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Explaining Listening Comprehension among Turkish EFL Learners: The Contribution of General Language Proficiency, Vocabulary Knowledge and Metacognitive Awareness

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Research Article

Explaining listening comprehension among Turkish EFL learners: The contribution of general language proficiency, vocabulary knowledge and metacognitive awareness

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Abstract

The present study investigates the impact of individual differences in language knowledge, namely general L2 proficiency and L2 vocabulary knowledge, and metacognitive awareness of strategies used in the listening process on L2 listening comprehension. It seeks an answer to what proportion of the variance in listening comprehension is explained by general L2 proficiency, L2 vocabulary knowledge and metacognition among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners. A total of 99 intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners, studying at Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages (AUSFL) participated in the present study. Data were gathered using Oxford Quick Placement test (OQPT), the New Vocabulary Levels Test (NVLT) (McLean & Kramer, 2015), a researcher designed Listening Comprehension Test (LCT) and Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) (Vandergrift et al., 2006). Results reveal that vocabulary knowledge and some sub-components of the MALQ (Person Knowledge, Problem Solving and Directed Attention) play a significant role in L2 listening comprehension. The results are interpreted and discussed within the light of the previous research, and a number of pedagogical implications are suggested accordingly.

Note(s)
[1]This study was presented at ACLL (Asian Conference on Language Learning) in Japan in 2018.
[2]This paper is part of a PhD study so it is ensured that it meets the principles of research ethics.

Author(s)' statements on ethics and conflict of interest
Ethics statement: I hereby declare that research/publication ethics and citing principles have been considered in all the stages of the study. I take full responsibility for the content of the paper in case of dispute.
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Introduction

Listening is a fundamental skill for both first (L1) and second/foreign language (L2) learners (Becker, 2016; Buck, 2001; Field, 2008; Rost, 2011). Its main purpose is to be able to comprehend the intended message of the speaker (Rost, 2011). Proficient listening comprehension enables learners to understand the spoken discourse of the target language, which in turn aids the development of other language skills (Dunkel, 1991; Rost, 2002). Along with reading, listening plays a vital role in foreign language learning. In other words, the more learners read and listen, the more they are exposed to language, which is what leads to language acquisition (Krashen, 1985; Peterson, 2001). Listening is even of stronger significance to language development than reading because it is the most frequently used language skill (Ferris, 1998; Morley, 1999; Vogely, 1998). Wolvin and Coakley (1988) showed that listening consumes more of daily communication time than other forms of verbal communication, both in and out of the classroom. Vandergrift (1999) also showed that in daily life, people spend 40-50% of their communication on listening. Through listening, language learners internalize linguistic information which they use to produce language (Brown, 2001). Similarly, Rost (2002) maintains that listening is considered one of "the primary means of L2 acquisition for most people" (p. 103). It is regarded as a key communication skill within and outside of school (Behrens & Eriksson, 2009; as cited in Wolfgramm et al., 2016). Tresch (2009) notes that classroom observations reveal that pupils spend a large part of class time listening (as cited in Wolfgramm et al., 2016). It is therefore not surprising that the skill of listening is likely to be a prerequisite for successful learning and knowledge acquisition (Hagen & Huber, 2010; as cited in Wolfgramm et al., 2016). In addition, the skill of listening enables engagement with a wide range of online spoken target language samples such as those from video sharing websites and digital audio/video on demand systems (Robin, 2007). Therefore, the importance of listening ability is increasing in the world, and technological advances in global communication have made listening by non-natives even more vital (Mendelsohn, 1998). Apart from being a fundamental skill, listening comprehension is a complicated process because it is based on both linguistic knowledge, such as vocabulary or grammar, and non-linguistic information, such as knowledge of the world (Buck, 2001; Vandergrift & Baker, 2015). At the same time, listening has been qualified as a highly complex skill because of its real-time (Buck, 2001) and implicit nature (Hulstijn, 2007).

However, despite the fundamental role of listening comprehension in L2 learning and abundance of listening materials available, it remains to be the least well understood and researched language skill compared to the other language skills, namely reading, writing and speaking (Field, 2008; Macaro et al., 2007; Vandergrift, 2006; Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). Regarding this, Nunan (1999) states that "listening is a Cinderella skill in second language learning" (p.199). He also notes that it is believed that knowing a language means speaking and writing in that language. Chastain (1988) attributes this belief to the fact that students and teachers do not recognize listening as a prerequisite to a developed speaking ability. Therefore, listening research is necessary for the development of a more complete understanding of learners' oral communicative abilities in a foreign language (Becker & Sturm, 2017). Largely lacking are empirical studies analyzing the predictors of listening comprehension. (Wolfgramm et al., 2016). Despite the abundance of literature on listening comprehension among non-native

speakers, explaining individual differences in listener characteristics has received less attention by comparison with studies which investigate individual differences in reading comprehension (Andringa et al., 2012). It is crucially important to gain better insights into the listener characteristics which determine L2 learners' success in understanding speech because "listening is a source of frustration to learners and an area in which it seems difficult to make progress" (Graham, 2011, p. 113). Comprehending spoken English is challenging for foreign language learners because their first language dominates most of their communication, they try to learn how to listen largely through formal instruction in the classroom, and are not exposed to English outside the context of formal study (Chang, 2007). Even when taking a classroom English listening text, learners are confronted with a wide range of difficulties such as limited vocabulary and syntactic knowledge, lack of background knowledge, fast speech rates, unfamiliar accents, unawareness of listening strategies, to name but a few (Chang, 2007). It is also worth noting that listening research has depended to a great extent on findings borrowed from reading research, probably because of the complexity in testing the aural modality (Bonk, 2001). Both reading and listening require receptive language processing, namely decoding and interpretation; employ linguistic knowledge, such as vocabulary and syntax, and world knowledge, including topic, text structure, schema and culture; entail top-down and bottom-up processing; necessitate cognitive processing that is flexible and adaptable to task demands, and are influenced by additional factors, such as metacognition and motivation (Vandergrift, 2006). However, there are a number of characteristics of listening that differentiate it from reading. For example, "listening takes place in real time and is ephemeral" (Vandergrift, 2006, p. 9). In addition, listeners must apply phonological knowledge to the comprehension process to segment the sound stream into meaningful units and process them quickly, which underscores the significance of working memory. Moreover, "listening is more context sensitive", which necessitates attention to prosodic features such as stress and intonation (Vandergrift, 2006, p. 9).

In sum, listening comprehension is an integral part of foreign language learning and an important foundation for success in other language skills, specifically the skill of speaking; however, little is known about specific variables that make significant contributions to the L2 listening. Given this clear gap in knowledge, the primary objective of the present study is to obtain empirical evidence for some of the listener characteristics that might contribute to listening and the extent to which these variables explain the variation in L2 listening comprehension. A more precise understanding of the learner characteristics involved in L2 listening comprehension is likely to help to explain some of the difficulties faced by L2 learners and, thereby, to inform listening instruction and potential remediation (Vandergrift & Baker, 2015). Additionally, identifying specific variables that make significant contributions to L2 listening can help teachers of English as a Foreign language (EFL) learners design and practice evidence-based curricula, and as a result, EFL learners can develop L2 listening skills more effectively (Oh & Lee, 2014). Therefore, the present study addresses the following research question:

What proportion of the variance in listening comprehension is explained by general L2 proficiency, L2 vocabulary knowledge and metacognition among intermediate-level Turkish EFL learners?

Literature Review

Rubin (1994) lists the factors that contribute to L2 listening comprehension as text characteristics, interlocutor characteristics, task characteristics, listener characteristics and process characteristics although there are other categorizations by other scholars (e.g. Vandergrift & Baker, 2015). The focus of the present study is on individual differences in listener characteristics, which refer to general language proficiency, vocabulary knowledge, listening strategy use, metacognitive awareness, working memory and processing speed (Wang & Treffers-Daller, 2017). Of these individual differences in listener characteristics, the present study is specifically concerned with general language proficiency, vocabulary knowledge and metacognitive awareness. The rationale for this lies in the Model of Communicative Language Ability by Bachman and Palmer (1996). According to the Model of Communicative Language Ability, language ability refers to "the capacity that enables language users to create and interpret discourse" (p. 33). In other words, language ability is a combination of language knowledge, which refers to vocabulary, syntax and phonology, and strategic competence, which refers to higher-order metacognitive strategies. Prior to delving into the factors contributing to L2 listening comprehension, which are of primary significance for the present study, it is necessary to review the others.

With regard to the text characteristics, three temporal variables, namely speech rate, pause phenomena and hesitation, affect L2 listening comprehension in terms of acoustics (Griffiths, 1992). In addition to these temporal variables, level of perception, sandhi ("the phonological modification of grammatical forms which have been juxtaposed" (Henrichsen, 1984, p. 311) and L1/L2 differences also affect L2 listening comprehension as part of the acoustics of the text characteristics. Besides, morphological and syntactic modifications including restatements do influence text characteristics and thus L2 listening comprehension. Text type has also been noted as a factor affecting listening comprehension. Furthermore, studies have suggested that whether the text has visual support has to do with L2 listening comprehension as well. For example, Aldera (2015) investigated the efficacy of using visual multimedia technique in multimedia language settings to aid L2 listening comprehension among Arab learners of English, and found that the participants who had been given exercises via multimedia task scored significantly higher in the listening comprehension test than those who were asked to listen to the task aurally only. Similarly, Becker and Sturm (2017) found that integrating online audio-visual materials into the listening instruction of L2 French learners had a measurable impact on their listening comprehension development. In an eye-tracking study, Suvorov (2015) found that ESL learners considered content videos (videos with visual aids) more important and informative than context videos (videos with no visual aids). Regarding the interlocutor characteristics, sex bias and perceived speaker expertness have been reported to affect L2 learners' listening recall (Markham, 1988).

As for the task characteristics, task type has been found to affect L2 listening comprehension. Research reveals that L2 learners may perceive some tasks as relatively more/less difficult than some others, or their recall may vary in accordance with the task type. To exemplify, Brunfaut and Revesz (2015) found that passages with a larger number of contractions and passages which contained more of the most common multiword expressions in written general discourse (e.g., as well as, deal with, over the years) posed significantly less

difficulty, while passages including a larger number of multiword expressions rare in written academic discourse (e.g., sort of, think about, go off) were significantly more demanding for ESL learners.

Concerning the individual differences in listener characteristics, listening strategy use, working memory and processing speed are also crucially significant for L2 listening comprehension. To begin with listening strategy use, Kassem (2015) explored listening strategy use among a group of Egyptian EFL college sophomores, identifying the strategies used more often by the participants and the relationship between listening strategy use and listening comprehension. Results revealed that cognitive strategies were used more often by participants, followed by metacognitive and socio-affective strategies, and listening strategies correlated significantly with listening comprehension. Kazemi and Kiamarsi (2017) determined the listening strategies used by intermediate and advanced EFL learners and investigated the relationship between learners' overall language proficiency and their choice of strategy. As a result, it was found that the total number of strategies used by advanced learners was higher than the total number of strategies used by intermediate learners, and advanced learners employed a wide variety of metacognitive strategies, while the most favored listening strategies for learners in the intermediate group were cognitive, and then socio-affective strategies. In Yeldam (2015) study, Taiwanese EFL learners who were taught bottom-up, top-down and metacognitive listening strategies made significant progress in listening comprehension. Second, for the working memory, Vandergrift and Baker (2015) maintained that more general skills like auditory discrimination and working memory play a significant role in the development of more specific language skills leading to L2 listening comprehension. Brunfaut and Revesz (2015) investigated the relationship between L2 listening and a range of task and listener characteristics, and found that working memory, assessed using forward and backward digit span tasks, indicated a significant, positive relationship to listening comprehension. However, Andringa et al., (2012), in their study explaining individual differences in both native and non-native listening comprehension, found that working memory did not explain unique variance in listening comprehension in either group. Similarly, Wolfgramm et al., (2016) examined the role of concentration, vocabulary and self-concept in listening and reading comprehension, and reported that working memory did not prove to have a significant effect on listening comprehension, nor on reading comprehension. As for processing speed, lastly, Andringa et al. (2012) found that processing speed contributed to listening comprehension substantially for the native speakers, whereas for the non-native speakers there was a significant contribution of IQ. Oh and Lee (2014) found that sentence processing speed along with grammar significantly predicted bottom-up and top-down listening comprehension.

Lastly, process characteristics refer to the characteristics of internal operations or behaviors, and how listeners interpret input in terms of what they know, or identify what they do not know (Rubin, 1994). The processes that are examined in L2 listening are top-down and bottom-up processing. Top-down processes refer to learners' using their knowledge of the world, situations and roles of human interaction to focus on meaning, whereas bottom-up processes refer to learners' using their knowledge of words, syntax and grammar to work on form. Studies investigating the role of bottom-up and top-down processing in L2 listening

comprehension vary in their findings, and reveal that listening processing is complex and difficult to measure mostly because the measures are indirect (Rubin, 1994).

Regarding the role of listener characteristics in L2 listening comprehension, two studies are worth mentioning in detail. First, Brunfaut and Revesz (2015) investigated to what extent linguistic complexity of the listening task input and response, and speed and explicitness of the input, were associated with task difficulty. The study also explored the relationship between L2 listening and listeners' working memory and listening anxiety. Results revealed a significant correlation between L2 listening task difficulty and indicators of phonological, discourse, and lexical complexity and with referential cohesion. In addition, a negative correlation was found between L2 listening and listeners' working memory and listening anxiety, indicating that the less anxious the listeners and the higher their working memory capacity, the more proficient they are in L2 listening. Second, Vandergrift and Baker (2015) conducted an exploratory path analysis on learner variables, namely L1 listening ability, L1 vocabulary knowledge, L2 vocabulary knowledge, auditory discrimination ability, metacognitive awareness of listening and working memory capacity, in L2 listening comprehension. A correlation analysis revealed significant correlations among the variables in the current study, and the strongest and most consistent correlation was found between L2 listening comprehension and L2 vocabulary. Additionally, as a result of a path analysis, it was found that L1 vocabulary and metacognition have an indirect positive influence on L2 listening comprehension through L2 vocabulary.

L2 listening comprehension and general language proficiency

In a study exploring the respective contributions of L1 listening comprehension ability and L2 proficiency to L2 listening comprehension ability, Vandergrift (2006) concludes that L2 proficiency plays a crucial role on L2 listening ability. Another piece of evidence comes from Wang and Treffers-Daller (2017), who explored the contribution of general language proficiency, vocabulary size and metacognitive awareness to L2 listening comprehension among Chinese adult EFL learners. In this study, the researchers reported significant positive correlations between listening comprehension and general language proficiency. In addition, as a result of a series of regression analyses, it was found that both general language proficiency and vocabulary size make an independent contribution to listening comprehension, but that the vocabulary size explains more of the variance in the dependent variable than the overall proficiency. This means that general language proficiency is likely to be a fundamental component of L2 listening comprehension; however, it seems to play a less significant role than lexical knowledge.

