

İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMEN ADAYLARININ FARKLI SEVİYELERDE ÖĞRETMENLİK YAPMA MOTİVASYONLARI

PRESERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS' MOTIVATION FOR TEACHING DIFFERENT GRADE LEVELS

Zeynep Ölçü Dinçer¹

Başvuru Tarihi: 08-09-2019 Yayına Kabul Tarihi: 05-02-2020 DOI: 10.21764/maeuefd.616995
(Araştırma Makalesi)

Özet: Farklı yaş gruplarından öğrenciler dünyanın önde gelen lingua frankası olarak kabul ediliyor olması nedeni ile İngilizce öğrenmek istemektedirler. Bununla birlikte Türkiye’ de mevcut İngilizce öğretmenliği bölümleri farklı yaşlardan öğrencilerin özelliklerine sınırlı bir biçimde odaklanan ortak bir müfredata sahiptir. Bu çalışma öğretmen adaylarının (N=156) farklı yaş kademelerindeki öğrencilere öğretmenlik yapma motivasyonları ve bu motivasyonları etkileyen faktörleri incelemeyi hedeflemektedir. Sıralama maddelerini analiz etmek için Friedman testi, nitel verilerin analizi için içerik analizi kullanılmıştır. İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının farklı yaş gruplarına öğretmenlik yapma motivasyonları en yüksekte en düşüğe olmak üzere şu şekilde sıralanmaktadır; ortaokul, ilkokul, lise, üniversite ve anaokulu. Öğretmen adaylarının motivasyonlarını etkileyen faktörler *yeterlik inançları, öğretime dair endişeler, öğrencilere dair inançlar, öğrencilere yönelik tutumlar ve mesleki gelişim istekleridir.*

Anahtar Sözcükler: *İngilizce öğretmen adayları, motivasyon, farklı yaş gruplarına öğretmenlik yapma, etken faktörler*

Abstract: Learners from different age groups are motivated to learn English as it is considered to be the prevalent lingua franca in the world. Nevertheless, the current English teacher education departments in Turkey have a common curriculum with a rather limited focus on different age characteristics. This study aimed to investigate preservice teachers’ (PT) motivation with regard to teaching learners from different age levels and the factors affecting their motivation. The data were collected from preservice English teachers’ (N=156) through a questionnaire. Friedman test was used to analyze the ranking item and content analysis was employed for open ended responses. Preservice English teachers’ motivation level to teach different age groups can be ranked from the most to the least as secondary school, primary school, high school, university and kindergarten. Factors affecting PTs’ motivation were *efficacy beliefs, instructional concerns, beliefs about learners, attitude towards learners and professional development aspirations.*

Keywords: *Preservice English teacher, motivation, teaching different age groups, affecting factors*

¹ Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Zeynep Ölçü Dinçer, Erciyes Üniversitesi, Eğitim Fakültesi, Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Bölümü, elmek: zeynepolcudincer@gmail.com. ORCID: 0000-0002-3680-3986

Introduction

Learner age is deemed as an inseparable part of discussions regarding language learning and teaching. In general, from the perspective of developmental psychology, age has a direct noticeable relation with the cognitive, affective, moral, social and psychomotor development of individuals. Following the seminal theories by well-known figures in the field such as Piaget, Vygotsky and Kohlberg, other researchers have also substantiated this relationship. These research findings are not only descriptive but they are also prescriptive in nature. From choosing the most effective teaching methods and techniques to material development, majority of practical and efficient classroom implementations are shaped through the lenses of aforementioned theories provided by developmental psychologists.

Accompanying the claims by developmental psychology, from the perspective of second language acquisition research, age is considered to be a prominent individual difference that affects language learning (Ellis, 1994; Ortega, 2013). Pertaining to biological scheduling, the putative critical period for language learning (Krashen, Long & Scarcella, 1979; Lenneberg, 1986) suggests that high degree of brain plasticity at younger ages supports the learning process (Lenneberg, 1986). Some other studies also suggest that learning another language at younger ages is advantageous. For example, older learners of language were claimed to be limited to achieve native like skills not only in terms of pronunciation but also syntax (Pattowski, 1980). Exposure to language at younger ages found to have positive effects on native like abilities in grammaticality judgment tasks (Johnson & Newport, 1989). In addition to these biological and cognitive constraints, the contextual and social differences between young and adult learners might lead to some differences in their language learning processes. As suggested by Lightbown and Spada (2006) younger learners seem to feel free to try new language items without feeling the pressure of making mistakes; however, older learners are likely to experience this stress. Moreover, older learners are claimed to be unable to express their high sophisticated ideas through limited proficiency in the target language which might lead to a sense of inadequacy. On the other hand, it is highlighted that adolescents and adults learn faster, especially in the early stages, and also there are cases that achieved native like mastery in another language at later ages (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Although researchers are cautious about the idea that children are by no means better at learning L2 and they probe the effect of age in relation with some other

variables such as exposure time and motivation, the tacit relationship between age and second language acquisition is widely accepted in the field. This perception motivated educational policies that advertently prioritize teaching second languages at early ages.

The developmental features of different age groups inevitably shape language teaching practices and materials. Ur (1996) highlights the differences among teaching language to different age groups which are clustered as children, adolescents and adults. Accordingly, children are defined as a group with a high degree of need for being motivated by teacher and materials. Making use of pictures, games and stories to activate children's interest to learn language is suggested by the author. Adolescents are claimed to be the most challenging group especially for the novice teachers. Ur (1996) states that compared to children, adolescents have higher learning potential; on the other hand, developing trust in classroom might take some time and management of adolescents is relatively different from children. Harklau (2007) also states that "adolescence is regarded as a particularly malleable and difficult age in the development of social identity and conception of self, and even more potentially problematic for multilingual and multiethnic English learners" (p.639). Lastly, teaching adults is claimed to be easier and less stressful; nevertheless, teachers in adult language classrooms might be required to be more proficient, even be a native speaker, and they should be careful about relations with adult learners (Harklau, 2007).

