

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

**DEVELOPING EFL TEACHERS' COMPETENCIES THROUGH AN INSET
PROGRAM IN TURKISH MONE CONTEXT: AN EXPLORATORY CASE
STUDY**

Ayşe ZAMBAK

PhD. DISSERTATION

ADANA / 2022

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Member of Examining Committee : Prof. Dr. Mahmut Oğuz KUTLU
Member of Examining Committee : Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gül den İLİN
Member of Examining Committee : Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erkan YÜCE
Member of Examining Committee : Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eser ÖRDEM

PhD. DISSERTATION

ADANA / 2022

To Çukurova University Institute of Social Sciences,

We certify that this dissertation is satisfactory for the award of the degree
DOCTOR of PHILOSOPHY in the Department of English Language Teaching

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Hasan BEDİR

Member of Examining Committee: Prof. Dr. Mahmut Oğuz KUTLU

Member of Examining Committee: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gülden İLİN

Member of Examining Committee: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erkan YÜCE

Member of Examining Committee: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eser ÖRDEM

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bildirir, aksi bir durumda aleyhime doğabilecek tüm hak kayıplarını kabullendiğimi beyan ederim. / / 2022

Ayşe ZAMBAK

DEDICATION

To my dear daughter, Göksu.

ÖZET

MİLLÎ EĞİTİM BAKANLIĞI BAĞLAMINDA BİR HİZMET İÇİ EĞİTİM PROGRAMI YOLUYLA İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN YETERLİKLERİNİN GELİŞTİRİLMESİ: KEŞİFSEL BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

Ayşe ZAMBAK

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Mesleki gelişim, bilgi ve becerilerin sürekli derinleşmesi, eğitim sistemlerinin değişim ve büyümesinin kritik bileşenleridir. Öğretmenler, kariyerleri boyunca, öğretme ve öğrenme sürecine yönelik bilgi, beceri, değer ve tutumlarını geliştirmek için hem kısa hem de uzun vadeli etkinliklere katılırlar. Bu süreçler göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, bu araştırmanın temel amacı Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı bağlamında hazırlanan bir hizmet içi eğitim programı aracılığıyla İngilizce öğretmenlerinin yeterliklerinin gelişimine odaklanmaktır. Ayrıca bu çalışmada, katılımcıların yeterlik düzeyleri ile bir hizmet içi eğitim programına katıldıktan sonra öğretme ve öğrenme deneyimlerine dayalı kazanımları, bakış açıları ve öznel değerlendirmelerinde gerçekleşen değişimler arasındaki ilişki araştırılmıştır.

Bu amaçlar göz önünde bulundurularak, bu araştırma, eğitim öncesi, sırası ve sonrası aşamalarını içeren keşifsel bir durum çalışması olarak tasarlanmıştır. Eğitim öncesi aşaması için, İngilizce Öğretmenleri Özel Alan Yeterlikleri Değerlendirme Ölçeği aracılığıyla 267 katılımcının kendi algıladıkları yeterlik düzeylerini belirlemek için kartopu örneklem yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Eş zamanlı olarak, 27 İngilizce öğretmeni ilgili konuda derinlemesine bilgi sahibi olmak için araştırmacı tarafından hazırlanan yazılı görüşme formlarını doldurmuştur. Verilerden elde edilen sonuçlara dayanarak, araştırmanın eğitim sırası dönemi için Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Öğretmen Yetiştirme ve Geliştirme Genel Müdürlüğü tarafından hazırlanan hizmet içi eğitim programları çerçevesinde yeni bir eğitim programı tasarlanmıştır. Hizmet içi eğitim programının

etkililiğini ve öğrenme kazanımlarını değerlendirmek için amaçlı örneklem kriteri ile seçilen 24 İngilizce öğretmeninden gerekli verileri toplamak amacıyla eğitim değerlendirme formu ve KWLA çizelgesi kullanılmıştır. Bunu takiben, eğitim sonrası aşaması için, beş öğretmenin sürdürülebilir öğrenme kazanımları ve öğrendiklerini eğitim bağlamlarında uygularken karşılaştıkları olası zorlu durumlar hakkında mümkün olan geniş perspektiflerden, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler, ders gözlemleri ve iki haftalık yansıtıcı öğretmen günlükleri aracılığıyla veri toplamak için maksimum çeşitlilik örneklem yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Veri analizi açısından, tüm nitel verileri hem tımdengelim hem de tümevarım perspektiflerinden analiz etmek için tematik içerik analizi kullanılmıştır. Ek olarak, elde edilen nicel verilerin analizi için tanımlayıcı ve çıkarımsal istatistikler gerçekleştirmek için SPSS yazılımı kullanılmıştır. Tüm bu veri toplama ve analiz prosedürlerinin eğitim öncesinden sonrası aşamasına kadar olan süreçlerinin güvenilirliğini ve geçerliliğini sağlamak için gerekli adımlar (örn. onay formu, katılımcı teyidi, yoğun betimleme ve üçgenleme) atılmıştır.

Temel sonuçlar katılımcıların özel gereksinimli öğrencilere İngilizce öğretimindeki mesleki becerilerinden emin olmadıklarını göstermiştir. Öğretmenlerin öğrencilerin İngilizce konuşma yeteneklerini geliştirme konusunda da benzer görüşlere sahip oldukları ortaya çıkmıştır. Ayrıca, eğitim düzeyi, mesleki deneyim ve daha önce hizmet içi eğitim programlara katılımın öğretmenlerin kendi algıladıkları yeterlik düzeylerini istatistiksel olarak etkilediği tespit edilmiştir. Dil becerilerinin, özellikle konuşma becerilerinin geliştirilmesinin en yaygın ihtiyaç olduğu ve bunu dijital becerilerinin geliştirilmesi talebinin izlediği anlaşılmıştır. Ayrıca, hizmet içi eğitim programı sırasında öğretmenlerin mesleki becerilerini çoğunlukla geliştirdikleri, özellikle öğrenme ve öğretme sürecini yönetmeye ilişkin becerilerini geliştirdikleri bulunmuştur.

Hizmet içi eğitim programının etkinliğine ilişkin olarak öğretmenler, öğretmenlerin eğitim hedeflerini yerine getirdikleri ve öğretimin kendileri için yüksek nitelikli olduğu konusunda hemfikir olduklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Bununla birlikte, daha pratik bir hizmet içi eğitime katılmayı ve diğer programlara dahil edilmek üzere daha çeşitli konuları önermişlerdir. Ayrıca, eğitim sonrası bölümde, sonuçlar, kişisel veya bağlamsal dinamiklerin etki düzeyini farklı şekilde etkilemesine rağmen, hizmet içi eğitim programının, özellikle mesleki gelişime karşı daha olumlu bir tutum geliştirerek ve mesleki becerilerini geliştirerek öğretmenlere çoğunlukla fayda sağladığını ortaya

koymuřtur. Son olarak, öğretmenler öğrencilerin fırsatlarını, okulun yetersiz teknik, finansal veya fiziksel koşullarını, aşırı yoğun müfredat ve ders kitaplarını, dil güçlüklerini, yetersiz ders süresini ve öğrencilerin dil öğrenmeye yönelik önyargılarını, yeni bilgi ve becerileri kendi eğitim ortamlarında uygulama ve uyarlamadaki zorluklarından sorumlu faktörler olarak tanımlamışlardır.

Bulgular ışığında, kısa süreli hizmet içi eğitim programlarına ilaveten, İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlükleri bünyesinde kurulacak ‘Mesleki Gelişim Merkezlerinde’ öğretmenlerin mesleki uzmanlıklarını artırmak, öğrencilerin öğrenme ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak, öğretmenler arasında işbirliğini geliřtirmek, farklı sınıflar ve yaş grupları arasında ortak faaliyetlerde bulunmak ve diğerk öğretmenlerin uygulamaları hakkında geri bildirim sağlamak amacıyla İngilizce öğretmenleri mesleki gelişim topluluklarının düzenlenmesi önerilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Öğretmen yeterlikleri, hizmet içi eğitim programı, mesleki gelişim

ABSTRACT**DEVELOPING EFL TEACHERS' COMPETENCIES THROUGH AN INSET
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STUDY****Ayşe ZAMBAK****PhD. Dissertation, Department of English Language Teaching****Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Hasan BEDİR****September 2022, 274 pages**

Professional development and continuous deepening of knowledge and skills are critical components of educational systems' change and growth. Teachers participate in short- and long-term activities to enhance their knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes towards teaching and learning throughout their careers. Considering this process, the primary purpose of this research was to focus on the competency development of English language teachers through an in-service teacher training (INSET) program prepared in the context of Turkish MONE. In addition, this study investigated the relationship between participants' competency levels and the changes in their learning gains, perspectives, and subjective evaluations based on their teaching and learning experiences after participating in an INSET program.

Keeping these aims in mind, the research was designed as an exploratory case study, including pre-, while- and post-training phases. As for the pre-phase, the snowball sampling method was utilized to determine the self-perceived competency levels of 267 participants through the English Teachers Field-Specific Competencies Assessment Scale. Simultaneously, 27 English teachers filled in written interview forms prepared by the researcher to obtain in-depth knowledge on the relevant subject. Based on the results obtained from the data, a new training program was designed using the framework of the INSET programs prepared by the Ministry of National Education, General Directorate of Teacher Development and Training for the while-phase of the research. The training evaluation form and KWLA chart were used to collect the necessary data from 24 EFL teachers recruited by a purposive sampling criterion to evaluate the effectiveness of the

INSET program and learning gains. Following this, for the post-training phase, the maximum variation sampling method was used to collect data from the wide range of perspectives possible about the five teachers' sustained learning gains and possible challenging situations they faced while implementing what they learned in their educational contexts through semi-structured interviews, lesson observations, and bi-weekly reflective teacher journals. In terms of data analysis, thematic content analysis was employed to analyse all qualitative data from both deductive and inductive perspectives. Additionally, the SPSS software was used to perform descriptive and inferential statistics for the analysis of the obtained quantitative data. The necessary steps (e.g. consent form, member-check, thick description and triangulation) were taken to ensure the reliability and validity of the processes from the pre- to the post-training phases of all these data collection and analysis procedures.

The main results indicated that participants were uncertain about their professional skills in teaching English to students with special needs. It was also revealed that teachers had similar views on improving students' English-speaking abilities. In addition, it was found that education level, professional experience, and participation in previous INSET programs statistically affect teachers' self-perceived competency levels. It was understood that developing language skills, more specifically speaking skills was the most common need, followed by the demand to progress their digital skills. Besides, during the INSET program, the teachers were generally found to develop their professional skills, namely, skills related to managing the learning and teaching process.

Regarding the effectiveness of the INSET program, teachers also expressed their agreement that the trainers fulfilled the training objectives and that the instruction was highly qualified for them. However, they recommended taking part in a more practical INSET program and more diverse topics to be included in other programs. Furthermore, in the post-training part, the results revealed that although personal or contextual dynamics may affect the level of influence differently, the INSET program mostly benefited teachers, especially by developing a more positive attitude towards professional growth and enhancing their professional skills. Lastly, teachers identified students' opportunities, the school's insufficient technical, financial, or physical circumstances, overloaded curricula and coursebooks, language difficulties, insufficient lesson time, and students' bias toward language learning as the factors responsible for their difficulties in applying and adapting new knowledge and skills in their educational contexts.

In the light of the findings, in addition to short-term INSET programs, it is suggested that EFL professional development communities be organized to increase teachers' professional expertise, meet students' learning needs, develop cooperation between teachers, engage in joint activities between different classes and age groups, and provide feedback on other teachers' practices at 'Professional Development Centres' to be established within the Provincial Directorates of National Education.

Keywords: teacher competencies, INSET program, professional development



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Ayşe ZAMBAK

ABBREVIATIONS

ACTFL:	The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
COHE:	Council of Higher Education
CPD:	Continuous Professional Development
EFL:	English as a Foreign Language
ELP:	European Language Portfolio
GDTTD:	The General Directorate of Teacher Training and Development
ILO:	International Labour Organization
INSET:	Inservice Teacher Training
MONE:	Ministry of National Education
NBPTS:	National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
OECD:	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
TALIS:	The Teaching and Learning International Survey
TESOL:	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
UNESCO:	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF:	The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
ZPD:	Zone of Proximal Development

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

‘Those who dare to teach must never cease to learn.’
John Cotton Dana

1.1. Introduction

This chapter briefly introduces the background of the study. Then, it clarifies the problem statement, aim, and research questions. Moreover, it sheds light on the significance and limitations of the study and defines the terms used in the study.

1.2. Background of the Study

Language teaching practices have been scrutinized as learning a foreign language is necessary to keep up with rapid changes in all aspects of life. The quality of these practices has been a source of contention for many years. However, the focus of debates has switched from searching for the finest teaching techniques to searching for best practices and effectiveness to advance teachers’ professional skills, so teacher professional development has thus acquired popularity as an area of investigation (Burns & Richards, 2009).

Teachers, who are one of the essential components of the education-teaching process, have an important place in the functioning of the education system, its success, and the training of a qualified workforce. ‘How does one learn?’ ‘How should a good education be?’ These questions have been up to date for centuries, and the development of teacher competencies is one of the possible answers. While it is vital to raise individuals who learn, research, question, and take responsibility for their learning with the changing understanding of learning-teaching, this situation has led to some changes in the roles of teachers. The most critical role expected from the teacher, who actively transfers information in the traditional learning-teaching approach, is to guide individuals to learn.

The curricula, which are the roadmap of the teaching process, no matter how successful they are prepared, depend on the competencies of the teachers who are the implementers of the programs (Arslan & Özpınar, 2008; Çelikten, Şanal & Yeni, 2005). Teacher competency is an essential factor that directly affects the quality of education. It

is important to be aware of the qualities and competencies that teachers should have because teaching recognition of the profession and determination of the duties and responsibilities of teachers become more of an issue to increase teacher performance (Karaca, 2008). Therefore, teachers' competencies need improvement for better education and student success (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Goe & Stickler, 2008).

The concept of competency is defined as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to perform a successful and professional performance and reach a specific goal (Gonczi, Hager, & Oliver, 1990). Besides the knowledge, skills, and attitudes, it is also possible to consider personality traits such as an individual's motivation, attention, and curiosity within the concept of competency (Sysoyev & Evstigneev, 2014). In addition to including explicit and implicit knowledge, skills, motivation, beliefs, and value judgments, teaching profession competencies can be decisive in enabling teachers to carry out complex demands professionally by activating psycho-social resources.

The concept of competency is handled in two different ways in the learning-teaching dimension. One of them is teaching competencies that refer to the role of the teacher in the classroom, directly related to the teaching profession. The other is teacher competencies, which refer to the broader and systematic expertise of the teacher in various fields such as personal, school, community, and professional networks. The competencies in this study are the ones that include knowing how to perform the roles of teachers with their knowledge, skills, and attitudes expressed by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MONE) in parallel with their continuous professional development.

Another area where teacher competencies are still being discussed is the issue of English language teaching within the context of Turkish MONE. Foreign language teachers are expected to have both field-specific competencies and a mastery of the language in which they teach, that is, after providing language proficiency. Richards (2010) states that language teacher competencies consist of content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, teaching skills, context knowledge, teacher identity, pedagogical reasoning skills, theorising practices, active in the school-society relationship, and professionalism. According to Turkish MONE (2017), teachers are supposed to have some competencies regarding content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of legislation, planning of education and teaching, creating learning environments, managing the teaching and learning process effectively, assessment and evaluation together with national, moral, and universal values, approach

to students, communication and communication and finally personal and professional development. It shows that the competencies that foreign language teachers are expected to possess are apprehensibly comprehensive and multidimensional. Considering the point where foreign language education is located in our country, it is essential to train teachers, who are the critical agents of foreign language teaching, with the expected competencies. In addition, after the cancellation of performance evaluation studies, teachers' professional development needs can be determined realistically as a result of self-assessments and performance evaluations within the framework of competencies, and various policies can be developed to meet these needs.

The high level of performance and competency of teachers, as well as the abundance of educational services and resources made available to them, are directly correlated with rising efficiency and quality in education (OECD, 2005). However, improving this quality and maintaining ongoing effectiveness rely on accurate, regular, trustworthy, and efficient teacher monitoring and assessment (European Commission, 2012). Teachers can assess themselves using a variety of approaches, decide where they need to grow professionally, and continually better themselves. Knowing the teachers' strengths, seeing their practice-related weaknesses, and giving them help to address these needs, in other words, contributing to their professional growth, are all important for realising this development.

In recent years, stakeholders, including administrators, teacher educators, and teachers themselves, have sought ways to redefine what and how much a competent language teacher should learn. They have also chosen to investigate which areas and to what extent they are qualified. According to Steiner (2004), teacher competencies are valuable tools for professional growth and teacher evaluation. Hence, to improve teacher quality and contribute to English language education in Türkiye, it becomes essential for national bodies to examine English teacher competencies and scenarios encountered during in-service professional development programs.

Bearing all these in mind, one can infer that this study contributes to the awareness of English language teachers' self-perceived competencies related to teaching English at public schools and evaluates the contribution of an in-service training program developed within the framework of competencies and the need areas.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Teachers' knowledge and skills, which could be sufficient for a lifetime in the past, are no longer adequate due to rapidly changing socio-economic conditions, increasing and facilitating sources of access to information, and even unexpected situations like a pandemic. In these conditions, teachers are still expected to provide their students with skills to do jobs, use technological tools, communicate effectively, and solve social problems that may arise in the future. To make it happen, teachers are asked to have skills that take into account students' interests, consider their differences and learning styles, and organize teaching in this direction. Hence, the need for teachers to equip themselves with new knowledge and skills has gained more importance than ever before. In other words, teachers are expected to have subject-specific, pedagogical, and psychological competencies to help students learn most appropriately and individualize their learning experiences (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 303). That way, they will raise individuals who have developed creative and critical thinking skills, have problem-solving skills, can use technology effectively, adopt democratic values, have high civic awareness, and respect differences (Schleicher, 2016, p.12).

Considering the great role of English language teachers in students' use of English appropriately and fluently, it is also important to investigate teachers' perceptions of subject area competencies. With this, the Ministry of National Education and Provincial Directorates of National Education can develop in-service training programs to improve teachers' qualifications in public schools. In addition to arranging in-service training, it is also vital that the effect of these in-service training develops sustainably throughout the entire professional life. However, when the studies conducted in Türkiye are examined, it is seen that the studies on the general or field-specific competencies of English language teachers are pretty limited, and these studies are generally conducted to determine self-efficacy beliefs. Self-efficacy is our belief in our abilities, particularly our ability to cope with the challenges ahead and complete a task (Akhtar, 2008). On the other hand, the Ministry of National Education defines teacher competencies as 'the knowledge, skills, and attitudes teachers must have to fulfil the teaching profession effectively and efficiently' (MONE, 2017). Therefore, the teacher competencies we aimed to develop in this study find a more concrete response. In addition, it is also underlined that teachers need to be aware of their general professional competencies and that their personal development should be determined by identifying deficiencies based on them. On the

other hand, it has been observed that there are limited studies on the competency-based professional development of English language teachers working at public schools at different levels within the Ministry of National Education.

When the studies were examined, it was seen that the studies generally included the opinions about the in-service activities of the teachers, and a lack of content design of an INSET program was observed. To illustrate, Hoş & Topal (2013) systematically examined the journal articles and theses published between 2000 and 2012 to have information about English teachers' professional development studies and in-service training programs. After reviewing 30 different studies, Hoş and Topal (2013) concluded that foreign language education, professional development, and in-service training activities are not satisfactory in Türkiye. More importantly, most of these studies were conducted to investigate the perceptions of subject area proficiency of instructors working in English preparatory schools at universities or pre-service teachers who are students in education faculties. When their research models are considered, it is seen that the studies are almost descriptive. To put it bluntly, one can state that relatively fewer well-directed studies focus on the professional development of English teachers working at public schools in Türkiye. The importance of this situation stands out in the foreign language education targets of the 2023 Education Vision. It was aimed to increase teacher competencies in foreign language education by providing online and face-to-face training to foreign language teachers in line with the philosophy of 'Lifelong Learning.' For this reason, supporting the competencies of English teachers with an in-service training program after analysing their self-perceived competency levels represents a critical part of the present study.

In Türkiye, the professional development of teachers working at public schools is carried out through the in-service training system established by the General Directorate of Teacher Training and Development under the Ministry of National Education. This current system falls short of improving the professional competency of teachers (OECD, 2009; TED, 2009) and makes relative contributions only on a small scale (Buldu, 2014). This is because teacher professional development training is not based on teaching profession competencies and/or the quality problems of the training programs. Therefore, restructuring the teaching process and developing professional development based on pre-defined competencies are of great importance.

Additionally, research shows that professional development is more effective when it focuses on student learning, actively involves teachers in designing instructional strategies, fosters collaboration between teachers, uses effective practice models, and provides teachers with coaching, feedback, and sufficient time to implement and maintain changes. (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner, 2017; Lumpe et al., 2012). In this way, the expected long-term impact of the training can be more sustainable by transferring the knowledge and skills acquired by the participating teachers to their teaching environment with the help of ongoing support. Also, Waters and Vilches (2000) discovered that incorporating school-based follow-up supervision and support elements into INSET programs, as well as relating theory and practice, confirmed to be a long-term success in terms of enhanced teaching competency, problem-solving capabilities, stronger professional self-esteem and improved relationships. However, there does not seem to have been much investigation into how the design of INSET systems influences the actual classroom practices and teachers' attitudes (Borg, 2006). It is evident that when an INSET training is over, evaluation of INSETs on their objectives is frequently overlooked. Furthermore, follow-up research examining results and long-term consequences of specific INSET activities are uncommon both in the Turkish setting and the field of language education (Mathew, 2006, p.26). As a result, the current study attempted to evaluate a one-week INSET program provided for English language teachers by the District Directorate of National Education four months after the course was completed.

Finally, ensuring that teacher competencies are associated with job performance processes, defining what kind of competency/performance levels are expected of teachers at different stages of their careers, and revealing what is expected of teachers to advance in their profession should all be part of an effective teacher professional development training system, because supporting teachers by identifying their professional needs at all stages of their professional careers is essential.

1.4. Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The need for continuous professional development for teachers increases every year along with the developing technologies and improvements. Teachers need to improve themselves both personally and professionally to update with recent changes in language teaching. By prioritising teachers' continuous professional development, it

becomes clear that the Ministry of National Education has determined a new route by introducing Türkiye's 2023 Vision of Education on 23rd October 2018. In line with this purpose, a critical keyword comes to the fore: in-service teacher training.

In-service teacher training means all education and training activities engaged in by teachers and principals, following their initial professional certification, and intended mainly or exclusively to improve their professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes to educate children more effectively (Bolam, 1982, p. 3). On the other hand, in-service training of teachers contributes to their professional development, which is one of the necessary teacher competencies of English teachers working for MONE. Activities need to provide teachers with competent and adequate qualifications in the teaching profession for a more qualified national education. According to the OECD's TALIS report (2009), despite a wide range of options for continuing professional development, teachers still experience a lack of professional development opportunities. In this respect, it is observed that both national and international studies are essential for determining and developing competencies, understanding, skills, and attitudes obtained to realise the tasks and responsibilities required by teaching. (Bıçak and Nartgün, 2009).

This study highlights the development of English language teachers' competencies through an in-service teacher training program. Since teacher competencies are crucial for increasing the quality of learning and teaching activities together with motivation (Sünbül and Arslan, 2009), it is also necessary to determine the perceptions of English teachers toward field-related competencies and to determine if these perceptions vary according to various variables. On the other hand, high-quality professional development practices are more likely to be relevant to the needs of teachers and their students, requiring teachers to be involved in decisions about content and process. Along with determining the current state of EFL teachers' competencies, it is critical to ascertain the areas that require development and how they succeed accordingly. As a result of self-evaluations and performance assessments, the professional development requirements of teachers can be identified in the context of competencies and different policies can be devised to meet these needs. Therefore, it can be suggested that any program that targets teachers' ongoing professional development be based on the immediate needs of teachers and designed with teachers' involvement. In other words, it is believed that the professional development training system, prepared within the teacher competencies framework, helps monitor teachers' development and identify the areas

where teachers need further professional assistance. Also, these competencies support teachers in getting to know themselves, making professional self-evaluations, and planning their careers.

In line with all, this study aimed to develop a local INSET program based on English language teachers' perceptions regarding their subject area competencies and evaluate the sustainable impact of this program through in-class observations, bi-weekly reflective journals, and semi-structured interviews. Considering these aims, the researcher investigated the following research questions in this study:

1. What are the perceived competency levels of in-service English language teachers regarding field-specific competencies set by Turkish MONE?
 - 1.a. Are there any statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' competency perceptions regarding gender, department of graduation, work experience, school type, and previous in-service training activities?
2. What do in-service EFL teachers think about the competencies an effective English language teacher needs to have?
 - 2.a. Do they think they bear these competencies as teachers?
 - 2.b. In which areas do they find themselves more competent and successful?
 - 2.c. In which areas do they need support to develop their competencies professionally?
3. How do EFL teachers evaluate the in-service training program they participated in?
 - 3.a. Are there any specific learning gains for EFL teachers during the training program? If yes, what are they?
 - 3.b. What are their expectations for further inset programs?
4. To what extent does the in-service teacher training impact EFL teachers' competencies from different educational contexts four months after the program?
 - 4.a. What challenges (if any) did the teachers face while implementing what they learned in their educational context?

1.5. Significance of the Study

To educate qualified, productive, and interested individuals in foreign language learning and teaching, teachers themselves need to be aware of the competencies they need to have. Furthermore, they are supposed to make continued efforts to improve them. However, due to the variable and complicated education system and processes, teachers may find it challenging to define the competencies that are expected to develop. These variables involve teaching programs, the school's physical conditions, students' individual characteristics, and teachers' different qualifications. For this reason, the Ministry of National Education has worked on the 'General Competencies for Teaching Profession' and 'Field-Specific Competencies' for teachers, including the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that the teacher should have to perform a task effectively and enhance their development area. In addition, it is stated by the Turkish MONE that teacher competencies prepared with participatory understanding will be continuously developed and updated in cooperation with the relevant institutions, benefiting from the feedback to be taken from the application at certain intervals, the innovations in education, the findings of scientific studies on teacher competencies.

On the other hand, sharing teacher competencies openly and transparently with teachers helps teachers make self-evaluation and career planning, as stated by the Ministry of National Education (Buldu, 2014). Likewise, sharing teaching skills and knowledge with teachers serves as a framework to guide their professional development throughout their careers (OECD, 2005). Hence, it becomes clear that each scientific study or INSET program with teacher EFL teacher competencies gains extra importance to reveal necessary innovations in the related field and contribute to the professional development of teachers.

The study adds to the growing teacher training literature in several ways because it considers the effect of short, hands-on, competency-based teacher training on teachers' self-evaluations and practices, as opposed to traditional teacher training sessions in which trainees are appointed passive roles in knowledge internalisation. First, the study's findings are useful not just for language teachers because it reveals that teachers should be provided training in which they actively explore new language teaching methodologies by connecting theory and practice. Because the trainees were assisted in becoming consciously aware of the perceptions and competencies they have before the training and motivated to see the changes they have gone through, it is apparent that teachers benefited

from their participation in such a professional experience pedagogically, individually, and intellectually. Second, this study contributes locally to the goal by taking the initiative to develop the competencies of foreign language teachers determined by the Ministry of National Education for the 2023 Education Vision. Third, the findings have contributed to me as the study's researcher by providing fresh insights into organising effective training programs and a new role. Working in such a setting has allowed me to expand my professional, practical, and conceptual understanding.

Another significance of this research is that it aims to explore teacher competencies and practice improvements in the observed lessons four months after the training. This dimension is lacking in evaluation studies, particularly in foreign language teaching in the Turkish MONE context. As a result, this study revealed possible changes in teachers' competencies and classroom practices four months after training. It also analysed the results in ways that can be critical to relevant parties in in-service training of Turkish MONE. Since current research may also shed light on the competency profile of English language teachers in public schools, the strengths, and weaknesses of current INSET programs were also examined in light of this study's findings. It also reveals the intricate interaction between educational policies of institutions and personal and pedagogical features in this study.

To sum up, it is believed that this study contributes to the quality management of English language education and teaching, designing competency-based INSET programs, evaluating the success and performance of language teaching, and planning for the career development of English language teachers.

1.6. Assumptions of the Study

As one of the main targets of the current study is to be able to carry out a comprehensive survey to determine and develop the field-specific competencies of English language teachers working for the Turkish MONE, it is assumed that a sufficient number of EFL teachers have already been achieved to design a local in-service teacher training program based on the results of the survey. To generalise the findings to all EFL teachers, this research is supposed to gather the opinions of the EFL teachers as much as possible.

In terms of vital ethical concerns in educational research, voluntary participation of the teachers is necessary, and they had the option not to take part in the study.

Therefore, no EFL teachers participated in the data collection procedure by force, as voluntary participation was the primary concern. As a result, they were presumed to provide truthful responses to the data collection tools employed in the study.

To preserve the study's validity and reliability, validity and reliability tests were performed on the data collecting instruments, including questionnaires, interviews, and other forms utilised throughout the study. As a result, they are regarded to be both valid and reliable. Moreover, their anonymity was protected by the confidentiality of the data.

Another assumption of this dissertation is that the items in the questionnaire and the questions in the forms were clear enough for the EFL teachers to understand and respond to. In case of misunderstanding or confusion, it was possible to have interviews with some EFL teachers on the clarity of the items. Last but not least, the study's duration was anticipated to be long enough to show the effects on teachers' competencies and professional development.

1.7. Operational Definitions

Ministry of National Education (MoNE): It is a governmental body responsible for the organisation, implementation, and supervision of educational services in Türkiye.

Competency refers to performing roles and responsibilities in an occupation at the required standard (Boahin & Hofman, 2014).

Teacher Competency: It is the set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that a teacher should have to perform teaching as a profession (MONE, 2017).

Specific Field Competencies: These are the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that must be possessed specific to fields to fulfil the teaching profession effectively and efficiently.

General Competencies for Teaching Profession: It is a reference text that includes three linked competency domains: 'professional knowledge,' 'professional skills,' and 'attitudes and values' with 11 competencies and 65 indicators related to the competencies (MONE, 2017).

Professional Development: It is the process of teachers internalising their professional responsibilities for students to learn more effectively in the school environment, taking their professional development to a further point and contributing to the efforts to improve their professional skills (MONE, 2007).

In-service teacher training (INSET): Professional development activities organized centrally and locally, through face-to-face or distance education, for the personnel of the central, provincial and foreign organizations of the Ministry of National Education and the education personnel working in private education institutions.

Exploratory Case Study: A study that entails investigating a single issue to the point of full, detailed, and complete comprehension (Epler, 2019)

1.8. Chapter Summary

This chapter has established the study's background, which is followed by an explanation of the problem guiding the investigation. Following that, the research questions generated in light of the study's objectives have been provided. The relevant literature to the investigation will be detailed in the next section.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature regarding teacher competencies in a broad sense and the frames of teacher competencies from different countries, including Türkiye in particular. The initial part of the chapter concerns the phenomenon of competence and competency, teacher competencies in the Turkish MONE context, and English teacher competencies in different countries. The second part of the chapter focuses on using competencies and the importance of competencies in teacher effectiveness. Next, continuous professional development, in-service teacher training programs, and the relationship between these concepts have been discussed. The last part of the chapter explains the impact of in-service teacher training (INSET) on EFL teachers from different dimensions and provides a review of the studies conducted in both the global and Turkish contexts.

2.2. Theoretical Framework: Social Constructivism

Teacher professional development is critical to a successful educational system for improving teacher quality and is seen as a powerful instrument for teachers to enhance their knowledge, skills, and practices. In that sense, fast changes have been lately seen in tandem with shifts and innovations in educational paradigms, pedagogies, technology, and the latest developments have significantly transformed the field's perception of how teachers learn to teach. With a move away from the conventional, sequential, and hierarchical perspective of teacher learning and development to a more holistic, participatory, and social-constructivist approach, recent research on second language teacher education, particularly on teacher cognition (Borg, 2003; Freeman, 2002), has altered the positivist conception of teacher learning that was previously prevalent (Korkmazgil, 2015).

The consequences of adopting a social interactionist approach for language teachers and teacher education programmes have already started to emerge because of the social aspect of language (Appel & Lantolf, 1994; Donato & MacCormick, 1994). Social interactionists contend that children learn best through interaction with others since they

are born into a social world. Hence, it is difficult to reconcile the Piagetian view that children learn individually from the moment they are born by exploring their environment with the behaviourist view that adults are solely responsible for guiding children's learning through the careful application of rewards and punishments. Vygotsky (1978) said that conversation and social contact inspire knowledge. That is to say; people use language to provide meaning to events and co-construct knowledge in social settings. As Churcher, Downs & Tewksbury (2014) and Oxford (1997) argue, social contact and life, in general, are an inevitable part of existence; therefore, this process happens naturally. Therefore, social constructivism holds that since knowledge is the outcome of communal activity, it cannot be an individual fabrication.

Additionally, learning occurs when one becomes aware of what is occurring in one's proximal environment, according to a combination of Vygotsky's (1978) and Bruner's (1977) developmental theories, as well as Bandura & Walters' (1977) social cognitive theory. The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is another name for this ecosystem. The ZPD is the area of competency that exists between the area of expertise that a person can learn on their own and the capacity that an individual can only attain with the assistance of an adult, typically a more knowledgeable other (Abtahi, 2017). Moreover, the ZPD is described as a metaphor for monitoring and comprehending how mediational tools are appropriated and internalised by Lantolf (2000) and Thorne Lantolf (2007). (p. 17) It describes the area of inquiry for which the learner is cognitively ready but needs assistance to provide the learner with scaffolding. This can be explained as the way learning occurs through negotiation between the learner and a more capable parent, teacher, peer or trainer to assist in understanding knowledge or expanding new skills. Strategies for supporting teachers' intellectual knowledge and abilities and encouraging purposeful learning include dialogue, modelling, scaffolding, and cooperative learning.

One of the key figures in the development of social interactionist theory, Vygotsky, had a lot to say about teaching and learning a second language. According to Vygotsky (1978), thinking evolves, and learning occurs via the transmission of culture through language. Vygotsky rejects the idea that the subject matter that needs to be learnt can be divided into little discrete components and taught as isolated elements and abilities since he has a holistic view of education. Instead, every unit of study to be presented in all its complexity must place meaning at the centre (Huitt, 2003). Thus, a fundamental tenet of the Vygotskian theoretical framework is that professional growth and learning

are best understood and shaped as a component of developing social practice within a community. Participation entails being brought into a setting that has a programme aimed at achieving objectives and goals, forms of interpersonal communication and teamwork within an institutional framework, and the use of cultural assets. In this environment, interpersonal interactions produce patterns of meanings, values, and cognitive structures, and productive activity and understanding are dialectically connected (Lave & Wenger, 1991). As a result, learning and growth may be seen as ongoing and integrating components of involvement for all participants in such a context, which can be productively connected to the ongoing development and renewal of the practice itself (Tharp & Gallimore, 1991).

One might argue that, in recent years, the professional development of teachers has turned toward a social constructivist perspective by focusing on their zone of proximal development (Pitsoe & Maila, 2012). Von Glasersfeld (1989), who contends that teachers do not acquire information passively but instead actively generate it within their educational environments, may provide more evidence. Stetsenko and Arievitch (1997) also discovered that culture and context, which are inaccessible to the individuals, are crucial in helping teachers develop their own and shared interpretations and understandings of reality, which open the door for interpersonal relationships, teamwork, communication, and social integration. As a result, it can be said that learning may not always occur when someone more educated than us is present, but it does happen when we engage with that agent. Following these arguments for the value of contact and sharing, Mitchell and Sackney (2000) assert that collaborative learning happens when teachers engage because doing so gives them the chance to assess their own experiences and ideas from various perspectives. Furthermore, Roberts (1998) also emphasises the significance of the social environment for a person's awareness of a need for change in in-service teacher training. According to him, school culture significantly impacts curricular and personal transformation. In conjunction with this notion, a school should have a policy that promotes teacher involvement and accountability in sharing since it tends to stimulate conversation and cooperation. Based on this assumption, Roberts (1998) proposes two broad in-service teacher preparation methods: 1. emphasising intra-school communication and building the school's potential for self-development; 2. combining off-site and on-site work to enable teachers to discuss issues in the classroom with colleagues.

Participating in learning activities in inset programs promotes teacher learning with the help of building collegiality through the exchange of ideas. The socio-constructivist viewpoint integrates the social and cognitive aspects of learning in this manner. These activities refocus attention on providing chances for teachers to understand theories in their work environments (Freeman & Johnson, 2004). It is also possible to comprehend how teachers learn, how their awareness develops, and how this internal activity strengthens their competencies. According to Johnson (2006), a dynamic process of rebuilding and modifying practices to be sensitive to both individual and local requirements is involved in teacher education from this point of view. This is an endeavour because it involves both learning about classroom life and responding to the social factors that affect the environments in which teachers live and work.

To sum up these ideas on professional development from a socio-constructivist viewpoint, one would propose that teachers as learners must be at the centre of the planning process. It is crucial to recognise that teachers are lifelong learners who provide students with a variety of rich learning opportunities through which they may form their own conceptual frameworks for professional development subject matter. To continue learning throughout their professional lives, teachers should create practice networks. Those involved in professional development initiatives often emphasise the significance of learning alongside others. Finally, it is crucial to have the chance to apply what they have learned via professional guidance, namely, scaffolding, to their contexts. By taking it a step further with the help they need to expand their present knowledge, abilities, and attitudes, they can be the master of their own progress.

2.3. Competency vs Competence

Although comprehensive studies have been carried out in the literature on competency-based education for a long time, the concept of "competency" means exactly is a concept that cannot be explained sufficiently in national and international literature. There is no definite consensus and definition. Most of the time, definitions differ according to the discipline in which it is expressed, the perspective of the researcher who defines it, and even the general understanding of competence accepted in the country in which it is defined (Barış, 2013; Eraut, 1998; Haste, 2009; Jeris et al., 2005; Koenen, Dochy & Berghmans, 2015).

The fact that there is a definition and semantic confusion on the concept of competence has sometimes caused this concept to be called 'vague, unclear, hazy' (Le Deist & Winterton, 2005, p. 25). Although it is challenging to define competence, explaining the concept and drawing its basic framework will better understand the changing roles of education and teachers. It is essential to raise individuals equipped with the age's skills and thus build a bridge between business life and education (Caena, 2013; Mansfield, 2004).

Both words have the same etymology derived from the French term 'compétence,' which refers to a skill, ability, or capability. This word has also been derived from the Latin word 'competentia,' which signifies 'agreement,' 'conjunction,' and potentially 'expertise.' Furthermore, the words 'competence' and 'competency' appear to have diverged in Middle English, where they originally had distinctive, independent meanings. They probably came up due to different spellings, taking on different meanings, and becoming new words. Although there is a nuance between the two, they are often used interchangeably and are considered synonymous in daily life. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English defines the word competence as 'the ability to do something well' and the word competency as 'the skill required for a certain job'.

The word "competence" is interpreted differently in American and British English from time to time, leading to semantic confusion. While the word 'competence' means the state of being competent when used as a singular noun, it is used only as a noun phrase in British English, as in the expression "business competence" (Mansfield, 2004, 303-304). In American English, the same word may describe a person's performance in performing a task. Competency in the singular and competencies in the plural is the distinctive feature of a person that shows an effective or superior performance. This means a distinctive behaviour that can be expressed as a motive, a personality trait, or a skill.

The concept of competency is explained as the distinguishing feature of the individual associated with a particular job and enables him to perform that job competently. It is considered as an 'input', especially in American schools. The concept of competence is accepted as the knowledge and ability that an individual must have to perform a certain job. In this context, competence is evaluated by the individual's ability to fulfil the standards required by that job in a business environment.

The concept of competence is accepted as ‘output’ showing the job requirements in the English school (Winterton, 2009, p. 684). Given these definitions, one can put forward that the concepts of competence and competency show specific characteristics. These features are shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

Characteristics of The Concepts of Competence and Competency

Competence	Competency
knowledge and ability	the distinctive feature of the individual
total ability	profession-independent ability
ability to meet standards /output	input

As can be seen in Table 1, while competence is a more holistic concept, competency is a concept related to the individual’s personality traits. It may be exhibited in other situations while performing other tasks. However, despite all these differences, the two concepts are often used interchangeably and are accepted as concepts that evoke the same meaning (Winterton, 2009, p. 684).

According to Sanghi (2016), ‘competence’ refers to talent and the level of performance obtained, while ‘competency’ refers to the behaviour used to acquire it. To put it another way, one describes what people can do, while the other concentrates on how they go about doing it. As a result, there is a connection between the two: competent implementation of skill is likely to lead to competent behaviour, and vice versa (p.10) as suggested in Table 2 below:

Table 2.

The Interface between Competence and Competency

Competence	Competency
Skill-based	Behaviour-based
Attributes of the job	Attributes of the person
Process-centric	Result-centric
Standard attained	Manner of behaviour
What is measured	How the standard is achieved

Table 2 shows that competence explains what people can accomplish, but competency is concerned with how they do it. To look at it another way, the former refers to talent and the level of performance obtained, whilst the latter refers to the behaviour used to acquire it. It suggests a connection between the two, i.e., competent application of skill leads to competent behaviour, and vice versa. Knowing and understanding the components of competence and competency can help one comprehend the difference between the two.

Although the concepts of competence and competency are similar concepts used interchangeably, competence is a concept that covers more functional areas, while competency is related to behavioural areas (Le Deist & Winterton, 2005, p. 27). In other words, competency is the behaviour that an employee must exhibit to show superior performance in any situation; Competence is about doing a job skilfully as a result. Competence is measured with minimum standards and demonstrated by performance and outputs (Sultana, 2009, p. 19). For example, competency in linguistics refers to a person's innate understanding of how a language operates. For example, someone who grew up speaking a language is more likely to be fluent in it since they are more aware of any unspoken rules that are violated. If people want to be fluent and competent in a language, they need to know it well enough to think and recognize if something is faulty. There is much overlap here because someone who has the skills also can accomplish something else.

To sum up, a person's competencies are the skills they have to meet a certain need. If a person can meet all of those conditions, they are considered competent. There is a significant distinction between competence and competencies in that competence results from having the abilities or attributes that bring success.

2.4. Teacher Competencies in Turkish MONE Context

The tremendous technical advancements of the twenty-first century and the accompanying social transformation need the adaptation of all civilizations to the ever-shifting conditions of the Information Age. This significant societal shift emphasises the need for high-level cognitive abilities such as communicating effectively, cultural recognition, high-level collaboration, global competency, and solution-focused thought. Accordingly, there are new responsibilities imposed on teachers. In addition to being a profession that can carry many duties in general, many competencies become compulsory

to fulfil these responsibilities. The fact that many qualifications, professional knowledge, and skills that are thought to be a teacher are the basis of competencies.

Competency is defined as the characteristics that must be possessed to successfully fulfil the requirements of a profession (Şişman, 2009). On the other hand, Şahin (2004) states that the concept of competence should be seen as the minimum standard for a job and underlines its importance in terms of professional performance. Competency is also defined as features that give people the power to play a specific role or the absence of features preventing them from playing it. In terms of the teaching profession, teacher competencies are expressed as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that teachers must have to fulfil their profession effectively and efficiently (MONE, 2017).

For many years, studies examining the relationship between education and development emphasised that a country's growth depends on the allocation of resources to education. Research has recently dominated education studies into the relationship between development and education quality. Practitioners, namely teachers, interpret any change that occurs in the field of education. As a result, teachers can be accepted as an effective impact on education. Thus, having highly qualified teachers is a necessary condition for educational reform to take place.

Studies on the characteristics of the teaching profession and teacher competencies in Türkiye started after the 1970s in direct proportion to the other studies that have been carried out in this field in the world. Teaching was accepted as a profession for the first time in the National Education Basic Law No. 1739, which came into force in 1973 (article 43). Article 45 of the National Education Basic Law No. 1739 is related to the qualifications of teachers. According to this law, all teachers must graduate from a school at the higher education level. In the same law, it is stated that teachers should have three basic qualifications: general culture, field knowledge, and teaching profession knowledge.

In Türkiye, the first formal study of teacher competencies started in 1998. Teacher training standards and accreditation studies were carried out in 1998-1999 as part of the 'Pre-Service Teacher Training of the National Education Development Project' with the collaboration of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) and the World Bank. Teacher competencies are discussed in 4 dimensions: related to the subject area and field education, the learning and teaching process, monitoring, evaluation, record-keeping of students' learning, and complimentary professional competencies (MONE, 2017). The

teacher competencies document, first prepared by the Ministry of National Education, started to be ready in 1999 and entered into force in 2002. It is known that the teacher competencies document has been prepared under three headings as education-teaching qualifications, general culture knowledge and skills, and specific field knowledge and skills. (MONE, 2017). They sent competencies to educational institutions providing undergraduate education to be considered in terms of teacher training.

Another study on teacher competencies was carried out as part of the Basic Education Support Program. The Basic Education Support Program went into effect on February 8, 2000, following the signing of a financing agreement between the European Union Commission and the Turkish Government. The project's activities began in September 2002 and comprised four areas: teacher training, educational quality, management and organization, and non-formal education and communication. The Directorate-General for Teacher Training and Education was in charge of the project activities related to the Teacher Training component. In this context, within the scope of teacher competencies, the areas of competency that a teacher should have, the sub-competencies required by each area, and the performance indicators in which the competencies will be observed have been determined (EARGED, 2006). The purpose of these efforts was to redetermine teachers' competencies to make them compliant with the countries of the European Union. In this regard, the draft 'General Competencies for Teaching Professions' was created from workshops, pilot practices, and stakeholders' viewpoints, brought together by national and international experts, academics, professors, and diverse participants. The draft consisted of six principal areas of competence, 31 sub-domains, and 233 indicators for performance.

Following general teaching competencies, efforts have been undertaken to identify 'field-specific teaching competencies,' which would determine the information, qualifications, attitudes, and values teachers have to relate to their subject matter. Field-specific competencies, on the other hand, were put into effect in 2008 for the primary education level; for the secondary education level in 2011 (MONE, 2017).

As a result of the current advances in education and the improvements in the Turkish education system, it has become necessary to update the General Competencies for Teaching Profession. During the process of upgrading the General Competencies for Teaching Profession, YÖK (Council of Higher Education), ÖSYM (Assessment, Selection, and Placement Center), the Vocational Qualifications Authority, the Board of

Education and Training, and other Ministry organizations, as well as numerous academicians and teachers, were consulted. During this process, fundamental policy texts on education and teaching from international organizations such as the European Council, World Bank, ILO, OECD, UNESCO, and UNICEF were studied, as well as competency documents from a variety of countries, including the United States, Australia, Finland, France, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Singapore. They organized meetings with stakeholders to ensure that the teaching competencies were updated through widespread engagement.

Instead of creating a subject-specific competency for each specific field, subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge were included in the general competencies, resulting in the creation of a single, comprehensive book. In this context, the General Competencies of the Teaching Profession have been modified to include three complementary competency domains: ‘professional knowledge,’ ‘professional skills,’ and ‘attitudes and values.’ There are eleven competencies and sixty-five indicators in these main domains. However, in this study, the competencies of English teachers played an essential role in need analysis before the in-service education content design.

2.4.1. General Competencies for Teaching Profession, 2006

The Ministry of National Education carried out the next stage of the studies to determine teacher competencies, the foundation of which was laid with the preparation of the teacher qualifications document in 2002, within the scope of the Basic Education Support Project (MONE, 2017a, p.6). Representatives from different sectors such as academics, teachers, inspectors, and union representatives participated in the determination of competencies, and comprehensive workshops were organized. As a result of the studies, they decided that the general qualifications of the teaching profession, the main competencies, the sub-competencies of the main competencies, and the sub-competencies determining the performance indicators in the form of performance indicators would be the most appropriate method.

