

THE COPING STRATEGIES APPLIED TOWARDS THE UNDESIRABLE BEHAVIORS OF EFL LEARNERS

Simay AKKAR¹

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to find out the strategies that EFL instructors apply to cope with undesirable behaviors of language learners at the tertiary level. The study was conducted with 20 EFL instructors working in the preparatory school at a university in 2017-2018 academic years. The data was gathered through a survey including 10 open-ended questions. Content analysis technique was used to assess the data. The results of the study reveal that EFL instructors apply 12 coping strategies towards the undesirable behaviors of language learners at tertiary level. The instructors use body language, verbal and facial expressions to warn their students. In addition, keeping silent, asking a question, finding out the reason of the undesirable behavior and the needs of the disruptive students, raising awareness, increasing motivation, talking in person, attracting attention, and ignoring the undesirable behavior are the other coping strategies.

Keywords: Undesirable Behaviors, Coping Strategies, Tertiary Level

İNGİLİZCEYİ YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRENEN ÖĞRENCİLERİN İSTENMEYEN DAVRANIŞLARINA YÖNELİK KULLANILAN YÖNTEMLER

ÖZ

Bu çalışmanın amacı İngilizce okutmanlarının, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen yüksek öğrenim seviyesindeki öğrencilerin istenmeyen davranışlarıyla baş etmek için kullandıkları stratejileri tespit etmektir. Çalışma 2017-2018 akademik yılları arasında, bir üniversitenin hazırlık okulunda görev yapan 20 İngilizce öğretim görevlisinin katılımıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bulgular, 10 adet açık uçlu sorudan oluşan bir anket ile toplanmıştır. Verinin değerlendirilmesinde içerik analiz tekniği kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonucunda, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin istenmeyen davranışlarına yönelik kullanılan 12 adet stratejiye ulaşılmıştır. Öğretim görevlileri sözlü anlatım ile ya da yüz ifadelerini ve vücut dilini kullanarak öğrencilerini uyarmaktadır. Ayrıca, sessiz kalmak, soru sormak, istenmeyen davranışın nedenini araştırmak, istenmeyen davranış sergileyen öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarını ortaya çıkarmak, farkındalıklarını arttırmak, teşvik etmek, yüz yüze konuşmak, dikkatlerini çekmek ve davranış görmemezlikten gelmek istenmeyen davranışlarla baş etmek için kullanılan diğer stratejilerdir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İstenmeyen Davranışlar, Başa Çıkma Yöntemi, Yüksek Öğrenim Seviyesi

Introduction

Morin (2013) stated that if a behavior causes a problem in classroom and hinders the student's academic progress, it is called as misbehavior. Such behaviors create a chaotic classroom environment for the instructor who tries to maintain learners' motivation, attention and interaction. In addition, these behaviors diminish the instructor's

¹ Öğr. Görevlisi, Çağ Üniversitesi, Yabancı Diller Bölümü, simay_akkar@hotmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0002-7063-7352

Received/Geliş: 11/03/2019 Accepted/Kabul:17/07/2019, Research Article/Araştırma Makalesi
Cite as/Alıntı:Akkar, S. (2019), "The Coping Strategies Applied towards the Undesirable Behaviors of EFL Learners", Çukurova Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, cilt 28, sayı 2, s.119-133.

professional satisfaction and desire to teach. Most instructors evaluate undesirable behaviors as a danger for education. Therefore, instructors feel necessity to apply some strategies to avoid the behaviors reaching an intolerable level and causing a long-term negative impact on classroom atmosphere. However, as Kuhlenschmidt and Layne (1999) stated there are the steps that instructors should follow before applying a strategy. Clarifying the problem, finding out possible reasons and describing the context in which the undesirable behavior occurs are the first items that should be considered. After these factors are clearly identified, instructors should analyze their emotional and behavioral response to that behavior. Finally, they should observe the effect of the strategy on students' learning process and psychology. If there is a negative effect, instructors should revise the strategy.