English Language Learners in Turkey

English, which is not only the lingua franca of this era but also the international language of science, technology, education and commerce, has become an invaluable investment for many citizens and governments in different countries as well as in Turkey (British Council and TEPAV, 2013; Doğançay-Aktuna& Kızıltepe, 2005; Kırkgöz, 2007). Although there is lack of consensus in the literature about pros and cons and the contextual requirements for successful practices in teaching English at younger ages (Enever, 2015), it is unquestionable that the recent decades are the heyday of teaching English at very early ages. In line with this, parents yearned for creating opportunities for their children to study English at younger ages. Parallel with the demands of parents, local policy makers increased the role of English in the national curriculum and started English courses at primary school second grade. In addition, role of English in higher education and number of English medium universities have also increased dramatically. Moreover, even

elderly people were motivated to learn this language at later ages simply for some practical reasons such as finding a better career or visiting other countries. To put in a nutshell, ever increasing demand for English in Turkey has substantially expanded the range of learner age in the country from very young kids to late adults.

In educational settings, English has gained importance from kindergarten to university level. Fueled by the theoretical assumptions which promote the motto of “the earlier the better” in language learning, local English language teaching policies and practices in Turkey were updated. The Ministry of National Education (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı in Turkish) revised the national curriculum so that the compulsory English courses were lowered up to second grade at schools (MEB, 2018). In addition, many kindergarten schools, especially the private ones, began offering English courses to very young learners. Universities also prioritized English in their programs to catch up with the global standards in research and technology, offer their graduates more career opportunities both in the country and abroad, and create an international learning environment. Eventually, English has gone beyond its limits as a foreign language and become the medium of instruction in many universities. Although many EMI universities have confronted with various shortcomings such as problems in creating effective learning environments caused by the limited language proficiency of instructors and students in English (British Council, 2013), still the precedence of English in universities has not still ceased.

Training English Teachers for Different Age Groups

Conceptualizing teacher knowledge, Schulman (1987) defines “knowledge of learners”, which refers to knowing about the characteristics of learners at certain age and context, as a subcomponent of general teacher knowledge. For example, teaching younger learners requires specific teacher competencies such as knowing the young learner (Uztoşun, 2018). Therefore, prospective teachers are supposed to develop necessary teaching skills suitable for different age groups. To this end, for some subject areas such as maths, social sciences and natural sciences, PT education programs in Turkey are departmentalized according to the age of target learners as elementary school teaching and secondary school teaching. On the other hand, despite the wide range of learners awaiting prospective English teachers in the future, this kind of an age oriented professional division is not offered in English teacher education programs. All English teachers, regardless of the age of their potential future students, get their training in the same program with

the same curriculum. Considering the demand for English and the wide range of learner age in Turkey, this training does not meet the local needs (Öztürk & Aydın, 2019).

In addition, it can be argued that even the research on English teacher education in Turkey in relation with learner age is still in its infancy. The canon of previous studies examining English teacher education in relation with the age of target students handled this issue within the limited frame of teacher education for young learners. Therefore, majority of studies are focused on primary school teaching. Özkan and Arıkan (2010) stated that there were limited number of studies on teaching English to young learners in Turkey in 2010. It can be stated that research on teaching English to young learners is a recent research topic that has become a foci of investigations within the last decade. When it comes to the literature considering PT education and young learners, even fewer research studies have been conducted, and they are mainly about prospective teachers' preparedness and efficacy beliefs to teach young learners (e.g., Çakır& Güngör, 2017; Çelik& Arıkan, 2012; Güngör, 2016; Uztosun, 2016) and pre-service education and experiences with young learners (e.g., Bekleyen, 2011; Çamlıbel-Acar, 2016; Yangın-Ekşi& Aşık, 2015).

The overall conclusion of local studies in Turkey underscores that the current teacher education curriculum and practices are not effective to prepare PTs to teach young learners. Examining the syllabi for "Teaching English to Young Learners" courses and having interviews with preservice English teachers, Çakır and Güngör (2017) found out that the current young learners courses offered in the curriculum are insufficient to support PTs in accordance with 21th century teacher qualifications. Çelik and Arıkan (2012) purported that the courses in preservice education are mostly theory oriented and inadequate to prepare PTs for real young learners classrooms. In another study by Şad (2010), through the lenses of PTs' reflective journals in practicum, the convergence between the theoretical knowledge offered in university courses and the real experiences and observations of PTs in the field were examined. Accordingly, it is found that PTs' theoretical background is not compatible with the realities in the classroom. Likewise, unfolding preservice and in-service English teachers' efficacy beliefs to teach primary students, Uztosun (2016) claimed that PTs found practicum teaching as the least effective course in the teacher education curriculum. The incompatible nature of preservice education and real classroom experiences of PTs in young learners classroom is observed in other contexts, such as Malaysia (Othman & Kiley, 2016), as well.

Researchers attempted to find solutions to lessen this gap through alternative practices. For example, PTs seemed to benefit from video recorded micro teachings in Güngör's study (2016). The author (2016) claimed that prospective English teachers' professional development for teaching young learners could be supported by using these recordings as a part of carefully designed reflective practices. According to the results of another study, although micro teachings in university courses could promote teachers' practical competencies, they might have some drawbacks because PTs cannot see the reactions of real young learners in these made-up settings (Yangın-Ekşi& Aşık, 2015). Therefore, Yangın-Ekşi and Aşık (2015) conducted an action research in which the PTs had actual practices with real young learners. Based upon the reflective comments of participants, it was found that teacher candidates got insights into how children learn, think and react. Bekleyen (2011) conducted a similar research in which preservice English teachers had an opportunity to teach very young learners. The results of the study indicated that having authentic experiences with real students has positive effects on their attitudes to teach this group of learners. Results of the research by Çamlıbel- Acar (2016) also supported the findings that favor the benefits of real experiences and observation on preservice English teachers' readiness and willingness to work with young learners.

