FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING PROCESSES OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

Aslı EROL[1]   Kerim GÜNDOĞDU[2]

Article Info	Abstract
	This research aims to examine how students with specific learning difficulties learn a foreign language in a middle school in a province in the Aegean region of Turkey. In this qualitative research, the case study design was employed. The participants were selected through the purposive sampling method. 1 Five students with specific learning difficulties who are currently attending a middle school, three foreign language (English) teachers, five Turkish language teachers, a psychological counselor and two special education teachers who are the experts within the field of special education were included in the study. The data were collected through observation, interviews, and document analysis techniques. The raw data from these sources were analyzed through descriptive and content analysis. According to the findings, the students' foreign language learning process consists of categories such as affective characteristics, process, sources of difficulties, peer influence, media usage, advantages and disadvantages, strategies, and recommendations. The research concludes that when the affective domain objectives of language education are initiated, plans are made according to students' interests and needs, content is simplified, and appropriate strategies are determined, the learning process can take place. It is recommended that teachers be trained in this field to make these adjustments.

1. Introduction

The learning process varies at different rates for each student. In the Regulation on Special Education Services, a student requiring special education is defined as those who, for various reasons, significantly deviate from their peers in terms of student's characteristics and educational competencies (MEB, 2004). When students with slow learning processes, the concept of 'specific learning difficulty' is encountered (Özen, 2011). Specific learning difficulty is defined as a disruption in one or more of the basic psychological processes, manifesting itself in difficulties with the oral or written use of language, such as reading, writing, spelling, listening, thinking, speaking, or

[1] Aydın Adnan Menderes University, Turkey, aslierol09@gmail.com
[2] Aydın Adnan Menderes University, Turkey, kerim.gundogdu@adu.edu.tr

performing mathematical calculations (Akçin, 2009). Specific learning difficulty does not necessarily imply a problem related to intelligence, mind or behavior (MEGEP, 2007). Instead, it is seen as a deficiency in using the mind rather than a cognitive impairment (Deniz, Yorgancı & Özyeşil, 2009; MEGEP, 2007).

Students with specific learning difficulties do not necessarily have intellectual impairments, but they may experience challenges such as short attention spans and difficulties in language development and expression (Korkmazlar, 1999). These students learn the rules that guide social-cultural relationships, what printed material is, and how letters represent sounds. However, they may not know how to participate in classroom discussions, to use language outside of social contexts or to talk about language and focus on language (metalinguistic skills) (Birol and Aksoy Zor, 2018).

Schwarz (1997) states that the difficulties students with specific learning difficulties face in language learning, especially when it comes to learning a second language, stem from a fear of failure and making mistakes, a lack of sufficient effort and motivation, and weaknesses in language learning experiences or skills. According to Schwarz, there are two challenges in teaching a second language to these students. First, schools rarely allocate a section or class for these students. Second, finding educated teachers to teach a second language to these students is a challenge. Possible factors affecting students with specific learning difficulties in learning a foreign language can be cognitive, visual, perceptual, linguistic, emotional, physical, educational, social, cultural, and economic factors (Gunning, 2006). These factors can differently shape language learning processes from other educational environments.

Many students with specific learning difficulties receive inclusive education in mainstream classrooms, where they are to be responsible for the same environment and educational programs like Turkish, mathematics, science and technology, and foreign languages. For inclusion to be successful, it is necessary to determine the level of the student in different disciplines, set appropriate goals for their level, provide individualized instruction for the achievement of these goals, and ensure the provision of special tools and support from special education professionals (Çulha, 2010). Even if individualized programs (Individualized Education Plan-IEP) are prepared for them, these students may still struggle to comprehend certain subjects. Providing equal educational opportunities for students in inclusive environments with their peers is a requirement of human rights (Efe, 2011). However, the ineffective structuring of these processes and the integration of all students into the same program can disadvantage them. Additionally, there are situations where parents of students, who cannot participate sufficiently in foreign language classes, request exemptions

(Yurttabir, 2019). In this process, teachers face challenges in terms of teaching and assessment materials, students face challenges in terms of learning, and researchers face challenges in terms of resources (Efe, 2011). Therefore, there is a need for further research on the subject.

To be more effective in their foreign language lessons, it is necessary to first identify the difficulties they face in this discipline (Efe, 2011). The impression that students with specific learning difficulties do not need to learn a foreign language is intended to be overcome by detailed descriptions of how students' learning processes. Therefore, describing the foreign language learning processes of students is important in this research. While research on various disciplines is frequently encountered in the literature, studies on foreign language instruction for students with specific learning difficulties are limited in both international and national literature. It is believed that this research, aiming to depict the foreign language learning processes of students with specific learning difficulties, will contribute to the literature, teachers, and researchers in terms of the views and suggestions of teachers and students in this process.

The research seeks to answer the question, "How do middle school students with specific learning difficulties learn a foreign language?". Based on this research question, the following sub-questions are included:

1. How do students with specific learning difficulties conceptualize the foreign language?
2. What are the views of English language teachers on how students with specific learning difficulties learn a foreign language?
3. What are the views of other language teachers on how students with specific learning difficulties learn a foreign language?
4. What are the views of specialists (special education, school psychological counselor) on students with specific learning difficulties learn a foreign language?

2. Method

In this research, the aim is to examine how students with specific learning difficulties learn a foreign language. These students were focused on a middle school located in a city center in the Aegean region. In this research, as one of the qualitative research designs, the case study was used. The case study is defined as a research method that focuses on 'how' and 'why' questions to understand a connected system formed by a certain individual or class in its natural environment (Jaeger, 1988) and is used when there is little or no control over events (Yin, 2014). This qualitative case study

(Creswell, 2018; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021), which is conducted to obtain in-depth information through multiple data collection and to create an opportunity to examine an uncontrollable event in depth, is a single embedded case study (Yin, 2014). In this context, the research aims to observe and investigate, without intervention, the natural progression of students with specific learning difficulties in the school environment and to define how the foreign language learning processes. This aim has laid the groundwork for selecting a case study design as the research method. Single embedded case design is a research design in which there are two or more substrates or units within a single case (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). In the research, the case study design was used and the process experienced by students with specific learning difficulties in foreign language lessons was considered as a single case. The unit of analysis is a middle school and the students are substratified to study in the fifth, sixth, and eighth grades.

2.1. Research Context (Case)

The research was conducted in a public school in in a city center in Aegean region. The school is a four-story building with 20 classrooms and approximately 420 students. The ground floor of the building was reserved for fifth-grade classrooms, a heating room, and a canteen. On the first floor, there is a deputy principal's room, teachers' room, special education class, eighth-grade classrooms, and teachers' toilets; on the second floor, there is a psychological counselor's room, computer laboratory, science laboratory, seventh-grade classrooms, and girls' toilets; and on the third floor, there is a principal's room, library, prayer room, sixth-grade classrooms, and boys' toilets. In the school garden, there is a single-story dining hall and a multi-purpose hall, a carpeted field, a few benches, tables, gazebos, and newly planted trees.