There are many studies written on coping strategies in educational and social science. Most of them were conducted on coping strategies used to deal with misbehaviors originating from classroom management. The first factor encouraging the researcher to study on this topic was there are a few studies in ELT written on coping strategies. As a second factor, most of the studies in relevant literature were carried out with primary, secondary or pre-service teachers. The coping strategies of these teachers were compared in terms of gender, academic seniority, the level of the classroom being taught and the kind of the school being worked. These studies mostly aimed to find out whether there are significant differences. Moreover, the participants of such kind of studies were generally primary, secondary and pre-school learners. The aim of this study is to designate the coping strategies applied by English instructors to cope with undesirable behaviors of language learners at the tertiary level.

Significance of the Study

This study will be a guide especially to novice and pre-service teachers because they have lack of real teaching experiences. They will not have to waste time to figure out the reasonable strategies thanks to this study. The rapport between the teacher and the students will not be broken down because of wrong coping strategies. Moreover, the experienced instructors will get a chance to evaluate their own strategies and compare them with the ones of their colleagues. On the other hand, disruptive students will not lose their desire to learn English because instructors will be more conscious about their expectations, needs and problems. Therefore, they will give right reactions to overcome the undesired behavior and attract the students' attention to the lesson again. Meanwhile, it will be prevented that disruptive students become wrong role model and affect their classmates in a negative way.

Research Question

The aim of the study is to find out the answer of the following question;

1. What are the strategies that EFL instructors apply to cope with undesirable behaviors of EFL learners at the tertiary level?

Literature Review

Undesirable Behaviors and Coping Strategies

Altrok (2013) explained the behaviors which include disrespect, immorality, violence and objection to the authority and also cause to waste time are called as undesirable

behaviors. As mentioned in the study of Sadık and Doğanay (2007), disturbing classmates, damaging school property, aggression towards classmates, not studying regularly, not doing homework, defiance towards the teacher and not being interested in lesson are the common undesirable behaviors designated by the students, their mothers and teachers.

All instructors feel necessity to apply some coping strategies to be able to reduce or overcome the present undesirable behavior and also avoid others (Taylor&Stanton, 2007). Coping strategies are the specific efforts which are both behavioral and psychological. (Taylor, Pham, Rivkin & Armor, 1998). English instructors use some coping strategies when they observe undesired behaviors. However, they should be more sensible and thoughtful before applying a coping strategy. Language is not a course that can be learned in a traditional and isolated way. Interaction, participation, creativity, sense of responsibility, cooperation and reflective thinking are the qualities that an EFL learner should have to be able to improve in English. Some strategies may interrupt the rapport and interaction between the student and the teacher. Wrong strategies may also make students introvert and reluctant towards learning English. The instructors may unconsciously cause loss of confidence if their coping strategies are not appropriate to the students' age and personality. Hence, English instructors should choose their coping strategies very carefully not to decrease learners' motivation for active learning. There are some positive strategies as stated in the study of Pala (2005). They are gaining self-confidence and achieving academic success. It is also believed that when the disruptive students are encouraged and appreciated, undesired behaviors disappear. Because of this reason, the teachers in the study written by Teyfur (2015) mostly prefer two positive strategies. They are taking care during break time and using expressions indicating that the disruptive student is precious among other students. The strategies are also similar in the study conducted by Güleç and Alkış (2004). Promoting the disruptive students to participate in the lesson and using various materials to attract their attention are applied by most of the participant teachers. As it is understood from the studies, the instructors should deal with undesirable behaviors through effective guidance, positive feedback and supportive attitudes. These strategies not only provide the students to give up such behaviors but also make them autonomous learners and critical thinkers.

