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Research Article

# The reading strategy use profile of EFL learners

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to explore foreign language reading strategy use profile of the prep-school students at a Turkish university with reference to the proficiency levels, genders, and the majors of the participants. The participants were 186 Turkish students enrolled in various levels of intensive English courses at a prep-school in a Turkish university. The present study adopted a cross sectional quantitative research design and its data was gathered by means of a foreign language reading strategy questionnaire. The analysis of the findings indicated that focal participants of this study generally use global reading strategies ($\bar{x}$ 4.52), problem-solving strategies ($\bar{x}$ 3.67), and support strategies ($\bar{x}$ 3.16) respectively. In terms of gender, and the majors of the participants, it was found that the difference is not significant in both variables. As for the proficiency levels of the participants, it was found that low proficient students use more reading strategies than the high proficient students do in general.

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# Introduction

As a consensus, it is believed that learning foreign languages necessitates learners to be competent both in receptive and productive skills. More importantly, becoming a competent speaker or writer in the target language is accepted as the sign of success. Nevertheless, the literature evidenced that being able to read and grasp the gist of the text in the foreign language is the primary goal of most foreign language courses. Thus, focusing on reading skills and the ways to improve it naturally attract the interests of the researchers. The reading skill, either in the first or in the target language, is a complex process, which requires more than one mental process at a time. For instance, the reader should decode the letters on the page, know the sounds that they represent, and gather the meanings of the words from the letters, as well as the sentence structures that are composed of words. In other words, reading process requires several additional skills such as orthography, vocabulary, and grammar knowledge.

The reading skill basically involves two mental processes, i.e. decoding or identifying the words on a written text and comprehending the message conveyed by those words (Gough & Tunmer, 1986; Hoover & Gough 1990). In a similar vein, the reading comprehension necessitates some "lower-level processes such as word recognition, and higher-level processes such as integrating the textual information on the sentence level" (Shiotsu, 2009). Additionally, as Grabe and Stoller (2014) claimed, "basic grammar knowledge, ability to identify main ideas, recognition of discourse structure, and strategic processing" are necessary mental processes involved in reading comprehension.

To achieve maximum comprehension in reading, readers employ various and essential reading strategies. According to Anderson (2009, p.132) "the reading strategies are conscious actions employed by learners to improve their language learning". As Sheorey and Mokhtari (2008) claimed, the reading strategies were important when used appropriately for both L1 and L2 readings since they actively engage learners in reading and improve the comprehension of the texts. It should be born in mind that the reading strategies are not inherently present in the process of reading. They are actually conscious of techniques and processes employed by readers to decode and comprehend a text.

Regarding the reading strategies, there are various overlapping definitions in the related literature. For instance, while Pritchard (1990) defined the reading strategies as intentional activities employed by readers to understand what they read, Oxford (1990) defined them as particular actions of learners that make learning easier and effective. Afflerbach, Pearson and Paris (2008) defined reading strategies as intended actions adopted by readers to decode written message, understand the meaning conveyed by words, and construct meaning out of the text.

By the same token, the types of reading strategies were also labelled with different names in the related literature. When they are scrutinized though, one can easily see that the categories sometimes overlap, and they vary only in terminology. For instance, Carrell (1989) categorized the reading strategies that focus on decoding dimension such as sound-letter and sentence-syntax relationship, grammatical structures, word-meaning, or text details as local (or bottom-up) reading strategies, whereas the strategies that concentrate on text-gist, contextual knowledge, and text organization categorized as global (or top-down)

reading strategies. According to Song (1998) reading strategies are assembled under two main categories. Accordingly, the two categories are simply defined as; '*simple fix-up strategies*' involving learners' rereading of problematic parts and predicting unknown words; and '*comprehensive strategies*' that help learners summarize the content and relating it their background knowledge.

Several lists of reading strategies have been identified from previous research in the literature regarding reading strategies. However, the reading strategies are generally identified as cognitive and metacognitive processes that help readers decode and get the gist of the reading text and to solve comprehension problems. Regarding this recognition, Cohen (1998) grouped the reading strategies as "cognitive, metacognitive, social, and affective strategies". Similarly, Hsiao and Oxford (2002) classified reading strategies as "cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies". Salatacı and Akyel (2002) suggested that "skimming a text for key information involves using cognitive strategies whereas assessing the effectiveness of skimming for gathering textual information would be a metacognitive strategy". Likewise, Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001, p.431) categorized the reading strategies into three units as "cognitive, metacognitive and support strategies". In another study, Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) also classified the reading strategies as "global reading strategies, problem solving strategies and support strategies" which were also used by Mokhtari and Reichard (2002) from other researchers such as Pressley and Afflerbach (1995), and Oxford (1990). In another classification of reading strategies, Oxford (2011) brought the affective and sociocultural mental processes into consideration and classified the reading strategies as "cognitive, affective, and sociocultural-interactive strategies" which she called as "metastrategies" in general. In a relatively recent classification, Purpura (2014) classified the reading strategies into four units such as "cognitive, metacognitive, social and affective strategies".

In a broader aspect, every kind of consciously employed technique to comprehend a text such as rereading, paying closer attention, or predicting the meaning of unfamiliar words is referred to as *cognitive reading strategies*. In some reading activities, readers employ some more conscious and pre-planned mental processes to assist them in comprehending the reading material such as using prior knowledge, deciding what to read in detail or skim, as well as techniques to examine and appraise the information in a reading text which are referred as metacognitive reading strategies. Additionally, some readers might use different strategies to promote comprehension such as highlighting or underlining the text, taking side notes, or using dictionaries while reading. Such strategies employed by the readers are also known as support reading strategies.

In Mokhtari and Sheorey's (2002) second grouping, the cognitive strategies are labelled as global reading strategies that enable learners to use some additional techniques to monitor their reading concerning the length and organization of the text or using typographic supports and figures to comprehend better what they read. The problem-solving strategies in their classification require more comprehensive range of techniques that include adapting the reading speed, predicting the meaning of unfamiliar words, and rereading the text to grasp the gist of the text. Other techniques employed by readers to get better text comprehension are "using a dictionary, taking notes, or underlining the text are grouped as support strategies" (Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002; 4).

The theoretical importance of this study is based on the need for a broader understanding of reading strategies helping learners' to better comprehend what they read. The fact that learners need to get the most benefit of reading activities attests to significance of researching reading strategies and detecting possible links between language proficiency and strategy use. As Purpura (2014) indicates, the basic ground for examining reading strategies is spotting the reading profile of language learners and addressing better learning and teaching opportunities for them. If teachers are aware of the reading strategy use profile of learners, they might well assist their students in comprehending the deep meaning of a text they read. Similarly, if curriculum developers are aware of the reading strategies employed by learners, they might carefully design the curricula and the reading activities included in it. Likewise, students themselves also make use of the information gained from research findings about their reading strategies and exert some effort to make up for their lacking strategies, which would ultimately help them increase their reading comprehension gains in the target language. Hence, as learners hone their reading comprehension skills, they might meet the EFL proficiency benchmarks required for enrollment at universities or in their professional life. Additionally, if the instructors, or the administrators, have a clue about the reading strategies that are used by learners, both parties might gain very useful advantages in terms of bettering reading comprehension skills of the learners. Gaining insights about current reading strategies of learners enables instructors to reorganize their methods of teaching academic reading courses and help their learners become good readers.

The research on the reading strategies generally focused on the first language reading strategies and the review of available literature revealed that there is scant research conducted to investigate reading strategies employed by the EFL learners. The dearth of studies with the EFL learners call for further research. Therefore, the present study attempted to figure out the reading strategy use profile of EFL learners, who have varied backgrounds in the reading strategies in their mother tongue.

The initial objective of the present study is to explore reading strategy use profile of the EFL students at a university in Turkey. Thus, it intends to raise the awareness of teachers, students, and other stakeholders on the reading strategies of EFL learners enrolled in prep schools of universities. In line with its main aim, the present study explored the variations in the type and number of reading strategies and their relationship between some other variables such as language proficiency, gender, and majors of the participants. Concerning its objective, the present study sought answers to the following research questions.

1.  What is the reading strategy use profile of the EFL learners in general?
2.  Is there any correlation between the proficiency levels and the reading strategy use?
3.  Is there any correlation between the genders and the reading strategy use?
4.  Is there any correlation between the majors and the reading strategy use?

## Literature Review

When the available literature on the reading strategies is reviewed it is observed that the studies evidenced usefulness of reading strategy use in advancing learners' reading comprehension in their first language (Baker & Brown, 1984; Brown, 1981; Palinscar & Brown,

1984, Singhal, 2001). Similarly, several studies also figured out that there are variations in the reading strategy use of successful and unsuccessful learners as well as the proficiency levels of learners and their reading strategy use in the first language. For instance, Singhal (2001) found that "successful readers or high proficient readers appear to be using a wider range of strategies" (Singhal, 2001).

As for the variation in reading strategies use of male and female readers, studies conducted by Poole (2005) and Sheorey and Mokhtari (2008) uncovered that the reading strategy use of learners show significant differences in terms of the gender of the learners. For instance, Poole (2005) studied the reading strategy use of 248 college-level ESL students and found that the overall number of strategy use showed differences concerning the genders of the participants. Although there were not significant differences in terms of the global, supportive, and problem-solving strategies, Poole's (2005) findings revealed that the female and male students differed on two individual strategies, which were "noting text characteristics" for the first group and "paying close attention to reading" for the latter.

In their study Sheorey and Mokhtari (2008) examined gender differences in the use of reading strategies of 302 ESL and U.S. students. They found that while there are differences in the U.S. group students concerning the gender, the ESL group students did not show any difference in terms of their genders. That is, the female readers in the US group employed reading strategies more than male readers.

As a possible variable in L2 learners' use of reading strategies, disciplinary fields (majors) were examined in related studies. For example, in a study by Daguay-James and Buluşan (2020) learners' use of metacognitive strategies from various majors were measured using MARSI (Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory). They found that students employed a variety of metacognitive strategies and that there is a discrepancy between the use of metacognitive strategies among subjects from various majors, which means that learners' field of study influences the extent to which reading strategies are used by the readers.

The possible link between academically successful individuals and their use of reading strategies was examined in the related research literature. In their study Chutichaiwirath and Sitthitikul (2017) quantitatively (using MARSI) and qualitatively (using think-aloud protocols) measured Thai EFL learners' use of reading strategies. They have found that subjects' academic success correlates with the use of reading strategies with academically high performing learners indicating higher frequency of reading strategies than low performing learners.

Use of reading strategies was examined in terms of possible correlations with learning styles of learners. Gürses and Bouvet (2016) conducted a study with Turkish/Australian learners of French as L2 that investigated the relationship between reading comprehension/learning styles and learners' perceived use of reading strategies. They found that learners from both sample groups (i.e Turkish and Australian L1 backgrounds) who report similar types of learning styles are found to use reading strategies abundantly. They did not find any correlation between perceived reading strategy use and reading comprehension levels between two sample groups. This finding was interpreted as demonstrating that learners' sheer self-perceived knowledge of reading strategies does not necessarily translate into their actual use when they engage in reading.

Language proficiency and reading strategy use was examined as two possible correlates. In one such study, Sarıçoban and Behjoo (2017) investigated types of reading strategies used by

Turkish EFL learners and any possible correlation between their perceived use of reading strategies and reading proficiency as measured by their scores from reading courses. They found that '*Global Strategies*' and '*Problem Solving Strategies*' are two most frequently used reading strategies. Their study corroborated results of similar studies by establishing a relationship between reading strategy use and L2 learners' academic grades from the reading course. This finding indicates that successful readers benefit from reading strategies when they engage in complex reading tasks.

L2 learners exhibit variations in terms of their needs for adopting various types of reading strategies. In order to examine closely how learners vary in their use of reading strategies, a study by Aydın and Yıldırım (2017) investigated the extent to which Turkish intermediate learners used reading strategies using a reading strategy survey. They found that reading strategies are used 'moderately' by subjects indicating that instructional intervention may be necessary to enhance learners' consciousness of reading strategies.

The studies outlined above give us intuitions about the role of reading strategies as a significant variable shaping the extent to which learners successfully master and hone their reading comprehension skills in the target language. Multiplicity of variables may be involved in learners' use of reading strategies. Among a wide array of variables and correlates involved in L2 learners' use of reading strategies, as well as the results of the studies above hint at disciplinary orientation (their majors), gender and academic success as possible considerations. The present study is a further attempt to research these three variables in shaping L2 learners' use of reading strategies.

## Method

The present study, which is descriptive in nature, adopted a cross sectional qualitative research methodology to figure out the reading strategy use profile of EFL students. Through implementing such a research design, the researchers intended to observe what is present with the focal participants. The rationale of designing a cross sectional qualitative research is to be capable of gathering data from a larger number of subjects at only one session and illustrate the characteristics of reading strategy use, that exist among the participants without focusing on the cause-and-effect relationships between other variables. The cross-sectional qualitative design is specifically useful in illustrating an overall picture as it is seen at the time of the study. The quantitative data of the research is used to investigate the overall reading strategy use of the participants and figure out whether there are variations in the reading strategy use of the participants regarding their genders, proficiency levels and majors.

### Participants

The subjects of the present study are 186 prep-school students who enrolled in Beginner, Elementary, Intermediate, and Upper intermediate level EFL classes at intensive English courses at the school of foreign languages. A total of 220 students were requested to participate and fill in a questionnaire on the reading strategies in foreign language; however, 186 (79 females, 107 males) of them agreed to participate and respond to the items on the questionnaire. As for their majors, while 71 of them were the students of social science and liberal arts programs, 115 of them were students in the field of science or life sciences. The

proficiency levels of the participants were accepted as assessed according to the administrative distribution of the placement examinations which were held at the beginning of the semester by the School of Foreign Languages.

All subjects were enrolled in the prep class reading course, which is an intensive reading course that serves to review and develop English grammar elements studied in other courses. The course is delivered in English, and the readings consist of passages, short stories, as well as practical reading tests. One objective of the course is to help learners achieve the reading proficiency essential to be successful in the English language proficiency exam, and other English related courses in the rest of their educational life. To guarantee that learners shared identical features, for instance the nature of reading instruction and language skills, the same proficiency level students in different classes were grouped together.

### Data collection instrument

The present study used a reading strategy survey which was originally based on Oxford (1990) and used and adapted by various researchers in the field of reading strategies such as Dreyer and Nell, (2003); Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002); Mokhtari and Reichard (2002); Pressley and Afflerbach (1995); Taraban, Rynearson and Kerr (2004) and Wyatt, Pressley, El-Dinary, Stein, Evans and Brown (1993). The researchers preferred to use the "survey of reading strategies (SORS)" which was developed by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) to examine the self-reported reading strategies employed by EFL learners.

The survey was piloted by the researchers of the present study and proved as a reliable and valid instrument for gathering reading strategy use data of EFL learners. The design of the survey is a 5-point Likert type scale, and it consists of 30 items which estimates the reading strategy use in three broad categories, namely, global reading strategies (13 items), problem solving strategies (8 items) and support strategies (9 items). Additionally, the demographic data about the subjects is gathered within the same survey simply by adding three demographic items which inquire the proficiency level, department/major and gender of the participants.

### Data collection procedure

The subjects were notified about the purpose of the research and reminded that their responses should only relate to the strategies they employed when reading academic material. The participants were also informed about the Likert type survey. The survey was delivered directly to the participants in one consecutive administration. Participants filled the survey in groups of 18 to 28 during a single meeting that lasted approximately 45 minutes under testing conditions. The language of the survey was English. Yet, the items in the survey were verbally clarified as well when it was necessary due to the students' levels of proficiency in English.

### Data analysis

The gathered data were examined using the scoring suggestions and interpretation key developed by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002). Additionally, for the statistical analysis of the records, a statistical software program for social sciences was used. Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) suggested that the scores obtained should be interpreted using the "High (mean of 3.5 or higher), Moderate (mean of 2.5 to 3.4) and Low (mean of 2.4 or lover)" usage descriptions. As a rule, the total score average "indicates how often students believe they use the strategies" in the

survey when reading course related materials. The means for each subscale in the questionnaire show the frequency with which readers use a given type of strategy when reading academic material (Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002).

## Findings and Discussion

The analysis of the coded answers of the participants depicted in general that, the global reading strategies ($\bar{x}$ 3.67) and problem-solving strategies ($\bar{x}$ 4.52) achieved higher scores whereas support strategies ($\bar{x}$ 3.16) achieved a moderate score. Although the difference between the strategies was not significant, the overall scores depicted that the EFL learners at an intensive English program use the higher and moderate level strategies in their academic readings. Regarding the first research question, we can claim that the students who enrolled in prep classes at the school of foreign languages use global reading strategies more than the other strategies while reading academic materials. Problem solving strategies have also achieved high score. However, these strategies were used less than global reading strategies but higher than support strategies. The results also depicted that the participants use the support strategies moderately. More precisely, the average of the students generally do not prefer using dictionaries or taking notes while reading an academic text. This finding shows similarity with the results of Salatacı and Akyel (2002), who found that the students used the dictionary less to find the meanings of unknown words when they read in English.

The second research question inquired the relation between the proficiency levels and the reading strategy use of the participants. The analysis revealed that regardless of the proficiency levels, all the students use the reading strategies in moderate levels in overall ($\bar{x}$ 3.45), but there are slight differences among them. The findings concerning the proficiency levels and types of the reading strategies are illustrated in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Reading strategy use and proficiency levels

| Types of reading strategy | Upper intermediate | Low intermediate | Intermediate | Beginner |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Global Reading Strategies | 3.33 | 3.17 | 3.55 | 3.63 |
| Problem Solving Strategies | 3.72 | 3.52 | 3.65 | 3.90 |
| Support Strategies | 2.74 | 3.75 | 3.14 | 3.39 |

As seen in Table 1, while reading academic materials, EFL learners used problem solving strategies in high level with slight differences between proficiency levels in general. Concerning the proficiency levels, the problem-solving strategy use profile of the EFL learners are lined up as beginner ($\bar{x}$ 3.90); upper intermediate ($\bar{x}$ 3.72); intermediate ($\bar{x}$ 3.65) and low intermediate ($\bar{x}$ 3.52) respectively. The analysis of the findings concerning the proficiency levels of the participants also revealed that the global reading strategies are ranked in the second order in general. When the scores are examined in detail, it is found that while beginners ($\bar{x}$ 3.63) and intermediate ($\bar{x}$ 3.55) level students used global reading strategies in higher ratios, upper intermediate ($\bar{x}$ 3.33) and low intermediate ($\bar{x}$ 3.17) students used moderate level global reading strategies. The analysis additionally revealed that the support strategies ($\bar{x}$ 3.25) were ranked in low level among all proficiency levels. The further analysis of students'

support strategy use revealed that while upper intermediate ($\bar{x}$ 3.75) level students use them in high levels, beginner ($\bar{x}$ 3.39), intermediate ($\bar{x}$ 3.14) and upper intermediate ($\bar{x}$ 2.74) level students use them in moderate levels, respectively. The results indicated that the students in the upper intermediate, intermediate and beginner levels generally prefer using problem-solving strategies. It is also observed that the students in low intermediate classes prefer using support strategies most. Although the previous studies in literature depicted that proficient students use more reading strategies than the other students, the findings of the present study did not reveal a significant difference in terms of reading strategy use.

The third research question was questioning the role of the gender in the use of reading strategies of the participants. The findings of this research question are illustrated in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Reading strategy use and gender

| Types of reading strategy | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|
| Global Reading Strategies | 3.46 | 3.41 |
| Problem Solving Strategies | 3.70 | 3.65 |
| Support Strategies | 3.12 | 3.20 |

As seen in Table 2, both female ($\bar{x}$ 3.70) and male ($\bar{x}$ 3.65) EFL learners use the problem-solving strategies in high levels. As for the use of global reading strategies and support strategies, it is found that regardless of the gender, EFL learners moderately use those strategies. The further analysis of this finding showed that there is not a significant difference between the two genders in terms of using the reading strategies. Nevertheless, the findings may provide us an overall picture about the reading strategy use profile of the female and male EFL learners. The finding that there is no significant difference in the use of reading strategies in terms of gender shows similarities with Brantmeier's (2002) study which also depicted that there was no difference in performance by two genders in reading strategy use.

The last research question of the present study examined the role of the students' majors in the use of foreign language reading strategies. The findings concerning the majors of the participants and their reading strategy use is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Reading strategy use and majors

| Types of reading strategy | Social sciences and Liberal arts | Science and Life sciences |
|---|---|---|
| Global Reading Strategies | 3.49 | 3.38 |
| Problem Solving Strategies | 3.79 | 3.61 |
| Support Strategies | 3.28 | 3.11 |

As seen in Table 3, the findings did not show a significant difference concerning the majors and reading strategy use profile of the participants. However, the further analysis uncovered that while EFL students in both broader classifications of majors use problem solving strategies in high level, they use global reading strategies and support strategies in moderate levels.

## Conclusion and Implications

The intent of the present study was to illustrate the reading strategy use profile of EFL learners and examine if there is any correlation between the reading strategy use and some variables such as proficiency levels, gender, and majors of the participants.

The findings of present study were promising as they implied that the students in an intensive English course were mostly aware of the reading strategies and employed them in their reading activities in high or moderate levels. Additionally, it is found that while problem solving strategies in reading were mostly used, the global reading strategies and support strategies were not employed as much as the prior one. Moreover, it can be claimed that the participants of this study generally either ignore or do not use the support strategies.

The findings of this study offer a picture of reading strategy use profile of the participants. Thus, the results might be helpful for curriculum developers as well as EFL teachers while planning the reading lessons in EFL contexts. For instance, reading teachers might organize their teaching curriculum according to the preference of the students' reading strategies and highlight the role of neglected reading strategies. Moreover, if the institutions or the reading teachers will arrange reading strategy instruction for their students, they might organize the frame of the instruction regarding these results.

The pedagogical implications of this study should be considered in the light of its limitations. First, although the SORS is a widely used instrument to investigate the reading strategies of the learners, sometimes such a survey might fail to reflect all reading strategies the learners employ. It should be also noted that the findings of the present study are based on the self-reported reflections of reading strategy use of the participants, thus, it is difficult to draw strong generalizations due to their self-reflection as well as the limited number of participants.

For future research, the reading strategy use of the EFL learners could be examined under experimental condition which examines the reading accomplishment and strategy use of learners who get strategy training and those who do not. Such a study can also be enhanced by exploring the variations in reading comprehension in first and foreign language reading activities and monitor the reading strategy employments of learners in different contexts.

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## A Systematic Review of the Representation of Cultural Elements in English as a Foreign Language Textbooks

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# A systematic review of the representation of cultural elements in English as a foreign language textbooks

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**Abstract**

Textbooks are complementary to language learning and teaching. Considering various foreign language teaching contexts, they also serve as one of the main tools to provide learners with cultural content. This mixed-methods systematic review aimed to identify predominant cultural elements in 22 studies published between 2005 and 2019, focusing on the analysis of foreign language textbooks. It also attempted to provide a review of the research designs to investigate the representation of cultural elements in language textbooks used in EFL (English as a foreign language) contexts. Concerning the prevalent cultural representations, five main themes emerged: (1) the dominance of target culture, (2) the lack of local culture, (3) the scarcity of cross-cultural comparisons, (4) the presence of surface culture, and (5) the imbalanced proportion of the world cultures. The findings also indicated that the quantitative studies outnumbered the qualitative and mixed-method research designs. The most frequently used research method to analyze the content of foreign language textbooks was content analysis.

## Introduction

Language and culture are two concepts that are interrelated and inseparable. In other words, "language and culture are interwoven in a way that one cannot be isolated from the other without losing its significance" (Brown, 2000, p.177). Therefore, Alptekin (2002) maintains that "learning a foreign language becomes a kind of enculturation, where one acquires new cultural frames of reference and a new world view, reflecting those of the target language culture and its speakers" (p. 58). In other words, cultural content in language teaching serves a key role in enhancing intercultural communicative competence (Yuen, 2011).

Textbooks are labeled as fundamental instruments that promote the process of language learning and culture acquisition (Allwright, 1981). Using English textbooks in language classrooms is an effective means of conveying culture and ideology (Zhili, 1999). In this sense, Cortazzi and Jin (1999) state that a textbook serves as "a teacher, a map, a resource, a trainer, an authority, and an ideology" (p.243). Regarding foreign language teaching contexts, Ihm (1996) notes that the EFL classroom serves as the main source of cultural information to language learners since they do not have many opportunities to experience cultural contact. Likewise, Rajabi and Ketabi (2012) maintain that "the textbook can be a major source of cultural elements besides providing linguistic and topical contents which necessarily reflect the ideology inherent in the EFL context of a particular circle" (p.708). In that vein, investigating cultural elements in foreign language textbooks plays an important role in promoting intercultural and intracultural awareness of language learners.

### The representation of cultural content in foreign language textbooks

Canale (2016) states that "textbooks as curriculum artifacts are just one of the many domains of discourse implicated in the representation of culture in teaching and learning practices" (p.239). An inquiry into the types of cultural content and the appropriateness of the design of the cultural elements in English textbooks are necessary (Kim& Paek, 2015). To that end, there has been a growing interest regarding the analysis of representations in textbooks. Many researchers have attempted to analyze English textbooks' cultural content across different instructional settings (e.g., Wu, 2010; Alemi& Jafari, 2012; Xu, 2013; Sadeghi& Sepahi, 2018). In line with this purpose, several questionnaires, checklists, and frameworks have been administered in research studies to assess the cultural content of EFL textbooks (Cortazzi& Jin, 1999; Hatoss, 2004; Kılıçkaya, 2004).

With regard to the dominance of target culture in textbooks, it could be attributed to the challenge of including local cultural data for textbook writers who are native speakers of English (Alptekin, 2002). Aliakbari and Jamalvandi (2012) maintain that "a textbook is able to render a valuable source of cultural elements and foster learners' knowledge of the target language" (p.93). However, Baker (2012) emphasizes that cultural awareness is beyond target culture awareness since it also necessitates awareness of one's own culture. In this regard, Shin et al. (2011) maintain that it is essential to "include target and global culture to facilitate learners' intercultural competence" (p.256). Nonetheless, English learning textbooks used in second or foreign language teaching contexts tend to concentrate on English-speaking countries' cultures. Therefore, the local cultures are underrepresented, which is likely to foster student alienation from western cultures depending on the tension between local and target culture (Ilieva,2000).

Liu and Laohawiriyanon (2013) also claim that the imbalanced representations of cultural content in textbooks might confuse students when they engage in intercultural communication. In order to eliminate the limitations of solely being exposed to one culture, several authors have

suggested including both local and target cultures (Choudhury, 2013). Kirkgöz and Agcam (2011) suggest that "a reasonably good balance between local, target and international target cultural elements in teaching materials is needed" (p.157).

### Statement of purpose and research questions

This study attempts to identify predominant cultural elements embedded in English language textbooks that are used within the scope of EFL contexts. To that end, a systemic review of scholarly articles was conducted. The studies selected for the review included the textbooks designed by international British and American publishing houses in addition to locally produced English textbooks utilized in different EFL contexts. Accordingly, one purpose is to provide a review of the research designs used to analyze culture in foreign language textbooks. Moreover, it aims to identify predominant cultural elements embedded in English language textbooks used within the scope of EFL contexts. The present study seeks answers to the following research questions:

1) What research designs are used to analyze the cultural elements in EFL textbooks?
· What are the instructional settings in which textbooks are utilized?
· What are the theoretical frameworks applied to the analysis of the textbooks?
· What data collection instruments are used to analyze the cultural content in EFL textbooks?
· What are the main research methods employed for the analysis of cultural content in EFL textbooks?

2) What are the main themes found in the studies regarding the representation of culture in EFL textbooks conducted within the last fifteen years?

## Methodology

After conducting a comprehensive electronic search of publicly available literature from 2005 to May 2019, the research articles used in this systematic review were determined. In order to find and select the studies, several keywords were entered into the Web of Science database and METU library catalog. These keywords were "culture in/and (English) textbooks", "cultural elements/ themes in textbooks", and "cultural content in/and textbooks". The search resulted in 144 articles. As shown in Table 1, considering the final selection process, a list of inclusion and exclusion criteria was created. Accordingly, the following aspects were included: *publication date*, *publication type*, *instructional setting*, *textbook type*, *context*, *focus of the article*, and *research method*. The articles that did not meet the selection criteria for inclusion were eliminated. Review articles, opinions, or discussion papers that do not consist of data analysis were excluded. The duplicates were also removed, then 27 studies were obtained.