In addition, it has been accepted that teacher competencies include knowledge skills and, attitudes. In 2006, the draft document of “General Competencies for Teaching Profession” was finalized on 17.04.2006, number 2590. It was published in the Journal of Announcements and entered into force (MONE 2017a, p. 6). These competencies are shown below:

A. Personal and Professional Values-Professional Development: Teachers see and value their students as individuals. They strive for students to learn and develop at the highest level, considering their social and cultural differences, what they do, and their interests. They show the personality traits they want to build in their students in their behaviour. They benefit from the experience of other teachers, administrators, and experts. They strive for change and continuous improvement by making self-assessments. They are open to new information and ideas and play an active role in developing themselves and the institution. They learn the legislation related to their profession.

Sub-competencies;

- A1. Valuing, Understanding and Respecting Students,
- A2. Believing that Students Can Learn and Succeed,
- A3. Giving Importance to National and Universal Values,
- A4. Self-Assessment,
- A5. Providing Personal Development,
- A6. Monitoring and Contributing to Professional Developments,
- A7. Contributing to the Improvement and Development of the School
- A8. Following Professional Laws, Fulfilling Duties and Responsibilities,

B. Getting to Know the Student: The teacher knows all the student's characteristics, wishes, and needs and knows the socio-cultural and economic aspects of the family and environment they come from.

Sub-competencies;

- B1. Recognizing Developmental Traits
- B2. Considering Interests and Needs
- B3. Valuing the Student
- B4. Guiding the Student

C. Teaching and Learning Process: The teacher plans, implements, and manages the teaching and learning process. It provides active participation of students in the learning process.

Sub-competencies;

- C1. Lesson Planning

- C2. Material Preparation
- C3. Organizing Learning Environments
- C4. Organizing Extracurricular Activities
- C5. Diversifying Teaching by Taking into account Individual Differences
- C6. Time management
- C7. Behaviour Management

D. Monitoring and Evaluating Learning and Development: The teacher evaluates and evaluates students' development and learning. It enables students to evaluate themselves and other students' learning.

Sub-competencies;

- D1. Determination of Measurement and Evaluation Methods and Techniques
- D2. Measuring Student Learning Using Different Assessment Techniques
- D3. Analyzing and Interpreting Data, Providing Feedback on Student Development and Learning
- D4. Reviewing the learning-teaching Process, Based on the Results

E. School, Family, and Community Relations: The teacher recognizes the socio-cultural and economic characteristics of the school's environment. It encourages families and the community to participate in the educational process and studies related to the development of the school.

Sub-competencies;

- E1. Getting to Know the Environment
- E2. Benefiting from Environmental Facilities
- E3. Turning the School into a Cultural Center
- E4. Family Recognition and Impartiality in Relationship with Families
- E5. Family Participation and Collaboration

F. Program and Content Information: The teacher knows and applies the fundamental values and principles on which the Turkish National Education System is based and the approach, purpose, target, principles, and techniques of the specific-field curriculum.

Sub-competencies;

F1. Aims and Principles of Turkish National Education

F2. Field-specific Curriculum Knowledge and Application Skills

F3. Monitoring, Evaluating and Developing the Field-specific Curriculum

(http://oygm.MONE.gov.tr/MONE_iys_dosyalar/2017_12/13161921_YYretmenlik_MesleYi_Genel__YETERLYKLERi_onaylanan.pdf)

In addition to the general competencies of the teaching profession, specific-field competencies for primary and secondary school teachers were also determined. Performance indicators at A1, A2, and A3 levels have been determined for each proficiency area. Performance indicators are based on pre-school and primary and secondary education programs. Classroom teachers' performance indicators differ from other teachers' performance indicators. It is not expected that the knowledge level of that field will be the same as the field teachers because they take more than one course.

The general competencies of the teaching profession, which were determined within the scope of the 'Support to Basic Education Project' and listed above, consist of 6 basic general competencies, 31 sub-competencies under these six general competencies, and 233 performance indicators used as proof of these qualifications. The determined qualifications coincide with the internationally accepted qualifications in terms of scope and content. In addition, the presentation of qualifications as 'area of competency,' 'sub-competency,' and 'performance indicators' shows that qualifications are prepared in a systematic framework (TED, 2009). However, these knowledge, skills, and attitudes are mixed, or the sub-competencies of this knowledge and skills and the performance indicators that are proof are presented in a very long and detailed way. TED (2009, p. 14) cites the following examples as proof of this:

A1 Valuing, understanding, and respecting students (sub-competency)

A1.3 S/he considers students' characteristics in selecting and developing appropriate materials, resources, and activities to facilitate learning (performance indicator)

A1.6 S/he values students' ideas and output (performance indicator)

A2 Believing that students can learn and succeed (sub-competency)

A2.10 S/he believes that every student will be successful (performance indicator)

A4 Self-evaluation (sub-competency)

A4.4 S/he is open to different opinions and criticisms (performance indicator)

A5 Ensuring personal development (sub-competence)

A5.6 S/he has self-confidence (performance indicator)

A5.15 S/he has the willingness to do scientific research (performance indicator)

B3 Valuing the student (sub-competency)

B3.5 S/he values student ideas and output (performance indicator)

B3.7 S/he respects students' values (performance indicator).

As seen in the examples above, expressions related to values and attitudes such as *believing, being willing, valuing, and showing respect* are used as performance indicators. However, performance indicators must be measurable and observable. Therefore, it is not appropriate to use such expressions as performance indicators. Instead, it would be a more relevant and scientific approach to address the issues considered necessary in the teaching profession with specific titles and to express these titles with appropriate performance indicators (Alan, 2019). Identifying observable and measurable competencies and using clear, simple, and understandable language in their writing will enable the competencies to be used more realistically and effectively.

2.4.2. General Competencies for Teaching Profession, 2017

After 11 years have passed since the general qualifications of the teaching profession were determined in 2006, the Ministry of National Education developed a new framework regarding general competencies for the teaching profession in 2017. The Ministry of National Education has shown the need for a new qualification framework, national and global developments, innovations, and reflections on education. It has redefined the general qualifications of the teaching profession to respond to these developments. These competencies entered into force in December 2017 (MONE, 2017a, General Competencies for the Teaching Profession, p.8, oygm.MONE.gov.tr). In this process, cooperation has been made with academicians and teachers, as well as institutions such as YÖK (Council of Higher Education), ÖSYM, Vocational Qualifications Authority, Board of Education and Discipline, and general competencies for the teaching profession have been updated by examining the general qualifications of some international institutions such as OECD and UNESCO and countries that are good

in education. MONE defines the most prominent feature of general competencies published (MONE, 2017a, p. 8) as follows:

“Instead of determining a separate specific field competency for each teaching field, subject area knowledge and competencies were added to general competencies. Thus, a holistic and single text was created to include the competencies of each teacher in their field”.

Accordingly, general competencies are grouped under three main competency areas: professional knowledge, professional skills and attitudes, and values. Under the three general competency areas, there are 11 sub-competencies and 65 performance indicators for them. The new general competencies for the teaching profession published as of 2017 (MONE, 2017a, pp. 13-16) are shown in Table 3.

Table 3.

General Competencies for Teaching Profession

A. Professional Knowledge	B. Professional Skills	C. Attitudes and Values
A1. Content Knowledge	B1. Planning of Education and Teaching	C1. National, Moral and Universal Values
They have an advanced and critical perspective on theoretical, methodological, and factual knowledge in their subject field.	They plan education and teaching processes effectively.	They observe national, moral, and universal values.
A2. Pedagogical Content Knowledge	B2. Creating Learning Environments	C2. Approach to Students
They have a good knowledge of the curriculum and pedagogical content knowledge of their subject area.	They prepare appropriate teaching materials and build a healthy and safe learning environment where effective learning can be achieved for all students.	They have an attitude that supports the development of students.
A3. Knowledge on Legislation	B3. Managing the Teaching and Learning Process	C3. Communication and Cooperation
As an individual and a teacher, they act according to the legislation related to their duties, rights, and responsibilities.	They manage the teaching and learning process effectively.	They establish effective communication and cooperation with students, colleagues, families, and other educational stakeholders.

B4. Assessment and Evaluation	C4. Personal and Professional Development
They use the methods, techniques, and tools of assessment and evaluation that fit for purpose.	By carrying out self-appraisal, they participate in personal and professional development activities.

MONE (2017a, p.12) states that this new competency framework can be a reference source in determining the content of university teacher training courses and determining and developing the qualifications to be sought in teacher candidates. The new competencies are also envisioned to guide in-service teachers in identifying their strengths and weaknesses. In addition to these, it is stated that teachers' performances can be evaluated based on the competencies mentioned above, with an objective evaluation system to be developed.

In the text of 'General Competencies for the Teaching Profession' published in 2006 within the scope of the Teacher Training Component of the Support to Basic Education Project, 31 sub-competencies and 233 performance indicators are included in 6 general competence areas. In the text 'General Competencies for Teaching Profession' published by the General Directorate of Teacher Training and Development in 2017, the number of qualifications and indicators decreased compared to 2006. In the new text, 11 competencies and 65 competency indicators are included in 3 general competency areas. Based on this result, it can be stated that there has been a simplification in the number of general qualifications. Although it includes fewer competencies and indicators, the 2017 competency test is considered to have a more general and inclusive framework.

While comparing the general competencies of the teaching profession in terms of content, the competencies of 'Professional Knowledge,' 'Professional Skills,' and 'Attitudes and Values' can be taken as a basis. In both competency texts, specific-field competencies that teachers should have in their fields are included. However, it can be evaluated that the 2017 proficiency indicators included more general and inclusive expressions compared to the 2006 indicators and drew a framework covering all teaching fields. Similarly, in both competency frameworks, teachers are supposed to have legislative knowledge about their profession. However, in the 2017 competency framework, a more general scope was considered, emphasizing the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye and citizenship rights and responsibilities.

One can see in both competency texts that the emphasis is placed on taking into account the individual differences and special needs of students, time management, environmental characteristics, and specific-field curriculum. Similarly, in the arrangement of learning environments in both competency texts, emphasis is placed on health and safety issues, student characteristics and individual differences, and the course's learning outcomes. However, the topics emphasized in both texts are preparing materials suitable for learning environments and student characteristics; learning environments allow students to develop their high-level cognitive skills by recognizing their strengths and weaknesses.

In both 2006 and 2017 competency documents on teaching and managing the learning process; it has been determined that the emphasis is placed on the teacher's displaying the skills required by the subject area curriculum, using the time effectively, taking into account the different needs and special needs of the students, the cultural and socioeconomic characteristics of the environment and students, cooperating with relevant persons and institutions when necessary, and using information and communication technologies effectively. Differently, in managing the teaching-learning process of the 2017 competency text, it also touches on ensuring active participation of students, giving place to analytical thinking activities, associating lessons with students' daily lives, and coping with undesirable behaviours.

In the Attitudes and Values part in 2017, four competencies were included: 'National, Moral and Universal Values,' 'Approach to Students,' 'Communication and Cooperation,' and 'Personal and Professional Development.' It has been determined that emphasis is placed on protecting children's rights and human rights, respecting individual and cultural differences, and developing national, spiritual, and universal values in students in 2006 and 2017 competency texts. In addition to these, teachers' sensitivity to the natural environment, history, and protection of cultural heritage has been mentioned in the 2017 competency text. Emphasis on valuing students as human beings and individuals, believing that all students can learn, guiding them in their development, and being a role model is common in both competency texts. Other common points are to use Turkish correctly and effectively, have practical communication skills, have respect, empathy, and tolerance, cooperate with colleagues and families, and contribute to the development of the school.

Regarding personal and professional development in both competency texts, teachers should enjoy their profession, make self-evaluations by benefiting from the opinions of education stakeholders, develop themselves personally and professionally, participate in cultural and artistic activities, pay attention to their care and health, and act in accordance with professional laws and ethical rules. In addition, the 2017 competency text mentions that teachers follow the agenda of Türkiye and the world.

To sum up, while a detailed competency framework was prepared with many sub-competencies and performance indicators in the 2006 competency text, a competency framework was designed with fewer competencies and indicators and inclusive and general expressions in the 2017 competency text. In this respect, it is possible to state that the 2017 competency test is more straightforward and more understandable.

2.5. OECD General Competencies for Teaching Profession

The OECD has recently carried out a study on teacher competencies. In this report published by the OECD, the basic competencies expected from teachers are explained under four headings: *'student level, grade level, school level, and parents and the wider community.'* (Schleicher, 2016, s. 17-18): According to the report, teachers are now expected to deal effectively with students from various backgrounds and mother tongues, be sensitive to cultural and gender issues, embrace diversity and social stability, work with disadvantaged and immigrant students, as well as students with learning or behavioural disorders, to use new technologies, and to keep up with rapidly developing fields of knowledge and approaches to evaluate student success.

On a student basis,

- *Managing and initiating learning processes.*

There is much discussion on how teachers should deliver the curriculum, with discipline, emphasis, and consistency of educational content at the forefront. On the other hand, teachers are required to encourage students to become more engaged in their learning. Teachers in several nations have taken on the role of creating stimulating learning environments and assisting students in developing problem-solving abilities, monitoring, and managing their learning.

- *Responding to the specific learning needs of individual students.*

Teachers are expected to examine and diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses and provide counselling to individual students and their parents, including on developmental needs.

- *Integrating formative and summative assessments.*

Teachers need to be 'assessment literate' in both summative and formative assessment techniques. They should be aware of standardized assessment tests, identify them using test results, and adjust the curriculum and instruction in response to student achievement.

At the school level

- *Working in multicultural classrooms.*

Teachers are supposed to encourage social cohesion and integration by utilizing proper classroom management strategies and employing a cultural understanding of different groups of students as classes become increasingly diverse, with students from various ethnic and religious backgrounds.

- *Cross-curricular studies are emphasized.*

Citizenship education, which covers civic engagement and social and moral responsibility, has been implemented in specific school systems. These courses are either taught separately or incorporated across the school curriculum.

- *Including students with special needs in the classroom.*

Teachers are encouraged to expand their knowledge of special education, appropriate teaching, management methods, and working with support staff as school systems increasingly offer integrated education for children with disabilities and learning difficulties.

At the school level

- *Working and planning in groups.*

Teachers are expected to collaborate with other teachers and staff members and to work in groups. They'll need social and managerial abilities to work together, identify common goals, and plan and monitor their progress toward those goals.

- *Evaluating and making improvement plans.*

Many systems now require schools to use data acquired through self-evaluation, testing, and external evaluations to inform school-development procedures. This necessitates the development of new abilities in data collection and analysis and

presenting the results to parents. In addition, project management and monitoring abilities are required for school development.

- *Using information and communication technology (ICT) for teaching and administration.* Teachers are expected to incorporate ICTs into their classrooms and stay current on ICT advances and applications.

- *Inter-school projects and worldwide collaboration.*

Schools are increasingly collaborating on joint work and establishing connections with schools in other countries. Teachers with leadership and organizational abilities and the ability to work and communicate effectively in a variety of situations are required for these programs.

- *Managing and sharing leadership.*

In most nations, school decision-making has been more decentralized in recent years, particularly in instructional organizations. Teachers are expected to engage in and contribute to school leadership in various countries due to an increase in the quantity and variety of decisions made at the school level.

At the level of parents and the wider community,

- *Providing parents with professional guidance.*

School systems are increasingly emphasizing the need for strong collaboration between schools and parents. As a result, teachers need to be taught how and when to connect with parents.

- *Creating learning partnerships in the community.*

Schools in some nations are expected to form relationships with community institutions and people, such as libraries, museums, and employers, to gain additional assistance and provide broader learning experiences. Teachers should be capable of establishing these ties.

This report covers the knowledge, abilities, and character characteristics that teachers need to develop to meet these demands and the work organization and support structures that they will require. When the qualifications of the OECD are examined, the most striking feature is that there are more macro-level qualifications within the framework of these qualifications. Giving importance to cross-program studies, inter-school projects, and establishing partnerships for learning with international cooperation

can be given as examples of these qualifications. In addition, special priority is given to teaching in multicultural classrooms.

2.6. English Teacher Field-Specific Competencies in Some Countries

Globalization of society and economics manifests itself in increased mobility, creating diverse cultural and linguistic diversity inside national borders and, as a result, among the student and teacher population. As a result, today's societies place challenging demands on teachers, who are confronted with the complexity of their professional lives. What competencies do teachers have or need to learn or develop to meet these demands? One strategy to meet the demands is to specify the competencies and standards to ensure a successful evaluation process.

Competency evaluation, which demonstrates that teachers are prepared for these difficulties, is impossible without a well-defined and agreed-upon reference point: standards. It is seen that English teacher competencies are predominantly expressed as standards in the international literature. The qualifications planned to be used in the teacher training process and prepared by certain institutions or boards may be standardized, and standard development approaches and models are used.

It is possible to state that the competencies created by the countries where English is taught as the mother and second language are adopted by the countries where it is taught as a foreign language and used to standardize the competencies. For example, Albania, Egypt, Paraguay, Uruguay, China, and Turkiye benefited from the competency framework created by the Association of Teachers Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL, 2010). As a matter of fact, in the March 2009 English Commission of the Ministry of National Education General Directorate of Teacher Training and Education II. The Term Report states that the studies conducted by the National Teacher Education Accreditation Council (NCATE, 2010) and the Association of Teachers Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL, 2010) in the creation were examined to standardize the qualifications.

In the study conducted by TESOL (2010), the fields consisting of language, culture, teaching, evaluation, and professionalism and the relationship between them are shown in Figure 1 below:

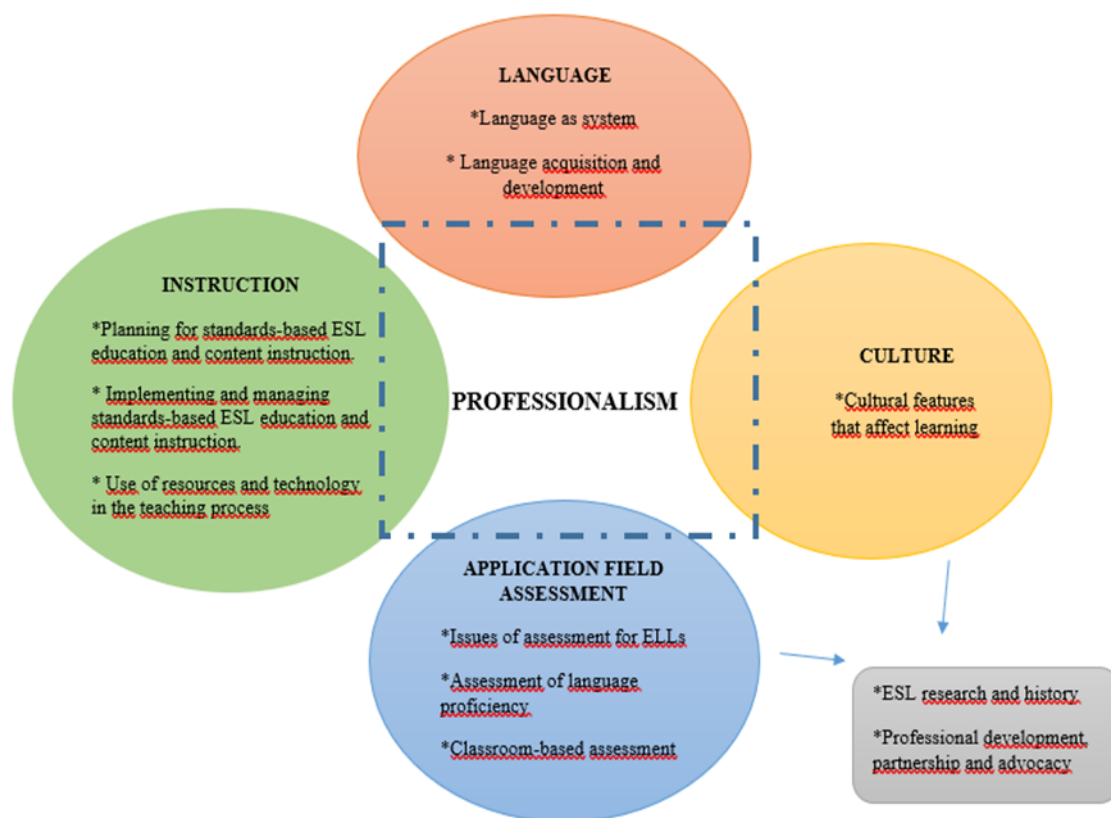


Figure 1. English teacher qualifications

Source: TESOL International Association, 2010, p.5.

When Figure 1 is examined, it is seen that qualifications are handled in two categories as basic areas and application areas. The core areas are language and culture, while the application areas include teaching and assessment. At the same time, the basic fields of language and culture include the dimension of knowledge related to these fields, teaching, and evaluation, which are the fields of application, including the dimension of skill and knowledge. While the language dimension covers English as a system and the knowledge of language acquisition and development, the culture dimension consists of the knowledge of the cultural characteristics that affect the students' learning. The teaching dimension includes the planning of English teaching, the operation of the teaching process, and the competencies for using materials and resources. On the other hand, the assessment dimension consists of assessing and evaluating the student's achievements.

TESOL chose to deviate from the typical revision procedure, in which standards are assessed, then justified, amended, or (sometimes) removed due to the nature of

extraordinary alterations. On the other hand, TESOL chose a more thorough and holistic approach, completely revamping the standards in 2018 based on the original five domains. TESOL handled this mission by gathering a panel of strategically chosen experts from various fields. These leaders firmly rooted their conclusions about the new standards in current research and theory, reports about students' needs in the contemporary educational atmosphere, and personal inquiry and wisdom gained through their teaching practice and research. Even though a different organic process produced the new standards, the 2018 and 2010 standards share significant commonalities. This is a monument to TESOL's unwavering fundamental beliefs, and the rock-solid foundation built on those original standards.

Although the basic categories of knowledge remain consistent, there are some significant differences between the 2010 and 2018 editions of the standards. All five standards cover the same content in broad strokes but with significant changes in accuracy and detail and are updated based on current research in the disciplines of TESOL and second language acquisition. The most noticeable distinction between the two sets of standards is in their relative 'structure and degree of specificity' (TESOL, 2019, p.4). The 2018 Standards are more simplified, with 4–5 components for each standard instead of the range of 3–8 performance indicators per domain or sub-domain in the 2010 edition, as per CAEP requirements. Since the 2018 Standards are less prescriptive about how teachers should proceed, they outline general knowledge and applications and assume that candidates are well-prepared professionals.

This contrast is particularly evident in Standard 3, which in the 2010 version had a total of 17 performance indicators, each relating to particular components that candidates should incorporate in planning and instruction, the four language domains. This standard's 2018 revision contains only five components, each of which refers to candidates' overall understanding of the subject and relies on the candidate to be sensitive to the learning requirements of individual pupils.

Another distinction between the two versions of the standards is an emphasis on the 2018 standards on candidates' knowledge of and application of personalized solutions for students and their families. Candidates are expected to adjust their education to the needs of the students in their classes rather than applying all of the approaches indicated as effective for ELLs. Teachers are expected to get a thorough grasp of their students'

backgrounds and personality characteristics, language learning procedures, and academic skills and results in the revised version.

Finally, the 2018 Standards, particularly Standard 1, reflect current research findings. The current edition of the standards reflects an increasing realization in the area that language acquisition is a communicative and academic procedure originating from various human encounters rather than piecing together the structures and components of a specific language. As a result, the 2018 Standards emphasize the positive features of language learning while keeping the 2010 emphasis on context and discourse.

One of the studies to standardize English teacher field-specific competencies was prepared by the United States National Board of Professional Teaching Standards in 2010 (NBPTS, 2010). One of the studies to standardize English teachers' field-specific competencies was prepared by the United States National Board of Professional Teaching Standards in 2010 (NBPTS, 2010). This study determined nine standards for English teachers aged 3-18. Since there are standards for teaching English as a mother tongue, it is one of the standard frameworks used by other countries in proficiency studies. These standards are expressed as:

1. Knowledge of Learners
2. Knowledge of culture and differences
3. Home, School, and Community Ties
4. Knowledge of the English Language
5. Knowledge of English Language Acquisition
6. Teaching Practices
7. Assessment
8. The Learning Teacher
9. Professional Leadership and Advocacy.

In countries where English is taught as a foreign language, and teachers learn English as a foreign language, the existing standard studies have been examined while creating competencies by the Ministries of Education, and the competencies regarding the teacher's knowledge of English as a foreign language and the mother tongue and foreign language relationship have been added. For example, China created English teacher competencies in cooperation with the institution that prepared TESOL standards

in 2006 under the 'English as a Foreign Language Project.' In the project, previous standard studies, especially TESOL standards, were examined. In the project, previous standard studies, especially TESOL standards, were examined. In addition, English Education Program Standards prepared by the Chinese Ministry of Education in 2003 were also used. In this study, it has been prepared in a way to include the competencies of English teachers regarding English knowledge, such as 'learners' knowledge,' evaluation of behaviours, planning, communication and reflection on teaching, and knowledge of languages (main and target language), language learning, gaining critical thinking, discovering and applying the culture, evaluating learning and teaching, communicating outside the classroom, developing professional horizons (TESOL, 2006). It is possible to say that this competency area seeks to answer the question 'How much do English teachers who learn English as a foreign language know?'. Likewise, teacher qualifications for knowledge of English as a foreign language were added to the study conducted by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Ecuador, which is one of the countries where English is taught as a foreign language, and they prepared a competency study by benefiting from TESOL standards.

The process of developing standards in Ecuador was divided into two stages. The first phase involved working with the Ministry of Education to develop and revise criteria for in-service English teachers. The goal was to improve the teachers' teaching abilities as well as their language skills. The universities are in the second phase, which is still ongoing. They have embraced the MOE's in-service standards and aligned them with courses with common content, major assignments, and assessments to establish conformity.

Ecuador has made strides toward uniformity across the country, both in terms of how new teachers are prepared and how experienced teachers are given professional development to improve their English skills and teaching approaches.

The MOE has finalized and is implementing its standards, and institutions have adopted and are updating their programs to ensure that common courses, standards, and assessments are available.

Table 4.

English Teacher English as a Foreign Language and Language Acquisition Competencies

1. Language: Knows and uses the basic theories and research on language acquisition and structure for learners' language development.

1. a. Language Structure of English and Communication:

The teacher knows the language as a system.

1.a.1. He sees parts of the language such as phonetics, morphology, phraseology, pragmatics, and semantics as complementary.

1.a.2. It uses components of language (phonetics, morphology, phraseology, pragmatics, and semantics) to help learners improve their English speaking, writing, and reading skills.

1.a.3. Knows English rhetoric and discourse structures.

1.b. Language Acquisition and Development:

Knows and applies theory and research on language acquisition and development for learners to learn a foreign language and foreign-language literacy and to be successful in the field.

1.b.1. Knows the theories and current research on language acquisition.

1.b.2. Knows the theories and research on developing literacy in the mother tongue and the difference in the foreign language.

1.b.3. Knows the importance of the learners' mother tongue to benefit from teaching a foreign language.

1.b.4. Knows and applies socio-cultural, psychological, and political variables.

1.b.5. Knows and applies the role of individual learning styles in the English learning process.

Source: Ministerio de Educación de Ecuador, 2012, p.4-7

As can be seen in Table 4, the teacher is expected to have knowledge and skills of the language structure of English as a foreign language, theory, and practice related to language acquisition and development. Various standardized tests are used to measure the knowledge mentioned above in the language proficiency of English teachers learning English as a foreign language.

It is also possible to see the competencies created for all foreign language teachers in the literature. One of them is the American Institute for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (2002), which prepared the foreign language teacher competencies. It is seen that these standards are created with the thought that teachers have learned the target language they will teach as a foreign language. Because, unlike TESOL standards, it also includes standards for teachers' proficiency in the language. The six main standard titles

mentioned are expressed as follows in Table 5:

1. Language, Linguistics and Comparisons
2. Cultures, Literature, Cross-Disciplinary Concepts
3. Language Acquisition Theories and Instructional Practices
4. Integration of Standards into Curriculum and Instruction
5. Assessment of Languages and Cultures
6. Professionalism

Table 5.

Foreign Language Teacher Standards

Standards	Sub-Standards
<i>1. Language, Linguistics, Comparisons</i>	1. a. Demonstrating language proficiency 1. b. Understanding linguistics 1. c. Identifying language comparisons
<i>2. Cultures, Literatures, Cross-Disciplinary Concepts</i>	2. a. Demonstrating cultural understandings 2. b. Demonstrating understanding of literary and cultural texts and traditions 2. c. Integrating other disciplines
<i>3. Language Acquisition Theories and Instructional Practices</i>	3. a. Understanding language acquisition and creating a supportive learning environment 3.b. Developing instructional practices that reflect language outcomes and learner diversity
<i>4. Integration of the standards into Curriculum and Instruction</i>	4.a. Understanding and integrating student standards in planning 4. b. Integrating student standards for learners in instruction 4. c. Selecting and designing instructional materials
<i>5. Assessment of Languages and Cultures</i>	5 a. Knowing the assessment techniques and using them appropriately 5. b. Reflecting on assessment 5. c. Reporting assessment results
<i>6. Professionalism</i>	6.a. Engaging in professional development 6. b. Knowing the value of foreign language learning

Source: American Council on The Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2002, p.3-4

When Table 5 is examined, it is seen that the six main standards determined include sub-standards within themselves. The language structure prepared by TESOL includes competencies related to the culture and literature of the target language in addition to language acquisition and development competencies. In addition, studies on

the proficiency levels of students and teachers in listening, speaking, writing, and reading in a foreign language were also conducted, and it was prepared in parallel with the teacher standards study (ACTFL, 2012).

When examining the field-specific competencies (TESOL, NBPTS, and ACTFL) created for teachers in countries where English is taught as a foreign language, one can see other notable competencies related to the mother tongue and target language culture. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and the European Portfolio for Foreign Language Teachers, created within the framework of the Socrates Project, in which Türkiye has been involved since 2000, aims to create cultural diversity and provide standards in foreign language teaching. (Mirici, 2015). When the competencies included in the portfolio prepared for foreign language teacher candidates to evaluate themselves are examined, it is possible to see that cultural teaching is also among the language dimensions that should be acquired (Table 6).

Table 6.

ELP Competencies

	Self-Assessment
Context	Lesson Planning
Program	Identification of learning objectives
Aims and needs	Lesson content
Role of the language teacher	Organisation
Institution resources and limitations	
Methodology	Conducting a lesson
Speaking/spoken interaction	Using lesson plans
Writing/written interaction	Content
Listening	Interaction with learners
Reading	Classroom management
Grammar	Classroom language
Vocabulary	
Culture	Assessment of Learning
Independent Learning	Designing assessment tools
Learner Autonomy	Evaluation
Homework	Self and peer assessment
Projects	Language performance
Portfolios	Culture
Virtual learning environments	Error analysis
Extra-curricular activities	Resources

Source: Newby, Allan, Fenner, Jones, Komorowska & Soghikyan, 2007, p.6

As can be seen, the competency framework prepared for foreign language teacher candidates consists of a total of six competency areas: lesson planning, context, methodology, conducting the lesson, independent learning, and assessment of learning. The social context and the learning-teaching environment that affect the decisions about the teaching process constitute the 'context' category. Therefore, the curricula, an essential part of the teaching process, are included in the context of competencies related to the school's possibilities and limitations and the community and learner needs. The teachers' roles for the context in which they are located constitute another competency of the context category. The teachers are associated with bonds targeted for the course content and organisation of education to make, as a 'lesson plan'. Methodical competencies include knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to teaching reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar, vocabulary, and target culture, which are the elements of language. Another step is to carry out the lesson plan prepared by the teacher, maintain the activities fluently and consistently, strengthen communication, provide classroom management, and 'conduct the lesson,' which includes competencies related to the use of mother tongue and foreign language.

Another critical point that draws attention in this context is the emphasis on learner autonomy, autonomous learning, and cooperative learning, emphasising creating activities considering these. The final competency is the assessment of learning. It includes the preparation of measurement tools to determine whether the objectives determined while making the lesson plan are realised, the measurement of language skills and culture and knowledge, the use of different measurement and evaluation techniques, and the competencies regarding error analysis.

Similarly, Demirel (1989) classified English language teachers' field-specific competencies in three dimensions: content knowledge competencies, professional competencies, and cultural knowledge competencies. Content knowledge competencies cover the teacher's competencies in English grammar, linguistics, literature, and the four dimensions of language. Professional competencies include oral teaching, teaching new structures, using exercises, teaching vocabulary and reading, teaching writing, measurement and evaluation, and planning teaching activities. Cultural knowledge competencies consist of competencies related to the culture of the teachers and the target language.

The field-specific competencies of English teachers determined in the international literature are discussed in six dimensions. These dimensions cover learner and cultural knowledge as a framework, knowledge of English as a foreign language and language acquisition, the learning-teaching process, assessment and evaluation, cooperation with stakeholders, professional development, and professional leadership competencies. When we look at the studies in Türkiye regarding the general competencies of the teaching profession and the field-specific competencies of English teachers, we can see that the Council of Higher Education and Turkish MONE have important initiatives in this regard. Therefore, revealing the studies conducted by these two institutions may be necessary to determine the expected competencies of English teachers in Türkiye. Since the Council of Higher Education carried out the first example of competency studies, firstly, the competencies determined by this institution were included, and then the more up-to-date competencies have been set by the Ministry of National Education.

2.7. Areas of Using Teacher Competencies

Teachers' and schools' responsibilities are evolving, and their expectations change: teachers are required to teach in multicultural classrooms, involve students with special needs, use ICT for a successful education, participate in assessment and accountability procedures, and include parents in schools (OECD, 2009). Teachers must also help students acquire 'the skills that are easier to teach and easier to test' (Caena, 2013, p.7), but most importantly, ways of thinking (creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making process, and learning), working practices (communications and co-operation), working tools and skills related to citizenship and lifelong learning (OECD, 2011). The variety and complexity of the skills necessary to teach in the 21st century are so large that it is improbable that someone would have them all or develop them all the same. Therefore, attention should also be placed on the skills or qualities of an education system or a teaching staff.

Thus, teaching skills are complex mixtures of information, abilities, comprehension, values, and attitudes that lead to successful situational action. Because teaching is much more than a duty and incorporates educational and societal ideals or assumptions, the concept of teachers' competencies may resonate differently in different national contexts. Ministers have agreed that, at a minimum, teachers should have a specialised knowledge of the subject(s) they teach, as well as the necessary pedagogical

experience in teaching them, such as teaching heterogeneous classes, making integration of internet and computer technologies, and assisting students in acquiring diagonal core competencies.

From the viewpoint of Turkish MONE, the document ‘General Competencies for the Teaching Profession’ serves as a foundational text to be considered when teachers assess their current level of competencies and performance gaps when creating educational programs for teacher candidates at higher education institutions and when recruiting teachers into the profession and planning their internship experiences and providing professional development for teachers to foster their continuing professional development (MONE, 2017). Along with serving as a primary reference point for all key teacher training and development actors, the competencies form the basis for coordination between the processes and regulations of the Higher Education Council, other associated public institutions and organisations, labour unions, and various non-governmental organisations. When multiple parties collaborate to base their teacher training and development practices on the competencies, a minimal standard may be established, resulting in a comprehensive and consistent framework. The areas in which the General Competencies for Teaching Profession will be applied in teacher development and training procedures are depicted in Figure 2.

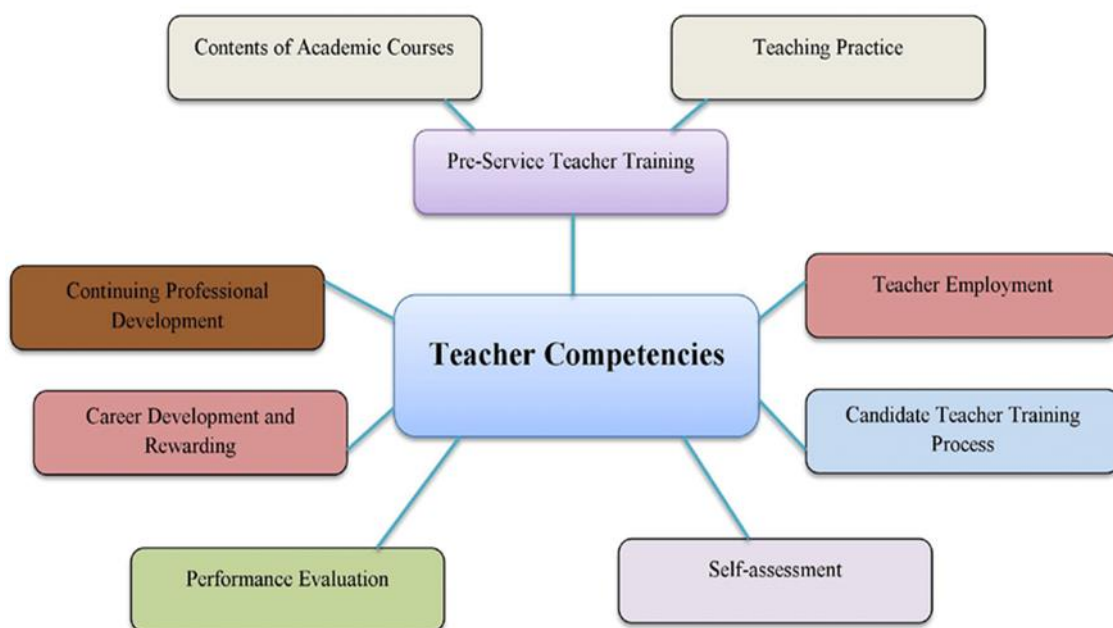


Figure 2. Areas of using the teacher competencies

Source: MONE, 2017

To start with the effect of teacher competencies on pre-service teacher training, one can suggest that the quality of education delivered in schools is directly related to teacher competency development. Without skilled instructors, it is impossible to improve school achievement and students' personal growth and success. As a result, it is fundamental to set specific criteria for teacher education to ensure that teachers possess the desired characteristics. Thus, studying teacher skills is critical and necessary in establishing these standards. For instance, Seferoğlu (2004) examined pre-service teachers' perceptions concerning teacher competencies in a study with senior year students at the Department of Computer Education and Instructional Technologies. The scale established by Mahiroğlu (2004) was utilized in this study, in which respondents rated themselves as weak, moderate, good, or outstanding concerning the chosen competencies. The findings indicated that participants assessed themselves as having a moderate or good grasp of most of the competencies.

On the other hand, the determination of compulsory and elective classes, as well as their components in university programs for pre-service teacher training, the design of lesson materials, the organization of learning environments, the process of guaranteeing collaboration between education faculties and schools, and the planning of teacher training processes are all guided by teaching profession competencies. Thus, students studying in faculties and departments may be supplied with information, skills, attitudes, and values specified within the competencies framework. Improving teacher competencies can result in an overall increase in quality. Sharply et al. (1997) argue that the key competencies serve as helpful organizational tools and strategies for articulating achievement. They are utilized in the prescribed format that supervisors fill out at the end of the teaching practice, and they are used to determine degrees of development in this context. Seeing performance from key competencies' perspective also helps focus on any subsequent discussions between academic staff and pre-service teachers.

Another area in which teacher competencies are examined is the hiring, candidacy, and training of teachers. To ensure that graduates of teaching-related departments are hired as teachers by the Ministry of National Education, several exams such as the Public Personnel Selection Examination, the Subject Content and Pedagogical Content Knowledge Test, and oral examinations are held. Restructuring these tests to measure the knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and values necessary for the teaching profession would hire the most capable teachers among university graduates. Candidacy

and training processes, another step in admitting teachers into the profession, can be structured around the competencies, ensuring that prospective teachers are prepared for the profession.

Self-evaluation is the action or practice of evaluating oneself. Self-evaluation is not a routine professional act; it is a process that involves both a high degree of personal and professional accountability and a deliberate and competent capacity for self-evaluation. Self-evaluation helps instructors to be critical of their professional selves and current practices. It should also assist teachers in setting personal goals, developing an action plan, and following through on them. It is difficult to conduct a thorough and accurate self-evaluation without comparing standards, much more so in professions such as teaching that demand multidimensional and diversified abilities.

The competencies serve as a guide for teachers, outlining their expectations. Teachers can track their development by assessing themselves against a set of competencies. Additionally, a teacher might see other colleagues demonstrating their abilities and ascertain his/her strengths and areas for improvement. Thus, instructors will align their personal and professional development plans with their desired outcomes and form collaborative relationships with their colleagues. Pantic and Wubbels (2010) surveyed Serbia to ascertain the relevance of competencies in teacher education. They gathered responses from 370 teachers and teacher educators. Their respondents identified four competency dimensions: 1) values and child-rearing, 2) understanding and contributing to the growth of the educational system, 3) subject knowledge, pedagogy, and curriculum, and 4) self-assessment and professional development. The surveys revealed that the competency “teacher engagement in the development of the national education system” received the lowest score, while “teacher identity and professional growth” received the highest.

Furthermore, Kararmaz and Aslan (2014) studied primary school English teachers’ perceptions of field-specific competencies. In this study, the data were gathered with the help of a scale of English teachers’ proficiency. The study sample consisted of 195 English teachers working at state and private schools in the city centre and the towns of Zonguldak. According to seniority and taking an in-service course, no significant difference was found in any competencies. According to gender, in the Development of Language Skills and Cooperation with the School, Family, and Society competency areas, in favour of female teachers; according to university graduation, in the Monitoring and

Evaluation of Language Development competency area, in favour of the graduates of educational faculty; and according to the school they are working in, in the development of language skills competency area, in favour of private school teachers, significant differences were found. Based on the results of the study, some recommendations were made.

Performance evaluation is another critical component of human resource management. Performance evaluation is used to determine a person's, institution's, or group's efficacy and level of success. Performance evaluation gives insight into the extent to which employees adhere to defined requirements. This evaluation is critical for employee growth and training, evaluating training programs and policies, and choosing and rewarding personnel. The Ministry of National Education conducts performance assessments to ascertain teachers' (including candidates') efforts, efficacy, and success in carrying out their responsibilities. More precisely, performance assessment seeks to discover teachers' level of knowledge and abilities, and therefore their training requirements, to take appropriate steps and assure awards. Then, a performance improvement system based on precise and realistic criteria is required.

Performance criteria developed based on competencies will allow for a complete and objective evaluation of instructors' performances. Consideration of instructors who do well in terms of competencies in terms of rewards and promotions to higher career stages will contribute significantly to developing a truthful, equitable, and just system.

Teachers and their work benefit significantly from appraisal and feedback. According to OECD research on teaching assessment and feedback and its effects on schools and teachers, teachers indicate that it enhances their work satisfaction and, to a lesser extent, their job security and considerably increases their growth as instructors (OECD, 2009). Lee and Tan (2010) mention that Singapore places a high premium on teacher development, having conceptualized and implemented the Enhanced Performance Management System (EPMS) in 2005. EPMS is a component of the career and promotion system established by the "Education Service Professional Development and Career Plan" (Edu-Pac) to ensure that teachers maximize their potential. The EPMS (Ministry of Education, 2005) is two-fold: (i) it is competency-based and identifies the knowledge, skills, and professional characteristics required for success in each track, thereby providing guidelines regarding the expectations and behaviours needed for

success in each track; and (ii) it is developmental, promoting teacher progress and performance.

Lastly, the teaching profession's competencies may serve as a valuable guide in developing and implementing in-service training programs. Teachers' professional development requirements may be identified realistically through self-assessments and performance evaluations within the competencies framework, and different policies can be established to meet these needs. As the primary concern of this dissertation, competencies play a critical role while designing professional development programs to reach the desired level of success.

Along with determining the current state of Turkish teachers' competencies, it is critical to discover how teachers excel and the areas that require help and development. In this framework, the Ministry may arrange training programs, and each teacher can get professional development assistance tailored to his or her specific requirements.

2.8. The Importance of Competencies in Teacher Effectiveness

Researchers have sought to identify what attributes a qualified language teacher should have to maximise learning since the late 1990s when teacher competencies were recognised. Classifications and qualifications for competent teachers have been developed based on concepts of teacher competencies. Thus, competence is synonymous with quality professional success, and there is a strong correlation between a teacher's professional competence and student performance in education.

The term competency refers to 'a combination of attributes underlying some aspect of successful professional performance' (Gonczi et al., 1990, p.9). Competency standards are based on teachers' professional principles and concern implementing professional experience and expertise in the workplace. Every competency criterion is a declaration of a teacher's level of competence in that dimension. Concepts such as performance and achievement are associated when thinking about competencies because competency is directly linked with efficient implementation in complex situations and is thought to serve as a contributing factor to success since 'competent performance presumes competence' (Westera, 2001)

Teacher efficacy is determined by how well a teacher performs in the classroom. It is also significantly related to the teacher's competence. Many variables influence teaching performance, including the teacher's professional competence, subject matter

knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, teaching and learning, curriculum knowledge, teaching experience, and certificate status (Shulman, 1986, Grossman, 1995, Westera, 2001). According to Varvel (2013, p.2), a competent teacher is 'one who effectively and efficiently accomplishes a task in a given context using appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes, and abilities that have adjusted and developed with time and needs.' Moreover, Arshad (2007) puts forward that a qualified instructor is one who has in-depth subject knowledge, efficient verbal and nonverbal communication skills, completes work on time, takes the initiative, makes reasonable choices, adjusts in any case, believe in learning, and has a constructive attitude toward students, colleagues, parents, and administration. The literature also emphasises the value of a quality instructor with well-developed subject knowledge, pedagogical material awareness, and curriculum knowledge to student success. Miguel and Barsaga (1997, p.120) reported factors influencing student success, analysing an instructor, student, parents, and neighbourhood variables. They concluded that the teacher was an enormous influence on student achievement. As a result, it can be argued that the quality of teachers relatively determines the quality of education and that training is critical to improving the quality of education in schools.

There seems to be a clear connection between teacher competencies and successful teaching. According to Wade and Moor (1992), teachers need pedagogical skills and preparation to establish themselves as adept teachers who are trusted in their abilities and trust in the capacity of their students. Powell (1992) and Hollingsworth (1989) discovered in their studies that content knowledge and the capacity to communicate shape the basis of effective teaching in the eyes of pre-service students. Liu and Meng (2009) investigated teacher views in China compared to those in the United States, taking the topic a step further by seeking to internationalise their research. They discovered that students, teachers, and parents preferred teaching ethics, professional skills, professional development, and student academic achievement. These studies underline the results of an essential link between the teacher's professional skills, interest in professional development, and perception of an effective teacher.

The views of practising and prospective teachers on teacher competencies are explored in the literature, and primarily studies on teachers who are currently working draw attention. To exemplify, Brosh (1996) researched with language teachers and students to examine the perceived features of a successful language teacher. According

to the findings, effective teachers should have a) adequate command of the subject matter, mastery of four basic language skills and understanding, b) the ability to transmit information quickly and memorably, c) behaving students, and equally, d) the ability to organise, explain, and clarify; and the ability to maintain motivation and engagement for teaching. It is known that that teachers' subject matter knowledge significantly impacts student achievement. It boosts teachers' trust and helps students respect them more. Less experienced teachers cannot meet the demands of their students' learning, making them ineffective in their field.

Similarly, in terms of content knowledge, comparable findings were observed in the research by Yüksel (2014), who sought to discover pre-service English language teachers' perceived teaching competencies in her study of 40 pre-service EFL teachers. According to the results, participants had the highest level of competence in content knowledge and the lowest level of competence in classroom management. It can be concluded that an in-depth experience of the subject matter that teachers can teach allows them to use different methodologies that are best suited to implement it. They are secure in their choice of teaching methods and skills that are better for students' comprehension because they comprehensively understand the material. Some students need detailed clarification on any subject, which is only possible if the teacher knows about it. The teacher's experience and up-to-date awareness of content have a significant positive impact on the teaching-learning environment. It enables students to read, exercise, and apply knowledge and skills daily.