All processes related to the school are conducted through collaboration among all stakeholders. Administrators seek teachers' opinions and suggestions during all processes. Communication is mostly in the form of face-to-face meetings. The school's official website and corporate e-mail address are actively used. Services are presented transparently and easily accessible to all stakeholders. Parents are actively involved in educational activities as much as possible. The school provides 15 students with special education needs ranging from autism, mental deficiency, language and speech difficulties. The most intensive group is special learning disabilities with five students. Two of these students are in the fifth grade, two in the sixth grade, and one in the eighth grade. There are no students with special learning difficulties in the seventh grade.

2.2. Participants

The participants of the research consisted of five students (St) with special learning difficulties, three foreign language (English) teachers (ET), five Turkish language teachers (TT), and a school psychological counselor (PC) studying in a middle school in the 2022-2023 academic year. In addition, two special education teachers of the school who are experts in the field of special education are also among the participants of this research group. The characteristics of the participants are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Characteristics of Participants*

Participant Codes	Gender	Age	Grade
St1	Female	10	5th grade
St2	Male	10	5th grade
St3	Male	11	6th grade
St4	Male	11	6th grade
St5	Male	13	8th grade
			Experience (Year)
TT1	Male	42	18 (Master Teacher)
TT2	Male	34	9
TT3	Female	39	16 (Master Teacher)
TT4	Female	36	15 (Master Teacher)
TT5	Female	35	12 (Master Teacher)
ET1	Female	47	24 (Master Teacher)
ET2	Female	38	17 (Master Teacher)
ET3	Male	38	17 (Master Teacher)
PC	Female	38	17
SE1	Male	29	8
SE2	Female	25	4

In the research, participants were determined by purposive (criterion) sampling method. Purposive sampling is a sampling method that allows in-depth study in cases where it is thought to have rich information (Patton, 1987) and includes a series of criteria determined before the research (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). In the study, since the school where the first author works was accessible and the criterion was appropriate, the convenience sampling technique was used under the purposeful sampling. In this type of sampling, the researchers gather data for the study from individuals or objects close to them to prevent loss of time, money and workforce (Aziz, 2013). The criteria determined for the participants in this research were that the students were diagnosed with specific learning difficulties, that these students were subjected to English education, that they were language teachers and psychological counsellor who taught the students, and that they were field experts.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

In the research, observation, interview, and documents were used as qualitative data collection methods. Semi-structured interview forms were used as a data collection tool in the interviews. These forms were prepared in line with the research questions, after ensuring that the questions of each group were parallel. Seven questions for teachers and students and eight questions for field experts were posed to describe students' language learning processes. Close-ended questions were avoided, and when necessary, probes were used to obtain in-depth information. Thus, a confirmation mechanism was provided within different participant groups.

After generating the form, expert opinions were obtained from a lecturer in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at a state university and two language teachers for language comprehensibility. Afterward, pilot interviews were conducted with three teachers and one student using a voice recorder. As a result of the pilot interview, the suitability of the form was tested and it was decided to use it in the actual interviews without changing it. In the observation part, a participant observer form was prepared and the related students were generally observed informally by the researchers in in-class and out-of-class environments.

2.4. Data Collection Process

The researchers personally visited the school, informed the school administration about the purpose and content of the research, and requested an interview. Volunteer participants were asked when they were available and an appointment was requested. In addition, permission was obtained from each participant for the voice recorder to record the data completely. The research was carried out in the form of one-to-one question-answer with the participants in a semi-structured interview form. Each participant was asked in the same order. Interview questions were asked in order. Non-directive explanations were made in line with the participants' requests.

When the interview was impeded, a break was taken, and the audio recording device was turned off. When these circumstances disappeared, the interview was continued. The interviews were conducted between 01.11.2022-01.01.2023 and lasted between fifteen and twenty minutes. The participants were given a number according to the chronological order of the interviews, and these numbers became the code names of the participants (St1, ET1, TT1, PC, SE1...). Interviews were conducted in suitable classrooms or rooms. In addition, the non-verbal messages of the participants were recorded as notes. In the observation phase, the relevant students were observed in in-

class and out-of-class environments through the participant observation form. Notes were kept by the researchers during the observations.

2.5. Data Analyses

The data from the interviews and observation forms were transcribed in a Microsoft Office environment in a short time. Observation notes and existing situations were analysed by inductive descriptive analysis; interview data and new situations that emerged were analysed by inductive content analysis. During the data analysis and interpretation, firstly, open coding was performed and thus the meanings hidden in the documents were made more understandable (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Then, thematic coding was performed. The data were sometimes coded as words and sometimes as word groups. Based on the research questions, the conceptual framework of the research, and the dimensions of the interviews, it was determined under which themes the data would be organised and presented. Then, the findings were described and interpreted with a systematic approach to reveal the meaningful relationships between the previously developed and coded categories and to reach some causal and explanatory conclusions, supported by direct quotations where necessary.

2.6. Trustworthiness and Repeatability

The replicability of the research is related to the concept of reliability (Baltacı, 2019). Triangulation is among the approaches used to increase reliability in qualitative studies (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). Triangulation is used by collecting information from different people and sources (Maxwell, 2018). In this context, it was aimed to increase the reliability of the research by using the interview technique with teachers and students in different branches and the observation technique in the school environment.

Guba and Lincoln (1982) identified four main criteria for trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. In terms of credibility, attention was paid to whether the themes and sub-codes formed a whole. Interview and observation forms were prepared by analysing the literature and finalised with expert opinions. In terms of transferability, attention was paid to whether the themes form a whole among themselves. The research design, research group, data collection tools, data collection process, data analysis, and interpretation were explained in detail. In terms of credibility, theme, and code analyses were made by taking the opinion of an expert at the points of data collection and analysis and reaching the results. Thus, it was aimed to increase the acceptability of the research. In terms of confirmability, the participants,

social environment, and processes were clearly defined, detailed explanations were made about data collection and analysis, and raw data (audio recording files, transcribed Word documents) were kept so that they could be examined by other researchers.

2.7. Research Ethics and Role of the Researcher

All processes of this research were carried out under the supervision of the second author. All processes of this research were carried out under the supervision of the second author and the first author has the equal contribution to the preparation of the manuscript as the first author. The first author has nine years of teaching experience and has been teaching students at various levels, grades, and with various types of special needs since the first day she started teaching. The first author is teaching at the school where this research was conducted. For this reason, other students and teachers did not feel alienated throughout the research because she had a good command of the school climate. Official permission and ethical approval were granted before the research process begin. A voluntary consent form was also signed by all participants. The researcher is responsible for conducting, analysing, and interpreting the whole process without interfering with the natural process. In the research, the researcher conducted interviews and observations. The observations were carried out in the role of participant observer. It is known by the groups that the researcher made observations.