**Table 1.** Inclusion/exclusion criteria

| Criteria | Inclusion | Exclusion |
|---|---|---|
| Publication date | 2005 to 2019 | Prior to 2005 |
| Publication type | Scholarly articles of original research | Book chapters, dissertations, or proceedings |
| Instructional setting | Secondary schools to higher education and private courses etc. | Primary schools |
| Textbook type | International British and American publishing houses and locally produced English textbooks / The textbook in-use | Not including in-use textbooks |
| Context | EFL context | English as a Second Language (ESL) context |
| Focus of the article | The research focuses primarily on the cultural content of English textbooks | Articles include perceptions of textbook users |
| Research method and results | There is an identifiable method and results section—All quantitative and qualitative methods are included. | Reviews of other articles, opinion or discussion papers that do not include the analysis of data |

After applying these criteria, five studies were eliminated due to not meeting a few criteria, such as analyzing an in-use textbook, referring to an instructional setting, allocating a greater proportion to the investigation of cultural elements. The final list contained 22 studies (see Appendix for the list of studies).

A mixed-method systematic review was conducted within the scope of this paper. In this regard, quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method research designs were included. Based on the methodological framework of Pearson et al. (2015), this mixed-method systematic review included the following stages: planning the review, conducting the review, and reporting the review. Table 2 illustrates the actions connected to each stage.

**Table 2.** The stages of a mixed-methods systematic review

| Stage 1: Planning the review | Stage 2: Conducting the review | Stage 3: Reporting the review |
|---|---|---|
| The rationale and the need to conduct the review | -Identification of research questions<br>-Selection/exclusion of the studies<br>-Study quality assessment<br>-Coding scheme of the reviewed papers<br>-Data synthesis | Communicating and synthesizing the results |

In order to extract the main themes, the overall findings were synthesized. The findings of the review were identified and presented in relation to the themes. Since the process was inductive, there were no predetermined themes assigned to the data.

## Findings

This study investigated the research designs used to analyze cultural representation in 22 foreign language textbooks. Moreover, it aimed to identify predominant cultural elements in English language textbooks utilized within the scope of EFL contexts. In this regard, the main themes that emerged from the studies were *(1) the dominance of target culture, (2) the lack of local culture, (3) the scarcity of cross-cultural comparisons, (4) the presence of surface culture*, and *(5) the imbalanced proportion of the world cultures*.

### Research designs

#### Instructional settings

There were five different instructional settings concerning the studies selected for the review. Many of the studies occurred in secondary schools ($f$=6, 27%) and universities ($f$=6, 27%), followed by high schools ($f$=5, 23%), private language centers ($f$=3, 14%), and pre-university programs ($f$=2, 9%). Accordingly, junior high schools were also categorized into secondary schools. Figure 1 displays the distribution of instructional settings represented in 22 studies.
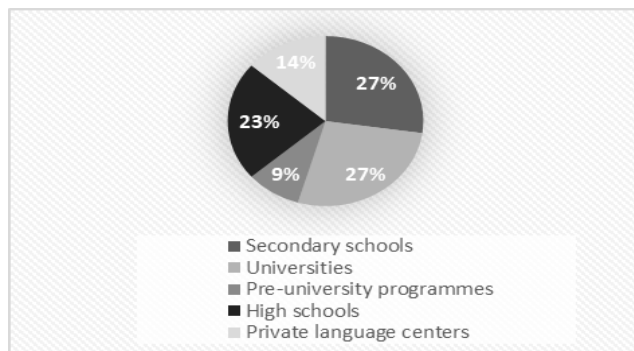


**Figure 1.** The distribution of instructional settings

### Theoretical frameworks

Out of the 22 studies, 19 referred to a theoretical or conceptual framework to analyze the cultural elements in EFL textbooks. While several studies included more than one framework (e.g., Silvia, 2015; Ashrafi& Ajideh, 2018; Sadeghi& Sepahi, 2018), some others mentioned only one framework (e.g., Yuen, 2011; Isnaini et al., 2019; Chao, 2011). Table 3 demonstrates the theoretical and conceptual frameworks utilized in the studies. The most frequently used ones were *the classification of cultural content* (Cortazzi& Jin, 1999) and *the coding scheme regarding the cultural dimensions* (Moran, 2011). According to Cortazzi and Jin (1999), the cultural content in English textbooks is classified into three categories that are *source culture* (SC), *target culture* (TC), and *international culture* (IC). The category entitled 'target culture' materials is associated with the culture of a country where English is spoken as a first language (e.g., the United States). The second category, 'source culture' materials refer to the learners' own culture. Thirdly, 'international culture' materials relate to various cultures where the target language is used as a lingua franca. Moran (2001) also proposed a framework based on five dimensions of culture as follows: *products* (e.g., food, painting, architecture), *practices* (e.g., rituals, daily routines), *perspectives* (e.g., beliefs, values, attitudes), *communities* (e.g., race, religion), and *persons* (individual members).

**Table 3.** Theoretical & conceptual frameworks in the studies

| Theoretical& conceptual framework | Frequency |
| --- | --- |
| Types of cultural information (Adaskou et al., 1990) | 2 |
| The classification of cultural content (Cortazzi& Jin, 1999) | 5 |
| The categorization of cultural content (Byram& Morgan, 1994) | 2 |
| The classification of cultural categories (Chao, 2011) | 2 |
| The coding scheme regarding the cultural dimensions (Moran, 2011) | 3 |
| A checklist for analyzing textbooks in terms of cultural elements (Xiao, 2010) | 1 |
| The categorization of cultural content (Ramirez& Hall, 1990) | 1 |
| The elements of culture (Yuen, 2011) | 1 |
| Levels of intercultural competence (Byram, 1997) | 2 |
| Peirce's (1980) sign typology | 1 |
| Visual semiotic theory (Barthes, 1971) | 1 |
| Social semiotic enquiry (Kress, 1993) | 1 |
| The culture learning model (Lee, 2009) | 2 |
| Chen's (2004) checklist for cultural themes | 1 |
| Big "C" and small "c" components (Tomalin& Stempleski, 1993) | 1 |
| Culture learning model by Paige et al. (1999, 2003) | 2 |

*Data collection instruments*

Although a few studies ($f$=5) did not specify the data collection instruments (e.g., 'activities in the textbook,' 'all the tasks and exercises' etc.) used to analyze the cultural content in EFL textbooks, most of the studies referred to them. Figure 2 illustrates the frequency distribution of the data collection tools. They were stated as follows: *reading texts* ($f$=10), *visuals* ($f$=9), *listening texts* ($f$=4), *speaking exercises* ($f$=3), *writing exercises* ($f$=3), *dialogue scripts* ($f$=2), *idioms* ($f$=1), and *discursive devices* ($f$=1).
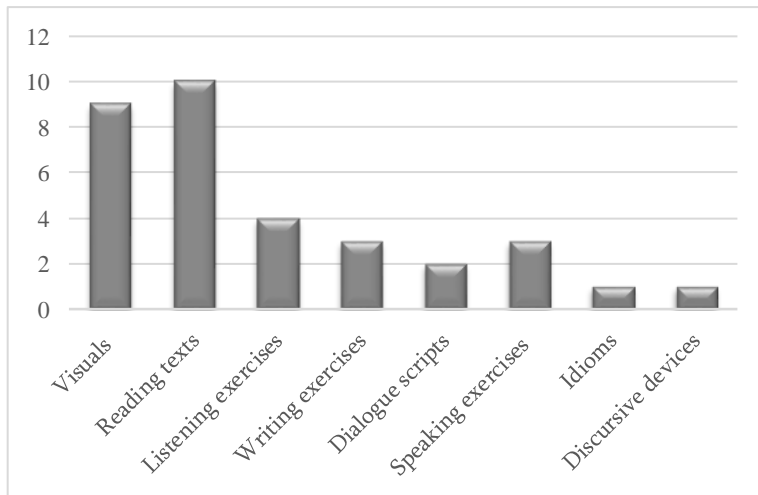


**Figure 2.** The distribution of data collection instruments in the studies

For instance, examining 18 units in three advanced level textbooks, Ashrafi and Ajideh (2018) focused on reading, listening, speaking, writing sections, and the pictures. In addition, Tajeddin and Teimournez (2015) concentrated on dialogue scripts and reading passages in two textbooks. Erlina et al. (2018) examined the paragraphs and pictures in ten textbooks within the Indonesian EFL context.

*Research methods*

Among 22 studies, 7 used a qualitative design, 11 used a quantitative design, and 4 used a mixed-method design. All the studies had at least one research method concerning data analysis. Figure 3 illustrates the frequency distribution of the main research methods used in the studies. In this respect, the most common research method was content analysis ($f$=19), followed by discourse analysis ($f$=4), and semiotic approach ($f$=2).
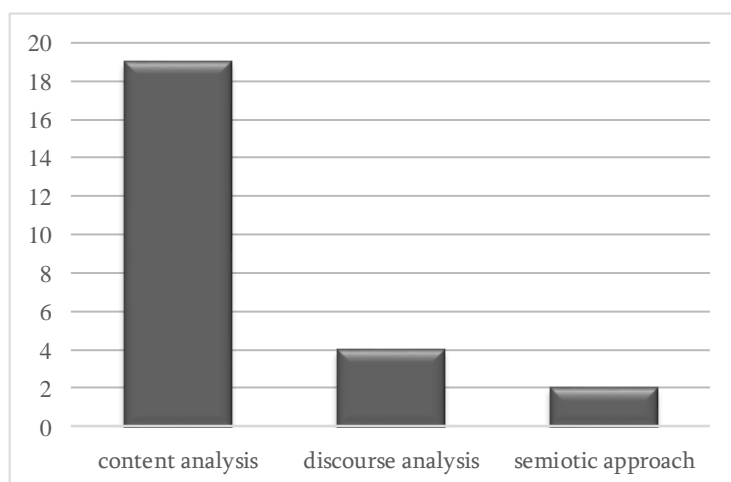
**Figure 3.** The distribution of main research methods

Investigating the representation of cultural content in English textbooks for middle school students, Kim and Paek (2015) conducted a content analysis. Similarly, Sadeghi and Sepahi (2018) and Chao (2011) used content analysis in their studies. Moreover, as regards discourse analysis, Awayed-Bishara (2015) provided a critical discourse analysis of textbooks used in Israeli high schools. Regarding the semiotic approach, Isnaini et al. (2019) analyzed how visual images convey a message in an EFL textbook and investigated multicultural values such as respecting other people's traditions. A few studies (e.g., Huang, 2019) included more than one data analysis method: content analysis and discourse analysis.

### The representation of cultural elements in EFL textbooks

#### The dominance of target culture

As regards cultural representation, this systematic review indicated a prevalence of target culture in EFL textbooks. Out of 22 studies, the pervasiveness of cultural elements related to the target culture was mentioned explicitly in 13 studies. To exemplify, considering visual and written modalities in textbooks, Aliakbari and Jamalvandi (2012) reported that most of the references in a textbook used in a Chinese high school were associated with the target culture (e.g., sailing in Canada, historical places in England, British royals). Moreover, Ashrafi and Ajideh (2018) stated that there were many instances of the target culture (e.g., geographic regions in England, English names) in advanced level textbooks used within the context of a language center. Likewise, Al-sofi (2018) noted that the texts and passages based on the themes such as foods, music, movies, fashion, etc., largely depended on the target culture in terms of representing the different cultures. Moreover, Chao (2011) maintained that most analyzed textbook images were categorized into the target culture. It was stated that target culture was also prevalent in terms of the listening, reading, and speaking exercises.

#### The lack of local culture

Some of the reviewed studies pointed out the lack of local culture in foreign language textbooks as well. To exemplify, Böcü and Razı (2016) maintained that although compare and contrast activities related to the source culture in the Turkish EFL context were provided in each unit, they were considered insufficient. Evaluating an internationally published textbook, Al-sofi

(2018) also noted that the references to the learners' source culture (e.g., Islamic and Arabic culture) was limited in number. Similarly, Chao (2011) stated that the local and Asian cultures such as China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong were disregarded in an internationally published textbook. She also indicated different dimensions of culture were fostered to some extent, emphasizing the target culture within the textbook. Additionally, as a result of investigating culture representation in dialogue scripts and reading passages, Tajeddin and Teimournezhad (2015) put forward that local culture was in a minority position. In this regard, only one passage referring to an earthquake in Iran was detected, which was not associated with the cultural aspects.

### The scarcity of cross-cultural comparisons

Depending on the under-representation of world cultures, the studies on the analysis of foreign language textbooks and the scarcity of cross-cultural comparisons were detected as common themes. For instance, Huang (2019) asserts that the cultural differences between local culture and target culture are not adequately explained in a set of textbooks utilized in a middle school. Therefore, he states that:

> Students do not realize the differences between speaking Chinese and speaking English from a cultural perspective. English speaking people tend to give a positive answer before refusing an invitation, such as 'I'd like to, but …', and that is a good idea, but…' while Chinese people may directly say 'sorry, I can't come because…' without showing a positive acknowledgment (p. 96).

Furthermore, analyzing the portrayal of international and intercultural issues in *Bachillerato* textbooks, Garcia (2005) maintained that the number of references to English-speaking communities with nations worldwide was limited in its scope. In this regard, Japanese, French, and American people compare and contrast their own societies with Britain. Accordingly, the comparisons such as politeness of British, the degree of safety in Japan, the friendlier attitude toward strangers in the US, etc., were mentioned in the analyzed textbooks. As regards the passages about culture shock, Garcia (2005) evaluates them as "insufficient number of texts to help Spanish students reflect on what moving to another community implies and the cultural and personal readjustment it demands" (p.66). Chao (2011) also noted that most speaking activities concentrate on personal reflection on a particular topic instead of intercultural comparison.

### The presence of surface culture

Concerning the presentation of cultural elements, many studies focused on the availability of surface and stereotypical vision of culture in foreign language textbooks. In this sense, examining a textbook thematically arranged considering cultural differences. McConachy (2018) asserted that the aspects of Japanese culture were reflected simplistically. Therefore, he stated that "due to its tendency to attempt to explain behaviors in terms of differences in underlying cultural principles, the textbook sometimes fell into the trap of simplistic cross-cultural juxtapositions" (p.84). Moreover, instead of deep culture, there was an emphasis on visible culture in two textbooks used in an Indonesian high school since values, opinions, and perspectives regarding cultures were absent (Silvia, 2015). However, people's names, food, landmarks, etc., were prevalent cultural elements. As Paige et al. (2003) point out, a 'tourist's perspective' is generally adopted in language textbooks. In this sense, Raigon-Rodriguez (2018) provides examples for the

lack of cultural content in six textbooks used in the Spanish EFL context. These examples can be stated as follows: 'how do people in your country live now?', 'describe a typical meal in your country' (p.296). Hence, Yuen (2011) indicates that "the information in language textbooks is generally fragmented and highly generalized, indicating only the norms of behavior" (p.460).

### The imbalanced proportion of the world cultures

In line with the lack of local culture, the imbalanced proportion of the world cultures came to the fore. Aliakbari and Jamalvandi (2012) noted that non-English speaking western countries and Eastern countries were underrepresented in a high school textbook used in China. In other words, "textbooks failed to create balanced opportunities for other cultures" (p. 98). Accordingly, the least represented group was found to be Eastern nations. Considering the predominance of European culture in an extensively used textbook in China, Song (2019) referred to a weakness in terms of the representation of world cultures. Compared to European culture, Asian or African cultures occupied a lower proportion of the textbook. Moreover, Kim and Paek (2015) found that less attention was paid to intercultural issues in current English textbooks for secondary school students in Korea.

## Discussion and Conclusion

This mixed-systematic review consisted of 22 studies that address foreign language textbooks used across different instructional contexts. The findings indicated a widespread adoption of content analysis in investigating cultural elements in foreign language textbooks. Regardless of the research designs, the underlying representation of culture in textbook discourse is generally associated with the target culture, which leads to the underrepresentation of the local cultures and world cultures. In that vein, the imbalanced proportion of the other cultures apart from the target culture was indicated. Underlining the need for textbooks that help instill awareness of foreign cultures in learners, Schewe (1998, p. 205) maintained that:

> If what we are trying to do in our foreign language classroom is to further understand a foreign culture and give students an insight into it, we need to develop techniques, exercises, and materials that involve them in imaginative reflection and make them 'see.'

Furthermore, several studies included in the review referred to a lack of depth in the analyzed textbooks' cultural content regarding the presence of surface/visible culture. As Canale (2016) suggests, "culture is seen as something static (whether facts, artifacts or homogeneous behaviors) that groups either have or do not have" (p.239). Nonetheless, the potential role of English textbooks can be stated as follows: "orienting the students towards a particular variety of English, acculturating them to particular culture/cultures, and providing them with intercultural and sometimes intra-cultural communicative capability" (Faruk, 2015, p.199). Accordingly, language materials that consist of cultural content could enable students to broaden their perspectives regarding culture and trigger them to develop multicultural competence (Tronscoso, 2010). Considering these issues, future textbooks should provide language learners with depth in the cultural content, integrate the varieties of world Englishes used across cultures, and help them develop their intercultural competence. Since locally designed EFL textbooks tend to reflect the learners' local culture to a considerable extent (Cortazzi& Jin, 1999), textbook writers could be encouraged to contribute more to the production of textbooks used in EFL contexts. Moreover, raising awareness regarding the integration of African or Eastern cultures into foreign language textbooks is necessary. However, it is also important to note that "though, as mentioned, no

textbook can fully convey the richness and diversity of those groups and individuals who are users of the language, it is nevertheless important to try" (Azimova& Johnston, 2012, p. 347).

Language teachers should also refrain from providing learners with superficial presentations of cultures (Tudor, 2001). According to Hatoss (2004), language textbooks pose a problem as "learners are expected to pick up the cultural content automatically without any conscious effort on the part of teachers to encourage them to reflect on the cultural knowledge, and without raising their awareness of their own culture" (p.27). Hence, language teachers should choose textbooks fostering cross-cultural awareness and presenting concepts related to deep culture.

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**Appendix:** The list of studies included in the review

| Author (s) & Year | Research design | Country | Number of textbook (s) & Name of the textbook (s) | Instructional setting | Text selection (visuals, images etc.) | Main research method for analysis (content analysis, CDA etc.) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Garcia (2005) | Qualitative study | Spain | 14& *Bachillerato textbooks* | Two-year pre-university cycle | 174 units (Reading and/or listening sections) | Content analysis |
| McConachy (2018) | Qualitative study | Japan | *1& Not specified* | National university | 20 pages of written assignment that required the students to reflect on the limitations of the textbook regarding the representation of culture and cultural differences | Content analysis<br><br>Discourse analysis |
| Yansyah (2017) | Quantitative study | Indonesia | 2& *English On Sky (EOS) 2* and *When English Rings A Bell (WERAB) VIII* | Junior High Schools | The sentences and pictures | Content analysis |
| Erlina et al. (2018) | Quantitative study | Indonesia | *10& Scaffolding English VII, Scaffolding English IX), English in Focus 1, Bahasa Inggris When English Rings a Bell (VIII),* | Junior high Schools | The paragraphs and pictures | Content analysis |

| Weniger& Kiss(2013) | Qualitative study | Hungaria | 2& *Bloggers* and *Steps* | Secondary school | Images, texts, and pedagogic task | Semiotic analytic approach |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ashrafi& Ajideh (2018) | Mixed-method study | Iran | 3& *ILI Series* (Advanced 1,2,3) | A Language Institute | 18 units- reading, listening, speaking and writing sections as well as pictures and activities | Content analysis |
| Kan-Young (2009) | Quantitative study | Korea | 11& (e.g., Sounds Great II) | High school | Not specified | Content analysis |
| Kim& Paek (2015) | Quantitative study | Korea | 5& Not specified | Middle school | Reading texts (51 topics) | Content analysis |
| Böcü& Razı (2016) | Mixed-method study | Turkey | 2& Textbook series *'Life'* | Two universities | Activities in the textbooks | Content analysis |
| Isnaini et al. (2019) | Qualitative study | Indonesia | *Bahasa Inggris* | Vocational high school | Visual images | Semiotic approach |
| Awayed-Bishara (2015) | Qualitative study | Israel | 6& *Build Up, Ten, Results for 4 Points, High Points, Zoom, and Dimensions* | High school | Seven discursive devices (as stated in Awayed-Bishara, 2015): | Critical discourse analysis (CDA) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | A textually oriented form of discourse analysis (TODA) |
| Aliakbari&Jamalvandi (2012) | Quantitative study | China | 5& *New Senior English for China* | High school | 25 units—not specified | Content analysis |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yuen (2011) | Quantitative study | Japan | 2& *Longman Elect* and *Treasure Plus* | Secondary school | The material associated with foreign cultures, including all the texts and the images | Content analysis |
| Sadeghi& Sepahi (2018) | Quantitative study | Iran | 3& Top Notch, Summit, Passages | A language institute | All the tasks and exercises | Content analysis |
| Raigon-Rodriguez (2018) | Quantitative study | Spain | 6& *English Unlimited, English File, New English File, Highlight, Straightforward, Inside Out* | University language centers | Not specified | Content analysis |
| Tajeddin& Teimournezhad (2015) | Quantitative study | Iran | 2& *Top Notch: English for Today's World, The ILI English Series: Intermediate* | Language centers | Dialogues and reading passages | Content analysis |
| Rodriguez (2015) | Qualitative study | Spain | 3& Not specified | Language programs at three universities | The activities in which cultural aspects were included | Content analysis |
| Al-Sofi (2018) | Qualitative study | Saudi Arabia | 1& *Well Read I* | Universities | The texts and pictures (the analysis of explicit words and implicit units) | Content analysis |
| Huang (2019) | Mixed-method study | China | A Set of Textbooks& *Project English* | Junior high school | Topics, texts, and tasks | Content analysis& Discourse analysis |

| Chao (2011) | Quantitative study | Taiwan | New American Inside Out | A university | Visuals, reading texts, listening scripts, speaking activities, and writing exercises | Content analysis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Silvia (2015) | Mixed-method study | Indonesia | 2&Not specified | High schools | Descriptive texts, dialogue scripts, idioms, and visual illustrations | Content analysis |
| Song (2019) | Quantitative study | China | 1& *New Concept English* (the third volume) | Cram school | Sixty reading texts and the notes provided below the text | Content analysis |

## Research Perspectives on Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety in Turkish EFL Context: A Systematic Review

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**Review Article**

# Research perspectives on foreign language speaking anxiety in Turkish EFL context: A systematic review

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### Abstract

Foreign language anxiety is an inevitable factor in the learning process, and it is believed that it is experienced mostly in productive skills especially in speaking since it is perceived as the most challenging skill in a foreign language. This study aims to reveal the current situation of research conducted in the 21st century upon investigating foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA) in Turkey in order to identify what has been done so far and to find the research gap to be filled by future researchers. This study adopts the meta-synthesis method which is an intentional approach aiming to bring studies together to synthesize and interpret data through qualitative studies. 24 Turkish-context qualitative studies, chosen according to their publication year, and the ones conducted in the 21st century were analysed thematically in order to reach new interpretations. The findings revealed six main themes as sources of anxiety, i.e., exploring some techniques and methods to decrease foreign language anxiety, teachers' perceptions towards FLSA, overcoming strategies against speaking anxiety, the effect and results of speaking anxiety upon learners and their communication & performance and identifying an ideal anxiety-free classroom setting.

## Introduction

Undoubtedly, anxiety is a common phenomenon experienced by all human beings, particularly by language learners. Teachers usually deal with anxious learners, and numerous studies have been conducted on this issue in the field of educational sciences. Psychology has the utmost importance in learning a new subject or acquiring a new language. Any learning environment is affected by factors of human psychology that plays a significant role in foreign language learning process (Ortega, 2014). In a foreign language learning process, there are many individual factors affecting learners' acquisition or learning in many ways. These factors include aptitude, motivation, and affective variables like anxiety, learning strategies, cognitive styles, extraversion vs, introversion and many others (Ortega, 2014). Anxiety, as one of those affective factors, has undeniably the utmost importance in foreign language learning. Simply referring to the body's natural response to stress, anxiety is defined as "a psychological construct, commonly described by psychologists as a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object" (Hilgard, Atkinson, & Atkinson, 1971, as cited in Scovel, 1991, p. 18). When it comes to foreign language anxiety, it is basically individuals' experiencing intense feeling of apprehension, tension, and even fear about what's to come when they think of a foreign language (Ortega, 2014). According to Stephen Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, a student's anxiety besides low self-esteem and lack of motivation cause a mental block. Following Krashen's claim, anxiety, being a set of psychological barriers in learning a foreign language, prevent successful acquisition of a foreign language. Some other scholars such as Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) are referred to as first researchers in this field treating foreign language anxiety who discussed it as a totally separate phenomenon regarding of its distinctive feature. These two authors defines it as a "distinct complex of beliefs, self-perceptions, feelings and behaviours related to classroom language learning process" (p.128).

Since foreign language anxiety mostly occurs in learning environment, it has different effects on various features of learning. Although learners experience foreign language anxiety at different levels depending on the case, the most anxiety provoking skill and challenging part of learning a second/foreign language was found to be speaking (Maclnytre and Gardner, 1994). Numerous studies have been conducted so far to reveal the levels of anxiety experienced by learners, the consequences of anxiety and major causes of foreign language anxiety, and all of these studies aimed to guide teachers as well. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) emphasized that teachers should first accept the existence of foreign language anxiety, and then they have two options to help anxious learners. First, they can help them learn to cope with the existing anxiety provoking situations. Second, they can make the learning context less stressful. In addition to this in-class perspective, foreign language speaking anxiety has also been a research matter on which many instruments were developed to help researchers study this issue. For instance, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) comprising 33 five-point Likert-scale items developed by Horwitz and his colleagues (Horwitz et al., 1986). Another instrument is the Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Questionnaire consisting of 28 five-point Likert scale items developed by Huang (2004).

## Literature Review

SLA research has revealed that almost one-third of the students experience at least a moderate level of foreign language anxiety (Horwitz, 2001). Experiencing foreign language speaking anxiety is inevitable since speaking is perceived as the most challenging and most anxiety provoking skill in the foreign language learning process (Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2013; Young, 1991). Many studies were conducted to find out the effect of foreign language speaking anxiety in learning process. These studies were categorized according to the variables they investigated such as gender, motivation, proficiency, academic success (Balemir, 2009; Bozer & Çalışkan, 2016; Dalkılıç, 2001; Debreli & Demirkan, 2015; Han & Şahan, 2016; Kayaoğlu & Sağlamel, 2013; Koçak, 2010; Mestan, 2017; Okay & Balçıkanlı, 2017; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2013; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2013, November; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014; Subaşı, 2010; Tüm & Kunt, 2013; Yaman, 2016; Zerey, 2010). Luo (2014) carried a study on Chinese language speaking anxiety with college students who learn Chinese in the USA and the findings showed that most of the participants had a high level of anxiety when they spoke Chinese and that gender had a significant effect on determining speaking anxiety level. A number of other studies also demonstrated that gender has an important effect on students' foreign language speaking anxiety (Csizer & Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Clement, 2001; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Huang, 2004).

Other similar aspects were investigated in terms of their relationship with anxiety. The relationship between foreign language speaking anxiety and oral performance attracted other researchers (Phillips, 1992; Woodrow, 2006; Young, 1990) and the results indicated that there were a significant negative relationship between speaking anxiety and speaking performance. As a result, it was alleged that anxiety is the predictor of oral performance. Speaking in front of a community or a class is also another anxiety-provoking factor since they experience a fear of making mistake and negative evaluation by the others (Koch & Terrell, 1991; Price, 1991; Young, 1990). Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) also found similar results approving the negative peer evaluation's negative effect on foreign language speaking anxiety.

In the Turkish EFL context, foreign language speaking anxiety has also been a trendy focus for SLA researchers, and it was examined in many ways. Öztürk and Gürbüz (2013) investigated the gender effect on anxiety and the results of quantitative data presented that there was a significant difference between genders in terms of speaking anxiety that they experience since male learners' speaking anxiety level found out to be lower than female learners, and the qualitative data obtained from interview questions supported the quantitative data. Results of this study indicated similar results to Balemir (2009) revealing that female students were more anxious while speaking English, so they experienced higher level of speaking anxiety than male students. Examining the impact of FLSA on learners' academic success in their language learning process, Dalkılıç (2001) performed a study, and both qualitative and quantitative data revealed that there was a significant correlation between the students' level of anxiety and their performance in speaking classes. In Saltan's (2003) study EFL speaking anxiety was examined from both teachers' and learners' perspectives and results showed that learners experienced FLSA, but the level of their anxiety was not so high.