L2 listening comprehension and vocabulary knowledge

Many studies show that L2 vocabulary knowledge is one of the most important correlates of listening comprehension in adult second language learners (Andringa et al., 2012; Bonk, 2000; Matthews & Cheng, 2015; Mecartty, 2000; Sağlam, 2014; Stæhr, 2009; Teng, 2016; Vandergrift & Baker, 2015; Wang, 2015; Wang & Treffers-Daller, 2017). In a study investigating the interaction between lexical knowledge and listening comprehension in a second language among Japanese speakers of English, Bonk (2000) found that acceptable comprehension levels were significantly associated with higher text-lexis familiarity. Andringa

et al. (2012), in their study attempting to explain individual differences in both native and non-native listening comprehension, found that knowledge, which was extracted from measures of vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, and segmentation accuracy, turned out to be the most important predictor of success in listening comprehension.

Some other studies exploring the multifaceted structure of listening through componential analyses found that L2 vocabulary knowledge contributes to L2 listening comprehension above and beyond some other variables such as grammar knowledge, general language proficiency, listening strategy use. Mecartty (2000), for example, aimed to examine the relationship between lexical and grammatical knowledge to reading and listening comprehension, and to combine both lexical knowledge and grammatical knowledge in one research design and to examine their relationship to reading comprehension and listening comprehension. In this study, lexical knowledge was operationalized through a word-association and a word-antonym task, while grammatical knowledge was operationalized through a sentence completion multiple-choice task and a grammaticality judgment task. Lexical knowledge was significantly related to both reading comprehension and listening comprehension, and explained a larger proportion of variance in reading comprehension than in listening comprehension. It was the only significant predictor of both reading and listening suggesting some similarities in both traits. However, in terms of the amount of variance explained by lexical knowledge, lexical knowledge source appeared to be more crucial for reading than it was for listening. In another study, Vandergrift and Baker (2015) reported that of a number of learner variables, including L1 listening ability, L1 vocabulary knowledge, L2 vocabulary knowledge, auditory discrimination ability, metacognitive awareness of listening, and working memory capacity, L2 vocabulary had the strongest and most consistent association with L2 listening comprehension. Wang and Treffers-Daller (2017) similarly noted that the variable which correlated most strongly with listening comprehension was vocabulary knowledge among general language proficiency, vocabulary knowledge and metacognitive awareness. In addition, it was found that both general language proficiency and vocabulary knowledge make an independent contribution to listening comprehension, but vocabulary knowledge explains more of the variance in listening comprehension than the overall proficiency. Sağlam (2014), in his study on the role of syntactic knowledge, vocabulary knowledge and listening strategy use on listening comprehension among Turkish EFL learners, concluded that both grammar and vocabulary knowledge have a role on listening comprehension; however, the role of vocabulary is slightly more than that of grammar, and the role of listening comprehension strategy use is very little.

Still some other studies looked into the relative contributions of two separate dimensions of vocabulary knowledge, namely depth and breadth, to L2 listening comprehension. Stæhr (2009), for example, investigated the extent to which vocabulary size and depth of vocabulary knowledge are associated with listening comprehension, and the extent to which depth of vocabulary knowledge, in addition to vocabulary size, contributes to successful listening comprehension. It was found that vocabulary size and depth of vocabulary knowledge are both significantly correlated with listening comprehension. However, vocabulary size alone accounted for a significant 49 % of the variance in listening comprehension, while depth of vocabulary knowledge added 2 % to the variance already

explained by vocabulary size. Although this change is statistically significant, it represents a very small increase, which suggests that depth of vocabulary knowledge adds very little to the variance already accounted for by vocabulary size. Teng (2016) also investigated the contribution of breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge to academic listening comprehension among Chinese EFL learners, yet found contradictory findings to Stæhr (2009). In this study, breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge were found to be equally and positively correlated to listening comprehension. However, depth of vocabulary knowledge explained 28 % of the variance in the listening comprehension success above and beyond vocabulary size. Similarly, Wang (2015) conduct an experimental study to test the respective effect of vocabulary breadth and depth on different parts of listening comprehension so as to provide an empirical support for vocabulary teaching in EFL listening class, and found that both vocabulary breadth and depth influenced listening scores significantly, but the overall effect of vocabulary depth was significantly greater than that of vocabulary breadth. In addition to depth and breadth, a third dimension, size, was investigated by Li and Zhang (2019) in terms of their association with L2 listening. Using a structural equation modeling technique, the researchers found that all three dimensions of vocabulary knowledge are significant predictors of L2 listening comprehension with the size of auditory vocabulary in the L2 having the strongest predictive power over L2 listening comprehension.

The role of L2 vocabulary knowledge in L2 listening comprehension has also been demonstrated in rather indirect ways. Matthews and Cheng (2015), to illustrate, investigated the relationship between recognition of high frequency words from speech and second language L2 listening comprehension among Chinese EFL learners. They used a measurement of word recognition form speech (WRS), which involves test takers listening to contextualized samples of spoken language in an effort to produce a target word present within the spoken input. The WRS test used in the study consisted of 23 target words from the one thousand-frequency range, 37 words from the two thousand-frequency range and 29 words from the three thousand-frequency range. It was found that word recognition from speech was strongly correlated with listening comprehension among Chinese EFL learners; the ability to recognize high frequency words from speech was found to be able to predict the variance in listening comprehension, and frequency levels in the WRS test were matched with listening comprehension proficiency, which is likely to guide EFL learners towards the levels of WRS associated with their desired category of listening comprehension competence.

Unlike the most of the previous research, Lange and Matthews (2020) attempted to explore the relationship between L2 listening comprehension and L2 vocabulary knowledge, as measured with an aural vocabulary test as well as a written receptive vocabulary test. They found that aural vocabulary knowledge is a more powerful predictor of L2 listening comprehension as compared to written receptive vocabulary knowledge and lexical segmentation. On the other hand, Li et al., (2020) reported that phraseological knowledge, the knowledge of formulaic sequences (Kremmel et al., 2017), explained some of the unique variance in L2 listening comprehension above and beyond aural vocabulary knowledge.

L2 listening comprehension and metacognition

Metacognition is among the most important factors contributing to L2 listening comprehension considering that "skilled listeners and readers integrate contextual knowledge and general knowledge about the world into their understanding of speech or writing" (Wang & Treffers-Daller, 2017: 142). Most of the studies investigating metacognitive listening awareness have benefitted from Vandergrift et al. (2006), who designed a listening questionnaire (Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire, MALQ) to assess L2 listeners' metacognitive awareness and perceived use of strategies while listening to oral texts. As a part of instrument development and validation in this study, the relationship between the listening behaviors reported in the MALQ and actual listening performance were correlated, and the positive moderate significant correlation confirmed the relationship between listening comprehension ability and metacognitive awareness of the processes underlying successful L2 listening. In addition, a regression analysis revealed that about 13 % of the variance in listening performance could be explained by metacognition. Additionally, Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010) investigated the effects of a metacognitive, process-based approach to teaching L2 listening over a semester. In this mixed-design experimental study, results revealed that the experimental group receiving metacognitive instruction outperformed the control group on the final test of listening comprehension. In addition, the participants reported in the stimulated recalls that this process contributed to their strategy use. They also stated that they consider this approach valuable for improving attention and goal setting, and acknowledged that the listening tasks delivered through a metacognitive, process-based approach had a significant influence on their level of attention and concentration. Similarly, Li (2013) investigated non-English majors' metacognitive awareness in English listening and the relationship between metacognitive awareness and L2 listening comprehension. It was found that the participants with higher metacognitive awareness scored higher in the listening comprehension test. It was concluded that L2 learners with high metacognitive awareness can successfully regulate the process of L2 listening comprehension and become more autonomous in language learning, and thus they can finish the listening task more effectively. In a very recent study, Ramli et al. (2019) provided evidence for the significant positive contribution of metacognitive awareness to L2 listening comprehension and emphasized that metacognitive awareness helped students to find their appropriate strategies to process their listening comprehension. Also, the findings reported by Vandergrift and Baker (2015) and Stæhr (2009) point out that metacognition is indeed an important variable in explaining L2 listening comprehension although the percentage of explained variance in these is generally not very high.

Method

Setting and participants

A total of 99 Turkish EFL students from seven intact classes, who were studying at Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages (AUSFL), participated in the present study. All of the participants were at A Level when the present study was being conducted. Of the four proficiency levels at AUSFL, namely A, B, C, D; A is the highest proficiency level. English proficiency of the participants had been determined as a result of a prerequisite placement test and a proficiency exam conducted by AUSFL. The placement test consists of 30 vocabulary, 40

grammar and 30 reading comprehension multiple-choice questions. Students who obtain 60 and more in this placement test are required to sit the proficiency exam. The proficiency exam consists of three sessions, namely a multiple-choice test on listening, reading, vocabulary and grammar, a writing exam, and a speaking exam. The exams are prepared according to Global Scale of English (GSE) learning objectives. The GSE extends the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) to include more learning objectives (or Can Do statements) that support learning English at all levels of proficiency, across all skills and for different purposes. The GSE learning objectives describe what a learner should be able to do at every point on the Global Scale of English for reading, writing, speaking and listening.

The participants were between eighteen and twenty-one years old. They were all monolinguals of Turkish, and no participant included in the current study had an extended stay in an English-speaking country. It is worth noting that the participants seldom had contact with native speakers in authentic listening situations. These participants mainly practiced listening comprehension through listening to materials of English tests out of class.

Data collection methods and analysis

The participants' general language proficiency was assessed using Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT), which gives information about students' language ability in relation to CEFR, and thus is widely used in research (Wang & Treffers-Daller, 2017, p. 143). The OQPT, which is a written test, consists of 60 items. For the first five items, test takers are required to understand notices and decide where they can see these notices. For items six to 20 and items 41 to 50, test takers are required to choose the word or phrase which best fits the blanks embedded in short passages from the three or four given answer options. For items 21 to 40 and items 51 to 60, test takers are required to choose the word or phrase which best completes the sentences given with a blank. In other words, these parts are in the form of a cloze test and a multiple-choice test respectively. The OQPT is appropriate for the purposes of the present study because it consists of question types that the participants are familiar with, and provides item variety. It measures L2 learners' English vocabulary knowledge such as word meanings, collocations, synonyms and antonyms, and phrases, and grammar knowledge such as tense, passive voice and counterfactual knowledge. The maximum score students can obtain is 60. The time allocated for the OQPT is 30-45 minutes (Aydın, 2019, p. 51).

The participants' vocabulary size was assessed using The New Vocabulary Levels Test (NVLT) (McLean & Kramer, 2015). The NVLT, intended as a diagnostic and achievement instrument for pedagogical or research purposes, measures knowledge of English lexis from the first five one-thousand-word frequency levels of the BNC and the Academic Word List (AWL) (McLean & Kramer, 2015). It consists of five 24-item levels which measure knowledge of the most frequent 5.000-word families and a 30-item section which measures knowledge of the AWL. It is worth noting that the AWL was not used in the present study considering the purposes of the study and the characteristics of the sample. The time allocated for the NVLT is 30-45 minutes.

The NVLT utilizes the multiple-choice format. The test takers are required to select the word or phrase with the closest meaning to the target word, which is exemplified in a sentence, from four answer choices. A sample item is as follows:

1. time: They have a lot of **time.**
    a. money
    b. food
    c. hours
    d. friends

Metacognitive awareness was measured using Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) (Vandergrift et al., 2006). The MALQ consists of 21 items and five categories: planning and evaluation (five items), directed attention (four items), person knowledge (three items), problem solving (six items) and mental translation (three items). All items are randomized on the questionnaire. Respondents are required to respond using a six-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". However, a five-point Likert scale was used for the accomplishment of the present study. In addition, the MALQ was translated into Turkish employing back-translation method in order to enable the participants to comprehend the survey thoroughly. The researcher and an experienced English instructor who holds an MA degree in ELT carried out the translation process together.

The Listening Comprehension Test (LCT) was designed by the researcher. It consists of three listening texts: a conversation between a student and a resident assistant, a radio news report about the Florida hurricane and an academic lecture about an animal that was taught to communicate with humans. The texts take 2:55, 4:92 and 3:04 minutes respectively. The texts vary in length because they vary in text type as well. For each text, there are questions for the main ideas and the details. Item types include multiple-choice questions, True/False statements and ordering topics. Open-ended questions were not preferred because the participants are not familiar with open-ended questions in their school-based listening exams. In addition, practical and reliable scoring may not be ensured in open-ended questions properly. The participants listened to each text twice because there were two sections after each text asking separate questions.

The linguistic difficulty of the three texts was compared with the Flesch–Kincaid readability formula, which found the three stories had a reading ease of 89, 77.7, and 61.3, and a grade level of four, five, and nine. This shows that the conversation and news report texts are easy to read and fairly easy to read respectively, whereas the academic lecture text is standard (average), which lies in between fairly easy and fairly difficult. This variance across the listening texts in terms of readability seems normal considering the texts also vary in text type.

As for the validation process of the LCT, expert opinion was gathered from four experienced EFL instructors who were teaching English at the same institution and working in the testing office at the same time. They were first asked for feedback on the audio-scripts of the listening texts in terms of content, topic and background knowledge. Then, they were asked for an overall feedback on the LCT including the audio texts and the test items. Necessary amendments were made, and the LCT was piloted with a group of A-level students at AUSFL sharing similar features with the participants of the present study (N=34). The allocated time for the LCT is 30 minutes.

As a result of the pilot study, the test was scored dichotomously, the answers were computed and item analyses and test analyses were carried out to ensure the reliability of the test. Item facility indexes, item discrimination indexes, item variance and test variance were

calculated, and distractor efficiency analysis was conducted for the multiple-choice sections of the test. Consequently, two items were eliminated and minor changes were made on five items. Lastly, KR20 formula was calculated to find test reliability. It was found to be 0.77, which indicates that the LCT is a reliable test measuring listening comprehension.

The participants were first administered the OQPT (day 1) followed by the NVLT (day 2), the LCT and the MALQ (day 3). Each test was administered on a separate day so as to avoid test weariness. Only the LCT and the MALQ were administered one after another on the same day to enable the participants to better think of the metacognitive strategies they use in listening. The regular teachers of the five intact classes from which the participants of the present study were recruited administered the tests. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and they participated voluntarily.