In addition to content knowledge, it is another critical competency that a teacher equips this knowledge with pedagogical skills and presents it in a form suitable for the target audience. Moradi & Sabeti (2014) performed an analysis to identify and compare EFL teachers' (N= 34) and students' (N=122) understandings of highly successful teaching. According to the findings, both teachers and students valued pedagogical knowledge over teaching experience. Another research result was that students agreed more than teachers did on the significance of holistic teachers, relating their teaching to learners' lives, interests, objectives, and preferences, responding to their English proficiency levels, and being equal to learners. Likewise, Malikow (2006) examined college students' (N=361) impressions of highly successful teachers and discovered that the most frequently quoted personal qualities were challenging/having relatively high

expectations, a good sense of humour, enthusiasm, innovation, compassion, explaining complex material well, and having flexible teaching style.

Moreover, Aydoğdu (2007) investigated foreign language teachers' evaluations of foreign language teaching competencies in one of the initial studies of Türkiye. 150 K-12 English language teachers took part in the study. The results showed that teachers believe they are qualified, but there are considerable variations in experience and workplace. Furthermore, experienced primary school teachers preferred structural instruction, while private school teachers had more flexibility in their educational instruction. In their study "Characteristics of Effective English Teachers Perceived by High School Teachers and Students in Korea," Park and Lee (2006) investigated the characteristics of effective English teachers perceived by 169 teachers and 339 high school students in Korea using a self-report questionnaire consisting of three categories: English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective knowledge.

Broadly speaking, teachers' perceptions differed significantly from students' perceptions in all three grades. Teachers rated English proficiency higher than students, while students ranked pedagogical experience higher. These results show us that presenting knowledge most efficiently, considering the interests and needs of the student, is one of the determining factors in teacher effectiveness. In other words, how you present yourself is relatively more important than what you offer.

The research conducted by Babai and Sadeghi has a similar aim to the above studies (2009). They included 215 English students from K12 to tertiary education in Iran and 59 English language teachers. According to the findings of their report, teachers prefer more assignments and include students in more group-work tasks. They place higher importance on high language skills and good pedagogical experience, while students place a higher value on the teacher's personality.

According to some other surveys, teacher effectiveness can be more than just student test results and a set of criteria that principals use for walk-throughs. King and Watson (2010) found that 'accomplished teaching is an art and a science, requiring commitment, persistence, consistency, creativity, support, as well as an effective and collective effort' (p. 177). Additionally, Schalock et al. (1993) suggest that successful teaching requires a complex relationship between information, pedagogical approaches, learner attributes, and the environments in which learning happens. Additional findings agree that teacher success is more than just student test scores. Dweck (1999) states that

‘accomplished teachers believe in the growth of the intellect and talent (their students’ and their own) and they are fascinated with the process of learning’ (p. 83). This situation indicates that a particular approach is necessary for a successful instructor. On this issue, Lehman (2012) added that children feel the investment by teachers and grow to be deserving of the teacher’s confidence in them, and the most crucial education happens when a teacher nurtures a child’s spirit and soul. As it can be understood, for a teacher to be effective, it is also essential to strengthen the spirit and emotional world of the students as well.

Teachers are supposed to facilitate student success through innovative teaching methods. However, implementing creative teaching and learning is a difficult task. Teachers must constantly diversify their knowledge base, thought processes, and assessment structures to be creative in their teaching (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000). Some teachers enthusiastically implement teaching innovations and continue to do so until they are thoroughly incorporated into their teaching activities (Jeffrey & Craft, 2006). Others never try new teaching techniques and methods or stick to their old teaching practice after a few tries (Abrami et al., 2004). For that reason, in their study, Zhu & Wang (2014) looked at teacher effectiveness from a different viewpoint. Their study seeks to identify the core competencies and characteristics of innovative teaching experienced by Chinese secondary school teachers. According to the findings, they established 17 factors underlying four key competencies deemed essential for creative teaching. These were learning competency, social competency, educational competency, and technological competency. Second, they developed an instrument to verify the established core competencies and characteristics and assess teachers’ perceptions of the relevance of the key competencies and features for innovative teaching.

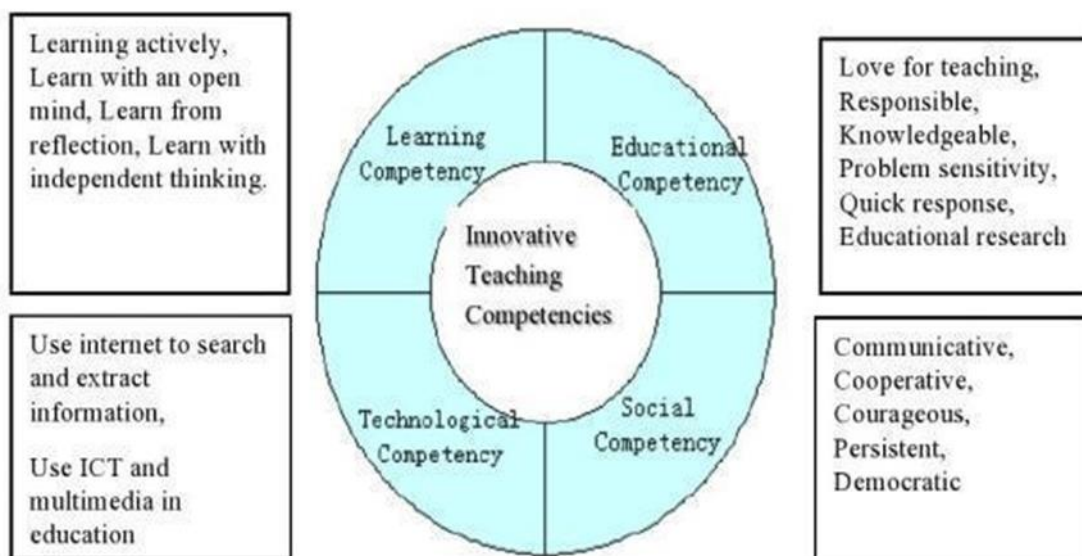


Figure 3. The framework of core competencies and characteristics for innovative teaching
Source: Zhu and Wang, 2014, p.304

This figure offers a broader structure for researching and comprehending teacher competencies for creative instruction. The competency model can be helpful for both teacher certification and professional development programs because it provides an additional structure and perspective.

There is substantial evidence that teachers' competency, job motivation, and professional success are associated. The professional performance of EFL teachers is an influential and significant factor affecting EFL students' achievement and results. Examining the impact of education and training on teacher competencies Krupchenko, Inozemtzeva, and Prilipko (2015) and Coburn (2016) researched in-service teachers. Krupchenko et al. (2015) surveyed 164 Language for Professional Purposes (LPP) teachers from 10 Russian universities to identify the professional development of foreign language tertiary teachers. The results revealed that 1) teachers were unable to step outside their comfort zones, providing LPP knowledge traditionally rather than assisting their students in developing professionally; and 2) they prioritised linguistic accuracy over the completion of communicative activities. Krupchenko et al. (2015) suggest that it is possible to hypothesise that giving teachers the chance to learn more about current methods of subject-language integration against the backdrop of competency-based

education and apply what they learn via practice would improve their competency in this area.

Coburn (2016) conducted a study with 33 English language teachers who had no prior EFL education to explore professional development in English through a nationwide in-service EFL teacher education course. According to the results, 1) there was an increase in EFL teacher competence and use of English in class; 2) there was less reliance on textbooks; 3) there was more support for student activity; 4) trust in oral English proficiency, and 5) there was an increase in knowledge of more profound interpretations of curriculum aims. Teachers, on the other hand, continued to struggle with teaching pronunciation goals. In short, it can be argued that EFL teachers who are competent in performing the process of EFL teaching seem to show a high degree of job commitment, which leads to a high level of professional success.

2.9. What is Continuous Professional Development?

Over the last few years, there have been numerous improvements in education involving teacher professional development. Teachers are undeniably crucial in these reforms and play the most critical role in education. According to Villegas-Reimers (2003), teachers are both the subject and the target of change, and they are not the only variables in these reforms. Furthermore, Garet (2001, p.74) emphasises the importance of teachers' professional development due to educational efforts. To this end, the development of teacher professions, which influence teacher knowledge and practices (Borko, 2004; Guskey, 2000), is seen as means by which teacher retention can be strengthened and engagement of teachers promoted (Gaikhorst, Beishuisen, Zijlstra & Volman, 2015,) and student achievement has been improved (Putnam & Borko, 2000).

There are various professional development definitions. Day (1999, p.4) provides a detailed explanation of professional development:

‘Professional development consists of all-natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute through these to the quality of education in the classroom.’

Desimone et al. (2002) further argue that professional development is an essential process for strengthening teachers' content knowledge and enhancing their instructional practices. More particularly, professional development relates to the teachers' experience

and their formal and informal experiences arising from their professional growth (Glatthorn, 1995). Professional development can therefore be a summary of a teacher's all professional experiences.

Regarding teacher education, the literature has recognised two broad goals: training and development. Teacher training refers to activities created and conducted with short-term and immediate purposes in mind, such as providing teachers with updates on new methods and techniques in teaching or familiarising them with teaching concepts and vocabulary. Experts usually decide about training. As a result, the training is typically planned from the top down. On the other hand, development entails increasing teachers' knowledge and abilities so that they can make an informed choice about their teaching practices with a specific set of students within a particular location. (Freeman, 1989). As Richards and Farrell (2005) put forward, development 'serves a longer-term goal and seeks to facilitate the growth of teachers' understanding of teaching and themselves as teachers' (p. 4). Considering everything, it is possible to suggest that the assumption underlying all of these initiatives is that by implementing a purposeful learning process created to fulfil specific learning goals, professional development can lead to the desired change in participants' beliefs, understanding skills, or attitudes.

Several critical elements of effective teacher professional development, based on contemporary teacher professional development methods, have been identified in the literature. First, they emphasise the necessity of authentic teacher learning communities, in which teachers work together and participate in cooperative and reflective learning processes (Darling-Hammond, Hyler & Gardner, 2017). Teacher learning can be encouraged and facilitated based on changes in local educational communities of teachers (Wells, 2014). Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009) state that active, continuous teacher learning communities are favourable to professional progress. As a result, providing opportunities for collaboration with peers working toward mutually established objectives, goals, and requirements.

Another important characteristic of good professional growth is practice-oriented reflective practice. There is a considerable demand for contextualising teacher learning in realistic circumstances so that professional development opportunities can have a more significant impact on teachers' practices (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2000). The contents and organisation of professional development should be integrated into teachers' classroom practices (Hung & Yeh, 2013), and teacher learning should be situated in

authentic situations directly related to teachers' practices, thus bridging the theory-practice divide. In other words, a teacher's classroom is the focal point of good professional development. As part of the professional development process, new techniques are implemented and reflected upon by colleagues.

The primary purpose of professional development programs is to improve educational programs and standards and ensure positive school student results. Direct benefits of professional development on student success are unavoidable, and most studies reflect that "the more professional knowledge teachers have, the greater levels of student achievement" (Villegas-Reimers, 2003, p.21). This is not surprising given that all professional development programs and activities aim to improve teachers' pedagogical information and insights, which is critical for student learning. According to Alexander, Heaviside, and Farris (1999), when teachers are given enough opportunities for high-quality professional development to strengthen their teaching and meet definite standards, their classroom instruction changes. On the other hand, Harwell (2003) argues that all educational changes should seek to increase student achievement and to reach this goal, the role of instructors in improving students' performance should be considered. Students will perform better as a result of improved and enhanced teaching skills.

Teachers' professional development is also critical for the organisations and institutions in which they work. Every administrator understands that as time passes and the responsibilities of instructors and students evolve, so make the demands. Teachers must maintain themselves up-to-date through various PD activities to satisfy these needs (Retallick & Groundwater-Smith, 1999); schools require better-qualified teachers for ongoing development. Joyce (1991) felt that teachers would be driven to gather and evaluate data on their students and their environments via professional development, resulting in school improvement. He also stated that the school's quality would increase if the staff were allowed to grow professionally.

Overall, education is a complicated system with many interconnected components whose proper operation ensures its success and prosperity. Teachers, and their characteristics, such as personality, conduct, and teaching efficacy, are undeniably among the variables that have significant direct and indirect effects on all other aspects of the educational system. Continuing professional development significantly contributes to creating this multi-dimensional teaching repertory and familiarising in-service teachers with the latest classroom setting and its variations. With the help of a deliberate, ongoing,

and lifetime process, teachers attempt to enhance their personal and professional skills and their knowledge, abilities, and practice, resulting in their empowerment, together with the growth of their organisation and their students.

2.10. In-Service Teacher Training

In a changing social order, a teacher's job constantly evolves in addition to their competencies. This indicates that four years of education may not be enough to qualify a teacher for a lifetime job, as things begin to change the moment they go onto the stage. To put it another way, a teacher may confront various challenges from the minute they start teaching. Teachers may need to develop new expertise to stay up with the rapidly changing knowledge base and be prepared to apply it to consistently improve their conceptual and craft skills (Guskey & Huberman, 1997 as cited in Kim, 2008:2). Furthermore, teachers may face new challenges after a certain period of experience, even if they are content with teaching after an extended stay because they are far removed from recently developed ideas in their educational contexts. Teachers require numerous chances and means to learn new approaches to stay professionally updated. In this regard, teachers may be expected to apply new skills or knowledge acquired through available in-service programs.

INSET appears to bridge the gap between teachers' professional training needs and their classroom instruction. As a result, definitions of training and INSET are needed right away. According to Laird (1985), training is 'an experience, a discipline, or a regimen which causes people to acquire new, predetermined behaviours' (p.11). That is, training necessitates some alterations in the teacher's behaviour in terms of teaching skills. Harris (1989:18) uses the term INSET as 'any planned activity of learning opportunities afforded staff members of schools, colleges, or other educational agencies for improving the performance of the individual in the assigned position.' Bolam (1982) characterises INSET as 'those education and training activities engaged in by primary and secondary school teachers and principals, following their initial professional certification and intended mainly or exclusively to improve their professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes so that they educate children more effectively' (p.3). Kasule (2003) continues narrowing it down for the case of teachers by specifying it as 'INSET can be tailored to respond to specific problems after a careful needs analysis of the participants' teaching situations including their needs and expectations' (p.8). For the most part, it

refers to on-the-job training following official undergraduate pre-service preparation to assist in new situations, address problems practically, and meet various demands. Thus, no matter what the definition is, it is comprehensible that all forms of teacher development, whether effective or not, have at their core the noble intention of improving student learning (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004, p.1). The ultimate goal and justification for continued professional development have been highlighted as improving student learning.

INSET refers to formal training courses delivered and administered by external partners (specialists and/or teacher educators). INSET focuses on institutional and organisational perceptions of need instead of individual or informal professional development, which focuses on individual needs (Craft, 2000). INSET courses based on limited models are still the most prevalent way of ‘supporting’ educational improvements, and their actual benefits and weaknesses appear to be expected.

Borg (2015) compares and contrasts two in-service teacher education training models: the training-transmission and development-constructivist models. According to Borg (2015), transmission-based training is the most often employed training approach in current in-service teacher education. Policymakers typically plan it as part of a national top-down implementation process, with specialists from outside the school in charge of delivery. This type of INSET training can be short or lengthy (mostly short), inside or outside, and aims to improve educational service quality (Hayes, 1997). According to Rudduck (1981), the benefits of short INSET courses include

1. the opportunity to broaden the range of ideas and techniques available to teachers,
2. offering opportunities for teachers to share professional experiences and become more reflective about their teaching practice, and
3. providing teachers with options to choose from based on their specific interests and needs.

However, what Rudduck (1981) sees as a strength has been critiqued for increasing teachers' reliance on expert knowledge from outside sources. The training information is sometimes referred to as decontextualised, and it is frequently enforced on teachers without encouraging them to comprehend why it is vital to know or perform it (Muijis et al., 2014). Because of the overreliance on gaining declarative or conceptual

knowledge, the role of teachers is neglected as active learners and knowledge constructors.

In contrast to the training-transmission model, the development-constructivist model calls for 'a host of alternative professional development structures that allow for self-directed, collaborative, inquiry-based learning that is directly relevant to teachers' classrooms' (Johnson, 2009, p.25). This means that the role of teachers needs to be considered active learners and knowledge constructors during the training course within the framework of this model. According to Cochran-Smith and Zeichner (2006), teacher education courses focusing on theory and methodology must harmonise with teachers' existing ideas, practices, and identities. It will not suffice for an INSET course to deliver theoretical information to teachers without also assisting them in exploring their previous perceptions of teaching and learning, internalising the input, and constructing their new knowledge based on the interaction of pre-existing views and further information.

Another critical aspect of a development-constructivist paradigm is the importance of the teacher's work environment, which is typically the classroom. Its significant impact on teachers' understanding and perceptions of new knowledge and teaching methods is underappreciated. That is why the mediating role of context has steadily been stressed in teacher education research to overcome the conflict between theory and practice, as socio-cultural theories have been employed to describe the process of teacher learning (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). Meanwhile, teacher education is a social event within itself. The INSET course can be thought of as a community for teachers to learn from one another and share their experiences and knowledge (Snow-Gerono, 2005; Stoll et al., 2006). Darling-Hammond (2013) states that "teaching improves most in collegial settings where common goals are set, the curriculum is jointly developed, and expertise is shared" (p.150).

To equip EFL teachers with the revised curriculum's goals and objectives, as well as constructivist and communicative language teaching principles and techniques, and to provide them with specific skills and knowledge to teach English to young learners, the MoNE held a series of in-service teacher training programs (Kırkgöz, 2008; Mirici, 2006). According to the literature on teacher professional development, in-service training interventions can be effective, particularly when bringing educational reforms and improvements to large numbers of teachers in a brief period (Lieberman & Pointer-Mace, 2008; Çimer et al., 2010). Furthermore, such training has been shown to boost

teachers' confidence and motivation while improving their knowledge and skills in new theories and curriculum content, contributing to their professional development.

The General Directorate of Teacher Training and Development (GDTTD) in Türkiye guarantees teachers' cultivation and professional development. The GDTTD is responsible for developing teachers' in-service training plans and programs to ensure personal and professional development. The GDTTD has prepared a "standard training (activity)" program to increase the performance of in-service training programs. The standard education program consists of four main areas: personal development, teacher training, management and corporate training, and special education (ÖYGM, 2019b). Through standard education programs, in-service teachers try to create a certain level of quality in education. Thus, it is aimed to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of in-service training activities. The English Language Teachers Association in Türkiye (INGED), the British Council (BC), the United States Information Agency (USIA), and Support for the Basic Education Program (SBEP) have been among the national and international organisations that collaborated with MoNE to develop such training courses (Kırkgöz, 2009). Lastly, On December 9th, 2020, in Ankara, the English Together project was officially inaugurated in collaboration with the Ministry of National Education Teacher Training and Development General Directorate, the British Council, and the Sabancı Foundation. The goal is to introduce new teaching methods and create environments where students feel free to speak up and participate actively in the learning process. English language teachers who participate in this state-wide continuous professional development (CPD) program will improve their teaching skills by implementing new communicative language teaching approaches and developing interesting extracurricular resources to utilise in their classrooms.

2.10.1. The Relationship between In-service Teacher Training and Continuous Professional Development

Schools nowadays face ever-increasing issues, and they are needed to help students succeed academically in an increasingly complicated society and quickly changing economies. They require successful learning and skilled teaching to assist individuals in reaching their targeted higher levels. As a result, the responsibilities of schools and the anticipated teacher profiles are shifting in many nations. According to the TALIS report, teachers today are expected to manage classroom diversity, accommodate

the requirements of students from diverse backgrounds, be proficient in using technology, be accountable for planning and evaluation, and work cooperatively with parents (OECD, 2009). Equipping them with subject knowledge and innovative instruction techniques, collaborating with colleagues and modifying the curriculum, and developing strategies for interacting with students might assist them in meeting these diverse expectations.

Teachers in many industrialised nations have been under pressure to enhance the quality of education and improve student results to produce a more competent and educated workforce (Osborn, 2006). According to James and McCormic (2009), today's circumstance creates a problem for teachers and schools, who will have to focus on two things: teaching subject content and assisting students in acquiring the ideas and practices connected with the educational process. As a result, it may be argued that teaching is a profession that necessitates using new trends and information throughout one's career, requiring teachers to engage in ongoing professional development. Teachers may accomplish their professional duties in this way, given the shifting environments in which they work and study (Day, 1999; Sandholtz, 2002).

It is stated that teacher professional development and continuous deepening of knowledge and abilities are critical components of educational systems change and growth (Ainscow, 1994; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001). In doing so, teachers are supposed to empower themselves by staying current on industry developments. They participate in both short- and long-term exercises to enhance their techniques and maintain their knowledge. When we think about short-term activities, we typically think of INSET programs.

Professional development and in-service teacher education appear to be closely interdependent, particularly in the variety of activities that contribute to the professional growth of practising teachers. In-service training is frequently associated with professional development, and the two terms are frequently used interchangeably, despite the likelihood of semantic distinctions. One might argue that INSET is a necessary component of a teacher's professional development since it expands their repertoire of teaching abilities, knowledge, expertise, and teacher qualities. Additionally, in-service training is viewed as a deficit model and is frequently connected with the notion that those in positions of authority should impart knowledge or skills to teachers.

In-service education and training, as defined in the OECD report (1998), relates to the 'identified learning activities in which practising teachers participate' (p. 18). This

type of training aims to enhance and develop teachers' professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competencies in a particular area, enabling them to educate students more successfully. Additionally, some argue that INSET, particularly in developing countries, is the only kind of preparation available to those teachers who are not certified (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Türkiye has a long history of implementing INSET programs to stimulate teachers' professional development. Since 1960, the MoNE has been responsible for teacher in-service training. Since then, significant initiatives, reforms, and improvements in the amount and quality of in-service training have occurred. Teachers' in-service training was transferred to the General Directorate for Teacher Training and Development in 2011. This institution is responsible for developing and executing in-service training programs for all teachers across the country, at all levels, teaching a wide range of subjects and for varying durations of time. Until 1993, in-service training was conducted centrally; nevertheless, these activities were woefully insufficient in terms of both quality and quantity (Bayrakçı, 2009). As a result, local educational directors have been empowered to create local training programs in collaboration with the MoNE's General Directorate for Teacher Training and Development.

The general purpose of INSET programs is to provide courses for inexperienced teachers or educate teachers about curricular changes in the educational system (Greenland, 1983) to improve teachers' competency (Kennedy, 1995). They are typically developed at the governmental level to assist teachers in implementing educational developments in their classrooms (Roberts, 1998). The trend in INSET programs is for them to be one-time events led by an outside expert (Craft, 1996). Teachers are passive participants in this process of information transfer, and their experiences, attitudes, and expertise are not considered while developing the programs. The INSET programs designed to promote specific skills are instructional, with trainers demonstrating various approaches and elaborating on them with handouts (Atay, 2004).

Professional development in educational processes is a crucial idea for educators. Some individuals see professional development as training, workshops, and in-service days, whereas others see this as a lifetime learning process for instructors about their professions. Diaz-Maggioli (2003) notionally characterises professional development as a process of self-reflection that leads to successful outcomes for a specific profession if they are sustained over time. Professional development regarding an individual's abilities, knowledge or learning is a fundamental idea for a continuing career in a quickly changing

and modern world to preserve his profession or employment. Professional development may also be seen as up-to-date abilities to improve your personal growth and work development. The means of professional growth may include conferences, training classes, online podcasts, degrees, discussion boards and classes, and workshops. Professional development is essentially described, especially for teaching, as actions that increase a teacher's knowledge, expertise, and other features (TALIS, p.49, 2009).

According to Aydın (2014), professional development can be provided in education, learning, training, and development. While education is generally seen as the process of changing the individual's behaviour, learning is the behaviour change that occurs as a result of the experiences of the individuals. *Training* is a systematic process that aims to change or improve an individual's knowledge, skills, and attitudes in a particular field. On the other hand, development is the general improvement and enrichment of the individual's skills and competencies through planned or unplanned learning.

It is seen that there are different definitions of teachers' professional development in the literature (Bautista & Ortega-Ruiz, 2015, p. 243), and these definitions vary according to their scope. For example, Richards and Farrell (2005) divided the professional development of teachers into two: teacher training and teacher development. According to Richards and Farrell (2005), while teacher training focuses on short-term goals and teaching principles in lessons, teacher development focuses on long-term goals. It aims to change and improve teachers' general understanding of teaching and teaching. Also, Middlewood, Parker, and Bere (2005, p. 64) considered the professional development of teachers as different from just attending courses and training programs. They defined this process as a self-starting and continuous reflection and review process that is compatible with the professional development of teachers in the context of lifelong learning adapts to the needs of the teacher and the school and is compatible with performance management. Based on the different definitions shared above according to the scope of the literature, professional development of teachers can be briefly defined as activities planned and continuous by the teacher herself or an institution to meet professional expectations and develop professional skills.

To sum up, professional development is viewed as a process for teachers, including them in continuous learning, finding, and applying their practice. It requires teachers to develop their unique teaching style based on their experiences, beliefs, values,

principles, and understandings of effective teaching. On the other hand, professional development in the in-service period involves both formal and informal experiences such as attending seminars, professional meetings, and mentorship, reading professional journals and viewing television programs relevant to an academic subject (Villegas-Reimers 2003). This situation drives teachers to constantly enhance their education through books, videos, and conferences and to observe colleagues in their classrooms and discuss what they observed or heard (Redefining Professional Development, 2006). As a result, it is essential to emphasise that, while professional development activities are vital for teachers' development, they are not one-size-fits-all or one-time occurrences. In other saying, long-term professional development is more than just a series of activities and events. It is a long-term process that includes various opportunities and experiences. It is likely to benefit the teacher if properly planned (Karaata, 2010) and critically evaluated (Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin, 1995).

2.10.2. The Features of an Effective INSET

There has been a rising emphasis on sustainable and high-quality professional development opportunities in teacher education programs and in-service activities, both before admission into the profession and in-service practices. Teachers begin to get acquainted with these chances before beginning their careers, but their experimentation with those opportunities grows after they start their teaching careers. However, it has to be seen how far professional development possibilities have been nurtured. It is commonly acknowledged that adequate professional development opportunities lead to beneficial changes in attitudes and behaviours. However, developing programs without considering practitioners' viewpoints would be unfounded, as in-service teacher opinions would aid in the better design of following chances. Therefore, there are critical issues to consider at every level of organising a P.D. activity, including in-service teacher education programs.

During their pre-service education, teachers are given the information and skills necessary to teach in schools. However, no pre-service education or training program can provide a standardised body of knowledge or a winning strategy in diverse situations in the teaching profession. Hence, teachers need to be trained throughout their careers to accept changes and innovations and stay updated about educational advancements.

The first essential feature of creating an effective professional development program is the needs analysis of the participants. Five major features of effective INSET courses were identified by Ayas et al. (2007). The first sign they mention is comprehensive course preparation based on precise needs assessments. Before developing any INSET activity, it is critical to do a requirements assessment to ensure that the course meets the needs of instructors (Dean 1991; Day 1999). A needs analysis starts by identifying the problem or need and then determines the intervention's goals, content, application, sample frame, and outcome (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2003).

Moeini (2008) mentions that although most teachers believe themselves to be informed and competent, they perceive a gap between their present knowledge and what they need to know to become effective teachers due to the increased demands and difficulties. Butler (1989) believed that in-service teacher training programs would adapt to fit participants' requirements, degree of awareness, mastery, and concerns. It is also crucial to consider the teachers' perceived self-proficiency in areas they know and do not know. The most successful teacher training programs are based on an examination of teacher needs. Regrettably, most teacher training programs fail to include a needs analysis as a vital first step. This situation wastes time, human resources, and money while demotivating and discouraging most participants. Wanzare and Ward (2000) argue that instructors should contribute to programs that fulfil their in-service training requirements.

Damnet (2021) designed an EFL training program for pre-service teachers based on the results of the needs analysis questionnaire given to the students a month before the training started. This questionnaire was divided into the following categories: 1) teaching strategies, 2) basic stages in teaching English, 3) intercultural communication, 4) lesson preparation, 5) language assessment overview, and 6) micro-teaching. In this EFL training program, all of the topics were used as the subject syllabus. The study found that EFL training had highly positive benefits. The students' opinions on the most useful of the EFL training, and eventually they all commented that they got a lot of information and experience of the training topics from the training activities and process offered.

The time and duration of courses are the second indicators of successful INSET. Teachers do not prefer courses held during school hours, particularly those held in the evenings. Furthermore, courses, particularly those introducing changes, should be offered regularly since 'one-shot workshops before and even during implementation are not very beneficial' (Fullan 1991, 85). According to DeMonte (2013), when traditional

professional development programs such as single event interventions are replaced with long-term designs, teachers are likely to benefit more and enhance their classroom instruction. Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarlos, and Shapley (2007) emphasise the critical nature of effective professional growth. Additionally, they state that professional development should be cohesive, interactive, collaborative, and sufficient in duration.

Coherence is acknowledged as a critical component of good P.D. courses and can appear on various levels and in a variety of ways. Desimone (2009) emphasises the need for consistency in the broadest sense: across national, municipal, and school-level educational policies and course content. Other studies stress the critical nature of consistency between the professional development content and the classroom environment. Bayar (2014), for example, emphasises the significance of basing professional development on genuine circumstances that happen in the classroom and are therefore "relevant to teachers' difficulties and concerns" (Şahin and Yıldırım, 2016). Posnanski (2002) highlights the need of drawing obvious linkages between theoretical and practical material, while Garet et al. (2001) focus on the importance of coherence among the activities in the in-service course, with each activity building on the previous one.

The No Child Left Behind Act (2001) requires that teachers obtain high-quality professional development, recognizing the scarcity of such changes. No Child Left Behind establishes five standards of professional development:

- It is long-term, rigorous, and content-specific, intending to improve classroom instruction and teacher effectiveness.
- It is closely connected to state academic content requirements, student success standards, and assessments and is connected with them.
- It enhances and expands the knowledge of teachers in the subjects they teach.
- It is frequently examined for effects on teacher effectiveness and student success.
- It increases teachers' understanding of effective teaching techniques based on scientifically supported research.

Guskey (1995, 2000) also highlights some essential qualities that professional development approaches have to foster teacher improvement, based on a study of

literature on the subject. In this respect, Guskey (1995) suggests that high professional development practices should:

- a. acknowledge change as a process involving both individuals and organisations.
- b. think big but start small.
- c. work in teams to sustain support.
- d. include processes for providing feedback on results.
- e. provide follow-up, support, and pressure; and
- f. incorporate programs.

INSET is a group of activities that may necessitate a shift in teaching methods. Change, on the other hand, is not always quickly well embraced. Teachers may not alter or adapt their approach even when an effective tactic is used (Richardson 1998). They may reject the reasoning and theory behind the suggested amendments, and even if they appear to comprehend the changes' needs, they may not put them into practice in the classroom (Ayas et al., 2007). As Goh (1999) pointed out, teachers are in charge of effective implementation of any reform or change since 'at the end of the day, and it is these teachers who will determine whether innovations approved through top-down methods would finally be carried out inside the classroom' (Goh 1999, 18). There is a relationship between instructors' transformation and the change process itself. INSET is critical in introducing innovations, improvements, and reforms to schoolteachers and facilitating change in this line of work.

Based on their extensive study, Joyce and Showers (1980) believe that the most effective INSET courses employ a combination of presentation, modelling, practice, feedback, and coaching approaches. In INSET courses, providing participants with the chance to practice what they have learned is especially crucial (Asilsoy, 2007). Another key element identified by Ayas et al. (2007) in the efficacy of INSET courses is instructor quality and knowledge of the material, and the ability to teach it effectively. A previous study in Turkiye on the effectiveness of INSET courses on different matters and with teachers at various levels of education found that the course instructors were unqualified primarily to teach their subject (Miser, Yayla, and Sayın, 2006). They suggested that university faculty members should teach INSET courses.

Follow-up work and continuous assistance after courses entail monitoring course participants at their places of employment for some time after the courses to determine whether and how instructors apply what they have learned from INSET courses in their daily job. This will show the long-term efficiency of the courses. However, it will also assist teachers in overcoming any challenges they may have throughout the adoption of the new learning methods. In their research, Odabasi Cimer et al. (2010) discovered that teachers' implementation of new methods in their practice, or if the course met its objectives, could not be obtained since there was no systematic and effective follow-up and support system after the courses. In other words, after attending INSET courses, none of the instructors who took part in the study got any assistance or follow-up work.

Our professional development activity, prepared by considering the characteristics of an effective in-service training organisation mentioned in the literature, started with a comprehensive needs analysis in the relevant field. The training content was designed based on the results of the data collected through questionnaires and structured interviews. As underlined in the literature, a 'Cooperation Protocol in In-Service Training' was signed with a university to receive university support and to combine theory and practice at the same time. The effectiveness of the training was assessed with the feedback we collected at the end of the training. For the follow-up phase, which was highlighted as a missing point in many studies, the lessons of some of our participating teachers were observed, and the ongoing support continued. Thus, it became possible to measure the long-term effect of training and to note the reasons for some difficulties experienced during the implementation process. As it can be understood from all these processes, quite different factors play a significant role in organising effective in-service training and measuring its effectiveness.

2.10.3. Why do some INSETs fail?

Teachers' in-service professional training is more sought after and essential than any other profession because teachers' personalities, attitudes, and expertise influence pupils and help mould the nation's future. There are many benefits of in-service professional training since it is the quickest method to refresh knowledge, fulfil new work needs, and socialise. Even though in-service training improves one's attitude and behaviour toward their job and increases productivity, INSET opportunities have been

rare in recent years. Teachers, particularly those working at the school level, seldom came across any training program in their service careers.

According to Eurydice (2002), throughout the world, in-service teacher training takes two forms: (a) continuous professional development, which seeks to update current knowledge and abilities, and (b) so-called extra programs, which provide new skills and credentials. However, many INSET programs fail to meet their objectives and have no beneficial effect on teachers' learning and teaching and students' learning results. Several studies have found that INSET programs do not accomplish their goals for several reasons (e.g. Atay 2008, Çimer et al. 2010, Hamid 2010).

According to Cin (2008), it is possible to collect the problems encountered in in-service training under four main headings. These are, respectively, organisational problems of in-service training units, problems related to personal rights of personnel working in in-service training units and participating in these activities, quality and quantity problems of personnel, and coordination problems in in-service training (p.21).

Emery (2012) conducted worldwide research in which she gathered data from a large group of English language teachers at primary schools in nine different nations to give information about teachers' qualifications, training, teaching experience, and career growth. Regarding teacher training, she discovered that 15% of participants did not get training after qualifying as a teacher, and 48% felt they had teaching difficulties that might be addressed via training. These results imply that INSET programs in many countries are insufficient (Emery 2012). Similarly, Nguyen (2012) discovered in research examining the implementation of a basic English curriculum in Vietnam that instructors lacked in-service training on teaching English in primary schools and indicated a need for methodological training.

While high-quality professional development is critical for educational improvement, specific professional development initiatives fail to achieve the desired outcomes. Cantrell and Cantrell (2003) emphasise that many teachers are either unwilling or unable to attend professional development to stay current. This is because some instructors continue to see professional development events as mandatory. Additionally, they think professional development has little effect on their teaching (p. 107). Cantrell (2003) observes that a one-size-fits-all approach aimed at meeting all teachers' requirements often fails. Cantrell states that teachers are hesitant to participate in professional development programs because they believe the programs are unrelated to

their demands. (p.105) Bayrakçı (2010) asserts that INSETs should focus on what teachers already know and how that knowledge may be expanded rather than on forcing irrelevant information on them. This kind of government-sponsored INSET ignores teachers' pre-existing views and needs and therefore misses the mark of meeting its objectives. Additionally, Speck and Knipe (2001) suggest that teachers oppose compulsory professional development. To address this issue, academics highlight the need to conduct a thorough requirements analysis as the first stage in designing an INSET (Odabaşı-Çimer et al., 2010). A well-designed and conducted needs analysis for teachers may educate administrators about the teachers' problems, expectations, and worries and can assist in determining the course material.

Several issues have been identified with INSETs in Türkiye, including a lack of available courses (Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2006), a top-down structure that forces students to learn topics and content chosen by others (Bayrakçı, 2009; Özer, 2004), and the delivery of programs in the form of short 'one-shot' courses (Daloğlu, 2004). INSETs have also been reported to suffer from transmission methods that do not allow educators to reflect on their learning and benefit from follow-up support and evaluation techniques. To illustrate, Altun (2011) claims that state-sponsored INSET participants are easily overwhelmed by the content since trainers primarily convey theoretical information, failing to emphasise the practical component of training. Turkish language teachers prefer INSET programs that rely on their specific instructional difficulties and provide practical ideas through need-based, meaningful instructional activities in an environment where participants may reflect on their experiences (Arslan, Mirici, Öz, 2019).

There is some debate among academics about whether professional development activities are successful unless they are well evaluated, particularly in terms of their long-term impacts on participant learning (Guskey, 2000). After-course evaluations, such as the ones conducted by Tarrou et al. (1999), are critical since they provide new views that lead to modifications, enhancements, and quality control. As a result, such assessments may reveal not just an INSET course's short-term and long-term strengths and shortcomings but also the future educational opportunities teachers themselves require. Uysal (2012) investigated the long-term effects of a one-week INSET given by the Turkish Ministry of Education on language teachers' attitudes, level of knowledge, and classroom practices. In her research, although teachers' attitudes toward the course were generally positive, and the course's implementation stage incorporated numerous positive

aspects, the course's planning and analysis phases were highly problematic, the course lacked a follow-up component, and the course suffered from a variety of failures, including a lack of resources and materials, a lack of dialogues about teachers' problems, and a lack of follow-up. In their study of English language teachers' demands regarding inset programs, Önalın and Gürsoy (2020) came up with the ultimate finding. They argue that requested outcomes can be achieved 'if the organisation is needs-specific, localised, provides applicable content, encourages active participation and cognitive involvement, is supported by activities aimed at developing experiences with new ideas, provides opportunities for reflection and evaluation, and is led by field experts who have the necessary expertise' (p.954).

Yurttaş (2014) delved into EFL instructors' opinions on the efficacy of various components and characteristics of an in-house EFL INSET program. Teachers' ideas for improving the quality of the existing EFL INSET program as well as the EFL INSET program in their ideals were also explored in the study. The study revealed that, while the program's efficacy was evaluated between ordinary and sound, it was considered particularly successful with activities such as classroom activities, adapting textbooks, and cooperation. On the other hand, the training was criticised for its duration, the meaningless of some sessions, content, or materials, the improper grouping of participants based on their expertise, the levels they teach, and the sessions in which promotional materials were presented.

Although the fundamental causes of challenges in implementing change following short INSET courses have been explored in the literature, there has been a scarcity of studies that provide a comprehensive follow-up study of such courses' efficacy. Lamb (1995) examines how participants put ideas given in a short INSET course into practice a year later. Indeed, the results showed that very few modifications were made as a result of the course. According to Lamb, INSET courses should focus on teachers' beliefs to effect long-term change. For this purpose, he suggests using awareness-raising activities and trainees' active engagement in INSET to develop a framework for change in their particular teaching setting.

Lastly, Cin (2008), in his doctoral study, emphasises the problems related to the personal rights of the personnel working in the in-service training units and participating in these activities. He argues that participation in these activities has decreased since the documents given at the end of in-service training activities are ineffective in the

assignment, relocation and promotion. He also adds that the low additional course fees paid to the instructors in in-service training activities and the low travel expenses paid to the trainees reduce the interest and participation in these activities. The relationship between in-service training-productivity increase-professional advancement should be used as a criterion informing occupational steps in all professions, especially in teaching. Since there is no positive change in the personal rights of the personnel participating at the end of the in-service training activities, the trained personnel prefer better working conditions by changing the institution.

2.11. The Impact of INSET on EFL Teachers

Because of globalisation, there is a quick flow of knowledge and technological advances, which may force governments to adopt changes and innovations in their education systems. A country's education system should be constantly improved by keeping up with current educational trends. To do this, it is necessary to invest in teacher education and training programs. Without question, teaching is a profession. Unlike certain professions, it requires a commitment to professional growth. A teacher's qualification does not necessarily signify that the person no longer needs education (Wedell, 2017).

Learning encompasses programs, rules, or other forms of instructions to develop professional knowledge, qualifications, and attitudes. The word covers the development of teachers and teacher training. Teacher development focuses on the teacher and works for professional and personal growth through reflection, investigation, and research into teaching (Freeman, 1982). Concerning teacher training, which refers to a much narrower situation, it comprises specific demands and aims. Teacher training focuses on grasping certain basic ideas before transferring them to teaching (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Thus, teachers require training before beginning their careers and during their careers because professional development is viewed as a continually positive and constructive process that refreshes and improves teachers' knowledge to keep up with educational advancements (Khan, 2010).

Evaluation is an essential aspect of creating an INSET program. It is necessary to determine whether the training achieves the desired aims and results in changes in teachers' knowledge, abilities, or perspectives. The program's positive and negative aspects, such as content, timing, materials, activities, delivery methods, trainers, and

budget, could be assessed; inadequacies could be identified, and suggestions for future implementations could be made. Smith & Woeste (1983) contend that evaluation is typically performed after training is completed, so they argue that evaluation should occur before, during, and after implementation. The pre-implementation stage determines the relevance of the content, activities, materials, resources, objectives, and staff capabilities. This stage is followed by evaluation, conducted during the training to see whether changes to the topic, resources, or practices are necessary. This stage can be thought of as a monitoring procedure in which any essential steps or precautions are taken. The final evaluation occurs after the training has been completed, and it focuses on the training's results. Participant contentment, changes in learning and behaviours, and organisational advantages may all be taken into account.

Peacock (2009) asserts that foreign language training programs, including feedback from teachers, learners, and other stakeholders, should be assessed, leading to the professionalisation of the subject area. Therefore, it is possible to say that trainers, researchers, and even policymakers need scientists to investigate and observe the actual level of effectiveness of the program. Various assessment data collection tools may be beneficial because the process is not focused on individual viewpoints. As a result, the assessment is based on a more scientific technique and cannot be influenced by personal preferences and prejudices. To illustrate, to provide an intense EFL teacher training program, Chang et al. (2010) proposed an evaluation system. They used six separate data sources in this context: 1) language proficiency testing of trainees; 2) self-assessment of teaching skills in English, 3) program evaluation checklist for trainees' satisfaction, 4) trainee's assessment checklist; 5) overseas program evaluation checklist, and 6) program management assessment reports and interviews.

Improving teaching requires a great deal of effort, patience, and perseverance. Besides, it also requires an internal trigger, which can foster change. Many experts believe that reflection is a critical component, a 'vital factor' in the growth of teachers (Saylag, 2012, p. 3851). Teacher reflection also helps them become more self-sufficient and capable of self-development. Another significant reason to reflect is that we are prone to jump to conclusions about why things are happening when we do not spend more time reflecting on or addressing what has occurred (Tice, 2004). Without a comprehensive understanding of why certain events arise or do not happen in one's classroom, it is

impossible to structure future classes efficiently and productively. As a result, reflection serves as a link between practice and theory, forming our future actions.

The number of studies focusing on INSET has expanded in recent years, increasing the amount of data connected to the effects of INSET programs. This research has covered a wide range of INSET-related issues. Teacher cognition is one area that has become increasingly popular in recent years (Borg, 2006; Johnson, 2006). The rise in research has resulted in a wide range of methodologies and focal areas in these investigations. Several studies, for example, have focused on teachers' beliefs (e.g., Borg, 2003, 2011; Farrell, 2005; Kiely & Askham, 2012; Nicolaidis & Mattheoudiakakis, 2008; Phipps and Borg, 2009; Velez-Rendon, 2006).

In a longitudinal study, Borg (2011) looks at how six beginner EFL teachers' views changed after taking an eight-week INSET course. The data for the study came from initial questionnaires, six semi-structured and audio-recorded interviews, and a review of the participants' assignments, including tutor feedback. The study found that the INSET affected their beliefs; however, it also found that the course content could have focused more on the participants' beliefs. Similarly, while studying English teachers' attitudes toward INSET courses, Nicolaidis & Mattheoudiakakis (2008) found that INSET courses significantly affected teachers' beliefs. According to their large-scale study, INSET appears to have little impact on teachers' beliefs; the report also emphasises the importance of Greek officials' engagement and willingness for change in the education sector. Even though this was a large-scale quantitative study, a more qualitative in-depth investigation is required.

The crucial point of many in-service training studies is professional development programs on student success, teacher knowledge, and skills. For instance, Mak (2019) wanted to look into the impact of a professional development program offered by a Hong Kong university on the development of assessment abilities among four teachers from two primary schools. The findings showed that gaining assessment knowledge is a lengthy process that causes continual professional development efforts. They all find the researcher's two-day session on assessment interesting and influential in broadening their theoretical and practical understanding. However, all the teachers voiced concern about putting what they learned at the workshop into practice. They hoped to receive more guidance from the researcher on designing appropriate teaching materials for their teaching contexts and incorporating assessment practices in their classrooms.

Dikilitaş (2013) examines the impact of in-service teacher training on trainees' views and classroom actions right after the program and six months after the training program based on theoretical knowledge of markedness theory conducted as part of a case study. The trainees were first observed to determine their existing grammar teaching approaches. Second, they voluntarily took part in the training. Finally, they were questioned and observed to determine the influence on cognitive and practical levels. Finally, they were interviewed and observed again six months later to determine the extent of the training's effect. The study primarily discovered that knowledge-based training could profoundly influence trainees and allow concurrent cognitive and practical changes following the training in the practical lessons.

Arifani et al. (2019) evaluated the influence of hybrid/blended teacher professional development on teachers' creativity and efficiency using the perspective of EFL students. The findings suggest that hybrid professional training positively impacts EFL teachers' creativity and ability to teach effectively in the target language. Regarding teaching effectiveness, the most potent variables are knowledge, content knowledge, self-directed learning, the educational environment, and the resources used in the classroom. Last but not least, Şahin and Yıldırım investigate how EFL teachers transform and adapt professional learning into their classrooms, thereby examining the link between effective staff development techniques and teacher improvement. The results show that significant changes in teaching practices have followed changes in their pedagogical ideas, and an interaction link exists over the long term between teacher beliefs and practices. It also suggests that understanding how teachers change due to INSET programs could help foster high-quality, long-term staff development.

2.11.1. Selected Studies of INSET from the Global Context

In-service teacher training is pursued with the primary purpose of assuring continuous improvement in academic institutions and the education system's capacity (European Union, 2013). The role of education and teacher training agencies in national, social, and economic growth is continuously emphasised. This necessitates the ongoing development and enhancement of educational stakeholders' professional competence. In-service teacher training is thus characterised as a crucial constituent of teacher professional development that policymakers and education departments have chosen to guide teachers and equip them with skills geared towards improving educational quality.

On the other hand, professional development is a continuous process triggered by knowledge, skills, and attitudes changes among teachers and other education sector workers to enhance learning outcomes (Cooper, 2004; Sparks & Richardson, 1998). New experiences, on the other hand, necessitate new and especially adapted approaches to teaching methods, justifying teachers' need to participate in in-service training programs periodically. Therefore, in-service teacher training is depicted as a never-ending, continual activity to learn and sustain knowledge.

The growing demand for English language instruction has prompted educational reforms in several countries worldwide. English language instruction has been implemented at younger ages as curricular revisions (Graddol, 2006). Many studies have looked into the professional development needs of EFL teachers, particularly in Asian countries where English is taught as a foreign language. Butler (2004), for example, evaluated elementary school teachers' language competency in Korea, Taiwan, and Japan. He asked the participants to self-assess their English ability and show the minimum proficiency level required to teach English at the primary school level. According to the study's findings, they rated their productive skills as lower than their receptive skills. It is worth noting that teachers in all three countries indicated considerable disparities between their self-assessed English proficiency and the level they thought was required for effective teaching.

Wall (2008) conducted another case study about the professional development needs of EFL teachers in Taiwan.

Despite having significantly more resources than most Thai EFL teachers, all of these teachers expressed a desire for more excellent in-service training. More crucially, the teachers still had obvious needs regarding their English and understanding of communicative lesson design, which they were entirely ignorant of. These findings show that, while asking teachers what they need is vital, they cannot tell us what they do not know and that a more objective needs assessment should be undertaken.