While carrying out a research study, enlarging data sources for crosschecking is important so the ideal way is to support quantitative data with the qualitative one. However,

there may be some contrast in findings. For instance, Öztürk & Gürbüz (2014) conducted a study to find out the learners' speaking anxiety level and major causes behind FLSA and while quantitative data revealed that learners experienced low level of speaking anxiety, according to qualitative data gathered from interview questions most of the students thought that speaking skill was an anxiety-provoking factor to them. In this same study, the major causes of FLSA were spontaneous speaking, fear of making mistakes, having a perfectionist attitude and reactions of other students. In his study, Ay (2010) also reported similar results to Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014) in terms of the perception that learners feel more anxious when they are asked to speak without being prepared beforehand. Subaşı (2010) investigated the causes of speaking anxiety and two major causes have been illustrated at the end of the study: fear of negative evaluation and their self-perceived speaking ability.

As aforementioned, a great number of studies have been conducted so far with the intent of identifying the concept of the foreign language speaking anxiety, revealing its effects on both individual and learning process, detecting its major causes and suggesting implications for teachers and researchers. In the present study, it is aimed to review studies conducted on foreign language speaking anxiety in order to analyse them according to the main themes they focus on, reach new interpretations through qualitative data obtained from these studies and detect the research gap if there is any.

## Significance of the study

Since the 1980s, there has been a load of studies on foreign language speaking anxiety in SLA —both in international context and in Turkish context. However, the fact is that there are relatively a few meta-synthesis studies in number to benefit from future implications that is why this study is going to be a valuable contribution to Turkish literature in SLA domain. Moreover, the review of studies in Turkish context will enable us to make a comparison of the results between foreign and Turkish context. The last but also important, this study sheds light on not only the future researchers to carry on new studies to fill the research gap but also teachers in order to take actions and precautions against foreign language anxiety to help their learners in many ways by following the guidance of this study.

There are mainly three objectives of this study. Firstly, this study aims to present a meta-synthesis of all the studies that have been carried out in the 21st century in Turkey. Secondly, the purpose of this study is to make a comparison between the studies conducted in foreign context and Turkish context by reviewing a number of studies and the qualitative data obtained from them. Finally, by examining the implications of scientifically valuable studies carried out in international context, the main aim is to find out whether we, as Turkish researchers, are in the right way in terms of conducting scientifically reliable, valid, qualified and well-designed studies to improve the current conditions and take necessary actions for a better progression in this field.

## Method

A meta-synthesis method was employed in this study in order to analyse qualitative data gathered from 24 studies on speaking anxiety. According to Finfgeld (2003), meta-synthesis is a quite broad term addressing synthesis of findings of qualitative studies in order to

create a new interpretation over those studies. All the studies adopted for the present meta-synthesis study conducted in Turkish context by collecting data through whether qualitative or mixed method; however, only qualitative data obtained by these studies were analysed in order to realize the aim of the meta-synthesis method. Besides, 21 studies examined in this article were taken from some journals related to language learning such as *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, Çukurova University Journal of Social Sciences, International Journal of English Language Education, International Journal of Psychology and Educational Studies, International Education Studies, The Journal of Language Learning and Teaching, Journal of History Culture and Art Research, Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, Advances in Language and Literary Studies, Journal of Foreign Language Education and Technology, Journal on Educational Psychology, Journal of language and Linguistic Studies, ELT Research Journal, Hacettepe University Journal of Education, English Language Teaching, Romanian Journal of English Studies and Education and Learning Research Journal*. One out of 24 studies was a master thesis, one was a doctoral dissertation, one of them was a book chapter and the rest were articles published in journals that aforementioned. While selecting the sample studies, the reliability and validity of both the studies and the data collection tools used in studies were taken into consideration to ensure the trustworthiness of the present study. While searching for the studies, the key terms that were used in the search query were "EFL anxiety, foreign language learning anxiety, foreign language speaking anxiety".

The selection of studies followed the following criteria:
1. Focus on foreign language speaking anxiety in Turkey,
2. Studies conducted using qualitative method and data collection instruments such as interviews, reflective journals, voice diaries, open-ended questionnaires etc.
3. Publication in national and international journals, conference papers and book chapters,
4. Published or unpublished theses and dissertations,
5. Publication date between 2000 and 2020.



**Figure 1.** *Number of Studies over Years*
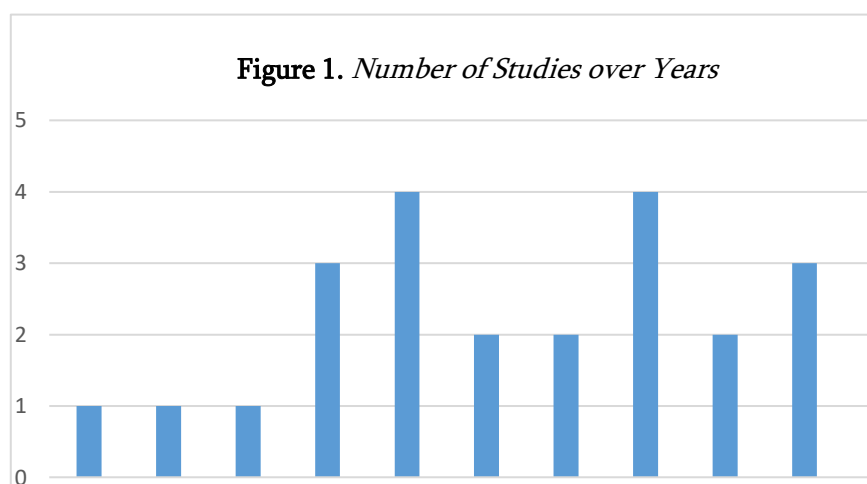
Figure 1 shows the number of studies conducted in the 21st century from 2000 to 2020 and distribution of publication years were demonstrated below in the graph. Not a single study was found between 2002-2007 and in 2011, 2012 and 2018. Most of the studies related to foreign language speaking anxiety were carried out after 2007, and later on the number of the studies gradually increased. It can be implied that FLSA have become a phenomenon after 2007 and it is still a matter of question in SLA domain in Turkish EFL context. 24 studies synthesized for this article took place in all education contexts from primary to tertiary level; however, the majority of them were carried out with university students.

**Table 2.** Systematic review table

| Publication Source | Participants | Context of the Study | Research Instruments |
|---|---|---|---|
| Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies | 19 prepatory program students | State university | Semi-structured interview questions |
| International Journal of Psychology and Educational Studies | 16 third year prospective English teachers (12 females and 4 males) | ELT department at a state university | Written reflections of participants on activities |
| Romanian Journal of English Studies | 39 second-year students | ELT department at a university | Semi-structured interviews |
| Journal of Foreign Language Education and Technology | 80 students from 6th, 8th, 10th,12th grades | Secondary school and high school | Open-ended questions |
| Çukurova University Journal of Social Sciences | 115 (41 males and 74 females) freshman students | ELT department at a state university | Interview protocol |
| Journal on Educational Psychology | 167 in total 17 for interviews | Prepatory program at a state university | semi-structured interviews |

| | Author & Year | Title of the Study |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Öztürk, G., & Gürbüz, N. (2014) | Speaking anxiety among Turkish EFL learners: The case at a state university |
| 2 | Güvendir, E., Kocabiyik, O. O., & Dündar, S. (2020) | The Influence of Counsellor Trainee Support on Public Speaking and Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety in the Class Setting |
| 3 | Zerey, Ozge. (2010) | Voices from Students: A Study on Some Possible Sources of Foreign Language Speaking |
| 4 | Mestan, T. (2017) | Speaking Anxiety among Different Grades of K12: 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th Grades |
| 5 | Dalkılıç, N. (2001) | The role of foreign language classroom anxiety in English speaking courses |
| 6 | Okay, A., & Balçıkanli, C. (2017) | .Belief Patterns and Anxiety Levels of Turkish EFL Students in Relation to Level of Instruction |

In the analysis of the studies, Table 2 was used as a template for the systematic review of all studies included in the present study consisting of author and year of publication, title of the study, publication source, participants, education context of the study and research instruments used in data collection.

As the next step, after reviewing the 24 qualitative studies, in order to analyse the data obtained from these studies thematic analysis was run. Thematic analysis is a widely-used qualitative analytic method which helps the analysis of qualitative data. Maguire and Delahun (2017) state the aim of thematic analysis as "to identify themes, i.e. patterns in the data that are important or interesting, and use these themes to address the research" (p.3353)

## Findings

As a result of the thematic analysis of 24 studies that investigate foreign language anxiety in Turkish context with all kinds of education levels, six main themes emerged. These themes were categorized as: sources of anxiety, exploring some techniques and methods in order to decrease foreign language anxiety, teachers' perceptions towards FLSA, overcoming strategies against speaking anxiety, the effect and results of speaking anxiety upon learners' and their communication & performance and identifying an ideal anxiety-free classroom setting. The first and the most focused theme was exploring the sources of FLSA, and 16 out of 24 studies investigated the major causes of speaking anxiety and mostly similar but some conflicting findings were revealed at the end of their research (Balemir, 2009; Bozer & Çalışkan, 2016; Dalkılıç, 2001; Debreli & Demirkan, 2015; Han & Şahan, 2016; Kayaoğlu & Sağlamel, 2013; Koçak, 2010; Mestan, 2017; Okay & Balçıkanlı, 2017; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2013; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2013, November; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014; Subaşı, 2010; Tüm & Kunt, 2013; Yaman, 2016; Zerey, 2010).

The studies that were conducted in order to find out the sources of FLSA indicated numerous reasons causing the increase of speaking anxiety. Most of the EFL learners perceived

speaking English itself as the most anxiety provoking factor. Studies that aim to explore the sources of FLSA revealed causes of anxiety as presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Sub-themes and regarded studies

| THEME | STUDIES |
|---|---|
| **Major Causes of FLSA** | |
| Teacher's attitude either positive or negative plays an important role as one of the determining factors of speaking anxiety | Bozer & Çalışkan, 2016; Han & Şahan, 2016; Kayaoğlu & Sağlamel, 2013; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2013, November; Subaşı, 2010; Zerey, 2010 |
| Fear of making mistake | Bozer & Çalışkan, 2016; Debreli & Demirkan, 2015; Han & Şahan, 2016; Mestan, 2017; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014; Tüm & Kunt, 2013; Yaman, 2016 |
| Fear of failure and getting low marks | Bozer & Çalışkan, 2016; Kayaoğlu & Sağlamel, 2013;  Koçak, 2010; Zerey, 2010 |
| Speaking in front of others in classroom |  Koçak, 2010; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014; Zerey, 2010 |
| Gender factor was found to be a predicting factor of speaking anxiety in some studies while some could not find a significant relationship between gender and anxiety | Balemir, 2009; Debreli & Demirkan, 2015; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2013 |
| Competitiveness among students by comparing their performance to good students in class | Balemir, 2009; Kayaoğlu & Sağlamel, 2013; Subaşı, 2010 |
| Fear of negative evaluation by peers | Balemir, 2009; Bozer & Çalışkan, 2016; Debreli & Demirkan, 2015; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014; Subaşı, 2010 |
| Students' beliefs and feelings towards speaking English | Mestan, 2017; Okay & Balçıkanlı, 2017; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2013, November; Yaman, 2016 |
| Level of instruction and proficiency level of learners | Balemir, 2009; Debreli & Demirkan, 2015Okay & Balçıkanlı, 2017 |
| Lack of speaking practice in foreign language | Debreli & Demirkan, 2015; Okay & Balçıkanlı, 2017 |
| Immediate questions and spontaneous speaking due to unpreparedness | Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014 |
| Lack of self-confidence and self-esteem | Bozer & Çalışkan, 2016; Dalkılıç, 2001; Debreli & Demirkan, 2015; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2013, November; Zerey, 2010 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Perfectionist attitude of learners | Debreli & Demirkan, 2015; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014; Tüm & Kunt, 2013 |
| Having high expectations from their performance | Dalkılıç, 2001; Subaşı, 2010; Zerey, 2010 |
| Being graded/assessed | Zerey, 2010 |
| Effect of subject and uninteresting teaching procedures | Subaşı, 2010; Zerey, 2010 |
| Negative past experiences | Kayaoğlu & Sağlamel, 2013 |
| Lack of information in their native language | Kayaoğlu & Sağlamel, 2013 |
| Lack of knowledge in foreign language and having linguistic difficulties such as limited vocabulary, lack of fluency etc. | Dalkılıç, 2001; Kayaoğlu & Sağlamel, 2013; Subaşı, 2010; Yaman, 2016; Zerey, 2010 |
| Negative self-assessment of ability | Subaşı, 2010 |
| Speaking to natives | Tüm & Kunt, 2013 |

Some studies sought new ways in order to deal with foreign language anxiety, and suggested new models and methods. These suggested methods and techniques were tested, and it was alleged that all of these found to be efficient in debilitating the effect of FLSA of EFL learners. Studies that aim to explore methods to deal with FLSA are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Sub-themes and regarded studies

| THEME | STUDIES |
|---|---|
| **Exloring New Ways to Decrease FLSA** | |
| Quantum Learning Model (designed based on learners' needs) | Altın & Saracaoğlu, 2019 |
| Interventionist Model of Dynamic Assessment | Köroğlu, 2019 |
| Taking advantage of collaborative activities through group works | Yalçın & İnceçay, 2013 |
| Counsellor trainee support | Güvendir & Dündar, 2020 |
| Theatre production in foreign language | Zerey, 2008 |
| Using drama techniques in classroom | Ataş, 2014 |

| Using mobile application for speaking activities | Han & Keskin, 2016 |
| --- | --- |

Furthermore, strategies used by learners and teachers to cope with FLSA were investigated (Dalkılıç, 2001; Han & Şahan, 2016) as well as clarifying and identifying the concept of an ideal classroom (Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2013, November). Last but not least, the effect of FLSA's upon EFL learners and their communication besides with the consequences of speaking anxiety were examined (Dalkılıç, 2001; Kasap, 2019; Tüm & Kunt, 2013).

## Discussion

Since the 1980s, the concept of foreign language speaking anxiety has been in the limelight of SLA domain and in both the international and national base many researchers have put invaluable efforts with the intent of understanding the FLSA concept and coming up with solutions to eliminate its negative effects on the learning process by which both learners and teachers are affected.  In terms of the sources of foreign language speaking anxiety, studies in both foreign and Turkish contexts show similarity. However, not only the teachers' attitude but also classroom procedures and teaching methods were found to be a predictor factor of speaking anxiety according to some studies conducted in foreign context (e.g. Kasbi & Shirvan, 2017) but they were not mentioned in Turkish-context studies. Along, with in-class anxiety provoking factors, out of class anxiety provoking factors should be investigated and the distinction between two contexts should be made in Turkey as Woodrow (2006) suggests. Besides, Kasbi & Shirvan revealed that effect of culture, preventing to speak L1 and family pressure on students were among sources of FLSA, but these factors were not mentioned or focused on in Turkish-context studies.

Moreover, friends were found to play an important role in students' speaking anxiety in L2 as they share their feeling with each other and exchange advice for their problems about this anxiety issue (Tran & Moni, 2015) so the effect of friends on Turkish EFL learners may be investigated as well. When these 24 studies are examined, it can be concluded that the majority of the studies still aim to find out the causes of speaking anxiety but studies exploring new ways to overcome FLSA's negative effects on language learning process are few in number. In foreign context, there are examples of this kind of research focused on revealing overcoming strategies of language learners such as Rafieyan (2016), Tsiplakides & Keramida (2009) and Woodrow (2006). Consequently, the findings indicate a need for research to find out the strategies to overcome and minimize FLSA's negative effects.

While much research focused on debilitating speaking anxiety or demolishing it, future researchers may conduct new studies in Turkish context by changing their direction to find ways in order to work with FLSA by minimizing its negative effects and taking advantage of its positive effects as it was stated by Tran & Moni (2015). Another point to be touched upon is that foreign language anxiety is a separate phenomenon from foreign language anxiety (Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2004); however, research on revealing the relationship between FLSA and other components of language should be unearthed according to Cheng, Horwitz & Schallert (1999)

so similar studies may be conducted in Turkey as well in order to shed a light to teachers and future researchers.

## Conclusion and Implications

This study adopted the meta-synthesis method and 24 qualitative studies, which were conducted on investigating foreign language speaking anxiety in Turkey through various data collection tools such as structured or semi-structured interviews, open-ended questionnaires, reflective journals, diaries or voice diaries etc., were analysed in order to follow this method. Qualitative data obtained from 24 studies were analysed by employing the thematic analysis and six main were revealed at the end of it.

These six main themes were sources of anxiety, exploring some techniques and methods in order to decrease foreign language anxiety, teachers' perceptions towards FLSA, overcoming strategies against speaking anxiety, the effect and results of speaking anxiety upon learners' and their communication & performance and identifying an ideal anxiety-free classroom setting. The most focused theme was revealing the sources of FLSA, and it was followed by techniques and methods used to alleviate the effect of speaking anxiety experienced by Turkish EFL learners and exploration of effects' & results of FLSA upon learners is the third most focused theme in Turkish context.

A considerable number of studies conducted on the concept of FLSA helped the literature gain ground to a great extent. However, there are still some weak and ambiguous points that needs to be explored, strengthen and shed light on for future researchers, teachers and learners. To start with, there is a dearth of research exploring the teachers' perceptions towards speaking anxiety experienced by their learners and the existence of this kind of studies would help us so that we can make sure of the EFL teachers' awareness of this issue and increase their awareness by helping them take appropriate actions.

Moreover, whether language teachers are conscious of the related issue, they should be trained about what overcoming strategies of FLSA are and how they can make their students learn and apply these strategies to minimize the undesired consequences of FLSA. Since FLSA is related to personality to some extent, thus to the culture that one was raised in, culture specific studies may bring a brand-new perspective to the field which provides us with more tangible results regarding FLSA's relationship with culture. Besides, out of classroom anxiety provoking factors need to be focused as well as in-class factors and the distinction between them should be done. Moreover, facilitating effect of anxiety should not be neglected and learners should be taught how to work with anxiety by minimizing its negative effects and teachers play an undeniably important role at this point so related studies may focus on teacher training on this issue. Finally, since this study is limited to qualitative data obtained from studies that adopted mixed or qualitative method, quantitative studies would be analysed by employing a meta-analysis study to reach many more studies that focuses on FLSA in the field so that the results of all studies would be generalized to the population.

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## Are the Kids Alright? A Black Mother's Microethnography and How It Can Inform Early Childhood Educational Practices

Toni Denese Sturdivant

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**Research Article**

# Are the kids alright? A Black mother's microethnography and how it can inform early childhood educational practices

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**Abstract**

This microethnography explores play, power, and discourse as it relates to Black racial identity development in two preschoolers aged two and four who are the author's daughters. Knowing more about the racialized content embedded within children's play can help early childhood educators plan diversity related experiences that account for the specific topics that children are thinking about. However, children may sensor themselves in classroom settings in a way that they do not in the comfort of their homes. For this reason, the researcher used her position as a mother to document authentic play experiences. Using the privilege of an insider positionality, the author used qualitative data collection methods which included observations, field notes, and audio transcriptions. Data was collected over the course of eight weeks in the home of the participants. With an aim to answer the research question: how does my daughters' play grapple with issues of race or issues related to race? The researcher used a racialized lens in examining their play. Data was analyzed in two tiers with the first tier using a lens of double consciousness, or an internal struggle between being oneself and being accepted by an oppressive society, and the final using intertextual critical discourse analysis. Findings revealed that the preschoolers in the study grappled with race in their play. Specifically, they displayed three types of discourse intertextuality, 1) responding to dominant discourse, 2) contradicting dominant discourse, and 3) confirming them. Implications for early childhood practitioners are discussed.

*Lullaby*
*(for a Black mother)*
*My little dark baby,*
*My little earth-thing,*
*My little love-one,*
*What shall I sing*
*For your lullaby?*
*Stars,*
*Stars,*
*A necklace of stars*
*Winding the night.*
*My little black baby,*
*My dark body's baby,*
*What shall I sing*
*For your lullaby?*
*Moon,*
*Moon,*
*Great diamond moon,*
*Kissing the night.*
*Oh, little dark baby,*
*Night black baby,*
*Stars, stars,*
*Moon,*
*Night stars,*
*Moon,*
*For your sleep-song lullaby.*
*Langston Hughes*

## Introduction

Black positive racial identity development has been found to be correlated with achieving higher academic attainment, better grades, and overall social and emotional well-being (Brittian et al, 2013; Brittian, 2012; Byrd & Chavous, 2019; Carson, 2009; Cokley & Chapman, 2008; Gordon, 2009; Street, Harris-Britt & Walker, 2009; Tovar-Murray et al., 2012; Whittaker &Neville, 2010). In contrast, negative Black racial identity development has been shown to be associated with lower grades and less mental resilience in dealing with racist acts (Smalls et al., 2007; Zirkel & Johnson, 2016). For these reasons, when my daughter told me that I could have her dark skin because she did not want it, I felt that there was a need for an in-depth investigation. The problem is, as a mother, I was not sure where my children fell in terms of racial identity development, despite knowing that Black racial identity development is a major factor in the quality of life of a Black person. As a mother and educational researcher interested in Black racial identity development, I felt that it is my duty to know how my children are managing given the context in which they are developing, a society rife with unchecked anti-blackness.

## Literature Review

Foucault conceptualized discourse and power as being interrelated as discourses are tools used to justify positions of power (Moran, 2010).  Adults are not the only people that are aware of and function within discourse. Young children are very much aware of the discourses

of society and even use societal discourses in their play (Dumas, 2016, MacNaughton, Davis, & Smith, 2010; MacNevin & Berman, 2017; Sturdivant, 2021).

One of the prevalent discourses found in our society is anti-Blackness (Dumas, 2016). This anti-Blackness is not only found within our schooling systems and policies (Dumas, 2016) but also in the media to which many children are exposed, such as in fairy tales (Pfeifer, 2007) and films based on those fairy tales. These anti-Black discourses have been shown to impact children in their play, causing them to refuse to be black play characters (Earick, 2010), reject Black toys (MacNevin & Berman, 2017; Sturdivant & Alanis, 2020) and refuse to choose skin toned paint that matched their dark skin (Van Ausdale & Feagin, 1996).

## Method

I utilized a micro-ethnographical approach to investigate the play discourse of a Black four-year-old and two-year-old. According to Mukherji and Albon (2009), "ethnographers focus on individuals' understandings of their social world as well as gaining an insight – at first hand – into the everyday habits, beliefs and language of the group they are studying" (p. 163). Further, I conducted a micro-ethnographical study in order to accurately analyze in great detail (Lebaron, 2008) the going-ons within the play of my two daughters.  Over the course of eight weeks, as my daughters played, either with each other, alone or with me, I recorded and or took field notes about what was happening. Additionally, I asked questions about certain things that they said, as I would normally do.

I chose to study my children because I argue that this relationship was necessary in order to gain access to their authentic play and conversations given the time constraints of one semester. I collected data with the following broad question in mind, how does my daughters' play grapple with issues of race or issues related to race?

### Setting

All data was collected in the home of the participants. The participants live in the Southwestern region of the United States in a home built in 1929. Their house is located in a neighborhood that is currently undergoing revitalization and gentrification. The home of the participants is around 1300 square feet and contains an office, two bedrooms, one bathroom, a yoga/meditation room, living, dining and mud rooms along with a kitchen. The data that was collected was collected in either the living room, the girls' bedroom, dining room or bathroom.

The living room is decorated in warm tones of browns, oranges and dark greens, adorned with wooden African statues from Tanzania and Kenya and African American paintings of African women. There are pictures in frames as well as canvas sized pictures of the participants, and a large, framed photo of my husband and I on our wedding day.

The participants, Ngozi and Khari, pseudonyms, share a bedroom and a bed, despite there being a bunk bed in the room. There is a child size table in the middle of the girl's bedroom, it is a wooden table with a dry erase tabletop and a built-in dry erase board in place of a cushion in the chairs. On one wall of the room there is a wooden shelf that contains materials with which to build, wooden discs, art materials and a box of found natural materials. Adjacent to this shelf is a rack of dress-up clothes, containing items such as tutus to costumes based on movie characters. On another wall there are more pretend play items such as old cell phones, and old event tickets. That shelf also includes blocks and ramp and ball building sets.

There is a pink and grey play kitchen with toy appliances and wooden food items from eggs to cucumbers. In the corner behind the door, there is a doctor's office, complete with an eye chart, x-ray, cabinet, stethoscopes, etc. The walls of the room are adorned with framed illustrations of Black girls in different hues, a poster sized map of Africa, a world map, as well as pictures of Black characters from movies, television shows and comic books. There are also handmade wooden letters and name plates showcasing the girls' names.

The dining room consists of a dark wood table that seats six. The table has cloth place mats with cloth napkins that work together to create a gray and sea blue color scheme that matches the Ghanaian hand painting of an African woman and her child which is affixed to the wall. There are also framed photographs of Toni Morrison and Angela Davis. Additionally, there is a shelf with blank canvases, white paper, construction paper, and paints that are easily accessible to the sisters.

The single bathroom in the house has grey ceramic tile with matching tile in the shower. There is a basket of bath toys usually drying out on top of the white porcelain bathtub. The toys consist of Black action figures from a popular comic book and movie, as well as sea animals, boats and small plastic balls. There is a full-length mirror affixed to the wall beside a towel rack which alternates between holding towels with an African American girl cartoon character or pink hooded towels decorated with animals.

### Participants

Ngozi and Khari were two and four at the time of the study. The order of the names and ages intentionally may not align, in order to help to protect each child's individual identity. Both girls verbally agreed to take part in the study, though IRB approval was not necessary due to the participants being my children. The sisters both identify as Afrikan. Their parents were born and spent much of their childhood in southern states in the US. Their parents are African American, college educated, professionals.

Ngozi is a medium skin toned child with kinky hair that is often braided or twisted and adorned with beads or pulled into puffs. Prior to the study, while enrolled in a racially diverse childcare center, she showed a strong appreciation for herself and racial aspects of herself, including her hair texture and styles. This was made evident by her spending time appreciating her puffs, beads, and twists in the mirror and while video chatting with grandparents. Unfortunately, after no longer qualifying for admission to that center, the children were enrolled in another child development center and Ngozi almost immediately began rejecting her hair, skin color, and eye color, preferring more Eurocentric features. She made this new preference clear verbally, through art and during pretend play. Upon enrolling in public Pre-K these ideas continued as she was the only Black child in her classroom, and one of twelve in the school, Pre-K through twelfth grade. I, not wanting my daughters to have to continue to face similar identity issues that I had in the past, enrolled my daughters in a small Afrikan-centered independent school.

Khari is a light skinned child with long curly hair. Her hair is often plaited and styled by wrapping the plaits around her ponytail holder, creating a sort of Bantu knot. This style makes it rather difficult to fully grasp the length of her hair. Although both girls look like their parents, Khari appears to be half white to many people. Khari has not had similar issues as her

sister as far as racial identity goes. She, however, is very much aware of differences in skin hues as she has said on more than one occasion that her skin is "light" and her sister's is brown.

### The researcher

Because the researcher is the tool used to gather, organize, and interpret the data in qualitative research (Creswell, 2014), I will present any potential biases as well as personal values. I am a Black (African American) woman and doctoral student (at the time of the study) who was born and raised in a rural town in North East Texas. I also spent a few years living in Virginia as well as a suburb of Cincinnati, Ohio. I remember being very much aware of race as early as age three. When I was three, my family lived in a townhome community where many young families lived. One of the families consisted of an interracial couple and their biracial (Black and White) child. This difference was very profound to me. I remember thinking, in my naiveté, how odd it was for this "Black" child to have a White mother.

When I was five years old my family moved to Ohio and we lived in a large apartment complex. I distinctly remember being one of two Black children that lived in the entire complex, as well as being one of three Black children that attended the elementary school where my half day kindergarten class was housed. It was in this same apartment complex that I realized that not only is race a human difference, but that it is also used by others.

My White "friends" (kids that lived in neighboring apartment buildings that were about the same age), would often ask me questions related to my race, such as why the palms of my hands were the same color as theirs and why my gums were not. While this may seem like simple curiosity, it was not. And at five I was acutely aware of the ways that I was treated differently by the group of curious friends. I was not invited to some birthday parties, teased, hit, called names, and given items and then was accused of stealing them.

One of the "friends" was a part of a family that immigrated from India. The daughter of the family made it clear that I was not to ever be in their apartment home when her dad was there because he did not like Black people. I can also remember wishing my hair was longer and hung down like the girls that made a point to talk about her hair. I would find myself staring at my hands, trying to figure out if my palms really were "white". In my pretend play, I would often drape a towel over my head so that I could pretend to have long hair that swayed as I moved my head.