The Studies Conducted on Coping Strategies

Özben (2010) investigated whether there are significant differences between students' misbehaviors and teachers' coping strategies in terms of teachers' gender and their teaching years. It was discovered although there are significant differences in students' misbehaviors, both female and male teachers mostly apply the same strategies. Eye contact, contacting the counsellor or the principal, verbal warning and talking to the student are the coping strategies who have the highest percentages in the list. Moreover, these strategies are used by most of the participant teachers regardless of their teaching years. Yılmaz and Şahinkaya (2010) determined the coping methods pointed out by primary school teachers. They were designated as listening to the student and communicating clearly warning through eye contact, giving advice, searching the reasons of the problem to solve. Marciniak (2015) revealed the effective ways applied to deal with discipline problems of adolescent learners. The strategies were

reprimanding the disruptive learner out of classroom or in front of their class mates, talking to the disruptive learner in person, applying nonverbal techniques, reinforcing the correct and desirable behavior through praise or positive feedback, giving punishment like additional homework or staying in classroom after lessons to practice English, changing the seat of disruptive student, cooperation with parents, the headmaster and the other teachers. According to the findings of the study conducted by Merç and Subaşı (2015), some of the strategies carried out by pre-service EFL teachers were ignoring the problematic behavior, verbal warning, using body language, rewarding, keeping silent, changing seat, showing individual interest to the problematic students, punishing, repeating the instruction, passing other activities quickly, providing individual help, giving the activity as homework and giving the answers directly.

Methodology

Research Design

The purpose of the study is to find out the strategies that EFL instructors apply to cope with undesirable behaviors of language learners at the tertiary level. Regarding to the aim of the study, descriptive research was thought as the most appropriate research type for this study. According to Key (1997), descriptive research is a study designed to reveal opinions and attitudes of the participants with regards to a given subject in an accurate way.

Participants

The study was conducted with 20 EFL instructors working in the preparatory school at a university in 2017-2018 academic years. Participant instructors were randomly selected among the voluntary instructors without taking any variables into consideration such as age, teaching experience, educational background or gender. 11 female and 9 male participants took part in the study. There are 6 instructors who have 4-6 years of teaching experience. Also, 4 instructors with 7-9 years of experience participated in the study. The number of the most and the least experienced instructors is equal. There are 6 participants whose degree is B.A. The degree of 10 participants is M.A. whereas 4 participants have a Ph.D. In addition, 5 of the participants are native English speakers.

Data Collection

Qualitative data was gathered through a survey comprising open-ended questions. The purpose of using survey as the data collection tool was finding out the coping strategies of English instructors towards the undesired behaviors of EFL learners at tertiary level. The researcher firstly looked into the studies conducted on undesirable behaviors in literature. The open-ended questions were developed later with an experienced researcher. The survey consisted of two sections (see Appendix 1). The first section was to determine the features of the participants such as gender, educational background and nationality. There were 10 open-ended questions in the second section. The section aimed to identify coping strategies of the participant instructors. The undesirable behaviors taking part in the survey were clarified to the participants in detail by the researcher. They were requested to write their coping strategies with clear explanations. All surveys were submitted to the researcher in three days.

Data Analysis

Content analysis technique was applied for the data collected through open-ended survey questions. The data was gone through several times from the beginning to the end in order to be familiar. Then the researcher came up with common themes mentioned in the data to describe the coping strategies. After grouping these strategies by combining similar headings into broader categories, open coding was used to make the data clearer and more comprehensible.

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to present the frequencies and percentages of coping strategies in tables. Cronbach's alpha was used to test the internal consistency of the open-ended questions in the questionnaire. The reliability was calculated to be 0.977. The researcher also discussed the findings with an experienced researcher in ELT to be able to provide further reliability.

Findings of the Study

The open-ended questionnaire involving 10 undesirable behaviors was created by looking through the relevant literature with an experienced researcher. The aim of the questionnaire was to find out the strategies that English instructors apply to cope with the undesirable behaviors which they encounter in their language classes. The responses were analyzed and the researcher came up with 12 coping strategies. A table was drawn for each undesirable behavior according to the order in the questionnaire. The strategies used to deal with that undesired behavior were displayed in the related table with their frequencies and percentages.

Table 1. Using Mobile Phone

Strategies	f	%
Warning	11	55
Facial expression	4	20
Ignore	5	25
Total	20	100

The first question is about which strategy the instructors apply when they observe their students using their mobile phones in the lesson. 3 strategies are designated to overcome this undesirable behavior. Out of 20 participants, 11 participants (%55.0) apply warning strategy when they notice their students using their mobile phones. They warn either reminding the classroom rules or directly saying to put their mobile phones away. One participant used this expression:

I always point out the prohibition of using mobile phone during the lesson mentioned at the beginning of the semester because this gadget distracts their attention.