3. Findings

In this section, findings related to data obtained through qualitative data collection methods are presented in an integrated. The findings are presented in line with the the research questions.

3.1. Conceptualization of Foreign Language by Students with Specific Learning Difficulties

The process of students' learning a foreign language was defined using the theme of 'affective characteristics in learning'. The metaphors created by students about learning a foreign language reveal the category of 'colors'. While two students liked the process of learning a foreign language to 'blue', the codes 'yellow', 'black', and 'white' are each expressed once. That each student chooses a different color indicates personal differences. Additionally, the presence of similar colors suggests that, like a Venn diagram, in environments where students come together, there may be intersecting points, while in discrete points, there may be unique differences.

A category of 'responses' related to students' foreign language learning processes was identified. These responses were coded as 'cognitive responses' (f=3), 'affective responses' (f=3), and 'socio-cultural responses' (f=2). Sub-codes for cognitive responses included 'new learning' for two students and 'speaking like a foreigner' for a student. In the sub-codes for affective responses, the code 'excited' appeared twice, while 'good' and 'different' were each expressed once. Sub-codes for socio-cultural responses included 'understanding with other countries' and 'responding in English', each once. This finding indicates that students have different perspectives in the process of learning a foreign language. The identification of cognitive awareness and positive attitudes in the foreign language acquisition process highlights the importance of learning goals in the affective learning domain. Within these categories, learning a foreign language for students with learning difficulties can be defined as a structure encompassing cognitive, affective, and socio-cultural domains.

When defining the process of students' learning a foreign language, the theme of the 'learning process' was utilized. The learning process was categorized into 'difficulties' and 'competencies'. Difficulties were coded as 'speaking' (f=5), 'writing' (f=3), 'listening' (f=3), 'books' (f=3), 'vocabulary' (f=2), 'reading' (f=2), and 'teacher'. Competencies in the learning process included the code 'listening' twice, while 'books', 'vocabulary', and 'grammar' codes were mentioned once each. The foreign language learning process, being a multidimensional structure, includes both factors that complicate and facilitate the process. While students emphasized speaking problems the most, they felt competent in listening. St3 expressed speaking difficulties "I struggle when the teacher asks us to answer in English. Speaking English is difficult." During classroom observations, it was observed that students often responded to written or oral questions in English with Turkish answers. St4 mentioned writing difficulties "I struggle when writing in English. I can write one by one for homework or when copying from the book and the board to the notebook. I can't write fast. I write slowly for it to be neat." Observations revealed that the English language teacher helped St4 by going to their side and coding the letters to write words on the board. Despite English language teachers preparing individualized plans for students, it was observed that, aside from instant assistance during the lesson, they did not provide suitable content or activities for the students' levels. The same content and materials were used for all students in the class. Therefore, the difficulty students face in speaking may be explained by educational situations that are above the students' levels. Students may need content broken down into smaller units. Especially in a class with two students with specific learning difficulties, it was observed that teachers

could not provide enough attention to these two students. Therefore, students who do not receive the necessary attention and feedback may struggle in some areas.

When defining the process of students' learning a foreign language, the theme of the 'sources of learning difficulties' was utilized. The sources of difficulties were categorized as 'classroom environment' (f=3), 'lack of effort', 'writing in a foreign language', 'speaking in a foreign language' and 'listening in a foreign language'. Among the difficulties defined as the classroom environment, noise and sound in the classroom were emphasized the most. During observations, it was found that the noise inside the classroom increased from eighth grade to fifth grade. In this case, as the critical age approaches, the increase in negativity in the learning environment can permanently affect the learning process negatively. In a crowded and noisy classroom, the student's need for the teacher increases, while the time the teacher can allocate to each student decreases.

When defining the process of students' learning a foreign language, the theme of 'peer influence' was utilized. In this theme, the category of 'working together' was encountered twice. St3 explained this situation with the statement "My friends help me. We study for exams together with Emre.". It is interesting to note that, especially when students think of peer influence, the first thing that comes to their minds is the absence of peer bullying. This is intriguing because teasing behaviors were observed during observations. However, students believing that they receive help from their friends despite such situations can be explained by their separate evaluations of their friends' behaviors in class and during breaks. In addition, stating positive words for their friends in the English language class despite negative memories may indicate that students have positive attitudes in the English language class. Moreover, this finding can be a sign of their effort in their studies.

When defining the process of students' learning a foreign language, the theme of 'media usage' was utilized. This theme included the categories of 'tools', 'purposes', and 'impact' each once. Media tools included the codes 'internet', 'phone', and 'computer' each once. For media purposes, codes such as 'music', 'timed study', 'educational game', and 'learning' were encountered once each. In the effects of media, only the code 'benefit' was created. The controlled and purposeful use of media elements and their potential benefits are interpreted through the statement of St3:

> *I can learn something I don't understand from the internet. When I didn't know any English, and didn't even know how to write, my mom taught me a song. In the evenings, we put on headphones. We find the song. We stay like that for a long time. We listen until it finishes. For*

an hour. It's similar to what we hear from the smart board. At the same time, it makes me write. I fill in the blanks. I check on Google or YouTube by opening it.

When describing the process of foreign language learning for students, the theme of 'advantages and disadvantages' was utilized. This theme was divided into categories of 'advantages' (f=4) and 'disadvantages'. The advantages category was coded as 'support education lessons' (f=2), 'games' and 'numbers'. The disadvantages category was coded as 'exams'. Among the advantages frequently mentioned for the learning process, support education lessons stood out. Particularly interesting is the finding that these students, often defined as disadvantaged by educators, mostly describe themselves as advantageous. Additionally, the students observed to be taken to support education in the foreign language course view this educational activity as an advantage, which can be explained by the opportunity to receive one-on-one education and attention from the teacher. It has been observed that in these lessons, the teacher is engaged with the student's daily life and problems related to both daily life and lessons.

St3 explained this situation "My one-on-one lessons are going better. The questions are different. The teacher explains half of what we do in the class.". In this context, it can be said that presenting content in a reduced or modified form has a positive effect on the student. Thus, the importance of implementing IEPs in a separate environment for students that cannot be applied in the classroom is emphasized. Additionally, it can be said that it is beneficial for students to receive education separately from the classroom environment. At this point, it can be considered that the student did not receive the expected attention from the teacher during the inclusion education, which may have led to the preference for individual lessons.