In first grade my family moved to the Southern part of the United States. This relocation meant that I could then spend a great deal of time with my grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles. This was really the first time in my life, beyond infancy, that I spent a great deal of time with Black people, that weren't my parents, and it felt good. However, I can remember experiencing a cultural mismatch between my home environment and the school environment, upon entering school. Possibly because of past experiences, or maybe because I understood something about dominance, this cultural incongruence led to assimilation which manifested in the abandoning of speaking Black English, correcting close friends and loved ones, including grandparents, for "inappropriate" and "incorrect" behavior, speech, and noise level, creating social distance between myself and my family, as well as many of my African American peers. This social isolation led me to an intentional study of African and African American culture and educational practices benefitting African American students.

Upon becoming a mother, I soon saw that some of the same issues of racial identity development that I faced were becoming a problem for at least one of my daughters. This prompted me to enroll my children in an Afrikan-Centered school and almost instantly, both of my daughters started to talk about Black being beautiful and one started drawing pictures of herself with kinky hair, instead of the long flowy hair of before. This change prompted me to want to examine my daughters' play at home, hence, the present study.

### Researcher positionality

I took a reflexive approach to positionality to this research, because I believe that researchers are not separate from the socio-political realities of the society in which we live (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). I used a critical race theory lens in my view of education and the greater society. That is to say that I believe that "race and racism are endemic, pervasive, widespread, and ingrained in society" (Milner, 2007, p. 395) and this belief heightens my awareness of situations and conversations that could be the result of living in a racist society.

According to Milner (2007) researchers using a frame of critical race theory, seeking to determine their position in relation to their participants, should ask and answer the following questions:

- What are the cultural and racial heritage and the historical landscape of the participants in the study? How do I know?
- In what ways do my research participants' racial and cultural backgrounds influence how they experience the world? How do I know?
- What do my participants believe about race and culture in society and education, and how do they and I attend to the tensions inherent in my and their convictions and beliefs about race and culture in the research process? Why? How do I know?
- How do I negotiate and balance my own interests and research agendas with those of my research participants, which may be inconsistent with or diverge from mine? How do I know?
- What are and have been some social, political, historical, and contextual nuances and realities that have shaped my research participants' racial and cultural ways or systems of knowing, both past and present? How consistent and inconsistent are these realities with mine? How do I know? (p. 395)

In the following sections, I will attempt to address some of the questions posed by Milner (2007) as they logically flow accounting for the ages of the participants.

*Position towards participants:* Because I studied the at home play of my own children, I consider myself to be an insider. My children and I share the same racial heritage and we started off our development in a similar setting as an extreme racial minority in most situations. However, our cultural identities diverge on one key aspect; I never experienced attending an Afrikan Centered school, as the participants were attending during the study.

I know that my oldest daughter is acutely aware of issues of race because she often brings them up or asks questions about them. She points out times of no or little representation of Black people in books, television shows, movies and advertisement, among other situations. She does this partly because I am teaching her to hold individuals and institutions accountable for erasing or not including the Black experience/perspective and because she is aware that she once attended a school that she refers to as "all White" and is now at a school with only "Afrikan people".

My children are comfortable being themselves around me, I see sides of them that they do not typically reveal around others. I also have a good understanding of the context in which their learning is occurring and the situations that frame their play, as myself and my husband choose the environments and situations to which they are exposed. Although, I am not with them while they are at school, I am aware of the curriculum and can more than reasonably ascertain from where certain ways of being, doing, and knowing come. Because my daughters are so young, they are either with my husband and myself, my parents or at school.

However, because of the close relationship I have with the participants, this creates a challenge in determining what information to share and what information to leave confidential. I feel that as their mother it is my duty to protect them and therefore will always have this in mind as I report their words and actions.

*Position towards play:* MacNaughton, Davis, and Smith (2010), drawing from the work of Foucault, asserted that racial discourses are delivered and redelivered by children, including young children through performance. This means that children are not only aware of the discourses of society, including those surrounding race, but those same discourses are salient enough to play a role in the actions of children. MacNaughton et al. (2010), argued that children perform their identities "within the constrained and bounded options constructed through the discourses available to them" (p. 137). MacNevin and Berman (2017) continued this argument by stating that "children are active agents who draw on the discourses available to them in the historical, social and political context in which they live. The discourses they draw upon may be observed in their play" (p. 829). With this being said, as a researcher concerned with race and racial identity development in young children, I expect to observe issues of race in the play of the participants and will naturally gravitate toward those situations.

*Position towards the setting:* I collected data in my own home. This is a place where I feel the most comfortable and the most like myself. I feel that this also adds to my insider position, as I am just as familiar with the physical environment as the participants themselves. However, this familiarity could have impacted my field notes. Because I am so familiar with the setting, it proved to be difficult to decide what needed to be stated and what could be left unsaid. An outsider might pay attention to environmental factors that I inadvertently glossed over.

*Role of the researcher:* As the mother of the participants and the researcher, I had no choice but to be both an observer and a participant. I cannot say that each time that I recorded and took notes that each role carried the same weight. I know that at times I had to participate more as my children needed help, and they came to me to seek this help, they needed me to become more involved. At other times, my children spent more time playing cooperatively

with one another, or by themselves. It was in these instances that I was more of an observer than a participant. I think there is value in both of the roles, and each allowed me to gather a more holistic picture of the play of my daughters.

## Instruments

I used a mini microethnography approach to obtain "detailed insights" (Mukherji & Albon, 2009) into the play of Ngozi and Khari. I took field notes in my home on my laptop. There was a mix of field notes that were taken on the spot, as well as some that were written up after the event had taken place, but on the same day. The field notes were used to explain information that I observed but that was not able to be communicated through audio recordings.

The audio recordings were taken on a cell phone using a digital recording app. Once a recording session began, I placed the cell phone somewhere in the room with the participants in order to record their speech as they played. At the end of the study the audio recordings were transcribed by a transcription service. I then replayed each audio recording and checked the transcription text, making any necessary changes.

## Data analysis procedure

Using the lens of double consciousness (Du Bois, 1999) and the Bakhtin intertextuality analysis method (Blackledge, 2012), I analyzed the data using two-tiered analysis. First, I read through all of the field notes and transcripts and coded the data by marking instances in which the girls acted in a way or said something that would reveal a double consciousness (Du Bois, 1999). After the relevant data was marked, codes drawing from the discussion of power and discourse found in Blackledge (2012) were developed and used to group and describe the discussions and actions of the participants. For example, Blackledge (2012) paraphrased Bakhtin (1981) by stating "discourse bears the traces of the voices of others, is shaped by them, responds to them, contradicts them or confirms them, in one way or another evaluates them" (p. 619). After marking instances of double consciousness and intertextuality (Blackledge, 2012), I grouped examples of specific types of intertextuality, such as instances that responded to dominant discourse.

## Findings

Based on the research question, how does Ngozi and Khari's play grapple with race, the following themes were revealed after data analysis. Ngozi and Khari in fact grappled with race in their play, as did other young children in existing research (Van Ausdale & Feagin, 1996). Additionally, Khari and Ngozi utilized three of the four ways that discourse can portray intertextuality (Blackledge, 2012), responding to dominant discourse, contradicting dominant discourses as well as confirming them.

## Responding to dominant discourse

For the purposes of this study, I defined responding to dominant discourse as talk and or actions that acknowledged an understanding of the prevailing discourse but neither overtly confirmed nor necessarily contradicted it.

One day Ngozi was looking at the poster sized graphic art on her and Khari's wall with Khari and me. This particular artwork showcased three individually framed 8.5x11 pictures of Black girls of different hues and different natural hair styles. Ngozi called me into her room so that she could tell me which ones she liked the best.

Ngozi: Alright, so this the first one backwards. The lightest, the middlest and the darkest

Khari: And the sleepiest with a book.

Mama: So that's the order that you like them?

Ngozi: Yeah.

Mama: Why?

Ngozi: Because I just do.

Mama: So I notice that you say you like the one with the lighter skin the best, then with the next lighter skin then with the darkest skin. So you have light, medium, dark, like that?

Ngozi: Yeah

Mama: But why? Is it because of the color of their skin?

Ngozi: And I notice that both tend to have earrings. Like me.

Mama: Did you rank them like that because of the color of their skin?

Ngozi: Nope.

Mama: Why?

Ngozi: Because I wanted them to be like that.

It seemed that this could have been a case of confirming a dominant discourse, but when pushed further Ngozi insisted that she had not ranked them in that order because of their skin hue, although she was aware of the different tones, as that is the way she referred to each picture.

During a different instance Ngozi began to describe a beautiful woman that she had recently dreamed about.

Ngozi: Well, she braid her hair like this..

Mama: Was she an Afrikan person, a…

Ngozi :Yes.

Mama: What was her skin like?

Ngozi: Brown skin.

Mama: Brown skin like your brown skin or a different brown skin?

Ngozi: It was very, it was [Khari's] color of skin.

Mama: OK, so light brown.

Ngozi: Yeah, and she braid her hair like this. And then she put her hair like this… And then she-

Mama: So she had a really long braid that she wrapped around her head?

Ngozi: Yeah. 'Cause she wanted her hair to be like Joiner.

Mama: What kind of hair did she have?

Ngozi: Kinky

While Ngozi's beautiful woman was not a blonde hair blue eyed European with a tan, she was also not a woman that looked very much like her.

### Contradicting dominant discourse

Ngozi and Khari were not always somewhere in between accepting and contradicting anti-blackness, there were instances where one or both of them outright contradicted them. For example, Khari and Ngozi were playing family in their room. Ngozi was playing the role of the mother and Khari was a big sister to a doll. Ngozi told big sister to get her little sister ready for the concert by doing her hair. The following exchange took place.

Ngozi: Because the concert needs beautiful hair.
Khari (to the doll): The concert needs beautiful hair, like my hair. Like my hair…
Ngozi: And Mommy's hair.
Khari: And Mommy's hair.
Ngozi: Their hair is so, our hair is so beautiful
Khari: Our hair is so beautiful.
Ngozi (to doll): So is yours.
Khari (to doll): So is yours.

This type of contradiction also occurred while playing with a monster puppet in the living room. The puppet goes with a book that features a green monster. The front side of the puppet is green, but all of the rest of the puppet, including the back, is black. Ngozi turned the puppet over to the back side and said she was turning the monster into a black monster.

Mama: Why did you want to change the monster from green to black?
Ngozi: Because he's scar- to make it even scarier.
Mama: Why, uh, what makes black scarier?
Ngozi: Oh, so it can be a beautiful monster.
Mama: If it was a beautiful monster then it's scary?
Ngozi: No. Black is beautiful, so a black monster.

The assertion of "Black is beautiful" was created to and continues to be a phrase to contradict the prevailing idea that Eurocentric standards of beauty are not the only ones that exist and should not be used to judge the appearance of all people.

Another example occurred while I was styling Ngozi's hair as we were getting ready to leave for the day. She expressed a desire to change an aspect of her hair to make it more beautiful, but while also contradicting a dominant discourse.

Ngozi: I want my hair to be my favorite colors, pink and white.
Mama: OK, so if I dyed your hair pink and it was still kinky, coily hair would you think it was beautiful?
Ngozi: Yeah. Please do that Mama, can you?
Khari also contradicted a kinky hair is not beautiful discourse that day.
Mama: [Khari], do you think your hair is beautiful?
Khari: No, I want hair as [Ngozi].

Ngozi has tightly coiled hair that naturally makes an afro and shrinks up substantially, not revealing its true length, not the hair that is routinely lauded for its beauty by those in control of media images.

Additionally, while the girls were painting in the dining room one evening, Ngozi made some comments about the color black as she used it to paint. Ngozi and Khari were sitting at the dining room table using acrylic paints on construction paper. Khari had a set of neon-colored paints, while Ngozi's set included primary colors as well as black and white. Ngozi said that she was going to paint nature. While using the black paint to paint clouds at the top of her piece of construction paper she said, "Black clouds. Beautiful black." After that, she painted a rainbow and included the color black stating "… and the beautiful black on the rainbow." These statements are in direct opposition to what is conventionally believed about the color black (Pfeifer, 2007), especially as it would relate to clouds and a rainbow.

### Confirming dominant discourse

While there were times where both Ngozi and Khari took an oppositional stance toward harmful discourse, there were also instances in which they confirmed them. Firstly, the instance presented above about the scary black monster is an example. Although Ngozi attempted to save face by stating that "black is beautiful", her initial statement that she made the monster black to make it scarier confirms a prevailing notion that black is scary, bad and evil (Earick, 2010).

Ngozi also confirmed through her speech harmful discourse beyond colors, but about actual race. Khari and Ngozi had just gotten out of the bathtub. They were using their hooded towels and pretending that it was their hair, as they walked into the other room to get dressed.

Mama: Wait, so now the towel is your hair?
Ngozi: (giggle) yeah.
Mama: But I'm noticing that that hair is hanging down and is not growing out like African hair.
Ngozi: We're pretending we're white people.
Mama: Why are you pretending you're white people?
Ngozi: Because I just love white, beautiful skin.

Moving beyond a love for white skin and long flowy hair, Ngozi also expressed dislike for herself as she began to get dressed.

Mama: Do you think your hair is beautiful?
Ngozi: Yeah. No. Not my real hair, but this do (referring to the towel that was still on her head)
Mama: Why don't you think your real hair is beautiful?
Ngozi: Because I don't.

### Discussion

After collecting and analyzing the data it became clear that both girls were in fact aware of the discourse around them. Although they were only two and four at the time of the study, they showed great knowledge of our society's concepts of race and color. This remains consistent with previous research involving young children, race, and discourse

(MacNaughton, Davis & Smith, 2010; Sturdivant, 2021), however, by using an intertextuality analysis (Blackledge, 2012) it also illuminated that more happened than the girls simply grabbing discourses and throwing them into their play.

Ngozi and Khari would sometimes embrace kinky hair and in other times reject it. The instance with the green turned black monster shows that Ngozi has a conscious understanding that there are two contradicting discourses available: black is scary and black is beautiful. In that instance she moved through the two notions, not being sure which would be the most appropriate in that situation. I argue that this reveals the presence of a double consciousness (Du Bois, 1999), even within young children. Du Bois (1999) described his notion of a double consciousness in the following way:

> It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness,-- an American, a Negro, two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. (p.11)

Ngozi and Khari clearly saw themselves through the eyes of hegemony as they pretended to be white and have European hair. But they also saw themselves for who they really are as they talked about the beauty of kinky hair. These young children, both under five, showed an internal struggle with discourse as it relates to power.

## Conclusion and Implications

It is my sincere belief that my kids will be alright, that they will continue to develop and learn and will gradually develop the tools to more consistently contradict harmful discourse, as well as to begin evaluating discourse, which is the last form of intertextuality but was not present in the study. However, with the girls attending an Afrikan-centered school and living in a home that expresses a love for Blackness in the decorations, materials, toys and even location, it becomes evident just how salient harmful discourse can be. We as a society, parents, teachers, producers of media, neighbors and friends must do our part to stop transmitting harmful anti-black discourse as well as making a point to contradict them as often as possible. Black children are listening, and they are internalizing both the confirmatory and the contradicting messages.

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## Illustrative Multiple-Choice Test Items on the Taxonomy of Cognitive Objectives in Assessing and Evaluating Musical Learning

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Review Article

# Illustrative multiple-choice test items on the taxonomy of cognitive objectives in assessing and evaluating musical learning

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## Abstract

This study identified and annotated appropriate test items using the multiple-choice test item format in the cognitive domain of the taxonomy of educational objectives in assessing and evaluating musical learning through the descriptive-developmental research design. This assessment approach is one of the key skills needed of Music teachers to resolve the learning competencies, difficulties, and diversity of the current curriculum, to assist them in exploring the needs of their students and to provide them with a structure for determining the best and most suitable evaluative methodology in the assessment process. The data were analyzed using Bloom's taxonomy including knowledge, comprehension, analysis, application, synthesis, and evaluation. The annotation for each test item utilized a summary of main ideas and responses for a brief description and discussion in accordance with the cognitive domain and musical concept. Twenty-three illustrative multiple-choice test items were identified and annotated including areas in the Philippine music, Asian music, Western music, and choral works and conducting. Planning classroom tests and assessments requires determining what is to be measured and then defining it precisely so that tasks can be constructed using various relevant measures related to musical learning. This process implied that constructing an assessment requires a clear, concise, and complete direction incorporating the music rudiments and test format according to the behavioral indicators essential in constructing appropriate assessment, that is, an objective test item such as the multiple-choice test item format on the cognitive domain of the taxonomy of educational objectives in assessing and evaluating musical learning.

## Introduction

Constructing a satisfactory test is one of the hardest jobs a teacher has to perform. Test construction remains largely an art rather than a science, but there are well-established, valid principles of test development that are all too frequently unknown or ignored. The process of constructing a good test item is deliberate and time-consuming. This process demands an understanding of the objectives being assessed and of the examinees and their test-taking behavior. High-quality assessment can produce valid information about students' learning outcomes and provide insights into the effectiveness of teachers' instruction. Research indicates that teachers who introduce various assessments into their classroom practice can affect substantial achievement gains. In this circumstance, this study aimed to identify and annotate appropriate test items using the multiple-choice test item format on the taxonomy of cognitive objectives in assessing and evaluating musical learning. This method is one of the necessary fundamental skills of Music teachers to address the learning challenges and diverseness of the current curriculum (Tabuena, 2021; Tabuena, 2019) in terms of test development and evaluation.

As stated in the philosophy and rationale for music education in K to 12 basic education curriculum in the Philippines (Department of Education, 2016), a keen sensitivity to environmental and musical sounds needs to be developed, in which the student must learn to think, hear, and speak in the means of music. Concurrently, growth, and progress in the abilities that facilitate the application of the learner's knowledge should be strengthened, through active engagement in the different musical endeavors and processes. One good example of assessing and evaluating musical learning is the preparation and development of test items and material through an objective test item to obtain valid, reliable, and useful information concerning student learning. This suggests a means in determining what is/are to be measured and defining objectives precisely so that the test items constructed can evoke the desired performance of the learner. However, few teachers in the grand arena of teaching are aware of and knowledgeable about the important considerations in the construction of test items regardless of academic disciplines. That at times leads to confusing and conflicting views and ideas which results in a meaningless endeavor. Classroom tests and assessments can be used for a variety of instructional purposes. They can be best described in terms of their purpose and use in the instructional process parallel to the types of assessment, such as a fixed-choice test, a form of assessment that is efficient in measuring the knowledge and skills of an individual.

Stanley and Hopkins (1972) claimed that logical considerations and research have shown that skillfully prepared informal tests can be as reliable as some standardized test, and often more valid for a particular class or student. Standardized tests tend to be a focus upon broad, general objectives that cover a wide range of content. A teacher needs to evaluate frequently so he/she can identify the specific learning difficulties of individual children and the class as a whole. By this test item development process, this study will ensure the analysis and evaluation process concerning the assessment and evaluation of musical learning. This research paper is an attempt to furnish the teachers to provide background knowledge of the characteristics and proper evaluative measures through test item development regarding the cognitive domain of the taxonomy of educational objectives.

## Literature Review

### Theoretical framework

The Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 8 (2015) on policy guidelines on classroom assessment for the K-12 basic education program stated that at the heart of an assessment framework, especially for a typical type of test, is the recognition and deliberate consideration of the learners' zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). Appropriate assessment is employed to secure learners' progress in advancing from guided to an independent array of knowledge, understanding, and skills, and to empower them to carry this successfully in future circumstances. From this point of view, assessment promotes the advancement of learners' higher-order thinking and 21st-century skills. The prospect of assessment, accordingly, recognizes the integration of instruction and assessment. The assessment is part of daily lessons and extends the everyday classroom ventures that are already in place in the K-12 curriculum. In addition, the Department of Education had released DepEd Order No. 79 (2003), in which assessment and evaluation of learning and reporting of students progress in public elementary and secondary schools were promulgated in giving an emphasis in the process of assessment and evaluation of learning in all of the general subjects taken in a primary and secondary level. In this light, appropriate assessment is employed to assure learners' achievement in leading from guided to an individualistic representation of knowledge, understanding, and skills (Tabuena, 2019). This viewpoint also acknowledges the diversity of students inside the classroom, the necessity for varied ways of assessing their diverse abilities and learning potentials, and the purpose of the students as co-participants in the evaluation process (Tabuena, 2020b).

### Taxonomy of educational objectives

There are three taxonomies utilized for a given measurable learner outcome depending upon the fundamental goal to which the measurable learner outcome is connected. There are knowledge-based goals (cognitive domain), skills-based goals (psychomotor domain), and affective goals (affective domain: attitudes, interests, and values); subsequently, there is a taxonomy separately. Levels of expertise are classified within each taxonomy in a specific order of increasing complexity. Assessable student results that demand higher levels of expertise will require more advanced classroom assessments. Most teachers are quite familiar with Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom et al., 1956; Shabatura, 2013). The six cognitive processes in the revised taxonomy are the following: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. These are just slightly different from the original six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy: knowledge, comprehension, analysis, application, synthesis, and evaluation.

### Cognitive domain of the taxonomy of educational objectives

In the knowledge cognitive domain, it involves the recall of specifics, universals, methods or processes, pattern, setting, or structure. The knowledge objectives indicate most of the subconscious processes of recognizing, relating or reorganizing a problem. In this cognitive domain, there are three sub-domains such as knowledge of specifics, knowledge of ways and means of dealing with specifics, and knowledge of the universals and abstractions in a field. In the comprehension cognitive domain, this depicts the weakest level of understanding or comprehension that the learner grasps what is being taught without significantly associating it

to other matters or recognizing its fullest meanings or implications. There are three sub-domains in this cognitive domain such as translation, interpretation, and extrapolation. The application cognitive domain is the management of abstractions in appropriate and actual situations. These abstractions may be in the sort of general ideas, generalized methods, rules, or procedures; ideas, technical principles, and theories that must be recognized and employed. The analysis cognitive domain is the division of a communication into its integral parts or elements such that the corresponding hierarchy of concepts is made clear and/or the connections between the concepts expressed are made specific and explicit meant to arrange, clarify, manage, or organize the communication. There are three sub-domains in this cognitive domain such as analysis of elements, analysis of relationships, and analysis of organizational principles. The synthesis cognitive domain is the manner of placing together the parts and elements to form or create a whole; combining and arranging them in such a way as to establish a structure or pattern not there before. There are three sub-domains in this cognitive domain such as production of a unique communication, production of a plan, or proposed set of operations, and derivation of a set of abstract relations. In the evaluation cognitive domain, it is a judgment regarding the value of methods and material for given directions. Qualitative and quantitative judgments concerning the extent to which methods and material satisfy the criteria or standards of an appraisal or assessment. There are two sub-domains in this cognitive domain such as judgments in terms of internal and external evidence or criteria.

### Multiple-choice test item

Multiple-choice test items were constructed as the main instrument for the test items in musical learning. It can effectively measure many of the simple learning outcomes measured by the short-answer item, the true-false item, and the matching exercise (Linn & Gronlund, 2000). In addition, it can measure a variety of complex outcomes in the knowledge, understanding, and application areas. This flexibility, plus the higher quality items usually found in the multiple-choice form, has led to its extensive use in achievement testing. A multiple-choice item consists of a problem and a list of suggested solutions. In this case, the researchers stated the problem as a direct question or an incomplete statement, which is called the stem of the item. The list of recommended solutions may include numbers, phrases, symbols, or words called the alternatives which are also known as choices or options. The correct alternative in each item is called the answer, and the remaining alternatives are called distracters. Multiple-choice test items are less responsive to selecting than true-or-false questions, giving them a more reliable and substantial means of assessment (Sinha, 2017).

From these reviews, the researchers drew much of methodology and processes, that is, from the guidelines, stages, and methods of test construction and test item annotation using the cognitive domain of the taxonomy of educational objectives and the multiple-choice test item format on the taxonomy of cognitive objectives in assessing and evaluating musical learning. Thus, this study aimed to identify and annotate appropriate test items using the multiple-choice test item format on the taxonomy of cognitive objectives in assessing and evaluating musical learning as an attempt to furnish the teachers in providing background knowledge of the characteristics and proper evaluative measures through test item development regarding the cognitive domain of the taxonomy of educational objectives. This assessment method is one

of the needed primary skills of Music teachers to address the learning challenges, competencies, and diverseness of the existing curriculum, help them to explore the needs of the students, and give them a framework (Tabuena, 2021) of what could be the best and appropriate evaluative technique or strategy in the assessment process.

## Methodology

### Research design

This study employed the descriptive method research design through the library method (Sappe, 2020) and literature review (Tabuena, 2020a) in gathering and synthesizing the articles and scientific papers related to the cognitive domain of the taxonomy of educational objectives and the use of the descriptive-developmental design in the development of the illustrative multiple-choice test items for each taxonomy of cognitive objectives. Descriptive-developmental studies are valuable for providing facts on which scientific judgments may be based, providing essential knowledge for closer observation into practices, behaviors, methods, and procedures, in playing a large part in the development of instruments for the measurement of instruments that would be employed in all types of descriptive-developmental research such as data-gathering instruments, and in the formulation of policies in the local, national, or international level (Calmorin, 2010; Creswell, 2009).

### Data gathering procedure

The stages used in the annotation process of illustrative multiple-choice test items was based on the first two stages developed by Sevilla et al. (1984), and the instructional design developed by Aguirre, Jr. and de Cadiz (2013): Stage I, Planning Stage, and Stage II, Test Construction Stage. In the planning stage, multiple-choice test items were constructed as the main format for the test items as it is generally recognized as the most widely applicable and useful type of objective test item (Linn & Gronlund, 2000). In this case, to determine the level of expertise required for each measurable student outcome, first decide which of these three broad domains (cognitive, psychomotor, and affective) the corresponding course goal belongs to. Then, using the appropriate Bloom's taxonomy, the researchers looked over the descriptions of the various levels of expertise. In this research design, the library method (Sappe, 2020) and literature review (Tabuena, 2020a) were utilized in gathering and synthesizing concepts related to the cognitive domain of the taxonomy of educational objectives. References used in the test item construction were adapted from various K-12-based learning materials and other music-related resources in the present curriculum in the book of Abijan et al. (1997), Casilang et al. (2014), Evangelista, et al. (2014), Forney and Machlis (2007), Gonzales et al. (2008), Kelly (2013), Lacia et al. (2008), Perez et al. (2004), and Santiago et al. (2014).

In the test construction stage, Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive objectives was used to see the importance of the categories into which the various aspects of cognition have been placed. Bloom and his co-authors believe that the taxonomy does progress from simple to complex so that examination of the order in which the categories of learning have been placed can be very helpful for planning learning experiences (Colwell, 1970). On the other hand, one of the structured response types of tests is the multiple-choice item test (Tabuena, 2020b). Multiple-choice item test is one of the objective types of tests, among others include recall test items, completion test items, true-false test items, recognition test items, matching test items,

rearrangement test items, and analogy (Asaad & Hailaya, 2004; Calmorin, 2010). In choosing an objective type of test, one should be careful if it is appropriate to deliver to a particular grade level and the subject matter. In this case, the researchers employed selected responses, items consisting of a stem, often a question or incomplete sentence that introduces the problem. The student selects the response from a set of options, such as (A), (B), (C), and (D), that follow the stem. Normally, one option is correct, and the remaining options are referred to as distractors. In this type of test, an objective test is less time-consuming since the responses are composed of single words, short phrases, or options are provided from which selection of the answer is to be made. An objective test is fair to students since the slow writers can accomplish the test as fast as the fast writers.

### Data analysis

The primary goal of the analysis is to identify appropriate illustrative multiple-choice test items on the taxonomy of cognitive objectives and annotate each test item in accordance with the students' musical learning. The classification of the taxonomy of educational objectives in the cognitive domain was based on Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (1956). Bloom's taxonomy (Shabatura, 2013) uses a multi-tiered scale to express the level of expertise required to achieve each measurable student outcome. Organizing measurable student outcomes in this way will allow the researchers to select appropriate classroom assessment and test items for musical learning. In this process, test items were annotated to identify the relevance of a particular taxonomy of cognitive objectives on the constructed illustrative multiple-choice test item and students' musical learning. The data, the illustrative test items, and annotations were analyzed through synthesis information (Tabuena & Hilario, 2021; Murray, 2006) known as explanatory synthesis, a written discussion that draws on one or more sources then divide the subject into its components parts through the use of six criteria in analyzing the reviews of the taxonomy of cognitive objectives such as the knowledge, comprehension, analysis, application, synthesis, and evaluation. This process also describes and explains previously reported significant results that examine the same phenomenon, known as a meta-analysis, the evaluation of the outcome of different data components and methodologies on the described results. (Stanly, 2001; Zeng et al., 2014; Aburayya et al., 2020). On the other hand, the annotation for each test item utilized two ways of annotating a text through paraphrase/summary of main ideas and comments/responses for a brief description and discussion (Hunter College, 2020).