It has been the case that PT education curriculum in Turkey does not provide a comprehensive training that could prepare teacher candidates to work with all age groups including children, adolescents and adults. In addition, affected by the putative idea that learning a language at early ages offers significant benefits, not only the curriculum but also the current research studies in PT education in Turkey are basically narrowed down to issues about young learners. The incongruence between the wide range of English language learner age, from kindergarten to late adults, in Turkey and young learners-oriented, therefore limited, PT education curriculum necessitates a new all-encompassing perspective. The present study aims to define English PTs' motivation to teach different age groups and thereby provide insights into the outcomes of this aforementioned incongruence. In addition, an in depth perspective will be offered by examining the factors that affect PTs' motivation. Findings could be useful for policy makers of English pre-service education and also researchers interested in English teacher education for different age groups. The following research questions are guiding this study:

- 1) How motivated are pre-service English teachers in terms of teaching learners from different age levels?

2) What are the factors affecting their motivation to work with these groups of learners?

Methodology

This research is designed as an exploratory mixed-methods study. The data were twofold. First, pre-service English teachers' motivation to teach English to learners from different age groups was investigated through quantitative data. Second, factors affecting their motivation were examined by means of qualitative data obtained through open ended responses.

Participants and Setting

English teachers in Turkey can get their diploma either from teacher education departments which offer an eight-semester bachelor's degree or from the two-semester intense Pedagogical Formation Programs offered at universities to the graduates of English majoring departments such as English Language and Literature, English Linguistics and American Culture. The participants of the present study were a cohort of prospective English teachers (N= 156). The group consists of participants from teacher education departments (N= 72) and from English Pedagogical Formation Program (N= 84). Both groups were from the same state university which is located in the mid regions of Turkey. Female participants (N= 129) outnumbered the males (N= 27). The precedence of female participants reflects the gender distribution in the field of English language teaching in the country. The data were collected in the last month of PTs' preservice training shortly before they were about to graduate from their programs.

Data Collection Instruments and Data Analysis

The data were collected through a questionnaire designed by the researcher to answer the guiding questions. For reliability and validity issues, the questionnaire was evaluated by another researcher to check whether the items were clearly stated and appropriate to answer the relevant research question. Then, a discussion session was held with that researcher to make necessary changes and finalize the questionnaire. The first part of the questionnaire was allocated to demographic information including age, gender and the teacher education program that PTs were enrolled in. The second part was consisting of a rating scale requiring participants to "rate their motivation to teach English to the given learner groups as 1= the most motivated to 5= the least motivated". Five different learner groups were defined to reflect the potential student profile that the participants would teach in the future. These groups were kindergarten, primary school (grades 1 to 4), secondary school (grades 5 to 8), high school (grades 9 to 12) and the preparatory

schools at universities. After rating the given age groups, the participants responded an open ended question asking them to "briefly explain the reasons for their ranking".

Ranking items were analyzed through the Friedman test as it can be employed for the ranking of nonparametric data. Content analysis was used for open ended responses. The answers of 132 participants to the open ended question were qualified enough to be considered in the analysis. Only the themes coded more than 3 times were counted in the coding as the themes appearing once or twice could not reflect the common tendency of a cohort of 132 cases. Relevant subthemes were merged under larger umbrella topics defined as the factors affecting PTs' motivation. In order to provide a rigorous analysis of qualitative data, interrater reliability was calculated (Miles and Huberman, 1994 as cited in Baltacı, 2016) and found as .83, which indicated that the coding results were reliable.

Findings

The first research question aims to unearth the general motivation of PTs in terms of teaching different age groups. Friedman test results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in PTs' motivation to teaching different age groups, $\chi^2(4) = 33.4, p = 0.00$. Table 1 shows the mean rank for each group. Accordingly, the PTs' motivation for teaching different age groups could be listed respectively from the most preferred to the least as secondary school ($\bar{x} = 3.44$), primary school ($\bar{x} = 3.28$), high school ($\bar{x} = 2.96$), university ($\bar{x} = 2.73$) and kindergarten ($\bar{x} = 2.59$).

Table 1

Mean Rank of Teaching Motivation for Different Groups of Learners with Different Age Characteristics

Age groups	Mean Rank
Kindergarten	2,59
Primary School	3,28
Secondary School	3,44
High School	2,96
University	2,73

In general, factors affecting PTs' motivation to teach different age groups were categorized from the most frequently mentioned to the least as *efficacy beliefs* consisting of 5 subthemes (f=50), *instructional concerns* consisting of 6 subthemes (f=45), *beliefs about learners* consisting of 2 subthemes (f=19), *attitude towards learners* consisting of 2 subthemes (f=19) and *professional*

development aspirations consisting of 2 subthemes (f=9). Subthemes for each category were given as full statements to make them more expressive for the readers. The overall distribution of affecting factors and relevant subthemes in relation with certain learner groups are presented in Table 2. It was observed that the same factors might have an effect on the motivation for different age groups. On the other hand, it is observed that *beliefs about learners* did not have any impact on PTs' motivation to work with high school and university students. In addition, *efficacy beliefs* were not noted among the factors affecting motivation to teach kindergarten students. Moreover, *professional development aspirations* were used as a motivational factor only for teaching to university students groups.