Mohammadi and Moradi (2017) studied this important topic by organising professional development workshops to train instructors to encourage long-term professional development. They investigated the opinions and attitudes of 86 EFL teachers toward CPD before and after participating in professional development courses. A questionnaire and a follow-up interview were used to gather information. The data show that people's attitudes toward CPD can alter. A statistically significant change in

EFL teachers' opinions was discovered in survey data collected before and after professional development sessions. Semi-structured interviews backed up this conclusion. Furthermore, the findings suggested that participants regarded tailored professional development programs using a professional development framework as a valuable tool to be included in professional development programs.

Most professional development programs designed to modify teachers' classroom practices, attitudes, and beliefs are inefficient. Ineffective support for teacher professional development is one of the key causes of this inefficiency. A recent study conducted by Yan and He (2015) looked at the perceptions of 120 Chinese EFL teachers regarding their INSET program to make some suggestions for increasing the program's efficacy. The results showed that the EFL teachers in the study regarded their training program as ineffective. The disadvantages of the program included short duration, insufficient support for follow-ups, a lack of peer communication, lack of practical information, insufficient teacher/student connection, insufficient information, and irrelevance. Likewise, Hourani and Stringer (2015) suggest that professional development models that give numerous forms of assistance, both formal and informal, must be structured to produce better results, examining the effectiveness of one-shot one-size-fits-all development techniques.

While the interest of in-service teachers has been growing in recent decades in what makes up good professional development (PD), the literature suggests that the question continues to inspire continuing discussion. Posnanski (2002) underlines the significance of establishing obvious links between theoretical and practical content. Garet et al. (2001) stress the requirement for consistency among PD course activities whereby one 'activity takes advantage of previous activities.' Sokel (2019) did a qualitative study to evaluate the extent to which, how, and why a professional development course was perceived helpful in its contribution to the growth and practice of the 28 in-service EFL teachers in Israel who took part in the course. The results identify different forms of effectiveness and reasons for this effectiveness that imply that PD courses need to be customised to the current needs of practitioners as the course participants view them.

Many studies have attempted to study the performance of teachers and changes in classroom practices after training. Borg (2011) looks at the effects of an intense eight-week teacher education program in the UK on the beliefs of six instructors of English. Based on an extensive database of semi-structured interviews, training, and tutor

feedback, the study reveals a significant, albeit varying, impact of the program on teacher beliefs. This training enables teachers to reflect more explicitly, understand and explain their values, and expand and deepen their ideas. Teachers also observed changes in previous assumptions regarding language teaching and learning characteristics. Despite this sign of influence, the findings imply that the in-service course studied here may have involved teachers examining their ideas more productively and sustainably. Likewise, in her doctoral dissertation, Li (2015) investigates the impact of an in-service teacher training (INSET) course on experienced secondary school English instructors in China's changing education system. This qualitative multiple-case study followed five secondary schools EFL teachers during the INSET course and for six months. Data from classroom observations and interviews were obtained at various points in time. This methodological technique added a longitudinal dimension to the study, investigating potential changes in instructors' knowledge, beliefs, and practice. The findings revealed that the teachers' knowledge and views had not changed significantly and that there had been no significant change in their subsequent practice to complement the new curriculum. The mismatch between the teachers' learning outcomes and practices mainly stemmed from their theory-learning, which was the focus of the INSET course, and failed to operate as a key motivator for behavioural change among the teachers.

On the contrary, Giraldo (2014) focuses on the results of a professional development action research project and its impact on the classroom performance of in-service English instructors at a Colombian State University language institute. As data-gathering instruments, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, class observations, and a researcher's report were utilised. The results imply that these in-service educators enhanced their performance in the classroom by making their education more communicative, organised, student-friendly, and principled. Furthermore, theory, practice, reflection, and the tutor's role worked together to help in-service teachers enhance their classroom performance.

In their study, Veenman and Voeten (1994) looked at the consequences of in-service training activities. School characteristics, features of in-service programs, implementation factors, and types of in-service activity were projected on the impact ratings of a sample of teachers and principals who took part in individual-based and school-focused INSET. This study's findings imply that some school characteristics, in-service program elements, and implementation factors all have a role in the impact of in-

service training. To improve in-service training efficacy, variables such as external assistance, hours spent on INSET activities, degree of engagement, teacher educators' competency, implementation circumstances, and the principal's guiding functions are all subject to change.

To summarise, it is critical to remember that building an inset program is a complicated undertaking that requires great attention to detail. The people who organise it should be highly familiar with the institution, the setting, the teachers, their requirements, and their styles, and they should keep in mind that this process will last throughout their entire career. It is, however, rewarding because it 'enables teachers to keep up with new educational trends' (UNESCO, 1990, p. 9).

2.11.2. Selected Studies of INSET from the Turkish Context

After obtaining a teaching certificate and working in a professional role, in-service education is important for teachers to continue their professional development (Locke, 1984). It assists teachers in expanding their awareness and skills, staying up to date on current events, and exchanging ideas and experiences with their colleagues (Knight, 2002; Smylie, 1988).

In-service education is respected as much as pre-service education in Türkiye when teachers' demands are considered. Many studies have been conducted on in-service training activities provided to English teachers in Türkiye. These studies have revealed significant issues with current courses' preparation, organisation, implementation, and assessment phases (Atay, 2004; Odabaş-Çimer et al., 2010; Uysal, 2012).

Karaca, 1999; Kayhan, 1999; Mısırlı, 2011) and/or aimed to investigate the effectiveness of in-service training programs (Ünal, 2011). However, the number of studies conducted on in-service training programs organised by the Ministry of Education for English teachers is limited. Some of these studies have been carried out to identify the in-service training needs of English teachers. Also, most of the work carried out in this context was carried out before the education reform, primarily using quantitative research techniques. Despite this significance, professional development programs and courses for teachers seem inadequate to lead to teachers' lifelong learning. As a result, studies on the professional development and in-service training practices of English teachers in the Turkish Ministry of National Education framework are relevant to this section.

To start with, Aribaş et al. (2012) conducted a descriptive study aiming to determine the views of English teachers on in-service training activities. Researchers surveyed 140 English teachers in the province of Nevsehir to obtain the study results. As a result of the research, teachers' views on in-service training activities generally converged on the "moderate level" option. Most teachers stated that developments in the scientific, technological and social fields make in-service education compulsory. Moreover, they want in-service education activities to continue, but the time of in-service education activities is inappropriate. While there were no differences between teachers' views on various aspects of in-service training activities, such as gender, age, and year of service variables, there was a statistically significant difference in graduation area variables. In addition, the views of teachers who have graduated from the Faculty of Education are more optimistic than those who have graduated from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences concerning the dimension of 'Opinions on the Organisation of INSET.'

Daloglu (2004) researched an in-service teacher development program at a private primary school in Ankara, Türkiye, that focused on developing a materials bank for English language teachers and teacher evaluations of the program. The program's goal was to promote teacher growth and development, address school-based needs, and enhance overall quality. Teachers developed their awareness and skills in materials design and curriculum-related problems. According to feedback received during and after the professional development program, they also improved the general standard of teaching and maintained a positive attitude toward professional growth. The program was beneficial because the participants specified the program's focus as a real need, and the resources produced through the program were immediately used, offering a tangible benefit to the teachers.

Uysal (2012) evaluated an in-service training program for elementary school language teachers in Türkiye. This evaluation aimed to examine the impact of in-service training provided by the Ministry of Education on teachers' attitudes, knowledge base, and teaching practices. The study revealed that teachers generally had positive attitudes towards in-service training. The results also showed that the program had its limitations in the planning and evaluation stages. The impact of the in-service training program on teachers' practices was relatively weak.

Akçadağ (2012) carried out a study to define teachers' expectations of CPD programs and understand how these expectations evolved based on their evaluations. The

results showed that teachers emphasised the content and methodology of CPD programs and the expertise and positive attitude of the trainers and expressed these criteria as expectations. In his study, the teachers suggested that the program should include the components such as classroom management, communication skills, special education, learning through games and drama, child psychology, parent training, design and use of instructional materials, training of school administrators, teaching methods and techniques, and some personal development topics.

Koç (2015) conducted a study presenting a critical diagnosis of in-service teacher-training activities offered to English-language teachers in Türkiye. In her research, she investigated whether the English teachers are content with the activities. Data were collected from 32 elementary-school teachers of English, utilising the evaluation form prepared by the researcher. The results indicate that the teachers are not pleased with their in-service teacher-training activities because they do not fulfil their needs. This study shows that a suitable needs analysis must be applied before practical in-service training. In this way, participants can benefit from the training activity at the maximum level.

Several studies have found that INSET is effective because it allows one to connect with peers (e.g., Yiğit, 2008; Uysal, 2012). A quantitative study by Altun and Gök (2010) found that trainers' quality is one of five factors determining the effectiveness of INSET. Similarly, Çimer et al. (2010) conducted qualitative research in the Turkish context, and it revealed that INSET is ineffective mainly because of the lack of qualified trainers. Similarly, in a qualitative study by Çimer et al. (2010) in the Turkish context, INSET was ineffective mainly due to the lack of qualified instructors. In Altun and Gök's (2010) study, the two most essential INSET aspects were training time and place. Ünal (2010) handled this issue from a different perspective: she conducted a qualitative study examining the underlying reasons why teachers do not participate in INSET and found that inconvenient location and time are the main two reasons.

In his PhD dissertation, Yiğit (2016) looked into 'Action Research' in teacher professional development. Following a literature review on the topic, he investigated the characteristics of successful in-service training programs and developed a workshop with a pilot study including 25 (twenty-five). The study employed a qualitative analysis design known as a 'case study,' in light of the information collected and changes made to the program. The final practice was conducted at a government school with limited facilities with 6 (six) volunteer teachers to allow in-depth study. The teachers were trained, and at

the same time, they conducted their action research on the issues they identified. Kirkpatrick's program evaluation model was used in the program. As a result, it can be stated that action research contributes significantly to teachers' professional development. Action research could be more popularised as a professional development model. It is suggested that sufficient time and space should be provided for more effective outcomes.

Mede and Dollar (2017) aimed to evaluate a two-week INSET course designed for primary English teachers working in private schools in Istanbul, Türkiye. Specifically, their study examined the effects of the training program, its impact on teachers' instructional practices, and the challenges that the participating teachers experienced during this particular program, which are also the main concerns of this dissertation. This evaluative study is intended to serve as an example for future teacher training programs that transfer what is learned to classroom practice. Finally, the study provides suggestions for facilitating future INSET programs.

Sönmez and Akyel (2017) researched to see if the Current Issues in In-Service Teacher Education (INSET) course, which is part of a Master of Art (MA) program in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), aids participants in becoming teacher-researchers. The research included seventeen non-native EFL teachers. Teachers' Research Awareness Questionnaire and other sources were used to delve into the participants' research knowledge and practice differences. According to the results, the participants' research skills were broadened due to the training and hands-on experience they received during the course.

Finally, in her doctoral dissertation, İleri (2019) aimed to determine the competencies and practices of English teachers working in public schools in measuring speaking skills. He prepared an in-service training draft that included the necessary topics. For this purpose, an online inquiry was used with 519 volunteer English teachers working in 69 different cities of Türkiye. Besides, face-to-face interviews constitute the qualitative part of the study. As a result of the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the obtained information, it was found that the 'Assessment and Evaluation in Foreign Language Teaching' course offered in the Departments of English Language Teaching could not provide the desired level of education, and the teacher candidates were not included in the studies related to the field of measurement and evaluation in the 'Teaching Practice' course. Finally, it was understood that the teachers participating in the survey wanted to participate in an in-service training activity to update their knowledge on measuring

speaking skills. As a result of the evaluation, suggestions were made regarding the course content offered by the Higher Education Council and the Ministry of National Education applications. Also, after determining the needs of English teachers to measure and evaluate speaking skills, a draft of in-service training was prepared with these headings to meet the Turkish MONE General Directorate of Teacher Training and Development requirements. In this study, although teacher needs were determined in the relevant field and a training draft was proposed, the recommended training program was not implemented, and its effect on teacher competencies and classroom activities was not observed.

2.12. Chapter Summary

The theoretical framework that served as the study's compass and the associated ideas that served as the foundation for the study's breadth has been covered in this chapter. Following the presentation of information on how teacher competencies may be tied to the notions of professional development, specifically the organisation of an INSET programme, considering the relevant research, the concept of competency and its components have been discussed. The presentation of the studies conducted in both national and international settings concluded this part.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This section covers the study's methodological framework. First, the research paradigm is provided by revealing information on the study's research design and methodology. Second, the setting and participants are discussed by delving into demographic data and the research location. Third, because the study employs a variety of data collecting tools, all of them are elaborately discussed. Fourth, the data analysis process outlines the methods used in this phase. Finally, the INSET program's methods, including design, implementation, follow-up, evaluation, and ethical considerations, are thoroughly described.

3.2. Research Paradigm

A paradigm is a set of core ideas that describe people's perceptions of the universe (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). According to a similar definition offered by Schwandt (2001), a paradigm is a common worldview representing beliefs and values in a particular field. According to Popkewitz (1984), research paradigms present a systemic solution to unanswered challenges within an area of knowledge. Diverse research frameworks rely on different ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions (Gilbert & Watts, 1983; Cohen et al., 2007; Bryman, 2012; Taylor, 2014), all of which have substantial ramifications for the investigation process and the analysis of the findings. Various paradigms drive us to ask different questions, utilize different techniques to explore those issues, analyze our data differently, and draw different conclusions from our findings (Willis, Jost, and Nilakanta, 2007).

Each study must be contextualized within a particular paradigm. This necessitates conformity between the researcher's thought patterns and research practices with the paradigm's ontological and epistemological perspectives (Bassey & Coate, 1999). Because of this connection, the research can only be evaluated utilizing its paradigm (Golafshani, 2003). No particular paradigm applies to every work; many paradigms are appropriate for different research purposes. As a result, the driving factor for choosing a paradigm is 'fitness for purpose' (Cohen et al., 2007).

This research follows the interpretive foundations and advances the constructive/interpretative paradigm as the most appropriate way to accomplish the study's objectives. The focus of this paradigm is to comprehend 'the world of human experience' (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p.36), implying that realities are socially created and varied. The interpretive/constructivist researcher prefers to depend on the participants' perspectives on the problem being examined and understands the importance of their pre-existing knowledge and experiences in the study (Creswell, 2003, p.8).

The ontological assumptions of this paradigm propose that constructivists, unlike often, 'generate or inductively build a theory or pattern of meanings' (Creswell, 2003, p.9) throughout the study process. The constructivist researcher will most likely use qualitative data collecting and analysis methods or mixed methods. Quantitative data may enhance or build on qualitative data, thereby deepening the description. Based on this, the current study gets insight into in-service English language teachers' experiences during all phases of the training program to develop their competencies and diverse perspectives of the issue, which seem to be very subjective. As for epistemological assumptions, science aims to characterize personally lived realities, experiences, and understandings; knowledge is achieved via an empathetic appreciation of participants' experienced social realities. Because the social reality is moulded by subjective experiences and social settings rather than being objective, it is best explored in its socio-historic context by harmonizing the subjective perceptions of its diverse actors. Interpretive researchers perceive reality through a meaning-making process rather than a hypothesis testing procedure because they see social reality as being entrenched within and hard to isolate from their social environments. It should be highlighted that all the findings are equally important and cannot be immediately applied to other situations. With this in mind, the current study was designed to understand that the consistency of the findings was inextricably linked to the research context.

3.3. Research Design

It necessitates a comprehensive review of the procedures and settings and the use of numerous data collection techniques and data sources to investigate the aspects that influence EFL instructors' competency levels before and after an inset program. As a result, this study adopted an exploratory case study methodology. An exploratory case study is used to determine the practicality of planned research methodologies or to define

the topics and hypotheses for a later study. (Laws & McLeod, 2004, p. 5). According to Yin (2003), case studies are required if a researcher wants to investigate a complex social phenomenon because the case study approach allows researchers to preserve an extensive grasp of the qualities of real-life events. In addition, the current study used an exploratory case study approach with a mixed method since it allowed the researcher to address both 'what' and 'how' types of questions while considering how a phenomenon was influenced by the setting in which it originated (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Hence, it can be put forward that the definitions of a case study as a qualitative research approach in the literature place weight on the case's confined singularity, the importance of context, the utilization of numerous sources of information or critical viewpoints on observations, and the detailed examination of the data (Duff, 2008, p. 22).

According to Creswell (1998), a case study framework should include the problem, background, difficulties, and lessons learned. A case study requires substantial data from various sources, including direct or participatory observations, interviews, document analysis of physical objects, and audio-visual elements. The researcher is expected to spend time on-site with the people being investigated because the learning and teaching process heavily relies on the teachers' prior knowledge, resulting in unique examples. The report would include acquired knowledge or discovered patterns related to theories.

The exploratory case study may harmoniously gather and evaluate qualitative and quantitative data. According to Ivankova, Creswell, and Stick (2009), mixed-methods research combines qualitative and quantitative data in the same study to better comprehend the research. In a similar vein, Dörnyei (2007b) stated that using a mixed methods research design allows for more accurate data to be obtained for a study. In doing so, in the 'exploration' part of the study, the researcher planned to obtain in-depth preliminary information from the participants using a questionnaire and written interview forms. With the data obtained, the content of the in-service training was determined, and a kind of needs analysis was performed. Thus, the researcher took a step to determine the competencies that the participating teachers needed to develop. Then, the learning gains provided by the training program to the participants were evaluated with the data collected through the KWLA chart and training evaluation form during the in-service training. Finally, the permanence of learning gains in the follow-up period after the in-service training program constitutes an essential argument of this study. Therefore, its various

effects on teacher competencies were evaluated holistically with 8-week lesson observations, semi-structured interviews, and bi-weekly teacher journals. Consequently, the case-study technique is appropriate for the current research since the primary objective is to conduct an in-depth descriptive, exploratory, and interpretative investigation of the impact of training on participants' competencies with comparable professional backgrounds.

3.4. Role of the Researcher

When conducting qualitative research, researchers have a variety of responsibilities within the research team. To make their study credible, it is essential that they define their roles, particularly for those adopting different positions in a specific study. These representations might vary from entirely belonging to the investigated group to total outsiders (Adler & Adler, 1994). Thus, the role of the researcher in the present study is twofold as a researcher and teacher trainer.

Depending on such socio-cultural ways of qualitative research, exploring and comprehending the process of socioculturally moderated meaning production draws attention to the collaborative and dialectical connections between the researcher and the participants (Kim, 2014). Also, as suggested by Denicolo et al. (2016), constructivist techniques call for a data collection process that is both participatory and interpretive to fully grasp the wide range of meanings that participants assign to their experiences. For this reason, she was mostly an observer as a researcher and an active interpreter of meanings, making detailed field notes and evaluations at each stage of the study to thoroughly investigate the phenomena as the study progressed.

Within the scope of this study, the researcher's new role was to participate as a teacher trainer in the in-service training program organized by the District Directorate of National Education. While continuing her studies within the research scope, she made the necessary arrangements to carry out the relevant studies in accordance with the In-Service Training Regulation of the Ministry of National Education, obtained the necessary permission from the District Governor and continued all the pre-and post-training processes meticulously. All these stages provided her with an idea of how these official steps were taken in the context of MONE and information on developing professional development sessions for her colleagues.

3.5. Participants and Sampling

Since this study aims to determine the competency perceptions of English teachers and develop these competencies together with an in-service training program, the context of the study consists of English teachers working in public schools in Adana. Hence, the selection of the study participants and sampling method vary according to the study's phases. The sampling methods of the participants are summarized in the figure below according to the research phases:

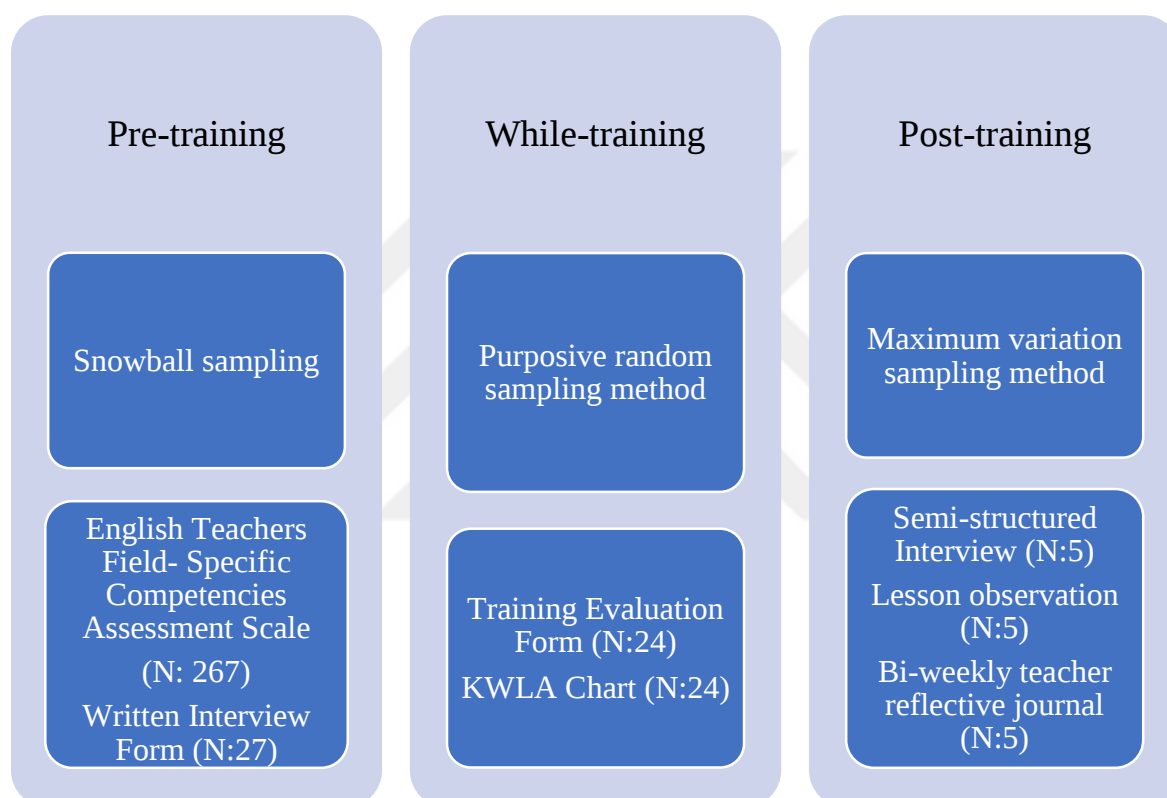


Figure 4. Overview of the sampling

As evident in Figure 4 above, quantitative data were collected from 267 English teachers working in public schools in Adana in the pre-training phase with the snowball sampling method. The English Teachers Field-Specific Competencies Assessment Scale, developed by Kararmaz and Aslan (2014), was applied to 267 English teachers to learn about teachers' perceptions of their field competencies. In addition, qualitative data were collected simultaneously from 27 teachers with a written interview form. A convergent parallel design requires the researcher to conduct the quantitative and qualitative aspects concurrently at the same phase of the research process, weigh the approaches equally,

analyze the two elements separately, and interpret the results together (Creswell & Pablo-Clark, 2011).

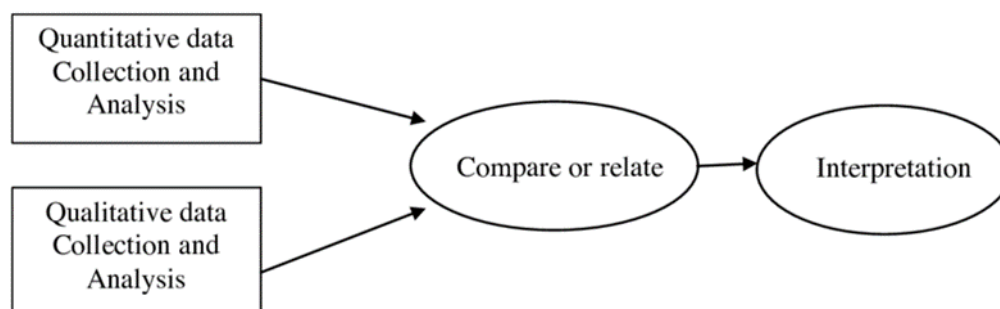


Figure 5. Convergent parallel design

As shown in Figure 5, a convergent (or parallel or concurrent) mixed methods design aims to gather quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously, integrate the data, and utilize the results to understand a research topic better. The primary logic for this approach is that one data collection type provides strengths to compensate for the other form's weaknesses. Gathering both quantitative and qualitative data results in a more comprehensive knowledge of a study subject (Clark & Creswell, 2014). The researcher collects both quantitative and qualitative data, analyzes both datasets independently, compares the outcomes of the study of both datasets, and concludes if the results support or refute each other.

For the study's second phase, an inset program was designed based on the results. After the program was prepared, a 'cooperation protocol in in-service training' was signed with a private university. English teachers working in public schools in the Sarıçam district of Adana province were informed about the training program, and applications were accepted for participation in the program with a purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling approach in which the components chosen for the sample are determined based on the researcher's judgment. Researchers frequently feel that they can acquire a fair representation by using competent judgment, saving time and money (Black, 2010). This sort of sampling may be effective when someone needs to obtain a particular sample rapidly, and proportionality is not the primary goal. Demographic information of the teachers who were accepted to the training program due to the applications is shown in Table 7 below:

Table 7.

The Demographic Data of the Inset Participants

Participants (N)	Gender		School Type		
	Female	Male	Primary	Secondary	High School
24	18	6	5	11	9

As seen in Table 7, 24 English teachers have completed the training. Female teachers constitute 75% (N:18) of all participants. Only 25% (N: 6) of a male participant profile appears. On the other hand, the highest number of participants consists of teachers working at the secondary school level. The least number of participants work in primary school.

For the follow-up phase of the study, four months after the training program, the third phase of the study was initiated with five English teachers who were volunteers among the participants and selected with the maximum variation sampling method to observe and evaluate the sustained effect of the program on teacher competencies. A maximum variation sample was chosen to give a varied set of instances related to certain phenomena or occurrences. This sample design aimed to offer as much information as possible on the event or phenomena under investigation. The professional experience, school context, and opportunities of each volunteer participant selected for this final stage vary. Thus, it was possible to evaluate the reflections of the education program in different educational ecologies. Also, answers were sought for questions such as ‘does in-service training have any sustained effect or not? If so, how do ambient conditions shape this effect?’ Demographic information of five English teachers, with whom we worked to observe the follow-up effect of the study, is shown in Table 8 below:

Table 8.

The Demographic Data of the Participants for the Follow-up Phase

Participant	Gender	Age	Professional Experience	School Type
Deniz	Female	34	7 years	Secondary (Rural)
Sedat	Male	39	8 years	Primary (Rural)
Kübra	Female	37	15 years	High School (Refugee Camp)
Didem	Female	36	11 years	Secondary (Centre)
Candan	Female	35	14 years	Primary (Centre)

As shown in Table 8, when utilizing a maximum variation sampling method, the researcher chooses a limited number of units or cases that have the most diversity related to the study subject to examine a small, homogenous collection of topics or units. As a result, researchers strive to understand how a phenomenon is seen and interpreted by various individuals in different locations and periods. For this reason, the researcher worked with the participants mentioned above to answer the final research question and evaluate the program's effectiveness in different educational settings.

3.6. Pilot Study

A pilot study is a brief study undertaken ahead of a planned project to evaluate components of the research design and allow for any adjustments before committing to the design in its final form. It is one of the most significant stages in a research project since it allows researchers to detect possible issue areas and flaws in the research equipment and methodology before they are used in the complete study. It can also assist members of the research team in becoming comfortable with the protocol's processes and deciding between two competing study approaches, such as employing interviews instead of a self-administered questionnaire (Hassan, Schattner, and Mazza, 2006; Lancaster, Dodd, and Williamson, 2004). To this end, the pilot study was conducted at the beginning of the second semester of the 2019-2020 academic year, just before the outbreak of the Covid pandemic. After this face-to-face study, an online session was also carried out during the distance education period.

The study participants were English language teachers working in public schools in the Sarıçam district. 26 English teachers participated in the pilot study. While 88.5% (N:23) of them were female teachers, 11.5% (N:3) of the participants were male teachers. Considering the age range of the participants, 73.1% were teachers between the ages of 31 and 40. Also, almost half of the participants (42.3%) had been working as English teachers for 11-15 years. 34.6% of the participants were English teachers for 6-10 years. There were only two teachers with more than 20 years of working experience. In addition, 76.9% of the participants had graduated in English Language Teaching. Other minority graduate fields were English language and literature, translation and interpreting, and philology. The following goals were explored for this pilot project, which was intended to serve as the foundation for a more comprehensive training program: To test research protocols; to provide an opportunity for the researcher to practice her teaching and organizational skills in preparation for the planned training; c) to gain an understanding of the participants' potential learning needs; d) to assess if the proposed project is possible; e) to identify potential weak points and challenges in the training phase.

The researcher intended to hold two sessions for 26 English teachers. The first part was a session delivered by an instructor from a private university regarding the direct influence of delivering instructions on learning. The second session was given by a native speaker, USA Fellow at Çukurova University, about 'How to engage students in digital classrooms?' It was the first time that MONE teachers took part in a face-to-face small-scale training organization offered by the District Directorate of National Education entirely in English. The participants, overall, had a good level of language competency and actively participated in the sessions. Even though it was the initial step, teachers answered a survey developed by Ekşi (2010) to provide us with information regarding the content of the following programs. Our teachers shared their happiness and excitement for the subsequent sessions following the workshop. They also discussed the absence of professional development opportunities within the MONE environment. As a result, the researcher has chosen to work even harder for teaching English and teachers' professional development. The scale results applied at the end of the pilot study are shown in Table 9 below.

Table 9.

Results of the Scale in the Pilot Study

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Sd
Attending professional development programs makes me feel more confident while teaching	26	3.00	5.00	4.69	.549
Professional development programs improve teaching competence	26	3.00	5.00	4.73	.533
Professional development programs help me improve my teaching skills	26	2.00	5.00	4.73	.666
Professional development programs make me reconsider my teaching methods	26	3.00	5.00	4.80	.491
Professional development programs are relevant to my needs and interests	26	2.00	5.00	4.61	.697
Professional development programs give me practical information that I can use in my classroom	26	1.00	5.00	4.53	.947

As shown in Table 9, the participants filled in a Likert-type scale including articles expressed as ‘I strongly agree’ (5), ‘I agree’ (4), ‘Undecided’ (3), ‘I disagree’ (2), and ‘I strongly disagree’ (1) on a level of agreement. The mean scores for each statement varied between 4.53 and 4.80. Item 4 (Professional development programs make me reconsider my teaching methods) received the highest mean score ($\bar{x} = 4.80$). In contrast, item 5 (Professional development programs give me practical information that I can use in my classroom) received the lowest mean score ($\bar{x} = 4.53$). Secondly, the participants were given 21 distinct areas for professional development and asked to rate their need for each area on a five-point scale, with 1 indicating ‘no need’ and 5 indicating ‘very high need.’ The total scores for each area were calculated to determine which area had the highest and lowest degree of need. The area with the greatest degree of need was determined to be ‘Use of Technology in ELT’ ($\bar{x} = 4.26$), followed by ‘Using games in ELT’ ($\bar{x} = 4.23$), as shown in Table 10 below:

Table 10.

Need Analysis Results

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lesson planning	26	2.88	1.366
Identifying learner characteristics	26	3.46	1.207
Increasing student motivation	26	4.00	1.264
Test development	26	3.23	1.305
Assessment and evaluation	26	3.61	1.202
Syllabus design	26	3.38	.982
Classroom management	26	3.30	1.378
Giving constructive feedback	26	3.92	1.055
Use of technology in ELT	26	4.26	.874
Using games in ELT	26	4.23	1.106
Storytelling	26	3.53	1.475
Using drama in ELT	26	3.57	1.270
New theories and practices of ELT	26	4.07	.890
English for specific purposes	26	3.19	1.296
Teaching integrated skills	26	4.07	1.055
Conducting classroom research	26	3.65	1.198
Preparing supplementary materials	26	3.73	1.150
Preparing students for exams	26	3.80	1.166
CEFR	26	3.69	1.378
Time management other teachers	26	3.38	1.387
Training other teachers	26	3.26	1.218

It also indicated that 88,5% of participants believed that professional development programs should be optional. ‘Workshop’ was deemed the most popular delivery format, while ‘seminar’ was determined to be the least liked. Seventy-three per cent of the participants said they prefer professional development activities at another institution in Adana. A ‘trainer or expert from an outside institution’ was chosen as the preferred speaker. Nobody chose a ‘colleague from my institution’ as an option to give the session. Half of the participants suggested that ‘weekday mornings’ would be the optimum time to plan a professional development activity. ‘Once a month’ was shown to be the most

preferred option for the frequency of organizing a professional development activity ($f = 14$). The perfect length for each session was up to 90 minutes.

To summarize, the pilot study was a simulation of the actual study for the researcher, who was also the trainer and researcher at the same time. It motivated her to collect data more efficiently and train participants for the actual research.

3.7. Data Collection Tools

Seven separate data collecting tools were devised and utilized throughout the study to guarantee with-in-method triangulation. The study's exploratory phase included quantitative and qualitative data, including a scale and a written interview form. During the action phase, the trainees also supplied qualitative data in the KWLA charts and open-ended questions on training assessment forms to supplement the quantitative data. Semi-structured interviews, bi-weekly reflective journals, and lesson observations were used to evaluate the impact of the training organization on teacher competencies during the reflection phase. The following sections include detailed information about the various tools available.

3.7.1. English Teachers Field- Specific Competencies Assessment Scale

Within the 'Support for Basic Education Project' (TEDP) scope, field-specific competencies covering the knowledge, skills, and attitudes have been prepared for teachers to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. Besides, for teachers to keep up with the changes of our age, they need to reconsider their competency levels and professional development. International studies reveal that teacher quality and proficiency levels significantly impact learning and student achievement and even affect national economies (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Goe & Stickler, 2008; OECD, 2005; Rivkin Hanushek, & Kain, 2001). For this reason, this study used this scale to define teacher competencies and conduct teacher professional development training based on competencies (See Appendix A). In addition, English Teachers Field- Specific Competencies Assessment Scale also serves the purpose of teachers' questioning their individual and professional competency levels, raising awareness about their current situation, creating professional development goals, and doing the necessary practices to reach their goals. In connection with these, the English Teachers Field-Specific Competencies Assessment Scale was used to collect quantitative data about EFL teachers'

perceptions of their field-specific competency levels. Also, it was among the purposes of using this scale to determine if teachers' perceived competency levels vary according to different variables.

The process of creating the scale used to determine the perceptions of English teachers about their specific field competencies is given in the following articles. (Kararmaz & Arslan, 2014).

a) The field-specific competencies of English language teachers, prepared by the Ministry of National Education, General Directorate of Teacher Training and Education, and approved by the Board of Education and Discipline, were examined. These competencies include proficiency area, scope, and performance indicators.

b) A test form of the scale was formed by considering five main qualification areas and a total of 26 sub-qualifications related to them and adapting them to work without disturbing the original qualification of the statements.

c) In the first part of the scale, personal information is provided. In the second part, 26 articles are provided to reveal the perceptions of English teachers about their special field competencies.

d) A Likert type scale including articles expressed as 'I strongly agree' (5), 'I agree' (4), 'Undecided' (3), 'I disagree' (2), and 'I strongly disagree' (1) was arranged to rate items on a level of agreement. There is no negative item on the scale.

e) It was filled by 83 primary English teachers who worked in Ereğli during the 2010-2011 academic year.

f) The Cronbach Alpha coefficient formula was used for the reliability study of the measurements. The reliability coefficients of the scale factors vary between 0.852 and 0.907. Accordingly, it can be said that the scale has high validity and reliability.

Table 11.

Reliability Analysis Results of the Scale

	Number of Items	Item Total Correlation	Cronbach Alfa
Planning and Organizing English Teaching Processes	5	0.611-0.749	0.873
Developing Language Skills	7	0.566-0.822	0.907
Monitoring and Evaluating Language Development	4	0.720-0.848	0.897
Collaborating with School, Family, and Community	6	0.483-0.767	0.852
Continuing Professional Development	4	0.704-0.867	0.896

When the Table is examined, the item-total correlation ranges of the factors and the reliability coefficients obtained in this study are given. The first of the factors in the scale is planning and organizing English teaching processes. This factor has a total of five items, with item-total correlations ranging from 0.611 to 0.749. This factor's Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient was found to be 0.873. The second factor, developing language skills, consists of 7 items, and the item-total correlations range from 0.566 to 0.822. This factor's Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient was found to be 0.907. The third factor, monitoring and evaluating language development, includes four items, and item-total correlations range from 0.720 to 0.848. This factor's Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient was found to be 0.897. In addition, the fourth factor, collaborating with school, family, and community, consists of 6 items, and the item-total correlations of the items vary between 0.483 and 0.767. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of this factor was found to be 0.852. Finally, there are four items in the fifth component, continuing professional development, with item-total correlations ranging from 0.704 to 0.867. This factor's Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient was discovered to be 0.896. As is apparent in Table, the reliability coefficients of the scale's factors vary between 0.852 and 0.907. Accordingly, it can be said that the scale makes measurements with high validity and reliability (Karamaz & Arslan, 2014, p.64).

3.7.2. Written Interview Form

The written interview form was another qualitative approach employed to collect data from the participants. This form was applied online to 27 English language teachers in the exploration part of the study (See Appendix B). This written interview form was applied to gain a deeper understanding of teachers' perceptions about their subject area competencies, learn which areas they feel more or less competent in, and determine which areas they need professional development to improve their competencies. Eight questions in the interview form required the teachers to answer them according to their perceptions and teaching experiences.

Table 12.

Written Interview on EFL Teacher Competencies

Question Types	Wh- questions		Yes/No Questions		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Background questions	1	16.67	-	-	1	12.50
Transition Questions	1	16.67	1	50.00	2	25.00
Key Questions	3	50.00	1	50.00	4	50.00
Closing Questions	1	16.67	-	-	1	12.50
Total	6	100.00	2	100.00	8	100.00

As can be observed from Table 12, most of the Wh- Questions are seen in key questions (50 %), while the second coming dispersion is seen in transition questions (25 %) within this category in total. Besides, Wh- Questions emerge with a percentage of 16.67 both in the background section and closing questions. The Yes/No questions emerge in the transition and key questions equally. In total, key questions have the highest percentage (50 %) among all kinds of questions.

In the background questions, teachers were asked how they would describe the concept of 'competency.' Background questions are informative inquiries that aid in comprehending a subject. Typically, the questions contain one or two concepts and do not require the same procedure as research or evidence-based questions. For the transition part, teachers answered if they had been informed about the general competencies of the teaching profession and field-specific competencies set by Turkish MONE. They were

also required to share their thoughts about the competencies of an effective English teacher in this part. The question that the study is attempting to address is known as a key interview question. For this part of the interview, there are four questions. These questions include whether teachers consider themselves competent, in which areas they find themselves more/less competent, in which areas they need improvement, and what they do to develop their competencies. The closing part answered which subjects they would need to support their competencies if participating in an in-service teacher training program.

3.7.3. KWLA Chart

Participants' prior knowledge of their professions, relevant competency needs areas, and overall learning gains were all ignited by Ogle's KWL chart (1986). Furthermore, the workshop instructors were acquainted with the participants' prior knowledge of the subject and their expectations and concerns. KWL and other graphic organizing tools can be used to show a learner's prior understanding of a topic or portion of text. Therefore, a KWLA chart, a refined version of Ogle's (1986) KWL chart, was used to engage participating teachers' existing understanding in the current study. Teachers wrote their K (what they KNOW) and W (what they WANT to learn) columns on the first day and then discussed K and W with their colleagues. On the last day, they completed the L (what they LEARNED) and A (what they want to APPLY) columns to reflect on their learning (see Appendix C).

The applicability of this strategy in different fields and subjects, each stage of which is appropriate for the learning styles, is also an organizational tool that helps the students and teachers to reveal the knowledge they know (Tok & Sarı, 2007, 3). While applying this strategy, teachers should evaluate their students' knowledge using brainstorming and questions effectively. Then, considering that the students have the necessary preliminary knowledge about the subject to be learned, the learning phase should be started; if they do not have sufficient prior knowledge about the subject, first of all, the teacher should build up the knowledge of the students (Moreillon, 2007; cited in Gürbüz, 2014, 29).

Teachers may also use the KWLA chart to better grasp what they have learned and hone their skills toward their objectives. KWLA charts even allow teachers to customize each person based on their particular needs. The charts help keep the trainers

and the learner on the same page, which keeps both students and teachers engaged without allowing them to stray from the topic. The KWLA chart used in this study was used to determine the previous knowledge of the teachers participating in the training, self-question their expectations, and raise awareness about the learning gains at the end of the training.

3.7.4. Training Evaluation Form

A training evaluation form is a tool used by trainers to collect feedback from trainees. It is used to identify skill gaps and problems to help improve training programs and the overall experience. Also, the main purpose of evaluating a training program is to know whether it has achieved or failed its objectives. Analyzing the training event by using appropriate evaluation tools can improve the outcome of future training to a considerable extent. According to Borg (2018), ‘professional development is central to teacher competence and, with particular attention to a larger scale, structured and formal professional development interventions’ (p.1). Therefore, the researcher created the form herself, taking into account the relevant evaluation criteria, revising it in light of the expert opinion, and applying it as a training evaluation tool (see Appendix D). The purpose of utilizing this form was to find out the extent to which learners found the training sessions beneficial based on the

- *objectives* (Item 1. The training met my expectation; Item 2. I will be able to apply the knowledge learned to my work; Item 3. The training objectives for each topic were identified and followed),
- *content* (Item 4. The content was organized and easy to follow; Item 7. The quality of instruction was good),
- *trainers* (Item 6. The trainer was knowledgeable; Item 8. The trainer met the training objectives; Item 9. Class participation and interaction were encouraged),
- *resources* (Item 5. The materials distributed were relevant and useful; Item 10. Adequate time was provided for questions and discussions; Item 11. The training room set up was comfortable and contributory to learning).

The trainees were asked to indicate their degree of agreement, which ranged from ‘Strongly disagree (1)’ to ‘Strongly agree (5),’ with the questions.

In the second part of the evaluation form, teachers were asked how they rate the topics and sessions in the training program separately. In doing so, they were expected to rate each session as ‘excellent’, ‘good’, ‘average’, ‘poor’, and ‘very poor’. Finally, they rated the entire training organization in an overall way.

For the third part, the training evaluation form includes open-ended questions to get the necessary opinions of the participants in a detailed way. The benefit of an open-ended inquiry is that there are no restrictions on the response. That means that the participants can tell you what they think is relevant and want you to know. On the other hand, open-ended questions give participants the opportunity and space to react in as much depth as they like. Extra detail aids in qualifying and clarifying their comments, resulting in more accurate information and valuable insight for the researcher. All this flexibility to provide an answer of any length or amount of detail implies that the researcher may occasionally come upon something entirely unusual and unexpected among answers.

3.7.5. Semi-structured Interviews

Interviewing is a form of introspective data collection used to examine teachers' internal viewpoints on their practices and why they do. Interviews are advantageous because they allow researchers to address specific issues and uncover attitudes and professed ideas, routines, objectives, and scripts (Bartels, 2005, p.5). A researcher can gain a detailed picture of the interviewee's reality through interviews (Patton, 1987, p.109). Interviews can complement observational data, especially when observational data fails to capture emotional experiences and personal insights that cannot be comprehended simply by observing. According to Patton (1990, p.278), we cannot see feelings, ideas, and intentions, which can only be learned by questioning the individual. As a result, interviews are one of the primary data collecting strategies for the current study, as the research questions demand information on the trainees' thoughts.

This study conducted semi-structured interviews with five English teachers four months after the in-service teacher activity for the reflection part of the research. The purpose of the interviews was to investigate the program's effectiveness, evaluate the impact of the process on the participating teachers, and discuss the possible positive and

negative aspects of the teacher training organization before the course observation and reflective journals writing process started. In doing so, they were asked pre-determined questions and sub-questions for more clarity, in-depth thinking, and occasionally confirmation of what had been inadequately articulated.

In the first part of the interview, the researcher asked general questions to the teachers. These questions include what grade level the teachers teach and their total number of lessons per week. These answers also gave the researcher preliminary information about the possible classroom environment and curriculum for lesson observation. In the second part of the interview, the researcher asked the teachers some key questions about the in-service training program. With *wh-* and *yes/no questions*, the researcher aimed to analyse the effect of the training on the participants in this interview, which was held four months after the in-service training. The answers also provided important clues to the researcher before the lesson observations. In the third part of the interview, they discussed the possible reasons why some of the methods and techniques they learned in training could not be applied in the classroom under different headings. In the last part of the interview, the researcher tried to understand the ideal in-service training form in their mind by discussing the closing question: What would you change, add or exclude if you organized this program? (See Appendix E)

The researcher also improved their connection via interviews by encouraging them to think thoughtfully about training activities more securely and cooperatively. They could express themselves freely in their mother tongue since they were the primary source of information to portray the impact.

3.7.6. Lesson Observation Form

According to Hammersley (2007), observation may be used in place of or in addition to interview, documentary, or questionnaire data while doing research. Therefore, the ‘Observation Form for English Lessons According to Field-Specific Competencies’ adapted from Arslan (2018) and developed by the researcher was used to observe the effect of the in-service training organization on the teaching process and teacher competencies (see Appendix F). This observation form aims to describe the English teaching lessons, content, and teaching process and examine the effect of the in-service training on the specific field competencies of the participating teachers. The researcher observed eight lessons of five volunteer English language teachers who

participated in the training. She was a non-participant observer, which meant that she participated in the observation by passively monitoring the teachers.

The lesson observation form prepared consists of seven parts: (i) general information (ii) classroom environment, (iii) the subject being taught, (iv) planning and organizing teaching processes, (v) developing language skills, and (vi) monitoring and evaluating language development, and (vii) ensuring professional development. In the first part, there is general information about the course observation, such as the name of the course, grade level, and date of observation. The second part describes the classroom environment, such as the number of students in the classroom, the physical characteristics of the classroom, the classroom atmosphere, and the materials in the lesson. The third part is about the learning outcomes and content of the course. The fourth part aimed to reveal the teaching process of the course based on field-specific competencies. This section contains phrases to remind sub-headings and performance indicators for each proficiency area. In the next section, the researcher added developing language skills to observe. She tried to understand how participant teachers teach different language skills in their classrooms. Also, the researcher observed how teachers monitor and evaluate learning in their classrooms using various tools. The last part of the observation includes teachers' efforts to sustain their professional development.

In the development of this observation form, (i) literature review, (ii) selection of special field competencies to be emphasized, (iii) determination of keywords expressing performance indicators of the selected competencies, (iv) creation of the draft form, (v) the steps of obtaining an expert opinion on the suitability of the draft form were followed.

3.7.7. Bi-weekly Teacher Reflective Journal

Qualitative research, particularly in the behavioural sciences, relies on reflective journals as a data collection tool (Janesick, 1999). These journals are seen to be an excellent tool for gathering information on an individual's thoughts and feelings (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). The journal data provides process information (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). Programs and changes are shown in action, and the participants' perceptions of these events are shown. Researchers can also use this information to assess the success or contribution of the process or change. In other words, it can be suggested that teachers' reflection mirrors the habit of thinking critically about an event or action (Bullock & Muschamp, 2004).