## Results and Discussion

### Knowledge
#### *Knowledge of specifics*

This domain is the recall of isolated and specific bits of information. The importance is on symbols with precise referents. This component, which is at a very low level of abstraction, may be thought of as the factors from which more intricate and abstract methods of knowledge are formed.

*Knowledge of terminology.* This domain is under the knowledge of specifics regarding the knowledge of terms for specific symbols or representational processes (non-verbal and verbal). The following is a test item in the area of Asian music (unit from the music of East Asia, a topic from the music of China) for the knowledge of terminology: *Ruan* is known as: (A) The long flute instrument in China and used to play classical music. (B) The kind of violin (fiddle) with two strings. (C) The moon guitar, and comes in a variety of different sizes and pitches. (D) The mouth organ with 17 pipes. In this test item, the answer is letter (C) The moon guitar and comes in a variety of different sizes and pitches. This question involves Chinese musical instruments, and the student must identify which of the following letter is suited in the description of the object, that is, *Ruan* is known as the moon guitar, and comes in a variety of different sizes and pitches.

*Knowledge of specific facts.* The domain is also under the knowledge of specifics regarding the knowledge of dates such as places, persons, events, persons, and other related matters. The following is a test item in the area of Philippine music (unit from the traditional music forms of the Philippines, a topic from the Filipino composers) for the knowledge of specific facts: Which of the following compositions of Nicanor Abelardo was his first work and dedicated to his grandmother? (A) *Himutok.* (B) *Ang Unang Buko.* (C) *Pahimakas.* (D) *Mutya ng Pasig.* In this test item, the answer is letter (B) Ang Unang Buko. The question is simple, yet if we observed the following set of choices, it must be directly imparted to the information above. Secondly, if the student grasps the clues in the question, it is easy to answer. Thirdly, if we consider the set of choices, *Himutok* and *Mutya ng Pasig* are kinds of *Kundiman* which Abelardo worked on in his later time, as well as *Pahimkas,* even if it is a song for a dying person. Therefore, *Ang Unang Buko* was the first work of Abelardo dedicated to his grandmother.

### Knowledge of ways and means of dealing with specifics

This domain is a knowledge of the ways of criticizing, judging, organizing, and studying. The following is a test item in the area of Western music (unit from contemporary music, a topic from the composers) for the knowledge of ways and means of dealing with specifics: Who is regarded as a prominent Post-modernist musician? (A) Sergei Rachmaninoff. (B) Igor Stravinsky. (C) Bela Bartok. (D) John Cage. In this test item, the answer is letter (D) John Cage. The relation of each composer is, they are all prominent contemporary composers, yet the relation of each in terms of their music is, John Cage is a prominent figure in the 20th century whose influence steadily grew and is regarded by many as the founder of post-modernist music. The facts of each composer can be reflected easily by understanding beyond simple factual knowledge in the relationship of other facts by the other composers, such Rachmaninoff (late romantic style), Stravinsky (neoclassicism), and Debussy (impressionism).

*Knowledge of conventions.* This domain is under the knowledge of ways and means of dealing with specifics regarding the knowledge of distinctive ways of presenting and treating phenomena and ideas. The following is a test item in the area of Western music (unit from the music of the Baroque Period, a topic from the historical background) for the knowledge of conventions: Which of the following generally characterize the Baroque music? (A) Elaborate musical ornamentations were incorporated. (B) Dynamics tend to stay constant; however, when there is a tense shift, the change in dynamics is sudden. (C) Both A and B. (D) None of

the above. In this test item, the answer is letter (C) Both A and B. Based on the general characteristics of Baroque music, letters (A) and (B) are dominantly flourished by the style and practices in this period; and it is significantly established by its composers.

*Knowledge of trends and sequences.* This domain is also under the knowledge of ways and means of dealing with specifics regarding the knowledge of the directions, movements, and processes of phenomena concerning time. The following is a test item in the area of the Philippine music (unit from the music of Luzon, a topic from the *Tingguian)* for the knowledge of trends and sequence: The word *"Tinguian"* may have been derived from the Malay word *"tinggi"* which have been coined during what period? (A) Early Spanish Period. (B) Late Japanese Period. (C) Early American Period. (D) Late American Period. In this test item, the answer is letter (A) Early Spanish Period. *Tingguians* of Luzon were descendants of the Chinese who settled in the northern part of the island centuries ago, yet the word *"Tinguian"* may have been derived from the Malay word *"tinggi"*, which means mountain or highlands, and may have been coined during the early Spanish period. This question evaluates the knowledge of the student in terms of their understanding of events and processes.

*Knowledge of classifications and categories.* This domain is also under the knowledge of ways and means of dealing with specifics regarding the knowledge of the arrangements, classes, divisions, and sets that are regarded as rudimentary for a given subject argument, field, problem, or purpose. The following is a test item in the area of Asian music (unit from the music of Southeast Asia, a topic from the music of Thailand) for the knowledge of classifications and categories: In Thailand music, instruments are classified according to a system and to use. What ensemble is mostly composed of stringed instruments to accompany singing, dancing, and on holidays? (A) *Gamelan* Ensemble. (B) *Pi Phat* Ensemble. (C) *Mahori* Ensemble. (D) *Khruang Sai* Ensemble. In this test item, the answer is letter (D) *Khruang Sai* Ensemble. *Gamelan* is just a distraction among the choices, for it is in Indonesian music. *Piphat*, *Mahori,* and *Khruang Sai* are ensembles established in Thai music, yet the *Khruang Sai* ensemble is mostly composed of stringed instruments to accompany singing, dancing, and on holidays. *Piphat* ensemble is made up of percussion and wind instruments, which are played at court ceremonies and theatrical presentations; and *Mahori* is composed of stringed and percussion instruments but not as the same use of *Khruang Sai*.

*Knowledge of criteria.* This domain is also under the knowledge of ways and means of dealing with specifics regarding the knowledge of the criteria by which conduct, facts, opinions, and principles are judged or tested. The following is a test item in the area of Philippine music (unit from the traditional music forms of the Philippines, a topic from the composers) for the knowledge of criteria: A *Balitao* is one of a Spanish influence which: (A) Written in triple time with many versions, the most popular is the *Ilocano* version. (B) Written in a minor key in duple time. The rhythmical accompaniment is in a slow tempo, habanera style. (C) Written in triple time and the movement is similar to the Spanish Jota or bolero. (D) Written in a minor key, a dance time, and the traditional name is Philippine Serenade or *Panapatan*. In this test item, the answer is letter (C) Written in triple time and the movement is similar to the Spanish Jota or bolero. In order to answer this question, the student must know what *Balitao* is, the elements of a *Balitao* in terms of its characteristics to figure out accurate information, and the basis to consider this thing. In order to distinguish a *Balitao*, it must be in

triple meter time, consider letters (A) and (C). Yet, a *Balitao's* movement is similar to the Spanish Jota or bolero, therefore it is letter (C). The knowledge of criteria must be established in students' learning habits for a basis of judgments in line with musical learning.

*Knowledge of methodology.* This domain is also under the knowledge of ways and means of dealing with specifics regarding the knowledge of the methods or manners of inquiry, procedures, and techniques made use of in a particular subject field and those utilized in examining particular phenomena and problems. The following is a test item in the area of the Philippine music (unit from the music of Luzon, a topic from the ethnic musical instruments) for the knowledge of methodology: Which of the following is the proper way of playing a *Gangsa toppaya*? (A) Played with a padded stick. The players are standing and slightly bending forward in step with the dancers. (B) Played with a padded stick. The players are in sitting positions. (C) Played with palms of the hand followed by a strong slap and slide from the center to the outer edge. The players are standing and slightly bending forward in step with the dancers. (D) Played with palms of the hand followed by a strong slap and slide from the center to the outer edge. The players are in sitting positions. In this test item, the answer is letter (D) Played with palms of the hand followed by a strong slap and slide from the center to the outer edge. The players are in sitting positions. *Gangsa toppaya* is played with palms of the hand followed by a strong slap and slide from the center to the outer edge. The players are in sitting positions. This question is just a matter of how to use a *Gangsa*. Yet, it is only played in two different ways: *Gangsa toppaya* and *Gangsa pattung*. *Gangsa pattung* is played with a padded stick. The players are standing and slightly bending forward in step with the dancers. Then, letters (B) and (C) are just distractions. Students should establish such kinds of processes in which things in relation to music should be manipulated. In this particular question, one should be also acquainted with the existing methods in different genres and fields of music.

### Knowledge of the universals and abstraction in a field

This domain is a knowledge of the major schemes and patterns by which phenomena and ideas are organized. The following is a test item in the area of Asian music (unit from the music of East Asia, a topic from the music of Japan) for the knowledge of the universals and abstraction in a field: In Asian music, pentatonic scale or the five-tone scale generally influenced the court music in their nature. Which of the following countries in Asia used *Yo-sen* and *In-sen* as their basic type of scales? (A) Japan. (B) India. (C) China. (D) Thailand. In this test item, the answer is letter (A) Japan. The following choices are in the part of Asian countries, and all of them use the five-tone scale except for Indian music. In order to answer this kind of question, this broad concept about the scale configures one commonality in the style given in the question, and that is *Yo-sen* and *In-sen*. Therefore, among the three (Japan, China, and Thailand), Japan is the only country in Asia in which these two kinds of scale were dominantly used.

*Knowledge of principles and generalizations.* This domain is under the knowledge of the universals and abstraction in a field regarding the knowledge of specific abstractions that summarize or reiterate observations of a particular element or phenomena. The following is a test item in the area of Western music (unit from the contemporary music, a topic from the musical styles) for the knowledge of principles and generalizations: In Contemporary music, minimalist sounds features: (A) Ordered group of musical elements to organize rhythm,

dynamics, pitch, and tone color. (B) Some elements of the composition are left to chance or some primary element of a composed work's realization is left to the determination of its performer/s. (C) Repetition, stasis, emphasis on consonant harmony, a steady pulse, and can sometimes sound similar to different forms of electronic music. (D) The sound and color of the Orient often use a pentatonic scale. In this test item, the answer is letter (C) Repetition, stasis, emphasis on consonant harmony, a steady pulse, and can sometimes sound similar to different forms of electronic music. Minimalism in general features repetition, stasis, emphasis on consonant harmony, a steady pulse, and can sometimes sound similar to different forms of electronic music. Letter (A) is Serialism, (B) is Aleatory music, and (D) is just an extraction of a different kind of music in the Contemporary period. Principles and generalizations about the movement help the student to describe each choice in their mind or help the student to extract the set of facts according to the principle imparted in the movement. In this process, one field of music, its history, explains the appropriate course about the facts involved.

*Knowledge of theories and structures.* This domain is also under the knowledge of the universals and abstraction in a field regarding the knowledge of the body of principles and generalizations together with their interrelations which present a rounded, clear, and systematic view of a complex field, phenomenon, or problem. The following is a test item in the area of the Philippine music (unit from the traditional music forms of the Philippines, a topic from the Spanish and American regime) for the knowledge of theories and structures: The development of music in the Philippines was generally influenced by the Spanish and the American communities who established the musical forms that included: I. Liturgical music. II. Extraliturgical music. III. Oriental music. IV. Secular music. (A) I and IV. (B) I, II, and IV. (C) I only. (D) All of the above. In this test item, the answer is letter (B) I, II, and IV. In this regime, they produced liturgical music for the Catholic Church, the extraliturgical music is extended outside the confines of the church liturgy, and the secular music is the ritual music of the native religion mixed with the music of the new faith. Therefore the answer is (B) I, II, and IV. Oriental music is more particular and related in the part of eastern Asia, that's why it is not included in the musical form that is influenced by the Spanish and the American communities. Letters (A) and (C) are also correct answers. In this kind of question, there is still the best answer which is letter (B).

## Comprehension
### Translation

The translation is comprehension as evidenced by the accuracy and care with which the communication is rendered or paraphrased from one form or language of communication to another. The following is a test item in the area of Philippine music (unit from the music of Luzon, a topic from Pampanga) for the translation: The song *"Atin Cu Pung Singsing"* is one of the famous ballad or narrative songs in Pampanga. Which of the following compositions is closely the same melody as the song – *Atin Cu Pung Singsing*? (A) *Tatlong Bibe.* (B) *Maliliit na Gagamba.* (C) *Ako ay may Lobo.* (D) *Sampung mga Daliri.* In this test item, the answer is letter (C) *Ako ay may Lobo.* Adequate knowledge about the song can figure each of the following compositions in the choices employing its melodic structure, or simply the melody of the given song itself – *Atin Cu Pung Singsing.* Additionally, other elements of music can be a kind of a

clue to answer this question, for example, *Atin Cu Pung Singsing* is in triple meter, then which of the following compositions is in triple meter, and it's no other than letter (C) because all of them are in duple/quadruple meter except letter (C).

*Interpretation*

The interpretation is a summarization or explanation of communication. Whereas translation includes an objective part-for-part rendering of information or communication; rearrangement, reordering, or a new representation of the element or material. The following is a test item in the area of Western music (unit from the music of the Classical Period, a topic from historical background) for the interpretation: During the Classical Period, music was viewed as art with permanent rather than short-lived value. Guided by this view, music in this period gave an impression characterized by which following attributes? I - greater stability or repose, clarity, traditionalism. II - emotional subjectivity, fantasy, individualism. III - traditionalism, individualism, conceptualism. IV - self-reliance, objectiveness, balance. V - neo-classicism. clarity of form, experimentalism. (A) II and V. (B) I, II, and III. (C) IV only. (D) I and IV. In this test item, the answer is letter (D) I and IV. The relationship between the columns is merely important to distinguish the impression characterized by the Classical period. If the student observed keenly each column, all of those have an impression characterized by the Classical period except in column II, which is characterized by pure Romantic music. Therefore, letters (A) and (B) were removed in the choices of the correct answers. Column V, is out of choices even though there is a characteristic of Classical music (clarity of form), and the other two are in the Contemporary period. Since column IV is correct, letter (C), the best answer is letter (D), I and IV – the total attributes which the Classical period characterized.

*Extrapolation*

The extrapolation is an extension of tendencies or trends beyond the given data to determine consequences, effects, implications, corollaries, and other related matters; which are in accordance with the circumstances specified in the original communication. The following is a test item in the area of the Philippine music (unit from the traditional music forms of the Philippines, a topic from traditional music) for the extrapolation: Unlike folk music in Ireland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and neighboring Malaysia, traditional music in the Philippines never reached national popularity. Which of the following might be the cause of this situation? (A) Through the contribution and a mixture of Spaniards, Americans, and Japanese influences. (B) The fact that every region of the Philippines has its own language. (C) A mentality that traditional songs are children's songs. (D) Traditional music is always at risk of being left in oblivion. In this test item, the answer is letter (B) The fact that every region of the Philippines has its language. In this particular question, information is important to understand the whole statement, and in order to come up with a certain possible solution. Also, the clue of objects can figure out what is the existing information among the clues inside the statement. For example, what is the main commonality between Ireland, Hungary, Czech Republic, and neighboring Malaysia that is not in existence in the Philippines to reach its national popularity. The student must be aware of his capabilities to answer the question and to judge a particular situation or subject. In the passage, "Unlike folk music in Ireland, Hungary, the Czech

Republic, and neighboring Malaysia, traditional music in the Philippines never reached national popularity". Perhaps, it is partly due to the fact every region of the Philippines has its language, letter (B). Although letter (A) can be an answer to the question, it has different communication in terms of popularity and not by influences. Letters (C) and (D) are the results in which traditional music has not succeeded in making it part of the national identity, much more a national symbol.

## Application

The application is the use of abstractions in particular and concrete situations. The following is a test item in the area of Choral Works and Conducting (a topic from singing) for the application: What is the ideal order of warm-up skills for singing? (A) Vowels, support, posture, breathing, choral skills, range, resonance. (B) Breathing, posture, support, vowels, resonance, range, choral skills. (C) Posture, breathing, support, range, resonance, vowels, choral skills. (D) Choral skills, posture, range, breathing, support, resonance, vowels. In this test item, the answer is letter (C) Posture, breathing, support, range, resonance, vowels, choral skills. Factual knowledge is significant in order to help students, applying his knowledge for certain applied skills and understanding in performance such as singing, therefore, letter (C) is the correct answer – posture, breathing, support, range, resonance, vowels, and choral skills.

## Analysis
### Analysis of elements

The analysis of elements is the association and identification of the elements involved in communication. The following is a test item in the area of Western music (unit from the music of the Baroque Period, a topic from the vocal and instrumental form) for the analysis of elements: In Baroque music, it is a polyphonic composition based on one theme, called a subject. Throughout, different melodies imitate the subject or the theme. Its texture usually includes three, four, or five voices. (A) Motet. (B) Fugue. (C) Aria. (D) Sonata. In this test item, the answer is letter (B) Fugue. The elements that make up a motet, aria, and sonata are not described by the statement above, and the word "subject" is merely associated with a fugue. In this question, the following choices are all Baroque music forms except for motet that flourished in the Renaissance period. Another thing, the aria is not a polyphonic composition, as well as the sonata which doesn't fit any of the descriptions above. Therefore, the fugue is the correct answer, if the student analyzes each of the given information about its existing musical elements.

### Analysis of relationship

The analysis of a relationship is the interactions and connections between parts and elements of communication. The following is a test item in the area of Western music (unit from the music of the Baroque Period, a topic from the composition) for the analysis of relationship: In the composition of Handel, the Water Music, Suite in D major, Alla hornpipe (second movement), what is the distinction of A section compare to the B section of the composition? (A) A section – Strings and woodwinds with brass; fast-moving string part; in B minor. (B) A section – Strings and woodwinds only (no brass); fast-moving string part with

syncopated winds; in B minor. (C) A section – Answered by trumpets and French horns, later disjunct theme in strings and double reeds, with thrills; in D major, at a moderate, spritely tempo. (D) A section – Disjunct theme in strings and double reeds, with thrills, later answered by trumpets and French horns; in D major, at a moderate, spritely tempo. In this test item, the answer is letter (D) A section – Disjunct theme in strings and double reeds, with thrills, later answered by trumpets and French horns; in D major, at a moderate, spritely tempo. The connection between sections in the composition is different in the way the composer defined it, as it is presented in a 3-part structure A-B-A. Therefore, it has only two sections, A and B. Based on the composition by Handel, A section–Disjunct theme in strings and double reeds, with thrills, later answered by trumpets and French horns; in D major, at a moderate, spritely tempo. As it continued alternation of motives between brass and strings. Letter (B), is the B section, and letters (A) and (C) are just distractions in the choices.

## Analysis of organizational principles

The analysis of organizational principles is the systematic arrangement, and structure that keeps the communication concurrently. The following is a test item in the area of Western music (unit from the music of the Baroque Period, a topic from the structure) for the analysis of organizational principles: The theme of the work by Handel's Water Music has which of the following formal structures: (A) three-part form, A-B-A. (B) two-part form, A-A-B-B. (C) three-phase group, A-B-C. (D) None of the above. In this test item, the answer is letter (A) three-part form, A-B-A. The student should understand how the total structure is put together in order to analyze organizational principles (refer to the analysis of relationship).

## Synthesis
### Production of a unique communication

This synthesis is the construction or development of communication in which the speaker or writer ventures to convey or communicate experiences, feelings, and/or ideas to others. The following is a test item in the area of the Philippine music (unit from the music of Luzon, a topic from the Tagalog folk song) for the production of a unique communication: The line *"... alibangbang, salaguinto, salagubang ..."* comes from the folk song: (A) *Leron, Leron, Sinta.* (B) *Bahay Kubo.* (C) Sitsiritsit. (D) *Atin Cu Pung Singsing.* In this test item, the answer is letter (C) *Sitsiritsit.* An appropriate conclusion for a composition is distinguished through a set of elements –or other facts, samples, music lines, that would fit the given statement; in addition, the student should be aware and construct his mind for a specific music phrase in apt for the correct composition. This simple question imparts the cognitive ability of the student by means of a problem in certain musical compositions that involve certain part/s into a whole thing (song).

### Production of a plan or proposed set of operations

This synthesis is the expansion or development of a plan of operations or work. The following is a test item in the area of the Philippine music (unit from the traditional music forms of the Philippines, a topic from the Rondalla) for the production of a plan or proposed set of operations: If you are the one who will organize a Rondalla, for example in your respective school, what are the expected instruments that might use by your students to build and form a

Rondalla? (A) Guitar, Banduria, Octavina, Double Bass. (B) *Bumbong*, *Angklung*, Marimba. (C) Electric Guitar, Lead Guitar, Drum Set, Keyboard. (D) Trumpet, Trombone, French Horn, Tuba. In this test item, the answer is letter (A) Guitar, Banduria, Octavina, Double Bass. By means of a plan, the process is one of the consideration in this kind of output, in which how will a student answer this kind of question particular in setting a kind of Rondalla if he in his own can't know what actual instruments combine the whole ensemble, or be part of the group (Rondalla). In this question, to put together the elements to form a whole, one should be capable and know the parts of a kind of music, before it justifies and configures the said concept.

### Derivation of a set of abstract relations

This synthesis is the development of a set of abstract connections either to explain or classify distinct phenomena or data, or the reduction of relations and propositions from a set of symbolic representations or basic propositions or premises. The following is a test item in the area of Asian music (unit from the music of South Asia, Central Asia, and Near East Country, a topic from the music of Israel) for the derivation of a set of abstract relations: In this passage, answer the following questions below: What kind of meter is the song? What is the key of the song? Where does the song originate? What is the title of the song? In this test item, the answers are Quadruple, G minor, Israel, and *Zum Gali Gali*, respectively. This task involved such a kind of inductive method, particular to a discovery-inductive method, in which students develop a concept by looking for common features to arrive at a fact, principle, truth, or generalization, depending on the musical concept involved in order to derive, formulate, predict or compile certain kind of concepts and designs. The relationship between those sets of information, that have not been fully described, is the subject in which may identify and through other existing significant pointers and pieces of evidence. Therefore, the student may come up with a good idea using all of those previous answers, and by all of those sets of abstract relations to the derived definite concept.

### Evaluation
### Judgment in terms of external criteria

This judgment is an evaluation of the correctness and efficiency of communication from such data or evidence as consistency, logical accuracy, and other internal criteria. The following is a test item in the area of Western music (unit from the music of the Romantic Period, a topic from the composition) for the judgment in terms of external criteria: In Romantic music, how will you justify that certain music (composition) is an art song? I. An art song is a composition written for the piano, such as etudes, nocturnes, preludes, concertos, ballads, polonaises, waltzes, and mazurkas. For example, Chopin's Etude No. 3 in E, in which it's a piece that develops technical skill and sometimes composed for public performances. II. An art song is a declamatory piece in free form using different melodies that vary in mood and tempo. For example, Liszt's Les Preludes, which these works are also called symphonic poems or tone poems. III. An art song is a composition for a solo voice that combines melody, poetry, and accompaniment into an integrated form. For example, Schubert's Erlking (Erlkonig), in which different music for each stanza of the poem in order to follow the changing ideas or

moods of the text. IV. An art song is a large-scale genre of choral music, such as the Mass, the Requiem Mass, and the Oratorio. For example, Brahms' A German Requiem, Fourth Movement, in which lyrical choral melody unifies 5-part rondo structure, use of word-painting, and emotional expressions of loss and acceptance of death. V. An art song is a composition with piano accompaniment to a song translated its poetic images into music. For example, Schumann's "In the lovely month of May," from A Poet's Love (Dichterliebe), No. 1, in which each stanza of the poem is set to the same music. (A) I, III, and IV. (B) I, III, and V. (C) III and V. (D) II and IV. In this test item, the answer is letter (C) III and V. In this question, the appropriateness in musical works especially in Romantic music should be to know the characteristics of an art song and its sample composition by the composer.

Additionally, in terms of external criteria, judgment has been processed in condition to justify the given object (art song), hence, it is directly stated what the elements are, and which compositions will be suitable to the given definite meaning which is seen in the given options. However, this question might be easy in terms of music theory and Romantic music, yet, the distinction of each option has different aspects of how the student will evaluate this type of question. Also, the student must know first both the characteristics of the thing involved which he examined and the criteria required by this particular question. In this process, all of the previous behaviors can be used to find out what the answer is; using the knowledge, comprehension, analysis, application, and synthesis. The knowledge about an art song can help to have the background to judge each option; therefore, based on definition, options III and V corresponded to the characteristics, where letters (A), (B), and (C) had it. Then, analyzing the other options, option I is not an art song rather a composition for piano (only), option II, its definition doesn't fit in the sample given (because the definition is a Rhapsody), option IV is a piece of Romantic choral music. To justify the question, there are two main structural forms in art song which are strophic – evident in option V, and through-composed – evident in option III. So, the correct answer is both options III and V, which is letter (C).

### *Judgment in terms of internal evidence*

This judgment is an evaluation of an element or material regarding remembered or selected criteria. It is the comparison of major facts, generalizations, and theories concerning distinct cultures and practices. The following is a test item in the area of Asian music (unit from the music of Southeast Asia, a topic from the music of Indonesia) for the judgment in terms of internal evidence: Given the music *(Naik Naik Ke Puncak Gunung)*, while listening, interpret the song in one to two words in terms of: Rhythm, Melody, Harmony, Texture, Form, Timbre. In this test item, the answers are Moderate Tempo/Triple Meter, Narrow Range, Major Tonality, Monophonic, Unitary, and Natural Tone, respectively. The decision is based upon identifiable items that are perceptible through the given statement and sample music. Therefore, an accurate judgment of this item by the student is one of the fundamental goals of education, especially in this kind of field. In terms of internal evidence, judgment is also based on the student engagement within the process, and he might use all of these elements involved to support his judgments.

## Conclusion

There were 23 illustrative multiple-choice test items identified and annotated for each cognitive domain of the taxonomy of educational objectives including musical areas in the Philippine music, Asian music, Western music, and Choral Works and Conducting in the assessment and evaluation of musical learning. Assessment and evaluation are intended to quantify the intellectual ability in the pace of academic growth of the students in musical learning. Classroom tests and assessments can be used for a variety of instructional purposes. Appropriate assessment is perpetrated to assure learners' achievement and progress from guided (scaffolding method) to an independent demonstration of knowledge, understanding (comprehension), and skills, and to allow them to carry this successfully in future circumstances (Tabuena, 2020a). Planning classroom tests and assessments requires determining what is to be measured and then defining it precisely so that tasks can be formed that need the intended knowledge, understanding, and skills as it reflects various relevant measures in learning outcomes related to musical learning. This implied that constructing an assessment requires a clear, concise, and complete direction incorporating the basic elements of music and test format according to behavioral indicators essential in constructing appropriate assessment, that is, an objective test item such as the multiple-choice test item format on the cognitive domain of the taxonomy of educational objectives in assessing and evaluating musical learning.

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## The Impact of Covid-19 on English Language Learners:
## A Qualitative Case Study

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# The impact of Covid-19 on English language learners: A qualitative case study

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### Abstract

Appearing in early 2020, Covid 19 hit the world. It created great fear and anxiety in almost all countries including Turkey. It also caused significant social, cultural and economic changes in societies. One of the sectors experiencing these changes and difficulties in societies is undoubtedly education. Based on this reality, this study aims to reveal to what extent the distance education caused by Covid 19 affects the attitudes of the students of Necmettin Erbakan University School of Foreign Languages towards English learning and their success. The study was carried out synchronously, in which the lecturer and the 19 English Language Teaching preparatory class students were in communication all the time. It was a qualitative study, and semi-structured interview was used as the tool to collect data. The findings were analyzed in depth making use of interpretive analysis. The biggest drawback of on-line learning was found out to be not having the interaction carried out in a physical classroom. The results showed that the switch to on-line learning can seem challenging both for teachers and for students.

**Note(s) from the author(s)**
» None

## Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 as an international concern on 30th January 2020 and a global public health emergency of 2020 as well as a pandemic on 11th March 2020 (Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020). On the same day, the Turkish Ministry of Health reported the first case in Turkey (Bayram, et al 2020). Certainly, like many other facets of everyday life, COVID-19 has had a critical impact on students, instructors, and educational organizations around the globe (Mailizar, Almanthari, Maulina, & Bruce, 2020). The outbreak caused schools, colleges and universities across the globe to close down their campuses so that students could pursue social distancing measures (Toquero, 2020). Nonetheless, moving smoothly from an environment of traditional education to distance and virtual learning could not happen overnight. This rapid shift is bound to various obstacles and challenges at this point (Crawford, Butler-Henderson, Rudolph, & Glowatz, 2020). However, as nobody knows when this pandemic will clear away fully, educational institutions across the globe settled on to use the already available technical resources to generate online learning material for students of all academic fields (Kaur, 2020).