As for the data analysis, first, item 15 (*I don't feel nervous when I listen to English)* in the MALQ was reverse-coded because it is the only negatively worded item in the scale. Then reliability of the MALQ was calculated. The results showed that Cronbach's alpha of the MALQ as a whole was 0.84. Subsequently, descriptive statistics, namely minimum, maximum and mean scores, and standard deviations, were calculated for each data collection instrument in the present study. Next, Pearson product moment correlations were computed to gain insights into the relationship between the dependent variable (listening comprehension) and the independent variables (general language proficiency, vocabulary knowledge and metacognition) in the present study. Finally, hierarchical multiple regression analyses were carried out to find the contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable.

Findings

To begin with, it is worth noting that data coming from two participants was removed because they scored *0* and *60* (maximum score) in the OQPT, diminishing the sample size to 97.

As for the overall scores regarding the OQPT, following the guidelines of Oxford, it was found that 82 of the participants were at intermediate-level (those scoring between 25 and 36), whereas seven and eight participants were at pre-intermediate (those scoring between 11 and 24) and upper intermediate (those scoring between 37 and 48) levels respectively. These findings as well as the standard deviation in this test (*SD*=5.20) indicate that the participants of the present study do not differ a lot from each other in terms of their general English language proficiency. The participants who are either behind or ahead of the mainstream proficiency level (intermediate), on the other hand, point out that even though foreign language learners are placed at the same proficiency level as a result of an exam (placement and proficiency tests conducted by AUSFL), it is likely for them to either make far more progress than or lag behind their peers. As Table 1 below shows, the mean score (*M*=29.44) also falls into the intermediate range according to the OQPT, whereas the minimum and maximum scores are 16 and 44 respectively.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics: OQPT, NVLT, LCT

	M	*SD*	Minimum	Maximum	Full Score
OQPT	29.44	5.20	16	44	60
NVLT	77.97	15.74	47	111	120
LCT	17.38	5.48	5	32	35

N=97

With regard to the NVLT, of the 120 vocabulary items, representing 1.000, 2.000, 3.000, 4.000 and 5.000 word-frequency levels, as can be seen in Table 1 above, the participants knew almost 78 words on average (*M*=77.97). This finding indicates that of the 15,000 English word families, the participants of the present study would know 9,746 English word families. In addition, McLean and Kramer (2015) note that "learners who correctly answer at least 47-48 of the 48 items from the 1.000 and 2.000 word-frequency levels and half of the items from the 3.000 word-frequency levels on the NVLT would be deemed to have sufficient lexical knowledge to comprehend texts consisting of the most frequent 2.000 English word families" (p. 6). In this sense, a total of 32 of the participants of the present study can comprehend texts consisting of the most frequent 2.000 English word families (See Table 2 below).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics: Word-frequency levels in NVLT

	Minimum	Maximum	*M*	*SD*
1.000 WFL	17	24	22.13	1.75
2.000 WFL	7	24	17.40	3.25
3.000 WFL	6	22	14.45	3.99
4.000 WFL	1	22	11.20	5.30
5.000 WFL	0	23	13.08	5.01

*WFL=Word Frequency Level, N=97

When it comes to the LCT, the minimum and maximum scores are 5 and 32 respectively, while the mean score is *M*=17.38 (*SD*=5.48). Considering the quartiles namely Q1 and Q3, and the interquartile range for the scores that the participants obtained from the LCT, it can be reported that the participants who score below Q1=14 are low achievers; those who score above Q3=21 are high achievers, and those who score between 15 and 20 (the interquartile range) are moderate achievers of the LCT. In this sense, 26 participants, corresponding to 27 % of the whole sample are low achievers of the LCT; 30 participants, corresponding to 31% of the whole sample are high achievers of the LCT, and 41 participants, corresponding to 42 % of the whole sample, are moderate achievers of the LCT.

As for metacognition in listening among the participants of the present study, Table 3 below displays an analysis of percentages of the MALQ, mean scores and the standard deviations for each item. The table shows that item 3 (I find that listening is more difficult than reading, speaking, or writing in English) has the highest mean score (*M*=3.87, *SD*=1.30). It is followed by item 17 (I use the general idea of the text to help me guess the meaning of the words that I don't understand) (*M*=3.85, *SD*=.03), and item 5 (I use the words I understand to guess the meaning of the words I don't understand) and 12 (I try to get back on track when I lose concentration) (*M*=3.62, *SD*=1.13 and 1.03 respectively). The item that has the lowest mean score, on the other hand, is item 18 (I translate word by word, as I listen) (*M*=1.87, *SD*=1.08). It is followed by item 10 (Before listening, I think of similar texts that I may have

listened to) (*M*=2.21, *SD*=1.24), and item 4 (I translate in my head as I listen) (*M*=2.44, *SD*=1.18).

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics: MALQ Items

No	Description of Items		1	2	3	4	5	*M*	*SD*
1	Before I start to listen, I have a plan in my head for how I am going to listen.	n	7	16	34	27	13	3.23	1.10
		%	7.2	16.5	35.1	27.8	13.4		
2	I focus harder on the text when I have trouble understanding.	n	21	16	20	25	15	2.96	1.38
		%	21.6	16.5	20.6	25.8	15.5		
3	I find that listening is more difficult than reading, speaking, or writing in English.	n	7	11	14	20	45	3.87	1.30
		%	7.2	11.3	14.4	20.6	46.4		
4	I translate in my head as I listen.	n	27	23	29	13	5	2.44	1.18
		%	27.8	23.7	29.9	13.4	5.2		
5	I use the words I understand to guess the meaning of the words I don't understand.	n	5	12	21	35	24	3.62	1.13
		%	5.2	12.4	21.6	36.1	24.7		
6	When my mind wanders, I recover my concentration right away.	n	24	27	20	19	7	2.56	1.25
		%	24.7	27.8	20.6	19.6	7.2		
7	As I listen, I compare what I understand with what I know	n	11	18	25	33	10	3.13	1.17

	about the topic.							
		%	11.3	18.6	25.8	34.0	10.3	
8	I feel that listening comprehension in English is a challenge for me.	n	13	13	20	23	28	3.41	1.38
		%	13.4	13.4	20.6	23.7	28.9	
9	I use my experience and knowledge to help me understand.	n	3	15	36	34	9	3.31	.95
		%	3.1	15.5	37.1	35.1	9.3	
10	Before listening, I think of similar texts that I may have listened to.	n	38	24	15	16	4	2.21	1.24
		%	39.2	24.7	15.5	16.5	4.1	
11	I translate key words as I listen.	n	20	14	23	28	12	2.97	1.33
		%	20.6	14.4	23.7	28.9	12.4	
12	I try to get back on track when I lose concentration.	n	3	11	25	28	20	3.62	1.03
		%	3.1	11.3	25.8	19.2	20.6	
13	As I listen, I quickly adjust my interpretation if I realize that it is not correct.	n	11	10	30	31	15	3.29	1.19
		%	11.3	11.3	30.9	32.0	15.5	
14	After listening, I think back to how I listened, and about what I might do differently next time.	n	4	19	21	35	18	3.45	1.12
		%	4.1	19.6	21.6	35.1	18.6	
15	I don't feel nervous when I	n	12	9	18	24	34	3.60	1.37

	listen to English.								
		%	12.4	9.3	18.6	24.7	35.1		
16	When I have difficulty understanding what I hear, I give up and stop listening.	n	30	19	26	16	6	2.47	1.25
		%	30.9	19.6	26.8	16.5	6.2		
17	I use the general idea of the text to help me guess the meaning of the words that I don't understand.	n	2	5	23	42	25	3.85	.03
		%	2.1	5.2	23.7	43.3	25.8		
18	I translate word by word, as I listen.	n	46	30	12	5	4	1.87	1.08
		%	47.4	30.4	12.4	5.2	4.1		
19	When I guess the meaning of a word, I think back to everything else that I have heard, to see if my guess makes sense.	n	10	15	37	21	14	3.14	1.16
		%	10.3	15.5	38.1	21.6	14.4		
20	As I listen, I periodically ask myself if I am satisfied with my level of comprehension.	n	17	15	24	29	12	3.04	1.29
		%	17.5	15.5	24.7	29.9	12.4		
21	I have a goal in mind as I listen.	n	7	10	29	34	17	3.45	1.11
		%	7.2	10.3	29.9	35.1	17.5		

When we have a look at the MALQ in terms of its sub-components, as Table 4 below shows, person knowledge has the highest mean score (M=3.63, SD=.70). It is followed by problem solving (M=3.39, SD=.66), planning and evaluation (M=3.08, SD=.75) and directed

attention (*M*=2.90, *SD*=.70). The sub-component of the MALQ that has the lowest mean score, on the other hand, is mental translation (*M*=2.43, *SD*=.99).

Table 4. Descriptive statistics: MALQ, sub-components

	Minimum	Maximum	*M*	*SD*
Planning and Evaluation	1.40	4.60	3.08	.75
Directed Attention	1.25	4.25	2.90	.62
Person Knowledge	1.00	5.00	3.63	.70
Mental Translation	1.00	5.00	2.43	.99

With regard to the relationship among the variables, Table 5 below displays that of the four variables in the present study, namely general language proficiency, vocabulary size, listening comprehension and metacognition, a significant positive weak correlation was found between general language proficiency and vocabulary size (*r*=.247, *p*<0.01). In addition, there is a significant positive moderate correlation between vocabulary size and listening comprehension (*r*=.451, *p*<0.01). Metacognition, operationalized as MALQ in the present study, did not significantly correlate to any of the variables. However, its sub-components, namely planning and evaluation (PLAN.), directed attention (D.ATT), person knowledge (PERS.), mental translation (MENT.) and problem solving (PROB.) showed significant correlations with some of the other variables in the present study. There is a significant negative weak correlation between vocabulary size and person knowledge (*r*=-.231, *p*<0.05); a significant positive weak correlation between listening comprehension and directed attention (*r*=.249, *p*<0.05); a significant negative weak correlation between listening comprehension and person knowledge (*r*=-.217, *p*<0.05), and a significant positive weak correlation between listening comprehension and problem solving (*r*=.266, *p*<0.01). Significant correlations were also found among the sub-components of the MALQ. There is a significant positive moderate correlation between planning and evaluation and problem solving (*r*=.466, *p*<0.01); a significant positive weak correlation between directed attention and problem solving (*r*=.204, *p*<0.05), and a significant positive weak correlation between person knowledge and mental translation (*r*=269, *p*<0.01).

Table 5. Correlation among the variables

	OQPT	NVLT	LCT	PLAN.	D.ATT.	PER.	MENT.	PROB.
OQPT	1	.247**	.157	-.007	-.018	-.065	-.076	.077
NVLT		1	.451**	-.092	.090	-.231*	-.068	.070
LCT			1	.118	.249*	-.217*	-.164	.266**
PLAN.				1	.042	-.020	.097	.466**
D.ATT.					1	-.019	-.138	.204*
PERS.						1	.269**	-.083
MENT.							1	.042
PROB.								1

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

To iterate, listening comprehension significantly correlates with vocabulary size, directed attention, problem solving and person knowledge. The relationships between listening comprehension and vocabulary size, directed attention and problem solving are positive, while the relationship between listening comprehension and person knowledge is negative. The highest correlation is with vocabulary size, followed by directed attention, problem solving and person knowledge.

As for the contribution of individual differences in listener characteristics to listening comprehension, a multiple regression analysis was carried out, in which the dependent variable is LCT and the independent variables are MALQ, OQPT and NVLT. As the Table 6 below indicates, the R square of this regression model was found to be .226 and significant at the 0.01 level. This means that the variables in this regression model altogether significantly explain 22.6 % of the variance in the dependent variable, listening comprehension. When the model is further examined in order to see the unique contribution of each independent variable; MALQ, which represents metacognitive awareness in listening, and OQPT, which stands for Oxford Quick Placement Test, do not have a significant relationship with the dependent variable, listening comprehension. In other words, metacognitive awareness and general language proficiency do not make a significant contribution to the explanation of the variance in listening comprehension among intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners. On the other hand, the third variable in the model, NVLT, has a significant R square change value of .191, which means that controlling for metacognition and general language proficiency, vocabulary size itself significantly explains 19.1 % of the variance in listening comprehension.

Table 6. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis 1 (Dependent variable: LCT)

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error	F Model	R Square Change	F Change
MALQ	.0898[a]	.010	-.001	5.49	.93	.010	.931
OQPT	.187[b]	.035	.015	5.44	.71	.025	2.475
NVLT	.475[c]	.226	.201	4.90	9.03	.191	22.901[*]

a. Predictors (Constant), MALQ
b. Predictors (Constant), MALQ, OQPT
c. Predictors (Constant), MALQ, OQPT, NVLT
* F is significant at the 0.01 level.

Considering that the correlation analysis revealed that listening comprehension significantly correlates with some of the sub-components of the MALQ, namely directed attention, problem solving and person knowledge as well as vocabulary size, another multiple regression analysis was carried out with the dependent variable being LCT scores and the independent variables being person knowledge, directed attention, problem solving and NVLT. As shown in Table 7 below, the R square of this regression model was found to be .296 and significant at the 0.01 level. This means that person knowledge, directed attention, problem solving and vocabulary size altogether significantly explain 29.6 % of the variance in listening comprehension. Table 7 also shows that all of the variables in this model make unique contributions to listening comprehension. Person knowledge alone accounts for a significant 4.7 % of the variance in listening comprehension when it is entered into the regression model

at the first step, $p<0.05$. When directed attention is put into equation, it adds 6 % to the variance already explained by person knowledge, $p<0.05$. Problem solving also explains an additional 4 % of the variance in listening comprehension, $p<0.05$. Lastly, vocabulary size accounts for 14.8 % of the variance in listening comprehension above and beyond person knowledge, directed attention and problem solving.

Table 7. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis 2 (Dependent variable: LCT)

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error	F Model	R Square Change	F Change
PERS.	.217[a]	.047	.037	5.38	4.68	.047	4.688[*]
D.ATT.	.327[b]	.107	.088	5.24	5.62	.060	6.291[*]
PROB.	.385[c]	.148	.121	5.14	5.39	.041	4.512[*]
NVLT	.544[d]	.296	.266	4.70	9.62	.148	19.398[**]

a.   Predictors (Constant), PERS.

b.   Predictors (Constant), PERS., D.ATT.

c.   Predictors (Constant), PERS., D.ATT., PROB.

d.   predictors (Constant), PERS., D.ATT., PROB., NVLT

* F is significant at the 0.05 level. ** F is significant at the 0.01 level.