Table 2

Factors and Subthemes Affecting PTs' Motivation to Teach Different Age Groups

Affecting factors	K. (f)	P.S. (f)	S.S. (f)	H.S. (f)	U. (f)
Efficacy beliefs (f=50)					
1. I can communicate effectively with this age group.			4	3	3
2. My practicum experience made me feel that I am suitable for this group.			6	4	
3. I think I can be more effective with this group.		3	4		3
4. I am not proficient (in English) enough to teach older learners.		7	4		
5. I can prepare various colorful materials, tasks and games which make learning English fun for this age group.		5	4		
Instructional concerns (f= 45)					
6. I want to be the first who teaches English to them, I don't want to fix language problems caused by prior learning experiences.	3	9			
7. I want to work with this group and develop positive attitudes to learn English.		3			
8. I think classroom management is easier with this age group.			7		3
9. I think they are mature and conscious, which makes teaching easier.				3	6
10. I think learners can understand the topics easier as they have higher readiness level and mental maturity.					8

11. I have the opportunity of speaking English in class (with high proficiency).				3
Attitudes towards learners (f=19)				
12. I love children and teaching English to them.	7	8		
13. I feel better as we are at closer ages.				4
Beliefs about learners (f=19)				
14. I think children do not hold bias to English and therefore they are more motivated to learn the language.	4	7	5	
15. I think this group has positive attitudes and respect to teacher.		3		
Professional development aspirations (f=9)				
16. I can have academic development opportunities if I work with university level students.				4
17. I think my English proficiency will be refreshed if I teach at this level.				5

K: Kindergarten; P.S.: Primary school; S.S.: Secondary school; H.S.: High school; U: University

The results indicated that different age groups might share the same subthemes. The intersections among the motivational subthemes for different age groups are given in the diagram presented in Figure 1. It is observed that the subthemes were distributed in a continuum which means that the closer age groups share the same subthemes while the learner groups with a larger age gap have no intersection. For example, kindergarten and university groups do not have any shared subtheme. In addition, the subthemes used for secondary school students, which is the learner group located in the middle of five different age groups, have an intersection with the other four learner groups which are kindergarten, primary school, high school and university level students.

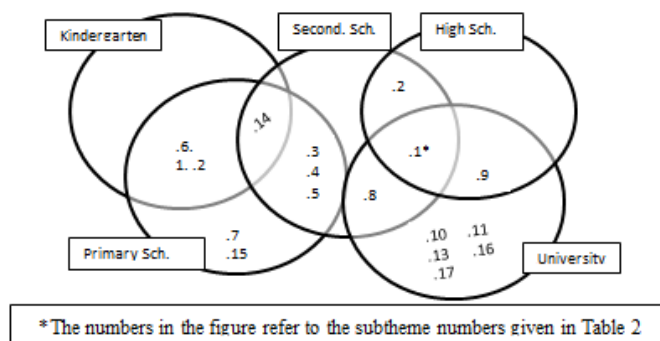


Figure 1. Distribution of the motivational subthemes and the intersections among learner groups

The results illustrated that PTs' motivation to teach English to secondary school students, which has the highest ranking among the other groups, is affected by *efficacy beliefs*, *beliefs about learners* and *instructional concerns*. The details are presented in Table 3 below. Accordingly, their motivation was mainly based upon their *efficacy beliefs* (f=22) and it is seen that all the subthemes listed under the category of self-efficacy were mentioned for secondary school students. These subthemes are “ I can communicate effectively with this age group.”, “My practicum experience made me feel that I am suitable for this group.”, “I think I can be more effective with this group.”, “I can prepare various colorful materials, tasks and games which make learning English fun for this age group.” and “I am not proficient (in English) enough to teach older learners”. In addition, PTs' were affected by their *beliefs about learners* (f=5) and think that “children do not hold bias to English and therefore they are more motivated to learn the language”. Finally, *instructional concerns* (f=7) refers to the subtheme that “I think classroom management is easier with this age group.”

Table 3

Factors Affecting PTs' Motivation to Teach English to Secondary School Students

Factors and subthemes	(f)
Efficacy beliefs (f=22)	
1. I can communicate effectively with this age group.	4
2. My practicum experience made me feel that I am suitable for this group.	6
3. I think I can be more effective with this group.	4
4. I am not proficient (in English) enough to teach older learners.	4
5. I can prepare various colorful materials, tasks and games which make learning English fun for this age group.	4
Beliefs about learners (f=5)	
14. I think children do not hold bias to English and therefore they are more motivated to learn the language.	5
Instructional concerns (f=7)	
8. I think classroom management is easier with this age group.	7

The second mostly preferred learner group was found as primary school students. PTs were basically affected by their *efficacy beliefs* (f=15) including the subthemes such as “I think I can be more effective with this group”, “I can prepare various colorful materials, tasks and games which make learning English fun for this age group.” and “I am not proficient (in English) enough to teach older learners”. PTs were affected by the following *instructional concerns*

(f=12); “I want to be the first who teaches English to them, I don't want to fix language problems caused by prior learning experiences” and “I want to work with this group and develop positive attitudes to learn English”. *Beliefs about learners* (f=10) were including the subthemes such as “I think children do not hold bias to English and therefore they are more motivated to learn the language” and “I think this group has positive attitudes and respect to teacher”. In addition, *attitudes towards learners*, “I love children and teaching English to them”, seemed to affect PTs’ motivation to work with primary school students.

Table 4

Factors Affecting PTs’ Motivation to Teach English to Primary School Students

Factors and subthemes	(f)
Efficacy beliefs (f=15)	
3. I think I can be more effective with this group.	3
4. I am not proficient (in English) enough to teach older learners.	7
5. I can prepare various colorful materials, tasks and games which make learning English fun for this age group.	5
Beliefs about learners (f=10)	
14. I think children do not hold bias to English and therefore they are more motivated to learn the language.	7
15. I think this group has positive attitudes and respect to teacher.	3
Instructional concerns (f=12)	
6. I want to be the first who teaches English to them, I don't want to fix language problems caused by prior learning experiences.	9
7. I want to work with this group and develop positive attitudes to learn English.	3

The overall results indicated that the third mostly preferred learner group was high school students. Factors affecting PTs motivation to teach this group is presented in Table 5. PTs’ *efficacy beliefs* and *instructional concerns* had an impact on their motivation. *Efficacy beliefs* (f=7) were built upon the following beliefs; “I can communicate effectively with this age group.” and “My practicum experience made me feel that I am suitable for this group”. As for the *instructional concerns* (f=3) it seemed that ease of teaching to cognitively mature students affected PTs’ motivation, which is noted in Table 5 as “I think they are mature and conscious, which makes teaching easier.”