When Covid-19 struck the world, everything came to a halt. Everyone had to work from home, figure out new ways to entertain themselves and make sure children received the necessary education. This meant educators had to learn how to train their students virtually. They didn't have the chance to learn how to do this effectively. They were embarked upon it in a matter of days. Most probably, they felt like they barely got through to their learners. It was a field that they had never had to pass through. Unfortunately, the situation hasn't altered much. COVID-19 is still uncontrolled, and it doesn't look as if it's going to go off anytime soon. This means teachers are presumably going to face the world of virtual teaching once more. While some countries are shifting to in-person learning, many are still holding forth a virtual option.

Nevertheless, distance education is not a new concept for Turkish society. In Turkey, it is a method used to a certain extent and with some differences for decades. For example, students would then learn only by reading published sources. However, later on, in parallel with the developments and changes in the world, the use of technology in education has become popular (Rennell, 2020). In fact, over time, some institutions using technology for educational purposes started to use it as a competitive tool with other institutions. However, in terms of technological infrastructure and teacher competencies, the number of educational institutions that provide services to students in this sense was already very limited. With the pandemic we encountered in 2020, distance education method had to be applied in all schools throughout the country and therefore the difficulties multiplied. Such a wide-ranging application of course affected students the most. They suddenly began to live between four walls isolated from the social environment, even with no fresh air, only with their electronic devices and without eye contact for a long time.

In such a situation, it is undoubtedly important to establish the necessary conditions to provide the individual with such a level of education. In particular, there is a need to work on teaching methods or learning pathways continuously and to create new alternatives to meet the differing needs and expectations of students in a rapidly changing and developing world. Especially in educational environments, the authorities often make comments on these developments and remind their employees that something new needs to be worked on to catch

up with innovations and keep up with changes. Keeping all this in mind, the study set out to find out how particularly English language learners were affected by the pandemic process and whether there is any change in their attitudes towards learning the language in this study. The sample research study was conducted with the students of Necmettin Erbakan University, School of Foreign Languages English Language Teaching Department.

**On-line education**

Distance education first emerged in the United States in the 1800s when tutors and pupils at the University of Chicago, being at different places, attempted to connect through correspondence programs. Many years later during World War I, the advancement of radio as a communication medium, opened the door for using that technology for distance learning in many different schools such as School of the Air set up in Wisconsin in the 1920s (Mclsaac & Gunawardena, 1996). When television became popular in the 1950s, visual instruction became feasible for the first time between instructors and learners who were at very different locations. As the technology of computer and emailing revived in the 1970s and 1980s, distance education started to widen significantly. The preliminary totally on-line course was presented in 1981, and in the following year, the first on-line program was founded by the Western Behavior Sciences Institute (Harasim, 2000).  The first on-line undergraduate and graduate classes were commenced by different universities and schools in the mid-1980s. In the late 1980s, because of a shortcoming of teachers on math, science, foreign languages, etc., some K-12 schools switched to commercial courses presented through the then-new satellite technology, which mainly promoted still faster growth of distance education (Mclsaac & Gunawardena, 1996).

The emergence of the World-Wide Web (WWW) in 1991 was a mighty accelerator for taking distance education forward, making it a milestone in the rapid distribution and development of online teaching and learning. Maloney-Krichmar and Abras (2003) indicated that WWW originated the wide-spread usage of web sites and the improvement of online community groups promoted by web pages and diverse forms of communications software (p.4). Thenceforward, schools and universities around the world have offered both online courses and total degree programs online, too (Wallace, 2003). However, when the Covid 19 pandemic struck, just like any other sector, the field of education took its share. As regards to UNESCO, all schools and higher education institutions (HEIs) were shut down in 185 countries on 1 April 2020, affecting 1 542 412 000 students, which makes up 89.4% of overall registered learners. On the first days of May, a few countries in which declining numbers of cases and deaths were experienced, began to lift lockdown measures. On 7 May, however, these institutions (HEIs) were yet already enclosed in 177 countries, effecting 1 268 164 088 students, composing 72.4% of overall registered learners. These numbers continued to increase over time and the governments of the countries started to take stricter health measures. On the other hand, in order to overcome the problems and uncertainties caused by COVID 19, educators started talking more and discussing new teaching methods or learning modalities, where

individual learning is encouraged and technology is used to the maximum as well as face-to-face and distance education.

While the world was in this condition, taking a look at the example of Turkey with over 68 thousand schools, 18 million students, 1 million 117,000 teachers, over 200 universities, 8 million university students and 174 thousand academic staff, it is easily understood that the problems caused by Covid 19 in the education sector were quite high. In order to find a solution to the problems, as in other sectors, MoNE officials, taking into account the opinions and suggestions of the health sciences board, decided to shift to distance education instead of face-to-face in almost all schools around the country. This obligatory transformation from the conventional method to the unsolved puzzle at the time was a mystery to be solved for many teachers and students. Distant learning was a process they had to get used to as soon as possible. This new method for some could be carried out in two ways.

In an online environment, interactions between students and teachers can occur synchronously or asynchronously, either way, the feedback from students and the perceived success of online learning frequently depends on the positive nature of these interactions (Picciano, 2002). Linked with these interactions is the perceived benefit of improved student learning (Davies & Graff, 2005). That is, students' success in distance education largely depends on their healthy communication with their teachers and their natural interaction with them.

### Context of the study

The School of Foreign Languages was established with the decision of the Higher Education Council dated 14.07.2010 and numbered 6005, affiliated to the Rectorate of Necmettin Erbakan University and offer both compulsory and optional (elective) foreign languages education including German, English and Arabic for all faculties, colleges and vocational schools within the University in accordance with Article 5/i of the Higher Education Law No.2547. The school is located in Necmettin Erbakan University Meram campus and has a total of 24 faculty members, including five assistant professors and 19 lecturers. The school offers a one-year intensive language program that allows new students to use their language skills efficiently and effectively at the levels recommended by the European Council Common Language Regulation during their academic studies and post-graduation business life.

The main purpose of the School of Foreign Languages is to enable students studying at Necmettin Erbakan University to use all the resources related to their academic studies effectively and to use the foreign language they have studied in their social lives by communicating in writing and orally. The school takes into account the need for continuous self-evaluation and renewal in order to better meet the needs of students, and works in this context. A School of Foreign Languages Library was established in the school, and efforts to establish a digital library are continuing to increase the speaking skills of the students. The school has switched to web-based exam system in 2019, and the exams are carried out digitally with 200 computers in the laboratories until the pandemic process. In addition, English, German, French, Arabic and Persian courses are opened to provide language training to the students and staff.

The school aims to enable students to effectively develop the target language in their business and social circles throughout their academic work and to provide them with the

necessary knowledge, skills and confidence. As the School of Foreign Languages, our goal is to use contemporary approaches and methods in foreign language education to enable our students to communicate in a foreign language such as English, German and Arabic in written and verbal form and carry out their academic work. To this end, we offer a highly qualified foreign language training that meets the needs of our students in their advanced professional and social lives with an innovative and dynamic teaching staff. Our vision as the School of Foreign Languages is: We aim to maximize our mission and ensure that our university is in an effective position at the national level by teaching foreign languages in line with the academic, scientific, and pedagogical goals of our university. This way, students can understand different cultures, think critically, and benefit from the foreign language in their academic, professional and social lives. (http://www.neu.ydyo.gov.tr)

Baring the information stated above in mind, the purpose of the study was to find answers to the following research questions:

1. How effective is on-line education in Turkey from university students' perspectives?
2. What are the challenges and obstacles of on-line education faced by university students in Turkey?

## Methodology

This study was carried out synchronously, in which the lecturer and the students were in communication all the time with 19 English Language Teaching Preparatory Class students studying at Necmettin Erbakan University. It was a study implemented following a 10-week process of on-line education in the first semester of the 2020/2021 academic year. All the students who participated in the study were currently attending online courses. The study was qualitative and semi-structured interview was used as the tool to collect data.

### Procedure

2020/2021 academic year started its education for Necmettin Erbakan University Preparatory class students via on-line just like all grades in Turkey. At the beginning of the term both the students and the teachers knew very little about how the procedure was to continue. Let alone the lessons, the materials, assessment and registers were all a mystery. As the puzzle got solved gradually, the marathon started. The students mentioned above had 30 hours of on-line synchronous English classes a week giving 6 hours a day. Virtual classes were formed by distant learning coordinators and not more than 30 students were placed in the classes. Due to the large number of students, the classes had to be divided into 2 shifts. The first shift started at 8.00 am in the morning and continued until 1.40 pm. The second shift started at 2.00 pm and finished at 7.40 pm. Unlike other departments that allocate 20 minutes for each lesson, foreign language school preparatory classes took 40 minutes for each lesson. The interview questions directed to the students at the end of the 10-week on-line education process were:

1. As Covid -19 Pandemic students, what are the advantages and disadvantages of on-line education?

2. What are the differences between face to face and face to screen learning? Which one would you prefer, why?
3. How did this circumstance affect your education life?
4. How do you feel about learning during lockdown? (technical, monetary, motivation, etc.)
5. What kind of problems did you have during courses?
6. Any other thought or feeling you would like to add, your ideas and opinions for the future?

These interview questions were applied via video calling to the 19 students attending English Language Teaching Preparatory class and their answers were documented. For each question the interviewees were required to think deeply and give real, sincere replies. The last question was not primarily within the interview questions, however upon necessity, was added and directed to all the students.

## Population and sampling

The analysis of qualitative data, such as text data from interview documents, is termed as Qualitative Analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1984). It mainly counts on the researcher's analytical, critical and integrative abilities besides personal knowledge of the social context where the data is collected. What is emphasized in qualitative analysis is "sense making" or figuring out a phenomenon, instead of projection or explanation. A mindset which is innovative, creative, inquisitive and investigative is essential for qualitative analysis.

Based on the above mentioned literature the study was put through with 19 Preparatory class students attending English Language Teaching Department of Necmettin Erbakan University in Konya. The students were 11 females and 8 males. In terms of sampling, convenience sampling, in which the participants are chosen based on their relative ease of access, was used (Wiederman, 1999). The 19 students were not told about the research being carried out during the on-line courses. Thereafter, they were informed about the research process in detail.

## Data collection

In this study, in order to collect data semi structured interview was utilized. Here, the interview type chosen at the beginning was structured, however a question asked to one of the interviewees upon necessity changed the data collection tool to semi-structured in which all the interviewees (in this case students) were asked the same open-ended question at the end of the 10-week research application procedure. Within this process, five (plus 1 added later) pre-prepared guiding questions were directed to the students following the 10-week on-line synchronous education period. All the students were told about the research being applied and were given the questions in advance. The following day, each student was video called by the researcher and the answers were transcribed. The responses of the students were carefully written down by the researcher so as to analyze later on.

## Data analysis

Stake (1995) illustrates analysis as a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compositions, and interpreting our first impressions. As the study is qualitative,

Interpretive Analysis was used to analyze the data gathered from the semi-structured interview results. The gathered data was separated and conceptually categorized into meaningful chunks. These parts can sometimes be a word, a sentence, a paragraph or even a whole page of data (Yıldırım and Simsek, 2013). Through a very long process and with an in-depth attention, these categories were analyzed and the results found were interpreted for each participant.

## Findings

According to the students' answers, the below stated issues emerged and these were descriptively analyzed.

### Reduced Expenses

In terms of the positive sides of on-line learning, the top answer was reduced expenses. 6 students talked about how their spending lessened during the distant learning. They needed no money to get along, no rent for houses or dormitories, no bus or tram fees. Some of the responses of the students were as:

*'It's economical for all.'*

*'Many of our expenses have been reduced (Book, travel costs, etc.).'*

*'It's a big opportunity for those whose houses are far from the school. Moreover, there are some economic advantages as well. For example, we can eat food at home, so we don't pay for food.'*

### Comfortable Home Environment

The second top answer for the advantages of on-line learning was that students felt themselves much more comfortable and cozy in their living environment. 4 students stated that their rooms at home were more relieved than hard classroom chairs and uncomfortable cold desks. A few answers were:

*'I think the biggest advantage of on-line education is that we can attend our lessons on cold winter days from our warm houses and we can go to our school with just a computer or a mobile phone from our desk without travelling in the cold.'*

*'I am attending my lesson from my room. This is more comfortable for me.'*

*'The first advantage is that we don't have to take our books with us all the time, the second is that we have actually more freedom than we could have in the classroom.'*

### Technological Opportunities

Another advantage considered by the students was the technological opportunities that on-line education offers. 3 students talked about how easier it was to meet new techniques and access different kinds of activities through on-line learning. Some said:

*'And with on-line education, we are seeing different learning techniques. Our teacher sends us interesting photos and videos and this is funny and educational.'*

*'Secondly, some activities can be done easier. For example, listening activities and sharing screen to show contents like books and videos is easy.'*

*'Using visual and audio elements of learning has become more effective in on-line education.'*

### Replay Benefit

It seemed like students also enjoyed the replay feasibility of the synchronous lessons. 2 students said that the lessons could be watched again when requested which seemed to be an advantage. Their original sentences were as:

*'As long as there are internet and technological tools, lessons can be listened to anywhere at any time. Lessons were easily entered at the desired time.'*

*'Because there is a registration system in on-line education, it can be listened to again at any time.'*

### Less Tiring

Some students thought that in this way they were less tired. They expressed their feelings like:

*'First of all, we don't need to travel to school. It's a big opportunity for those whose houses are far from the school.'*

*'I think the biggest advantage of on-line education is that we can attend our lessons on cold winter days from our warm houses and we can go to our school with just a computer or a mobile phone from our desk without travelling in the cold.'*

Apart from these responses, some students indicated that they did not spend time on buses or minibuses to go to school which saved them time and that this system helped introverted students to participate more. An answer that stepped forward and lit a bulb in the researchers mind was about the physically disabled students. A student mentioned how practical on-line education was for the handicapped students. They had the comfort of joining the lessons at home with no difficulty.

### Technical Problems

The biggest problem for the students attending synchronous on-line education was the technical problems. 10 students stated that they had serious difficulty during the process. They could not participate in the classes due to systematic and technical problems. Some of their responses were as:

*'Due to some technical problems the lessons can be delayed or canceled and the continuity of the lessons depend only on a power cut or an internet failure and in some rural areas, connectivity problems and internet access can be difficult.'*

*'Internet disconnection is one of the most common situations. The internet is constantly cut off during the courses.'*

*'We may encounter some obstacles such as system errors affecting when participating or during lessons.'*

*'Firstly, the biggest problem here is the internet connection. I knew the internet in Turkey isn't satisfying but it could be repaired. Moreover, there are some hard ware problems too. Sometimes we can not communicate with each other because of microphone issues.'*

*Health Problems*

The second highly ranked issue about distant learning was the health problems students encountered in front of the screen. 6 students talked about their different kind of aches due to sitting long hours with no movement in front of their computers. A few answers were like:

*'Having 6 hour lessons isn't too much but because of the online lessons sitting in front of the table during 6 hours make me really exhausted at the end of the day'.*

*'The other disadvantage is our health. Nearly all students use telephone, computer and tablet to enter the lesson and of course this affects our physical and mental health. For example, my eyes are always red and puffy because of spending so much time with the telephone'.*

*'However less tiring it is, it is tiring. Although it may seem less tiring, it is actually tiring. Especially we suffer from eye strain because of looking at the screen. As we are constantly sitting, we have backache too'.*

*'Sitting at in front of the computer or looking at the screen for hours causes many health problems such as weakness, low back and neck pain, headaches.'*

*Focus Problem*

One fourth of the students stated that they had concentration problem while looking at the screen. 5 students told the researcher that they had difficulty in focusing on the lesson due to the atmosphere. Some replies were:

*'It is very difficult to focus on the lesson on the computer screen. This makes the lessons inefficient.'*

*'One of the most important disadvantages of on-line education is the inability to focus. Since we can not make eye contact with the teachers and our classmates, we can not focus on the lesson.'*

*'Audio from any device can distract us and bring us about to move away from the classroom'.*

*Financial Problems*

The last disadvantage students talked about was the monetary issue. 3 students said that this process was not quite easy for the students who were not on an equal basis. Some of their speeches were as:

*'It is very difficult for those who do not have a computer or internet access at home.'*

*'Some students suffer because they don't have any technological devices or internet to join the lessons. As a result they fall behind their friends and the education process.'*

*'And I think the most important thing is we can't enjoy university and unfortunately not everyone's home has internet. This is the biggest problem.'*

*Face to Face Education*

When the students were asked the difference and to make a choice between on-line and face to face education, the majority said that they would definitely prefer face to face

education. 11 students talked about how efficient the traditional way of learning is with interaction and eye contact both with their teachers and their classmates. Some answers were as:

*'Face-to-face education is much more effective and reasonable. Classroom environment encourages students to be more effective. It is easier to focus on the lesson. Your attention can be easily distracted in face to screen learning.'*

*'Students can see their teachers. They can make eye contact with their teacher.'*

*'It is very important to make eye contact with the teacher in face-to-face education. Thus, communication becomes more effective. However, face to screen learning does not have such an opportunity. We had the opportunity to socialize more in face-to-face learning. In face-to-face learning, any question could be discussed by listening to everyone's thoughts. However, this cannot be done in face to screen learning.'*

*'Face-to-face education is much easier than on-line education. Since people see each other in face-to-face education, they communicate much more easily.'*

### Limited Student Involvement

Students thought that in face-to-face education, they could be involved at any time and communicate with their teachers, but in on-line education, this was very limited. 4 students indicated that student involvement was quite low during distant learning. A few responses were:

*'In face-to-face education, we can be involved at any time and communicate with our teachers, but in on-line education, this is very limited and only possible when there is a teacher who knows how to behave. Otherwise, unfortunately it turns into a live lesson video on YouTube.'*

*'Since people see each other in face-to-face education, they communicate much more easily. But it is very difficult to speak in on-line education, even attend classes. When we don't speak, we can be seen as not attending the lesson, but actually this is not so.'*

### No Eye Contact

For some students the most important thing for communication was eye contact. 3 students talked about how they felt themselves in mid-air with no eyes to look at and no face to see. Some replies were like:

*'I definitely prefer face-to-face learning. Because eye contact is important to me. Courses were more efficient.'*

*'Face to face learning is more effective than face to screen learning. We can see our teacher and I think eye contact is important. We can't do this now.'*

### No Internet Connection

When the students were asked about the differences between face to face and on-line education, another point they emphasized was that they would need no technological gadgets or internet connection in the traditional method, however on-line was fundamentally based on technology. 3 students said:

*'Face to screen learning is more related technology. We are using technology now.'*

*'I have some problems for example, I get disconnected, my microphone doesn't work, I can't attend the lesson, etc.'*

*'Face to face doesn't need internet connection or technological tools or devices but face to screen learning consists of these. Every student doesn't have these so it is compelling for them.'*

*Inappropriate Home Environment*

Some students stated that not all had equal conditions and that many of them could be living in a crowded house with noise everywhere or no fair opportunities like net connection or technological devices. 2 answers were in this way:

*'Some students can not attend classes because they live in a crowded house.'*

*'On the other hand some families can be crowded so the student can't find a convenient place to listen the classes and attend them. They can't open their microphone in fear of her/his friends and teacher will hear the sounds coming from the back.'*

One last thing a student mentioned here was upon the superiority of on-line education. As mainly students mentioned about the handicaps of it, this answer was recognized as significant. She said that limited equipment was used in face-to-face learning, but screen learning had a wider area of technology usage.

*No Feeling of University Life*

The third question directed to the students in the interview was about in what ways this circumstance affected their education life. 8 out 19 said that they did not feel like a university student. They would have wanted a university life. Their answers were like:

*'I was bored from this city so I studied really hard to pass the university exam and finally I did. I would study and I would see different places. But now this circumstance handicapped me unfortunately'.*

*'I passed the university exam but it was odd because I never went to university and I am wondering what's it like.'*

*'I'm like in a parallel universe where everyone lives with laptops. I don't feel like I've started college, but I feel like I've fallen into a new habitual life'.*

*Adaptation Problems*

About one third of the students talked about adaptation problems to the new learning style. 8 of them stated that they had trouble in understanding the lessons. Some of their original words were as:

*'I can't study well in my lessons either. Living in constant fear of death is very bad and hard for me.'*

*'I'm not hardworking as before, I cannot give much importance to the lessons; I always prefer to spend time with my family. This situation makes me sad, I feel like there aren't classes and I see that my English is starting to get bad'.*

*'After the Corona Virus entered our lives, our lives suddenly changed and of course it also affected our education lives. At first I had some difficulties in getting used to on-line lessons as I was used to going to school and also my IT skills were not good but over time I kept up with everything.'*

One last thing a student mentioned about this question was again about the advantage of this process. He said that staying at home offered more free time for activities like watching movies, reading books and developing his English skills.

*Decreased Motivation During Lockdown*

The fourth question of the interview had quite precise answers. 17 students out of 19 talked about how this epidemic made them down day by day. They said that they started to feel stressed and tired. Some replies were as follows:

*'I was very bad at motivation during the lockdown. I wanted to go out and walk, but I couldn't because of the curfew. Being in the same house overwhelmed me all the time. Hearing bad things from the news every day made it worse.'*

*'Our lives have been severely restricted by the curfew. We started doing the same things every day. We started to get education without ever going to school, which decreases interest after a while. It was really difficult to start classes without being in the school environment. Sometimes I don't feel like a student of this school.'*

*'I think this is the most positive situation in my new life because I can't leave the house anymore and I don't spend much money. Also, I have a lot of free time and I'm tired of fun events such as watching movies, TV shows or reading books. Now I'm more interested in doing scientific research and watching videos that can improve me.'*

*'Motivation is actually something I lost a long time ago. I can't motivate myself, and even the things I used to be overly happy don't make me happy anymore. My life goes on not by desire, but by necessity.'*

*Less Expenses*

2 students here indicated that the lockdown could be considered as a positive thing in terms of decreased expenditures. The two answers were:

*'We don't have to spend extra money. This situation makes me feel real bad except for financially. This makes me happy.'*

*'There are no expenses like eating out, transportation, so we can easily save money. It's a financial advantage.'*

*Connection Problems*

The next question aimed at learning the kind of problems students had during the on-line courses. A very large number stated that they had connection problems. 14 students were fed up of disconnection. Some said:

*'The most important problem is connection problems. Sometimes we lose connection or go out of power. These problems prevent us from attending the classes.'*

*'It is a huge problem for us to follow the lesson because of connection problems and internet problems.'*

> *'One of the situations where I have the most difficulty is the internet and the power cut off.'*

*Systematic Problems*

System problems were the second top answer for the kind of problems students faced during the lockdown obligatory on-line education. 9 students complained about how the system bothered them with its problems. A few answers were:

> *'The application that we use in the course constantly pushes the teacher away and the teacher's voice doesn't come to us.'*
>
> *'This may be a systematic connection problem or a computer-related audio problem. I'm sure if we could see our professors and teach face to face everything would be much better.'*

One student also claimed that sometimes the smart phone or the computer broke down.

*The Desire To Start School*

The last question that the students were expected to answer was their thoughts and feelings they would like to add and their opinions, ideas about the future. Here, 11 students said they expected the quarantine to end as soon as possible and so that they could start school. Some answers were like:

> *'I hope we can do face to face education as soon as possible.'*
>
> *'Actually, I have no idea. I just want to say something: I hope we get back to our normal educational life and daily life.'*
>
> *'I hope the pandemic process will end as soon as possible and we will have everything we miss. In the new academic year, I hope we meet face to face with our friends and teachers and we do lessons efficiently.'*
>
> *'I hope that virus will end, we'll come back to school and we'll live our lives.'*

*No Complete Expression*

Students here reported that they could not fully express themselves in on-line lessons. 5 students said:

> *'For example, when we see our friends and teachers in the classroom, our willingness and motivation to study increases. But the people we can communicate face to face on quarantine days are only our families. Therefore, we cannot share our troubles and problems with our friends and teachers.'*
>
> *'I find it quite tiring actually. We can not express ourselves fully in my opinion, socialization is very low.'*
>
> *'I could be much better in class; I feel that I can not express myself the way I really want.'*

The different ideas which came from students were also transcribed. Each and every answer was valued. One student claimed if shopping malls, markets and all kinds of social areas are open, schools should be opened too. Another one said that people will fight more epidemics

as a result of harming the world. One more statement here was that he better understood the value of living and the value of his loved ones.

## Discussion

The purpose of the study was to find out how affective on-line education is from university students' perspectives besides the challenges and obstacles faced by English Language Department Preparatory class students at Necmettin Erbakan University School of Foreign Languages.. The problem which was the starting point of the study was the obligatory shift to digital learning due to Covid 19 and the continuing complaints and comments of the students throughout the 10-week on-line courses.

This study of student perceptions of on-line education approves that student experiences vary. For the majority of students, their experience is negative and they frequently indicate that this method of learning hinders their learning. Majority of the interviewed higher education students have doubts about online/digital learning. Lack of access to internet facilities, lack of actual interaction and communication with classmates and lecturers besides technological, health and financial problems were among the top challenges faced by higher education students of the above mentioned University. The sudden transition from traditional classrooms to online learning ended up in a completely different learning experience for students. As also reported in Adnan M. & Anwar K. 2020, some students in question unfortunately did not have any technological devices to pursue their education on-line or access to high speed or reliable internet services.

The research also demonstrated additional challenges faced by students like limited student involvement, inappropriate home environment and focus problems. Interviewees also reported that traditional classroom learning was much more effective as set against to online learning or distance education.

One of the less discussed areas of on-line education also mentioned within the study is the necessity of motivation. In conventional classes, students often actively participate in activities due to their face-to-face engagement with the lecturer and class mates. Most of the students stated that learning in the traditional classroom was more motivating than screen learning. To provide an effective and productive on-line program, students should not only be in on how to master the fast-paced online classes but they also need to possess a sound computer and technological skills to be able to learn from on-line lectures. Some students mentioned that they did not know how to do certain activities or moves on the computer.

Looking back on the literature, some points also showed similarity with Kemp, N. & Grieve, R. 2014 in terms of more engagement and immediate feedback in face-to-face education. Some similar answers from the study were:

*'I think that discussion face to face really allows you to think more deeply and bounce ideas of other people. Writing it online, felt like your answers had to be more formal and exact, whereas in class discussion I felt you could really bounce more possible ideas off each other before coming to a conclusion.'*

*'You are able to directly discuss with tutor and peers and therefore directly receive feedback for your questions and others questions.'*

However, to some extent, face to screen learning was preferred by some students. Especially under the circumstances of the pandemic, home learning via on-line was a remedy

for some. They considered themselves safe and also thought that on-line education was not that bad. They felt free peaceful at home, moreover an introverted student claimed that she was much better in this way than in the classroom atmosphere with many faces looking at her.

On the other side, owing to the rich resources of the educational institution, on-line classes were immediately initiated by the Rectorate. School of Foreign Languages, in this case the institution in research, had already started web-based exams in 2019 and was quite successful in carrying them out. This situation in specific was observed to help the lecturers in preparing and holding the examinations.

From the arguments and views put forward in this research study, it can be understood that on-line education can provide many advantages as well as disadvantages for students. Some students talked about health problems like backache or headache or even obesity, while some students indicated that home environment was quite comfortable for them. Some expressed that they had difficulty in focusing while others liked the replay opportunity. There were also students who felt more free while learning online.

The existing results play a part as a reminder that it is rather simplistic to consider "online learning" as an isolated concept, to be searched on its own or compared wholesale to face-to-face learning. Both methods of education host multiple aspects, and research concentrating on only one particular aspect or combination of aspects might reach very different conclusions from research focusing on another aspect or combination of aspects.

In short, from all these facts, we see that students have a lot to say about the e-learning they are exposed to at the moment. They like technology being blended into their education apart from the internet and systematic problems they come across. In online education, we understand that some students have more personal advantages such as having more free time, working freely, not having economic difficulties and using less manpower. However, it is quite likely that sitting indoors in front of a computer or tablet for a long time may cause physical, social and mental discomfort in students. That is, if online learning continues in this way, students will likely be more unhappy and less willing to learn. Therefore, they would never change the conventional classes to anything in which they are more socialized and have the opportunity to communicate and interact live with the instructor and classmates.

## Pedagogical Implications

It is important that the online learning method provides students with some individual advantages such as money savings, free time and less manpower requirement. However, it is more important to have a positive attitude towards learning new things in terms of education. This is what students need first and most.

In this context, the biggest drawback of on-line learning is not having the interaction you carry out in a physical classroom. Some of these interactions are hard to replace, but there are things you can do to communicate with your students. The close proximity of the classroom may not be formed, but the magic of in-person learning can be exploited. There may not be an office anymore, but office hours can still be offered or on-line discussions can be held with the students to make the process much more effective. In addition, both the instructors and the

students must check out their expectations, what were they expecting from on-line education and what they eventually got to. Lessons should also be performed so that they are emotionally satisfying for the students. One of the most important aspects of continuing an on-line course is to gain the attention of the students and then to maintain that engagement, which is a daunting task, even in person. Students should be made as interactive as possible. Creating a sense of community would be rewarding at the very end.