Discussion

The findings of the present study reveal that of the three independent variables, namely general language proficiency, metacognitive awareness and vocabulary size, general language proficiency and metacognitive awareness do not significantly correlate with listening comprehension. The two variables do not make significant contribution to listening comprehension, either. Some of the sub-components of the MALQ and vocabulary size, on the other hand, display significant correlations with listening comprehension, as the correlation analysis reveals, and explain significant and unique variance in it, as the regression analyses point out. These findings are interpreted and discussed below.

The findings of the MALQ prove that Turkish EFL learners have difficulty in L2 listening, which is the rationale for conducting the present study. Sixty-seven % of the participants reported that they find that listening is more difficult than reading, speaking, or writing in English. In addition, almost 60 % of the participants stated that they feel nervous when they listen to English, and 53 % indicated that they feel that listening comprehension in English is a challenge for them. In addition, of the five sub-components of the MALQ, person knowledge has the highest mean score, and has a significant negative correlation with listening comprehension although the correlation is weak. Moreover, person knowledge alone accounts for a significant 4.7 % of the variance in listening comprehension. An interpretation of the items in the person knowledge sub-component of the MALQ is necessary for a better understanding of these findings. Person knowledge represents listeners' perceptions with regard to the difficulty of L2 listening and their self-efficacy in L2 listening (Vandergrift et al., 2006). This sub-component consists of items assessing the perceived difficulty of listening compared with the three other language skills, learners' linguistic confidence in L2 listening, and the level of anxiety experienced in L2 listening. Considering that learner perceptions,

anxiety, and self-efficacy have been found to be significantly and directly related to academic expectations, approach to learning, and academic performance, the significant negative relationship between person knowledge and listening comprehension and the significant variance in listening comprehension explained by person knowledge make sense to a great extent. These findings indicate that EFL learners who think that listening is difficult and those who feel anxious while listening to English are likely to be less successful in comprehending what they listen to. Vandergrift et al. (2006), Vandergrift and Baker (2015) and Wang and Treffers-Daller (2017) reached the same conclusion regarding the importance of person knowledge as well. These results are congruent with the considerable evidence in the literature about the relationship between foreign language anxiety and a range of aspects of language learning (Dewaele et al., 2008) and between listening and anxiety in particular (Mills et al., 2006). That person knowledge received the highest mean score may be because learners are aware of their problems with listening (Goh, 2000) and person knowledge is therefore more easily accessible to conscious inspection than other components of metacognition (Wang & Treffers-Daller, 2017, p. 148).

Problem solving has the second highest mean score, and has a significant positive correlation with listening comprehension. In addition, it explains an additional 4 % of the variance in listening comprehension above and beyond person knowledge and directed attention significantly. Problem solving represents a group of strategies used by listeners to inference and to monitor these inferences (Vandergrift et al., 2006). The six items representing this factor include strategies such as using known words to deduce the meaning of unknown words, using the general idea of a text to deduce unknown words, using one's experience and general knowledge in interpreting the text, adjusting one's interpretation upon realizing that it is not correct, monitoring the accuracy of one's inferences for congruency with the developing interpretation, and comparing the developing interpretation with one's knowledge of the topic (Vandergrift et al., 2006, p. 450). It is evident that EFL learners who can guess the meaning of unknown words either depending on the words they already know or using the general idea of the text and monitor their guesses, and those who can make profitable use of their previous experience and knowledge about the topic to interpret the listening text and check their interpretation are likely to be more successful in comprehending what they listen to.

Of the metacognitive strategies that the participants of the present study employ in listening, planning and evaluation follows problem solving. However, it doesn't correlate significantly to listening compression and does not make any significant contribution to listening comprehension, either. Planning and evaluation represents the strategies listeners use to prepare themselves for listening, and to evaluate the results of their listening efforts (Vandergrift et al., 2006). The four items in this factor include strategies such as having a plan for listening, thinking about similar texts as a guide for listening, having a goal in mind while listening, periodically checking one's satisfaction with the ongoing interpretation while listening, and evaluating the strategic effectiveness of one's listening efforts (Vandergrift et al., 2006, p. 450). This finding indicates that although EFL learners employ planning and evaluation strategies frequently, this does not have a profound effect on their listening comprehension scores, which indicates that listening comprehension is more of a matter of instantaneous understanding and is ephemeral.

Planning and evaluation is followed by directed attention in terms of the mean of the participants' responses to the questionnaire. Although it received a lower mean score than planning and evaluation, it has a significant positive correlation with listening comprehension, and accounts for a significant 6 % of the variance in listening comprehension above and beyond person knowledge. Directed attention represents strategies that listeners use to concentrate and to stay on task (Vandergrift et al., 2006). The four items under this factor include strategies such as getting back on track when losing concentration, focusing harder when having difficulty understanding, recovering concentration when one's mind wanders, and not giving up when one experiences difficulties understanding, which all represent the important roles played by attention and concentration in the process of listening comprehension (Vandergrift et al., 2006, p. 451). This finding indicates that EFL learners who "are able to maintain attention and to concentrate on the incoming information or on their train of thought while regulating the other metacognitive processes and persisting in spite of difficulties" are likely to be skilled listeners (Vandergrift et al., 2006, p. 451).

Lastly, mental translation has the lowest mean score, and it neither has any significant correlation with listening comprehension, nor predicts it. In addition, it is worth noting that one of the items included in this factor, which is about translating word by word during listening, received the lowest mean score from the participants of the present study. Mental translation represents strategies that listeners must learn to avoid if they are to become skilled listeners (Vandergrift et al., 2006). The three items under this factor all tap the online mental translation strategy. The findings suggest that most of the intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners participating in the present study do not translate in their head either in general or in terms of key words as they listen. However, this does not seem to influence their listening comprehension at all.

The present study differs from Wang and Treffers-Daller in the sense that MALQ as a whole did not correlate with and explain unique variance in listening comprehension, but some of its components, namely person knowledge, problem solving and directed attention did so, whereas in Wang and Treffers-Daller (2017) none of the other categories in the MALQ, except person knowledge, correlated significantly with listening comprehension. However, the present study confirms the results of Vandergrift and Baker (2015), who also found significant roles of person knowledge, problem solving and directed attention in listening comprehension, and X. Zuo (2013), who found that metacognitive strategies were significantly correlated with listening comprehension performance. The divergent findings regarding the role of metacognitive awareness in listening comprehension may be attributed to what Wang and Treffers-Daller (2017) and Vandergrift and Baker (2015) consider as the key problem with the MALQ: "that the MALQ does not tap into actual metacognitive activity but rather asks learners to self-report on their awareness of listening processes" (Wang and Treffers-Daller, 2017, p. 148).

As for the vocabulary size, assessed using the New Vocabulary Levels Test (NVLT), it was found that there is a significant moderate positive correlation between vocabulary size and listening comprehension, and vocabulary size accounts for 14.8 % of the variance in listening comprehension above and beyond person knowledge, directed attention and problem solving. These findings indicate that the more vocabulary EFL learners know, the more skilled listeners

they are likely to become. The findings also indicate that although both vocabulary size and metacognitive awareness make unique contributions to listening comprehension, the role of vocabulary size is far more important. The results of the present study support the findings of Mecartty (2000), Adolphs and Schmitt (2003), Stæhr (2009), M. Liu (2011), van Zeeland and Schmitt (2013) Andringa et al. (2012), Vandergrift and Baker (2015) and Wang and Treffers-Daller (2017) regarding the importance of vocabulary size for listening comprehension among L2 learners. Vandergrift and Baker (2015) maintain that the significant finding for L2 vocabulary lends credence to the possibility of a threshold for L2 listening, similar to an L2 reading threshold, which assumes a relationship between L2 vocabulary knowledge and listening comprehension success. In other words, it is claimed that listeners need to attain a certain level of vocabulary knowledge before they can efficiently transfer L1 listening skills to L2 listening tasks. The findings of the present study also reinforce this claim.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The rationale behind the present study is that the listening skill is crucially important for L2 learners in the sense that languages are learned through exposure to the foreign language, which can be achieved mainly by listening. In addition to its importance, it is a complicated skill as well, and is challenging for L2 learners. Although it is an important and difficult language skill for L2 learners, it is densely investigated. Therefore, the present study aimed at closing this gap in the field by exploring the impact of individual differences in language knowledge, namely general L2 proficiency and L2 vocabulary knowledge, and metacognitive awareness of strategies used in the listening process on L2 listening comprehension.

Results revealed that vocabulary knowledge and some sub-components of the MALQ, namely person knowledge, problem solving and directed ttention play a significant role in L2 listening comprehension. General language proficiency, on the other hand, was not found to have a significant relationship with L2 listening comprehension. Most of the findings of the present study with regard to the role of vocabulary knowledge and metacognitive strategies used in listening are congruent with previous research.

The findings of the present study suggest some pedagogical implications to improve EFL learners listening comprehension. First, considering the role of L2 vocabulary knowledge in listening comprehension, teachers should focus on enhancing learners' vocabulary knowledge in particular. For this purpose, teachers could employ intentional vocabulary learning activities and create opportunities for incidental vocabulary learning from aural and written input (Wang & Treffers-Daller, 2017). They could also make use of multimedia software to develop L2 learners' vocabulary knowledge for L2 listening comprehension as L2 learners' ability to recognize words from speech plays an essential role in L2 listening comprehension (Hulstijn, 2003). Mecartty (2000) gives several pragmatic reasons for developing lexical knowledge. First, "it is the building block of both comprehension and communication" (p.338). This means that learners need to know the basic vocabulary to understand any form of language. Second, lexical knowledge is one of the many factors that determine proficient and non-proficient readers in foreign language as well as in native language. Third, a higher level of proficiency paves the

way for learners to be able to distinguish among the range of meanings in lexical items and vice versa.

The findings also point out the significance of learner perceptions, anxiety, and self-efficacy in listening comprehension. Therefore, it is necessary to help L2 learners reform their perceptions of listening skill in a rather positive way. This can be achieved with the help of listening exercises appropriate for their proficiency level and encouraging them to listen to the target language as much as possible outside the class as well. Raising awareness among L2 learners of listening strategies will help them develop their listening abilities, and show them that listening indeed is not an "unmanageable" skill. This will decrease their listening anxiety and increase their self-efficacy. As for the listening strategies, of the metacognitive ones, the findings of the present study emphasize the importance of problem solving and directed attention. L2 learners had better be trained about using known words and the general idea of a text to deduce the meaning of unknown words (lexical inferencing), using their experience and general knowledge to interpret the text, adjusting their interpretation upon realizing that it is not correct, monitoring the accuracy of their inferences for congruency with the developing interpretation, and comparing the developing interpretation with their knowledge of the topic. This can be achieved through practice exercises in which learners listen to texts and are asked to guess the meaning of unknown words depending on local and global contextual clues as well as their world knowledge. They may listen to the introduction of a listening text, make guesses about the text, and check their guesses and interpretations after they listen to the rest of the text. It is also necessary to inform EFL learners about the role of attention and concentration in the process of listening comprehension.

Although utmost attention was paid to data collection procedures, there are some methodological limitations in the present study. First, the vocabulary measurement that was used in the present study assessed the written form of the word only. However, the relationship between vocabulary and listening could have been based on a measurement tool that involves an auditory presentation (hearing) of a word rather than a visual presentation (reading) of its orthographic form (Stæhr, 2009; Vandergrift & Baker, 2015). Since a measure of oral receptive vocabulary was not available, the New Vocabulary Levels Test was used in the present study. Second, "the MALQ does not tap into actual metacognitive activity but rather asks learners to self-report on their awareness of listening processes" (Wang & Treffers-Daller, 2017, p. 148). Therefore, metacognition could have been assessed more directly through observations or think-aloud protocols; however, it would not have been practical and inappropriate considering the large sample size in the present study. Third, general language proficiency was assessed using a standard placement test, and thus there were only multiple-choice questions even though some questions were in cloze-test format. An achievement test in which there were fewer items but wider item variety could have been employed; however, it would have been a challenging task to ensure its reliability and validity. In addition, the results of the present study are limited to intermediate-level adult Turkish EFL learners. A similar study with learners of higher or lower L2 proficiency and/or those coming from a different L1 could bear different findings. Lastly, some other learner variables such as background knowledge and topic familiarity could have been included, which may be the concern of further research. Additionally, further research could employ path analysis or SEM (Standard

Equation Modeling) to provide a provisional model of L2 listening comprehension. Despite these limitations, the present study shed some light on the componential structure of L2 listening, and recommends some pedagogical implications for ELT practitioners in Turkey.

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The Perspectives of Turkish EFL Learners on the Differences and Similarities between Turkish (L1) and English (L2) Languages

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The perspectives of Turkish EFL learners on the differences and similarities between Turkish (L1) and English (L2) languages

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Abstract

Pedagogically, the issue of similarities and/or differences between the mother tongue and the foreign language is one of the interesting areas of second/foreign language acquisition and learning. Therefore, this study aims at exploring in which way the Turkish language (L1) influences the English language (L2) learning through the perspectives of EFL undergraduate Turkish students, whereby the main focus is on the extent of the possible effects of the Turkish language (L1) on English learning (L2). A qualitative approach was employed, including 15 male and female students from Karabuk University studying in the first year of the English Department whose mother tongue is Turkish. The majority of the findings showed negative transfer from L1 (Turkish) to L2 (English), including pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and thinking in the mother tongue (Turkish), whereas the positive aspects involved only two aspects, namely similar alphabets, and vocabulary (cognates). These findings can be employed pedagogically for second language learning/acquisition through enhancing the positive aspects and overcoming the negative ones.

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» None

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Ethics statement: I hereby declare that research/publication ethics and citing principles have been considered in all the stages of the study. I take full responsibility for the content of the paper in case of dispute.
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Introduction

Language transfer, which can refer to the first language (L1) interference, cross-meaning, and linguistic interference, is defined by Oldin (1989, p. 27) as the result of "similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired". The effect of L1 transfer in the acquisition/learning of L2 has always been the subject of controversy in the field of L2 learning and bilingual education, whereby the cross-linguistic influence is a widely discussed theme in the literature (Erarslan & Hol, 2014; Mede et al., 2014; Yan, 2010; Yildiz, 2016). Differences between languages could result in challenges in L2 learning particularly in the way learners conceptualize experience since they believe that no variations exist across languages (Alonso, 2002). For instance, Subandowo (2017) argues that the effect of mother tongue on students' pronunciation is highly dominant due to the differences of sounds between their mother tongue and English. Similarly, Jomaa and Bidin (2017) revealed that differences between Arabic and English in terms of vocabulary, sounds, grammar, and writing systems have their negative transfer on EFL doctoral students in writing their Ph.D. theses. However, though the subject of linguistic transfer has received lots of emphasis and attention, linguistic studies are still debating on whether the linguistic transfer of L1 knowledge has constructive or destructive effects on acquiring and learning a second/foreign language (Nedelkoska, 2021). In other words, various prevailing theories have controversial thoughts about the role of L1 effects on L2 learning (Yan, 2010). Therefore, this study aims at exploring the possible transfer from L1 (Turkish) to L2 (English) through the perspectives of EFL Turkish students, focusing mainly on the differences and similarities between these two languages.