When describing the foreign language learning process, the theme of 'learning strategies' was utilized. In learning strategies, one of the categories 'resources', 'note-taking', and 'listening in class' was found. St3 mentioned the learning strategies "I look at my mom's old notebooks. I write them down in my notebook. We learn better if we listen to the lesson." In this regard, when determining learning strategies, it can be said that personal characteristics are as influential as the environment. Moreover, it can be interpreted that students are open to defining and applying strategies.

3.2. Views of English Language Teachers On How Students With Specific Learning Difficulties Learn a Foreign Language

The theme of 'affective characteristics in learning' was established based on the views of English language teachers when defining students' foreign language learning

processes. This theme was divided into two categories 'affective response' (f=3) and 'cognitive response'. In the affective response category, codes such as 'happy', 'unhappy', 'pessimistic', 'sad', 'lack of enthusiasm', and 'lack of curiosity' each appeared once. In the cognitive response category, the codes 'lack of effort' and 'unwillingness to learn' were obtained once each. It was observed that teachers perceive students' positive and negative behaviors more in affective areas. Additionally, during observations, students were found to experience different emotional states in various lesson contents, and on some days, the same students exhibited positive attitudes, while on other days, they displayed negative attitudes. In the context of affective learning, it can be said that initiating the learning process with attention and interest is crucial. The importance of addressing students personally and diversifying content is highlighted by ET1's "If we use methods that are easy, fun, songs, drawings, and games according to their level, they are happy. But when we use methods like grammar-based, explaining grammar rules, listening, writing for all students, they struggle and become unhappy.".

According to the views of teachers, the theme of 'learning process' was established when defining students' foreign language learning processes. This theme was examined in the categories of 'difficulties' (f=3) and 'competencies'. The difficulties category of the learning process included codes such as 'lesson' (f=3), 'resource' and 'teacher'. The 'lesson' code consisted of sub-codes such as 'grammar', 'reading', 'writing', 'vocabulary', and 'speaking' each once. The 'resource' code consisted of the sub-code 'no book'. The 'teacher' code consisted only of the sub-code 'method'. In the competencies category, the 'lesson' and 'student' codes appeared once each. The 'lesson' code consisted of sub-codes such as 'listening' (f=2), 'grammar', 'speaking' and 'writing'. According to teachers, students feel most competent in listening, which aligns with the students' views mentioned in the previous section, where they feel competent in listening. Moreover, the presence of responses from students during listening activities observed in class strengthens this finding. Competencies in listening can be explained by the natural process of language acquisition, where listening, speaking, reading, and writing occur sequentially. Thus, students being in the initial step of language acquisition, which is the listening stage, may explain why they struggle in other stages and cannot progress in the language acquisition process.

According to the views of teachers, the theme of 'sources of learning difficulties' was utilized when defining students' foreign language learning processes. In this theme, the categories of 'teacher' and 'student' were encountered once each. The 'teacher' category was coded only as 'method' while the 'student' category was coded only as

'mind'. Teachers pointing to themselves as the source of difficulties was explained by ET2 "...first of all, some training should be provided to teachers on how to use methods in special learning difficulties, how to approach students. Because none of us received any training for this during university.". This finding emphasizes the importance of pre-service education for teachers. ET3's statement "We are trying to help them with a few things we researched on our efforts only," supports this view. In line with these statements, it can be said that the focal point of learning difficulties is centered around teacher education.

According to the views of teachers, the theme of 'peer influence' was utilized when defining students' foreign language learning processes. This theme was constructed from the categories of 'support' (f=2), 'peer bullying' (f=2), 'student' (f=2) and 'effect' (f=2). In the 'support' category, the codes 'collaboration' (f=2) and 'working together' (f=2) were. The 'peer bullying' category included the code 'teasing' (f=2). Under the 'student' category, the codes 'inadequacy' (f=2) and 'participation' were obtained. In the 'effect' category, the codes 'negative', 'withdrawal', and 'enjoyable' each appeared once. Similar to the students' views, support and collaboration stood out in the teachers' perspectives as well. ET3 emphasizes the dimensions of support and collaboration "In the classes I attend, those with learning difficulties try to help other friends. They try to assist when I give activities related to English. In other words, they help.". In this context, it can be said that group activities are beneficial in the learning process. Teachers also mentioned that there are minimal instances of peer bullying behaviors. This corresponds to the researcher's observation of teasing and mocking behaviors in classroom and hallway settings. The negative behaviors of students can be explained by the behaviors they acquire from their environment.

According to the views of teachers, the theme of 'media usage' was used when defining students' foreign language learning processes. This theme was divided into the categories of 'tools' (f=2), 'objectives' (f=3), 'effect' (f=2) and 'process' (f=2). In the 'tools' category, the codes 'internet' and 'smartboard' each appeared once. The 'objectives' category included the codes 'language acquisition', 'drawing', 'music', and 'non-educational game' each once. The 'media usage process' category was constructed from the codes 'controlled' (f=2) and 'according to the student's interest'. In the 'effect' category, the codes 'comfortable', 'appropriate', 'positive', 'negative', and 'beneficial' each appeared once. Various media elements can be used as different tools in language teaching. However, the emphasis on directing the process is mostly evident with the prominence of the controlled code. It can be said that students should not be left alone in media environments.

According to the views of teachers, the theme of 'advantages and disadvantages' was utilized when defining students' foreign language learning processes. This theme was examined in the 'disadvantages' (f=3) category. The disadvantages were divided into the codes 'teacher' (f=2) and 'student'. The teacher code is the most observed, with teachers pointing out that they do not have sufficient knowledge about the subject but are trying their best. ET3 states:

> *If there is a well-equipped teacher, that is the biggest advantage. But, as teachers, have we received such training? We have not received training specifically for students with special learning difficulties. We are just trying to help them with a few things we have researched on our own. I believe a good teacher is a great advantage for them.*

This finding can be explained by the shortcomings in teacher education and professional development.