Journals are multifaceted tools that may take various forms (Boud, 2001). Anderson (2012) asserts that using journals as an instructional tool promotes reflection, critique, and self-analysis. In this study, four months following the training, the teachers recruited using the maximum variation sample approach were required to write four bi-weekly reflective journals. Teachers were asked to reflect bi-weekly on their sustained learning gains from teacher training and plans for further professional development throughout the researcher's lesson observation process. The teachers prepared their reflection reports for eight weeks (two months). Before starting the post-training phase reflection process, the selected teachers were encouraged to be thoughtful and critical. In reality, the sole prerequisite for producing the reports was truthful, realistic, and comfortable. In addition, the teachers were given certain leading questions discussed in the following paragraph. (See Appendix G)

In the reflective journals, teachers were required to reflect on the things that go well with examples of the most successful teaching moments. Apart from that, they were also expected to write down their ideas about the very challenging moments and how they coped with these situations. For both situations, they were asked to include their feelings as well. Moreover, they mentioned possible areas in which they need further assistance and guidance in developing their competencies. Lastly, they noted down their ongoing professional development activities or planned to pave the way for better teaching.

Five selected trainees from various educational contexts were voluntarily involved in this reflection writing process for eight weeks. Each teacher submitted four reports to the researcher in this follow-up phase. In addition, the teachers wrote reflection reports to evaluate the training, their learning gains, and themselves. For the study, a total of 20 individual reflection reports were obtained.

3.8. Data Collection Procedure

In this study, which aims to develop the field competencies of English teachers through an in-service training program, the data collection process has been completed in three different phases. First, the researcher started collecting data from the participants after receiving approval from the Çukurova University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee (See Appendix H) and the Adana Governorship Provincial Directorate of National Education (See Appendix I). Since this research is an exploratory case study, the first step of the data collection process has started exploring perceptions

and needs. An in-service training program titled ‘Developing EFL Teachers’ Competencies’ was designed with the data obtained from the exploration phase. The researcher applied the training evaluation form and KWLA chart data collection tools in this phase. Finally, four months after the training program was implemented, the follow-up phase of the study was completed with five volunteer English teachers among the participants to evaluate the program’s effectiveness and learning outcomes. Semi-structured interviews, 8-week course observation, and bi-weekly reflective teacher journals were utilized as data collection tools.

3.8.1. Pre-training phase

Exploratory research on a topic is frequently a required initial step to satisfy the researcher’s interest in the subject and better understand the phenomena and the research participants to construct a more extensive following study. The Exploration stage occurs long before a new program or practice is implemented. The general purpose of this stage is to determine whether a proposed innovation or technique fulfils the community’s demands and whether or not the application is practical. Spending time figuring out what to do, how to do all of this, and who will do it keeps costs down and increases the likelihood of success (Saldana, Chamberlain, Wang, & Brown, 2011).

The exploration phase, which was the first stage of this study process, consisted of gaining knowledge of ELF teachers’ perspectives of field-specific competencies set by Turkish MONE. On the other hand, this phase aimed to learn which competency areas teachers feel more successful or inadequate and determine the competencies in which they need professional development. Since the primary purpose of the research is to develop general knowledge, skills, and attitudes specific to fields to fulfil the teaching profession effectively and efficiently, it is also of great importance to developing the competencies needed in this field. For this reason, this stage of the research can be considered a kind of needs analysis.

English Teachers Field-Specific Competencies Assessment Scale created by Kararmaz & Arslan, 2014 was utilized in this study to identify teacher competencies and to perform competency-based teacher professional development training. Furthermore, this scale assists in challenging teachers’ individual and professional competency levels, raising awareness about their situations, creating professional development objectives, and implementing the necessary practices to achieve their goals. Primarily, this scale was

applied via an online survey of 267 English teachers by snowball sampling. In addition, additional questions were added to the demographic information section to examine the effects of different variables on teachers' perceptions of competency. Simultaneously, 27 English teachers filled in written interview forms prepared by the researcher to obtain in-depth knowledge on the relevant subject. Then, the obtained data were analyzed with the convergent parallel design method, and the qualitative and quantitative data thus complemented each other.

Based on the results obtained from the data, the researcher designed a new training program by the framework of the in-service training programs prepared by the Ministry of National Education, General Directorate of Teacher Development and Training (see Appendix J). The training program has been designed to consider the 32nd article of the Ministry of National Education In-Service Training Regulation. According to this article, the weekly working hours of in-service training activities cannot be less than 25 lesson hours and more than 40 lesson hours. In addition, daily working hours cannot be less than 4 lesson hours and more than 10 lesson hours. Daily lesson hours are 50 minutes, and block lessons are 90 minutes. Hence, the training program has been prepared as 30 lesson hours.

After identifying the competencies in which teachers need improvement, the Sarıçam District Directorate of National Education signed a 'Collaboration in In-Service Training' protocol with a private university. It also symbolizes a joint step taken by the Ministry of National Education and a higher education institution in teachers' professional development.

3.8.2. Developing EFL Teachers' Competencies Training Program

The implementation of the in-service training program constitutes the second phase of the study, the while-training part. After the training program was prepared, the English teachers working in the schools of the Sarıçam district were informed by the school principals to identify the teachers who wanted to participate in the professional development program, and the applications were accepted. After the applications were completed, official permission was obtained from the Sarıçam District Governorship to implement the program (see Appendix K). The content, scope, and relevant competency areas of the training program are presented in Table 13 below:

Table 13.

Developing EFL Teachers' Competencies Inset Program

Date	Title of the session	Lesson hour
June 7th, 2021	Ice-breaking activities/ Teacher competencies	2 hours
June 7th, 2021	Web 2.0 tools: Engage learners in EFL classrooms	3 hours
June 8th, 2021	The integration of 21st-century skills into foreign language education	3 hours
June 8th, 2021	Teacher as a researcher	3 hours
June 9th, 2021	Positive psychology in EFL classrooms	3 hours
June 9th, 2021	Classroom-based language assessment and its role in promoting a positive classroom environment	3 hours
June 10th, 2021	Advertisements as language teaching materials: The Starbucks sample	3 hours
June 10th, 2021	Teacher autonomy shapes teaching anatomy	3 hours
June 11th, 2021	Use of games in English language classrooms	2 hours
June 11th, 2021	A stance at writing activities in English classes	3 hours
June 11th, 2021	Project-based English language teaching: E-twinning	2 hours
TOTAL		30 hours

As shown in the Table, the objectives in the in-service training program were blended with different contexts and took their final form above. Although there was a need for foreign language teaching to students with special needs, this subject could not be included in the program due to the lack of experts to provide training on this subject.

During this study, two different data collection tools were used. The first one was a training evaluation form that included qualitative and quantitative evaluation criteria. At the end of the training, it was filled by 24 of our participants. The training evaluation form consisted of three sections. In the first section, the trainees were asked to identify their level of agreement with the questions, which ranged from 'Strongly disagree (1)' to 'Strongly agree (5).' Teachers were asked to score the topics and sessions in the training program separately in the second section of the evaluation form. They were asked to score each session as 'excellent,' 'good,' 'average,' 'poor,' or 'very poor.' Finally, they gave an overall rating to the entire training organization. The third section of the training

evaluation form comprises open-ended questions designed to elicit thorough responses from participants.

Another data collection tool used in the while-training phase was the KWLA chart. The KWLA chart was utilized in this study to identify the teachers' prior knowledge, self-question their assumptions, and raise awareness of the learning gains at the end of the training. For this reason, the same chart has been filled in twice by the same people, both at the beginning of the training program and the end of the training. At the beginning of the training, participants filled in the K (Know) and W (Want to learn) columns of the KWLA chart. Later, they filled in L (What I Learned) and A (How will I Apply what I learned) columns at the end of the training program. The third question of the research was answered by analyzing the data obtained from both data collection tools.

3.8.3. Follow-up Phase

The final part of this project aims to observe teachers transitioning from being recipients of learning activities to actively employing these new skills and knowledge in their close environment because the most significant feature of an efficient in-service training program is that it enables the gained knowledge can be used in the classroom (Rust & Dalin, 1990, p. 75).

The first part of the follow-up phase started with semi-structured interviews consisting of five English teachers four months following the in-service teacher training program. Before the lesson observation and bi-weekly reflective journal writing process began, the purpose of the interviews was to investigate the program's effectiveness, evaluate the impact of the process on the participating teachers, and discuss the potential positive and negative aspects of the teacher training program. For this reason, online semi-structured interviews were conducted with five volunteer English teachers selected by the maximum variation sampling method. The interview with each teacher lasted between 25 and 30 minutes. The obtained qualitative data were analyzed by the content analysis method. After the interviews were completed, each of our teachers determined the appropriate day and class time to observe the lesson. With the lesson observation form created by the researcher, each teacher was observed in their classroom environment for eight weeks. Detailed information about the lesson observations can be seen in Table 14 below:

Table 14.

Participant information about the lesson observation phase

	Total number of lesson	Observation start date	Observation end date	School type
Deniz	8	October 5th, 2021	December 7th, 2021	Secondary (Rural)
Sedat	8	October 5th, 2021	December 7th, 2021	Primary (Rural)
Kübra	8	October 6th, 2021	December 1st, 2021	High School (Refugee Camp)
Didem	8	October 8th, 2021	December 10th, 2021	Secondary (Centre)
Candan	8	October 14th, 2021	December 10th, 2021	Primary (Centre)

As the table shows, the researcher observed five English teachers working in different educational contexts for eight weeks in total. According to the teachers' lesson and time availability, this period started on October 5th, 2021, and ended on December 10th, 2021. During these eight weeks, besides the course observation process, they filled out bi-weekly reflective journals prepared by the researcher. The follow-up phase of the training program was evaluated with a holistic approach. The content analysis technique was applied to the obtained data, and the effectiveness of the training program and other factors affecting this situation were evaluated together.

3.9. Data Analysis

This study investigates EFL teacher trainees' perceptions of subject area competencies, learning gains, and opinions during and four months following training. Furthermore, it is intended to develop and propose an in-service training course for EFL teachers working in public schools. Based on this, it is believed that the study motivates teachers to improve their EFL teaching competencies. In this respect, one of the essential aspects of this research is collecting data on trainees' and researchers' perspectives on the efficiency of the training and their ideas to enhance the training for future related objectives. To achieve those goals, the study used both a qualitative and quantitative approach to data collecting and analysis; nonetheless, the qualitative approach dominated

the data collection process, and hence the data analysis process. Table 15 below displays the defined research questions, as well as the relevant data collection tools and analysis methods, to help understand the data analysis procedure:

Table 15.

The Data Collection Tools and Data Analysis Techniques per Research Question

Phases of the Study	Research Questions	Data Collection Tools	Data Analysis Techniques
Pre-Training	1. What are the perceived competency levels of in-service English language teachers regarding field-specific competencies set by Turkish MONE?	English Teachers Field- Specific Competencies Assessment Scale	Descriptive and Inferential Statistics- SPSS25
	1.a. Are there any statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' competency perceptions regarding gender, department of graduation, work experience, school type, and previous in-service training activities?		
Pre-Training	2. What do in-service EFL teachers think about the competencies an effective English language teacher needs to have?		Computer Content Analysis- MAXQDA 22
	2.a. Do they think they bear these competencies as teachers?	Written Interview Form	
	2.b. In which areas do they find themselves more competent and successful?		
	2.c. In which areas do they need support to develop their competencies professionally?		
While-Training	3. How do EFL teachers evaluate the in-service training program they participated in?	Training Evaluation Form	Descriptive Statistics- SPSS25

	3.a. Are there any specific learning gains for EFL teachers during the training program? If yes, what are they?	KWLA Chart	Computer Content Analysis-MAXQDA 22
	3.b. What are their expectations for further inset programs?		
Post-Training	4. To what extent does the in-service teacher training have an impact on EFL teachers' competencies from different educational contexts four months after the completion of the program?	Semi-structured Interviews Lesson Observation Form	Computer Content Analysis-MAXQDA 22
	4.a. What challenges (if any) did the teachers face while implementing what they learned in their educational context?	Bi-weekly Teacher Reflection Paper	

The first two research questions were developed for the pre-training phase, as shown in Table. Along with the first research question, 267 English teachers filled out the 'English Teachers Field-Specific Competencies Assessment Scale' developed by Karamaz & Aslan (2014) to investigate the perceptions of English teachers working in public schools in Adana about the subject area competencies they are expected to have. With this data collected through this survey, descriptive and inferential statistics were used to see the effect of different variables on these perceptions. At this stage, quantitative data were analyzed with the statistical program. To get complementary data, 20 English language teachers filled out a written interview form developed by the researcher. This written interview form was used to learn more about teachers' evaluations of their subject area competencies, learn which areas they feel more or less competent in, and identify which areas they need professional development to improve. Qualitative data gathered from written interview forms have been analyzed using computer content analysis through MAXQDA 22. The data from both data collection tools that we used to answer the two research questions in the pre-training phase were analyzed using the convergent parallel design approach. The concurrent convergent-parallel technique includes collecting qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously, then combining and comparing these different data sources. This method entails gathering various yet

complementary data on the same phenomenon. As a result, it is employed for combining and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data. Because the data is gathered and processed independently yet at the same time, this method is known as ‘concurrent triangulation design’ (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2017, p.181).

Regarding the while-training phase, necessary research was carried out to obtain answers to the third research question and sub-questions (3a and 3b). A training evaluation form and a KWLA chart were used to gather data. The researcher evaluated qualitative and quantitative data from the training evaluation form, which aims to assess the program’s effectiveness in many ways, using statistical and content analysis. In addition, it aims to evaluate the learning outcomes with the KWLA charts that all participants fill out both before the program's start and at the end of the program. For this reason, the researcher conducted a deductive thematic content analysis of the qualitative data from KWLA charts. However, the data obtained from some open-ended questions in the training evaluation form were also analyzed by the inductive content analysis method, and relevant inferences were made. The reason for making a deductive coding to the data is that the effectiveness of this in-service training program, prepared within the framework of the competencies determined by the Ministry of National Education, is also evaluated in the light of the same parameters. Deductive coding entails beginning with a pre-existing set of codes and then assigning those codes to new qualitative data. These codes might originate from past studies, or you could already know what themes you want to investigate.

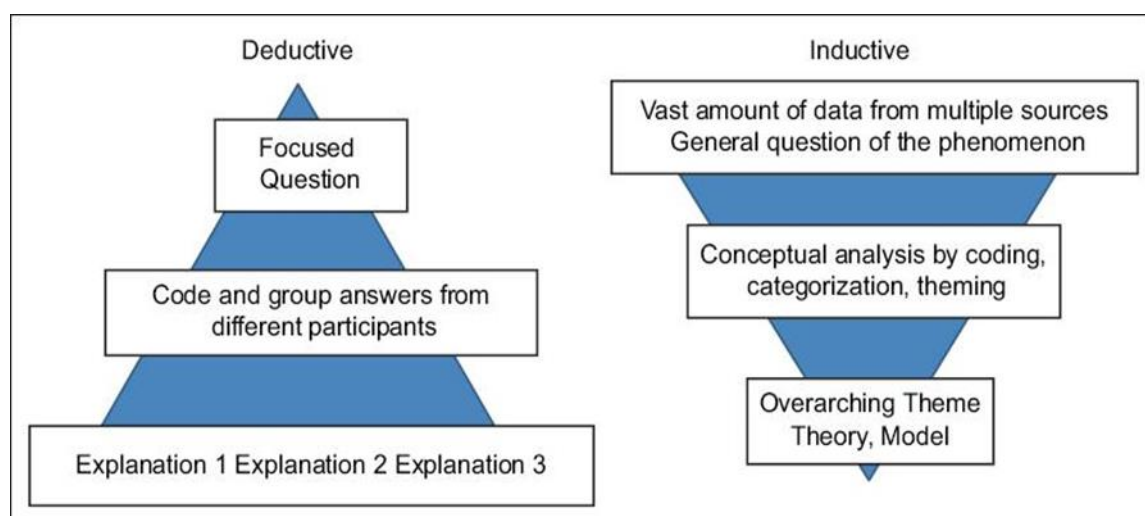


Figure 6. Approaches to qualitative data analysis

Source: Ravindran, 2019, p.41

As shown in Figure 6, deductive and inductive approaches to qualitative data analysis are possible. Although the deductive process, which attempts to demonstrate causal linkages, is associated with quantitative research, it may also be used as a deductive explanation technique or a deductive category adaptation (Mayring, 2000). A deductive analysis method can be utilized when the researcher is interested in specific phenomena, and the research question is specialized rather than broad (Ravindran, 2019). Instead of advancing to a more interpretative or conceptual level, the deductive approach in qualitative data analysis allows the researcher to stay at a descriptive level where the results are closer to the participants' perspectives. Thus, the data obtained from the KWLA chart were analyzed in a deductive manner under the themes of 'Teaching Profession General Competencies' created by the Ministry of National Education (see Appendix L).

Research question 4 was formulated for the post-training phase. In this phase, four months after the in-service training program, the researcher collected qualitative data from five participants selected by the maximum variation sampling method to analyze the program's effectiveness. At the same time, the learning gains of participants were evaluated in terms of sustainability. In addition, the effect of the environment in which they work on the development of their competencies has also been observed. At this stage, the researcher used semi-structured interviews, lesson observation forms, and bi-weekly reflective teacher journals as data collection tools. The obtained data were analyzed with both inductive and deductive content analysis approaches, and the developments in their related competencies were noted.

3.10. Trustworthiness of the Study

Trustworthiness in social science research relates to how logical, rational, and repeatable the findings are, and it explicitly addresses how these criteria apply in different situations (McKenney et al., 2006). Many social science researchers use trustworthiness as a broader notion that encompasses both validity and dependability, primarily seen in quantitative research (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). According to Jupp (2006), validity represents the extent to which study findings provide an accurate explanation of what happened or a proper explanation of what happened and why, while reliability refers to the extent to which a measurement tool generates correct findings.

According to Roberts, Priest, & Traynor (2006), making a study trustworthy necessitates the researcher's participation in verification procedures, including prolonged field engagement, clarification of researcher bias, member checks, peer review, external audit, triangulation, thick description, and reflexivity. Creswell (1998) states that at least two of these steps must be met to acquire trustworthiness. To ensure that the interpretations in qualitative investigations are valid, we need to verify the findings by assuring specific criteria such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.301). The following actions were implemented to improve the study's trustworthiness.

Credibility: The credibility of this study was assured by my prolonged engagement as a researcher throughout the whole research procedure since I was also one of the trainers throughout the training program. In addition, four months following the in-service teacher training program, I observed the participants' lessons, evaluated their bi-weekly teacher reflective journals, and conducted semi-structured interviews to examine the sustained learning gains. Following the interviews, each participant's trustworthiness was checked. Participants were asked to verify if the interpretations were complete and genuine and whether the themes were appropriate, as Creswell & Miller (2000) suggested. Participants were asked to provide feedback on the data and interpretations to reduce the chances of their words being misunderstood. The original Turkish translations of the interview data were also provided. Peer debriefings, which were conducted regularly during the research with two separate academics aside from the study's supervisor, are another feature that supports the credibility of the findings. Peer debriefing is the process of improving the study's validity by working with one or more peers, an unbiased and objective individual with no personal stake in the topic. This process allowed me to eliminate all disruptions from the study environment and continue working on the research successfully. Lastly, triangulation was also developed to enhance the study's accuracy by correlating evidence from various data and data collection methods, including a questionnaire, a written interview form, a training evaluation form, a KWLA chart, semi-structured interviews, and lesson observations with bi-weekly teacher reflective journals.

Dependability: The stability or consistency of the inquiry procedures utilized throughout time is dependability. The credibility and dependability of a qualitative study are inextricably linked and guaranteeing the former aids in establishing the latter. To

strengthen the dependability of this study, the researcher documented a strategic description of the research design and implementation, field stages, and research process effectiveness (Shenton, 2004). The current study's research design and implementation were extensively explained in this regard. The data collection procedure for each step of the study, or what was done in the field, was covered in depth.

Transferability: The study's trustworthiness is also determined by its applicability in distinct contexts. However, qualitative studies do not seek to generalize the findings since they understand unique instances in their setting. Holloway (1997) states that thick description paints a vivid picture of persons and groups within the context of their culture and the environment in which they live. It can be understood that a thick description entails more than just taking notes and summarizing something. It entails giving the background knowledge required to comprehend social interactions' significance, interpretations, and intentions. As a result, a detailed explanation of the research setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316) might help other researchers understand what contexts the findings are appropriate. The research and training procedures and the data gathering instruments and analysis were all thoroughly described in this inquiry.

Confirmability: This criterion refers to the degree of certainty that the research study's conclusions are based on the participants' accounts and ideas rather than possible researcher biases. The primary task in ensuring the research's confirmability was to guarantee that the conclusions were not the researcher's own biases, beliefs, and experiences but rather the results of the informants' data. To accomplish this, the judgments taken and the justifications behind the applied techniques and practices were purposely disclosed to prevent the researcher's bias or prejudice from interfering. In addition, triangulation was used to decrease the impact of such bias to increase confirmability in the current study. In doing so, comprehensive methodological information is intended to assist the readers in understanding how the study was developed and how data was collected and analyzed (Shenton, 2004). Furthermore, data collection and analysis happened continuously, allowing the researcher to continue the study iteratively. This was also important in convincing the readers that the conclusions were the outcome of the informants' ideas and experiences rather than the researcher's preferences.

3.11. Ethical Considerations

Carrying out research demands a high level of sensitivity to achieve the ethical criteria for each study phase. The ethics that regulate how scientific and other research is conducted at research organizations such as universities and how it is distributed are known as ethical guidelines. According to Resnick (2015), research ethics are essential for various reasons. They advance the goals of the research, such as knowledge expansion. They also promote collaborative work principles such as mutual respect and sensitivity. This is critical since scientific research relies on cooperation amongst researchers and groups. For this purpose, on September 30th, 2020, the researcher first received consent from the Çukurova University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee to avoid breaking an ethical guideline. Immediately after this, the Adana Governorship Provincial Directorate of National Education Provincial Research and Evaluation Commission gave an ‘appropriate’ report for research on November 11th, 2020, to collect data on the relevant subject.

After collecting qualitative and quantitative data in this study's ‘Exploration’ part, an in-service training module was designed. Teachers applied on an entirely voluntary basis after being informed about the program. With the participants’ list, Sarıçam District National Education Directorate applied to Sarıçam District Governorate and obtained legal application permission on June 2nd, 2021. The pilot and the actual research participants were told that their participation was entirely voluntary. They have the right to withdraw from the research at any time and without explanation.

Furthermore, the participants were informed about the study's scope and goals and that their names would be used confidentially in the study before signing their consent forms (See Appendix L). They were also assured that the information they provided would not be shared with anyone. Furthermore, in the lesson observations, which is the third stage of the research, the teachers’ lessons were observed according to the times they were available, and pseudonyms were used to keep their identities confidential. Finally, since Çukurova University Science Research Projects Department supported this research, the stages related to the study were presented to the relevant department at regular intervals, and a transparency principle was adopted in this process.

3.12. Chapter Summary

This chapter addressed the research paradigm, research design, participants, sampling technique, and the research setting and teacher training procedure. After that, each data collection tool and the appropriate data analysis methods were discussed in-depth. Finally, details about the pilot research, the study's trustworthiness, and ethical issues have been presented.



CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The quantitative and qualitative data findings are reported in this chapter in line with the research questions. As the data was acquired at different periods, it is presented in chronological sequence, covering the pre- (exploration), during-, and post-training phases. The interpretations of the pertinent findings are provided at the end of each step of the investigation.

4.2 Findings of the Exploration Phase

The exploration phase, which was the initial part of this research, entailed learning about ELF teachers' perceptions of competencies. On the other hand, this phase intended to establish which competency areas teachers felt more competent or inadequate in and which competencies they needed professional development. Because the research's primary goal is to build general knowledge, abilities, and attitudes relevant to specific subjects to perform the teaching profession successfully and efficiently, strengthening the competencies required in this field is critical.

4.2.1. What are the perceived competency levels of in-service English language teachers regarding field-specific competencies set by Turkish MONE?

The first research question investigates English teachers' perceptions of subject area competencies in public schools. In this section, it was aimed to see the competency levels of all participants, secondly, to investigate their level of competency in terms of specific categories such as planning and organizing English teaching processes, developing language skills, monitoring and evaluating language development, collaborating with the school, family, and community, and finally continuing professional development in English. The English Teachers Field-Specific Competencies Assessment Scale developed by Kararmaz & Arslan (2014) was utilized to determine teachers' competency levels and provide competency-based teacher professional development training. Since the scale has five sub-categories, the descriptive results are tabulated separately for each category. There is no negative item on the scale. For the interpretation

of the data, mean scores were evaluated as follows: 1.00 – 1.80 ‘strongly disagree,’ 1.81 – 2.60 ‘disagree,’ 2.61 – 3.40 ‘undecided,’ 3.41 – 4.20 ‘agree’ and 4.21–5.00 (5) ‘strongly agree.’

Table 16.

Teacher Perceptions Regarding ‘Planning and Organizing English Teaching Processes’

Descriptive Statistics

Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Sd
I can make planning appropriate for English language teaching.	267	2	5	4.11	.588
I can organize learning environments suitable for teaching English.	267	2	5	4.21	.497
I can use materials and resources appropriate for the English teaching process.	267	3	5	4.31	.517
I can use methods and techniques appropriate for the English teaching process.	267	3	5	4.19	.568
I can use technological resources in teaching English.	267	2	5	3.95	.785
TOTAL	267	2,8	5	4.19	.441

As shown in Table 16, 267 English language teachers participated in this study. According to Table 16, it is possible to say that the highest mean score belongs to the scale item ‘*I can use materials and resources appropriate for the English teaching process*’ ($\bar{x}$: 4.31), whereas the lowest mean is related to the statement ‘*I can use technological resources in teaching English*’ ($\bar{x}$: 3.95, SD: .785). Although the participants generally see themselves as competent in the planning and organization of the English lesson, it can be understood that they need a little more support in the use of technological resources compared to other scale items. Yet, from a general point of view of the competencies in this category, it can be said that the participants are considered quite competent in planning and organizing English language teaching processes ($\bar{x}$: 4.19, SD: .441).

Table 17.

Teacher Perceptions Regarding 'Developing Language Skills'

Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Sd
I can help students develop effective language learning strategies.	267	2	5	3.91	.690
I can ensure that students use English correctly and clearly.	267	2	5	4.04	.518
I can improve the listening/watching skills of students.	267	1	5	3.88	.723
I can improve the speaking skills of students.	267	1	5	3.63	.845
I can improve the reading skills of students.	267	2	5	4.07	.606
I can improve the writing skills of students.	267	2	5	3.75	.730
I can do practices considering the needs of the students who need special education	267	1	5	3.22	.898
TOTAL	267	2,14	5	3.78	.563

Table 17 reveals the descriptive statistics of teachers' perceptions regarding the sub-competency of developing language skills. When results are considered, the lowest mean score is related to doing practices considering the needs of the students who need special education ($\bar{x}$: 3.22, SD: .898). It can be grasped that participants were undecided about their proficiency in teaching English language skills to students with special needs. It can also be seen that teachers share a similar perception about developing students' speaking skills. On the other hand, the highest mean score belongs to the statement '*I can improve the reading skills of students*' ($\bar{x}$: 4.07, SD: .606). With an overview of all statements involving the development of language skills, it can be argued that teachers see themselves as most competent in the development of teaching reading skills.

Table 18.

Teacher Perceptions Regarding 'Monitoring and Evaluating Language Improvement'

Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Sd
I can determine the objectives of measurement and evaluation applications related to English language teaching.	267	1	5	3.96	.633
I can use measurement and evaluation tools and methods in teaching English.	267	1	5	4.06	.652
I can interpret the assessment results and give feedback to determine the language development levels of students	267	1	5	3.96	.706
I can reflect on the assessment results in my practices to determine students' language development.	267	1	5	3.75	.746
TOTAL	267	1	5	3.95	.576

In the next section of Likert-scale items, which evaluates competency in monitoring and assessing language improvement, Table 18 shows that the participants perceived themselves as most competent in using measurements and evaluation tools and methods in teaching English ($\bar{x}$: 4.06, SD: .652). Although they agree about a high degree of perceived competency in reflecting on the assessment results in their practices to determine students' language development, this statement has the lowest mean score in this section ($\bar{x}$: 3.75, S: .746). As can be deduced from the results, although the participants feel very competent in using different methods and techniques to make assessments, they are less competent in designing activities by reflecting on the assessment results to determine students' language development than other competencies in this sub-category. As a result, when the sub-competencies of monitoring and developing language improvement were examined, the teachers stated a high level of competency perception at the 'agree' level ($\bar{x}$: 3.95, SD: .576).

Table 19.

Teacher Perceptions Regarding 'Collaboration with the School, Family and Community'

Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Sd
I can cooperate with families for the development of students' language skills.	267	2	5	4.00	.704
I can cooperate with relevant institutions, organizations, and individuals for students to understand the importance of using a foreign language.	267	2	5	3.97	.717
I can enable students to realize the meaning and importance of national holidays and ceremonies and participate actively.	267	1	5	4.21	.640
I can manage and organize national festivals and celebrations.	267	1	5	4.10	.793
I can manage and organize national festivals and celebrations.	267	2	5	4.01	.725
I can be a social leader.	267	1	5	3.76	.857
TOTAL	267	2	5	4.01	.553

When Table 19 is examined, the highest mean score belongs to the responses given by the participants to the competency 'I can enable students to realize the meaning and importance of national holidays and ceremonies and participate actively' ($\bar{x}$: 4,21, SD: .640). Besides, the participants have a high perception of their competency in preparing and conducting national holidays and celebrations ($\bar{x}$: 4.10, SD: .793). Although the lowest mean score in this section was related to teachers' seeing themselves as social leaders, they indicated that they had a high level of CSFC competency in the 'agree' range with an overall mean score of $\bar{x} = 4.01$.

Table 20.

Teacher Perceptions Regarding 'Continuing Professional Development in English'

Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Sd
I can identify professional competencies.	267	2	5	4.03	.772
I can provide my personal and professional development for teaching English.	267	2	5	4.25	.515
I can use scientific research methods and techniques for my professional development.	267	1	5	3.79	.933
I can reflect my research of professional development on my practices.	267	2	5	4.05	.678
TOTAL	267	2,5	5	4.03	.669

When the participants' perceptions regarding the competency area of continuing professional development in the field of English are examined, the mean score of the answers given by the teachers regarding the sub-competency item "I can provide my personal and professional development in teaching English" is $\bar{x} = 4.25$. This mean score corresponds to the range of '*strongly agree*'. According to this, it can be said that teachers perceive themselves as reasonably competent regarding the sub-competency of providing personal and professional development for teaching English. The lowest mean score is related to the sub-competency '*I can use scientific research methods and techniques for my professional development*' ($\bar{x}$: 3.79, SD: .933). Although this mean score is in the '*agree*' range, it has a relatively lower mean score when compared to other scale items. As a result, when the sub-competencies of the CPD proficiency area in English were examined, teachers stated that they had a high level of CPD competency in the range of '*agree*' with a general mean score $\bar{x} = 4.03$ ($\bar{x}$: 4.03, SD: .669).

4.2.1.1 Are there any statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' competency perceptions regarding gender, department of graduation, work experience, school type, and previous in-service training activities?

This research question aims to answer if some variables have a statistically significant effect on EFL teachers' competency perceptions. A normality test was performed to determine the analysis that would be suitable for the research data to reveal any effect. Many statistical tests need an assessment of data normality since the normal data is an underlying assumption in parametric testing. Normality test results are given in Table 21 below:

Table 21.

Results of Normality Test

Sub-competencies	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
POETP	.218	260	.000	.919	260	.000
DLS	.097	260	.000	.979	260	.001
MELD	.229	260	.000	.911	260	.000
CSFC	.152	260	.000	.964	260	.000
CPD	.177	260	.000	.937	260	.000

When the normality values in Table 21 are reviewed, it is discovered that the data obtained from the English Teachers Field-Specific Competencies Assessment Scale does not follow a normal distribution in all sub-categories of the scale. According to the results, it was determined that non-parametric tests should be used in data analysis.

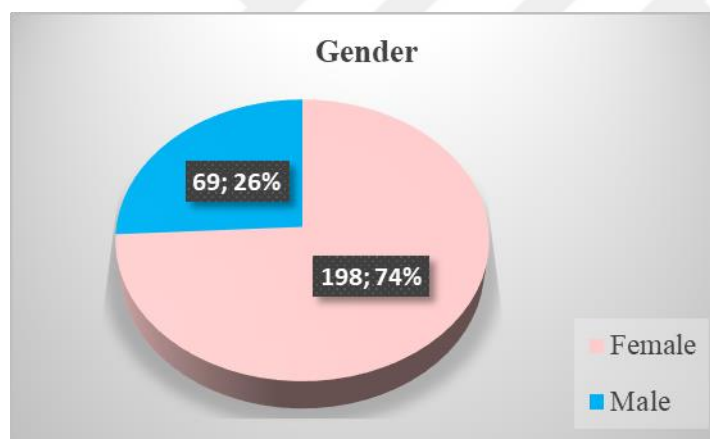


Figure 7. Distribution of participants by gender

Figure 7 reveals the gender distribution of the participants who filled in the English Teachers Field-Specific Competencies Assessment Scale in the exploration part of the study. According to the results, out of 267 participants, 198 teachers were female, which constitutes %74 of all participants. Besides, only 69 male teachers answered the scale items, and this percentage equals the whole sample. These rates show that the number of male participants in the study is almost one-third of the number of female participants. The Mann-Whitney U test determined whether the participants' perceptions of competency differed significantly by gender. Test results are shown in

Table 22 below:

Table 22.

Mann Whitney U Test Results by Gender

Sub-competency	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	z	p
POETP	Female	198	135.18	26766.50	6596.50	-.432	.666
	Male	69	130.60	9011.50			
DLS	Female	198	135.62	26853.50	6509.50	-.585	.559
	Male	69	129.34	8924.50			
MELD	Female	198	134.85	26701.00	6662.00	-.316	.752
	Male	69	131.55	9077.00			
CSFC	Female	198	137.87	27299.00	6064.00	-1.398	.162
	Male	69	122.88	8479.00			
CPD	Female	198	137.71	27266.00	6096.00	-1.356	.175
	Male	69	123.36	8511.50			

p<0.05

As provided in Table 22, female teachers had higher mean ranks than male teachers. This means that female participants have a higher degree of self-perceived competencies than male participants regarding the five sub-categories of the scale. However, it is noticed that gender does not have a statistically significant effect on participants' competency levels considering all categories and related competencies at the $p>.05$ levels. In other words, the study's findings indicate that competency levels do not show any statistically significant change among the five sub-competencies of the scale by gender.

Table 23.

Kruskal- Wallis Test Results by Education Status of Participants

Sub-Competency	Education Status	N	Mean	Sd	X²	p
POETP	BA	208	125.41			
	MA student	21	147.31			
	MA graduate	25	174.72	.441	14.931	.005
	PhD student	12	164.83			
	PhD graduate	1	252.50			
DLS	BA	208	127.85			
	MA student	21	131.98			
	MA graduate	25	162.40	.563	9.953	.041
	PhD student	12	177.42			
	PhD graduate	1	224.00			
MELD	BA	208	126.65			
	MA student	21	145.45			
	MA graduate	25	169.04	.576	11.209	.024
	PhD student	12	160.21			
	PhD graduate	1	232.00			
CSFC	BA	208	128.90			
	MA student	21	135.88			
	MA graduate	25	173.54	.553	9.102	.059
	PhD student	12	128.96			
	PhD graduate	1	227.00			
CPD	BA	208	125.25			
	MA student	21	139.07			
	MA graduate	25	183.88	.629	17,040	.002
	PhD student	12	166.00			
	PhD graduate	1	216.00			

p<0.05

When Table 23 is examined, out of 267 English teachers who filled out the scale, 208 teachers, 77.9% of the participants, had a bachelor's degree. While 21 English

teachers continued their education at the master's level, 25 teachers had already completed their master's degrees. In addition, there is only one PhD graduate as 12 teachers were studying at the doctoral level. When the Kruskal Wallis test results are taken into consideration, education status has a statistically significant effect on teachers' perceived field-specific competency levels in planning and organizing English teaching processes (X^2 : 14.931; $p < .005$), developing language skills (X^2 : 9.953; $p < .005$), monitoring and evaluating language development (X^2 : 11.209; $p < .005$) and continuing professional development (X^2 : 17.40; $p < .005$). It can be assumed that education status is a determining factor in nearly all sub-categories, although it is slightly beyond the accepted p-value for the sub-category of collaboration with the school, family, and community (X^2 : 11.209; $p > .005$). As teachers improve their knowledge and skills through postgraduate education, they perceive themselves as more competent in their fields.

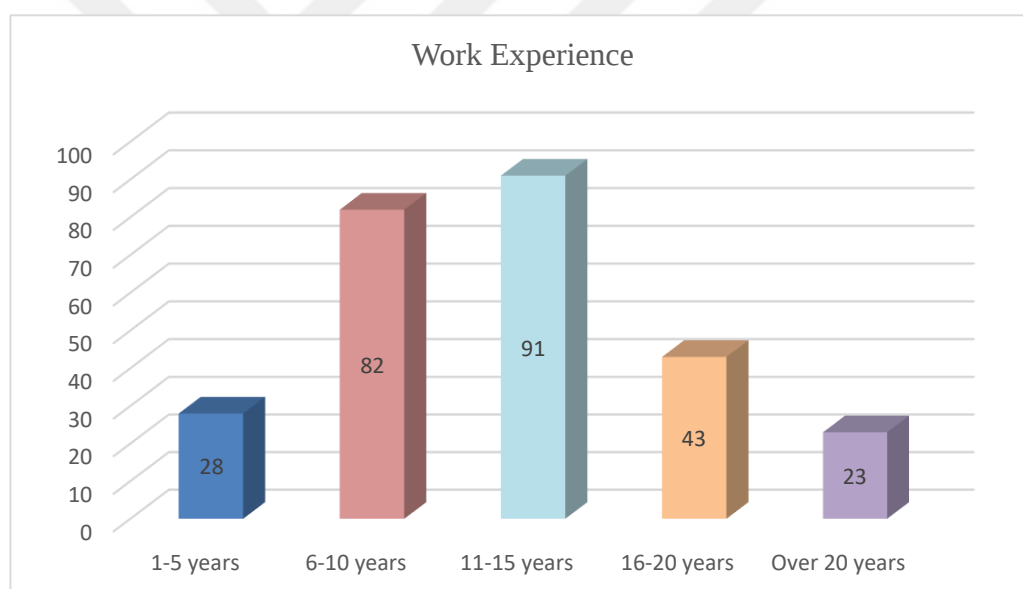


Figure 8. Total work experience of participants

Figure 8 shows the total experience of participants. Out of 267 participants, the highest number of teachers belong to the 11-15 years of work experience. Teachers in this experience range correspond to 34% of all participants. The second place is the 6-10 years of work experience group, which includes 82 teachers. Within this sampling, the minimum number of participants belongs to the group of 23 teachers having more than 20 years of experience. This group also equates to almost 8.7% of all respondents. As one can understand, most of the participants in this study are English teachers with 5-15 years of experience, which forms approximately 65% of the whole sampling.

Table 24.

Kruskal-Wallis Test Results by Work Experience of Participants

Sub-competency	Experience	N	Mean	Sd	X ²	p
POETP	1-5 years	28	132.13	.441	8.258	.083
	6-10 years	82	115.93			
	11-15 years	91	140.58			
	16-20 years	43	142.90			
	Over 20 years	23	158.07			
DLS	1-5 years	28	140.64	.563	8.408	.048
	6-10 years	82	118.61			
	11-15 years	91	136.95			
	16-20 years	43	134.03			
	Over 20 years	23	169.04			
MELD	1-5 years	28	127.41	.576	7.589	.108
	6-10 years	82	118.13			
	11-15 years	91	143.62			
	16-20 years	43	136.06			
	Over 20 years	23	156.72			
CSFC	1-5 years	28	129.39	.553	8.803	.066
	6-10 years	82	117.13			
	11-15 years	91	135.81			
	16-20 years	43	153.86			
	Over 20 years	23	155.46			
CPD	1-5 years	28	146.80	.629	3.458	.484
	6-10 years	82	123.22			
	11-15 years	91	135.15			
	16-20 years	43	135.53			
	Over 20 years	23	149.43			

p<0.05

Examining Kruskal-Wallis's test results in Table 24 by work experience groups, one can see that teachers with more than 20 years of experience have the highest mean scores across all sub-categories. The lowest mean scores belong to the 6-10 years of

experience. The table above indicates that work experience statistically affects English language teachers' competency levels only in developing language skills (X^2 : 8.408; $p < .005$). On the other hand, participants' subscale scores did not significantly affect their competency perceptions across sub-competencies except for developing language skills. One can assume that as teachers' work experience increases, their language teaching skills increase at self-perceived competency levels, and they consider themselves more competent in developing students' language skills.

Table 25.

Kruskal Wallis Test Results by School Type

Sub-competency	School type	N	Mean	Sd	X^2	p
POETP	Primary	49	119.35			
	Secondary	133	133.36	.441	3.153	.207
	High School	85	143.44			
DLS	Primary	49	120.78			
	Secondary	133	133.54	.563	2.457	.293
	High School	85	142.35			
MELD	Primary	49	132.19			
	Secondary	133	126.84	.576	3.533	.171
	High School	85	146.24			
CSFC	Primary	49	123.41			
	Secondary	133	130.89	.553	2.891	.236
	High School	85	144.96			
CPD	Primary	49	119.77			
	Secondary	133	134.56	.629	2.536	.281
	High School	85	141.33			

$p < 0.05$

In Table 25, although the highest number of participants in the study are English teachers working in secondary schools (n: 133), the highest mean scores belong to English teachers working in high schools in five sub-competency levels of the scale. Kruskal-Wallis's test was applied to understand if the type of school the teachers work in has a statistically significant effect on their subject area competency levels. The results of this test revealed that teachers' perceptions of competency do not show a statistically significant change according to the type of school they work in. For this reason, it cannot be stated that school type is a determining factor within the scope of competency perceptions.

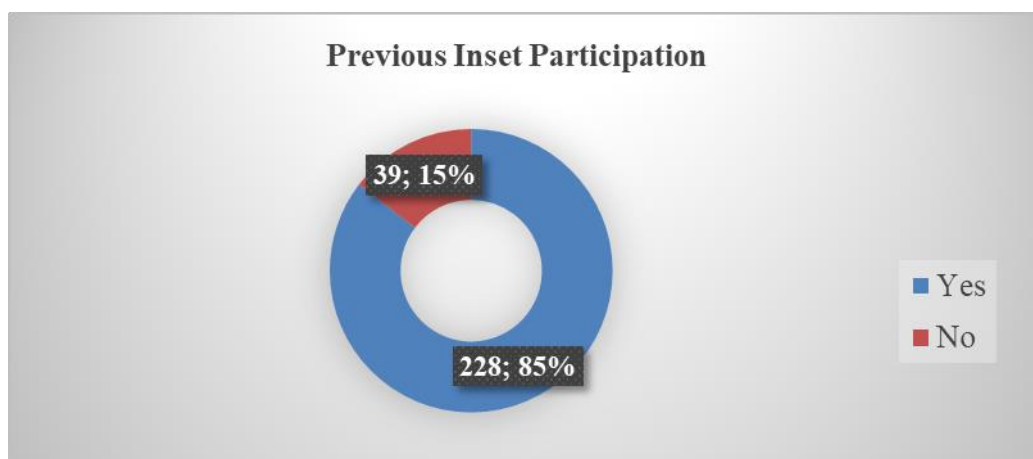


Figure 9. Previous INSET Participation of the Participants

Figure 9 shows participants' responses to any previous INSET program in their field. According to the results, 228 teachers, who make up 85% of all, stated that they had already participated in an in-service training program related to their subject area. 39 teachers, equal to only 15% of the participants, indicated that they did not participate in any in-service training program.

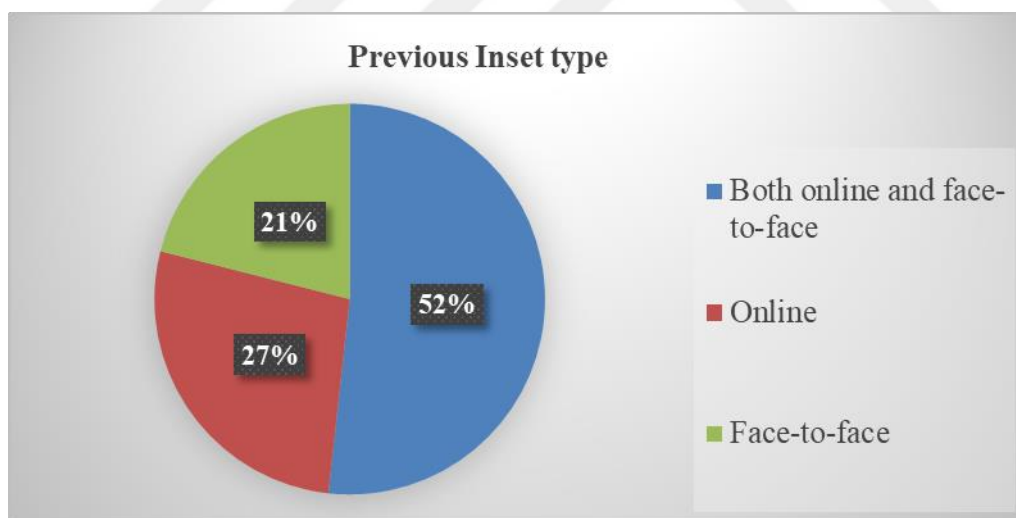


Figure 10. Previous INSET Type of Participants

Figure 10 shows the answers given to the question about the type of program of English teachers who said that they had participated in an in-service training program related to their field before. According to these results, more than half of the participants (52%) stated that they participated in an online and face-to-face INSET program. The lowest percentage of the participants belonged to the group of teachers who participated

in a face-to-face INSET program (21%). A group of 27% of the participants reported that they have only attended online training related to their field so far.

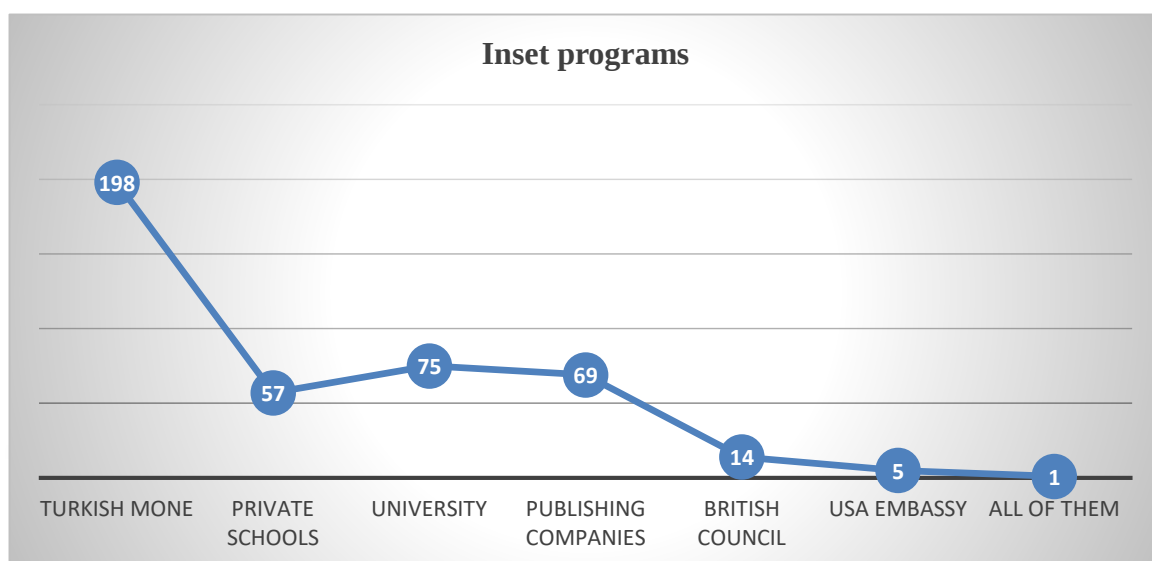


Figure 11. INSET programs that teachers have participated before

As shown in Figure 11, English teachers, who stated that they had participated in an in-service training program related to their subject area, were asked by which institution the training was given. At the same time, teachers were informed that they could choose more than one institution according to the education they attended. When the results were examined, 198 teachers reported that they attended the training given by Turkish MONE. In second place, 75 participants stated that they took part in training or conferences offered by various universities. In addition, massive online open courses provided by private publishing companies, British Council and USA Embassy were among the teachers' preferences. Only one teacher stated that s/he participated in all the programs among the alternatives.