Literature Review

The mother tongue has an important impact on second language acquisition and learning. This aspect has been argued by researchers and linguistics for many years. The effect of the mother tongue on a second language can include pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary of the language. These points affect the second language in writing, reading, or speaking. In the process of second language acquisition and learning, several theories have been trying to explain how L1 can be a factor that may influence the second language. In the following, the role of L1 on the acquisition of L2 is discussed through the perspectives of Contrastive Analysis (CA), Contrastive Rhetoric (CR), Creative Construction (CC), and Constructive Underlying Proficiency (CUP), thus providing an understanding of the L1 transfer and new pedagogical implications (Yan, 2010). On the one hand, some theories, namely Contrastive Analysis (CA) and Contrastive Rhetoric (CR) state that L1 negatively influences L2. The contrastive analysis implies the psychological and linguistic aspects. The first is based on the Behaviorist Learning Theory which suggests that the interfering elements formulate a difficulty in L2 learning. The second aspect, namely the linguistic one is based on structuralist linguistics which focuses on the differences between languages. In his explanation of the Contrastive Analysis, James (1980) argues that L1 transfer occurs negatively and definitely as well as learning difficulties could be predicted based on the linguistic differences between the two languages. This degree of difficulty in learning depends basically on the similarities and differences of linguistic patterns between the two languages. However, this view has been

proved to be so simple based on the teaching experience and empirical studies which have revealed that differences in the two languages are not necessarily leading to learning difficulties in the two languages.

The other theory that is called Contrastive Rhetoric (CR) presents a cross-cultural view on the aspect of the negative transfer focusing mainly on the similarities and differences between the two languages. Based on Grabe and Kaplan (1989), differences in the cultural conventions and knowledge of the native language and L2 negatively affect how L2 writers organize the written discourse in the second language. Besides, CR assumes that writers composing in different languages produce different rhetorical patterns because of their respective L1 cultural modes of thinking. In brief, CR emphasizes mainly the textual features between two languages and helps L2 learners overcome L1 interference in L2 writing.

On the other hand, some theories advocate the positive transfer of L1 in learning L2. One of these theories is the Common Underlying Proficiencies (CUP). According to Cummins (1983), L1 and L2 proficiencies overlap with the common sector. In other words, although L1 and L2 are separated proficiencies, they essentially overlap and share specific universal principles and limitations that are common to all natural languages. This theory reveals that second language learners (SLLs) can express their language proficiencies in two distinct modes: the native language and the second language. Besides, L1 skills, knowledge, and concepts can be transferred to L2 easily. The CUP model implies that cognitive/academic proficiency exists across languages, thereby following the transfer of literacy-related skills across languages. The most obvious element of CUP is probably the conceptual knowledge which implies that the subject matter knowledge, higher-order thinking skills, reading strategies, and writing composition skills developed through L1 become available to L2 when having enough motivation and exposure. The other element of CUP is the common experience. A third element was proposed by Francis (2000) which implies the actual linguistic knowledge, including possibly the comprehension competencies, the discourse competencies, the formal schemata, and the organizational skills.

For Carson (1990), the three principal elements of the Common Underlying abilities are (1) the cognitive processes in L1 and L2, (2) the shared structures in L1 and L2, and (3) the mechanism that enables the process and structure to transfer across languages. CUP has been developed by Carson by proposing the threshold level as a necessary element for positive L1 transfer in the following summary: a) a common underlying proficiency with a threshold level of language proficiency exists that allows skills to transfer. b) an underlying proficiency with a threshold level of language proficiency and cognitive restructuring exists that allows skills to transfer. c) separate language systems with a cognitive separation of language skills exist. He added that transfer can occur when two previously separated but structurally similar language routines come together. Another party of theories has adopted a neutral attitude towards the influence of L1 on L2 represented by the Creative Construction (CC) theory. In their study, Faerch and Kasper (1987) claim that L1 acquisition and L2 learning progress develop similarly because of the innate mental mechanisms employed universally by L2 learners. Therefore, L2 learning is unaffected by L1 transfer. Another study by Dulay and Burt (1972) implies that L2 is facilitated by UG (Universal Grammar), whereby L1 plays no role.

Practically, in their study, Jomaa and Bidin (2017) showed that EFL Arab doctoral students face a challenge associated with thinking in the mother tongue (Arabic) while writing in English, thereby leading them to commit mistakes in their English writing. In the Turkish context, Erarslan and Hol (2014) showed in their quantitative study that Turkish students who attended English courses have a challenge in vocabulary use due to a lack of vocabulary equivalence particularly for the compound nouns used in Turkish. This reveals the negative transfer from Turkish to English. The results related to the lexical interference revealed that the Turkish learners not only transfer the Turkish meaning into English directly but also match an irrelevant target word with an irrelevant word group, due to their inability to recall the standard use of English while speaking (Yildiz, 2016). Another study was conducted by Erkaya (2012) which showed that the word choice represents the most challenging aspect for EFL Turkish students based on the analysis of 17 English essays written by 17 Turkish students. Regarding the grammatical L1 interferences, the differences between Turkish and English languages in terms of grammar and the lack of some English grammatical structures and forms in Turkish could be considered as the main reason for interference (Yildiz, 2016). However, the majority of these studies are limited to textual analyses of students' writings or quantitative studies. Therefore, this study aims at exploring the possible influences of the Turkish language on the English language based on EFL Turkish students' perspectives. The aim of the present study is not to make generalizations; rather, it seeks to fully understand in which way the mother tongue of Turkish students affects them in learning English as a second language to address the following research question:

> To what extent does your mother tongue (Turkish) affect your L2 (English) language learning, and in which way?

Method

Research design

An exploratory qualitative approach was employed in this study. The purposeful sampling included interviewing 15 male and female EFL Turkish students in the first year of the English Department at Karabuk University. Based on Creswell (2012), in qualitative studies, the sampling and the site are identified purposefully to obtain a comprehensive explanation of the phenomenon under the study.

Besides, Dörnyei (2007, p.243) states "qualitative research is iterative, using a nonlinear, zigzag" pattern: we move back and forth between data collection, data analysis and data interpretation, depending on the emergent results". However, due to the spread of the global pandemic Corona virus (Covid 19), it was not possible to interview the participants individually face-to-face. Therefore, the students were sent an email including the following question: to what extent does your mother tongue (Turkish) affect your L2 (English) learning, and in which way?

Data collection and analysis procedures

The participants were sent an email that explains the instructions for responding to the question. Those who would like to participate in the study wrote a statement that allows the researcher to analyze their response for academic purposes only. Besides, since the English department encompasses students from different nationalities and ethnic backgrounds, only

Turkish students whose mother tongue is Turkish were included in the study to avoid any results that may belong to speakers of other languages. The students were given two weeks to respond to the question. The emphasis was on the content, whereas grammatical errors were not considered and this part of the instructions was sent to the students to motivate them to express themselves freely without being handicapped by their weakness in English writing skills. A hand analysis, mind mapping, and visual mapping were employed as analysis strategies to explore thematically the participants' replies to the question. The thematic analysis was based on coding the main ideas mentioned by the participants and regrouping these codes to form main and sub-themes. To support these codes, quotations from the participants' replies were employed to explain the themes further. To achieve trustworthiness (reliability, credibility, and validity), in the present study, member checking was utilized by sending the analysis to three participants to make sure that the analysis represents their ideas and opinions towards the similarities and differences between the two languages.

Findings

The findings of students' answers showed two types of effects: negative transfer and positive transfer. The findings related to the negative transfer formed the majority of the findings, including four major themes with sub-themes, whereas the positive transfer from L1 to L2 constituted the minority of the findings, involving only two aspects. Figure 1 shows the findings related to the possible effects of the mother tongue (Turkish) on L2 (English).
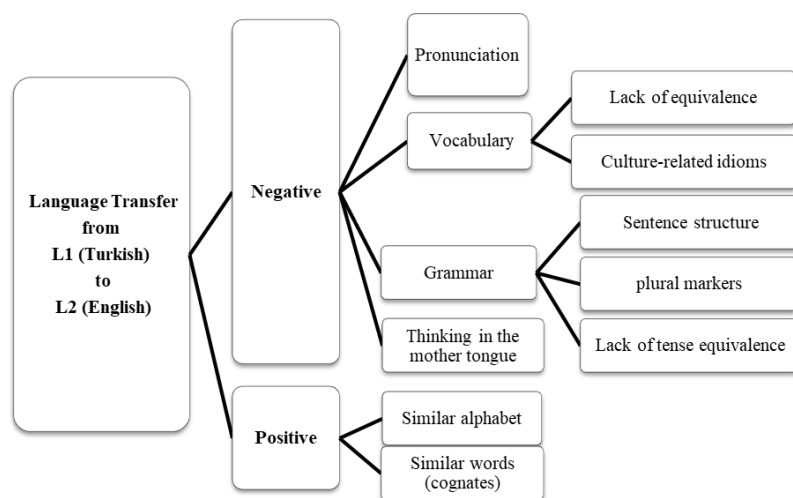

Figure 2. Language transfer from L1 (Turkish) to L2 (English)

Negative language transfer

The negative language transfer included four major themes, namely pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and thinking in the other tongue.

Theme 1: Pronunciation

Although the Turkish language has almost similar alphabets to English, the sound system, particularly the vowel sounds in Turkish are more in number and are completely different in their pronunciation from the English language. These include specifically vowel sounds O, Ö, U,Ü İ, I, E, A which can affect the pronunciation in English negatively, thereby leading to a difficulty in pronouncing, reading, and misunderstanding on the part of the listener. For instance,

Participant 1 reports that L1 affects her L2 negatively due to vowel sounds and spelling:

My native language is Turkish and my opinion is L1 could effect negatively on L2 writing. The reason why I think like this is; Turkish language has some sounds that English does not have. These sounds are ' i, ö, ü, ç, ş and ğ '. While writing in English, Turkish people may have a difficulty in vowel sounds. (Participant 1)

The difference in the vowel sounds between Turkish and English has its effects on reading and pronouncing as stated by one of the participants since Turkish is read and pronounced as it is written, whereas the English language is read and pronounced in a way that is different from the writing system. As a result, a difficulty arises in pronouncing, reading, and writing. In this regard, Participant 2 adds:

Lastly Turkish is pronounced as it is written. English is read according to certain rules. (Participant 2)

Another participant added that pronunciation forms a major problem for him in learning English.

In the Turkish language, pronunciation is the same as how it is written. However, in English there is a different situation for pronunciation. Therefore, some Turkish people use the same technique as Turkish pronunciation while they are reading English words. These differences cause incorrect pronunciation in English words. So, our mother tongue affects our second language negatively. (Participant 3)

The difference between Turkish and English in terms of pronunciation has its negative effects not only on pronunciation and reading but also on spelling and writing in English, thus affecting the EFL Turkish learners' writing performance negatively.

First of all, language is a really important thing for writing. Especially, spelling plays a remarkable role in writing. I generally make spelling mistakes while writing because, in my language, a word is written as read. Nevertheless, it is different in the English language. Therefore, I am confused about spelling the English words because of my first language. (Participant 4)

Theme 2: Vocabulary

Vocabulary use in English also forms a challenge for EFL Turkish learners because of several aspects. First, lack of equivalence for the Turkish vocabulary in English is a real problem.

Lack of equivalence

One of the negative effects of Turkish on English is the lack of vocabulary equivalence; Turkish students cannot find equivalence for Turkish vocabulary in English. Therefore, they use English words with a close meaning, thereby resulting in communicating a different meaning.

> *Sometimes, when we use a word in Turkish, and we want to translate it to English, it can be a problem because of its meaning in different languages. These different meanings can cause some disagreements between two-people who use different two languages. For instance, one word can mean a slang word in another language.* (Participant 3)

Another participant added that lack of vocabulary equivalence represents a challenge for him in using the English language.

> *On the other hand, not knowing the language sufficiently may have negative effects in a second language. For example, you have a thought in your mind, but you do not know what the exact equivalent of that idea is in your language. So, you have to use another word with a close meaning. Then, if you cannot find a word that fully meets this word in English. The idea in your mind will be eroded. As a result, you may not be able to express yourself fully to another person. This is also a negative reflection.* (Participant 5)

Participant 6 added that lack of vocabulary equivalence forms a problem when translating from Turkish to English; therefore, he is forced to choose another word with a close meaning.

> *Another situation is, sometimes there is not specific meaning or a word in second language. When you try to translate a word from your native language to second language, you can't find it. Every language has them own culture, so it may not possible sometimes. However, you can find and put your sentence word that the closest meaning.* (Participant 6)

Participant 7 also mentioned that lack of vocabulary equivalence in English is a challenging aspect, and using another word will convey a meaningless message.

> *The last negative impact is some words in Turkish doesn't have exact meaning in English. This poses a problem because when I write an essay, its semantic value changes according to my mother tongue and the English language. The essay can be seen unmeaning in English but this is not true for Turkish.* (Participant 7)

Culture-related vocabulary

Another negative effect of language transfer (L1) from Turkish to English is related to culture-related words. According to some participants, some words in Turkish have a specific meaning related to their own culture. Therefore, they cannot be used in English, and no vocabulary equivalence exists in English.

> *Finally, every culture and language has its idiom and proverbs. Therefore, using them can be trouble for me. Since, I can't understand totally what this proverb tells about. To brief, different cultures think different so, it isn't possible to overlook all languages.* (Participant 4)

Finding the right vocabulary in English is a challenge for EFL Turkish students due to the effect of their own culture. The Turkish and Western cultures are different; some vocabulary is associated with its own culture, so a difficulty arises in finding a word that expresses the meaning based on the Western culture.

> *The other negative impact is the culture of my mother tongue (Turkish) and the culture of the English language. For example, when I want to write an essay about a topic, I think with my own language and this brings to think with my own culture. Language includes its own culture inside that is means words have meanings related to culture. So, because of the differences in of the cultures I can't explain myself.* **(Participant 7)**

Theme 3: Grammar

Another negative influence of L1 (Turkish) on L2 (English) is represented by grammar. Three minor themes are associated with grammar, including sentence structure, plural markers, and lack of tense equivalence.