According to teachers' views, the theme of 'learning strategies' was utilized to describe students' foreign language learning processes. This theme was categorized into 'strategies' (f=2) and 'recommendations' (f=2). In the 'strategies' category, 'auditory techniques', 'visual techniques', and 'simplification' were each coded once. The 'recommendations' category was coded only as 'teacher' and 'student.' Under the 'teacher' code, 'education' sub-codes were mentioned, and under the 'student' code, 'memorizing words' sub-codes were mentioned once. ET1 explained the simplification strategy "They try to simplify everything. They don't write long things. They have found their methods, shortening everything. They focus on the simplest things in books or materials.". In this context, it can be said that students are still at the lower levels of cognitive learning goals. Simplifying and reducing content or activities in programs and books by teachers to facilitate students' learning processes could be a way to increase learning. Additionally, the suggestion that visual and auditory strategies could be beneficial was derived from the statement of ET2:

> *I have a student who learns the most by memorizing songs and drawing pictures. … I make sure to have him draw pictures for at least 10 minutes in every lesson. He memorized almost all building names in English by drawing pictures with arrows, and he repeats them every day. Also, the song is memorable.*

3.3. Views of Other Language Teachers on How Students with Specific Learning Difficulties Learn a Foreign Language

According to the views of Turkish language teachers, the theme of 'affective characteristics in learning' was established to describe students' language learning processes. This theme was examined under the category of 'affective reactions' (f=3). Within the 'affective reactions' category, the codes 'inadequacy' (f=3), 'bad' (f=3), and

'impairment' were obtained. At this point, teachers' views were mostly reflected in feelings of inadequacy and negativity. It has been previously expressed that positive and negative feelings can be present in the process of learning a foreign language. However, the absence of positive feelings in the context of native language learning is noteworthy. This finding can be explained by the fact that students in foreign language classes are more supported visually and auditorily, attracting their interest. Therefore, it can be assumed that students approach learning a foreign language with more positive effects compared to learning their native language. TT1 explained feelings of inadequacy and impairment as follows:

> ...Students feel bad about themselves when learning a language. Because learning a language is like a barrier in front of students with learning difficulties. Since they already struggle to express themselves and have difficulty in other subjects, language instruction is seen as a higher-level challenge for them. Therefore, language learning appears as an insurmountable barrier for them.

Although there may be insurmountable barriers to learning the native language, this situation is not considered an obstacle to learning a foreign language according to the views of English language teachers. Additionally, during observations, it was noted that Turkish language lessons progress more with a reliance on textbooks, while English language lessons involve various tools such as presentations, visuals, and music. The differences can be explained by the methods and approaches chosen by teachers.

According to the teachers' views, the theme 'learning process' was used to define students' language learning processes. This theme was examined in the categories of 'difficulties' (f=3) and 'competencies'. The difficulties category was divided into 'lesson' (f=3), 'student' (f=2), 'teacher', 'method', 'classroom environment', 'content', and 'source' codes. The classroom environment code was divided into 'exclusion', 'shyness', and 'discomfort' sub-codes. The lesson code consisted of 'reading' (f=2), 'understanding' (f=2), 'writing' (f=2), 'grammar' (f=2), 'vocabulary', 'listening', 'speaking' and 'content' sub-codes. The content sub-code included 'abstract concepts' and the understanding sub-code included 'implicit meanings'. In the student code, the sub-code 'level appropriateness' was obtained. In the competencies category, 'lesson' (f=2) and 'teacher' codes were found. In the lesson code, 'speaking' (f=2), 'reading', and 'understanding' sub-codes were discussed. The speaking sub-code consisted of 'simple language' and 'self-expression' sub-codes. The teacher code was formed from the sub-code 'method', and the method sub-code included 'eye contact'.

Competencies in speaking stand out in learning the native language. Students who come home having learned their native language to a certain level may have progressed from listening to speaking in the natural language acquisition process. The differentiation of this skill, sometimes seen as easy and sometimes as difficult, can be explained by dimensions such as teacher, method, and content. Considering the different perspectives on the process and the methods applied by different teachers, different reactions may have been received from students in similar situations. TT2 explained the teacher and method codes "Making eye contact with them also helps them understand better.". In other words, using gestures and facial expressions during the presentation of lesson content can be effective in achieving the goal.

TT1 expressed difficulties related to understanding "The grammar topic in our language might seem a bit abstract to them. They can understand sentences, but they might struggle to understand sentences with more implicit meanings." and "They can forget what they're doing when reading long paragraph questions, and they can disconnect from the meaning. They understand shorter paragraphs, shorter sentences, and clear sentences.". It was observed that students had difficulty perceiving long units in terms of language, text, and sentences. As the Turkish language teacher mentioned, using shorter units can contribute to a better understanding of language learning processes. In this context, it can be said that effective results can be achieved by using simplification strategies in language learning processes. Additionally, since daily language, which is used in the process of learning the native language, is more intense compared to foreign language content, it can be said that the learning process of foreign languages, which remains at a more basic level, can be easier, more enjoyable, and understandable.

According to the teachers' views, the theme 'sources of learning difficulties' was used to define language learning processes. This theme was divided into the categories of 'source' (f=2), 'classroom environment' (f=2), 'teacher' (f=2) and 'lesson'. The source category was created from the codes 'book' (f=2) and 'text'. The classroom environment category was divided into the codes 'teasing' and 'shyness'. The teacher category was divided into the codes 'method' (f=2), 'experience', and 'time management'. It can be said that there are problems at the basic level based on sources, classroom environment, and teachers in the process of learning the native language. TT2 expressed the source problem "I think books and texts are already heavy for them. Books can be special for them, simpler at a lower level. Also, they need to be separated from the class.". This situation can be explained by the lack of special classrooms and materials for students, making the process more challenging. TT1 stated the shyness

situation "Students with reading difficulties don't want to read in class. They can say things like 'Teacher, I can't read, I struggle. Can I not read?". In this context, it can be said that activities do not relax the environment, students do not see each other as a team, and the principle of individualization in teaching methods is not adhered to. Additionally, it can be said that IEP is not followed.

According to the teachers' views, the theme 'peer influence' was used to define language learning processes. This theme was created from the categories of 'peer bullying' (f=3), 'impact' (f=3), 'support' (f=2), and 'student'. The support category was created from the codes 'helping each other' (f=2) and 'working together'. The peer bullying category was created from the codes 'teasing' (f=3) and 'humiliation'. The student category was created from the code 'awareness'. The impact category was created from the codes 'shyness' (f=2), 'negative', 'positive', 'introversion', 'positive', 'negative', 'fear' and 'shame' . TT2 exemplified support and cooperation "They can help each other. They can explain questions and words they don't understand in exams. It's a good side for their friends to help them. It's also a good side for those with learning difficulties. They like this interaction; group work is nice for them.". In this context, it can be said that including group work in learning activities is beneficial.

TT1 expressed peer bullying "Laughing at them or looking down on them when they have difficulty reading or making fun of them, in short, peer bullying is effective.". In this context, it can be considered that peer bullying in the native language course may be more specific, as other students are more knowledgeable about the subject. Because the foreign language course is not a new situation for all students in general, teasing behaviors may be less common as all students' disadvantage each other.