From the opinions put forward and the arguments made, we understand that the sudden transition from face-to-face education to distance education caused by Covid 19 significantly affected students' motivation to learn language. This study also shows us the fact that in the context of integrating technology with education, it is necessary to find new learning areas and to discover new learning ways.

However, despite the classroom and technology have modified, the nature of the student has not. Students will behave as students. No matter if they are children or teenagers, they will act as such whether you are teaching them in-person or online. Baring a good strategy for moderation is key to maintaining the learning experience great. Students of any age may act up at any time, which means moderation of the behaviour needs to be in act in order to make sure the process stays productive. Otherwise, texting inappropriate messages, harassing other students, undermining the teaching, or simply being lost can be inevitable.

## Conclusion

It is a well-known fact that every individual has the right to take a good education and that the education received has a significant impact on his or her life. The individual, with the help of his/her education, gains new knowledge, skills and experiences; develops personally, socially and economically; organizes his/her daily life and tries to make life more enjoyable for himself/herself (Rennel, 2013). COVID-19 affected this traditional learning method of academic institutions across the world. The administrations of schools, colleges and universities favoured on-line lectures/classes as an alternative way to sustain education. Although on-line learning is confirming to be helpful in safeguarding students' and faculty's health amid COVID-19 pandemic, however, it is not as efficient as conventional learning. This study aimed to find out the effectiveness of on-line classes for students of higher education. As for this study, most of the students felt that conventional classes were more efficient as compared to on-line learning. Apart from technical and financial issues, students also indicated some other difficulties like lack of interaction with the instructor, response time and absence of traditional classroom socialization besides physical and psychological health problems due to the present education system. It can be clearly understood from the above mentioned findings and impacts that studying from home with the extra affects of quarantine and isolation, often had a depressing impact on the students. Unfortunately, this type of learning is at present difficult, but the uncertainty of the time added, it is becoming extraordinarily hard.

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## Research on Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety in the Last Decade: A Review of Studies in Turkish EFL Context

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# Research on foreign language teaching anxiety in the last decade: A review of studies in Turkish EFL context

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**Abstract**

Anxiety has usually been a fundamental factor affecting the language learning as well as the language teaching process. Although there are numerous articles regarding foreign language learning anxiety, there is a scant body of literature about foreign language teaching anxiety (FLTA).  The purpose of this research is to explore the main research areas concerning FLTA that are conducted in Turkey within the last decade, through the meta-synthesis method. Accordingly, the results of 13 FLTA-related studies were presented in this study after excluding irrelevant articles. Using content analysis, the data were analyzed. Based on similarities and differences, several codes were evaluated and separated between the themes.  The results of the 13 selected studies revealed 5 themes, namely, the sources of FLTA, the impact of gender on FLTA, the relationship between self-efficacy and FLTA, the connection between years of experience and FLTA, and the level of FLTA. Consequently, for prospective research, possible research areas were recommended.

## Introduction

Considering the classroom environment of many schools and universities, it has been identified that anxiety is a crucial issue pervading learning and teaching of all disciplines. Anxiety can be defined as the psychological stress in the implementation of a learning activity that the learner goes through (Zhang, 2001). The concept of anxiety varies from an eclectic mix of explicit behavioral features that can be rationally studied to empirically inaccessible introspective feelings (Casado & Dereshiwsky, 2001). It is the subjective feeling of apprehension, nervousness, tension, and worry correlated with automatic nervous system arousal (Spielberger, 1983). Kunt and Tüm (2010) note that some research found negative relationships between anxiety and accomplishment, while some of them reported no association at all, others revealed a positive one. Accordingly, scholars stated that while mentioning anxiety, they should better consider the types of it. The researchers classified anxiety as trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. Trait anxiety is regarded as a personality feature, whereas state anxiety is viewed as a reaction to a certain circumstance at a specific time (Spielberger, 1983). As for situation-specific anxiety, it is a type of anxiety associated with certain events and situations (Horwitz et al., 1986). In another classification made by Oxford (1999), there are two types of Anxiety known as debilitating and facilitating anxiety. Briefly, facilitative anxiety can be defined as an attempt to enhance a person's efficiency in many activities, while debilitative anxiety deteriorates the quality of his work (Oxford, 1999).

### Foreign language anxiety

The type of anxiety which is primarily linked to the learning of a foreign language is language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989, 1991). When learning or using a second language, the concern and unpleasant psychological reaction awakened is conceived as language anxiety (McIntyre, 1998). In other words, it is the subjective sensation of fear and anxiety regarding learning and using languages (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). It is a type of situation-specific anxiety that can incorporate anxiety measures encountered in second/foreign language contexts in particular. Young (1991) classifies the causes of language anxiety into six groups: (1) personal motives; (2) language learning beliefs for learners; (3) language teaching beliefs for teachers; (4) interactions between teacher and learner; (5) procedures in the classroom; and (6) language testing. Moreover, according to MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) language anxiety occurs at any of the three primary stages of the language learning process, consisting of receiving external stimuli, processing stage, and output production (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994).

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) is a phenomenon related to but distinct from other anxieties (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986). FLA was defined by Macintyre and Gardner as a state of uneasiness and tension. In terms of emotions, self-esteem, and self-confidence, Clement (1980) specified foreign language anxiety as a multidimensional concept that deals with the psychology of learners. FLA has been categorized into three notions: the apprehension of communication of foreign language, test anxiety, and fear of negative assessment (Horwitz et

al., 1986). Communication apprehension is apparent when learners have trouble conveying their sophisticated thoughts and opinions because of their poor communicative abilities; second, test anxiety refers to the anxiety of a person related to assessment incompetence, and third, fear of negative assessment can be explained as a kind of anxiety based on one's failing to produce a proper social impact, according to Aydın (2016).

### Foreign language teaching anxiety

Although the recognition of anxiety, its causes, and consequences on the learning process have been examined by researchers, foreign language teaching anxiety (FLTA) has not gained enough attention from researchers. That means, although prospective instructors and teachers feel the pressure of anxiety in their classrooms, their anxiety cases have been scarcely studied by researchers. However, nowadays, language teaching anxiety has gained popularity especially in cases where researchers need to search for the emotional state of language teachers who teach a non-native language to others (Merç, 2015). Anxiety in language instruction is a challenge that should be recognized as a separate but linked term to anxiety in L2 learning and general anxiety in educating (Merç, 2011). Although this anxiety may not affect the efficiency of language teaching, it might remain a critical hindrance to the cognitive health and career enhancement of practitioners of various languages (Horwitz, 1996). Having a look at related studies might help us understand the nature of FLTA better. Moreover, such a holistic perspective might help us identify the research gap on FLTA. Therefore, this study aims to synthesize the qualitative and quantitative findings of 13 articles conducted on FLTA and to identify the limitations in the content of the literature on this subject for prospective studies.

## Methodology

Via the synthesis of independent studies carried out on a specific topic, meta-synthesis studies attempt to analyze and describe a specific phenomenon. A set of distinct but overlapping experiments are analyzed to establish an illustrative concept that could clarify the phenomenon's results and to provide a conceptual model for investigators (Walsh & Downe, 2005). Meta-synthesis has also been considered as a systematic technique aimed at reviewing a substantial amount of knowledge and comprehensively synthesizing the results in an attempt to build a more effective insight into a remarkable topic of focus (Tang, 2009). In his meta-synthesis, Bair (1999) included data from quantitative research, along with qualitative ones which is also the case in this study.

The meta-synthesis process encompasses several main stages including research question or problem formation, comprehensive search of literature, inclusion & exclusion criteria, analyses via meta-synthesis techniques, presentation of the synthesis with themes, and further suggestions for prospective studies (Uysal, Akalin, & Güven, 2018).

In the stage of data collection, although it was not the main concern of the data collection phase, the data were compiled using indexes such as Google Scholar, Eric, ResearchGate, and ULAKBIM TRDizin. The key terms used for searching the data were "Anxiety, Language anxiety, Foreign language teaching anxiety, Teacher anxiety, Language teacher anxiety, Student-teacher anxiety, and Pre-service teacher anxiety". Moreover, the studies conducted through the years 2010-2020 were utilized. Other criteria taken into account

were that the studies were written by Turkish scholars in Turkish contexts. So, briefly, the criteria considered for inclusion were:

1. Was the study undertaken by Turkish scholars?
2. Were the articles included or related to language teaching anxiety in Turkey?
3. Were the studies carried out between the years 2010-2020?

Overall, after the exclusion of the irrelevant articles, 13 articles remained to be included in the meta-synthesis. Table 1 presents the studies examined and provides information on the ID of the studies, topic, author & year of publication, the research sample, data collection tool, and research purpose involved.

**Table 1.** List of the articles eligible for meta-synthesis

| ID | Topic of the study | Author & Year of publication | Research sample | Data collection tool | Research purpose |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | FLTA among pre-service teachers during teaching practicum | Dilek Tüfekçi Can- 2018 | 25 pre-service EFL teachers at Balikesir University | A background questionnaire, interviews, reflection, and essay papers. | The pre-service teachers' opinions on teaching practicum in general, their Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety during teaching practicum, and the anxiety-provoking factors during teaching practicum |
| 2 | A descriptive study on FLTA | Selami Aydın, Özgehan Uştuk- 2020 | 156 EFL teachers | A background questionnaire and the Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale (FLTAS) | The levels of FLTA among EFL teachers, the difference between the levels of FLTA regarding the variables of gender, age, school levels and types, teaching experience in years, whether they are native or non-native speakers of English, the degree of graduation, and their nationalities |
| 3 | A Qualitative Study on FLTA | Hülya İpek- 2016 | 32 non-native EFL teachers working at the School of Foreign Languages at the Anadolu University | Two self-report instruments, diaries and interviews, and a combination of the two self-reports. | The sources of anxiety experienced by non-native teachers of English as a foreign language while teaching the target language |
| 4 | Self-efficacy and anxiety perceptions of pre-service EFL teachers. | Güngör, F., & Yaylı, D.- 2012 | 77 pre-service teachers in English Language Teaching field of three state universities in Turkey | TSES (a 24-item paper-and-pencil questionnaire), FLTAS of 26 items with a five-point Likert scale | Whether variables such as gender, having some overseas experience and attending professional development activities affect pre-service teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy and foreign language (FL) teaching anxiety, and whether there is a correlation between pre-service teachers' levels of self-efficacy and FL teaching anxiety |
| 5 | A Qualitative Research on FLTA | Selami Aydin- 2016 | 60 pre-service teachers of English studying in the English Language Department of Education Faculty of Balikesir | Background questionnaire, interviews, reflections,and essay papers | The sources of Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety (FLTA) |

University.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | Student Teacher Anxiety Related to the Teaching Practicum | Turan Paker-2011 | 101 student teachers of an English Language Teaching Department at a Faculty of Education | The Student Teacher Anxiety Scale (STAS)with 26 items with a five-point Likert scale and Interviews with written responses | Student teachers' anxiety regarding the teaching practicum, the possible sources of anxiety for student teachers, and how different genders are affected |
| 7 | FLTA among Non-native Teachers of English: A Sample from Turkey | Gökhan Öztürk-2016 | Randomly-selected 103 Turkish instructors of English at six universities. | Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale (FLTAS) and Interviews | Whether non-native instructors of English in Turkey experience foreign language teaching anxiety and if so, the level of it. Besides, whether the level of this anxiety changes according to several demographic features of the instructors. Plus, the factors that directly cause foreign language teaching anxiety in classroom atmosphere |
| 8 | FLTA and Self-Efficacy Beliefs of Turkish Pre-Service EFL Teachers | Ali Merç-2015 | 117 senior student teachers of Anadolu University Faculty of Education English. | Foreign Language Student Teacher Anxiety Scale (FLSTAS) with a 5-point Likert-type scale, Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (SEQ), and Interviews (semi-structured) | The level of foreign language teaching anxiety experienced by pre-service Turkish EFL teachers, their level of perceived teaching efficacy. Whether variables such as gender and practicum school type influence the level of anxiety and teaching efficacy and whether there is a correlation between the level of teaching anxiety experienced by pre-service Turkish EFL teachers and their teaching efficacy. |
| 9 | Perceived Social Self-Efficacy and Foreign Language Anxiety among Undergraduate English Teacher Candidates: The Case of Turkey. | İlknur EĞİNLİ & Mehdi SOLHİ-2020 | 69 Turkish undergraduate English teacher candidates from two different English-medium private universities in Turkey. | Two questionnaires: Perceived Social Self-efficacy (PSSE) Scale and Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) Scale. | The PSSE (the perceived social self-efficacy) levels of Turkish teacher candidates and the FLA (the foreign language anxiety) levels for Turkish teacher candidates. Whether there is a relationship between teacher candidates' PSSE and their FLA. The effect of teacher candidates' age and gender on their FLA and PSSE. Whether there is a relationship between PSSE and FLA of teacher candidates moderated by age. |
| 10 | FLTA of language teachers Pre-service VS. In-service. | Hasan Şerif Baltacı-2017 | 30 non-native last year ELT pre-service teachers in a Turkish State university and 30 non-native in-service ELT teachers at a private university. | The TFLASF of 18 items with a 5-point Likert scale | Whether there is a significant difference between pre-service and in-service EFL teachers regarding their foreign language teaching anxiety (FLTA) |

| 11 | Sources of Foreign Language Student Teacher Anxiety: A Qualitative Inquiry | Ali Merç -2011 | 150 student teachers from Anadolu University in ELT Department | Diaries-Interviews (semi-structured interviews) | The sources of anxiety experienced by student EFL teachers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12 | An Analysis of the Pre-service Teachers' Teaching Anxiety and Coping Strategies: A Turkish Elementary School Context | Turgay Han and Ayşegül Takkaç Tulgar-2019 | 32 pre-service English teachers studying at ELT Departments in two state universities in Turkey. | Background Questionnaire, Observations, the interviews, and Diaries | The construct of English as a foreign language (EFL) pre-service teachers' feeling of anxiety before, while, and after experiencing teaching English within a Turkish elementary classroom setting, the anxiety sources for pre-service teachers in their practicum experiences, the ways they adapted to cope with these anxiety-provoking sources |
| 13 | Anxiety levels of novice and experienced EFL instructors: İstanbul Aydın University case | Aynur Kesen, Zühal Aydın-2014 | 35 EFL teachers instructors of English who work at the School of Foreign Languages at Istanbul Aydın University | The Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale with 26 items with A 5-point Likert type scale. | The anxiety levels of EFL instructors in terms of their gender and experience years Whether there is any relationship between the anxiety perceptions of EFL instructors and their gender and whether there is any relationship between the years of experience and the anxiety perceptions of EFL instructors.  If there is, the correlation between them |

## Data analysis

After selecting the eligible studies, they were read more than once and all of them were presented in a detailed way (Table 1) with their IDs. Then, for analyzing the data, content analysis method was used.  Content analysis was explained based on a structured, generalizable technique including clear coding rules to compress several lexes of the text into fewer categories of content (Stemler, S., 2000). Thus, the data, both quantitative and qualitative, were analyzed based on the most frequent themes that were investigated in accordance with the research purpose of this paper for all the selected studies. And these themes were, in turn, determined based on the frequency of the similar codes(findings) in the designated studies. Besides, the frequency of the themes and their subthemes were shown in the upcoming tables.

## Findings

The content analysis revealed five overarching themes that appeared in the prior research:(1) Sources of anxiety in FLTA, (2) The impact of gender on FLTA, (3) The general relationship between self-efficacy and FLTA, (4) The connection between years of experience and FLTA in Turkey (5) Level of FLTA.

**Table 2.** Identified themes and their frequencies

| Themes | Studies' IDs | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Sources of foreign language teaching anxiety | 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 ,11, 12 | 8 |
| 2. The impact of gender on FLTA | 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 13 | 6 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3. The relationship between self-efficacy and FLTA | 4, 5, 8, 9 | 4 |
| 4. The connection between years of experience and FLTA | 2, 4, 7, 13 | 4 |
| 5. Level of FLTA | 2, 7, 8, 10 | 4 |

As shown in Table2, the results of the available literature on foreign language teaching anxiety are significantly related to the sources and causes of FLTA. As it is apparent in Table 2, the sources of FLTA have been studied in studies 1,3,5,6,7,8,11 and 12. Secondly, the results of studies marked 2,3,4,6,7,8, and 13 have shown that the correlation between gender and FLTA has taken the attention of scholars in Turkey. Thirdly, in studies labeled 4,8,9, and 5 the relationship between self-efficacy and FLTA has been identified. The connection between years of experience and FLTA has been searched in the studies 2, 4, 7, and 13. Lastly, studies marked as 2,7,8, and 10 have manifested the levels of FLTA in pre-service and in-service teachers.

### Sources of FLTA

**Table 3.** Sources of foreign language teaching anxiety

| Sources of foreign language teaching anxiety | Studies' IDs | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| · Evaluation | 1, 3, 5, 6, 12 | 5 |
| · Staff relationship | 6, 11 | 2 |
| · Pupils | 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12 | 7 |
| · Management | 1, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12 | 6 |
| · Observation | 1, 6, 8, 11, 12 | 5 |
| · Language proficiency | 3, 5, 6, 7 | 4 |
| · Mentor | 6, 8, 11, 12 | 4 |
| · Inexperience | 1,3,5,11 | 4 |

Concerning the sources of anxiety, this study has compiled the main sources of anxiety into 8 subthemes including evaluation, staff relationship, pupils, management, observation, language proficiency, mentor, and inexperience.

Focusing on evaluation as the first subtheme, fear of making mistakes, being graded & evaluated, and getting feedback were among the causes of anxiety in pre-service and in-service teachers. The studies 1, 3, 5, and 12 emphasized the fear of making mistakes in their findings. As seen in the following excerpt:

"I am not an experienced teacher. Thus, I am afraid of making mistakes when I speak in front of the students. Yes, I did some mistakes because of stress at the beginning of the activity. Indeed, I always feel fear of making pronunciation mistakes. That is why my performance was

so bad." (Study 5) Moreover, as reported in studies 1, 6, and 12, being evaluated and graded was among the most anxiety-provoking factors. Besides, study 12 has mentioned another item regarding evaluation known as getting negative feedback. As one of the participants says:

"Getting feedback on our teaching performances is beneficial for us to develop ourselves. However, no one wants to be criticized. So, receiving negative feedback, though it is true, may decrease my self-confidence and motivation leading me to think that I don't have the capabilities to be an English teacher." (From the interview in study 12)

Secondly, staff relationship was another subtheme of the sources of FLTA. According to the studies 6 and 11, other teachers and their negative ideas about student teachers in the school were the sources of anxiety experienced by student teachers in terms of staff relationships. For example, in a case from study 11, the student-teacher was stressful about teaching a class, about which she was informed by other teachers in the teachers' room just before her class.

The third category, which is the most frequently found subtheme in the studies, is students. Since students are the undeniable part of each class, having anxiety while teaching them is something quite understandable. In study 12, having a desirable relationship with pupils and providing students with a good impression about the teacher was among the after teachings anxieties of pre-service teachers. In addition, in the interview conducted in the qualitative research of study 8, a teacher mentioned the following thought about the low proficiency level of her students:

"Actually, I always think about it. Why does it happen? I can't say I'm not guilty. I tried hard to use my body language, sure I'm giving the verbal instruction, too; plus, the body language, I mean, I hold the paper, I show the activity, for instance, I try to answer one as an example, to make them understand, but when those pupils do not understand the simplest instruction, one really start to think 'Am I really insufficient?' You know, expressions like 'circle', 'be quick', 'answer'. They have these even in their books. And they don't seem to get these, and you can't know what to do, then. Maybe I try shifting to Turkish, I don't know. Nothing to do more… I feel hopeless…" (Study 8)

Similarly, in two other studies, 5 and 11, the low proficiency of the pupils was among the notable anxiety-provoking factors. Also, unfamiliarity with students and not knowing who they are, led to anxiety in studies 6 and 11. Besides, the reluctant, disinterested, and indifferent students in language classes put a further burden and concern on teachers.

"I felt bored because they felt bored. They were not willing to attend the course. They did not react to my explanations about the activity. At the end of class, students learned nothing about the verbs I tried to introduce. This caused me to lose my motivation and felt me worried." (Study 5)

Noisy and disruptive students (study 11) and unexpected and undesired questions usually made by them can also lead to anxiety in language teachers (studies 1, 7,11)

The fourth category labeled as "management" includes class management, time management, and lack of preparedness and planning. Studies 1, 6, 11, and 12 have noted that

they are incapable of class management because students get out of their control. Below is a comment of a student-teacher who experiences the fear of classroom management to the bone.

"My biggest fear was about classroom management. I was not their real teacher; I was just like an elder sister to them. So, I was anxious that I would not be able to set control over the students, which would negatively affect my teaching performance." (a student's diary in study 12)

The second crucial problem causing anxiety in Language teaching is time management. In studies 1, 5, 11, 12 teachers claim that although they prepare a good lesson plan by allocating enough time to each activity in class, they cannot manage the time in a real class atmosphere. For instance:

"Today I had a reading class for the eighth grades. I was to teach seven words before the reading session. Then we had pre-reading and during-reading activities.  As not all of them would finish in this lesson, I was a bit worried. I made good lesson plans; also, I decently allocated time; however, in practice, I cannot manage the time as I noted in my lesson plan and this situation causes anxiety a little." (Study 11)

The fifth category is observation; being observed or being under the surveillance of mentors and other staff can be related mostly to pre-service and novice teachers' FLTA that has been highlighted in studies 1, 6, 8, 11, and 12.

Language proficiency is the next subtheme of FLTA. In this category, teachers often suffer from speaking skills and pronunciation knowledge (Studies 5, 7), and teaching a particular language skill (studies 3, 6).

"In the reading lesson, while discussing inferencing, expected problems came up.  It is a troublesome subject anyway! I am anxious about how I will put up with it tomorrow." (Study 3)

Next, mentors and their expectations from teachers (Study 6), their attitude about pre-service teachers (11), their interference in the lesson (8, 11), and in turn teachers' tolerance to make a good impact on mentors (12) bring about language teaching anxiety.

Finally, inexperience is among the anxiety-provoking variables for the language instructor, typically confronted by novice and pre-service student teachers. The inappropriateness of content and resources at the level of learners (studies 5 and 1), teaching a challenging subject or teaching a subject for perhaps the first time (studies 1 and 11), teaching students at a specific level of language proficiency (study 3), teaching students at a special level of language proficiency (study 3), technical problems e.g., being unable to use interactive board, lead to teaching anxiety.

## Gender and language teaching anxiety

According to the findings of the studies regarding gender and FLTA, while some studies have established no statistically significant difference between the two concepts, some others have found contradictory ideas related to this theme.

Studies labeled as 7 and 13 have reached the conclusion that being male or female cannot affect the level of FLTA; however, while study 7 have found very similar statistical data regarding this issue (Means: Female 1.86 Male 1.82), in study 13, the male instructors have an average rank of 11.60 and the female instructors have an average rank of 19.07 that makes it impossible to conclude the above-mentioned notion that there is no relationship between

FLTA and gender. Similarly, the results in study 6 indicated that even though there is no huge difference between males and females in pre-and post-tests, women are more anxious prior to teaching, but both groups have nearly the same mean scores in the post-teaching phase.

On the contrary, some studies, have established a high statistical difference between the two variables, gender & anxiety. Although the studies 4 and 8 have reached the idea that male teachers feel less anxious in comparison to females, it is noteworthy to say that study 4 has only come to this conclusion based on 3 items including English, listening comprehension, and teaching technique mentioned in FLTAS questionnaire. And study 2 has reported the notion that male teachers are more anxious than female teachers in terms of the self-perceptions of language proficiency, fear of negative evaluation, inexperience, and time management.

Having said all this, there is an important issue that has been ignored in studies 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 13 and should be taken into consideration in further studies. In order to receive a more nuanced result, the critical issue that should be considered is the equality of the number of male and female teachers. In none of the above-mentioned studies, equality can be observed (e.g., in study 6, there were 28 males and 73 females participating in the study).

### Self-efficacy and language teaching anxiety

Concerning the relationship between self-efficacy and FLTA, studies 4, 5, 8 and 9 have found inconsistent results. According to a group of studies, there seems to be no or low correlation between self-efficacy and FLTA (studies 4, 5). In another study, a moderate level relationship has been identified (study 8); finally, in study 9 a high-level correlation has been declared. All in all, the existing correlation among these two variables, FLTA and self-efficacy, was negative. So, an increase in self-efficacy level would turn into a decrease in FLTA. Here, conducted mostly with pre-service teachers (only study 5 included in-service EFL teachers), FLTA and self-efficacy can be further studied.

### Years of experience and language teaching anxiety

Based on the data collected in studies 2, 7, and 13, there was a statistically considerable relationship between the years of experience and FLTA of the teachers. The findings indicated that there was a linear negative correlation between years of experience and FLTA. To put it another way, EFL teachers who had more teaching experience felt less anxious when compared to less experienced teachers and novice teachers concerning the fear of negative evaluation, target language proficiency, and fear of making mistakes. For instance, in study 7, instructors with 4 to 6 and 7 to 9 years of teaching experience when compared to teachers with 16 to more years of experience have more teaching anxiety.
"In fact, I was a little bit worried and apprehended in previous years, especially when I met a new group of students. However, as the time passed and I got more experienced, I began to feel more comfortable while teaching in front of my classes" (Study 7)

Interestingly, although it cannot be included as a finding of the relationship between years of experience and FLTA, it can be inferred that the whole concept of experience can

influence the level of anxiety. Study 4 is an instance of what I have mentioned. In other words, pre-service teachers with overseas experience and professional development program attendance seemed less anxious about their English level.

### Level of foreign language teaching anxiety

In studies 2 and 7, while the anxiety level of teachers has been taken into account, in study 8, student teachers' anxiety levels were examined and finally, in study 10 both pre-service and in-service teacher's anxiety levels were compared. EFL teachers experience a low level of anxiety in time management, and foreign language anxiety. But foreign language proficiency, uninterested students, and unpreparedness made in-service teachers feel anxious at a moderate level. According to study 7, in-service teachers suffer from a moderate level of anxiety and this notion is statistically supported (68 percent of teachers had moderate level anxiety). Furthermore, in study 8, it has been reported that pre-service student teachers endure a low level of FLTA and the most anxiety-provoking situation was their relationship with their mentors. Having found separate ideas about FLTA levels in 3 diverse studies, study 10 provides a more comprehensive and clear view of the level of FLTA among pre-service and in-service teachers; based on this study, in-service teachers demonstrated lower levels of teaching anxiety than pre-service teachers when compared according to self-confidence, fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension as the 3 factors of FLTA.

## Discussion

Of the collected studies, only 5 of them involved in-service teachers in their studies (Aydın & Uştuk, 2020; İpek, 2016; Öztürk, 2016; Paker, 2011; Baltacı, 2017; Kesen & Aydın, 2014). And of these 5 studies, only two studies (İpek, 2016; Öztürk, 2016) addressed the sources of the FLTA. In other words, studies that have examined the sources and causes of anxiety are more likely to involve pre-service and student teachers' concerns. Moreover, while in most in-service teachers, certain anxiety-provoking causes such as fear of making errors, classroom management, and time management can be found, other excessive reasons such as instructor observation and grading can be seen only in pre-service training programs. Accordingly, more studies on the concerns of in-service teachers should be conducted over this argument.

On the other hand, Öztürk (2016) considered the educational history of teachers with regard to FLTA in the articles compiled for in-service teachers and concluded that no significant difference was observed across teachers with MA or BA certificates. Similarly, Aydın and Uştuk (2020) reported educational background as one of the influencing factors on FLTA but did not provide evidence to back it up. That is why I believe, in future studies, the relationship between educational background and FLTA should be given more attention. Besides, studies on the correlation between GPA (Grade point average) of student teachers and their level of teacher anxiety can reveal interesting results regarding the factors of anxiety and the level of it.  So, scholars can consider it seriously.

Although Aydın and Uştuk (2020), Güngör and Yaylı (2012), Paker (2011), Öztürk (2016), Merç (2015), and Kesen and Aydın (2014) have reported valuable information regarding the connection between gender and FLTA, none of them have considered balanced gender-based participation of males and females. As it is apparent, in all these studies, women outnumbered men.  Consequently, it can be a potential problem.