Sentence structure

Turkish and English belong to two different language families. This difference in origins results in varieties in the sentence structure. In Turkish, the sentence structure is (Subject (optional)+ Object+Verb), but in English, the sentence structure is (Subject+Verb+ Object (optional)). This grammatical variation in the sentence structure of both Turkish and English languages influences negatively the English writing of EFL undergraduate Turkish students.

> *So, the grammatical structure of our mother language can be distinctive, entirely.* (Participant 8)
> *It is not necessary to use a subject in every sentence we set up, write, or speak in Turkish. In English, the subject is strictly used.* (Participant 2)

Other differences between Turkish and English languages represented by the grammatical structures, plural markers, and prepositions cause difficulties to EFL Turkish students in learning and using English.

> *Secondly, certain grammatical structures that are complicated cause those who learn the second language to make mistakes. For instance, one of the problems is plural markers and changing of some words when they are plural like children, people, women. However, in the Turkish language, we only use the plural suffix. Also, some prepositions change according to time or place. It differs from my mother tongue. Additionally, in the English language, we use subject, verb, and noun (object) respectively. But, in the Turkish language, subject, noun (object), and verb are used respectively.* (Participant 4)

The other negative effect is grammatically different. According to English sentence structure, the place of a verb comes after the subject. But in my mother tongue, the verb is at the end of sentences. There are differences. For this reason, it can be confusing. (Participant 9)

Another associated aspect related to the grammar of the Turkish language and influences negatively the English writing of EFL Turkish students is the plural marker in English. In Turkish, only two plural markers are used with all nouns, whereas English has different ways for pluralization, and the most common one is adding 's' to singular nouns. Consequently, the Turkish students generalize this grammatical feature and add the plural marker 's' to all nouns, including the uncountable ones, such as 'informations'.

Lack of tense equivalence

Unlike the English language which has regular and irregular verbs, the Turkish language uses fixed suffixes with all tenses associated with the past, present, and future. Another difference is the high number of tenses in English compared to the Turkish language. Therefore, some participants mentioned that the lack of tense equivalence for the Turkish tenses affects their use of tenses in English negatively.

Another distinctive difference is the tenses. Although, Turkish has 5 tenses fundamentally, English includes 12 tenses. Some types of English tenses are not equivalent in Turkish as present perfect tenses. This tense is challenging for me like other language learning students. Additionally, tense conjugation is provided with suffixes in contrast to English. Each tense owns its structure in English. That used to make writing harder for me to grasp these tenses since some topics have no equivalent in Turkish and it has become more difficult for me to use them in writing. (Participant 10)

Theme 4: Thinking in the mother tongue

Thinking in the mother tongue (Turkish) led to having a negative transfer from L1 (Turkish) to L2 (English). This concept was mentioned by several participants; this implies that the students have not reached the level of thinking in the second language. Rather, they are still thinking in the mother tongue with all its vocabulary and grammatical structures, and this entails committing mistakes in these two aspects.

Finally, thinking in mother language is effects writing skills negatively. the process of writing extended and became hard. I try to make sentences with the logic of the Turkish language structure. Because of thinking in my mother language makes completing my essays harder. (Participant 10)

For this reason, we can think of our language. To think in the mother tongue may affect the second tongue, negatively. (Participant 8)

The First negative impact is thinking with the mother tongue unavoidably even you have to write in English. When this happens, writing is getting harder than normal

because I never translate my thoughts into English. It makes me feel like meanless when translate. (Participant 7)

Positive transfer from L1 (Turkish) to L2 (English)

Despite the negative transfer from L1 (Turkish) to L2 (English), some participants revealed that their L1 (Turkish) helped them positively in their L2 (English) learning. These included two issues, namely similar alphabets and similar words 'cognates'.

Similar alphabets

Five participants revealed that their L1 (Turkish) helped them positively in their L2 (English) mainly because of the similarity between Turkish and English in terms of the alphabet. Although the vowel sounds are different in the two languages, the articulation of most of the consonant sounds in the two languages is similar. This facilitates learning the English alphabets, mainly consonant sounds.

Also, the fact that Turkish and English use the same alphabet, that is, a language of Latin origin, made my job easier. (Participant 11)

Referring to the positive effects of learning English while your mother tongue is Turkish is that both of these two languages share a common alphabet. Latin alphabet is used in Turkish and English languages. It makes reading and writing in English easier. (Participant 12)

Similar words 'Cognates'

Another aspect related to the positive transfer from L1 (Turkish) to L2 (English) is represented by the 'cognates' which are the similar words used in the two languages in terms of spelling and meaning with a slight difference sometimes related to pronunciation and spelling.

First of all, I want to talk about similar words between two languages. There are many similar words between English and Turkish. Since languages are affected by each other, it is possible to find similar forms of words. This similarity had a positive effect on me when I learned many words. (Participant 11)

As Participant 8 stated, the similarity between Turkish and English languages in terms of vocabulary helps in increasing the size of the vocabulary.

On the other hand, there can be some positive effects of the mother language on the second language. As an example, we can have a great vocabulary. We can use similar words in our studies like writings. Thus, we can enhance our vocabulary knowledge. Also, if your mother tongue and second tongue are in the same linguistic family, this condition will affect your studies, positively. (Participant 8)

As stated by the participants, the Turkish language has both positive and negative effects on learning the English language. The majority of the participant mentioned that the Turkish language has a negative influence, whereas only a few reported a positive effect of the Turkish language on learning English as a foreign language.

<div align="center">Discussion</div>

This study is based on conducting interviews with 15 EFL undergraduate Turkish students studying in the first year of the English Language Department at Karabuk University. The purpose was to explore the possible influence of L1 (Turkish) on L2 (English) in their second language learning. Only students whose mother tongue is Turkish were selected purposefully to avoid any concepts that may deviate from the normal themes derived from the analyses of the data. The exploratory study with the 15 participants showed that their L1 (Turkish) can affect them positively and negatively. However, the negative aspects of L1 (Turkish) on L2 (English) are more dominant than the positive aspects. The negative effects of L1 on L2 included pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and thinking in the mother tongue, whereas the positive ones involved similar alphabets and similar words (cognates).

The findings of the current study related to lack of vocabulary equivalence as well as prepositions and tense in English are in inline with the results identified by Erarslan and Hol (2014) and Yildiz (2016). The finding related to the use of the appropriate word choice was also supported by Erkaya (2012) who mentioned that it forms the most challenging issue for EFL Turkish students. In a different study, Yildiz (2016) demonstrated that the prepositional interference errors represent the most frequently encountered error by Turkish EFL learners' speaking performances, followed by lexical and grammatical interference errors. This demonstrates the negative transfer experienced by EFL Turkish students while learning English. In the process of learning a foreign language, the cross-linguistic transfer is inevitable. In other words, in the case of L2 learning, L1 is the only source of language transfer that can be utilized by the learners to cope with the new learning environment. However, due to the high differences compared with the low ones between Turkish and English in terms of pronunciation, language structure, and cultural context, EFL Turkish students experience difficulties in learning English and this hypothesis is advocated by Lado (1957).

<div align="center">Conclusion and Implications</div>

This study aimed at highlighting the differences and/or similarities between the Turkish language (L1) and the English language (L2) based on the perspectives of EFL Turkish students at Karabuk University in Turkey. Despite the positive transfer of L1, the negative transfer is dominant more than the positive transfer, thereby implying that EFL undergraduate Turkish students are faced with challenges in their L2 (English) learning. Such findings support the previous theories, mainly the Contrastive Analysis (CA) and the Contrastive Rhetoric (CR) which imply that L1 negative transfer is higher than the positive one. Consequently, these findings can be used pedagogically for teaching and learning the second language (English). First, courses designed for teaching English to EFL Turkish students can be modified and developed based on students' needs and difficulties. In other words, the findings of this study can be useful for curriculum designers by focusing on the needs of EFL Turkish students who are learning English. The content of the textbook can be organized in a way that can cope with the learners' challenges at each level. Second, teachers of the English language can direct the Turkish students appropriately in a way that supports them positively and reduces the negative transfer of their L1. Though the findings could add extra knowledge to the possible transfer from L1 to L2, this study is limited in terms of sampling and context.

Therefore, future studies can be conducted with a large sample including students from different L1 backgrounds to explore how L1 influences L2. Conducting discourse-based interviews, involving textual analyses and interviews, as advocated by Odell and Goswami (1981) Odell, Goswami, and Herrington (1983), and Lancaster (2016), could highlight how the L1 (Turkish) could contribute either positively or negatively to learning L2 (English). In addition, employing a quantitative research design based on the several qualitative studies related to L1 transfer involving respondents with varied L1 could probably present more insights into L1 linguistic interference in the process of L2 learning and acquisition.

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Research Perspectives on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Learning Motivation in Turkish Context: A Systematic Review of Studies between 2010 and 2021

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Review Article

Research perspectives on English as a foreign language (EFL) learning motivation in Turkish context: A systematic review of studies between 2010 and 2021

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Abstract

Motivation has been demonstrated to be an important affective factor in language learning process and its importance has led to the emergence of diverse research perspectives in both foreign and second language learning contexts. In addition to the research studies investigating language learning motivation of learners, review studies presenting the picture of how and in what ways this phenomenon has been studied as a research focus make a significant contribution to the understanding of it. Based on this, this study aims to scrutinize how English as a foreign language (EFL) motivation has been studied as a research matter in Turkish context. Aims of the studies, the participant groups and contexts, research methodologies, motivational frameworks followed and major findings were examined to find out the general trends in EFL motivation research. For these purposes, 14 research studies and nine master's thesis and doctoral dissertations in the last 10-year period were selected based on certain criteria, and they were systematically analyzed in the light of the research questions. The findings showed that motivational research in Turkish EFL context mainly concentrate on university context, and some of the findings related to motivational orientations of Turkish EFL learners are inconsistent and they need more investigation.

Note(s)
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Introduction

Through the 20th and 21st century, with the technological developments and improvements in communication, the way of living around the world has undergone a significant shift, population in the world has increased, occupational opportunities have varied, and education has been attributed more and more importance. Moreover, improvements in communication have led nations to interact more often than ever before, thus cultural interaction and influence have been observed. As O'Doherty (1975) has suggested, language is controlled by the social context, and culture is an indispensable component of the language, besides people are in relation with the culture reciprocally, when one change, the other's change is inevitable. Therefore, learning other languages to sustain communication for diverse reasons has become a crucial part of human life, and the learning process has become more important than it has ever been before, and also educational research has attracted more researchers' attention to make the process more productive and effective. Thus, different aspects and factors that the learning process is affected by have been widely investigated by researchers, and motivationa has been one of those fields.

Definition of motivation and early views

Motivation is one of the factors that have an influence on learning processes and achievement in various learning settings. Therefore, it has been comprehensively studied in a number of disciplines from various aspects. Cropley (1980) has defined motivation as one of the essential elements of successful learning along with the necessary skills, a positive attitude for learning, the ability to set goals and to assess the degree of achievement. According to Williams and Burden (1997), motivation is "a mental and emotional arousal leading to a conscious decision to act, which promotes sustained intellectual and/or physical effort for attaining a goal or goals." (p.120).

The learning theories started with the influence of conditioning and behaviorist theories, and motivational psychology studies were in line with these theories. However, these early approaches to learning and motivation were not satisfactory in their findings regarding the complex motivational procedures in the learning process. Examining the existing state of motivational psychology literature and the system in schools on those times, Weiner (1974) attributed the reason for 'the lack of a clear process' to two factors. First, he strongly emphasized that the influence on learning was excessively higher as a consequence of the neglect of the other processes that were affected by the motivational status of learners. Second, he suggested that many of the teachers still regarded learners as 'a mechanic conception'. Weiner's (1974) argument exemplifies the need for a more comprehensive theory on that educational setting.

The earlier motivational research studies and their findings also influenced the researchers in the second/foreign language learning field, and consequently led them investigate the motivational state of second language learners. Through those research studies, various types of motivational frameworks and theories has been put forward so far, and they are all essential to understand the existing state of motivation in EFL and ESL environments.

Gardner's motivational theory

Early investigations of motivation in learning environments have regarded motivation as one of the key components of learning procedures (Hall, 1966). When compared to other learning environments as in content-based subjects, second/foreign language learning process might be more influenced by affective factors such as motivation because those subjects which depend on knowledge do not require personal appropriation while language learning demands both personal involvement and interest. In time, researchers in the second/foreign language learning field started to question why some EFL/ESL students showed different levels of attainment, if talkative and social people are better in language learning than introverts, and if learning another language has the same importance for each person in a community, and so on (Gardner, 1985). Thanks to the arousal of those questions and more, the research on ESL/EFL gained momentum. The pioneering studies on the field of motivation in second language learning started with Gardner and Lambert (1972)'s research with high school students studying French, and the concept of 'integrativeness' was highlighted in their study. Following that, the socio-educational model of language learning has been proposed by Gardner (1985) which defines motivation as an effective factor in learning process consisting of effort and desire to obtain an objective and desired attitude. In addition, Gardner (1985) has proposed the widely known distinction between integrative and instrumental orientations in motivation, which indicate the reasons for learning. According to Dörnyei (1990), when a learner starts learning a language to communicate and interact with native speakers and to learn about the culture of the target language, integrative orientations drive this learner. On the other hand, instrumental orientations are associated with some pragmatic and functional rewards of language learning and external goals such as better career opportunities, gaining economic advantages (Dörnyei, 1990). Gardner and his colleagues carried their theory further by a large-scale data, and as Dörnyei (1990) described, they detected four common orientations to all groups of learners regardless of their ethnicity, learning milieu, and target language: (1) students learned a foreign language to travel, (2) to seek new friendships, (3) to acquire knowledge, and (4) for instrumental purposes.

Motivational self-system

Dailey (2009) indicates that it is not likely to find a model community to observe as a result of globalization in language, which leads researchers to reframe and make a broader definition of integrative motivation. Dörnyei's (2009) theory of Motivational Self System might be regarded as a response to this change in the learning environments, along with several researchers studied on the issue of motivation (Leary, 2007; Markus & Ruvolo, 1989). Dörnyei and Ceizer (2002) explained Gardner's (1985) theory of integrative motivation as an internal process, and Dörnyei (2005) developed this theory further by providing a link between learner's selves and their learning process. Motivational Self System reframes Gardner's theory so that it might be applied to various learning environments by including learners' self into the motivational processes. This theory consists of three main components namely the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought-to L2 Self, and L2 Learning Experience (Dörnyei, 2005).