Table 5

Factors Affecting PTs' Motivation to Teach English to High School Students

Factors and subthemes	(f)
Efficacy beliefs (f=7)	
1. I can communicate effectively with this age group.	3
2. My practicum experience made me feel that I am suitable for this group.	4
Instructional concerns (f=3)	
9. I think they are mature and conscious, which makes teaching easier.	3

Working with university students was in the fourth order in the PTs' ranking. They were mainly motivated by *instructional concerns* (f=20). PTs assumed that university students were cognitively mature and proficient in English, which were supposedly effective on the ease of teaching. The following subthemes presented in Table 6 are related to the aforementioned suppositions; "I think classroom management is easier with this age group", "I think they are mature and conscious, which makes teaching easier", "I think learners can understand the topics easier as they have higher readiness level and mental maturity", and "I have the opportunity of speaking English in class (with high proficiency)". In addition, PTs motivation to teach university students were also influenced by their *professional development aspirations* (f= 9) including the subthemes such as "I can have academic development opportunities if I work with university level students" and "I think my English proficiency will be refreshed if I teach at this level"; *efficacy beliefs* (f= 6) consisting of the subthemes such as "I can communicate effectively with this age group" and "I think I can be more effective with this group"; and *attitudes towards learners* (f=4) including the subthemes such as "I feel better as we are at closer ages".

Table 6

Factors Affecting PTs' Motivation to Teach English to University Students

Factors and subthemes	(f)
Efficacy beliefs (f=6)	
1. I can communicate effectively with this age group.	3
3. I think I can be more effective with this group.	3
Attitudes towards learners (f=4)	
13. I feel better as we are at closer ages.	4
Instructional concerns (f=20)	
8. I think classroom management is easier with this age group.	3
9. I think they are mature and conscious, which makes teaching easier.	6
10. I think learners can understand the topics easier as they have higher readiness level and mental maturity.	8

11. I have the opportunity of speaking English in class (with high proficiency).	3
Professional development aspirations (f=9)	
16. I can have academic development opportunities if I work with university level students.	4
17. I think my English proficiency will be refreshed if I teach at this level.	5

The last group of learners in PTs' ranking was kindergarten students. A detailed presentation for the effective factors is provided in Table 7. The most influential factor on PTs' motivation for this groups was *attitudes towards learners* (f=7), which refers to the subtheme stated as "I love children and teaching English to them". *Beliefs about learners* (f=4) was also effective on motivation to teach this group. This factor is based upon the subtheme stated as "I think children do not hold bias to English and therefore they are more motivated to learn the language". Finally *instructional concerns* (f=3), consisting of the subtheme "I want to be the first who teaches English to them, I don't want to fix language problems caused by prior learning experiences", was found to be among the motivational factors for working with kindergarten students.

Table 7

Factors Affecting PTs' Motivation to Teach English to Kindergarten Students

Factors and subthemes	(f)
Beliefs about learners (f=4)	
14. I think children do not hold bias to English and therefore they are more motivated to learn the language.	4
Instructional concerns (f=3)	
6. I want to be the first who teaches English to them, I don't want to fix language problems caused by prior learning experiences.	3
Attitudes towards learners (f=7)	
12. I love children and teaching English to them.	7

Discussion

Age is claimed to be a significant learner characteristic that is directly related to classroom implementations as well as teacher education practices. Teachers' knowledge about learners' age characteristics together with their capacity to integrate this knowledge with classroom implications are of great importance to facilitate learning. Nevertheless, preservice English teacher education programs in Turkey, regardless of the wide range of learner age awaiting PTs, do not offer an age oriented division to teacher candidates but rather a number of courses for

young learners are added to the curriculum. In addition, studies concerned about learners' age characteristics and teacher education are mainly concerned about young learners (e.g., Çakır& Güngör, 2017; Güngör, 2016; Uztosun, 2016). Therefore, English teacher education curriculum and relevant research agenda should adopt a comprehensive perspective including all potential groups of learners such as children, adolescents and adults.

The goal of this study was to unearth preservice English teachers' motivation to teach different age groups and to investigate the factors having impact on their motivation. To this end, a cohort of PTs shared their motivations through a ranking scale and an open ended question. Overall, the order of motivation to teach different learner groups, from the most to the least, was secondary school, primary school, high school, university and kindergarten respectively. Considering that PTs cannot find practicum opportunities in universities and kindergarten, it can be stated that parallel with previous studies (eg., Bekleyen, 2011; Yangın-Ekşi& Aşık, 2015) real and contextual experience offered in practicum might have an effect on PTs' motivation to teach in secondary school, primary school and high school students.

Factors effective on their motivation were *efficacy beliefs, instructional concerns, beliefs about learners, attitude towards learners* and *professional development aspirations*. Regarding the subthemes listed under the factors, it is seen that they are distributed in a kind of continuum. In other words, the intersections of subthemes between and among learner groups are in a way that the closer age groups are likely to share the same subthemes. Accordingly, the motivational subthemes used for kindergarten and primary school students have no common ground with the factors associated with high school and university students. This type of distribution could be interpreted as PTs, in general, have a common background knowledge about age related differences between different groups of learners.

The results indicated that PTs were imbued with motivation to teach English in secondary schools. Considering the open ended responses, it is observed that they have high efficacy beliefs in terms of teaching this learner group. Another reason for this tendency is PTs' instructional concerns and beliefs about this group of learners. The results showed that managing secondary school students was regarded to be easier by PTs; in addition, these students were believed to have less bias to learn English and thereby be more motivated. Students at secondary schools in Turkey are between the ages of 10 to 13. These students are like older children on the way of

becoming adolescents. They are neither like little children in kindergarten and primary schools nor like adolescents but rather in between. Unlike kids and younger children who are dependent on the teacher (Ur, 1997), secondary school students are old enough to get some relative autonomy in learning; in addition, they do not have the significantly challenging identity of adolescents (Harklau, 2007) yet. It can be asserted that these age related characteristics of secondary school students decreases teachers' burden to a moderate level and makes PTs more motivated to work with them.