Table 26.

Mann Whitney U Test Results by Previous INSET Participation

Sub-competency	Previous INSET	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	z	p
POETP	Yes	228	141.03	32155.00	2843.00	-3.661	.000
	No	39	92.90	3623.00			
DLS	Yes	228	138.73	31630.00	3368.00	-2.430	.015
	No	39	106.36	4148.00			
MELD	Yes	228	135.54	30903.50	4094.50	-.815	.415
	No	39	124.99	4874.50			
CSFC	Yes	228	134.90	30756.50	4241.50	-.462	.644
	No	39	128.76	5021.50			
CPD	Yes	228	137.92	31445.50	3552.50	-2.045	.041
	No	39	111.09	4332.50			

Table 26 indicates the effect of previous INSET participation on participants' self-perceived competency levels. Initially, participants' mean scores across all sub-competencies who responded positively to previous INSET program participation were higher than those who answered 'no' to the question. A Mann-Whitney test was administered to determine if involvement in earlier INSET programs significantly changed teachers' perceptions of competencies across all sub-categories. Looking at the data in the table, one can see that participation in previous INSET programs has a statistically significant effect on teachers' self-perceived competencies regarding planning and organizing English language processes (U: 2843.00; $p = .000$), developing language skills (U: 3368.00; $p = .015$), continuing professional development competencies (U: 3552.50; $p = .041$). As can be grasped from the results, as teachers participate in professional development programs such as in-service training, their knowledge and skills in their fields significantly affect their subject area competency perceptions.

4.2.2 What do in-service EFL teachers think about the competencies an effective English language teacher needs to have?

This research question aimed to address teachers' perceptions of subject area competency perceptions in a deeper way in the exploration part of the study. Among the 267 teachers who filled out the scale, twenty-seven English teachers simultaneously answered the questions in the written interview form prepared by the researcher. The descriptive findings of the written interview forms are presented in Table 27 below

together with their statements:

Table 27.

Descriptive findings of written interview forms regarding competencies of effective EFL teachers

Competencies of Effective EFL Teachers	f	%
Professional skills	12	44.4
Attitudes and values	9	33.4
Professional knowledge	6	22.2
TOTAL	27	100

When teachers were asked what the competencies of an effective English teacher are, the answers given were analyzed with thematic analysis, and three different areas emerged. As shown in Table 27, teachers placed the greatest emphasis on professional skills (f: 10; 44.4%). The teachers agreed on the most often stated competencies regarding professional skills, as demonstrated in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 1:

‘...S/he can adapt the opportunities of the digital world to the lessons. S/he also gives practical situations used in daily life to students without boring them with details.’

Excerpt 2:

‘...It is important to present the introduction, development, and conclusion parts of the activities related to the subjects required by the course, without interruption, and without logical errors.’

Excerpt 3:

‘A successful EFL teacher becomes aware of the holistic approach of four skills together with grammar and vocabulary.’

Excerpt 4:

‘..... transferring knowledge effectively in a creative way’.

Excerpt 5:

'I think it means being able to express yourself and convey what you know correctly. It is also important to keep up with the technology and new approaches required by the age of students.'

As excerpts indicate, it is seen that the participants' statements are more related to the instructional delivery of the teacher and managing the learning and teaching processes. This means that the knowledge of an effective English teacher is presented to the student in a fun and holistic way, in line with the student's interest and knowledge level to carry out the learning and teaching processes effectively. Other perceived competencies belong to attitudes effective English teachers are supposed to have (f: 9; 33.4%). Participants stated their opinions in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 6:

'In my opinion, an effective English teacher should be a teacher who can adapt to different conditions, is open to continuous improvement of his competencies and innovation, maintains his/her professional development.'

Excerpt 7:

'...most importantly, these competencies include attracting students' interest and love to learn a foreign language culture.'

Excerpt 8:

'Being able to communicate well, open to all kinds of development, tolerant, making students love English, contributing to their students' language development and guiding them'.

Examining the excerpts about competencies covering attitudes, one can understand that teachers mostly underline competencies that include approaches to professional development as well as communication with students. Besides, participants came up with some effective teacher competencies covering the mastery of subject area knowledge as well (f: 6; 22.2%).

Excerpt 9:

'Being an effective English teacher requires being aware of language mastery, current language teaching methods and techniques, adaptation issues.'

Excerpt 10:

'... If we work with small groups, some reading should be done on 'young learners,' and current developments should be followed.'

Excerpt 11:

'They know the developmental characteristics of the age group they teach, know how they learn best, and get down to students' levels.'

As evidenced by the excerpts above, effective English teachers are expected to be well-informed about the theories and methodologies of the subject area. They are also required to have a broader understanding of pedagogical content knowledge to transfer the knowledge properly and efficiently to the students.

4.2.2.1 Do they think that they bear these competencies as English language teachers?

After receiving opinions on the competencies of an effective English language teacher, the areas in which the participants consider themselves competent in their profession were investigated with this research question. Thus, it was aimed to understand their self-awareness of their competencies in this field. Before answering this research question, teachers were asked whether they consider themselves competent in teaching English. Among the 27 teachers who filled out the written interview form, two teachers stated that they definitely see themselves as competent and thriving in this field. Fifteen teachers answered 'yes' to the self-competency question in language teaching. While five teachers stated that they see themselves as 'usually' competent, two teachers classified their competency levels as 'partially'. Two teachers did not want to answer the question because the perception of 'I am competent' would have side effects that might slow down the active teaching and learning process.

4.2.2.2 In which areas do they find themselves more competent and successful?

When asked in which areas of foreign language education they consider themselves competent, two main competency areas were highlighted. The most underlined area of competency of teachers is professional skills, which include planning educational instruction, creating learning environments, and managing the learning and teaching process related to teachers' in-class practices, as emphasized in the below excerpts:

Excerpt 12:

'I focus on reading and listening skills, and I ensure that my students are motivated. I place a lot of emphasis on my students' pronunciation. Lastly, the use of authentic material forms an essential part of my lessons.'

Excerpt 13:

'My digital skills are at a good level. I find myself successful in producing and implementing projects, time management, classroom management, language teaching methods, and techniques.'

Excerpt 14:

'I think that I can successfully cope with undesirable behaviours and situations in the classroom by attracting students' attention, especially with the use of different Web 2 tools and smartboard.'

Excerpt 15:

'I find myself successful in making lessons more fun with the use of interactive games and songs without depending on the textbook alone. The contribution of the e-Twinning projects I am involved in is important.'

Excerpt 16:

'... material preparation, time management and using different methods in my classes.'

In addition, another cited self-perceived competent area is the professional

knowledge that consists of the required subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge regarding the teaching profession. Notedly, the knowledge of integrating different strategies, methods, and techniques that can be used in English teaching and integrating the understanding of students' development and learning characteristics into the teaching processes stands out, as seen in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 17:

'... I find myself successful in language proficiency, expressing myself to students, and, most importantly, conveying what I know to my students.'

Excerpt 18:

'I think I am good at knowing the periodic characteristics of the primary school group, being able to go down to their level, patience, knowing how they learn.'

Excerpt 19:

'I think I can say that I am competent enough to teach English grammar fun with simultaneous development of other skills, too.'

Lastly, the teachers expressed themselves on the competencies that include the attitudes and values of the teaching profession, approach to students, and approaches to professional development, as stated in the excerpts below:

Excerpt 20:

'I can say that I am open to learning new concepts and methods related to my field, sharing them, and trying to apply them in appropriate teaching environments.'

Excerpt 21:

'I especially find myself competent in using language, conducting research, professional development, and adapting what I learn in my classes.'

Excerpt 22:

'I try to ensure that my students are motivated. I can guarantee that students have 'intrinsic motivation' for assessment and evaluation.'

Excerpt 23:

‘... I am very good at communicating with my students and classroom management.’

As seen from the extracts, the professional development activities they participate in to support teachers’ professional skills, teaching styles, and learning methods inside and outside the school also stand out as essential support for teachers’ values and attitudes. Besides, exhibiting an attitude that supports the development of students and establishing a constructive communication method is also accepted as an underlined attitude by teachers.

4.2.2.3 In which areas do they need support to develop their competencies professionally?

After making self-evaluations about the areas that teachers considered themselves competent, the study aimed to determine the perceived less competent areas of English language teachers and their needs for further development. Hereby, a complete understanding was provided with other results regarding the ‘exploration’ phase of research. On the other hand, this research question also sheds light on the content of the in-service training program to be organized in the while-training part. The results are demonstrated in Table 28 below:

Table 28.

Perceived Less Competent Areas of EFL Teachers

Perceived less competent areas	f	%
Language skills	6	26.08
Digital skills	6	26.08
Classroom management	2	8,7
Implementing projects	2	8.7
Making research	2	8.7
Material development	2	8.7
Content knowledge	2	8.7
Lesson planning	1	4.4
TOTAL	23	100,00

As summarized in Table 28, teachers who filled out the written interview form reported diverse areas regarding the competencies they needed to develop. The most highlighted demand is linked with their anticipation of strengthening their language abilities, followed by the necessity for developing their digital skills (f:6; 26.08%). This result demonstrates that teachers placed a high value on improving their language skills in parallel with their digital capabilities while performing their professions, as detailed in excerpts below:

Excerpt 24:

'I may need improvement in the field of reading skills as we have problems obtaining resources.'

Excerpt 25:

'My biggest wish is to be able to speak fluently and with an accent.'

Excerpt 26:

'Speaking a foreign language is an important aspect of being able to communicate in that language. As a result, I'd really like to enhance my speaking abilities as a teacher.'

Excerpt 27:

'Sometimes I feel less capable of improving students' writing skills because we do not have enough class hours to do the necessary classroom activities.'

Another need to improve the competency-related area is digital skills as pointed out by teachers in the excerpts:

Excerpt 28:

'I need to improve my abilities to keep up with the digital world since integrating some Web 2 tools into effective online classes with students is essential.'

Excerpt 29:

I make an effort to keep up-to-date technological skills to create effective lessons.

Excerpt 30:

'During the pandemic period, I realized that no matter how competent we are in language teaching, we are insufficient if we cannot transfer it to the digital learning environment. Therefore, I need to develop my competencies in this subject.'

Aside from these, the teachers stated that they needed to improve their competencies in classroom management, project implementation, researching, material development, content knowledge, and lesson planning. All of the aforementioned less competent areas are outlined in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 31:

'I need support for planning lessons because I always use ready-made exams and plans.'

Excerpt 32:

'...Having to make some conversations about classroom management in Turkish makes me feel less competent.'

Excerpt 33:

'I think I may concentrate on material development to give learners opportunities to promote the target language for communicative purposes. Otherwise, it appears like we are sticking to the coursebook, which is monotonous.'

Excerpt 34:

'Since project-based studies such as E-twinning or Tübitak are very common lately, I need to improve my research skills to carry out them successfully.'

Considering all these statements, teachers were asked what subjects they would need to support their competencies if they were participating in an in-service training programme. In addition to presenting some subject alternatives, the option 'other' was added, and teachers were given the right to make more than one choice. Figure 12 contains the results obtained from the written interview form regarding this question.

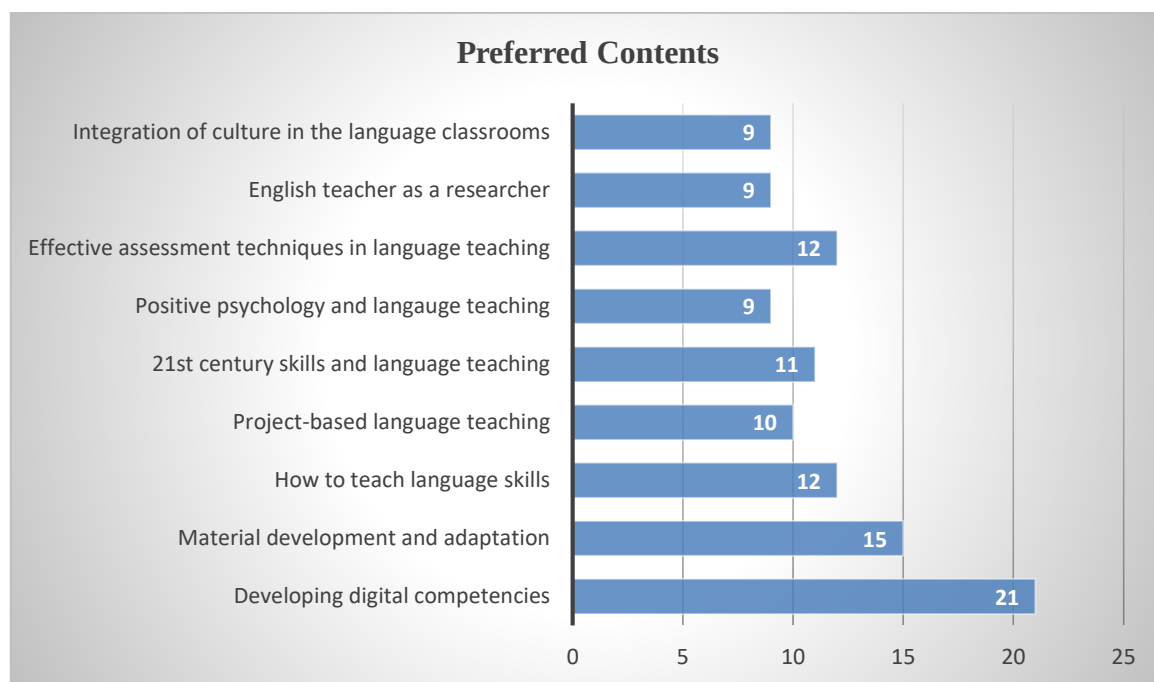


Figure 12. Preferred contents of an INSET program

As seen in Figure 12, the most preferred subjects among the possible alternatives suggested to improve the competencies of teachers in an in-service training program are respectively reported as ‘developing digital competencies’ (f:21), ‘material development and adaptation’ (f:15), ‘how to teach language skills’ (f:12) and practical assessment techniques in language classrooms’ (f:12). As can be understood from these results, the content of the INSET program to be attended with the areas where the teachers feel less competent are compatible with each other.

Briefly, when all the quantitative and qualitative data in the exploration phase were examined, although the results appear at the ‘agree’ level, the ‘developing language skills’ sub-competency had the lowest mean scores. In particular, perceptions of competency in teaching speaking and writing language skills were remarkably lower. In addition, the perception of low proficiency in language teaching to individuals with special needs drew attention. Another underlined sub-competency was ‘monitoring and evaluating language improvement.’ Teachers’ reflection on the assessment results in my practices to determine students’ language development required additional improvement. Parallel to this situation, the data obtained in the written interview form showed that teachers needed to develop their language skills and teach them effectively. Another highlighted less competent area was the effective use of digital technologies in the teaching and learning processes. Thus, it was emphasized that teachers are supposed to

effectively carry out the teaching and learning processes as professional skills.

4.3 Findings of the While-training Phase

The second phase of the research, the while-training phase, follows the identification of the competencies which teachers need to develop. Regarding the results in while-training phase, a training evaluation form covering both qualitative and quantitative data was used to understand the effectiveness of the INSET program. As supplementary data for the learning gains of the participants, KWLA charts were applied both at the beginning and at the end of the program to learn the concrete achievements of the participants in the program and understand how these gains could be applied in the follow-up phase. Tables containing descriptive results, excerpts regarding the learning gains and suggestions for other programs are addressed in the following sections.

4.3.1 How do EFL teachers evaluate the in-service training program they participated in?

To find out the participants' ideas about the INSET program from different perspectives, a training evaluation form was utilized after incorporating appropriate assessment criteria and updating. The goal of using this form was to determine how successful the training sessions were to learners based on the objectives, content, trainers, and resources. Twenty-four teachers voluntarily applied to participate in the INSET program. The highest participation rate belongs to English teachers working in secondary schools (f:13, 54.2%). In second place are English teachers working in high school, constituting 33.3% of all respondents. Lastly, only three participants are English teachers from primary schools. At the end of the INSET program, the trainees were requested to rate their level of agreement with the questions, which ranged from "Strongly disagree (1)" to "Strongly agree (5)." The results are presented in Table 29.

Table 29.

INSET Program Evaluation Results

Training Evaluation Form Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. The training met my expectations.	24	4.79	.41
2. I will be able to apply the knowledge learned to my work.	24	4.50	.58
3. The training objectives for each topic were identified and followed.	24	4.75	.44
4. The content was organized and easy to follow.	24	4.87	.33
5. The materials distributed were relevant and easy to follow.	24	4.87	.33
6. The trainers were knowledgeable.	24	4.95	.20
7. The quality of instruction was good.	24	4.91	.40
8. The trainers met the training objectives.	24	4.91	.28
9. Class participation and interaction were encouraged	24	4.79	.41
10. Adequate time was provided for questions and discussions.	24	4.37	.57
11. The training room set-up was comfortable and contributory to learning.	24	4.75	.67

Table 29 summarizes the mean scores for each item on the training evaluation form. Each item gets a mean score of more than 4 out of 5, indicating that the participants regarded the training to be generally effective. In particular, Item 6 has the highest mean score ($\bar{x}$: 4.95). (The trainers were knowledgeable). On the other hand, Item 10 has the lowest mean score ($\bar{x}$: 4.37). (Adequate time was provided for questions and discussion). In addition, participants expressed strong agreement ($\bar{x}$: 4.91) that the teaching was of good quality and that the trainers met the training objectives ($\bar{x}$: 4.91).

The trainers and their method of instruction delivery, as understood, were decisive for the participant's satisfaction with the course. The lowest mean score for adequate time for questions and discussions is due to the INSET program being held face-to-face during the pandemic period, beginning at 9:00 a.m. and ending at 1:30 p.m. in June 2021.

After an item-by-item analysis of the INSET program regarding objectives, trainers, resources and content, the participants also evaluated each session in the INSET program. Each session was evaluated as 'excellent,' 'good,' 'average,' 'poor,' and 'very poor.' Finally, they rated the overall effect of the training organization, as summarized in Table 30.

Table 30 depicts that the sessions, which took place in 30 lesson hours in five days, were evaluated one by one by the participants. According to the results, the three sessions with the highest mean score can be seen at the ‘excellent’ level ($\bar{x}$: 4.91): Classroom-based language assessment and its role in promoting a positive classroom environment, use of games in English language classrooms and project-based English language teaching: E-twinning. The comments of the participants about these sessions in the section of the training evaluation form containing open-ended questions were expressed in the excerpts below:

Excerpt 35:

‘Project-based English language session was beneficial for me because I could see some concrete examples of materials that I can easily prepare with waste materials at home. I am sure they will do a good job in the classroom.’

Excerpt 36:

‘Project-based English language training was my best session because, as a new teacher, I learned so many things about PBL and creative materials which I can use in my classes.’

Excerpt 37:

‘The project-based English language teaching session was the most useful one for me because it was full of unusually created materials I had never seen before.’

Excerpt 38:

‘The use of games in English language classrooms, Project-based English teaching, and positive psychology sessions were useful because I can apply many great details in my classes.’

When the least effective session was questioned in the form, it was seen that the lowest mean score belonged to the session titled ‘a stance on writing activities in English classes’ ($\bar{x}$: 4.12). While there was no evaluation at the ‘very poor’ level throughout the table, two participants described this session as ‘poor’. Participants also added their comments about this session to the evaluation forms as can be seen below excerpts:

Excerpt 39:

'A stance on the writing activities in English classes was the least useful one because I do not have too much chance to do writing activities.'

Excerpt 40:

'The session 'a stance on writing activities in English classes' was not very effective for me. I am not sure, but it was not helpful for my grades. I could not engage with the topic.'

Excerpt 41:

'The session about writing activities was the least beneficial for me because I am teaching primary students, so it is useless in my classes. We do not have writing or reading skills in the curriculum.'

Another important competency that needed to be developed was reported as digital skills in the exploration phase. Although the session on this subject had a high mean score of 4.54 and was evaluated as 'excellent' by 15 participants, the participants emphasized that they could not benefit from the training on this subject at the desired level because the trainer wanted to give the training online due to the pandemic.

Excerpt 42:

'The session including the introduction of Web 2.0 tools was the least useful for me. It should have been face-to-face. The most negative aspect is being not practical.'

Excerpt 43:

'Due to the pandemic, some of our sessions were online. We had some problems with the connection, and I missed some parts.'

In addition to the featured sessions, participants expressed how other sessions influenced them and what kind of awareness they experienced. The comments of the participants about the other sessions in the INSET program are exemplified in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 44:

'Personally, the best part for me was Ads as language teaching materials because this session made me look for another perspective while teaching English.'

Excerpt 45:

'Teacher autonomy was the one I like most. The use of games was the one I enjoy most. The assessment session made me think of what and how I do in the classroom and revise myself.'

Excerpt 46:

'Positive psychology in EFL classrooms and icebreaking activities were very practical for me as a teacher. Generally, nearly all my students do not want to participate and engage in the lesson. I understood that I should create a positive atmosphere for them. They should feel self-confident, relaxed, and happy in the lesson.'

Excerpt 47:

'Icebreaking activities, games in English classrooms, teacher autonomy, and project-based English language teaching sessions were useful for me. Because I saw they are more critical for me, and they were not only theoretical. I have learned many things about my real problem in my lessons.'

4.3.1.1 Are there any specific learning gains for EFL teachers during the training program? If yes, what are they?

In addition to the training evaluation form, which evaluates the INSET program in many ways, the participants were asked to fill in the relevant columns on the KWLA chart at the beginning and end of the program to determine their specific learning gains. Although preliminary information about the title and content of the program was provided to them before applying to the training program, the main purpose here was to draw a more concrete portrait of the learning gains that the participants have gained as a result of the program. After applying the deductive thematic analysis to the data obtained with the KWLA chart, the learning gains of participants are presented in Table 31 according to the competency domains:

Table 31.

KWLA Chart Results Regarding Learning Gains of Participants

Competency Domain	Competency	f	%
Professional Knowledge	Pedagogical content knowledge	9	14.06
	Content knowledge	11	17.18
Professional Skills	Planning of education and teaching	2	3.12
	Creating learning environments	10	15.62
	Managing the teaching and learning process	12	18.75
	Assessment and evaluation	4	6.25
	Communication and cooperation	3	4.68
Attitudes and Values	Personal and professional development	7	10.93
	Approach to students	6	9.37
TOTAL		64	100

Table 31 is a description of the participants' learning gains at the end of the INSET program based on the KWLA charts they filled out. According to the table, the program has an impact on their views of different competency domains, including professional knowledge, skills and attitudes. When the data obtained from the KWLA charts filled by the participants at the end of the INSET program were evaluated with a deductive thematic analysis, it was seen that they had the most learning gains in the professional skills competency domain. More specifically, the participants stated that they had the highest learning gains in 'managing learning and teaching process' competency in the five-day in-service training program (f:12, 18%). At the end of the program, considering the competency domains and related competency indicators, it was revealed that the least number of learning gains was in the 'planning of education and teaching' competency belonging to the professional skills competency domain (f:2, 3.33%). The excerpts below clearly exemplify these learning gains:

Excerpt 48:

'I realized that I forgot some teaching skills, and I need to develop myself. English is not just a lesson; it is real life. So, we should bring real life into the classrooms.'
(Managing learning and teaching process)

Excerpt 49:

'I have learned that there is a massive ocean in front of me to discover, and this week I had a big ship to move on! I saw that we could use lots of materials without technology, which is fantastic.' (Creating learning environments)

Excerpt 50:

'I learned that I am responsible for creating positive energy in the classroom. I should help my students find meaning in the class. There is always a way for interactive activities, so games are at the centre of the teaching and learning environment. Smartboards are not necessary all the time.' (Managing learning and teaching process)

Excerpt 51:

'I learned that teaching and learning processes require sincere efforts. As teachers, we need to include more interactions, purposes, and games in courses.' (Managing learning and teaching process)

Excerpt 52:

'I learned how to develop materials from even the rubbish we have at home. I remember that being a student is entirely different from being a teacher. I also had information about some other digital, internet-based applications to be used in my classes.' (Creating learning environments)

Excerpt 53:

'I learned that I should encourage my students more with positive feedback. While checking the passages, I realized that I needed to check one thing at a time.' (Assessment and evaluation)

Excerpt 54:

'I realized that assessment is a sensitive issue. We should use more constructive feedback to our students. We need to refrain from overusing negative expressions while giving feedback.' (Assessment and evaluation)

Excerpt 55:

'I learned that I need to make detailed plans of units and topics and prepare materials for each topic. I will not go to the classroom with only my bag and course books.' (Planning of education and teaching)

In addition, participants also underlined that they became aware of new 'content knowledge' as a part of the professional knowledge competency domain (f:11, 17,18%). The participants also expressed learning gains related to pedagogical content knowledge, which requires mastery of the subject area and application of different strategies, methods, and techniques based on students' development and learning characteristics (f: 9, 14,06%).

Excerpt 56:

'I realized that I had not seen a subject taught by one of our teachers before in class—the subject of positive psychology. When I was a university student, I did not take a course on positive psychology, and it did not exist in my time. This topic was new to me.' (Content knowledge)

Excerpt 57:

'I learned that project-based learning is so important. Playing games is vital for the lessons to engage young learners. Now, I know more about games and Web 2.0 tools in the class.' (Pedagogical content knowledge)

Excerpt 58:

'Some games can be childish for my high school students. Still, I think that I can use some of them by adapting to different subjects in the coursebook.'
(Pedagogical content knowledge)

Considering learning gains, participants also made self-evaluations by communicating with their colleagues, benefiting from their opinions and suggestions, and realising that they needed to engage in activities to improve themselves personally and professionally in their future careers. In addition, they stated that they should develop their competencies in displaying a supportive attitude towards the development of their

students. Relatedly, the excerpts below are indicators of their learning gains related to attitudes and values competency domain:

Excerpt 59:

'First of all, no matter what I live in my private life, I will be a more smiling and learner-centred teacher. I will give formal and informal feedback to my students whenever they need my assistance.' (Approach to students)

Excerpt 60:

'Training's best part for me was to be among the English teachers again. This has increased my self-confidence as well. This is my 9th year in primary school. With the repeatedly same subjects and primary school problems, I noticed a professional decline in my strengths as a teacher. It gave me the feeling that I still remember things and know.' (Communication and cooperation)

Excerpt 61:

'The most important thing I learned here is that the learning process never ends, even if I am a teacher. I realized that I should give more importance to my professional development and that I should always take advantage of opportunities to go one step further.' (Personal and Professional development)

Excerpt 62:

'I learned that teaching (learning how to teach) is a life-long process because we learn many details while teaching. I realized that I have forgotten (or can not remember) so many things since I graduated from the university. Therefore, I need to be more active in my professional development. I will search a lot to prepare context-specific materials.' (Personal and Professional development)

While teachers were filling in the 'Learned' part of the chart about their learning gains, they were also asked to fill in the 'Action' column on the KWLA chart for their further steps to implement what they have learned. The aim here is to grasp the reflections of the new subject area knowledge or latest attitudes on classroom practices and teachers' professional and personal lives and make the concrete outputs of the process more

evident. According to the actions expressed, it is primarily the teachers' plans to step out of the routine by communicating and collaborating with their colleagues, along with different materials and learning situations in the lessons in the next period of their careers as illustrated in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 63:

'I will adopt some of these methods and use the tools in my classes and projects. It is essential to keep the students' attention alive, so what I learned will be very helpful to reach this goal. I also will share the outcomes with my colleagues.'

Excerpt 64:

'I decided to do much more outdoor activities with my students. I should use more colourful and attractive materials to make my lessons enjoyable. I plan to do different projects by sharing ideas more often on teaching English with other colleagues at my school.'

In addition, some teachers stated that they will focus more on language skills that they think they neglect, along with fun activities, especially speaking skills.

Excerpt 65:

'I plan to prepare some games according to the student's needs and the units of the coursebook to develop students' speaking skills.'

Excerpt 66:

'I want to use games more. I was afraid of speaking activities, but I will try to use speaking activities more.'

Excerpt 67:

'I will use different materials for teaching language skills. I also won't skip writing parts in the coursebooks.'

Other areas that teachers emphasize about the actions they will implement are that they will have a more positive attitude in their approach to students, that they will both support their professional development with a project-based approach and thus use a new

technique, adopting both formal and informal evaluation methods as exemplified in excerpts:

Excerpt 68:

'I will use all information in my language class. I will try games with my primary school students. I will encourage them whenever they have a problem. They need to believe they can succeed.'

Excerpt 69:

'I will search about e-twinning projects and get engaged in a project. I will make more efforts to develop my competencies.'

Excerpt 70:

'I will try to start a new e-twinning Project with my new knowledge. I will try to be a better researcher as a teacher. I will be more careful and pay attention to positive psychology in my classes.'

Excerpt 71:

'I will create some materials, develop some rubrics for the informal evaluation, and note what's happening in the classroom. I will also include some Web 2.0 tools such as Padlet and Mentimeter in my lessons for assessment purposes.'

These extracts, expressed by the teachers in the Action section of the KWLA chart, indicate the changes they want to make in the following academic year in many subjects such as project participation, game development and material adaptation after participating in the in-service training program.

4.3.1.2. What are their expectations for further INSET programs?

Based on the current INSET program, this research question aims to reveal suggestions for other future training programs for English teachers. Inductive content analysis was conducted on the answers given to an open-ended question in the training evaluation form. The suggestions were ranked from the most to the least frequent. Table 32 is given to summarize the participants' suggestions to improve some aspects:

Table 32.

Suggestions for Further INSET Programs

Suggestion area	f	%
More practice-based program	7	28
Additional content	7	28
Face-to-face sessions	6	24
Longer duration	2	8
School type	1	4
No suggestion	2	8
TOTAL	25	100

As inferred from Table 32, the most frequently cited suggestion is related to participating in a more ‘hands-on’ INSET program (f:7, 28%). Likewise, although the training was created as a result of needs analysis, secondly, the teachers suggested that more different subjects should be included (f:7, 28%). The following are pertinent excerpts from the trainees’ suggestions:

Excerpt 72:

‘Maybe some sessions could be removed, and more time can be allocated to other interactive activities.’ (More practice-based program)

Excerpt 73:

‘Maybe, there could have been more activities, but I understand that we had limited time. That was the best under pandemic conditions.’ (More practice-based program)

Excerpt 74:

‘A content suggestion would be classroom management specifically for students with special needs. According to the curriculum, those students are not responsible for learning English. Other students should take this class despite their incapacibilities. Therefore, a session would be great to integrate these students into the course.’ (Additional content)

Excerpt 75:

'Outdoor learning activities might be a suggestion to enhance the awareness of environmental issues.' (Additional content)

In addition to the content suggestions mentioned in the excerpts, the participants also stated that there should be sessions on topics such as storytelling, eliciting and wrapping up the lessons with enjoyable activities, classroom management in EFL classrooms, exchange of experience among colleagues, and teaching English to the youngest students (the kindergarten).

Another important point brought out by the teachers was that the training planned for the future should be face-to-face, not online. Three trainers offered their sessions online due to their sensitivity to the pandemic. Concerning this situation, the teachers claimed that the connection problems they experienced prevented them from establishing the desired interaction and that they could not do the practical work in the session properly for this reason, which made it difficult to follow the content, as it is illustrated in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 76:

'We had some connection problems during online training. According to me, online sessions were less interactive, but they were also useful.' (Face-to-face sessions)

Excerpt 77:

'Every session should be face-to-face. Even though I know that it is because of the pandemic, the zoom sessions were not very effective in terms of connection and communication.' (Face-to-face sessions)

Some participants emphasized that the duration of the program should be longer and that the activities in the program should be classified according to school types. In addition to these, two participants stated that they did not have any suggestions on any subject and thanked those who carried out the training program.

Excerpt 78:

'There could have been more activities or games to use in higher education. These activities mostly included the ones for primary school students, not for high school students.' (School type)

Excerpt 79:

'It would be great if we could take the training for two weeks. To me, teachers might be required to prepare and share their tasks as a part of the seminar.' (Longer duration)

Excerpt 80:

'The training was excellent. I have never joined such a productive, enjoyable and beneficial seminar before.' (No suggestion)

4.4. Findings of the Post-training Phase

The study's last phase aims to monitor teachers transforming from passive recipients of learning activities to active users of these new skills and knowledge in their educational environments. Concurrently, it seeks to evaluate the program's effectiveness in the teachers' own environment four months after the training. The difficulties, if any, experienced during the implementation and the identification of the contextual factors affecting teachers' practices and attitudes are also the focus of post-training research. With these purposes in mind, the researcher conducted this phase with five volunteer English teachers who participated in the INSET program and were recruited by the maximum variation sampling method.

4.4.1. To what extent does the in-service teacher training impact EFL teachers' competencies from different educational contexts four months after the program?

Four months after the completion of the in-service training program, volunteer English teachers were selected to observe the effect on the participants in different educational contexts. The demographic information of the teachers who participated in the post-training phase of the present study is presented in Table 33 below.

Table 33.

Demographic Information of The Participants in The Post-Training Phase

Participants	Gender	Age	Professional experience	School type
Deniz	Female	34	7 years	Secondary School (Rural)
Sedat	Male	39	8 years	Primary School (Rural)
Kübra	Female	37	15 years	High School (Refugee Camp)
Didem	Female	36	11 years	Secondary School (Centre)
Candan	Female	35	14 years	Primary School (Centre)

As illustrated in Table 33, five different English teachers working in schools with different educational contexts affiliated with the Ministry of National Education, and having various work experiences, took part in the follow-up phase of the study. Four of the participants are female teachers, and only one is a male teacher. Teachers' work experience varies between 7-15 years. Considering the school types, one can see that there is a high school located in the refugee camp, where refugees live and receive education, as well as primary and secondary schools located both in the centre and in the rural areas.

Five case studies depict teachers' changes, revealing that while teachers had comparable learning expectations, their learning outcomes varied based on contextual factors and personal approaches.

4.4.1.1. Case 1: Deniz

Deniz had been working as an English teacher for seven years when this study was conducted. The school Deniz still works at is a secondary school 35 km away from the city centre and 17 km from the district centre. The school has a total of 168 secondary school students, including students coming from neighbouring villages to receive education via the bussed education system. *Bussed education* is the name given to the education system made by the daily transportation of primary school students within the scope of compulsory education to the central primary schools in larger settlements. The lesson observations were made in the 6/A class, which includes 21 students. At the classroom level where lesson observations were made, students receive three lessons per week in English. There was no technological equipment in the classroom.

Deniz wanted to acquire some new techniques for teaching English to her students before taking the INSET course because she wants to be a more successful teacher. Even though she does not have a smartboard in her classroom, she wanted to learn additional Web 2.0 tools for her possible upcoming projects. She was also eager to learn more about how to put e-Twinning projects into action and learn varied interactive games and activities to have relatively more enjoyable English courses. After being exposed to the training content, Deniz stated that she felt more enthused and motivated to put her newfound knowledge into practice in the classroom. In her interview, she mentioned that:

Excerpt 81:

'I benefited greatly from the training. Even after the INSET training, the start of the summer vacation was extended until July 2nd, so it was a very good experience to have the opportunity to immediately adapt and apply the games and techniques I learned there.'

Post-training observations showed that Deniz used some of the games she learned in education by adapting them to sixth-grade students. Moreover, she preplanned the games she had designed or adapted before coming to class. In addition, it has been observed that the approach toward students regarding positive psychology has developed in a more positive direction. To illustrate, although an inclusive student was exempt from English lessons in the classroom, the teacher took a positive approach, especially to his more active participation in language games. Although it is observed that the games were mostly used for vocabulary revision, students played them together in a competitive atmosphere in the classroom. She highlighted this situation in her bi-weekly journal, saying:

Journal Entry 1:

'The moments when we played vocabulary games went so well. I felt the best when I saw the difference between the beginning and the end of the lesson. The words that the students were confused about at the beginning were no longer confused at the end of the lesson.' (October 19th, 2021)

In addition, she admitted that she used to skip writing parts of their coursebook before. After the INSET, she mentioned in her KWLA chart that she would try her best to include these parts to improve her students' writing skills. It has been observed that she generally did controlled-writing activities in the classroom. Additionally, in the interview, she also questioned what she could do more to bring out more creativity in her students, although she tries to give more responsibility to the students. To that end, she made up her mind to become the coordinator and do studies for the Tübitak 4006 science fair in her school, including research to improve students' writing skills with coding, as depicted in her bi-weekly teacher reflective journal:

Journal entry 2:

'I am planning to do studies for the Tübitak 4006 Science Fair. We have two English lesson projects at the Science Fair, which will be held in the 2nd semester. One is about writing stories in English with coding. First, we will write a story with my 7th-grade students. Then we will turn it into an animated story with the Scratch program. Our other project is to create a game about irregular verbs using Web 2 tools, which are the most difficult for students. For this, we will use the Cram Web 2 tool.' (November 9th, 2021)

It can be understood that she decided to benefit from scientific research and take a new role in her career as the Tubitak 4006 science fair coordinator for the sake of her professional development. Furthermore, she started her MA in the Educational Technologies department at Anadolu University.

For different techniques, it was observed that Deniz brought real-life materials such as croissants for the 'Yummy Breakfast' unit and examined a box of orange juice and a bar of chocolate to make comparisons about nutrition facts. She also asked her students to prepare a cafe menu to discuss their preferences and revise some language expressions. She was also observed while giving feedback, scaffolding her students, eliciting the correct answer, and using various visual materials. However, in her bi-weekly reflective journal, she highlighted that she needs to find new ways to integrate reading skills into the courses. During her interview, she also expressed her concern about integrating technology in her classes and developing the listening skills of the students:

Excerpt 82:

'In terms of school facilities, we do not have smartboards. This is the biggest problem. Normally, I want to prepare and deliver games myself with web 2 tools. I even have children prepare games. They learn very well with the games they prepare. Unfortunately, this is not possible for all classes. Since only two of our classrooms have smartboards, this is extremely challenging.'

Excerpt 83:

'We need it for low-level listening activities. Otherwise, we stick to the book. It could have been a little more supportive if we had smartboards in each classroom.'

Another issue that attracted attention in the lesson observations was that the teachers and students had very little communication in the target language. Although Deniz usually came to her lessons with different materials, the use of Turkish was much more dominant than English. She expressed her dissatisfaction on this subject in the bi-weekly reflective journal as follows:

Journal entry 3:

'I know I need to focus on more English use in class. I still use the mother tongue too much so that the motivation of the students does not decrease.' (December 7th, 2021)

To sum up, it can be put forward that the INSET program greatly contributed to Deniz's professional development perceptions and competencies with the adaptation of different games to the 6th grade English classes to revise vocabulary, the preparation of two different studies for the Tübitak science fair to improve the writing skills of the students, starting her MA, and the new role she took for the science fair. Despite this, it was seen that she needed in-service training to support her professional development, especially in teaching language skills that she could not transfer the content she learned with this training to the classroom environment.

4.4.1.2. Case 2: Sedat

Sedat has been an English language teacher working for Turkish MONE for seven years. Currently, he works at a primary school in a rural area which is 20 km away from

the city centre. In the school where Sedat works, there are 16 classrooms, 13 teachers, and 214 primary school students. Sedat also teaches English at another primary school located 20 km from the district centre. Sedat had an operation for a syndrome mentioned in the medical literature as cleft lip-palate (orofacial cleft), which caused him to have some speech disorders that cause problems in the articulation of some sounds.

Lesson observations continued for eight weeks in the 3/A class, where the 3rd-grade students were studying, with a class size of fewer than 20 students. There was a smart board in the classroom that could provide technical support to the teacher's language teaching process. During the lesson observation process, the teacher tried to help the students gain the lesson objectives in the 'Greetings', 'My Family' and 'People I Love' units of the textbook given by the Ministry of National Education. On the first day of the training, Sedat expressed the following expectations in the relevant section of the KWLA chart given to him:

Excerpt 84:

'I know a few Web 2.0 tools and enjoy using them. I would love to know more about these tools and how to integrate them in my classrooms effectively.'

Although later in the KWLA chart, he mentioned learning that teachers can use lots of materials in the class even without technology and he can use more materials to make learning much more enjoyable and exciting for students, it was seen that he did not give much place to different activities in his lessons. Apart from that, for pre-planning of teaching processes, it was observed that Sedat did not make any preparations long before and did not design extra activities other than copy papers containing some fill-in-the-blanks/ multiple-choice studies and did not evaluate his assignments with effective feedback. Although there are only objectives for the development of listening and speaking skills in the annual plan of the 3rd grade English lesson, the researcher observed that no listening activities were carried out with effective use of the smartboard in the classroom during the first two weeks. This situation was emphasized as the language skill that Sedat aims to develop in his bi-weekly teacher reflective journal:

Journal entry 4:

'It will be better to use more concrete data for giving examples to pupils and the usage of listening skills would be better if I add to lessons.' (October 22nd, 2021)

Interestingly, although there is not an objective for the development of writing/reading skills in the curriculum at this grade level considering young children's language learning features, he mentioned that he aimed to develop these skills in the semi-structured interview:

Excerpt 85:

'I understood that I needed to focus on reading and writing skills. It is not effective if only the information on the board is written in the notebook. For example, we read the songs in the books before we sing them, and sometimes I have the students write them.'

Other parts of instruction demonstrated that Sedat did not attempt to adapt any new information to his classes. He became accustomed to utilizing teacher authority to keep students under control. He maintained his dominance in both teacher presentation and teacher-student interaction. Despite the need for learners of this grade and age to be exposed to the target language as much as possible, there was extensive use of the grammar-translation method and the mother tongue Turkish in the classroom. All interactions were given in Turkish by the teacher. Generally, different approaches were not commonly observed in the classroom, except for the question/answer and translation technique during lesson observation. He expressed his need on this subject in the semi-structured interview as follows:

Excerpt 86:

'I need art and craft activities. Since I work with young learners, I would like to receive training on integrating such activities into language education.'

After discussing the reason why he usually used traditional teaching in his lessons and was unaware of listening excerpts from the coursebook, he showed a self-critical approach towards his language teaching technique, as indicated in his bi-weekly reflective journal:

Journal entry 5:

'I found out that I handle my students as first language learners and hurry up on doing the topic exercises. Moreover, the third and fourth units of the 3rd class and fourth units are about 'abilities and disabilities, so I behaved to the 3rd class as if they already had preliminary knowledge about the topic! I need to prevent such events. I still need to develop 'teaching with listening' skills since I have not (could not) applied for a long time.' (November 12th, 2021)

With the support of the researcher, Sedat started to do the listening activities in the book, starting from the second unit, 'My Family'. Although he had been working with young learners for a long time, the integration of listening skills into the lesson was partially achieved, but it was observed that no clear purpose or instructions were given before the activities. This result showed that the teacher needs more professional development in the related area. As learning gains related to training, it was observed that Sedat included only the use of peer assessment in the classroom, thus supporting students' learning from each other. To underline the things that went well that week, he added in his last bi-weekly reflective journal:

Journal entry 6:

'We did not have that much electricity cut off, so, we were able to do our smartboard activities with web2 tools, listening chunks and Morpa campus website exercises. Half of the students were good at handling the topic so, I asked them to assist me in teaching their friends and they were great at peer work! 'Peer work' works perfectly!' (December 7th, 2021)

It was also seen that he tried to make use of scaffolding, prompting and demonstration to foster students' language production. On the other hand, Sedat's participation in any project or in-service training was not observed during the lesson observation process. Moreover, he did not benefit from any scientific research methods or techniques reflecting on professional development in practice.

4.4.1.3. Case 3: Kübra

Kübra is a teacher with 15 years of English teaching experience in public schools. Currently, she works at a religious vocational high school located in an accommodation centre where only Syrian refugees live, also known as the world's largest container city. This school is 22 km away from Adana city centre and provides education to 933 Syrian students with a total of 36 teachers from different branches. Although the school includes students who are entirely Syrian refugees, educational activities occur according to the curriculum and objectives determined by the Ministry of National Education. The class in which the lesson observations were made is at the 9th grade level with 18 female students. Students in this grade take five English lessons per week. Lesson observations were carried out as one class hour per week for eight weeks between October 6th and December 1st, 2021.

Kübra frankly noted that she had almost forgotten everything she had learned about teaching methods at the university in the KWLA chart before the teacher training started. Therefore, she wanted to learn new methods in language teaching in this INSET program. At the end of the training, she expressed her satisfaction with the training content as follows:

Excerpt 87:

'For me, it was an excellent activity to improve myself, see my shortcomings, and update myself. Thanks to you, we had a helpful seminar period without getting bored. After the seminar, I did some work to prepare for the new academic term. I evaluated myself.'

Despite contextual limitations, it was observed that Kübra managed to adapt some activities she learnt to her lessons. For instance, she prepared an activity for making meaningful sentences using medicine boxes as group work. In this activity, she distributed the words that she cut and put in the medicine boxes to each group and asked them to correctly form sentences in a way that would support the interaction between the students. Meanwhile, Kübra visited the groups in the classroom and gave them continuous feedback.

In another activity, she distributed a worksheet to the students to practice making comparisons. It was designed as pair work to foster students' learning from each other.

At the end of the activity, students exchanged papers to give feedback to each other. Kübra needed to describe how they would assess the answers because it was the first time they had evaluated their friends' papers. She mentioned her content with this technique in her bi-weekly reflective journal, as indicated in the entry:

Journal entry 7:

'I used peer assessment for the first time. Although at first they did not understand how to do peer assessment and this was new to us, later on, they really enjoyed this work because I saw them discuss the activity and the answers among themselves. Learning from each other was a good part of this week' (October 18th, 2021)

However, it was observed that there was no technological support, including the smart board, to aid the teacher's skill-based language teaching and make other adaptations in the classroom environment. She also indicated this shortcoming in her interview after four months of the INSET program:

Excerpt 88:

'I work in the refugee camp, and both our students and teachers feel shortcomings in many ways. We do not have computers in our school. Internet connection is not available at students' homes or schools. Therefore, we cannot use it. But I can use the digital tools you taught me while doing research and evaluation.'

Kübra also tried to reveal the difficulty of the situation with these utterances more clearly in this respect:

Excerpt 89:

'Even when teaching via Zoom, a student or two could participate, even though some students were very motivated. Some students never participated in online education. They were saying they did not have the means, which they are indeed telling the truth. While they cannot reach their basic needs, it is impossible to wait for technological devices.'

In another journal entry, it was clearly grasped that Kübra was not happy in terms of developing students' listening and speaking skills, and she was in search of diverse techniques to overcome this shortcoming.

Journal entry 8:

'I need to develop listening and speaking skills. I am aware that I should develop new teaching methods to use in the classroom environment. I am planning to use audio-visual materials in the classroom' (November 5th, 2021)

In the following weeks, although Kübra tried to improve the students' language skills using different techniques such as the use of visuals, group-pair work, and demonstration in her lessons, she could not do any further study for their listening skills. Nevertheless, she supported her students with techniques such as elicitation, inferencing, scaffolding, and prompting in every activity and during the lesson and always approached her students with a positive and constructive attitude.

Another noteworthy feature of the educational context was that the teacher taught Syrian high school students English in a refugee camp. Therefore, Turkish was a target language to be learned in her educational environment rather than being a mother tongue. Considering that Arabic is the students' mother tongue, Kübra also learned Arabic to improve her professional knowledge and boost her students' learning. It was observed that the courses were mainly in English, Arabic and Turkish being used jointly, and three different languages were intertwined. For this reason, translation was also a frequently utilized technique. In addition, the teacher used relevant instructions in Arabic in the classroom to facilitate students' learning and help them acquire a positive attitude towards learning both Turkish and English.

Kübra was observed using code-switching when she needed to help students comprehend better, usually to fit in with that group. To illustrate, she told the students that they would get a 'necm' (star) for each question with correct answers (You have a necm for it) by blending both English and Arabic. She also used the 'vazifetül beyt' Arabic word, indicating homework for the next lesson.