The Ideal L2 Self: Dörnyei (2009) defines the ideal self as "the representations of the attributes that one would ideally like to possess (i.e. representation of hopes, aspirations, or

wishes)" (p. 13). He also suggests that the motivational power of Ideal Self stems from "the desire to reduce the discrepancy between one's actual self and the projected behavioral standards of the ideal/ought to selves" (p. 18). Thus, it might be said that the ideal self provides learners with the necessary incentive to sustain their learning activity.

The ought to L2 self is referred as "the representation of attributes that one believes one ought to possess (i.e. representation of someone else's sense of duties, obligations or moral responsibilities" (Dörnyei, 2009, p.13). This component might be related to the steps learners take to meet the expectations or to avoid negative outcomes. Besides, the extrinsic and instrumental motivation orientations may be categorized in this component such as passing the class successfully, or getting accepted to a profession.

L2 Learning Experience addresses to each learner's personal experiences in their earlier learning environment. Dörnyei (2009) gives examples of the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, the experience of success.

On the other side of the current views of motivation, as Ryan (2009) highlighted, Kim (2005) opposes the array of studies that reframe the previous ones by this 'vicious circle', and claims that 'the current L2 motivation paradigm would have inherent limitations from the start' (p.307). Regarding these suggestions, it might be beneficial for future research to focus on FLL from another perspective other that the existing and prevalent ones.

Those frameworks and theories that have been designed and put forward so far shape the research studies on language learning motivation and provide them with a systematical pathway to follow. In different contexts, various motivational orientations and sources of learner motivation have been discovered, but the research field on motivation in language learning still needs more investigation as language learning is a dynamic and ever-changing process owing to the changes in technology, society, and way of living.

Aim and significance of the study

In Turkish EFL setting, language education in primary state schools starts at the second grade, and continues until higher education. However, the outcome of this language learning process is lower than expected for many students (Kırkgöz, 2007; Öztürk and Aydın, 2019). In this process, some of the students show higher achievement while some of them highly struggle. This gap regarding the achievement level of learners might be dependent on various reasons, and as motivation is one of them, it has become necessary to observe the existing situation of motivational research in Turkish EFL context. Besides, it is believed that presenting the findings of exiting research studies in a holistic way will provide a deeper understanding of language learning motivation in Turkish EFL environments for future studies. Parallel to this, the main purpose of this study therefore is a) to review the studies that were carried out in Turkish EFL context on FLL motivation between the years 2010 and 2021, b) to examine their findings related to FLL motivation orientations of Turkish EFL students, and c) to contribute the literature by presenting the current situation in motivation and d) to present suggestions for future research studies. With these purposes, the following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the research trends in EFL learning motivation in Turkish context between the years 2010 and 2021 in terms of research foci, research methods, participants, and education context?
2. What motivational frameworks are adopted in the studies on language learning motivation between the years 2010 and 2021?
3. What is the general inclination in foreign language learning motivational orientations among Turkish EFL students between the years 2010 and 2021.
4.

Methodology

This study presents a systematic review of studies on EFL learning motivation in the Turkish context. Petticrew and Roberts (2006) define systematic review as a method that aims to "comprehensively identify, appraise, and synthesize all the relevant studies on a given topic" (p.19). Tondeur et al. (2017) have highlighted that "the advantage of such systematic review is that it produces a map of 'bigger picture'" (p.558). Thus, research studies which specifically focus on motivational orientations of Turkish EFL learners were examined, and their results were analyzed to produce a systematic review in this study. The following databases and indexes were used to gather the most related research studies: Education Research Information Center (ERIC), ULAKBIM, JSTOR, ProQuest, Taylor & Francis, Web of Science- Social Science Citation Index (SSCI), and Science Direct. In addition to the research studies, postgraduate thesis studies in Turkish EFL context were searched in the Council of Higher Education Thesis Centre. While searching those studies, the following keywords and their combinations were used; motivation, EFL, Turkish context, motivational orientations. After finding the first set of research studies, some relevant articles in their reference lists were searched in Google scholar, as well.

The aforementioned databases were scanned, and a high number of research studies were detected. In order to narrow down the selection of the studies and to be able to find the most relevant studies, the following inclusion criteria were determined and applied:
- Studies that were carried out and written in English.
- Studies that were published between the years 2010-2021.
- Studies that were carried out with EFL learners in Turkish context using data collection instruments, and guided by research questions.

Additionally, in order to make the selection more specific, the following exclusion criteria were applied:
- Studies that investigated other language learning procedures in Turkish context as their motivational orientations may differ regarding the differences between languages and their instrumental usages in people's lives.
- Studies that were based on motivational strategies and their use in language learning.
- Studies that focused on specific skills like motivation in reading comprehension, etc.

After setting the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the studies that comply with them were determined and included. Between the years 2010 and 2021, nine master thesis and doctoral dissertations and 14 research study articles were detected as a result of the online

quest. The data were analyzed through thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) define thematic analysis as a "method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (p.79). The data gathered from the selected research studies were read more than twice by the researcher to enhance the interpretation. The themes were discussed and set with a researcher outside the study, then they were reviewed and revised. Additionally, the selected studies were coded in order to make the data analysis procedure more practical and to make the article more reader-friendly.

Table 1 shows the selected articles and thesis dissertations with their codes (A1, A2… A14, T1, T2… T9), authors, publication year, aim of the study, education context (Secondary/ High School/ University), research methods, and the motivational framework followed.

In order to provide validity and reliability to this study, the selected studies were read and analyzed by the researcher herself for several times. An expert opinion in English language learning motivation was sought through the procedure of setting themes, and the studies were analyzed according to those themes in an excel table. Finally, the findings derived from this analysis procedure are presented in tables with their frequencies.

Table 1. A description of studies on motivational research in Turkish EFL context: 2010-2021

	Article	Aim of the Study	Method	Context and Participants	Motivational Framework
A1	Başaran & Hayta (2013)	-To discover the types of motivation that students have to learn English as a foreign language in relation to age, gender, and grades.	Quantitative research design	ELT department Undergraduate	Gardner's Motivation Theory
A2	Göktepe (2014)	-To examine the attitudes and motivation of junior Turkish undergraduates in their English language learning process.	Quantitative research design	Undergraduate	Dörnyei's Framework of L2 Self-System
A3	Yılmaz (2017b)	-To investigate the beliefs of pre-service teachers, and to find out the relationship between their motivation system and gender, proficiency, and year.	Quantitative research design	ELT department Undergraduate	Dörnyei's Framework of L2 Self-System
A4	Öztürk & Gürbüz (2013)	-To examine the motivational orientations and motivation levels of a group of students towards learning English as a foreign language. -To find out whether integrative and instrumental orientations correlate.	Mixed-method research design	Preparatory school	Gardner's Motivation Theory
A5	Genç & Aydın (2017)	-To examine students' motivation and attitudes towards learning English and its relations to their academic achievement, gender, family, fields of study.	Quantitative research design	Undergraduate	Gardner's Motivation Theory
A6	Yılmaz (2017a)	-To discover pre-service teachers' motivational beliefs in language learning process, and to find the relationship between the dimensions of L2MSS.	Quantitative research design	ELT department Undergraduate	Dörnyei's Framework of L2 Self-System
A7	Taylan (2017b)	-To investigate the factors that have impact on adult EFL learners' motivation.	Quantitative research design	Undergraduate	Gardner's Motivation Theory

A8	Solak (2012)	-To investigate the role of motivational factors in the academic achievement. -To reveal the role of motivational factors in terms of gender and academic majors.	Quantitative research design	ELT department Undergraduate	Gardner's Motivation Theory
A9	Şener & Erol (2017)	-To investigate the motivational orientations of high school students.	Quantitative research design	High school	-Gardner's Motivation Theory -Williams & Burden's Framework of L2 Motivation
A10	Sakiroğlu & Dikilitaş (2012)	-To explore the factors influencing motivation such as gender, skill level, perceived proficiency and personality traits.	Quantitative research design	Preparatory school	-Dörnyei's Motivational Framework of L2 Motivation -Williams & Burden's Framework of L2 Motivation
A11	Altıner (2018)	-To investigate Turkish learners' FLL motivation, and the relationships between motivation and learners' gender, interest in continuing language learning and achievement scores.	Quantitative research design	Preparatory school	-Gardner's Motivation Theory -Dörnyei's Framework of L2 Self-System
A12	Eraldemir Tuyan & Serindağ (2019)	-To investigate the socio-psychological orientations of undergraduate EFL learners. -To determine the difference in the attitudes of learners in terms of the constructs of motivation by gender and level of proficiency.	Quantitative research design	Preparatory school	Gardner's Motivation Theory
A13	Arslan & Çiftçi (2021)	-To examine relationships among components of L2 motivational self-system and the effect of school type, gender, and intended effort on L2 motivation.	Quantitative research design	Secondary school	Dörnyei's Framework of L2 Self-System
A14	Yetkin & Ekin (2018).	-To discover the effect of the components of L2MSS on learners' intended effort for language learning.	Quantitative research design	Secondary school	Dörnyei's Framework of L2 Self-System
T1	Çelebi Ayan (2014)	-To investigate EFL learners' (de)motivation. -To investigate language teachers' perceptions of their students' motivation levels.	Mixed-method research design	Preparatory school	Dörnyei's Motivational Framework of L2 Motivation
T2	Aygün (2017)	- To determine the factors that contribute EFL learners' demotivation. -To investigate the effect certain demographic features (de)motivational level. -To develop a new scale for demotivation.	Quantitative research design	Undergraduate	A Holistic Approach
T3	Günay (2017)	-To investigate the motivational orientations of a group of police officers in learning English. -To investigate whether their gender, educational background, work experience, and perceived proficiency level have an effect on their FLL motivation.	Quantitative research design	Police officers attending private language courses	Dörnyei's Motivational Framework of L2 Motivation

T4	Sıvacı (2019)	-To examine the learners' L2 motivational self-system profiles and emotions they experience through language learning process.	Quantitative research design	Preparatory school	Dörnyei's Motivational Framework of L2 Motivation
T5	Şahin (2020)	-To investigate the L2MSS of EFL learners and to discover their achievement attributions.	Quantitative research design	Preparatory school	Dörnyei's Motivational Framework of L2 Motivation
T6	Bilhan (2019)	-To examine L2MSS of EFL learners in terms of their intended efforts to learn English, ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, family influence, attitudes toward learning English, and ethnocentrism. -To investigate the effect of gender and department they study on their motivational variables on EFL learners' motivation.	Quantitative research design	Preparatory school	Dörnyei's Framework of L2 Self-System
T7	Taylan (2017a)	To investigate the effectiveness of Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) motivational self-system in this Turkish university context	Quantitative research design	Preparatory school	Dörnyei's Framework of L2 Self-System
T8	Bulut (2017)	-To learn why Turkish, English as a foreign language (EFL) adult learners who attended English courses want to learn English as a foreign language. -To explore their motivation and attitudes toward the English language; 3) to find out how willing they are to communicate in English.	Quantitative research design	Private language courses	Gardner's Motivation Theory
T9	Cabiroğlu (2016)	-To investigate the EFL motivation of a sample of Turkish undergraduate students through the perspective of L2 Motivational Self System.	Quantitative research design	Preparatory school	Dörnyei's Framework of L2 Self-System

Findings

The findings of the data collected through the selected research studies are explained responding to research questions by examining each theme in itself. In order to answer the first research question, the purposes of the research studies in the scope of this review are stated in Table 2.

Table 2. Research foci of the selected studies

Focus	Study	Frequency
The relation of motivation to learners' gender.	A1, A3, A5, A8, A9, A10, A11, A12, A13, A14, T1, T3, T6, T9	14
The effect of motivation on learners' intended effort for language learning.	A13, A14, T6, T7	4
The relation of motivation to learners' academic achievement.	A1, A5, A8, A11	4
The relationship between motivation and language proficiency.	A3, A10, A12, T2,	4

The relationship between learners' motivation and their academic department.	A5, A8, T2, T6	4
The relationship between language learning motivation and family influence.	A5, T6, T7	3
The language learning motivation of working adults.	T3, T8	2
The relationship between motivation and perceived proficiency.	A10, T3,	2
The relationships among the components of L2 motivational self-system.	A6, A13,	2
The effect of school type on language learning motivation.	A13, T2,	2
The relationship between EFL learners' motivation and their willingness to communicate or their interest in continuing language learning.	A11, T8	2
The relationship between learners' motivation and their year of study.	T1	1
Language teachers' perceptions of their students' motivation levels.	T1	1
Emotions that EFL learners undergo through language learning process.	T4	1
The effectiveness of L2 motivational self-system in Turkish EFL context.	T7	1
The relation of different types of motivations.	A4	1

Table 2 illustrates that 14 of 23 research studies in the scope of this review targeted at finding out the relationship between FLL motivation and gender. Following that in frequency, four of the research studies focused on the effect of FLL motivation on learners' academic achievement. The relationship between FLL motivation and language proficiency was investigated by four of the studies while two other studies examined the perceived proficiency. Besides, another four investigated whether FLL motivation vary depending on learners' academic department, and a group of different four studies looked into the effect of FLL motivation on learners' intended effort to learn English. Three of 23 selected studies tried to reveal the relationship of FLL motivation to learners' age and family influence. Single studies aimed to investigate the relation of motivation to learners' year of study, personality traits, emotions, learners' interest in continuing language learning, ethnocentrism, willingness to communicate and living abroad. Furthermore, individual studies targeted at developing a new scale to evaluate EFL learners' (de)motivation, to investigate teachers' perceptions of learners' motivation, to evaluate the effectiveness of L2MSS in Turkish EFL context, and to find out the

relation of different motivation types to each other. Lastly, studies coded T3 and T8 which carried out their studies with working adults.

Another focus of the first research question was the classification of selected studies according to their research methods. The finding related with that grouping is presented in the following table.

Table 3. Research methods employed by the selected studies

	Qualitative	Quantitative	Mixed-Method
Studies		A1, A2, A3, A5, A6, A7, A8, A9, A10, A11, A12, A13, A14, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9	A4, T1

As illustrated in Table 3, 21 of the selected 23 research studies were carried out following quantitative research methods. Besides, only 2 studies adopted mixed-method research design and they both utilized questionnaires and interviews to collect data. Lastly, none of the selected research studies followed solely qualitative research methods.