Contrary to the emphasis on young learners' in PT education curriculum, PTs put kindergarten students to the last order. It could be attested that motivational factors for teaching kindergarten students are mostly for affective and practical reasons such as positive beliefs about learners' motivation and the assumption that these learners would not have previous fossilized mislearnings. Therefore, the very first motivation for working with little children was affect and love towards kids. Although efficacy beliefs play an important role in PTs' decision to teach at secondary school, primary school, high school, university level, it was interesting that efficacy was not a motivational factor for teaching kindergarten students. In order to develop PTs' competence to teach young learners, a two-semester course is offered in the departments; nevertheless, these courses seem to be insufficient to prepare them for very young learners. In addition, scarcity of teacher trainers having real experience with kindergarten children and lack of practicum experience in kindergartens could be taken as reasonable explanations for lack of efficacy beliefs in the findings. Supporting PT professional development through having practice opportunities with very young learners might change PTs' attitudes towards teaching this group and also help them have firsthand experiences with kindergarten students as in the study of Bekleyen (2011).

Professional development opportunities are the motivating factors related to teaching English at universities. Although in-service trainings for continuing professional development of K-12 teachers has been common in public and private schools, PTs seem to perceive universities as the primary opportunity for career development. They claimed that universities offer academic development occasions, and students at universities create a context suitable for the development of their subject knowledge. As Ur (1996) suggests, adult learners are the easiest groups for teachers, but the teacher might be expected to have expertise in different areas and be a proficient

user of English. PTs also seem to share parallel ideas with Ur (1996). They believe that compared to K-12 group university students would have high proficiency in English and required mental maturity. Working with such students was appealing for PTs as teaching mature and proficient students and managing the classroom were supposed to be much easier.

Interestingly, primary school children are the only group claimed to be respectful to teacher. In addition, these students are at the early stages of their English learning journey and thereby they were assumed to have no bias towards English, which are the learner characteristics that appeal PTs to work with them. The role of PTs subject knowledge, in other words their English proficiency, in their motivation to teach primary and secondary school students is an unexpected finding of this study. The results indicated that PTs plan to compensate their lack of proficiency with teaching to primary and secondary students because these groups were supposed to be fresh beginners of English with very limited knowledge of English.

Practicum courses have been claimed to be effective on PTs professional perceptions by researchers (eg., Bekleyen, 2011; Çamlıbel & Acar, 2016). PTs in the present study mostly had their practicum at secondary schools and high schools. They stated that their practicum experiences with secondary and high school students affected their motivation to work with them. Therefore, in addition to theoretical courses that offer opportunities to develop teaching skills for different age groups, more practicum experiences with different groups of learners should be provided to PTs. This would allow them develop more realistic and concrete perceptions about learners with different age characteristics.

Conclusion

In an effort to gain insights into prospective English teachers' perceptions about teaching different age groups in Turkey, this study addressed senior year preservice English teachers' motivation to teach learners of different age groups with a larger perspective including kindergarten, primary school, secondary school, high school and university students. In essence, our study is an initial attempt in Turkey that investigates the issue of English teacher preparation and learner age with a comprehensive outlook. The major finding of the study is that the participants were mostly motivated to teach at secondary school and this motivation was based upon strong self-efficacy beliefs towards teaching this group of learners. In addition, when it

comes to professional development opportunities, preservice teachers considered only the university level teaching as a prospect for their professional development. The motivational subthemes for different age groups might have some common grounds. However, these intersections were observed among the closer age groups. The larger the age gap between the groups the less likely it is to find motivational intersections between them. For example, there is no common motivational subtheme between kindergarten and university or high school teaching. Considering that different age groups have different characteristics and thereby require different pedagogical knowledge and competencies, developing different teacher education programs for training English teachers of different age groups seems highly promising. On the other hand, substantial research is required for an effective categorization of learners and the development of convenient teacher training programs compatible with the defined learner groups. Based upon a mixed methods research design, this study explained the quantitative results of a ranking item through the lenses of qualitative data obtained through open ended responses. The data were limited to a group of teacher candidates enrolled in the English Teaching Department and Formation Program of a university. It is suggested that working with enriched data gathered through interviews and focus groups would be more illuminating. Therefore, further research conducted with a larger cohort of participants and supported with other data collection techniques would provide vigorous information about the issue.

References

- Baltacı, A. (2017). Nitel veri analizinde miles-huberman modeli. *Ahi Evran Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 3 (1),1-15.
- Bekleyen, N. (2011). Can I teach English to children? Turkish preservice teacher candidates and very young learners. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 32,256–265.
- British Council & TEPAV (2013). Turkey national needs assessment of state school English language teaching. Ankara: Mattek.
- British Council & TEPAV (2015). *The state of english in higher education in Turkey: A baseline study*. Ankara: British Council. Retrieved from: https://www.britishcouncil.org.tr/sites/default/files/he_baseline_study_book_web_-_son.pdf
- Çakır, A., & Güngör, M. N. (2017). Pre-service teachers' evaluations of practices in teaching English to young learners in terms of 21st century teacher qualifications. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 13(1), 244-259.