She tried to use positive language in her approach to students, their cultural values and her communication style with his students. In addition, she tried to appreciate both national and global values by giving a Turkish flag sticker to each student who answered

the questions correctly in one of the activities and by learning the native language of the students, Arabic.

Lastly, though she tried to blend what she learned in training with her contextual factors, it was seen that she had difficulties in adapting the content. As for language skills, she tried to organize only controlled writing and some basic speaking activities and could not do activities that would improve their listening skills because there was no technological support.

Finally, all these results show that Kübra tried to use some techniques or methods for assessment as a learning gain from the training. She has also developed her professional skills, more notably, in creating some learning environments and managing the teaching process. Her approach to students was another sub-competency that has been positively affected by her students from another ethnicity and language appreciating both countries' national values. However, her participation in another professional development activity was not observed, and only the areas that needed improvement were expressed in the bi-weekly reflective journal.

4.4.1.4. Case 4: Didem

Didem works as an English teacher at a secondary school located in the centre of the district and, at the same time, stands out for its achievements in the district. The school she works at is a secondary school with 838 students and a total of 54 teachers from different branches. The lesson observations were carried out as one lesson hour per week for eight weeks at the eighth-grade level, including 26 students. Students take four English classes a week. A smart board is available in the classroom where the teacher can diversify her activities. Also, she has other technical equipment such as photocopiers to reproduce the activities she may prepare using different sources.

In the KWLA chart given to her at the beginning of the training, she stated that she did not know much about teacher competencies. In the W (want to learn) part, she highlighted that she wants to learn how to be a teacher as a researcher or integrate 21st-century skills into the English language teaching process. She also wanted to know more about using games and different activities in every classroom and conducting projects. At the end of the training, she made up her mind about how she would apply what she learned, as clarified in the excerpt below:

Excerpt 90:

'I will try to start a new E-twinning Project with my new knowledge. I will try to be a better researcher as a teacher. I will be more careful about my students' needs and pay attention to positive psychology.'

In the lesson observations, the first striking point was how she adapted the activities used during the training to her classroom. To illustrate, Didem adapted the ice-breaking session of the training as a speaking activity in her class to revise the objectives of the previous unit. Students were expected to read the questions they chose and answer them. Didem sometimes prompted her students when she thought they were having difficulty. In the following weeks, she used the 'colours' game introduced in training as a warm-up activity to make a revision of the vocabulary items of the second unit consisting of camp materials. To improve students' speaking skills, Didem used this game as a group activity to boost interaction in the classroom. She also wanted her students to use 'thank you' and 'please' to support a positive language of communication. The language expressions she wanted to develop in the students were as follows:

What do you need?

I need

Can I have, please?

Let's change.

Can you please give me, please?

In her bi-weekly reflection journal, she wrote down the following sentences to express the positive change in her lessons:

Journal entry 9:

'My students' interest and enthusiasm for the course increased significantly. Learning different methods and techniques made me feel better as an individual and increased my self-confidence, which naturally made a noticeable difference in my interaction with my students.' (October 21st, 2021)

For another activity, it was observed that she used the pdf format of the activity book that the trainer shared with participants. Regarding the adaptation and positive reflection of this activity, Didem mentioned in the reflective journal, as depicted in the entry:

Journal entry 10:

'... in one of our activities, students had to create a mutual dialogue about inviting-rejecting-offering. I have a student who does not want to read any English sentences aloud. With the help and support he received from his friend, he produced a wonderful dialogue. Thus, he proved to himself that he could attend an English activity. He also discovered that he had great acting ability while performing the dialogue.' (November 11th, 2021)

She also discusses the importance of adaptation of some games and other activities in her semi-structured interview:

Excerpt 91:

'I adapted the games to my classes, and we developed a new project. We will implement it. I am a teacher working in a secondary school. Students have some prejudices against English. I believe that the more I can enrich this process with projects and different activities, the better I will establish a bond with my students. I strive to create a classroom environment that students would like.'

In addition to these adaptations, Didem has integrated some of the web 2.0 tools she learned during the training into her English lessons. For example, she designed an activity called "Jewels of the Wisdom" using the web 2.0 tool Cram. Students were supposed to match the visuals with their English meanings in this game. She also used another game called "Jeopardy" on the smart board to revise some vocabulary items.

Despite all these successful attempts, one of the points that Didem underlined was her need to develop the four basic language skills simultaneously. No studies were found in lesson observations or bi-weekly reflection journals, especially on the development of reading and listening skills. She explains the issue in her reflective journal, saying:

Journal entry 11:

'Writing-reading-speaking-listening activities are all different from each other. Moreover, sometimes the student who participates in the writing activity with great motivation and enthusiasm may hate the reading activity. Such situations also bring the mood down in the classroom. Maybe I can create a more effective lesson environment by increasing the variety of skills.' (November 25th, 2021).

In terms of monitoring and evaluating language development, it was observed that Didem also applied a vocabulary quiz in addition to the games she designed to revise the related vocabulary items. In this quiz, the only thing expected from the students was to write down the Turkish meanings of the given English words. New words or any language expressions were not evaluated in a context.

To ensure professional development, Didem started an e-Twinning project called 'Dersimiz Dünya' (Our Lesson is the World) in September 2021, based on what she learned from the training. In addition to that project, she started another KA229 Erasmus project titled 'Act like a pro: Preserve H2O'. Reflecting research on professional development into practice, Didem has taught English classes in a way that supports her students to participate in related projects and pursue her professional development. Different projects have created a positive attitude towards both the interaction in the classroom and her career, as she stated in the last bi-weekly reflective journal:

Journal entry 12:

'Erasmus+ and e-Twinning projects were the studies in which I progressed professionally. We started an Erasmus+ project that will last for two years. Our e-Twinning project, which started in September, continues at full speed. My students, who had never heard of the platform before, warmed up to the project and showed extraordinary participation.' (December 10th, 2021).

Along with a positive approach toward professional development, she has been observed to keep participating in personal and professional development activities, benefiting from some scientific procedures. Similarly, she also developed some of her professional skills to manage the teaching and learning processes. Utilizing her new content knowledge, she adapted activities to build an effective learning environment for

all students. For this reason, it can be stated that the training she attended positively improved Didem's competencies as an English teacher, including knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

4.4.1.5. Case 5: Candan

Candan works as an English teacher in a public primary school with 1046 students and 41 teachers in the district centre. She has a total of 14 years of English teaching experience, with the last nine years being at this school. The lesson observations were conducted for one hour per week for eight weeks at the fourth-grade level, with 37 students. Every week, students attend three English lessons. The classroom has a smart board where the teacher may vary her activities. She also has additional technological equipment, such as photocopiers, to duplicate the activities utilizing various sources.

Before starting the training program, Candan mentioned that she knew some teaching strategies and methods. She wanted to learn how she could apply these strategies in the classroom more effectively. She wanted to study some new language teaching ideas since she finds it difficult to describe her teaching without theoretical understanding. She was also interested in getting practical information for actual teaching to deal with teaching challenges. After the training, she felt satisfied with the course since her educational ideas had been updated to understand the new educational requirements and some other essential concepts in language teaching. Excerpt 93 indicates her content with the training:

Excerpt 92:

'We take part in many in-service pieces of training online or face-to-face. However, there is usually some training that always remains in theory. The training you gave was to discuss how we prepare and apply it in our contexts. It felt good to be able to feel like a student again.'

In the KWLA chart, she expressed in the section on adapting what she learned to her educational context that she is not sure if she can apply all the things she learned in the classroom, but she will remember many of them. For instance, she has made up her mind to use more colourful and attractive materials to make her lessons enjoyable because she is studying with young learners.

During the lesson observations, it was seen that Candan conducted English lessons in line with the objectives in the ‘Nationality, Cartoon Characters, and Free Time’ units in the textbook given by the Ministry of National Education. It was observed that she made preparations for the additional materials in her lessons and also used an online version of the textbook. Candan explained that she used it to attract students’ attention to the lesson and do the book’s listening activities more successfully. In particular, she tried to let her students get exposed to the appropriate language used in the listening activities. In her bi-weekly reflective journal, she asserted that listening is a crucial skill to develop because each student needs to take the necessary input and get used to the way English is used in dialogues:

Journal entry 13:

‘There are smart boards in my school. I can also use the online version of the book. We do listening activities in a very comfortable way. I had to carry a sound bomb (equipment) with me to the schools I previously worked in. Lately, I can see that students’ listening skills have improved’ (October 28th, 2021)

In addition to the goal of improving students’ listening skills, it was also observed that Candan used the target language as much as possible in the classroom, and listening activities are generally followed by speaking activities. She asked some guiding questions to foster speaking among students, including both yes-or-no and open-ended questions. To illustrate making associations with students’ lives, she asked some questions to urge students to use the target language function regarding talking about abilities/disabilities.

Candan felt more enthusiastic and motivated to integrate her learning outcomes into the actual classroom after being introduced to the training input, and she gained more insights about language teaching. Her enthusiasm is evident in Excerpt 94:

Excerpt 93:

‘I discovered that teaching (and learning how to teach) takes a lifetime. Yes, there is a plan and program I have to follow. But the plan and the program should be compatible with my educational environment. I will move forward more confidently. This was the most important competency I developed.’

Candan's use of classroom activities demonstrated that she put what she had learned into practice and became more mindful while making teaching decisions. For example, she adapted a game to revise free-time activities. This game was primarily an activity that required the demonstration of a word selected from the box and guessing it correctly by the group members. In such activities, Candan kept giving continuous feedback to her students by making use of techniques such as elicitation, scaffolding, prompting, and self-correction. She also employed short dialogues to help her students inductively learn the language function. Furthermore, she was observed to be keen on utilizing the target vocabulary in language patterns and transferring the related language expressions into new contexts. On the other hand, she asked her students to look at the first page of the new unit and guess the content evoking the correct answers:

Where are they?
 What are they watching?
 Which animals can you see?
 Which one do you like?

Despite her insistence on using English as the language of instruction in the classroom, she spoke her mother tongue, Turkish, for clarification or extra explanation, even to ensure discipline. Still, she noted down her plans to have wider use of English in her classes, as shown in her bi-weekly journal entry:

Journal entry 14:

'I started using English more. I used to be afraid to use English in class if they did not understand. However, I see that they learn many things that I use when speaking English. I talk more in English this year. My students told their families that our teacher speaks English very well. I used very simple sentence structures, but this change caught their attention.' (December 3rd, 2021).

Some of the attitudes that the training program helped Candan develop were the increase in her communication with her colleagues and the support to ensure continuity in her professional development. She expressed her thoughts in her interview:

Excerpt 94:

'The best thing that the training added to me was being among the English teachers again. This reunion has increased my self-confidence as well. This is my 9th year in primary school. From time to time, I observe a professional decline in my strengths as a teacher.'

Candan initiated an e-Twinning project called 'Tanışalım mı?' (Get to know each other?) to assure professional growth and maintain the beneficial effect. In addition, she voluntarily gave English lessons at the A1/A2 level to his colleagues at the school. She was also selected as a participant in the Erasmus+ project of the Provincial Directorate of National Education and she went to Amsterdam, Netherlands to attend a professional development course.

Finally, she has kept participating in personal and professional development activities and has a more favourable attitude towards professional development. Similarly, she enhanced her professional knowledge and skills to administer the teaching and learning processes, including creating appropriate materials for effective learning. With a more focused interest in developing students' listening and speaking skills, she decided to slow down a bit more due to the school type, no matter at what pace the curriculum plan goes, to follow a more supportive manner to understand the students' needs. She also developed projects in cooperation with colleagues to effectively reflect on the language learning and teaching processes.

4.4.1.6. What challenges (if any) did the teachers face with implementing what they learned in their educational context?

After evaluating the local INSET program EFL teachers attended and analyzing its effects on their competencies, learning gains and actual classroom practices, English language teachers were asked if they had any difficulties adapting what they learned to their educational environment during the post-training phase of the study. Table 34 is given to describe the challenges they experienced in implementing what they learned into their English classes:

Table 34.

Sources of Challenges in Implementation

Challenges	f	%
Students' bias	1	5.55
Inadequate lesson hours	2	11.11
Language problem	2	11.11
Curriculum and coursebooks	3	16.66
Lack of school facilities	3	16.66
Students' opportunities	6	33.33
TOTAL	18	100

Table 34 shows the resources that create difficulties for teachers in applying the knowledge and skills acquired in the INSET program to the actual classroom environment during the post-training phase. Teachers stated students' opportunities as the source that creates the most challenge for them in implementing and adapting new knowledge and skills. The relevant excerpts about the teachers' evaluations of students' opportunities are given below:

Excerpt 95:

'I have some students who come to class without having taken any previous English lessons, together with others who have been taking English lessons for 3 years. This difference sometimes creates problems in implementing innovations. I try to teach by finding the middle way and creating a common understanding.' (Deniz- students' opportunities)

Excerpt 96:

'The deficiencies in the school environment, family situation, and financial conditions of the children have a very negative effect on the school environment and their success.' (Kübra- students' opportunities)

Excerpt 97:

'Practice is a must to teach grammar. When I want to send a Pdf via Whatsapp, some parents do not have an internet connection or phone. I cannot produce every material at school because this requires a particular cost.' (Candan- students' opportunities)

In addition to the limited opportunities for the students, the poor technological, financial, or physical conditions of the school were also expressed as another important reason for the teachers' inability to include the new knowledge and skills they have acquired in the INSET program.

Excerpt 98:

'I cannot do technological content. I have slides that I love to prepare. However, once I go to school, there is no electricity, no internet, or the smart board is broken.' (Sedat- lack of school facilities)

Excerpt 99:

'We work in the refugee camp, and our students and teachers feel shortcomings in many ways. We do not have computers in our school. An Internet connection is not available at students' homes or schools. Therefore, we cannot use it.' (Kübra- lack of school facilities)

Excerpt 100:

'In terms of school facilities, we do not have smartboards. Typically, I want to prepare and deliver games myself with web 2 tools. I even have children prepare games. They learn very well with the games they prepare. Unfortunately, this is not possible for all classes. Since only two of our classrooms have smartboards, this is extremely challenging.' (Deniz- lack of school facilities)

Curriculum, textbooks, and especially the inadequacy of weekly English lesson hours determined by the Ministry are among the controversial issues that force teachers to adopt innovations. The excerpts below exemplify these situations more clearly:

Excerpt 101:

'There are 2 hours of English lessons per week. Even if I wanted to do something, I could not. Already, students in primary school speak very loudly. Some of my classes pass by saying, "Be quiet all the time." I'm sure all teachers in Türkiye complain about the same issue.' (Candan- inadequate lesson hours)

Excerpt 102:

'Two hours a week is not enough. Especially in primary school, I think my students are not young learners. They are the youngest learners, in my opinion. To me, we should have at least six lesson hours of English per week' (Sedat- inadequate lesson hours).

Excerpt 103:

'Our books and curriculum are too heavy-loaded for my students. These children have stayed in camps in Turkiye for years and received education in Turkish schools as I try to give them the simplest form of the curriculum. I try to do it so that they can understand, without boring them.' (Kübra- curriculum and coursebook)

Apart from these, it has also been stated that teachers have difficulties in applying what they have learned to the classroom environment and activities due to the bias that students have regarding language learning, as indicated in the following excerpt:

Excerpt 104:

'When I first adapted a game to improve my students' speaking skills, some students said, "I absolutely cannot do it; I can not even read." When they understood that the questions were very simple, not for evaluating English, but for integration, and then this prejudice was broken. Their biases always negatively affect them at first. They may think that their friends laugh at them.' (Didem- students' bias)

To conclude, although teachers learn enriching knowledge and skills that may improve their competencies in the INSET programs they attend and help them develop a positive attitude towards professional development and cooperation, other factors affect the implementation process. Thus, it is obviously a multi-layered situation incorporating different dynamics of professional development that are shaped according to the specific educational contexts and personal features.

4.5. Chapter Summary

The analyses of the entire data collected in the pre-, while-, and post-training phases have been detailed in chronological sequence in this chapter. That is, during the pre-training phase, the EFL teachers' perceptions of their competencies and the need areas

to enhance them were provided. Following that, in the while-training phase, the participants' learning gains from the training sessions and their evaluations of the overall training quality were explored. In terms of the post-training phase, the findings of the teachers' sustained learning gains have been documented and studied, with an emphasis on the competencies determined by Turkish MONE.



CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

The collected findings are addressed in this chapter, with particular references to the relevant literature. The explanation of those findings is structured so that each research question is well discussed. The chapter begins with a review of EFL teachers' perceptions of competency and their perspectives and self-evaluations of teacher competencies before the INSET program. Then it moves on to the participants' learning gains from the training sessions and an evaluation of the training program's efficacy in particular areas. Finally, it focuses on the teachers' long-term learning gains from the program and their comments on their abilities in various educational contexts.

5.2. Discussion for the Research Question 1

Research Question 1: What are the perceived competency levels of in-service English language teachers regarding field-specific competencies set by Turkish MONE?

This research question aimed to determine the EFL teachers' self-perceived competency levels regarding their subject area competencies as set by Turkish MONE in the exploration part of the study. The goal of this research question was first to determine all participants' competency levels and then to explore their degree of competency in particular categories. The English Teachers Field-Specific Competencies Assessment Scale developed by Kararmaz and Arslan (2014) was utilized as a data collection tool to identify their competency levels and organize competency-based in-service teacher training. This scale was first applied to 267 English teachers via an online survey, which was selected using a snowball sampling method. Additional questions were also included in the demographic information section to investigate the influence of various factors on teachers' views of competency. At the same time, 20 English teachers filled out written interview forms created by the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the issue. The gathered data were then evaluated using the convergent parallel design approach, resulting in complementary qualitative and quantitative results.

The results revealed that the competency perceptions of English teachers are pretty high. English teachers' perceptions range from $\bar{x}$: 3.78 to $\bar{x}$: 4.19 according to sub-

competency areas. This range corresponds to the ‘agree’ and ‘totally agree’ ranges. These results were compatible with the study conducted by Kararmaz and Arslan (2014). It was very pleasing that teachers found themselves highly competent in the sum of the competencies because teachers with high self-efficacy believe they will demonstrate quality teaching with confidence in themselves and their competencies. They may also be considered to serve the highest learning and teaching goals with enthusiasm and enthusiasm. However, of course, these results are also open to being evaluated from a sceptical point of view; because there have been researchers who have determined that there are differences between teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs and their observed competencies (Jacob & McGovern, 2015; Marshik, Ashton & Algina, 2017; Poulou, Reddy & Dudek, 2019).

Developing language skills had the lowest mean score among all competency areas ($\bar{x}$: 3.78; SD: .563). To shed light on this result, it is first necessary to present a portrait of our country regarding English language teaching. Starting from our country’s 2013-2014 academic year, students have started learning the English language from the second grade of primary school. Although various changes have been made in English teaching programs to respond to today’s changing needs, it is seen that the desired success in English teaching has not been achieved in our country, Türkiye (Gömlüksiz & Aslan, 2017; Memduhoğlu & Kozikoğlu, 2015). To illustrate, when the international proficiency index for 2020 is examined, the Netherlands, which ranks first among 100 countries, has a very high (very high proficiency) English level, while Türkiye ranks 69th among the countries with low proficiency in English. (English Proficiency Index, 2020).

Language mastery is critical for language teachers since it is the ‘bedrock of their professional confidence’ (Murdoch, 1994, p. 254). If language teachers have a solid command of the language they teach, they will be able to present the information more readily and clearly. Similarly, Richards, Conway, Roskvist and Harvey (2013) suggest that language teachers who are fluent in the target language may deliver rich information to language learners. This may imply that language competency, including understanding the target language in terms of language skills and/or knowledge, should be integrated into INSET programs, depending on the areas of need.

Teachers in the current study reported a relatively lower mean score than other competencies in improving students’ speaking skills ($\bar{x}$: 3.63, SD: .845). As emphasized in the teachers’ opinions in the study conducted by Tunç and Kozikoğlu (2022), almost

all teachers think that speaking is the language skill students have the most difficulty teaching English. They mentioned that this skill was followed by listening and other skills. Furthermore, according to Paker (2012), 95% of teachers primarily try to teach English grammar and do not see or use the language as a communication tool. Moreover, there is no section for communication in the exams. Similarly, Özmat and Senemoğlu (2020) discuss various factors, such as short course hours, lack of flexibility in the course schedules, the inadequacy of the materials used in the course, insufficient use of technology in the course, too much emphasis on theory and grammar teaching, and the student's prejudices against the course, that makes it difficult to use English as a communication tool. Although the English lesson is included in the central exam at the secondary school level, the English lesson may fall into the background as students prepare intensively for the exam in all subjects (Gökler, Aypay & Arı, 2012). Since teachers also adopt exam-oriented language teaching to students, effective teaching of language skills is unfortunately thrown into the background. In addition, short English lesson hours reduce the permanence of what is learned, thus causing students to develop negative attitudes towards foreign language learning (Cihan & Gürlen, 2013). For these reasons, even though English is a global language of communication, in this study, teachers' perceptions of a relatively low level of proficiency, especially in improving students' speaking skills, seem to be affected by the results of the above studies.

In the results, the lowest mean score was associated with conducting practices that consider special education students' requirements into account the requirements of special education students among all items of the scale ($\bar{x}$: 3.22, SD: .898). In line with this result, it can be suggested that there is a great lack of research in foreign languages despite the pervasive research in other disciplines related to inclusion and IEP preparation in the literature (Zeybek, 2015). Among the reasons for this situation, it can also be put forward that foreign language lessons are considered insignificant and unnecessary for children with learning difficulties. In addition, the fact that parents of children with special needs want their children to devote time to other disciplines that they consider more important and beneficial during their stay at school affects this situation even more negatively (Padurean, 2014). In the same vein, the study conducted by Yesmin, Ullah and Khan (2020) demonstrated that instructors had a significant obstacle in teaching language to special children due to a lack of knowledge, suitable classroom equipment, lack of awareness, and limited language training.

On the other hand, according to Article 27 of the Special Education Regulation of the Ministry of National Education, the goals and behaviours included in individualized education programs are considered in evaluating the achievements of special-needs students. These students are exempted from teaching some knowledge and skills in foreign language programs, the whole course, or even from the foreign language course exam in the central system exams in line with their demands (by petition to the school administration) in primary education. Therefore, as students continue to be in the classroom even though they are exempt from the course, English teachers also need support to improve their competencies in teaching language to children with special needs. Hence, in this study, it was emphasized once again that English teachers were not satisfied with this situation. Moreover, although these students can be officially exempted from language learning, it has been found that teachers need to develop competencies to work effectively with these students.

Although the highest mean score included the teacher perceptions regarding planning and organizing English teaching processes among all competency areas, the proficiency level of teachers in using technological resources while teaching English was relatively lower ($\bar{x}$: 3.95, SD: .785). It is apparent that they demanded a bit more assistance in utilizing technology resources than other scale items. During the educational process, technology had to be used in a variety of ways, including offering appropriate teaching materials for students, allowing students, teachers, and parents to communicate at any time and from any location, and aiding in determining learning materials from the internet (Fansury, Januarty & Ali Wira Rahman, 2020). Teachers needed to continually develop fresh teaching strategies in classrooms to keep students interested and motivated throughout the COVID-19 pandemic as educators. This compulsory situation caught many teachers almost unprepared in this sense and made it difficult for many teachers to develop content in related fields and present online education effectively.

Besides, as aimed in the 2023 education vision, supporting the professional development of teachers, and raising leading teachers who have the competency to use and develop existing digital content effectively have been essential for the digital transformation experienced with technological developments (MONE, 2018). It is also seen that the level of digital competencies that educators should have today has also increased, and the need to develop their competencies by integrating them into the educational environment is emphasized rather than using digital tools. Another issue is

that the adoption and use of educational technology are mainly dependent on the willingness of teachers, who are a crucial part of the classroom and ultimately determine whether or not to incorporate them and how they will be utilized in the classroom (Razak, Alakrash & Sahboun, 2018). This situation has been reinforced by the positive effects of technology use on the teaching and development of language skills in many studies (Klimova, 2018; Lestari, 2019; Setiawan & Wiedarti, 2020). These studies undoubtedly make significant contributions to the modernization of teacher education, raising the quality of language teaching and showing the teachers possible ways, as the current study highlights.

Another research question tried to determine if certain variables statistically impact EFL teachers' perceptions of their competencies. These variables included teachers' gender, educational background, work experience, school type, and previous INSET participation. The findings demonstrated that education status is a deciding factor in almost all sub-categories of the scale, except for collaboration with the school, family, and community, where it is slightly over the accepted p-value. This result showed that teachers consider themselves more competent in their professions as their knowledge and skills increase during postgraduate study.

It is well-known that postgraduate education requires a different level of knowledge, skills, and synthesizing skills than undergraduate education by conducting in-depth studies in a specific field, aiming to raise a high level of specialization for problem-solving, producing knowledge, and specializing in professional fields (Karaman & Bakırcı, 2010). At the same time, gaining an important place in a constantly developing and renewing age necessitates the training of a qualified workforce, which is the most crucial input of development (İlhan, Sünkür, & Yılmaz, 2012). In parallel with the current study results, teachers believe that postgraduate education benefits them in decision-making, academic autonomy, career development, critical thinking, and professional competency and values, as suggested by İlter (2020). Similarly, teachers' positive and high attitudes about graduate education can help improve their professional values (MONE, 2018).

Teachers may accept postgraduate studies as a stepping stone to academic autonomy by advancing their professional or academic careers in their expertise or exhibiting professional behaviour while fulfilling their teaching duties (Harvey, 2009). These efforts can also help teachers to gain a more dynamic structure in the existing

education system and the institutions where they work by forming a bridge between academic research and schools, facilitating the transfer of results to their professional contexts, and increasing the benefits of research results and their application (Ion & Iucu, 2016). Barduhn and Johnson (2009) also argue that, despite the prevalence of the opinion that four-year undergraduate education is sufficient for the development of professional competency of English teachers, the desired level of competency, which accepts the master's degree as a basic one, can only be achieved with a doctorate. They stated that there are ongoing opinions; therefore, for example, in New York, the title of permanent teacher is given to teachers with a master's degree. Similarly, if the knowledge and skills provided by undergraduate education are considered a layer, what is gained from graduate education will almost be new bricks placed on top and, therefore, higher layers. The onion metaphor used by Korthagen (2004) for the development of teachers' competency can be given as an example of this situation, and this analogy would be appropriate to express the state of knowing and being able to expand in each layer.

Besides all this positive picture, Sevim and Akın (2021) argue that due to deficiencies such as the lack of a career system that encourages graduate education and the inability to put what has been learned into practice for various reasons, it is not enough to have a graduate education alone. Some precautions should be taken regarding both the structure of the graduate education programs and the working environment of the teachers. Also, the number of teachers who believe that participation in master's or doctoral programs to support their professional development is not a decisive factor is relatively high (Kızılkaya, 2012).

Another noteworthy result for discussion was the statistically significant effect of work experience on EFL teachers' competency perceptions. Results revealed that out of 267 participants, teachers with 11 to 15 years of experience made up the largest group of participants, constituting 34 per cent of all. The 82 teachers with 6–10 years of professional experience came in second. Work experience statistically affects English language teachers' competency levels in developing students' language skills (X^2 : 8.408; p .005). One might suppose that as teachers' professional experience expands, so do their self-perceived competency levels in language teaching skills, and they feel more competent in enhancing students' language abilities. Obviously, not every experience is educational: some experienced teachers are ineffective or may lose their enthusiasm, while others are active and competent. Nonetheless, a more experienced teaching staff

generally benefits students and schools (Podolsky, Kini & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Koedel and Betts (2007) came up with a similar result that teachers learn the most from experience during their first years in the classroom, but they continue to increase their competency beyond these first gains. The researchers also noted that as teachers grow experience, their students are more likely to perform better on performance indicators other than standardized tests. Hence, they support the idea that teaching experience is positively related to student performance improvements across most of a teacher's career. In tandem with these results, Donkoh (2017) put forward that the ability to teach for greater grasp, create and maintain student interest in lessons, identify student misunderstandings and correct them, comprehend the requirements of individual students at any given time, ask questions and respond to the students' questions appropriately, and choose suitable materials and teaching methods for various topics are all skills that teachers with solid subject-matter content knowledge have.

The effect of participation in professional development activities on teacher competencies also presented another essential result in this study. When the findings were analysed, 198 instructors reported having undergone Turkish MONE training. Second, 75 individuals reported participating in training or conferences organized by different universities. Furthermore, private publishing companies, the British Council, and the US Embassy offered massive online open courses that were among the teachers' top choices. Only one teacher indicated that s/he participated in all the alternate programs. Furthermore, 52 per cent of the participants claimed to have taken part in both an online and in-person INSET program. The group of teachers who participated in a face-to-face INSET session had the lowest participation rate (21%). Until lately, the professional development of teachers in Türkiye was seen as teacher training with a focus on developing skills and understanding. As a result, many teachers prefer education programs that are short-term INSET courses designed to enhance mastery of predetermined skills and information (Daloğlu, 2004; Yılmaz, 2017; Çalışkan, 2021). Korkmazgil and Seferoğlu (2013) also investigated the professional development activities of non-native English teachers in Türkiye. They discovered that most of the participants in the research were previously involved in multiple professional development activities, including workshops, seminars, or some compulsory INSET programs.

It was discovered in this study that participation in prior INSET programs

significantly impacts teachers' self-perceived competencies in planning and organizing English language processes, developing language skills, and continuing professional development competencies. Moreover, the findings demonstrated that teachers' judgments of their subject area competency are greatly influenced by their knowledge and expertise in their professions when they engage in professional development programs like in-service training. Similarly, Omar (2017) suggested that in-service teachers who participate in professional development activities become more proficient because of the pedagogical skills and subject-area knowledge they obtain throughout the courses. Several studies have also found that professional development courses improve teachers' content understanding and pedagogical skills (Radford, 1998; Supovitz & Turner, 2000; Nguyen, 2018). Another set of research found that these courses boost teachers' trust in teaching their subjects and foster a positive approach to their professions (Derakhshan, Coombe, Zhaleh & Tabatabaeian, 2020; Önalán & Gürsoy, 2020; Arslan, Mirici & Öz, 2020).

According to Guskey (2000), the assessment of INSET programs for teachers should centre on the participants' satisfaction with the courses they have taken, the program's efficiency, and input from administrators directly supervising the participants in their professions. However, in her study, Koç (2015) concluded that English language teachers are dissatisfied with their in-service teacher-training programs, which do not meet their demands because their subject areas are disregarded while planning INSET programs. For this reason, the needs analysis of English teachers took an important place in the present study's first stage, 'exploration.' Additionally, although the INSET programs fulfilled the objectives of the participants and their managers, project management was challenging, with the primary concerns of the participants being a lack of references for trainees, sufficient preparation, and the needs analysis in Hung (2016)'s study. Hence, a meticulously executed process is needed to get the maximum benefit from a professional development program, from the needs analysis to analysing and reporting the follow-up effect.

5.3. Discussion for the Research Question 2

Research Question 2: What do in-service EFL teachers think about the competencies an effective English language teacher needs to have?

In the exploration phase of the project, this research question sought to explore

the perspectives of an effective EFL teacher's competencies more deeply. To contribute to the intended INSET program's content, it also attempted to study the self-awareness of English teachers regarding their knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Twenty English language teachers out of the total 267 teachers that took the scale also answered the written interview form that the researcher had created.

As the extracts showed, it was evident that the participants' responses were primarily concerned with how the teacher delivers instruction and how to manage the teaching and learning processes, both of which are connected to the teachers' professional skills. This result implies that to carry out the learning successfully and teaching processes, the information of an effective English teacher is provided to the student pleasantly and comprehensively, according to their interest and knowledge level. According to Loughran and Russell's (2003) research with pre-service teachers, professional knowledge about teaching how to learn is fundamental as a teacher is expected to. Concerning the way of teaching, Zu Chang et al. (2013) also conducted research that correlates teachers' innovative teaching approaches with teacher competencies. According to this research, four basic competency concepts exist, including learning, teaching, and social and technological competencies. It has been revealed that the mentioned basic competency is directly related to the teachers' innovative teaching approach, which shows parallelism in this study. More than that, in Mammadova's (2019) study comparing teacher quality and teaching quality, it was found that teachers who manage a qualified teaching process by integrating their skills and knowledge into teaching affect students' outcomes positively. It can be understood that the material and approach used in creative teaching should be customized depending on the students' interests, previous knowledge, and existing skill levels (Russ, 2003). Instead of being limited to particular and predetermined materials, the teacher adds, adjusts, incorporates, develops, and diversifies the teaching content to their students' needs and the learning tasks (Chen, 2009).

In addition to the quality of instruction, providing adequate teaching materials and creating healthy and secure learning settings in which successful learning may be attained for all students is critical in terms of EFL teachers' professional skills, as evidenced by the utterances of the participants. Accordingly, Hsieh (2002) discovered that upgrading the entire EFL environment boosts student motivation: providing students with what they need and informing them about it encourages them to achieve more independently.

Furthermore, Dornyei (1994) discovered that second-language motivation is closely related to the venue or location where the language is studied. Labrie and Clement (1986) also supported the presumption that low academic proficiency results from inadequate genuine immersion or an authentic environment, which leads to a lack of dedication of Taiwanese students to effective learning and the accompanying motivation for learning English. For this reason, both the quality of the language education offered to the student, the environmental conditions in which this education is given, and the variety of activities constitute an important place in terms of the professional skills of an EFL teacher.

Another conclusion drawn from the findings was that teachers emphasize competencies regarding attitudes, such as approaches to professional development and interaction with students. According to the participants' statements, effective English teachers follow innovations to keep themselves up to date with a very positive approach to their professional development. The subject of continuing professional development, which constitutes the main point of this research, was thus expressed by the research participants. To explain better, Pettis (2002) posited that the teaching profession necessitates adopting lifelong learning by teachers. She identifies key characteristics of an expert teacher, stating that teachers should continually try new methods to improve themselves professionally based on their prior expertise. Also, she adds that a teacher needs to be personally devoted to advancing his or her profession. Other findings of the study conducted by Babanoğlu and Yardımcı (2017) corroborate with the results of the current study, suggesting that all the study's participants had a highly favourable attitude toward professional development topics, particularly about lifelong professional development and self-confidence in their professions. Thus, it turns out that professional development is seen as an undeniable way to maintain and increase the quality of teachers. In addition, the acquired knowledge not only provides an improvement in the teaching process but also leads to career development.

Among the characteristics an effective English teacher should have, the teachers' attitudes towards the students were also outlined. The participants' attitudes towards the students were also specified as characteristics an effective English teacher should have. These positive features are mainly contributing to the students' development of positive attitudes toward learning English, being tolerant, and behaving in a motivating way. As Jones (2007) emphasizes, a student-centred classroom is not a place where students determine what they want to learn and what they want to accomplish. Instead, this is an

environment where their needs as a group and as individuals are recognized and where they are constantly encouraged to engage in the learning process. On the other hand, Murphy, Delli, and Edwards (2004) list the essential qualities of an ideal teacher: showing interest in students, being patient and polite, teaching fun, and avoiding excessive prescriptiveness. These findings also comply with the statements about the approach to students in the ‘Teaching Profession General Competencies’ document published by the Ministry of National Education in 2017.

In the last place, participants developed several effective teacher competencies that also addressed subject-matter expertise. Effective English teachers are supposed to be knowledgeable about the ideas and teaching methods of the topic, as shown by the excerpts. To transmit information to the students effectively and correctly, they also need to understand pedagogical content knowledge better. Although the sentences about the competencies in this field were the least expressed by the teachers, some studies draw attention to the subject-matter competency in the literature. In her empirical study, Brosh (1996) looked at the qualities of an excellent foreign language instructor. Participants in the research included 406 ninth-grade high school students from 10 different schools and 200 English, French, Arabic, and Hebrew teachers. The results revealed that teacher and student viewpoints were very close. Language ability was deemed the most crucial quality by both educators and students. The capacity of the teacher to communicate information in a way that is intelligible to students was also deemed to be the second most crucial quality.

Additionally, in Tarajová and Metruk’s (2020) study, more than half of the participants (53.1%) stressed the need for effective teachers to have a high level of knowledge in the subject area they are teaching, together with a strong love for their work. These results align with the excerpts that the participants in the current study also underlined mastery of language and knowing the developmental characteristics of the group they teach. However, although the ‘General Competencies for the Teaching Profession’ report prepared by the Ministry of National Education includes legislative knowledge, the participants of this study did not express such knowledge as the qualities that an effective English teacher should possess.

After comments on the qualities of successful English language teachers were gathered, the areas in which the participants considered themselves to be competent in their chosen profession were examined using the sub-research question ‘*In which areas*

do they find themselves more competent and successful?' with an emphasis on their personally perceived competencies in language teaching. Professional skills, which include organizing lesson plans, designing learning environments, and monitoring the teaching and learning process concerning teachers' in-class activities, were the teacher competencies highlighted most frequently by the participants. Regarding their professional skills, teachers considered it their most competent feature to motivate their students, adopting opportunities of the digital world, including interactive games, and making lessons more enjoyable using smart boards in the classroom. Emphasizing project-based language teaching, they also gave the use of authentic materials as an example, not only depending on the textbooks.

Along with these, the professional knowledge of the teaching profession, which comprises the necessary subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, is another area where self-perceived competence is mentioned. The ability to incorporate various teaching tactics, methods, and approaches, as well as the knowledge of how to consider students' developmental and learning characteristics, comes out. At this point, they expressed their competency in conveying what they know, especially considering the developmental and cognitive characteristics of the target group of students they teach. In parallel with this finding, Hansen (1995) stated that the ability to adapt the knowledge to be taught to the students in a fashion that might be readily comprehended is a crucial competency that a teacher should possess. The teacher's capacity to help the students comprehend the content knowledge in a meaningful way should be included in teaching in addition to the skilful exposition of the teacher's knowledge.

Finally, the teachers mentioned their skills, which involve basic attitudes and values of the teaching profession, approaches to students, and ways to professional development as their effective self-perceived competencies. Two issues they especially emphasize in this field stand out as their professional development by researching continuously to learn new concepts and methods and, simultaneously, the positive relationships they have established with their students. Teachers undeniably need to be active in professional development activities that are vital in improving the learning process. Guskey (2002) states in a report that teacher professional development is crucial in improving educational quality through supporting teacher competency. Many researchers (Guskey, 2002; Putnam & Borko, 2000) believe that structured professional

development activities are one of the essential variables in increasing the quality of teachers and student accomplishment.

Another example is the research done by Cordia (2003) to explore how teachers and students perceive a good language teacher. According to the students, having traits like patience, kindness, fairness, dedication to teaching, willingness to learn from mistakes, and openness to change and improvement are all needed for a competent English teacher. Thus, it is possible to say that professional development and approach to students are interrelated as necessary attitudes in this study. On the other hand, even though having good communication with students and a positive attitude towards professional development were underlined, cooperation with colleagues and national, moral, and universal values were not mentioned by the participants. However, they are among the competencies to be possessed by the Turkish MONE.

After completing self-evaluations regarding the areas in which teachers feel capable, the researcher intended to identify the perceived less competent areas of English language teachers and their needs for ongoing development with another sub-research question: *"In which areas do they need support to develop their competencies professionally?"* This way, further findings offered a comprehensive grasp of the research 'exploration' phase. Likewise, this research question clarifies the in-service training program's content structured in the while-training section. The most prominent need was associated with their expectation of improving their language skills, specifically speaking skills, followed by the need to enhance their digital capabilities. The teachers' need to improve their English-speaking skills was also consistent with the relatively lower level of 'improving students' speaking skills' competency obtained from the scale. As it can be understood from the relationship between these data obtained from two different data collection tools, teachers, who do not see themselves as competent in speaking fluently and express the need to improve this language skill, may also feel inadequate in developing students' speaking skills. In the same way, according to the findings of the study conducted by Mısırlı (2011), primary school English teachers working in Adapazarı stated that they wanted to be trained to speak English proficiency. In terms of language teaching, they stated that they needed in-service training to teach speaking, listening, and writing skills and they wanted to receive this training in English in classes of 11-20 people at the schools they work. This situation leads us to conclude that teachers cannot teach effectively in areas where they do not feel competent, mainly in English speaking skills.

There are various reasons leading to this result. To begin with, speaking is frequently regarded as the most complex and challenging skill to learn and is also viewed as a neglected skill in foreign language instruction (Ur, 1996). It is ignored because traditional approaches to language teaching are still prevalent amid the golden era of communicative approaches. Furthermore, speaking is a complicated skill since it includes both language and non-linguistic factors such as vocabulary, intonation, articulation, formal and informal expression, and gestures. Given its unique characteristics and difficulties in mastering, motivation as a significant aspect of language success is helpful in clearly realizing teaching and learning to speak in EFL contexts, as suggested by Dinçer and Yeşilyurt (2013).

The fact that English education is mainly based on grammar teaching and that speaking is not given priority over other skills may be another reason why students are not fluent enough in English speaking even though they attend English classes in each grade till their graduation from the schools. At the same time, the fact that English is included in the 8th-grade entrance exam in our country, Türkiye, directs teachers to provide language education in a way that contributes to the solution of multiple-choice questions. This situation brings vocabulary and grammar teaching to the fore instead of skill-based language teaching. Therefore, as time progresses in the profession, teachers' language skills begin to deteriorate. Teachers who do not take the necessary steps in professional development also experience a decrease in their teaching skills. In the same vein, Coşkun (2013) concluded that students are unable to communicate in English due to the emphasis on grammatical rules in English courses, discrepancies between English and Turkish, limited speaking practice chances, and the teacher's usage of the mother tongue in the classroom. Thus, teachers' adopting a language teaching approach based on grammar and using the mother tongue more often than the target language in the classroom underlined the inefficiency in this area.

Another critical problem regarding the qualifications of English teachers is that people with an undergraduate education in different fields were appointed as English teachers to fill the shortage of English teachers just because they knew English. At a time when the qualifications of teachers who graduated from the English teaching programs of current education faculties are still being debated, the competencies of teachers who graduated from different undergraduate programs and were appointed English teachers are highly controversial. Although only education faculty graduates are appointed as

teachers today, it is an important problem that a significant part of the current teachers work as English teachers even though they have not graduated from the relevant teaching field as stated above (Çinkır & Kurum, 2015). This result can also be considered one of the reasons why they both feel inadequate as English teachers to speak fluently and need support in improving students' speaking skills.

In addition to speaking skills, teachers also stated that they needed to develop their digital competencies. Although some of the participants described themselves as competent in digital skills in the previous research question, most of them stated that they needed to develop their skills related to this subject. As known, distance education has become an indispensable part of the education system, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, which still has not lost its effect today. Due to this rapid spread, nearly 200 countries decided to temporarily close their educational institutions to reduce the spread of the epidemic (Shaikh & Özdaş, 2022). The closure of schools, colleges, and universities disrupted teaching for students worldwide and coincided with a crucial evaluation period. Therefore, many exams were postponed or cancelled (Burgess & Sievertsen, 2020). This situation has affected the educational lives of millions of students.

Countries affected by the epidemic started to implement distance education so that education would not be disrupted. In response to school closures, UNESCO recommended that schools and teachers use distance education programs, open education apps, and platforms to reach students remotely and limit educational disruption (UNESCO, 2020). This unexpected situation caught many teachers unprepared for digital competencies to deliver effective distance education. In particular, the lack of access to technology or the lack of fast, reliable internet access prevented students from rural areas and disadvantaged families from receiving education (Daimary, 2020; Mahundu, 2020). Parallel to the findings of the current study, pedagogical difficulties, specifically the lack of digital skills of teachers and students, a lack of structured content, and a lack of interaction and motivation of students, were among the fundamental problems of compulsory distance education (Ferri, Grifoni, & Guzzo, 2020). It is also stated that teachers are worried about the lack of knowledge that may occur in students and feels incompetent during the distance education process (Bakioğlu & Çevik, 2020). In another study, it was stated that there are problems in assessment-evaluation in distance education, students are not on equal terms in terms of technical infrastructure and opportunities, they do not attend their classes, and teachers need in-service training to

deal with some of these deficiencies (Balaman & Hanbay, 2021). For these reasons, it is understandable why English teachers may not feel competent enough in digital competencies and need further professional development programs in the present study.

These two prominent areas also showed themselves among the answers given to the last question asked in the written interview form. Teachers were asked what courses they would need to reinforce their competencies if they were registered in an INSET program. In addition to offering particular topic alternatives, the option 'other' was also introduced, and teachers were given the option of making several choices. According to the findings, the most chosen subjects among the potential possibilities included developing digital competencies, material development and adaptation, and how to teach language skills. As can be seen from these findings, the content of the INSET program to be attended and the areas in which the teachers feel less competent are complimentary. This portrait shows that the data obtained from different data collection tools give consistent results.

Apart from these two main issues, the teachers indicated that they need to expand their skills in lesson planning, project management, doing research, material development, and classroom management as additional content. As it can be understood, English teachers need to improve themselves in many areas, such as being more effective in the classroom, responding to the needs of students, using the material effectively, knowing how to use digital tools in the lesson when necessary, and researching to learn innovative foreign language teaching techniques and methods.

5.4. Discussion for the Research Question 3

Research Question 3: How do EFL teachers evaluate the in-service training program they participated in?

The goal of Research Question 3 was to determine the success of the training in specific areas from the participants' perspectives with the help of a training evaluation form and KWLA chart. Each item had a mean score of greater than 4 out of 5, suggesting that the training benefited the participants. The highest mean score was related to the trainers, who were considered knowledgeable. Furthermore, participants strongly agreed that the instruction was high quality and that the trainers accomplished the training goals.

It is accepted that trainers are critical to the effectiveness of INSET programs, as underlined in the current study. According to research, highly theory-oriented INSET

trainers and ill-prepared or ineffective teacher educators decrease training productivity (Öztürk & Aydın, 2019). Subjects such as methods, techniques, strategies, feedback, and corrections to be used by the trainers, who play an important role in the learning-teaching process, also affect the learning and practice levels of the participants. No matter how well a training program is prepared, it cannot be said that the program will be effective if the program implementers' teaching staff are not well selected (Özyürek, 1981). Another noted issue in Türkiye is the insufficiency of trainers, who lack teaching experience in public schools and hence are unable to draw obvious connections between practice and theory (Yiğit & Altun, 2011). For this reason, selecting experts for in-service training has become necessary to increase the quality.

According to the results of this study, due to the high quality of education expressed by the participants, the conclusion that the instructors have successfully achieved the program's objectives is fundamental to me as a researcher who also served as a teacher trainer during the implementation phase. One of the important reasons behind the participants' giving the highest mean score in the INSET program about the knowledge levels of the people who worked as teacher trainers lies in the fact that this training program was carried out within the scope of a university-district national education directorate cooperation. Academicians who continue their studies at a university with different titles conducted sessions. Thus, this cooperation has also been very enlightening in terms of finding solutions to the problems arising from the teaching staff in in-service training, which has been expressed in some studies in the literature. It has also given the researcher a reflective portrait of her new role.

On the other hand, item 10 (Adequate time was provided for questions and discussion) had the lowest mean score, although it was a very high mean score in a positive sense ($\bar{x}$: 4.37). This item was related to allotting sufficient time for questions and discussion. Although the in-service training program was designed by considering the relevant articles of the INSET regulation of the Ministry of National Education, it can be understood why the participants needed a more extended period when the overall program satisfaction was taken into account. This training program was conducted face-to-face to exchange ideas and provide a more efficient interaction between the participants despite the pandemic. Before this process, since the teachers were quite dissatisfied with distance education and possible technological difficulties, it was planned to get together with their colleagues and get the maximum benefit from the program.

Criticisms about the online sessions in the INSET program also confirm this situation. On the other hand, Yurttaş (2014) mentioned that participating teachers do not like lengthy programs on weekends or during summer vacation. Some teachers have unfavourable things to say about the number of sessions held throughout the training day. Therefore, it can be stated that the program is a success in terms of the period and the content for the participants.