The other aspect that the first research question investigates is the educational contexts of the selected studies. Regarding to the educational contexts and participants, the findings are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Participants and contexts of the selected studies

		A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	A10	A11	A12	A13	A14	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9
Participants	Students		•			•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•		•
	Working Adults																	•					•	
	Pre-Service Teachers	•		•			•		•															
	Teachers																•							
Context	Secondary													•	•									
	High School									•														
	University					•					•	•		•					•	•	•	•		•
		•	•	•		•	•	•	•		•						•	•						
	Private Language Courses																	•					•	

As shown in Table 4, participants of the studies include language learners from diverse groups. 17 of the 23 research studies were carried out with students; two of these groups of students were at secondary school, one of these groups were at high school, and 14 of them were at university level either at preparatory program or undergraduate English courses. Besides, it might be seen in Table 4 that four groups of participants were pre-service teachers who were undergraduates at ELT departments of universities, and in these studies their language learning motivation was taken into consideration. In addition, two of the groups consisted of working adults attending private language courses to learn English. Lastly, only one of the selected studies included teachers into the data collection procedure, and considered their perceptions of language learners' motivations.

Classification of the studies regarding educational contexts indicates that most of the studies on FLL motivation carried out between the years 2010 and 2021 focused on Turkish university context, and majority of them were carried out in preparatory school context. Four of the studies carried out in undergraduate contexts were in ELT departments, and five of them were carried out within the scope of the English language courses of different departments. Only one of these studies were in a high school, and two of them were in secondary schools. Lastly, two of the studies were conducted in private language courses.

The motivational frameworks that are followed by the selected studies are given in Table 5 to answer the second research question. Ölmezer Öztürk (2012) presents a comprehensive list of modern motivational theories in second language learning as following; Gardner's Motivation Theory, Dörnyei's, Motivational Framework of L2 Motivation, Williams and Burden's Framework of L2 Motivation, Dörnyei and Otto's Process Model of L2 Motivation, and Dörnyei's Framework of L2 Self-System. Table 5 categorizes the selected research studies in accordance with these theories.

Table 5. Motivational frameworks followed by the selected articles

	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	A10	A11	A12	A13	A14	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9
Gardner's Motivation Theory	•			•	•		•	•		•	•					•						•	
Dörnyei's Motivational Framework of L2 Motivation									•						•	•							
Williams & Burden's Framework of L2 Motivation								•	•							•							
Dörnyei & Otto's Process Model of L2 Motivation																•							

Dörnyei's Framework of L2 Self-System	•	•		•		•	•		•		•		•	•	•		•

According to Table 5, 12 of the studies in the scope of this study adopted Dörnyei's Framework of Motivational Self-System, and Gardner's Motivation Theory was followed by nine research studies. Two of the studies were carried out regarding Dörnyei's Motivational Framework of L2 Motivation and, and another 2 of them were conducted according to William and Burden's Framework of L2 Motivation. None of the studies followed Dörnyei and Otto's Process Model of L2 Motivation except T2-coded study, which aimed to develop a new scale to investigate language learners' motivation and adopted all the frameworks to design a new scale.

The third research question investigates the general findings in FLL motivational orientations among Turkish EFL students between the years 2010 and 2021. To answer this research question, the findings of the selected research studies were detected and listed in Table 6.

Table 6. Findings of the selected studies

	Studies	Frequency
Gender causes a difference in language learning motivation in favor of female EFL learners.	A5, A8, A10, A12, A14, T6 , T9	7
EFL learners have at least moderate or adequate level of motivation to learn English.	A1, A4, A9, A12, T1, T5	6
Comparison of learners' integrative and instrumental motivation levels.	A2, A3, A4, A5, A9, T2	6
Learners may imagine themselves as a proficient English speaker in the future.	A2, A3, T4, T5, T6, T7	6
Learners mostly have a positive feeling to build communication with people from the culture of the target language	A1, A2, A5, A6, T1, T4	6
Gender do not cause a difference in language learning motivation.	A9, A11, A13, T1, T3	5
Learners generally continue language learning processes with instrumental reasons.	A2, A4, A12, T3, T4	5
Participants do not learn English just to meet the expectations of people surrounding them.	A3, A7, T5, T6	4
Language learning motivation levels and types of students vary regarding their department.	A5. A8, T2, T6	4

Learners believe that they will benefit from English in their future careers.	A3, A6, T4, T7	4
Motivation has a significant influence on Turkish EFL learners' proficiency levels.	A10, A12, T2	3
Participants learn English as the people surrounding them do so, or to meet the expectations of people surrounding them.	A2, A6, T4	3
Motivation has a significant effect on learners' academic achievement.	A8, T5, A11	3
There is a significant relationship between motivation and the year of study.	A3, A14,	2
Age shows a negative relation with some aspects of language learning motivation	A1, A14	2
Age do not state a significant effect on learners' motivation levels.	T1, T9	2
Gender causes a difference in language learning motivation in favor of male EFL learners.	A1, A3	2
Language learning motivation levels and types of students do not vary regarding their department.	T1, T2	2
There is a weak correlation between intrinsic/extrinsic motivation and achievement.	A5	1
The learners who have positive experiences in language learning have a positive L2 self-image.	A13	1
Language learning motivation levels and types of students do not vary regarding their experience (the year) of their English learning.	T1	1
Department that learners work poses a significant effect on their language learning motivation.	T3	1
Learners' type of school, whether it is private or state school, does not have any significant effect on their language learning motivation.	A13	1
Learners' type of school, whether it is private or state school, has a significant effect on their language learning motivation.	T3	1
Motivation has no significant or weak influence on learners, academic achievement.	A1,	1
Motivation has no significant influence on Turkish EFL learners' proficiency levels.	A3	1

The findings of the studies coded A1, A4, A9, A12, T1, T5 show that EFL learners have at least moderate and adequate level of motivation to learn English, and A4-coded study found that the level of language learning motivation continuously changes throughout the language learning process.

Regarding instrumental and integrative motivation, the studies revealed contradictory findings. Four of the studies (A2, A4, A9, T2) indicated that language learners' instrumental motivation is higher than their integrative motivation, and five of the selected studies found that learners generally continue language learning processes with instrumental reasons. On the other hand, the A3-coded study found that learners' integrative dimension of motivation is higher than their instrumental dimension. Besides, A5-coded study suggested that integrative motivation and instrumental motivation of language learners are positively related to each other.

The main findings of studies adopted L2MSS and its components mostly supported each other. According to the studies coded A2, A3, T4, T5, T6, T7, learners may imagine themselves as proficient English speakers in the future, and in the studies coded A3, A6, T4, T7, it was found that language learners believe they will benefit from English in their future careers. The studies coded A1, A2, A5, A6, T1, T4 showed that learners mostly have a positive feeling to build communication with people from the culture of the target language. The L2MSS component of ought-to L2 self was found to be weakly effective in language learning in the studies A6, T4. Besides, the studies A3, A7, T5, T6 found that participants do not learn English just to meet the expectations of people surrounding them, but the studies coded A2, A6, T4 revealed that participants learn English as the people surrounding them do so, or to meet the expectations of people surrounding them.

Regarding the relation of FLL motivation to learners' academic achievement and language proficiency, studies again put forward contradictory findings. The findings of the studies coded A8, A11, T5 supported the significant effect of motivation on learners' academic achievement; however, A1-coded study did not find a significant relationship between motivation and academic achievement, and A5-coded study found a weak correlation between intrinsic/extrinsic motivation and academic achievement. The findings of the studies coded A10, A12, T2 related to proficiency indicated a significant relation between motivation and language proficiency, but A3-coded study did not support this finding.

Some of the studies also investigated the relation of motivation to various variables such as learners' age, gender, field of study, and school type (state or private). The studies coded A1, A14 found that age shows a negative relation with some aspects of language learning motivation; however, T1 and T9-coded studies did not detect any significant effect of age on learners' motivation levels. Regarding age, seven of the selected studies found that gender causes a difference in language learning motivation in favor of female EFL learners while two of the selected 23 studies found the difference in favor of male learners. However, the studies coded A9, A11, A13, T1, T3 did not find any significant motivation level difference regarding learners' gender. Besides, it was found that learners' motivation levels and types changes according to their departments in the studies coded A5. A8, T2, T6, but the studies coded T1, T2 did not find any difference. The study coded T1 suggested that language learning motivation levels and types of students do not vary regarding their experience (the year) of their English

learning, but the studies coded A3, A14 found that there is a significant relationship between motivation and the year of study. The study coded A13 did not find any difference regarding the school type. On the other hand, one of the selected studies (T3) found a significant difference in motivation of learners from a state school and a private school, but in this study learners were working adults and their former schools were taken into consideration.

Discussion

Within the scope of this review study, the initial online inquiry resulted in 23 research studies consisting of 14 research studies, 7 master's thesis research studies, and 2 doctorate thesis research, and their findings were examined in accordance with predetermined foci. The existing studies provide a deep insight into the situation of language learning motivation in Turkish EFL context; however, the issue is still needed to be explored in-depth as there are some areas and aspects that the existing studies have not observed.

The first research question investigates the research trends in foreign language motivation research referring to the purposes, research methods, participants, and educational context of the selected studies. The frequently adopted purposes of the studies were to investigate the relationship between FLL motivation and gender (n=14), the effect of FLL motivation on learners' academic achievement and language proficiency (n=4), and whether FLL motivation change depending on learners' academic department (n=4). These mutual aims point out that the focus regarding the relation of motivation to gender is prevalent among the research studies in the Turkish EFL context. This may be explained by the findings of the existing studies that regard the gender differences as effective factors in language learning processes (Fatemi & Asghari, 2012; Mori & Gobel, 2006). In addition, the relation of motivation to language proficiency and academic achievement is an important aspect of FLL to be investigated. There has been a number of research studies that explore and support the existing relationships in the literature (Hu, 2011; Moskovsky et al., 2013). Thus, it is reasonable to investigate this issue in the Turkish context as well. Moreover, a group of diverse purposes was followed by the studies, and these purposes require more confirming findings by the future studies.

When the research methods of the selected studies were examined, it was found that only 2 of them (Çelebi Ayan, 2014; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2013) were carried out in a mixed-methods research design, which may be regarded as a very limited number for the literature in Turkish ELF context. Almalki (2016) suggests that mixed-method research approaches may be time-consuming, however, their use in research yield more beneficial and comprehensive findings, and enable researchers to observe their research matter in depth. Lastly, the educational contexts of the selected studies were mainly university contexts consisting of preparatory English schools and undergraduate English classrooms. This finding indicates that the studies in the scope of this review do not pay much attention to secondary school and high school contexts, and completely omit young learners of English in the Turkish EFL context.

The second research question investigates which motivational frameworks were adopted by the studies. The data analysis has shown that Dörnyei's Framework of Motivational Self-System is followed by half of the studies. Taylan (2017a) evaluated the effectiveness of this framework in the Turkish EFL context and found that the model is suitable to observe the

language learning motivation of Turkish EFL students. Besides, one of the studies integrated all the frameworks to design a new scale to investigate language learning motivation, which provides the researchers a broader perspective on language learning motivation. With the same intention, Sakiroğlu and Dikilitaş (2012) followed both Dörnyei's Motivational Framework of L2 Motivation and Williams and Burden's Framework of L2 Motivation to have a deeper and broader insight into learners' motivation. In this regard, a more integrated approach might be more effective in language learning motivation research as each framework addresses different components of FLL motivation.

Concerning the last research question, the findings of the selected studies were examined. One of the primary findings indicated that the level of language learning motivation fluctuates throughout the learning processes, and instrumental and integrative motivation have a dynamic nature changing from one context to another. Göktepe (2014) suggests that university students in their study are aware of the importance of English in their future careers, and making money, consequently, they have higher instrumental motivation. Similarly, Öztürk and Gürbüz (2013) explained why the participants of their study mostly stated instrumental reasons to learn English with the students' awareness of the fact that knowing a foreign language is an advantage for better occupational opportunities. On the contrary, Yılmaz (2017b) carried out a study with pre-service teachers studying at ELT Department and found that their integrative motivation is higher than instrumental motivation. However, in order to be certain whether motivation level changes during the language learning process, more investigation is needed. Öztürk and Gürbüz (2013) have reached this finding through interviews with university students, and future research may follow a similar path both in a similar and different context. The difference between the findings of these studies may stem from their contexts and participants' individual differences. Thus, it might be beneficial to carry out a comparative study that investigates different dimensions of motivation in diverse contexts.

Besides, the inquiries of the relationship between FLL motivation and learners' age have pointed at contradictory findings. The inconsistent findings related to age might be explained by considering the sampling of the studies in the scope of this review. Yetkin and Ekin (2018) have studied with 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders, and have detected age as an effective variable in language learning motivation, and again, Başaran and Hayta (2013)'s study with university students has reached a similar finding. On the contrary, Çelebi Ayan (2014) and Cabiroğlu (2016) have not found any significant relationship. These findings are limited to their own contexts as they focused on either one group of students or students among an age group. Kormos and Csizér (2008) carried out a study with Hungarian EFL learners and found out that secondary school students' motivation is higher than university students, and they have attributed the reasons behind this finding to the fact that university students feel obliged to learn a language for future career-related reasons and it is a prerequisite to graduate. Similar research might be conducted to have a deeper understanding of the Turkish EFL context.

Conclusion and Suggestions

This study targeted at reviewing the studies in motivational research area in Turkish EFL context between the years 2010 and 2021 to reveal the research trends, to find out which

motivational frameworks were adopted, and to discover the general inclination in FLL learning motivational orientations. Based on the findings, this review study presents various implications and suggestions for future research studies. The results of this review are noteworthy as they reveal the current trends and issues in FLL motivation research in Turkish EFL context. In addition, language teachers and pre-service teachers may benefit from the results to gain an understanding of language learners' motivational orientations. Moreover, the results might be useful for researchers to contribute to the existing research and to address the areas that the existing studies exclude or fall short to explain.

When the education contexts and participants of the selected studies are examined, it is clear that motivational research in Turkish EFL context has mainly focused on preparatory language schools and undergraduate contexts in recent years. Only limited number of studies have been carried out with secondary school and high school students, and none of the studies examined the language learning motivation in primary school context or young learners. Thus, future studies may observe the issue in these neglected contexts to shed a light onto the existing situation.

As the findings of this review indicates, it might be beneficial to adopt a longitudinal approach in motivational research studies to observe the changes in language learning motivation in different levels of education contexts and with different age groups. In this way, future studies may investigate whether motivational orientations of language learners change throughout their language learning processes. Moreover, future studies may utilize more qualitative research tools covering diverse samples and contexts. Qualitative research tools may enable researchers to attain more information where a questionnaire falls short. Also, in order to have an alternative perspective, future research may benefit from teachers' perceptions of language learning motivation of their students in these diverse contexts.

Finally, the studies in the scope of this review adopted or adapted an existing scale to investigate learners' motivational orientations except Aygün (2017)'s study developing a new scale. The existing scales are mostly developed in foreign contexts that are socio-culturally different from Turkish EFL context. Future studies may incorporate a questionnaire more specific to Turkish EFL context, or may attempt to develop a new one so that the findings may be more accurate and relevant.

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