In addition, 4 participants (%20.0) prefer to use facial expressions to provide them to leave their mobile phones. The following quote from a teacher illustrates this point:

Gestures and eye contact are enough to make them feel that their behavior is annoying for me.

5 of the participants (%25.0) expressed that this undesirable behavior may be ignored. The following view is related to the issue:

I pretend not to notice that. Maybe the student needs a break or has a personal reason. I can tolerate unless he regularly use the mobile phone.

Table 2. Talking to each other

Strategies	f	%
Keeping silent	3	15
Body language	5	25
Asking question	7	35
Ignore	5	25
Total	20	100

It was found out 4 different strategies applied to stop students' irrelevant talking. One of them is keeping silent applied by 3 participants (%15.0). Regarding this issue, one participant expressed:

They may not be aware of their volume. I stop talking or whatever I am busy with to make them notice and reach an ultimate silence.

The other strategy is using body language mentioned by 5 participants (%25.0). The following extract belongs to one of them.

I approach the disruptive students and put my hands on their desks while I am going on talking. It is a silent warning between the teacher and the students.

Asking a question is also used by 7 participants (%35.0) to stop the students' conversation. One participant stated:

I ask a question related to the subject to stop their chatting and get them to participate in the lesson. I think this is more efficient than interrupting the whole concentration.

There is one more strategy that 5 participants (%25.0) apply when they observe the students talking to each other. As it is understood from the following quotation, some participants ignore this undesirable behavior.

I ignore and continue lecturing as long as they do not make too much noise and interrupt our concentration.

Table 3. Not bringing course materials

Strategies	f	%
Finding out its reason	4	20
Warning	12	60
Ignore	4	20
Total	20	100

Third question was asked to figure out the instructors' reactions towards the students who do not bring course materials. 3 strategies were found reasonable for this undesirable behavior. The first one is finding out its reason. The following expression belongs to one of 4 participants (%20.0) supporting this strategy.

They cannot focus on the lesson without course materials. I want to learn why they did not bring their course books and listen to their excuses.

12 participants (%60.0) stated that they warn the students not to repeat the same behavior. One of them used this statement to clarify the strategy.

I point out that course materials are necessary to follow the lesson so they should not forget them again.

There is also a group of participants (%20.0) whose ideas regarding to the course materials are totally different from others.

I do not evaluate this behavior as a big issue as long as my students are engaged in my lesson. The real matter for learning is not the material itself.

Table 4. Displaying Disrespectful Behaviors

Strategies	f	%
Analyzing needs of the students	6	30
Raising awareness	6	30
Talking individually	5	25
Ignore	3	15
Total	20	100

Question 4 is about the ways of overcoming disrespectful behaviors in the classroom. The researcher reached 4 strategies from 20 participants. 6 of them (%30.0) think that instructors should firstly analyze the students' needs to cope with disrespectful behaviors. The following quote illustrates this point:

Our students are at a critical age. They are neither teenage nor adult learners. These learners may display disrespectful behaviors unless their needs are met. I think finding out their needs and determining the teaching strategies in that way will help instructors solve the problem.

6 participants (%30.0) applied the strategy of raising awareness. One participant stated:

Our students are in a critical period of their personal development. They may not be aware of their disrespectful behaviors and their consequences. I explain why their behaviors are disrespectful and lead them to the appropriate behavior.

5 of the participants (%25.0) believe talking individually after class is reasonable. In concern with this strategy, one participant stated:

Due to the fact that it is possible to emerge other disrespectful behaviors when the student is warned in front of classmates, talking to the student in person is the most effective way.

3 participants (%15.0) prefer to ignore the disrespectful student because of the following explanation.

When students are ignored, they notice something wrong and criticize themselves. They give up displaying such behaviors to make themselves appreciated again.