The participants also evaluated each session in the INSET program after analysing components, including the objectives, trainers, resources, and materials, item by item. They then graded the training organization's overall impact. The results showed that the three sessions with the highest mean score were at the 'excellent' level ($\bar{x}$: 4.91). These sessions included using games in English language classrooms, classroom-based language assessment's role in fostering a positive learning environment, and project-based English language teaching: E-twinning. According to the common points expressed by the participants, these three sessions inspired teachers to produce creative materials that they could adapt to their classrooms. The session with the lowest mean score was titled 'a stance on writing activities in English schools' ($\bar{x}$: 4.12). Even though there was no evaluation across the table at the 'very poor' level, two participants classified this session as 'poor.' Based on the participant comments about this lowest mean score, especially those who teach English at primary school stated that this session is incompatible with their needs, as there are no objectives related to writing or reading skills taught according to the curriculum determined by the Ministry. Another reason was that this session did not make much sense to them, as teachers did not do many writing activities in their classroom environment. In connection with this, Alamrew's (2005) study suggests that the lack of attention given to writing instruction by English language teachers prevents students from learning to write efficiently.

One explanation for the teachers' indifference to writing lessons may be their erroneous assumptions. Although one of the prevailing presumptions regards writing as a process, teachers typically use the product approach when educating students on writing skills (Reid, 1993). In other words, rather than engaging students in the regular classroom and extending writing practice through the process method (Hedge, 2005), teachers want students to generate a piece of written output for evaluation. Likewise, according to the findings of the research by Ferede, Melese and Tefera (2012), which are consistent with the results of the present study, writing is given insufficient attention. It is poorly taught

because instructors fail to apply their views about the nature of writing and how it should be taught in classroom practice. Namely, the study showed a weak relationship between teachers' perceptions of writing and how they actually teach the skill. These results from different studies clearly show why students are not successful enough in writing in the target language.

Another remarkable point for discussion is related to the learning gains of participants from the five-day INSET program. It was discovered that the participants had the most significant learning gains in the professional skills competency domain when the data from the KWLA charts were examined with a deductive thematic analysis. Furthermore, the participants explicitly mentioned that they had the most learning gains in managing the learning and teaching process. When we look at the data obtained, it is seen that teachers generally need to teach English not as a lesson but as communication in real life. Therefore, they focused on the necessity of putting interactive activities at the centre of learning and teacher processes and, at the same time, conducting them in a more meaningful way for their future lessons. They stated that they should make a sincere effort to realize this aim. In this regard, it has been seen that the most frequently cited learning gains are compatible with proficiency indicators such as associating education with students' daily life, realizing effective learning by using appropriate strategies, methods, and techniques, and effective use of appropriate tools, and materials mentioned in the 'Managing Teaching and Learning Process' competency in the 'Teaching Profession General Competencies' document updated by the Ministry of National Education in 2017.

Secondly, participants also noted that as a component of the professional knowledge competency area, they acquired awareness of new 'content knowledge.' In the clear statements on this subject, they stated that they thought they knew a lot before participating in this INSET program, but they also learned much new information they encountered for the first time. Concerning this, the session about positive psychology and its adaptation to language teaching classes was the most underlined. One of the most significant characteristics of a successful INSET activity is its content emphasis (Birman, Desimone & Garet, 2000). Indeed, teachers in several studies believe that content-specific INSET sessions are their most valuable professional development engagement (Aminudin, 2012). However, the important point is not giving only theory-based training to the participants behaving them as passive listeners, but on the contrary, adopting the current and innovative field studies in the literature in line with the needs of the teachers

in a practical way.

Interestingly, it was discovered that the ‘planning of education and teaching’ competency, which belongs to the professional skills, had the least reported learning gains. As known, the planning process in education determines how the teaching activities will be carried out most rationally and regularly, based on a specific systematic. All kinds of activities, tools, equipment and methods/techniques that will be used to achieve the course’s objectives require that the course be planned. Khan (2011) states that lesson planning guides a teacher to the right path to achieve predetermined goals and helps the teacher in self-assessment for the further application of techniques and strategies. In this respect, lesson planning is both a teacher’s guide and a self-evaluation criterion. Therefore, it was interesting to find out that the learning gains for planning the course process, which has such a vital function, were obtained at a minimum level from this INSET program.

Instructional planning is essential in organizing the teaching process, revealing the issues that the teacher will consider in their future studies, and improving themselves in planning the lesson. However, in the Turkish education system, a united annual plan was implemented in the Ministry of National Education starting from the 2003-2004 academic year, and planning has gained a different dimension with the new primary education programs developed since the 2004-2005 academic year (Kılıç, 2010). As of the 2005–2006 academic year, textbooks, student workbooks, and teacher's guidebooks have been included in the education system. In the teacher's guidebooks, the process of how to teach a lesson, the united annual plan, and the lesson plan are presented ready. While this situation facilitates teachers in providing a ready source, the absence of the teacher's obligation to prepare a lesson plan has led to a change in teachers' knowledge and attitudes about preparing lesson plans. According to Doğan's (2010) study results, teachers think it takes much time to plan the lesson after the program change. With updating all curriculums in 2018, the teacher's guidebook application was abolished entirely. Therefore, teachers who had not prepared a lesson plan for about 13 years had to prepare a lesson plan again. This situation necessitated teachers to make more efforts to prepare for the lesson and review their competencies. For this reason, it is thought that the results obtained from this study are closely related to the teachers’ approaches to this competency.

After the participants evaluated the INSET program and learning gains, they were

asked about their expectations for a possible future training program with the sub-research question. The responses to an open-ended question on the training assessment form were subjected to inductive content analysis. The recommendations were ordered from most to least common. The findings showed that participating in a more practical INSET program was recommended. Although it was a training program enriched with many different activities, the teachers still expressed that they would like to work on more activities. This result can also be considered compatible with the item ‘adequate time was provided for questions and discussion,’ which received the lowest mean score in the training evaluation form. As stated before, this INSET program had to be arranged within a certain class hour limit since it was designed considering the articles in the Ministry of National Education's In-Service Training Regulation. In addition, since it was a program requested to be organized face-to-face even during the pandemic period, it was aimed to get the maximum benefit within the constraints of that period.

Similarly, even though the training was developed because of a needs analysis, teachers requested that more diverse topics be included. Although the methods and techniques of teaching English to children with special needs, which were explicitly mentioned in the recommendations, were also a situation that emerged in the needs analysis, this content could not be added to the program due to the lack of a field expert trainer. For this reason, this situation has become one of the most critical limitations of this study. This situation again underlines the necessity of adding an elective course on this subject to the pre-service English teacher training curriculum. Moreover, the participants recommended workshops on topics including storytelling, prompting and closing lessons with enjoyable activities, classroom management in EFL classrooms, outdoor learning activities, and teaching English to the youngest children, in addition to the current study. According to the research results conducted by Raud and Orekhova (2017), the implementation of contemporary technology ranks first on the list of recommended topics, with the most references. A significant proportion of respondents indicated that these subjects for CPD validated teachers’ interest in ELT didactics and language methodology. Another popular topic is literature and British and American studies, emphasizing the significance of including content-based instruction in EFL programs. It is yet again recognized that when creating professional development programs for EFL teachers, the plurality of perspectives should be recognized to meet the particular requirements of teachers.

Another significant suggestion raised by the teachers was that future training should be face-to-face rather than online. Due to their sensitivity to the epidemic, three trainers gave their lessons online. Concerning this circumstance, the teachers reported that the connection issues they encountered stopped them from creating the appropriate engagement and that, as a result, they could not complete the practical work in the session correctly, making it challenging to comprehend the subject. This result revealed that although there are blended/hybrid professional development programs that have come to the fore in recent years (Arifani, Khaja, Suryanti & Wardhono, 2019; Nami, 2021), teachers still prefer face-to-face training to get together with their colleagues and achieve more efficient interaction and do better practice-based work.

5.5. Discussion for the Research Question 4

Research Question 4: To what extent does the in-service teacher training impact EFL teachers' competencies from different educational contexts four months after the program?

The last part of the research intended to observe teachers become active users of the new skills and information in their educational contexts. In addition, four months following the training, this phase aimed to assess the program's performance in the teachers' actual classrooms. The post-training study also focuses on the implementation's challenges, if any, and the contextual variables influencing teachers' practices and attitudes. With these aims in mind, the researcher performed this phase with five volunteer English teachers who joined the INSET program and were selected through the maximum variation sampling method.

Five case studies portray the teachers' advances and illustrate the teachers' similar learning goals but distinct learning outcomes. Their use of learning outcomes mirrored the features of competency development and suggested a specific link between teacher development and the effect of INSET. The teachers' interest in theories was one of the notable aspects of their professional knowledge learning. Teachers mostly said they expected to study theories and various language teaching strategies in the KWLA charts, training evaluation forms, and semi-structured interviews. The teachers also mentioned several explicitly taught concepts as their learning outcomes, such as positive psychology, some web 2.0 tools, or assessment-related strategies during and after the INSET period. Li (2018) often assumes that what and how much teachers know determines how teachers

can teach effectively in classrooms. It is not unexpected, therefore, that the teachers' perspectives on knowledge in this research were likewise framed in terms of increasing the amount of their knowledge. According to the notion of teacher knowledge classification, content knowledge, also known as knowing about, is the kind of information they thought to be improving (Shulman, 1987).

Another feature of teachers' knowledge development in the INSET programme is their enthusiasm for information communicated informally with other trainees rather than officially delivered training input. In addition to the need for theoretical understanding stated above, it is intriguing to note that all the instructors indicated happiness with receiving a practical exchange of ideas from other teachers since it was a face-to-face engagement. In the interviews that followed the seminar, they emphasised the value of being there rather than having online training. This supports Bartlett and Leask's (2005) view that teachers need to communicate and debate their teaching ideas, particularly their methods, with other colleagues. They believe they may improve their teaching skills, uncover new ideas, and compare how others have handled comparable issues in this manner.

Four months following the INSET program, the teachers' lessons were observed. It was seen that the inset program significantly influenced Deniz's professional development perceptions and competencies through the adaptation of various games, the preparation of two different studies for the Tübitak science fair to improve the writing skills of the students, the beginning of her MA in educational technology, and the new role she assumed for the science fair. Furthermore, Didem has been noted to continue participating in personal and professional development activities while using certain scientific methods and having a favourable attitude toward professional growth. She also developed some professional skills to handle the teaching and learning processes. She redesigned activities to provide an effective learning environment for all students using her new content understanding. Because of this, it can be said that Didem's qualities as an English teacher—including her knowledge, skills, and attitudes—were favourably boosted by the training she attended. In addition, Candan has continued to engage in personal and professional development activities and now views professional growth more favourably. She decided to move more slowly because of the nature of the school, regardless of how quickly the curriculum is being implemented, to follow a more supportive approach and better understand the needs of the students, with a more focused

interest in improving students' speaking and listening skills. She also designed projects with colleagues to properly reflect on the language learning and teaching processes. According to the analysis of the data obtained from the lesson observations, semi-structured interviews, and bi-weekly teacher reflective journals, these three teachers got the most out of the INSET program and tried to integrate it into their professional life as much as possible. As a common point for all three teachers, the INSET program they participated in created a triggering effect for their professional development, and after that process, they took part in different projects even more actively. This shows that besides developing their professional skills, they got the most impact on their attitudes, mainly by developing a positive attitude towards professional development.

Besides all these developments, as a learning outcome from the training, Kübra attempted to employ various approaches or procedures for evaluation. Additionally, she has improved her professional abilities, particularly in directing the teaching process and designing various learning settings. Her students' appreciation of the national values of both nations had a good impact on another sub-competency she possessed—her attitude to students. However, she was not observed taking part in any other professional development activities. Lastly, it was evident that Sedat sought to encourage students' language output using scaffolding, prompting, and demonstrations. Sedat's involvement in any projects or in-service training was not seen during the lesson observation process. Additionally, he received no advantages from any scientific study methodologies or approaches that impacted his professional progress in actual practice. While the incorporation of listening skills into the class was somewhat successful despite the teacher's extensive experience dealing with young students, it was noted that no explicit goal or instructions were provided before the exercises. This outcome demonstrated that the teacher requires further specialised training in the relevant field. It was also noted that Sedat solely used peer evaluation in the classroom, promoting students' peer-to-peer learning as a learning gain connected to training. As can be inferred, the level of impact may differ due to personal or contextual dynamics. The desired change and development effect may be shaped according to many different reasons, manifest in different ways, or have no effect at all.

As an overall effect that parallels the present study's findings, Dikilitaş (2013) discovered that knowledge-based training could profoundly affect trainees and allow concurrent cognitive and practical changes after the training specified in the observed

sessions. Similarly, the data analysis conducted by Chang et al. (2010) showed that the trainees thought their instruction had improved through intensive English language teacher training. The level of the trainees' English language improved, as shown by comparing pre-and post-tests of language proficiency. The trainees also provided extremely favourable comments on the course design and structure, the value of the information obtained, and the fulfilment of their expectations in Mattheoudakis and Nicolaidis' (2005) study as well. In keeping with these results, it may be claimed that INSET should be an ongoing, practical activity for teachers to grow their professional knowledge and abilities throughout the educational process.

Akbari (2008) emphasises that switching from one methodology to another places many demands on teachers, particularly in the contemporary post-era when context rather than technique is used as the basis for educational decision-making (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Teachers may require long-term assistance to acquire the information, abilities, and confidence necessary to effectively apply a new technique (Andon & Leung, 2014; Akyel, 2000). This result is consistent with the social constructivist foundation of the INSET program because it shows how teacher development happens in continual interaction with the environment by reshaping beliefs and instructional strategies with the aid of comments and input (Williams & Burden, 1997). When the contextual differences between the schools are also added to this situation, it is possible to anticipate that the desired changes and developments cannot be realized.

After analysing the effects of the local INSET program on their competencies, learning gains, and actual classroom practices, teachers were asked if they had any problems adapting what they learned to their educational setting during the study's post-training phase with the research question 'What challenges (if any) did the teachers face with implementing what they learned in their educational context?'. It was understood that although the teachers in this study understood the value of the competency-based professional development concepts offered throughout the INSET program, they reported having trouble putting some of their learning gains into practice due to a lack of chances for doing so.

Teachers identified students' opportunities as the cause of the greatest difficulty in adapting to new information and skills. According to them, students who have never studied English in primary school before cause a lack of unity in the classroom in terms of the activities they want to apply and different methods. For this reason, they stated that

they could not make every application they wanted and that their extracurricular work was also interrupted for this reason. In addition to the restricted opportunities for students, the school's inadequate technical, financial, or physical facilities were cited as another critical cause for the teachers' failure to incorporate the new information and skills they gained via the INSET program. To illustrate, in Deniz's school, there were no smart boards, which made it impossible to use some of the Web 2.0 tools she had learned in the INSET program. Additionally, visual and auditory elements that can be used in teaching language skills could not be applied for this reason. The same was true for Kübra, who works as an English teacher at a high school within the refugee camp. Since there were no smart boards in the classrooms and no internet connection in the places where the students lived, they could not benefit from any technological opportunity and had severe difficulties in developing language skills. These results are also consistent with Personn's (2014) findings, which show that, while participants reacted positively to the contents of the INSET program and believed that the course made a contribution to their professional development, the INSET course had little influence on their teaching because of the interaction of cultural, contextual, and institutional limitations.

Heavy-loaded curricula and coursebooks, language problems, inadequate lesson hours and students' bias towards language learning have emerged as other difficulties encountered by teachers in transferring the new knowledge they have acquired to their own educational environments. Particularly, it is possible to see that the biggest obstacle to the implementation of innovations is the fact that there are only two English lessons per week. This becomes an inextricable situation for teachers who, on the one hand, want to adopt the innovations they have learned but, on the other hand, feel obliged to provide the students with the learning outcomes given in the curriculum.

Although not expressed by the participants in this study, another important issue in the literature is institutional support. According to Ingvarson, Meiers and Beavis (2005), a school's degree of support for professional development has a considerable indirect influence on program success. Building the circumstances that allow schools to provide a rich field for professional development continuously and as a regular part of the work requires equal attention from policymakers and educational authorities. Zein (2015) also stated that the educational administrators harmed the planning and management of teacher preparation programs, leading to unsatisfactory training management and unclear participant selection. Consequently, successful school administrators are required to

behave in ways that they respect teacher learning if they expect evidence of professional growth and improved learning outcomes.

To summarise, although teachers receive valuable information and skills that may increase their competencies and help them build a good attitude toward professional growth and collaboration via the INSET sessions, other elements influence the implementation process. Thus, it is apparently a multi-dimensional issue encompassing many professional advancement dynamics formed by unique educational circumstances and personal characteristics.

5.6. Chapter Summary

The results from the pre-, during-, and post-training phases have been evaluated independently and in connection to the relevant literature in this chapter. Before the training, the participants' perspectives, self-evaluations, conceptualizations, and present understanding of effective EFL teacher competencies were critically addressed. Following that, the participants' shifting perspectives, experiences, and learning gains on teacher competencies during the INSET program were explained holistically. Afterwards, the participants' sustained learning gains from the training and their challenges regarding implementation in the post-training phase were thoroughly described.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

6.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the study's purpose, a clear answer to our research question(s) and summarises the key findings. This chapter also addresses the implications and limitations of the study, as well as recommendations for future direction.

6.2. Overview of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to focus on the competency development of English language teachers using an in-service teaching program within the context of Turkish MONE. Furthermore, this research investigated the relationship between participants' competency levels and the change in their subjective evaluations based on their teaching/learning experiences after they participate in an INSET program. Given the importance of teacher competencies in improving the quality of learning and teaching activities, it is required to consider English teachers' self-perceived competencies and if these perceptions vary according to multiple variables for more eligible and continuous professional development.

It was observed that the systems for determining competency levels, evaluating them, and identifying areas in which teachers demand professional development, which was determined within the framework of teacher competencies, aid in tracking teachers' progression. Additionally, these skills help teachers develop a sense of self, perform professional self-evaluations, and formulate career plans. To do so, the District Directorate of National Education collaborated with a higher education institution to organise a local in-service training program to develop the competencies of EFL teachers, which was the primary focus of this research. Furthermore, since little research appears to have been conducted regarding how the design of INSET systems affects the outcomes, the training's expected long-term impact was to be examined by in-class observations, bi-weekly reflective journals, and semi-structured interviews after the in-service training program. According to earlier research (Miser, Yayla, & Sayın 2006), this component is usually lacking in INSET programs in Türkiye. Therefore, in this study, the researcher studied the following research questions considering these aims:

1. What are the perceived competency levels of in-service English language teachers regarding field-specific competencies set by Turkish MONE?

1.a. Are there any statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' competency perceptions regarding gender, department of graduation, work experience, school type, and previous in-service training activities?

2. What do in-service EFL teachers think about the competencies an effective English language teacher needs to have?

2.a. Do they think they bear these competencies as English language teachers?

2.b. In which areas do they find themselves more competent and successful?

2.c. In which areas do they need support to develop their competencies professionally?

3. How do EFL teachers evaluate the in-service training program they participated in?

3.a. Are there any specific learning gains for EFL teachers during the training program? If yes, what are they?

3.b. What are their expectations for further inset programs?

4. To what extent does the in-service teacher training impact EFL teachers' competencies from different educational contexts four months after the program?

4.a. What challenges (if any) did the teachers face while implementing what they learned in their educational context?

In light of these objectives, this study was divided into three phases: pre-, during-, and post-training. Before the final training plan was decided, a pilot study was carried out so that I, as the researcher (also one of the trainers), could practise the whole procedure. Due to the emergence of COVID-19, the actual research was undertaken one year after the pilot work.

The research began with a pre-training phase to create awareness of the notion of teacher competencies and to explain the perspectives of EFL teachers before they received any training. The initial part of this research procedure involved learning about ELF teachers' viewpoints on field-specific competencies established by Turkish MONE with a scale. This phase, on the other hand, intended to understand which competency areas teachers felt more effective or insufficient in and which competencies they needed further professional development in. Because the fundamental goal of the study is to build

broad knowledge, skills, and attitudes unique to areas to fulfil the teaching profession effectively, strengthening the competencies required in this field is equally critical. As a result, this part of the study can be considered a form of needs analysis. Following this, the second stage of the research, the while-training component, consists of putting the in-service training program into action. Two different data collection tools were employed in this phase. The first was a training evaluation form covering qualitative and quantitative criteria for evaluation. It was filled by 24 participants at the end of the program. The KWLA chart was another tool utilised throughout the while-training phase to detect teachers' existing knowledge, express their expectations of the program, and enhance awareness of learning gains at the end of the training.

The project's last phase intends to monitor teachers moving from passive recipients of knowledge of learning activities to active practitioners of these new skills and knowledge in their educational environments. This phase not only attempted to disclose the program's long-term impact but also allowed them to be aware of any obstacles they may have throughout implementing the new techniques. Before starting the lesson observation and bi-weekly reflective journal writing process, five volunteer English teachers were interviewed online using the maximum variation sampling method to examine the program's effectiveness, analyse the impact of the process on the participating teachers, and explore the future positive and negative aspects of the teacher training program. As a result of this extensive study, the following list provides an overview of the key findings:

- a. The English Teachers Field-Specific Competencies Assessment Scale developed by Kararmaz and Arslan (2014) was used before the training to identify teachers' competency levels and prepare competency-based teacher professional development training. Even though participants believe they are competent in the planning and organisation of the English lesson, it was understood that they need slightly more assistance in the use of technology tools to develop their digital skills.

- b. Teachers' perceptions regarding their sub-competency in developing language skills had the lowest mean score. More specifically, the lowest mean score was associated with conducting activities that consider the requirements of students who need special education. The results showed that participants were unsure about their professional skills

in teaching English to students with special needs. It was also discovered that teachers had comparable perspectives on increasing students' speaking skills.

c. Although the participants felt reasonably competent in applying various methods and approaches to conduct assessment, they reported being less competent in planning activities based on assessment findings to evaluate students' language development. Consequently, when the sub-competencies of monitoring and developing language progress were investigated, teachers reported a high degree of competency perception at the 'agree' level. In addition, teachers reached a relatively lower mean score in their competency to be social leaders than other competency perceptions.

d. Another research question examines whether certain variables statistically affect EFL teachers' perceptions of their competencies. The variables considered were teachers' gender, educational background, job experience, school type, and past INSET involvement. The results indicated that education level is a decisive factor in almost all sub-categories of the scale, except cooperation with the school, family, and community, where it was slightly higher than the allowed p-value. Moreover, another interesting result was the statistically significant effect of job experience on EFL teachers' judgments of proficiency. It was discovered that when teachers' professional experience increases, so does their self-perceived competency in language teaching skills, and they feel more capable of boosting students' language abilities. Another important finding in this research was the influence of involvement in professional development activities on teacher competencies. Participation in previous INSET programs had a notable influence on teachers' self-perceived competencies in the present research in terms of planning and organising English language processes, improving language skills, and ongoing professional development competencies. Apart from these, it was seen that the gender of the teachers and the school type they work in did not have a statistically significant effect on their self-perceived competency levels.

e. Teachers emphasised professional skills most when asked what qualities an effective English teacher should possess. It was observed that the remarks made by the participants were more inextricably related to how the teacher delivers instruction and oversees the teaching and learning processes.

f. After collecting viewpoints on what qualities make a good English language teacher, it was determined what areas the participants thought they were proficient in. Professional skills, which include organising educational instruction, designing learning

environments, and monitoring the teaching and learning process of teachers' in-class activities, were the most highlighted competency area for teachers. Professional knowledge, which includes the necessary subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge relating to the teaching profession, was another area where self-perceived competency was often mentioned.

g. It was intended to identify the perceived less competent areas of English language teachers and their requirements for future development after completing self-evaluations regarding the areas in which they feel competent. In this way, a thorough knowledge of the research's 'exploration' phase was given along with further findings. Developing their language skills was the most prominent demand, followed by the need to advance their digital skills, which is consistent with the scale's findings. Being able to speak English fluently was the first one of these language skills. For this reason, teachers' perceptions of competency in developing students' speaking skills were also relatively low, thus confirming this result.

h. To evaluate the training program, teachers filled out a training evaluation form with quantitative and qualitative sections and a KWLA chart to determine their learning gains. Participants agreed that the trainers fulfilled the training objectives and that the instruction was highly qualified. Due to the face-to-face nature of the INSET program during the pandemic, it received the lowest mean score for providing enough time for questions and debates. They exhibited the most significant learning gains in the professional skills competency area, according to a deductive thematic analysis of the data drawn from the KWLA charts that the participants had completed at the end of the INSET program. More precisely, the participants said that they had learned the most about managing the learning and teaching process throughout the five-day in-service training program.

i. The responses to an open-ended question on the training evaluation form were subjected to inductive content analysis to determine the participants' expectations for upcoming programs. The recommendation that included taking part in a more practical INSET program was the most frequently noted one. Similarly, even though the training was developed as a consequence of a needs analysis, teachers recommended that more diverse topics be included, such as storytelling, eliciting and wrapping up the lessons with enjoyable activities, classroom management in EFL classrooms, and teaching English to the youngest students.

j. Four months following the training, five different English teachers from schools associated with the Ministry of National Education, each with a distinct educational background and a range of work experience, participated in the study's follow-up phase to assess the program's effectiveness.

k. Three teachers said that the INSET program had a sparking impact on their professional development, which led to their involvement in various initiatives becoming even more active. This demonstrates that, in addition to improving their professional skills, they also have the greatest influence on their attitudes, particularly when they adopt a favourable attitude toward professional growth. Another teacher made an effort to use different assessment methods. She has also strengthened her professional skills, notably in leading the teaching process and creating different learning environments, even if she works in a disadvantaged area, like a refugee camp. Her attitude toward students was influenced positively by her students' admiration of the national values of both countries. Finally, even though one teacher used scaffolding, prompting, and demonstrations to boost students' language production, the lesson observation procedure did not reveal his participation in any projects or other professional development. Additionally, he did not benefit from any scientific research procedures or approaches that might have influenced his advancement as a professional in the real world of practice.

l. The results demonstrate that personal or contextual dynamics may affect the level of impact differently. The desired change and development effect may take various forms, appear in various ways, or have no impact.

m. After analysing the local INSET program and examining its impact on teachers' competencies, learning gains, and actual classroom practices, English language teachers were questioned about any challenges they had applying what they had learned to their educational context during the study's post-training phase. Interestingly, teachers identified students' opportunities as the factor most responsible for their difficulty in applying and adapting new knowledge and skills. The school's insufficient technical, financial, or physical circumstances were cited as another significant factor for the teachers' incapacity to integrate the new information and skills. Lastly, teachers have reported having trouble applying their newly gained knowledge to their educational settings due to overloaded curricula and coursebooks, language difficulties, insufficient lesson time, and students' bias toward language learning.

6.3. Implications

The current study's results provide vital insights into the implications for in-service teachers, policymakers, and the Ministry of National Education, which are all described in detail in the following lines.

It was understood that the participants benefited greatly from the inset program. In addition, the results obtained are discussed within the scope of the relevant literature, and some necessary implications are suggested. The most important of these is a professional development community that teachers will establish by considering their grades so that they can solve local language teaching problems more successfully, exchange ideas, and continue their professional development.

- Although in-service training programs planned for professional development can be organised and managed locally, such professional development programs are generally established by the Ministry of National Education with a centralised approach. At the same time, although the teachers evaluate the program's effectiveness through MONEBİS (Ministry of National Education Information Systems) and receive their participation certificates, evaluating the follow-up effect of this related professional development is mostly ignored. Courses for INSET programs should be subject- and context-specific. These programs need to be local and focus on issues with contextualised training rather than a broad, national viewpoint. In the same vein, Sifuna and Kaime (2007) mention that the Ministry of Education's INSET Unit should organize and guarantee those in-service efforts are 'decentralized, institutionalized, and sustained' to strengthen the coordination of in-service providers and programs (p.124). For this reason, there is a need for 'Professional Development Centres' to be established within the Provincial Directorates of National Education. Thus, each province will carry out this process more effectively by identifying the areas that teachers need to develop through needs analysis. At the same time, the Ministry of National Education can be informed by making necessary reports about the effectiveness of these programs.
- The findings of this research suggest that the trainers need to have experience, qualifications, and an understanding of how to educate teachers to overcome

the instructional challenges they face in the classroom. Trainers could be academics with knowledge in the appropriate field or experienced and effective English instructors, as proposed by Wallace (2001). To achieve this, a local collaboration between the university and the provincial directorate of national education should be fostered. The two parties should collaborate on research that advances both theory and practice. Moreover, teachers need to see the benefit of participating in these programmes to be involved in the training process. As a result, the time and location of INSET should be carefully planned, and participants' work schedules should be considered while designing these programs.

- Because the training programme was established by paying attention to the 32nd article of the Ministry of National Education In-Service Training Regulation, the weekly working hours of in-service training activities could not be less than 25 or more than 40. As a result, the training curriculum has been designed as 30 lesson hours. For this reason, considering the studies with INSET in the literature, the INSET program performed in this study may be short-lived, according to some results. For that reason, it is essential to establish professional development communities to increase teachers' mutual professional expertise, meet students' learning needs, develop cooperation between teachers, engage in joint activities between different classes and age groups, and observe and provide feedback on other teachers' practices. Rather than a one-way transfer of information, a feedback loop will be created with meetings where teachers come together at regular intervals and reflect on their experiences. From these experiences, it can be determined how new information will be transferred to the classroom or practice, thus ensuring continuity in professional development and providing the opportunity to evaluate with a follow-up effect.
- In addition, the subject of providing English language education to students with special needs is another significant output of the study. For this reason, necessary steps should be taken, especially in foreign language education for students with special needs, which stands out as a limitation in this study, as well as more effective participation of these students in language teaching. 'Teaching English to Students with Special Needs' can be added to the

curriculum as an elective course in universities that provide pre-service teachers' training in English language teaching. Furthermore, as previously indicated, in-service teacher training programs should emphasise the development of these competencies.

- Concerning the skill of teaching linguistically and culturally diverse learners, the study shows that teachers are expected to bring learners from varying backgrounds together, incorporate culturally diverse elements into their teaching, provide a caring and safe environment for all learners, and treat and assess different children fairly (Gürbüz, 2021). In this direction, there is no qualification on intercultural competency in the General Competencies for Teaching Profession document issued by the Ministry of National Education. Only the 'attitudes' section mentions respect for moral and universal values. In this way, it cannot be said that it is sufficient in the relevant competency area because language teaching is a process that includes universal and cultural dynamics. In this sense, the General Competencies for the Teaching Profession document should be updated by adding the relevant competency areas.
- The updated General Competencies for the Teaching Profession have been created as a single text in a holistic structure, including field knowledge and field education information, to eliminate the need to determine a separate special field competency for each branch. For this reason, it was stated that these special field qualifications were abolished with the Minister's Approval since there was no need for the published special field competencies. However, it is seen that the General Competencies for Teaching Professions document, updated in 2017, does not sufficiently include the multiple dynamics in foreign language teaching adequately. For this reason, the competencies that teachers should have regarding foreign language education should be re-expressed.
- Because teacher competencies are dynamic rather than static, they can be changed to meet the needs of the time and the specifications of current educational trends. Additionally, to better meet the requirements of students, various implementations of these competencies should be shared while taking into account context-dependent variations in educational environments. Also,

the participation of all stakeholders in the decision-making process is crucial since it fosters a democratic climate and makes pre-service and in-service teachers feel more respected. In conclusion, pre-service and in-service teachers should have a voice in what the teacher competencies should include.

- Another important issue is that these competency items can be described by correlating them with their practical representations in actual classroom settings so that teachers can comprehend the underlying reasons for each competency item and find them achievable to depict classroom conditions. Teachers are more likely to regard these competencies as possible if the gap between their formal explanations and their consequences in practice can be bridged.
- The primary purpose of this study suggests that the General Competencies for the Teaching Profession should be structured to support professional development, which is one of the crucial areas of use and has a vast place in the literature. However, it has been understood that the General Competencies for the Teaching Profession are far from being a frame of reference in which EFL teachers can make a self-assessment to determine their professional development needs or clearly see what is expected of them. In the studies to determine the proficiency levels of teachers and in this study, it was concluded that teachers and teacher candidates consider themselves competent (Aktemur Gürler & Tekmen, 2020; Özer & Gelen, 2008). For this reason, competencies determined at a rational and optimum level can play a role that will reveal the professional development needs of teachers. Similarly, the preparation of performance and proficiency indicators in a way that will enable the development of teachers and the realistic use of these indicators in evaluation will be beneficial to increasing the quality of teachers (Tosuntaş, 2020). It should also be ensured that pre-service teachers know the competencies required by the profession and can make self-assessments. Finally, it can be suggested that the competencies should be structured to serve as both a guide and an evaluation criterion for teachers and teacher candidates.

6.4. Limitations

As with any study, the findings must be weighed against the study's limitations. The first is that this study was conducted only with English language teachers working at public schools in Adana, more specifically in the Sarıçam district, so the data gathered in this study is limited to the group of teachers who participated in the survey. Considering the socio-economic conditions of the other districts of the province where the study was conducted, it is possible to reach different results.

Another limitation is that establishing well-balanced professional development and good social relationships strongly depends on the setting, participants' perspectives, and reflective capacities. Therefore, the conclusions are influenced by the profiles of the participants and the amount of time, energy, and effort they dedicated to the study.

As the most important limitation of this study, although it was revealed in the needs analysis that teachers needed professional development in teaching English to students with special needs to develop their professional skills, this subject could not be included in the INSET program due to the lack of experts in the relevant field. This result was also expressed by a teacher in the answer given to the open-ended question in the training evaluation form, and she expressed that she would like to participate in a professional development program related to this content next time.

In addition, the study's conclusions are limited to the period in which the study was done and the data collecting tools during that period. However, different results will likely be obtained if the study is undertaken over a longer period and backed by other data collection tools in different contexts.

Another significant limitation of this study was that since the in-service training program was held face-to-face during the pandemic period, some sessions had to be done online upon the request of the trainers, and some technical problems were experienced in this process. It is assumed that the internet access problems or the inability to perform the hands-on activities related to the subject had a negative effect on the effectiveness of these sessions.

6.5. Personal Reflections

This section presents some personal views and ideas of the researcher as one of the teacher trainers involved in the current study. Sharing the researcher's experiences throughout the study can be valuable for researchers who want to conduct similar studies

later.

I worked at the Sarıçam District Directorate of National Education for three years to complete this study and to be able to reach them easily to evaluate the impact of the designed in-service training program on English teachers. As a researcher, carrying out a study with different stages in a detailed and orderly manner has taught me much about improving my research skills. This position also gave me essential opportunities to analyze the data I obtained from my colleagues more accurately, considering the local dynamics, follow the official permission processes closely, and provide institutional cooperation with the university involved in the study.

As a trainer, I learned how to identify training needs successfully for my colleagues by being aware of their educational contexts. Besides, I saw that although a good program was designed, without solid organizational skills and well-prepared training delivery, a solution could not be produced in possible crisis moments. Once again, I realized that both inter-institutional and intra-institutional collaborations were important in running an effective program.

During the training delivery stage, I also realized that I had to consider the types of schools the teachers were working in and choose my activities accordingly. While the teachers preferred to reflect more on hands-on activities, they also wanted to produce materials themselves. Although this situation had a restrictive effect as the sessions were held face-to-face during the pandemic, I understood that the effect became even more joyous when a fruitful interaction was established.

To summarise, the present research had an unprecedented era but overcame obstacles by being structured, adaptable, and committed to the engagement of all study participants at all phases.

6.6. Suggestions for Further Research

The context-bound restrictions on INSET content in the classroom would be revealed by research in other cultural contexts or by determining if the findings from this study are specific to this educational environment. In other words, it would be interesting to see how the teaching methods of those teachers are impacted in other districts of the same province and to find out if they report having the same experiences, different problems, or only having positive experiences because of participating the INSET.

Future research may concentrate on various institutional settings and varied cultural backgrounds. The teachers had just one week to develop their competencies in this study's context. Future research may concentrate on other institutional contexts, such as language schools, public education centres, or private schools with diverse learning contexts. Specific academic circumstances may have an impact on teachers' strategies, which in turn may have a different influence on their classroom instruction and teacher competencies.

Another factor to consider when developing such research is doing a longitudinal study. For example, research across multiple academic terms can be done since instruction and its efficacy is impacted over a longer period. In particular, the 'English Together' project, carried out by the Ministry of National Education with English teachers, aims to develop teacher competencies by creating a local professional development community. A longitudinal study can investigate the development of English teachers who meet with the facilitator regularly during an academic year. Thus, the differences between short-term and long-term engagement in professional development can also be reported.

This research evaluated the INSET program by assessing teachers' knowledge, classroom practices, and attitudes toward their professional development. In training to be offered in line with the competency levels of the teachers and their professional development needs, the focus should be on improving the education in the school where they work and increasing the success of the students studying in that school. As a result, more research might be necessary to assess the effectiveness of the INSET program by including the learners. The PD activities' impact on learner success might be included when assessing the program's overall effectiveness. Furthermore, while the training was designed for in-service EFL teachers working at public schools, comparing the results with comparable studies in pre-service teacher training courses and programs would be immensely useful.

Finally, more research is needed to investigate the effect of competency-based INSET seminars/programs on teachers' roles, school effectiveness, and teacher development in their schools. Also, during the INSET, coaching peers, facilitators, academicians or teacher trainers might be invited for additional data to reinforce the findings contributing to the research's reliability. Thus, further research on the impact of in-service teacher training seminars/programs may offer additional interesting and

valuable data, allowing others to investigate how broadly applicable some or all the findings are across a broad range of contexts.

6.7. Chapter Summary

The study's key conclusions have been outlined in this chapter, along with particular references to the overall results. Following that, the study's conclusions and several suggestions were presented to various ELT stakeholders. Finally, the study's limitations and recommendations for more research have been presented.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENİ ÖZEL ALAN YETERLİKLERİ DEĞERLENDİRME ÖLÇEĞİ

Temel Eğitime Destek Projesi kapsamında, öğretmenlerin kendi gelişim alanlarını belirleyip, ilgili alanda gelişimini sağlamak için sahip olması gereken bilgi, beceri ve tutumları içeren “**Öğretmenlik Mesleği Genel Yeterlikleri**” ve ilköğretim kademesi öğretmenlerine yönelik “**Özel Alan Yeterlikleri**” Talim Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı tarafından geliştirilmiş ve de onaylanmıştır.

Değerli Meslektaşım;

Bu anket formu İngilizce öğretmenlerinin özel alan yeterlik algılarını belirlemek üzere Kararmaz ve Aslan (2014) tarafından oluşturulmuştur ve 26 maddeyi kapsamaktadır. Bu çalışmada da İngilizce öğretmenleri için düzenlenecek hizmet içi eğitim programının içeriği belirlemek amacıyla kullanılacaktır. Size uygun seçeneğe (X) işareti koyarak, tüm soruları eksiksiz cevaplamanız rica olunur.

Sorulara vereceğiniz içten cevaplar, bilimsel bir amaçla kullanılacağından çalışmamızın da geçerlik ve güvenilirliğini arttıracaktır. Katılımınız ve ayırdığınız zaman için teşekkür ederim.

Ayşe Zambak
İngilizce Öğretmeni

Prof. Dr. Hasan Bedir
Tez Danışmanı

KİŞİSEL BİLGİLER

Cinsiyetiniz: Kadın () Erkek ()

Çalıştığınız okul tipi: İlkokul () Ortaokul () Lise ()

Mezun olduğunuz bölüm: İngilizce Öğretmenliği ()

İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı ()

İngiliz Dil Bilimi ()

Mütercim Tercümanlık ()

Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı ()

Diğer ()

Meslekteki çalışma süreniz:

1-5 yıl ()

6-10 yıl ()

11-15 yıl ()

16- 20 yıl ()

20 yıl üzeri()

Eğitim durumunuz: Lisans ()

Yüksek lisans mezun ()

Yüksek lisans öğrenci ()

Doktora mezun ()

Doktora öğrenci ()

Daha önce alanınızla ilgili Hizmet içi Eğitime katıldınız mı? Evet () Hayır ()

Evet ise, Katıldığınız eğitimler hangi kurum tarafından verildi?

MONE ()

Özel Okullar ()

Üniversite ()

Özel yayınevleri ()

Diğer ()

Katıldığınız hizmet içi eğitim şekli (bir önceki soruyu 'hayır' olarak cevaplayanlar, bu soruyu geçmelidir.)

Online ()

Yüz yüze ()

Hem online hem yüz yüze ()

	Özel Alan Yeterlikleri Ölçeği	Hiç Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Tamamen Katılıyorum
1	İngilizce öğretimine uygun planlama yapabilirim.					
2	İngilizce öğretimine uygun öğrenme ortamları düzenleyebilirim.					
3	İngilizce öğretim sürecine uygun materyal ve kaynaklar kullanabilirim.					
4	İngilizce öğretim sürecine uygun yöntem teknikleri kullanabilirim.					
5	İngilizce öğretiminde teknolojik kaynakları kullanabilirim					
6	Öğrencilerin etkili dil öğrenme stratejileri geliştirmelerine yardım edebilirim.					
7	Öğrencilerin İngilizceyi doğru, anlaşılır bir şekilde kullanmalarını sağlayabilirim.					
8	Öğrencilerin dinleme/ izleme becerilerini geliştirebilirim.					
9	Öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerini geliştirebilirim.					

10	Öğrencilerin okuma becerilerini geliştirebilirim.					
11	Öğrencilerin yazma becerilerini geliştirebilirim.					
12	İngilizce öğretiminde özel gereksinimli ve özel eğitime gereksinim duyan öğrencileri dikkate alan uygulamalar yapabilirim.					
13	İngilizce öğretimine ilişkin ölçme ve değerlendirme uygulamalarının amaçlarını belirleyebilirim					
14	İngilizce öğretiminde ölçme ve değerlendirme araç ve yöntemlerini kullanabilirim.					
15	Öğrencilerin dil gelişimlerini belirlemeye yönelik ölçme sonuçlarını yorumlayabilir ve geri bildirimsağlayabilirim.					
16	Öğrencilerin dil gelişimlerini belirlemeye yönelik ölçme değerlendirme sonuçlarını uygulamalarıma yansıtabilirim.					
17	Öğrencilerin dil becerilerinin geliştirilmesinde ailelerle iş birliği yapabilirim.					
18	Öğrencilerin yabancı dil kullanmanın önemini kavramalarında ilgili kurum, kuruluş ve kişilerle iş birliği yapabilirim.					
19	Öğrencilerin ulusal bayram ve törenlerin anlam ve öneminin farkına varmalarını ve aktif katılımlarını sağlayabilirim.					
20	Ulusal bayram ve törenlerin yönetim ve organizasyonunu yapabilirim.					
21	Okulun kültür ve öğrenme merkezi haline getirilmesinde toplumla iş birliği yapabilirim.					
22	Toplumsal liderlik yapabilirim.					
23	Mesleki yeterliklerimi belirleyebilirim.					
24	İngilizce öğretimine yönelik kişisel ve mesleki gelişimimi sağlayabilirim.					
25	Mesleki gelişimime yönelik uygulamalarda bilimsel araştırma yöntem ve tekniklerinden yararlanabilirim.					
26	Mesleki gelişimime yönelik araştırmalarımı uygulamalarıma yansıtabilirim.					

APPENDIX B: WRITTEN INTERVIEW FORM FOR SELF- PERCEIVED COMPETENCY LEVEL OF EFL TEACHERS

1. How do you describe ‘competency’ as an English language teacher?
2. Do you find yourself a competent English language teacher?
 - a) In what ways do you find yourself more competent?
 - b) In what ways do you find yourself less competent?
3. What do you think about the competencies an effective English language teacher needs to have?
4. Are you informed about the generic teacher competencies and English language teacher competencies which were set by Turkish MONE?
5. What do you do for improving your competencies as an English language teacher?
6. If you take part in an in-service teacher training program, which areas do you need to support your competencies as an English language teacher? (You can choose more than one).
 - a) Developing digital competencies.
 - b) 21st Century Skills and language teaching.
 - c) Positive Psychology and language teaching.
 - d) Integration of culture in the language classrooms.
 - e) Project-based language teaching.
 - f) Effective assessment techniques in language teaching.
 - g) Material development and adaptation in language classes.
 - h) Other.....

APPENDIX C: KWLA CHART

K What do I know?	W What do I WANT to know?	L What did I LEARN?	A How will I APPLY what I learned?

APPENDIX D: DEVELOPING EFL TEACHERS' COMPETENCIES

Training Evaluation Form

School Type:	Primary:	Secondary:	High School:
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	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The training met my expectations.					
2. I will be able to apply the knowledge learned to my work.					
3. The training objectives for each topic were identified and followed.					
4. The content was organized and easy to follow.					
5. The materials distributed were relevant and useful.					
6. The trainers were knowledgeable.					
7. The quality of instruction was good.					
8. The trainers met the training objectives.					
9. Class participation and interaction were encouraged.					
10. Adequate time was provided for questions and discussions.					
11. The training room set-up was comfortable and contributory to learning.					

12. How do you rate the sessions discussed?	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Ice-breaking activities					
Web 2.0 Tools: Engage learners in EFL classrooms					
The integration of 21st-century skills into foreign language education					
EFL Teacher as a Researcher					
Positive psychology in EFL classrooms					
Classroom-based language assessment and its role in promoting a positive classroom environment					
Advertisement as language teaching materials: Starbucks sample					
Teacher autonomy shapes teaching anatomy					
Use of games in English language classrooms					
A stance on writing activities in English classes					
Project-based English language teaching: E-twinning					
13. How do you rate the training overall?					

14. Among the topics in this training, which is the most useful one for you? Why?

15. Among the subjects in this training, which is the least useful for you? Why?

16. What aspects of the training could be improved?

17. How do you hope to change your practice as a result of this training program?

**18. What additional EFL training programs would you like to have in the future?
What would you be your content suggestions?**

19. Please share your other comments if you have any.



Thank you so much for your valuable feedback.

APPENDIX E: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of the INSET program?
2. What did you learn most important/ most valuable?
3. Were there any new concepts or subjects you learned or encountered for the first time in this program? If so, what were they?
4. What do you think are the main skills/ competencies you have developed/ acquired during this training?
5. Are you planning to apply techniques/ strategies in your classes? Why and how?
6. What do you plan to do differently?
7. What are the challenges or barriers to the implementation into your classes, if any?
8. What would you change, add or exclude if you organized this program?
9. What professional plans do you have to continue with your professional development?

APPENDIX F: LESSON OBSERVATION FORM

I. General Information	
Observation Date: Observation Time: Teacher: Grade:	
II. Classroom Environment	
The number of students in the class: Physical characteristics of the class: Seating arrangement: Materials (computer, projector, cabinet etc.):	
III. The Subject of Teaching	
Unit Title:	
Learning Outcomes:	
Content:	
IV. Planning and Organizing Teaching	
Processes	Examples/ Further Explanations
Pre-planning of teaching processes:	
Organizing suitable learning environments:	

Ability to use appropriate materials and resources:	
Different techniques used:	
Used/Recommended Teaching Materials/Tools/Technological Resources:	
V. Developing Language Skills Examples/ Further Explanations	
Listening	
Speaking	
Reading	
Writing	
VI. Monitoring and Evaluating Language Development Examples/ Further Explanations	
Evaluating the effectiveness of the learning environment:	

Measurement-Evaluation Tools Used:	
Interpreting measurement results and providing feedback:	
Reflecting on the measurement and evaluation results of their applications:	
VII. Ensuring Professional Development	
Examples/ Further Explanations	
In-service training attended during the observation period:	
Benefitting from scientific research methods and techniques:	
Reflecting research on professional development into practice:	

APPENDIX G: BI-WEEKLY TEACHER REFLECTIVE JOURNAL**Anything else to add:****Name and Surname:****Week:****Date:**

Things that have gone well:

Things that have been challenging:

What was the most successful teaching moment for you?

What do I need to focus on? Things I need to develop further:

What are my professional development activities? What am I planning to do?