According to the teachers' views, the theme 'media usage' was used to define language learning processes. This theme was divided into three categories: 'tools' (f=2), 'purposes' (f=2), and 'effect' (f=3). In the tools category, the codes 'social media', 'computer', 'internet', and 'television' were accessed once. Purposes were divided into the codes 'language learning' (f=2), 'educational games', and 'learning words'. The effect was created from the codes 'negative' (f=3), 'effective', 'decrease in reading and writing', 'attention deficit', 'fun', 'easy', 'good', and 'positive'. TT1 explained the negative effects of the media "Because students do not use the media consciously; the videos negatively affect them in terms of language learning. Because few platforms speak by grammar rules or apply grammar rules perfectly. These cannot be supervised.". TT3 stated the negative effects of the media "Students who are too interested in social media experience an increase in learning difficulties. The reading

and writing rate decreases, and it causes attention deficit."; and the positive effects "By watching videos related to learning languages from the computer, internet, and social media, playing games, they can develop themselves more easily, more fun, and more efficiently.". TT2 mentioned the positive effects of television "Actually, television has positive sides. For those whose vocabulary is limited in normal life, positive words, of course, can be obtained from television.". In this regard, it can be said that the purposeful use of media elements provides the opportunity for students to experience situations they would not experience in real life. Students can have new achievements. However, at this point, mentioning negative sides alongside positive sides reminds of the controlled code mentioned in previous findings.

According to the teachers' views, the theme 'advantages and disadvantages' was used to define language learning processes. This theme was examined in the categories of 'advantages' and 'disadvantages' (f=3). The advantages category included the codes 'exams' and 'success'. The disadvantages category included the codes 'understanding' (f=2), 'reading' (f=2), 'writing' (f=2), 'grammar', 'analysis', 'hindrance to foreign language' and 'inability to learn'. It was observed that students who received different disciplinary training in different disciplines in support education courses took exams prepared specifically for their levels at the end of these processes, entering the exams that other students took, as observed in the support education lessons. TT2 explained the possible negative effect of not being sufficient in the native language on foreign language learning "If they did not understand the ways sentences are structured in Turkish... I think it has an impact on other languages to that extent. The better they know Turkish, the more parallel their English or foreign language goes...". In this regard, a perspective focusing on similarities in language learning processes has been developed. However, previous findings indicate that interest and success in foreign languages can occur independently of this situation.

According to the teachers' views, the theme 'learning strategies' was used to define language learning processes. This theme was divided into two categories 'strategies' and 'recommendations' (f=3). The strategies category was coded as 'learning strategy'. The subcode of the learning strategy code was 'oral reading'. The recommendations category was coded as 'learning strategy' (f=2) and 'teaching strategy' (f=2). Learning strategies were created from the subcodes 'oral reading', 'silent reading', 'reading with eyes', 'repeating new words', 'using in sentences', 'paragraph writing', 'separating by colors', 'coding from initials' and 'learning by doing'. Teaching strategies included the subcodes 'teaching with games', 'teaching by hinting', and 'teaching according to the student'. TT1 expressed her recommendation for teaching strategy "I think language

teaching can be given to students with learning difficulties in a light, suggestive, and very small amount.". It can be explained that simplifying the content and using different strategies facilitate learning.

3.4. Views of Specialists on on How Students with Specific Learning Difficulties Learn a Foreign Language

According to the views of school psychological counselor and special education teachers, the theme of 'affective characteristics in learning' was created when defining students' native language and foreign language learning processes. This theme was examined under the categories of 'affective responses' (f=3) and 'cognitive responses'. In the affective responses category, the codes 'inadequacy' (f=2), 'anxiety' (f=2), 'unreadiness', 'bad mood', 'silence', and 'pressure' were included. SE1 expressed the feeling of anxiety in the learning process "Students with learning difficulties feel anxious because they don't know what they will encounter when they move on to a new topic.". PC expressed, "The situation is the same when learning a foreign language. They feel inadequate. Since they already have difficulty learning Turkish, we can say the same for foreign languages.". SE2 described what students feel "They are in a bad mood because of the lack of grammar and the confrontation with external factors such as their peers progressing faster. We can see feelings of inadequacy, and pressure. We can encounter crying or silence in students.". According to the teachers, while this process is generally defined negatively, in some cases, it has been interpreted as impossible. However, it can be said that special education teachers interpret this situation differently due to spending more time with students who have higher learning needs.

According to the teachers' views, the theme of 'learning process' was created when defining students' language learning processes. The learning process was examined under the categories of 'difficulties' (f=3) and 'competencies'. The difficulties in the learning process were coded as 'lesson' (f=2) and 'student' (f=2). The lesson code was created from the subcodes 'grammar' (f=2), 'writing' (f=2), 'vocabulary', and 'reading'. The student code consisted of the subcode "learning speed" (f=2). The comment that inclusive education may disadvantage students comes from the expression of PC, which includes difficulty and inadequacy codes:

> *Due to not progressing as fast as other students, they feel inadequate. Other students in their classes adapt to lessons more quickly since they do not have language or writing problems. They learn faster. Students with specific learning difficulties may feel inadequate because they deal with language problems, writing problems, and difficulty learning new topics all at once.*

According to the teachers, the theme of 'sources of learning difficulties' was utilized to describe students' language learning processes. This theme resulted in categories such as 'classroom environment' (f=3), 'external factors' (f=2), 'teacher' (f=2), and 'student' (f=2). The category of classroom environment included only the code 'peer bullying'. The student category only resulted in the code 'individualization for the student'. In the teacher category, the codes 'expertise' (f=2) and 'method' (f=2) were reached. PC emphasized the need for collaboration and support between teachers and parents, stating that the process becomes easier when there is cooperation and awareness at both home and school. PC also pointed out that students with specific learning difficulties are not easily identifiable in the classroom environment unless disclosed, emphasizing the importance of raising awareness among teachers.

Additionally, when exploring the students' language learning processes, the theme of 'peer influence' was utilized. This theme was constructed from the categories of 'support' (f=3) and 'impact' (f=3). In the support category, the codes 'peer interaction' (f=2) and 'motivation' (f=2) were obtained. In the impact category, the codes 'positive' (f=2), 'good' (f=2), and 'negative' (f=2) were obtained. PC explained this situation:

> If the classroom is accepting and compassionate, if students are included in games during breaks, if they can participate in class activities, and if mistakes are not met with mockery, laughter, or negative comments, then students can progress. This highlights the potential negative impact of the environment and peer influence, regardless of well-prepared programs.