Moreover, there is only one study (Baltacı, 2017) in which in-service and pre-service teacher's differences in terms of FLTA has been delved deep into. Accordingly, when compared, in-service teachers had less anxiety in comparison to pre-service teachers in Baltacı's study (2017). The dilemma, here, appears on the idea that aside from experience, although not statistically supported, the type of school (private or public) is also among the factors influencing teaching anxiety. Therefore, the type of school and school level can have a possible effect on FLTA and should be further analyzed.

## Conclusion and Suggestions

The results of the study have gathered the potential reasons behind foreign language teaching anxiety and its correlation with gender, years of experience and self-efficacy perceptions of pre-service and in-service teachers and its overall level. However, research on in-service language teacher teaching anxiety is found in few studies (2, 3, 7, 10, and 13). Therefore, there is a gap to be filled by prospective researchers. Additionally, qualitative research on FLTA requires a profound longitudinal perspective rather than observing and interviewing teachers in a limited period of one semester or two.

Considering these studies, several implications can be offered in order to reduce the amount of FLTA in pre-service and in-service teachers. Teacher education programs should attach a reflection aspect to the teaching practice to find out the causes of teaching anxiety and the relevant solutions. Moreover, mentor teachers in teacher education programs can constantly provide positive and motivating feedback. Also, comprehensive time management, schedule, and training recommendations before their teaching tasks can alleviate extreme anxiety.

According to the findings of this review article, there is a focus on the sources of FLTA, its level, and its correlation with the years of experience in face-to-face language settings(classrooms); however, further research can be done to compile the potential sources of FLTA, its level, and years of experience in online or digital teaching platforms within the context of Turkey in the recent years specifically since the outbreak of Coronavirus. Moreover, if investigated in that way, the results may be applicable to other non-native settings.

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## The Opinions of Teachers and Administrators on the Selection of Teachers of Gifted Students

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# The opinions of teachers and administrators on the selection of teachers of gifted students

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**Abstract**

There are many different applications in the education of gifted individuals and in the selection of teachers who work in this field. The aim of the research is to study the qualities, selection, and training of the teachers of gifted students in the national and international literature in addition to the opinions of administrators and teachers on the qualities of teachers in Turkey. The opinions were obtained from 242 administrators and teachers, with five associate degrees, 117 undergraduate, 111 master's and nine doctorate degrees. Research data were analyzed by content analysis in line with teacher competencies criteria. Although the opinions of the administrators and teachers revealed in this research and the criteria set forth in the workshop overlap with each other, it is seen that the skills such as social skills determined as the criteria are still not taken into account in the selection processes.

**Note(s) from the author(s)**
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## Introduction

When an answer is sought to the question of who gifted people are, people with IQ levels of 130 or higher are gifted individuals based on the psychometric approach. (Ataman, 2003). According to Gardner (2010), they are individuals who differ (become superior) in the direction and characteristics they employ in understanding their environment, phenomena, and events. In another description, giftedness is related to genetics and develops with stimulus. Giftedness can be measured by physical growth, development, movement development, perception-attention control, analysis, synthesis, cognitive development such as problem-solving, understanding and speaking the language, and social, emotional development by experts via many observation tools. Being gifted means being one step ahead of your peers (Baykoç Dönmez, 2010).

From the oldest to the newest philosophical understandings and education understandings, a teacher is very valued. hen it comes to gifted students' education, importance and value of a teacher increases dramatically. A program might be prepared very carefully and have very effective content and goals, but it will be the teachers carrying out the program that determines the effectiveness of the program. Thus, considering the interactive relation between the elements in a program, teachers have more effective compared to other elements (Demirel and Kaya, 2006). In other words, even if the other elements are prepared perfectly, without teachers with required sufficiency the desired results in education cannot be reached (Yaşar et al., 2005; Demirel and Kaya, 2006) because the quality and effectiveness of education are directly related to the qualifications of teachers (Demirel and Kaya, 2006).

Undoubtedly, it does not matter how carefully a program is designed since it is the teachers who carry out the program that determine the effectiveness of it (Demirel and Kaya, 2006). Before revealing the teachers of gifted students, it is necessary to focus on the basic qualifications of teachers. In the studies, the qualifications to be sought in teachers are listed in general as general knowledge, special field knowledge and pedagogical formation (Demirel and Kaya, 2006; Karaçalı, 2004; Arslan and Özpınar, 2008). In recent and more detailed studies, the qualifications of teachers are divided into 6 main competence areas, whereas knowledge is not the only focus—skills and attitudes are also included. These are: personal and vocational values, program and content knowledge, knowing students, the process of learning and teaching, observing and evaluating learning and development, and school, family, and society relations (Demirel and Kaya, 2006; MEB, 2006; Karaçalı, 2004).

The qualifications of teachers' personal and professional progress are divided into 8 sub-categories: offering guidance to students; enriching school culture and making improvements, being a researcher, examiner, and being able to develop oneself; being able to use educational technologies in daily life; being an expert in human relations, being able to carry out vocational responsibilities and obeying laws, being able to self–evaluate; and having sufficient knowledge of the curriculum.

In addition to personal and professional progress, teachers must also have other qualifications related to learning/teaching. Some of these qualifications are specified as: being able to develop and practice activities, being aware of personal differences and using different types of teaching methods, being able to carry out student-centered lessons, being

able to design and use materials, being able to use new technologies in education, and adopting thematic approaches (TED, 2009). Moreover, if teachers are proficient in planning and teaching, with adequate assessment and evaluation efficiency, effectiveness can be persistent. When measurement and evaluation competencies are mentioned, the expressions of using alternative measurement-evaluation methods, interpreting the measurement results, and giving feedback to the student, creating a classroom teacher folder containing each student's personal information come to mind. In addition to these qualifications, teachers must have qualifications required for society, parents and school relations. Considering the education-life connection, a teacher must make connections with families, get to know parents and cooperate with them, evaluate the cooperation and share the evaluation results, and benefit from environmental opportunities.

Furthermore, teachers of gifted students must have additional qualifications. Renzulli (1968) based on his research in which he worked with 21 gifted students experts, stated that the main factor in gifted students' education is the teacher, and that teachers of gifted students must have the following qualifications: understanding cognitive, social, and emotional needs of gifted students, adapting the curriculum based on the needs of gifted students, encouraging high-cognition skills by using appropriate strategies, creating opportunities for student-centered learning, being a facilitator and a guide, creating a learning atmosphere which is not traditional, being organized, being an expert in the subject area, being interested in literature and cultures, having at least an average IQ level, iife-long learning, creative thinking, having excellent communication skills, being able to make mistakes, being eager, asking potent questions, helping students to have broader perspectives in developing new ideas, giving appropriate homework based on students' levels, and giving students an opportunity to learn at their own pace without focusing on the level of the classroom.

In addition to all these qualifications, Ataman (2003) stated that building students' talents, cooperating with students, being fair and objective, having a sense of humor, having the ability to praise and being presentable, and having a positive attitude are also important. At present, we try to answer 2 main questions regarding the education of gifted students. The first question is: "how should the education of these students be implemented?" In our country, this is a controversial topic and there are different opinions such as: forming different institutions, giving additional support to the school, forming application centers (BİLSEM), and having inclusive education full-time or half-time in schools. The second question is: "How should the selection and education of teachers and other staff be, and who would be responsible for the education of gifted students?" In addition to these 2 questions, "Should teachers have master's program certificate?" or "Should creative and successful Ministry of National Education (MoNE) teachers be chosen?" are some of the questions that are confronted.

In this study, we have tried to evaluate the qualities of teachers of gifted students nationally and internationally. The practices in different countries concerning the education of gifted children have been studied, and the education, selection and proficiencies of these teachers have been examined. The following were presented within the context of the study: 1) teacher selection and education in Europe for the education of gifted students, 2) teacher selection and education in America and other countries for the education of gifted students,

3) teacher selection and education in Turkey for the education of gifted students, 4) the similarities and differences among Turkey and other countries in the selection and education of teachers for the education of gifted students, 5) teacher sufficiency in teaching gifted students in Europe, 6) teacher sufficiency in teaching gifted students in America and other countries, 7) teacher sufficiency in Turkey in teaching gifted students, and 8) similarities and differences in teacher sufficiency in teaching gifted students in Turkey and other countries.

### Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to create a review of national and international literature on the qualities of the teachers of gifted students, how to select and train these teachers, as well as examining the thoughts of administrators and teachers on the qualities of teachers in Turkey. The study was carried out with two sub-purposes. The first sub-purpose focused on the following: the qualities of the teachers of gifted students in national and international literature; how teachers of gifted students are selected and educated around the world; and the differences between the education of gifted students in Turkey and around the world. The second sub-purpose sought answers to the following questions, which were directed to the BİLSEM administrators and teachers to present their thoughts:

1)      What are the personal and professional characteristics of teachers of gifted students?

2)      In terms of educational characteristics how well do the teachers of gifted students know and guide their students?

3)      How well do the teachers of gifted students monitor and evaluate the achievement of their students?

4)      Do the teachers of gifted students have good communication with the school, parents, and the society?

## Method

Qualitative explanatory case study was preferred in the research. The explanatory case study design was applied in two stages. In the first stage, the characteristics and selection of teachers of gifted students were compiled. The data for the first sub-purpose dimension was collected by survey method, and the data for the second sub-purpose was obtained by fixed form questionnaire interview.

In this study, the opinions consisted of 242 administrators and teachers having five associate degrees, 117 undergraduate, 111 master's and 9 doctorate degrees. Research data were analyzed by content analysis in line with teacher competencies criteria. The fixed questionnaire interview form consisted of six open-ended questions. Opinions of two relevant field experts were taken for the form. The final draft was sent to 276 participants and the feedback of 242 participants was used for the findings. Participants consist of BİLSEM teachers and administrators. BİLSEMs are institutions that take part in the identification and subsequent education of gifted students in Turkey. Classroom teachers, guidance specialists, science teachers, teachers from branches such as mathematics, social studies, painting, music, history, geography, physics, chemistry, biology, philosophy and sociology work in these centers.

## Findings

The findings were first started by explaining and comparing the teachers' selection, training, and qualifications to work with gifted students in Turkey, which is the first sub-problem of the research, and the selection, education and competencies of the teacher who work with gifted students in the world.

### The selection, education, and qualities of teachers who work with gifted students in Turkey

There are similar practices in Turkey and around the world in the selection and education of teachers as well as different practices. This part presents criteria used in the selection of teachers in Turkey and the teacher employment criteria and processes used around the world respectively. As the education of gifted students is carried out by BİLSEM (Science and Art Centres) the qualities required for teachers who will work with students in the private sector are usually similar to those qualities required within the country. There are two pre-requisites required in order to be included in the pre-selection process. These are: documenting that one has not violated any laws, having an ALES score of 60 or 65 or having completed one's master's degree. ALES is a mental skill level determination test used for entry to postgraduate education in Turkey. Those who score 55 and above in the exam made out of 100 points are considered successful.  The teaches who meet the pre-requisites are included in the selection process, and the teachers are selected within the framework of the criteria stated below. A list is prepared based on the points obtained by the evaluation criteria. The following Application Evaluation Criteria are used when employing teachers for BİLSEM (Science and Art Centres).

- Having completed a doctoral degree in their field or in the field of teaching gifted students
- Currently attending a doctoral degree program in their own field or in the field of teaching gifted students (proving that one has passed classes of 15 credits apart from scientific preparation)
- Having a master's degree in their field or in the field of teaching gifted students
- Currently attending a master's degree program in their own field or in the field of teaching gifted children (proving that one has passed classes of 15 credits apart from the scientific preparation)
- A document showing the language level exam results in KPDS, YDS (KPDS; the exam to determine the Foreign Language Level of Public Personnel. YDS; the foreign language level determination exam conducted by the Council of Higher Education for academic staff) Graduation grades
- Having publications in peer-reviewed journals (first publication 5 points, second publication 5 points)-journals with more than two will not be evaluated
- Having published a book in their own field (the ISNB number will be documented)
- Conducting a national or international project
- Having received training on the education of gifted students while carrying out a graduate or post-graduate degree in their own field (confirmed via transcript)
- Having the title of specialist teacher

The Ministry of Education carries out specific training processes for the BİLSEM teachers it has employed based on the criteria presented above. The candidates who are employed using the candidate evaluation criteria are invited to a two-week in-service training at the General Directorate of Special Education Guidance and Consultance Services. Classes on the qualities and education of gifted students and project-based education are offered at the course.

**The selection, training, and proficiencies of teachers who work with gifted student around the world**

When the criteria regarding teacher selection is studied, Baldwin (1993) defines teachers working with gifted students as individuals who love gifted students, respond to their complex problems and questions, develop programs for the gifted, are willing to carry out experiments with unknown results, accept mistakes and develop materials for the individual needs of children.

There are five basic criteria that make up the framework for teacher proficiency in the U.S.A (TED, 2009):

- Teachers are dedicated to their students and to teaching those students
- Teachers are competent in their subjects and know how to teach those subjects to their students
- Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring learning
- Teacher review their practices systematically and learn from their experiences
- Teachers are members of learning societies

Although there are differences in teaching practices in different states of the U.S., teachers who wish to get a certificate for teaching gifted students receive a training which ranges from six months to one and a half years. (Ladson and Darling, 2000)

There has been a rising trend in Austria in the last 10 years for training for teaching gifted individuals. There are more seminars and conferences in higher education on gifted individuals. The Pedagogy Institute, which has been set up in nine states, organizes seminars and conferences for teachers, scientists and other people who are interested in gifted individuals. Some of these activities are financed by the Ministry of Education. Approximately 600 teachers have completed the 500-hour training. The aim is to have one specialist of gifted students at each school. In Switzerland, teacher education is organized by the Pedagogy University. The education of gifted individuals is a part of basic education in which all students have to participate in during their school years. Education for teachers is regularly organized in different ways such as seminars and post-doctoral courses. (TED, 2009)

In the UK, the issue of giftedness is included in general teacher education. The placement of gifted students in teaching education varies from institute to institute. There is an increase in this area for teacher training and their professional development. People in other fields may also participate in these educational processes. The Westminister Education Institute of Oxford Brookes University practices EIC, a national educational program for gifted coordinators of schools. In addition, 'Lifelong Professional Development' programs are implemented for teaching gifted individuals. (TED, 2009) In Italy, the fourth and fifth years of

university are specialization for two years on gifted teachers. Within this two-year period, students are able to choose to teach gifted individuals.

There are different practices in different provinces in Germany. In some federal provinces, the teaching of gifted students is a compulsory subject in departments of teaching. In Germany, further education is suggested under some conditions. (ISCED Level 0-3). Munster University International Centre for the Study of Giftedness (ICBF) coordinates the ECHA program for teachers and pre-school teachers.

In Romania, educational guides include the teaching of gifted students within teacher training. However, offering such courses depends on the curriculum rules of universities. There is a one-term course in the third year of the psychology pedagogy module at the Institute of Psychology and Educational Sciences. There is a compulsory class at the IASI University for graduate students of Education and Special Education in their second and third years. There is teacher exchange program for the education of gifted students in ISCED levels 2 and 3 (TED, 2009).

Teaching gifted students plays a major part in the teacher curriculum in Hungary. There are topics such as definitions, giftedness and age, giftedness and creativity, school programs for the gifted, school-parent cooperation, low achievement in gifted students, the role of the teacher in teaching gifted students, special fields (sports, mathematics, music, etc.) and international practices in teaching gifted students. Debrecen University organises a program called 'The Teaching of Gifted Students. In the program, which lasts four terms, teachers receive training of over 600 hours.

In Sweden, the preparation of teachers for the education of gifted students began in Lulea Technical School, Pitea School of Music. However, the studies for teacher training are pretty limited. A small part of the Spanish system's share for teacher training is reserved for gifted education. In 6 schools, among 56 schools, there are courses for gifted students (TED, 2009). Some school administrators and professional organizations suggest courses on giftedness and gifted students. In Denmark, teachers have compulsory training on gifted students as a part of their general education. However, there is not much focus on the education of gifted students.

In Luxembourg, pre-school and elementary school teachers are trained at Universite du Luxembourg Campus Walferdange for 3 to 4 years (TED,2009). In addition to basic education, there are theoretical subjects such as increasing motivation and mental creativity in gifted students. In France, Letonia, Portugal, Belgium, Ireland and Greece there is no specific training for teachers of gifted students. Teachers either connect with what they have learned at college or develop their own methods and approaches (TED, 2009).

In Finland, there is no special program for teachers of gifted students. The teachers' knowledge of teaching gifted students is related to their personal knowledge. The teachers are expected to provide support to students. However, subjects related to the education of gifted students is a part of the training that some pre-school teachers receive (TED, 2009). According to a study conducted in Australia, the ability to make challenges easier was considered the key factor by most participants (Vialle and Quigley, 2007). In addition, a sense of humor, creativity and being curious were considered to be valuable by students. This is so they have to present interesting materials to students and carry out their job in an organized way.

**Similarities and differences in Turkey and around the world for the selection and education of teachers who work with gifted students**

The similarities and differences in Turkey and around the world for the selection and education for the teachers of gifted students are listed below:

Similarities:

- Subjects such as music and art are also part of the education of gifted students and the educators are selected
- In general, it is not a part of graduate education on its own
- The emphasis on the pedagogical approach
- Post-graduate studies, and their contribution to teacher proficiencies

Differences:

- Having a humorous character or making challenges easier, which are individual characteristics of teachers, are not present in formal procedures in Turkey
- Sports is not a part of the program for gifted students in Turkey
- There are differences in considering the interest of teachers when they choose to teach gifted students
- The training in Turkey for the training of teachers for gifted students has not reached the desired level concerning in-service training and pre-training
- The role of graduate and post-graduate institutions in life-long learning

When the stated similarities and differences are taken into consideration, it is possible to carry out studies to eliminate differences. It may also be possible to create national educational models and options should be discussed in order to add a special program to the education of gifted students.

**The thoughts of BİLSEM administrators and teachers on the qualifications of teachers of gifted students**

As a part of the second sub-heading of the study, the qualities needed by teachers for the successful training of gifted students were defined based on the thoughts of administrators and teachers of BİLSEM. For this reason, answers were sought to the following question: 'What are the thoughts of administrators and teachers of BİLSEM on the qualities of teachers of gifted students?' In this context, the qualities of teachers who work with gifted students are studied under the headings presented below:

**Table 1.** Personal and Professional Qualifications

| No | The Thoughts of Teachers | Percentage |
|----|--------------------------|------------|
| 1 | Being open to criticism | 98 |
| 2 | Being open to change and development | 96 |
| 3 | Being a person who conducts research, questions, and improves himself/herself | 95 |
| 4 | Being eager, energetic, and energetic | 95 |
| 5 | Supporting lifelong learning | 94 |
| 6 | Being able to self-evaluate | 93 |

| 7 | Having creative thinking skills | 92 |
| 8 | Knowing how to use information and communication technologies, having general knowledge, and having knowledge of art and aesthetics | 92 |
| 9 | Being a person who can represent his/her institute with his/her general attitudes and qualifications | 91 |
| 10 | Having detailed knowledge on subject matter | 91 |

Administrators and teachers emphasized that being a person who carries out research, questions, and improves himself/herself is the main qualification in the education of gifted students in terms of personal and professional qualifications.

**Table 2.** Qualifications regarding knowing students well enough and offering them guidance

| No | Teacher's views | Percentage |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Guiding students in projects and other tasks | 95 |
| 2 | Understanding gifted students' cognitive, social, and emotional needs | 94 |
| 3 | Not revealing learned information about a student during vocational activities, except when it is necessary | 94 |
| 4 | Expressing her/his emotions and thoughts clearly and understanding the emotions and thoughts of other people | 94 |
| 5 | Encouraging students to be independent | 93 |
| 6 | Getting to know students completely by carrying out interviews with parents | 90 |
| 7 | Providing solutions to students' personal problems | 89 |

BİLSEM administrators and teachers emphasized that guiding students, understanding students' needs, not exposing students' information, knowing students, and communicating effectively were among the qualifications that were of great prominence.

**Table 3**. Qualifications of teaching methodology

| No | Teacher's views | Percentage |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Getting out of routine in education | 95 |
| 2 | Using different teaching methods | 94 |
| 3 | Being sensitive to personal differences | 94 |
| 4 | Being a facilitator and a guide in activities | 93 |
| 5 | Making the activities and environment appropriate for student centered teaching | 93 |
| 6 | Forming an educational atmosphere which is safe from dangers | 92 |
| 7 | Using diversification techniques effectively for gifted students | 92 |
| 8 | Preparing and using materials | 90 |
| 9 | Using strategies that encourage higher thinking | 90 |
| 10 | Knowing the steps in the BİLSEM directive | 89 |

BİLSEM administrators and teachers emphasized getting out of routine, differentiating methods and techniques, being sensitive to personal differences, and guiding students regarding qualifications of teaching methodology.

**Table 4.** Qualifications regarding monitoring and evaluating the development of students

| No | Teacher's views | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Sharing detections about students with parents after teaching activities | 97 |
| 2 | Analyzing evaluation results properly and reflecting them in his/her works | 96 |
| 3 | Communicating with families and cooperating with them | 92 |
| 4 | Continuity in assessment and evaluation | 89 |
| 5 | Being an expert in analyzing evaluation results and giving feedback to students | 88 |
| 6 | Using assessment and evaluation techniques holistically | 88 |
| 7 | Being an expert in creating a student history file, where information about a students and his/her works are kept | 87 |

When we look at BİLSEM administrators' and teachers' opinions about *Qualifications regarding observing and evaluating students' development*, they say that sharing perceptions with parents is the most important factor. Moreover, administrators and teachers also emphasize the importance of analyzing evaluation results and reflecting them in the following practices.

**Table 5.** Qualifications about school, family and society

| No | Teacher's views | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Being able to work as a team with colleagues in a working environment | 95 |
| 2 | Sharing observations about students with families in an appropriate manner | 94 |
| 3 | Being used to working in groups and teams | 93 |
| 4 | Contributing to the development of the school and making it a cultural centre | 93 |
| 5 | Having the skills to communicate with parents properly | 92 |
| 6 | Having the skills to communicate with others, such as people who are needed when talking about the education of gifted students, institutes, and organizations. | 90 |

BİLSEM administrators and teachers emphasized being able to work as a team with colleagues in a working environment and cooperating with them regarding qualifications about school, family and society. In addition, BİLSEM teachers and administrators reported that

sharing observations about students with families in an appropriate manner and contributing to the development of the school and making it a cultural center are crucial main qualifications.

**Table 6.** Qualifications on academic requirement

| No | Teacher's views | Percentage |
|----|----------------|------------|
| 1 | His/her colleagues thinking that he/she is successful in his/her fields | 83 |
| 2 | Having a master's degree in gifted students' education | 83 |
| 3 | Having a master's degree in his/her own field | 82 |
| 4 | Having completed a class on gifted students' education during graduate or post graduate studies | 81 |
| 5 | Having average or higher scores on language efficiency exams | 80 |
| 6 | Using the foreign language effectively in communications and obtaining information from foreign sources | 80 |

BİLSEM's administrators and teachers emphasized the importance of their colleagues thinking that they are successful in their fields, as well as having master's degree in gifted students' education in terms of qualifications about academic requirement. Furthermore, having a master's degree in their own fields and attending a class about gifted students' education are also important.

**Table 7.** The items with the lowest averages in all qualifications

| No | Teacher's views | Percentage |
|----|----------------|------------|
| 1 | Having the degree of head teacher/specialist | 50 |
| 2 | Having a book published | 66 |
| 3 | Having articles and writing in refereed journals | 68 |
| 4 | Doing scientific research and sharing their results in international congresses | 69 |
| 5 | Having average or higher scores on language proficiency exams | 70 |
| 6 | Having a doctorate in his/her own field | 70 |
| 7 | Conducting scientific research and sharing their results in international congresses | 71 |
| 8 | Being in an international project team | 72 |
| 9 | Being a member of a non-governmental organizations and associations about his/her own field | 76 |
| 10 | Being an intellectual | 78 |
| 11 | Parents thinking that he/she is successful on his/her own field | 79 |

In the interviews, it is seen that the qualifications with the lowest average of all the qualifications that administrators and teachers should have in BİLSEM teachers are Specialist or Head Teacher. Moreover, teachers and administrators think that having a book published, conducting and publishing scientific research, proficiency in foreign language, having a

doctorate degree, and doing a doctorate are less important compared to other qualifications. Furthermore, according to participants' opinions, being an intellectual is not that important.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The qualifications necessary for teachers of gifted students and the selection criteria do not overlap completely. In order to get over with this problem, extensive research needs to be conducted on educating and selecting gifted students' teachers in terms of qualifications. There are certain criteria which need to be met by teachers who will work with gifted students. However, this causes problems as this is reflected in the selection of teachers. During a workshop on 13-15 February 2009 on gifted students, attention was drawn to the inefficacy of selection and education of teachers, and some points were criticized. These points were:

- Deficiency in the step of determining criteria for the character analysis of teachers
- Deficiency in the step of evaluation of field knowledge during selection
- Lack and deficiency of criteria during interviews
- Not being able to measure social skills and talent performance
- The deficiency in the measurement of performance is reflected both in literature review and in the thoughts of administrators and teachers.

The opinions of the administrators and teachers revealed in this research and the criteria set forth in the workshop overlap with each other. However, it is seen that the social skills determined as criteria are still not taken into account in the selection processes.

Similarly, although teachers' personality traits and affective characteristics were expressed both in the literature, in the relevant workshop, and in the opinions of teachers and administrators in their findings in this study, they could not become a method used in the selection process. In order to resolve this problem, further research on measurement should be conducted on the criteria required by teachers in the selection and education of teachers. It is observed that the performance criteria of teachers selected for BİLSEM centers in Turkey are not clear, and problems exist related to performance indicators for organizing complementary and developmental training. It is necessary to create performance indicators for teachers working in the field and increase monitoring and evaluating quality based on these factors. It is observed that in international practices, academic institutions rather than state institutions are responsible for pre-service and in-service training. For this reason, for the pre-service and in-service training processes in Turkey, universities and other academic institutions should play a more active role.

Although the department of teaching gifted students started in Turkey much earlier compared to some European countries and other countries around the world, there has been no differentiation in the status of graduates of this department, which has caused arguments concerning the role of such teachers in BİLSEM. Teachers undergo a 2-week training course (60 hours) during the BİLSEM selection process. In developed countries, teachers attend a training of 500-600 hours to get a certificate in this field. It is observed that while universities and the Ministry of Education are actively involved in teacher education in Turkey, in most other countries private institutions and foundations carry out this responsibility.

It is observed that in countries which are advanced in education such as Finland, Norway and Denmark, additional education for gifted students is not offered since they aim to provide the best education for all individuals. Teachers who will work with gifted students are not limited to BİLSEM and a few private schools. These students also attend mainstream classes. Similar to the model used for inclusive education, all teachers may attend an in-service training program to provide a holistic approach for gifted students. Based on the results of the study, it is observed that the most prominent qualities of the teachers of gifted students based on the views of administrators and teachers are as follows: Being open to criticism, Being open to change and development, Having personal qualities in order to question and develop oneself as well as being a researcher, Being enthusiastic, ambitious and energetic, Having a desire for life-long learning, Being able to guide students in projects and other research, Being able to understand the cognitive, social and emotional needs of gifted student ,Not revealing the information about students obtained through professional activities, except for legal and professional obligations, Effectively expressing one's feelings and thoughts to others and being able to understand the feelings and thoughts of others, Encouraging students to become independent individuals, Being able to use different teaching methods, Being able to act different to routines in education, Being sensitive to individual differences, Being a facilitator or a guide in activities, Being able to provide student-centered opportunities, activities and environments, Sharing observations about students following activities with parents ,Correctly interpreting evaluation results and reflecting this in studies, Having interaction and collaboration with parents, Creating continuity in assessment-evaluation processes, Being in a team with colleagues and working in harmony with the team, Sharing observations about students with parents in an appropriate way, Having the habit of working in groups and teams, Contributing to making one's institution a cultural center and contributing to the development of the school, Being able to use strategies to promote higher thinking.

It is observed that the qualities which are presented above are not stated in the standards determined by the American National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education(2008), Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (Ladson and Darling,2000), National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, National Guide for Standards for the Profession of Teaching in Australia 1999 report,  the Teacher Development Agency in England, Teaching Council Act, 2001 Ireland, and the '2007 Treaty of Lisbon signed by the European Council'. In this research, teacher qualifications that emerged in the form of teacher and administrator opinions, the American National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (2008) and Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (Ladson and Darling, 2000) revealed that the criteria and qualifications teachers working with special talents should have are similar. There are also some qualities which are not stated in the mentioned reports but are considered as prominent by some of the teachers. It is assumed that this is due to the fact that there are different practices in Turkey concerning the education of gifted students.

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