Table 5. Being Interested in Other Things

Strategies	f	%
Taking the students' attention	7	35
Finding out its reason	7	35
Facial expression	4	20
Warning	1	5
Ignore	1	5
Total	20	100

Question 5 is related to the strategy that the instructors apply when their students are interested in other things during the lesson. There are 5 strategies and 2 of them are used by only one participant (%5.0). The first one is gaining students' attention through using sense of humor or asking a question out of topic. One participant defined the strategy with these words:

The lesson period is not short. Students may be interested in other things in consequence of losing their concentration or getting bored. Thus, I usually try to attract their attention by asking an interesting question or making a joke.

The other group including 7 participants (%35.0) thinks that learning the main reason of their indifference is the most appropriate strategy to cope with this problem. The following quote explains its effectiveness:

I would like to find out the reason behind their indifference. I ask them to explain the reasons of the misbehavior without writing their names because I need to know the main reason to be able to find a solution.

There are also 4 participants (%20.0) who believe facial expression stops the undesirable behavior. One of them stated:

I stop talking and look at their eyes. I wait until they make an eye contact with me to make them understand that behavior is annoying.

On the other hand, one participant (%5.0) expressed that warning is effective for the students who are interested in other things during the lecture.

I should manage the classroom as a teacher. Hence, I verbally warn the students who are not interested in my lesson. The students instantly stop the thing that they are busy when they are warned in front of their classmates. Thus, they do not disturb other students.

The last perspective is quite different from others. It is stated by one participant (%5.0).

Following the lesson or being interested in other things is their free choice. I do not do anything if they do not interrupt me or their classmates.

Table 6. Not doing homework

Strategies	f	%
Raising awareness	8	40
Warning	3	15
Finding out its reason	5	25
Ignore	4	20
Total	20	100

Question 6 was asked to find out the instructors' reactions when their students do not do their homework. Although there are 4 strategies, the most applied strategy is to raise students' awareness of assignments' importance. One of 8 participants (%40.0) explains its importance with this expression:

I state that homework is their responsibility. If they do not take their own responsibility for their progress, they will not completely achieve success. I advise them to evaluate homework as a supplement task rather than a compulsory assignment.

3 participants (%15.0) point out warning strategy. It is deduced from this statement:

If students reach the answer without thinking about the topic, it is useless for them. Thus, I warn and give them a second chance for the next lesson. I also remind of the consequence of late submissions.

5 participants (%25.0) also think that finding out its main reason is essential to find a permanent solution. There is a quotation clarifying the importance of this strategy.

I would like to discover its reason. They may have some important reasons or problems and need my advices. Telling them to do their homework is meaningless without overcoming its main reason.

According to 4 participants (%20.0) not doing homework does not have a negative effect on their learning process. One of the participants made the following comment:

I do not usually take any strict actions because I personally believe that homework and all extra worksheets are optional. If they read something in English or show me the blog they voluntarily write, it makes me happier.

Table 7. Not Attending the Lessons Regularly

Strategies	f	%
Finding out its reason	12	60
Raising awareness	7	35
Ignore	1	5
Total	20	100

Question 7 aims to reveal instructors' reactions when their students do not attend the lessons regularly. The participants divided into 3 different ideas. 12 instructors (%60.0) believe that finding out the reason of absenteeism is necessary. This is one of the expressions given to make the strategy clear:

I firstly want to understand whether they do not have desire to learn English or there are some private reasons. Every student is precious and

their needs may vary. If they have problems about their classmates or lessons, I can solve them.

The other strategy used by a large quantity of participants (%70.0) is raising students' awareness. The following extract is given to illustrate this strategy:

I explain the importance of attendance. I tell them regular absence affects their learning in a negative way because they have difficulty to follow the lesson. I also remind attendance is compulsory for their departments.

Out of 20 participants, one participant (%5.0) prefers to ignore the undesirable behavior. It is clarified with this statement.

They are higher education level students. They should know their responsibilities and the consequences of absenteeism. There are not many things that the teacher can do for them.