According to the teachers' views, the theme of 'media usage' was utilized to describe students' language learning processes. This theme was divided into three categories 'tools' (f=2), 'objectives' (f=3), and 'impact' (f=3). The tools category was formed by the codes 'social media' (f=2), 'tablet' (f=2) and 'television'. The objectives included codes such as 'practice' (f=2), 'repetition' (f=2), 'vocabulary learning', and 'opportunity in time'. The impact category consisted of codes such as 'negative', 'beneficial', and 'positive'. SE1 mentioned, "These devices can be useful because they provide a chance for continuous repetition. They offer the opportunity to practice anytime by watching.". On the other hand, PC expressed the negative effects of media elements, stating, "I don't think watching lessons or solving tests on tablets has any positive impact. I believe it significantly shortens students' attention spans... Afterward, they can't focus on books. If media tools are not used for education.". At this point, it can be suggested that the controlled and purposeful use of media elements for educational purposes, both in terms of duration and content, can be beneficial. Additionally, it can be interpreted that excessive use may lead to attention deficits.

Regarding the teachers' views on students' language learning processes, the theme of 'advantages and disadvantages' was used. This theme was examined in the categories of 'advantages' (f=2) and 'disadvantages' (f=3). The advantages category was coded with 'student' and 'teacher'. The student code included 'talent' and 'fast learning' as sub-codes. The disadvantages category was coded with 'student' (f=2). The student code was divided into sub-codes such as 'falling behind' (f=2), 'inadequacy' (f=2) and 'negative emotion' (f=2). PC explained the advantage situation as follows:

> *They overcome the process more easily if they encounter professionals. When we compare students with specific learning difficulties, the approach of the primary school teacher is crucial. If the primary school teacher approaches consciously, the student progresses easily... If there is an opportunity to receive individual support, which most of them have, and if they have a good teacher there, this can be an advantage for them. If they receive special education, and if the teacher there is good, it can be an advantage for them.*

In this context, it can be stated that teachers' approaches are effective in learning. Furthermore, the necessity of adequate teacher training becomes prominent when an appropriate approach to students is considered. Additionally, the expression emphasizing the importance of support at an earlier age can be interpreted in connection with the critical age in language learning. Among the reasons for students generally being at a disadvantage in language learning are inadequate school and program opportunities, teacher inadequacies, and parental capabilities.

Teachers' views on students' language learning processes were defined through the theme of 'learning advice'. This theme was constructed from the categories of 'teacher' (f=2), 'student', and 'classroom environment'. The teacher category was coded with 'method' (f=2), which included sub-codes such as 'drawing attention' (f=2), 'different materials' (f=2), 'different activities' (f=2), 'getting to know the student' (f=2) and 'planning' (f=2). The student category was coded with 'learning pace' (f=2). The classroom environment category was coded as 'homogeneous class' (f=2), 'gradual class' and 'class size'. PC stated her advice on the learning process as follows:

> *If it can be taught without grammar, through activities such as theater, games, and dialogue, they learn much more quickly... Especially fifth-grade students. Because they have no prejudice in the fifth grade, they eagerly turn to the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades... When it is entirely focused on rules or grammar, students automatically distance themselves from the lesson and the foreign language... For them, games and fun activities should be organized, and even an extra different program should be arranged. Students with special learning difficulties should take foreign language classes in a separate group of 3-4 people. Short-term memory-enhancing activities can be especially beneficial.*

SE2 expressed her advice on the learning process "They need to learn in classes and gradually approach their levels. With a specific number of students at their levels and a certain pace. I think special classes should be opened.". The teachers' recommendations appear to be directed towards addressing the issues encountered. The reason behind providing recommendations on programs and activities may lie in the ineffective implementation of the IEP, even though it is prepared. Furthermore, the perceived need for special classes may result from insufficient benefits provided by the integration of students into regular class levels.

4. Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

In this research, the foreign language learning process of students with specific learning difficulties was comprehensively examined based on the perspectives of teachers and students. The foreign language learning process of students was addressed through categories such as affective characteristics, process, sources of difficulties, peer influence, media usage, advantages and disadvantages, strategies, and recommendations.

Affective characteristics occurring in the foreign language learning process were examined in the categories of cognitive, affective, and socio-cultural reactions. The emergence of differences in the learning process due to personal variations was highlighted. It was observed that students have awareness, different perspectives, and attitudes in learning a foreign language. Generally, students have a positive attitude. According to the views of teachers, students have different affective characteristics in this process. It was determined that students had positive feelings in lessons prepared with content that was suitable for their interests and levels and was fun and easy. In this context, it was identified that initiating the foreign language learning process with affective domain objectives was necessary. Especially in lessons intensively, based on the book, like in native language education, students experienced negative emotions. Foreign language education, when conducted similarly to native language education, led to feelings of alienation and inadequacy. However, foreign language education, often supported with various materials, was found to be interesting. On the other hand, lessons in native language education conducted strictly based on the book became an insurmountable barrier. Akçamete's (2009) statement that the differences of students with special needs differentiate the education process supports this finding.

The foreign language learning process was examined in the categories of difficulties and competencies. According to student perspectives, the listening stage was generally considered sufficient, while the speaking stage was identified as a challenging area. Additionally, students were observed to struggle with the spelling

of words. In a study examining the written products of students with specific learning difficulties, Ceylan (2023) found that students with specific learning difficulties across all grade levels wrote less legibly. Lam et al. (2011) concluded that students with specific learning difficulties had larger handwriting and differences in letter size in their written products. These findings support the difficulties encountered by students in the foreign language learning process in the current research.

Based on the findings from students, inappropriate content not suitable for the level and interests of students was presented to all students in the same way. Students were observed to struggle and fall behind in the classroom due to the lack of content division, simplification, and inadequate attention from the teacher. According to teacher perspectives, the inclusion positions of students in the classroom put them in a difficult situation. Students fell behind because the same content was presented to everyone in the class. This situation indicated a lack of adherence to IEPs. Additionally, the absence of special books for students was defined as a difficulty. Foreign language education differs from native language education in that the content is basic, simpler, and more straightforward. Generally, the learning process in language education was found to be influenced by the methods and approaches used by the teacher, as well as the content. Besides simplifying content from long units to make it suitable for the level, gestures and even eye contact were found to positively impact students' learning processes. Furthermore, the study by Ürün, Ürün, and Doğan (2023) concluded that the ideal environment for providing education to students with specific learning difficulties was not presented to teachers. In Çetinkol's (2019) study on inclusion practices, teacher perspectives were negative, viewing this education as a means of socialization for the student without contributing academically.