- Çamlıbel-Acar, Z. (2016). Teaching English to young learners: some challenges faced by pre-service teachers. *The Eurasia Proceedings of Educational & Social Sciences (EPESS)*, 5, 323- 377.
- Çelik, S., & Arıkan, A. (2012). Öğretmen yetiştirme programlarının İngilizce öğretmen adaylarını ilköğretimde İngilizce öğretimine ne kadar hazırladığına yönelik nitel bir araştırma. *Pamukkale Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 32, 77-87.
- Doğançay-Aktuna, S., & Kızıltepe, Z. (2005). English in Turkey. *World Englishes*, 24 (2), 253-65.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford University Press.
- Enever, J. (2015). The advantages and disadvantages of English as a foreign language with young learners. In J. Bland (Ed.), *Challenges in teaching English to young learners: global perspectives and local realities* (pp.13-31). Bloomsbury Publishing PLC
- Güngör, M. N. (2016). Turkish pre-service teachers' reflective practices in teaching English to young learners. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 41(2). 137-151.
- Harklau, L. (2007). The Adolescent English Language Learner. In: Cummins J., Davison C. (eds) *International Handbook of English Language Teaching*. Springer International Handbooks of Education, vol 15. Springer, Boston, MA.
- Johnson, J. S., & Newport, E. L. (1989). Critical period effects in second language learning: The influence of maturational state on the acquisition of English as a second language. *Cognitive Psychology*. 21: 60–99.
- Kırkgöz, Y. (2007). English language teaching in Turkey: policy changes and their implementations. *RELC J.* 38, 216-228.
- Krashen S.D., Long M.H., & Scarcella R.C. (1979). Age, rate and eventual attainment in second language acquisition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 13, 573–582.
- Lightbown, P.M., & Spada, N. (2006). *How Languages are Learned*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- MEB. (2018). Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı İngilizce dersi öğretim programı, Ankara. Retrieved from: <http://mufredat.meb.gov.tr/ProgramDetay.aspx?PID=327>
- Ortega, L. (2013). *Understanding second language acquisition*. New York: Routledge
- Othman, J., & Kiely, R. (2016). Preservice teachers' beliefs and practices in teaching English to young learners. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 6(1), 50- 59.
- Özkan, H. & Arıkan, A. (2010). To what extent does English language teacher education curriculum prepare prospective teachers for teaching young learners? Paper presented at the International Conference on New Trends in Education and Their Implications (ICONTE),

Antalya, Turkey.

Patkowski, M. S. (1980). The sensitive period for the acquisition of syntax in a second language. *Language Learning*, 30: 449–72.

Şad, S. N. (2010). Theory–practice dichotomy: prospective teachers' evaluations about teaching English to young learners. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 6 (2),22- 53.

Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57, 1-22.

Uztosun, M. S. (2018). Professional competences to teach English at primary schools in Turkey: a Delphi study, *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 41 (4), 549-565.

Uztosun, M. S. (2016). Pre-service and in-service English teachers' efficacy beliefs about teaching English at primary schools. *İlköğretim Online*, 15 (4), 1191-1205.

Yangın Ekşi, G., & Aşık, A. (2015). Enriching microteaching in teaching English to young learners: an action research. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching (IOJET)*, 2(1). 26-41.

Ur, P. (1996). *A course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Uzun Özet

Giriş

Eğitim ortamlarında öğrencilerin yaşı eğitim öğretim faaliyetlerini etkileyen önemli bir faktördür. Gerek gelişim psikologları gerekse ikinci dil edinimi ile ilgili çalışmalar yapan araştırmacılar yaşı öğrenme ile doğrudan bir ilişkisi olduğunu ortaya koymaktadırlar. Bu nedendir ki, belirli yaş seviyesindeki öğrenciler için geliştirilen öğretim programları, kullanılacak öğretim yöntemleri ve ders materyalleri o öğrenci grubunun yaş özellikleri dikkate alınarak belirlenmektedir. Türkiye’ de ve dünyada en yaygın kullanılan lingua franca olarak kabul edilen İngilizce, bu yaygın ünü nedeni ile oldukça farklı yaş grubundan öğrenciler tarafından talep edilmektedir. İngilizce öğrenmek isteyen öğrencilerin yaş aralığı okul öncesinden üniversitelere ve hatta orta yaş üzeri öğrencilere kadar geniş bir yelpazeye sahiptir. Bununla birlikte mevcut İngilizce öğretmenleri yetiştirme programları öğrencilerin yaş özelliklerine dair genel bilgiler vermekle kalmakta, diğer branşlarda olduğu gibi, örneğin ilköğretim ve ortaöğretim matematik öğretmenliği gibi, öğrencilerin yaşına göre farklı öğretmen eğitimi programları bulunmamaktadır. İngilizce öğrenmek isteyenlerin yaş aralığı diğer branşların öğrenci yaş aralığına göre daha geniş

olmasına rağmen bu farklılığın öğretmen eğitimi sürecine yansımaması mevcut çalışmanın çıkış noktasıdır. Bu çalışma iki ana araştırma sorusunu cevaplamak üzere gerçekleştirilmiştir.

- 1) İngilizce öğretmen adayları farklı yaş gruplarından öğrencilere öğretmenlik yapmaya ne kadar motive olmuşlardır?
- 2) Bu öğrenci gruplarına öğretmenlik yapmaya dair öğretmen adaylarının motivasyonunu etkileyen faktörler nelerdir?

Yöntem

Katılımcılar. Türkiye’ de İngilizce öğretmenleri Eğitim Fakültelerinin İngilizce Öğretmenliği bölümlerinde verilen dört yıllık eğitimi tamamlayan öğretmen adayları veya İngilizce alanında lisans diploması veren İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı veya Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı gibi bölümlerden mezun adaya verilen pedagojik formasyon eğitimi ile yetiştirilmektedirler. Bu nedenle bu çalışmanın katılımcılarını aynı üniversitenin İngilizce Öğretmenliği bölümünde kayıtlı olan son sınıf öğrencileri (N=72) ve pedagojik formasyon programına kayıtlı olan ve mezun olmak üzere olan öğretmen adayları (N=84) oluşturmaktadır. Toplam 156 öğretmen adayı mezun olmadan bir ay önce anketi yanıtlamıştır. Kız öğrencilerin sayısı (N=129) erkek öğrencilerinkinden (N= 27) fazladır, bu durum genel olarak İngilizce Öğretmenliği bölümlerindeki demografik dağılımın bir yansımasıdır.