Table 8. Not Participating in the Lesson

Strategies	f	%
Encouragement	12	60
Talking individually	4	20
Ignore	4	20
Total	20	100

Question 8 aims to discover the strategies that the instructors apply towards the students who do not participate in the lesson. Most participants (%12.0) think that encouragement is the most effective way to make reluctant students active. This is one of 12 excerpts related to this strategy.

I make them feel their participation is important for me. If the students believe the teacher respects their ideas, they feel themselves valuable and they have desire to participate. The teachers should not leave any students behind.

In addition, 4 participants (%20.0) support that talking in person helps the teacher understand the reluctant student better and analyze the problem in detail. The following example indicates their strategy:

It is possible for the students not to participate in the lesson because of being shy or having lack of information. Maybe, there are some factors related to their classmates or teacher. We should talk to them individually to figure out the reason.

The last group participants (%20.0) think this undesirable behavior should be ignored. The following explanation was given to clarify the strategy.

It depends on their personality. Teachers should not force them to participate. Some students do not want to take an active role in the lesson. However, it does not mean that they are not interested. It is their choice.

Table 9. Asking Irrelevant Questions

Strategies	f	%
Taking the students' attention	8	40
Warning	4	20
Ignore	8	40
Total	20	100

The purpose of question 9 is to figure out the strategies applied when the students regularly ask irrelevant questions. 8 participants (%40.0) expressed that they attract the students' attention to the topic again. The following expression clarifies their strategy.

It means that the student got bored or missed some parts of the lesson so the student could not concentrate on the topic. I should gain the student's attention to the lesson again through educational activities.

There are also 4 participants (%20.0) who verbally warn the student not to ask such questions. The following explanation belongs to one of them.

I tell the student the question is not relevant to our topic so it should not be asked in the lesson. We should focus on what we are studying. I do not want other students are confused and distracted.

In addition, 8 participants (%40.0) pointed out they ignore irrelevant questions. It was given to identify the strategy.

I totally ignore because they will continually keep asking that kind of questions as long as they get an answer. I cannot let other students lose their concentration and the flow of my lesson is interrupted.

Table 10. Talking Out of Turn

Strategies	f	%
Warning	11	55
Body language	8	40
Ignore	1	5
Total	20	100

The last question leads the instructors to think about the coping strategies when their students talk out of turn. 11 participants (%55.0) express that they verbally warn their students in classroom. One participant made the strategy clear thorough this statement:

I kindly warn and remind my student that it is disrespectful to other students. They should learn to listen to each other. Otherwise, they may have a habit of talking without permission.

On the other hand, using body language is evaluated as an appropriate strategy by 8 participants (%40.0). Regarding to this strategy, one participant pointed out:

Using body language is the most effective way to remind them turn-taking without discouraging any students.

There is also one participant (%5.0) who does not share the same idea with others because this participant would rather ignore the undesirable behavior. The following quotation explains the strategy:

I do not listen to that student. I communicate with other students and wait until the student asks for the right to speak. They are adult learners so they should know when to talk and listen.

Discussion

According to the results of the study, EFL instructors apply 12 strategies to cope with undesirable behaviors of language learners at the tertiary level. They are verbal warning, using body language and facial expressions, keeping silent, asking a question, finding out its reason, raising awareness, observing their needs, talking individually, gaining their attention, encouragement and ignore the undesirable behavior. The coping strategies reveal that the instructors have a positive attitude towards their students whatever their undesirable behaviors are. It was deduced that most instructors believe most strategies will provide temporary solutions unless they can find out its main reason. Thus, they try to identify the problem causing the student to display an undesirable behavior in the lesson. They prefer to talk individually, observe the attitudes of disruptive students and analyze their needs. A group of instructors support that the students may have an undesirable behavior because they feel bored, lose concentration or miss some parts of the lecture so their reaction is to attract their attention to the lesson again. These instructors take their attention by making a joke, moving to an educational game or asking a question. According to some instructors, undesirable behaviors may be unconsciously displayed so they prefer nonverbal warning to make the students realize. Regarding to this perspective, they keep silent, use their facial expressions or body language. Some instructors agree to their colleagues but they follow different strategies. These instructors think that students may have misbehaviors because they cannot take responsibility for their own learning. In addition, they are not aware of negative consequences of their misbehaviors. In order to raise the students' awareness, the instructors warn verbally, give advice, talk about classroom rules and tell the right behavior. They clarify the consequences that they may encounter if they maintain such behaviors. However, a group of instructors do not have the same thoughts with their colleagues. They state that their students are adult learners at higher education level so they must know both positive and negative consequences of their attitudes. Therefore, they ignore the undesirable behavior as long as other students are not disturbed and the flow of the lesson is not interrupted. The idea supported by the last group is that disruptive students need encouragement and scaffolding because they have lack of knowledge and self-confidence.