The source of difficulties in the foreign language learning process, according to students, was the noise in the classroom. It was observed that in smaller classes, increased noise led to more negative interventions at the critical age of language learning. Consequently, it was concluded that permanent difficulties in language learning could occur. According to teacher perspectives, the failure to establish collaboration between teachers and parents, teachers not receiving the necessary training, the absence of special resources and materials, the lack of special classrooms, not acting according to the student, and non-adherence to IEPs were among the sources of difficulties. In a study by Birol and Aksoy Zor (2018), it was found that either no education was received or insufficient education was provided regarding students with specific learning difficulties during university education. Additionally, the biggest problem in IEP practices was found to be inadequate time and the inability to

allocate time to students due to crowded classes. Akçay (2014) stated that primary school teachers lacked any knowledge about students with learning difficulties and did not know how to apply any teaching method to these students. Mullikin et al.'s (2021) study revealed that teachers had conceptual misconceptions about the characteristics and diagnostic criteria of learning difficulties. Avcıoğlu (2012) expressed that necessary collaboration between education staff and families was not achieved at every stage of inclusive education. Avcıoğlu also found that individualized instruction-based materials for students with specific learning difficulties could not be developed and there were insufficient resources on how to prepare, implement, and evaluate these programs. These findings parallel the difficulty sources obtained in the current research.

According to students, in the foreign language learning process, peer influence is described as working together, supporting, and helping each other. According to teacher perspectives, support and collaboration, especially through group work, were observed. Positive effects were found when students accepted each other. However, on the contrary, due to environmental factors, students were observed to fear making mistakes, remain silent, cry, and experience peer bullying. Interestingly, despite experiencing peer bullying, students did not mention it in the interviews but rather described their friends in terms of cooperation and assistance. Students with specific learning difficulties tend to decrease when learning their native language compared to other students. Most students feel competent in their native language. Moreover, students with specific learning difficulties have more negative attitudes toward their native language. This situation may be explained by the fact that other students, being more proficient in the native language, realize they are at a better level than students with specific learning difficulties and, as a result, may engage in peer bullying.

In foreign language classes, the absence of peer bullying is attributed to the fact that all students are learning the language anew, and they cannot perceive the difference between each other's proficiency. Therefore, behaviors such as teasing and belittling are less likely among students. Birol and Aksoy Zor (2018) stated that students with specific learning difficulties could be exposed to peer bullying due to the influence of other students. Bayrakçı and Susam (2021) found that students with specific learning difficulties acted shyly when their communication with friends was weak. These findings support the results of the current research.

Regarding the use of media elements in the foreign language learning process, the prominent media tools included the internet, tablets, phones, computers, smartboards, social media, and television. The unanimous opinion of all participants is that media

elements can be beneficial when used consciously and under parental control, in a way that matches students' interests and levels for educational purposes. In some cases, providing experiences and content that students cannot experience in real life and offering the opportunity for repetition as much as they want were also considered beneficial. However, uncontrolled usage of media in terms of duration, content, and purpose, and even leaving students alone with this media, can lead to excessive use. Inappropriate grammatical structures in media content and the inclusion of unsuitable topics were found to distract attention and lead to incorrect learning. Additionally, excessive and uncontrolled use may result in decreased attention span, difficulty in focusing, and regression in learning. Çınar (2023) statistically demonstrated in their study that students with high screen exposure had lower language development compared to students with low exposure. Duch et al. (2013) found that screen exposure affected the language development of normally developing students. Some studies suggest that computer-assisted education methods developed for students with specific learning difficulties can lead to improvement in reading, writing, and reading comprehension skills (Gonzales-Ledo, Barbetta & Unzueta, 2015; Hall et al., 2015; Jacobs & Fu, 2014). These findings qualitatively support the positive and negative effects of using media elements from the research.

In the advantages and disadvantages of the foreign language learning process, according to students, the most important advantage is supportive education. They mentioned that content in supportive education is simpler, and teachers show student's interest in them. This situation indicates the opportunity for the implementation of IEPs through supportive education. Surprisingly, while teachers could define students in many different situations as disadvantaged, students did not define themselves as disadvantaged in any area; instead, they stated that they were advantaged. According to teachers, good teaching, receiving the necessary training, being a relevant primary school teacher, supportive education, and exams prepared at the appropriate level through IEPs, along with showing interest and support at critical ages, were identified as advantages. Disadvantages were seen as insufficient school facilities, teachers not receiving the necessary training, failure to establish collaboration between teachers and parents, and the inability to implement IEPs. The lack of proficiency in the student's native language was also found to negatively affect foreign language education. This finding is parallel to the view that students with expression difficulties in their native language will experience failure in learning a foreign language (Senemoğlu, 1987; Cited in Günday, 2007). In Sivrikaya's (2023) study, it was determined that the knowledge of preschool teachers about specific

learning difficulties was insufficient, and there were conceptual misconceptions about learning difficulties. Such situations support the disadvantageous effects indicated in the research findings. Eripek (2007) found in their study that in written exams, questions designed for students in inclusive education to easily read, leaving more space between questions, or breaking down the content into sub-levels could turn the exams into an advantage for these students.

The strategies in the foreign language learning process were examined in the categories of strategy and recommendations. It was observed that students are aware of and use learning strategies. The effectiveness of personal characteristics and environmental factors in determining strategies was identified. Teachers suggested strategies for students' learning strategies, such as simplification, reduction, diversification with easy and fun materials, learning objectives at lower levels, suggestive approaches, and especially coding to support short-term memory. Teachers, who recommend experiencing critical ages effectively, also emphasized the importance of making methods and content fun, interesting, and simple. Since inclusive education does not provide opportunities for the implementation of IEPs, the preparation of appropriate programs for students in special classes, in the form of small groups of three or four people, with memory-enhancing activities was proposed. Seçkin Yılmaz's (2021) study indicates that students with specific learning difficulties speak with simple structural sentences, in addition to forming shorter sentences. Bayrakçı and Susam (2021) found in their study that teachers preferred one-on-one and simple to complex explanations to minimize the difficulties experienced by students with specific learning difficulties. Smith (2007) stated that the instructional goals and content of the education programs applied in general education classes should be organized in a simpler form for inclusion students. In addition to these strategies, Ürün, Ürün, and Doğan (2023) recommended plenty of reading and writing methods. The strategies and recommendations mentioned in the studies are similar to the findings of this research.

In summary, this research provided a detailed description of the foreign language learning processes of students with specific learning difficulties. To initiate the language education process, it is necessary to attract and convince students about language learning through affective domain objectives. The results indicated that when plans are made according to students' interests and needs, content is simplified, and appropriate methods, strategies, and techniques are determined, the learning process can take place. In this context, plans may be prepared according to students' interests and needs. To ensure the implementation of these plans, teachers can be

encouraged to pay more attention to students. Group work may be emphasized more in educational activities. Media elements may be used for educational purposes in a controlled. Activities to prevent peer bullying may be organized as part of values education. Support education may be increased according to school facilities. At more advanced levels, instead of inclusive education, students may be educated in special classes with fewer students. Achieving these goals may be facilitated by prioritizing teacher training at both pre-service and in-service levels.

Limitations

The limitations of this research include accessibility and the absence of a standard format for interviews and observations (Bowen, 2009; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). Additionally, the data obtained in the research is limited to information gathered until January 2023.

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