Veri toplama araçları ve veri analizi. Bu karma yöntem çalışmanın verileri anket yolu ile toplanmıştır. Anketin birinci sorusu katılımcıların hangi yaş grubuna İngilizce öğretmeyi daha çok istediğini (1= En çok; 5= En az) sıraya koydukları bir sıralama maddesidir. Bu maddede yer alan öğrenci grupları anaokulu, ilkokul, ortaokul, lise ve üniversitedir. İkinci madde ise açık uçlu bir sorudan oluşmaktadır. Bu soruda katılımcıların daha önce yaptıkları sıralamanın nedenini açıklamaları istenmektedir. Böylelikle birinci madde ile öğretmen adaylarının farklı yaş gruplarına İngilizce öğretmeye dair ne kadar motive olduklarını sorgulayan birinci araştırma sorusunun cevabının bulunması hedeflenmektedir. Ayrıca ikinci maddeye yapılacak açıklamalar ile daha önce belirtilen motivasyon durumunu etkileyen faktörlerin ortaya konması hedeflenmektedir. Sıralama maddesi Friedman testi ile analiz edilmiş, nitel veriler için ise içerik analizi kullanılmıştır. İçerik analizi sonuçlarının kodlayıcılar arası güvenilirliği .83 olarak

bulunmuş ve elde edilen nitel sonuçların güvenilir olduğuna kanaat getirilmiştir.

Bulgular

Friedman test sonucundan elde edilen bulgulara göre İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının farklı yaş gruplarına öğretmenlik yapma motivasyonları en yüksekten en düşüğe ortaokul (M=3.44) , ilkokul (M=3.28) , lise (M=2.96) , üniversite (M=2.73) ve anaokulu (M=2.59) olarak sıralanmaktadır. Genel olarak öğretmen adaylarının motivasyonlarını etkileyen beş faktör belirlenmiştir. Her bir faktörün altında o konu ile ilgili alt temalar yer almaktadır. Katılımcılar tarafından en çok kullanılan faktör *yeterlik inançlarıdır* (f=50) ve bu faktörün altında beş alt tema bulunmaktadır. İkinci sık değinilen faktör *öğretime dair endişeleridir* (f=45) ve altı alt temadan oluştuğu görülmektedir. *Öğrencilere dair inançlar* (f=19) ve *öğrencilere yönelik tutumlar* (f= 19) aynı sıklıkta bahsedilmiştir. Her iki faktörün de ikişer alt teması bulunmaktadır. Son faktör olarak mesleki gelişim istekleri yer almaktadır (f=9) ve iki alt temadan oluşmaktadır. Her ne kadar katılımcılar tarafından farklı yaş grupları için aynı faktörler veya alt temalardan bahsedildiği durumlar görülse de, yaş grupları arasındaki mesafe arttıkça aynı faktörlerin veya alt faktörlerin belirtilmediği bulunmuştur. Örneğin anaokulu ve üniversite grubu için belirtilmiş hiçbir ortak faktör bulunmamaktadır. Ayrıca bazı faktörler sadece bazı yaş grupları için kullanılmıştır. Örneğin *mesleki gelişim istekleri* sadece üniversite grubu için belirtilmiş bir faktördür.

Sonuçlar

Türkiye’ de İngilizce öğretmeni eğitimi ve bu eğitimin öğrencilerin yaşı ile ilişkisini inceleyen çalışmalar genellikle çocuklara yabancı dil öğretimi ile sınırlı kalmaktadır (örn., Uztosun, 2016; Çakır &Güngör, 2017; Güngör, 2016). İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının öğretmenlik yapma potansiyeli bulunan öğrenci gruplarının yaş aralığı ise oldukça geniştir. Bu nedenle, konuya ilişkin araştırmaların çocuklara yabancı dil öğretiminin yanında diğer yaş gruplarına uygun öğretmen yetiştirme gibi konuları içermesi daha kapsamlı bir bakış açısı sunacaktır. Mevcut çalışmanın amacı okul öncesinden üniversiteye İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının genel olarak hangi yaş gruplarını tercih ettiklerini inceleyerek kapsamlı bir bakış açısı sunmaktır. Programların genel bağlamda öncelikli olarak orta öğretime yönelik öğretmen yetiştirdikleri görülmektedir. Zira nitel bulgular bu gruba karşı hissedilen yeterlik algısının oldukça yüksek olduğunu göstermektedir. Araştırma bulgularından anlaşılmaktadır ki farklı yaş gruplarının tercih edilmesi farklı etkenler

ile bağlantılıdır ve birbirine yakın yaş grupları uzak olanlara göre daha çok ortak faktör veya alt tema paylaşmaktadır. Bu durumda öğretmen adaylarının belirli yaş gruplarına İngilizce öğretmeye karşı, ortak veya benzer nedenler ile, daha istekli oldukları görülmektedir. Mevcut öğretmen eğitimi programında İngilizce öğretmen adayları bazı yaş gruplarına İngilizce öğretme konusunda daha yeterli hissederken bazılarına karşı o kadar yeterli ve motive değildirler. Bu nedenle diğer branşlarda olduğu gibi İngilizce öğretmen eğitiminde de öğrenci yaş gruplarının belirlenmesi ve buna uygun öğretmen eğitimi planı geliştirilmesinin daha verimli olacağı önerilebilir. Ancak bu yeni planlamanın alt yapısını oluşturabilmek için İngilizce öğretmen eğitimi ve öğrenci yaşı odağında daha kapsamlı çalışmalar yapılmalıdır. Bu çerçevede, yapılan çalışmaların çocuklara yabancı dil öğretimi ile sınırlı kalmaması, tüm öğrenen yaş gruplarının dikkate alındığı ve karşılaştırmalı bulgular sunabilecek araştırmaların yapılması önerilebilir.

ETİK BEYAN: "İngilizce Öğretmen Adaylarının Farklı Seviyelerde Öğretmenlik Yapma Motivasyonları" başlıklı çalışmanın yazım sürecinde bilimsel, etik ve alıntı kurallarına uyulmuş; toplanan veriler üzerinde herhangi bir tahrifat yapılmamış, karşılaşılabilecek tüm etik ihlallerde "Mehmet Akif Ersoy Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi Yayın Kurulunun" hiçbir sorumluluğunun olmadığı, tüm sorumluluğun Sorumlu Yazara ait olduğu ve bu çalışmanın herhangi başka bir akademik yayın ortamına değerlendirme için gönderilmemiş olduğunu taahhüt ederim."