As a result of looking through the studies in the related literature, it was seen that the findings are in parallel with other studies conducted in this field. For instance, Güleç and Alkış (2004) found out behavior change strategies applied by the teachers working in elementary schools. The common coping strategies are that encouraging the student to participate in the lesson, making eye contact, explaining the right behavior and the results of the misbehavior, talking after class, verbal warning and using various education materials to attract the student's attention. According to the findings of the study conducted by Yılmaz and Şahinkaya (2010), the strategies mostly used are also applied by the participants in the present study. They are described as listening to the student and communicating clearly, looking of the reasons of the problem, trying to solve the problem, warning through eye contact an advising.

There are also the strategies never followed by the participant instructors such as the ones mentioned in the study of Merç and Subaşı (2015). They are punishing, passing other activities quickly, giving the activity as homework, changing the students' seats and giving the answers directly. The instructors also do not prefer to use the strategies designated in the study of Teyfur (2015). They are asking for apology, changing students' seats, complaining about the student to his/her parents, prohibiting students from having a break, visiting the student at home and discussing the problem with the school counselor. In addition, some of the strategies in the research of Marciniak are not applied by any of the instructors in this study. The participant instructors reprimand the disruptive learner neither out of class nor in front of their peers. They are aware of its negative effects on the student's learning process. They do not give punishment like additional homework. They also do not force any students to stay in classroom after lessons to practice English.

Conclusion and Implications

The findings showed that the instructors respect their students' feelings, ideas and differences as an individual. They carefully designate their coping strategies not to cause their students to feel embarrassed and ignored. Although their strategies are preventive for other undesirable behaviors, they are also promotive to make them active learners. It was deduced that the instructors are considerably aware of the importance of motivation and participation in language learning so they apply the strategies such as encouragement, talking in person, raising awareness, asking a question to attract the attention and finding out the main reason of the undesirable behavior to overcome. Even the instructors who ignore the undesired behavior state that the disruptive student may have a personal problem or need a break to feel boredom. It reveals the instructors tolerate some undesirable behaviors not to interrupt the students' desire to learn English. It is known that English cannot be taught through dominant attitudes. Therefore, the strategies like giving additional assignment, not letting have a break to practice and complaining about the student will not be meaningful strategies for students' improvement. It is important for instructors to know their students well to be able to elicit the main reason of the undesired behavior. Students may have lack of motivation, anxiety, prejudice or negative attitude towards learning English. In that case, asking a question, verbal warning, eye contact or using body language will be temporary solutions. It can be observed that undesired behaviors disappear in time thanks to talking in person, giving advice, overcoming negative past experiences, finding out the right studying techniques and raising intrinsic motivation. There are many students who have not experienced efficient English courses, authentic materials, cooperative working and interactive activities until they reach the tertiary level. Therefore, they have difficulty to adapt English courses, accommodate to their classmates and communicate with their instructors clearly. These weaknesses may cause undesired behaviors. If instructors ignore or reprimand the students, they believe that they will not be able to succeed in English and give up making an effort. Instructors should be patient, insightful and also a good decision maker and mentor because it is a long process to determine the appropriate strategies, observe their effectiveness and analyze the outcomes.

Suggestion and Limitation

The study should be interpreted in the light of several limitations like the other studies in literature. It was firstly conducted with a small group of English instructors. Therefore, the findings of the study may not be appropriate for all English instructors working in universities across Turkey. The data was also gathered through a survey including 10 open ended questions. It may not reflect the whole coping strategies applied in language classrooms.

Regarding these limitations, it is suggested to use other data collection tools such as observation, questionnaire and interview. The number of participants can be increased in order to reach further data and enlarge the research. The coping strategies of instructors can be compared in terms of gender and seniority. It can also be analyzed whether there is a significant difference between the coping strategies of native English speakers and non-native English speakers. Presenting the perspectives of EFL learners can provide more insight for the research.

References

- Altıok, E. (2013, November 24). *Sınıfta istenmeyen davranışlar*. Retrieved from Prezi: https://prezi.com/mz0ij8t_mhrb/snfta-istenmeyen-davranslar/
- Güleç, S., & Alkış, S. (2004). Öğretmenlerin sınıf ortamında kullandıkları davranış değiştirme stratejileri. *Uludağ Üniversitesi, Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 17(2), 247-266.
- Key, J. P. (1997). Descriptive research. Oklahoma State University Retrieved from: <https://www.okstate.edu>
- Kuhlenschmidt, S. L., & Layne, L. E. (1999). Strategies for dealing with difficult behavior. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 77
- Marciniak, A. (2015). Effective ways of dealing with discipline problems when teaching adolescent learners. *World Scientific News*, (7), 53-72
- Merç, A., & Subaşı, G. (2015). Classroom management problems and coping strategies of Turkish student EFL teachers. *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry*, 6(1)
- Özben, Ş. (2010). Teachers' strategies to cope with student misbehavior. *Science Direct*, 2(2), 587-594
- Pala, A. (2005). Sınıfta istenmeyen öğrenci davranışlarını önlemeye dönük disiplin modelleri. *Manas Journal of Social Studies*, 13(7), 427
- Sadık, F., & Doğanay, A. (2007). Sınıf içi istenmeyen davranışlarla ilgili öğretmen, öğrenci ve veli görüşlerinin karşılaştırılması. *Çukurova Üniversitesi Sosyal BilimlerEnstitüsü Dergisi*, 16(1), 539-560
- Taylor, S. E., Pham L. B., Rivkin I. D., & Armor D. A. (1998) Mental Simulation, Self-Regulation, and Coping. *American Psychologist*, 53(4), 429-439
- Taylor, S. E., & Stanton, A. L. (2007). Coping resources, coping processes, and mental health. *The Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 3, 377-401
- Teyfur, M. (2015). Undesirable student behaviors encountered by primary school teachers and solution proposals. *Academic Journals*, 10(17), 2422-2432
- Yılmaz, S., & Şahinkaya, N. (2010). The relationship between the methods teachers use against the misbehaviour performed in the classroom and emphatic tendencies of teachers. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2, 2932-2936

Appendix

Open-Ended Survey Questions

Dear Colleague,

The purpose of this survey is to designate the coping strategies applied by EFL instructors. The survey includes 10 open-ended questions related to some undesirable behaviors observed in language classrooms. Please, write your coping strategies with clear explanations. Your precious thoughts are really important for this research. Your responses will only be used for this research and be kept confidential.

Thank you for your contribution and sincere ideas.

Section 1: Background Questions

1. Gender? Female_____ Male_____
2. Education? B.A._____ M.A._____ Ph.D._____
3. Teaching Experience? 1-3_____ 4-6_____ 7-9_____ 10-more_____
4. Nationality? Native English Speaker_____ Non-Native English Speaker _____

Section 2: Open-Ended Questions

1. When my students use their mobile phones in the lesson, I _____

2. If I notice my students talking to each other during the lesson, I _____

3. When my students do not bring their course materials in class, I _____

4. I think, the most effective way to handle disrespect in the classroom is _____

5. When my students are interested in other things during the lesson, I _____

6. If my students come to class without doing their homework, I _____

7. If my students do not attend the lessons regularly, I _____

8. My reactions towards the students who do not participate in the lesson are that _____

9. If one of my students asks irrelevant questions regularly, I _____

10. When my students talk out of turn, I _____
