MANİSA
CELAL BAYAR
UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Manisa Celal Bayar University

International Journal of English Language Studies

Publishing and Advisory Board / Yayın ve Danışma Kurulu

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Editor's Note:
The 1st Symposium of the Foreign Languages in the Aegean Region

Pınar GÜZEL GÜRBÜZ*,

The Symposium of the Schools of Foreign Languages in the Aegean Region, which was held for the first time this year, was held on October, 14 2022 on Manisa Celal Bayar University Şehit Prof. Dr. İlhan Varank Campus.

Attending the opening ceremony of the meeting, Manisa Celal Bayar University Rector Prof. Dr. Ahmet Ataç stated that the event serves as a bridge for the Schools of Foreign Languages and aims to revive communication and interaction between units. It was also emphasized that the theme of our Symposium is to enable foreign language schools to share information about "good practices" in various units and thus to develop these practices. Rector Ataç, who stated that it is important to share the process and operation carried out in different universities with other universities in order to ensure the sustainability of development and progress in education, was with the participants throughout the Symposium.

Symposium President and Manisa Celal Bayar University School of Foreign Languages Director Prof. Dr. Pınar Güzel Gürbüz, in her opening speech, emphasized the importance of such a symposium, the first of which was held within the School of Foreign Languages of MCBU. She stated that this symposium, in which the experienced instructors in English language education from different universities came together and shared their experiences, projects and studies in the field, contributed considerably to both professional development and educational processes, and that further inter-university dialogue was also ensured at the symposium.

Afyon Kocatepe University, Aydın Adnan Menderes University, Pamukkale University, Kütahya Dumlupınar University, Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University, Uşak University, İzmir Institute of Technology, Ege University, Dokuz Eylül University, İzmir Bakırçay University, İzmir Democracy University, İzmir Katip Çelebi University, İzmir University of Economics, and Yaşar University were invited to the event.

Session moderators Assist. Prof. Dr. Donald Staub, Assist. Prof. Dr. Esin Çağlayan, Lect. Nilgun Iner, Lect. Özge Coşkun Aysal, Lect. Asu Pinar, and Lect. Seden Önsoy led fruitful concurrent sessions on "Accreditation Processes, Curriculum Development, Professional Development, Leadership and

* Corresponding: Pınar GÜZEL GÜRBÜZ, Prof. Dr., Manisa Celal Bayar University, Manisa, Türkiye, pinar.guzel@cbu.edu.tr, Orcid: 0000-0001-5982-2816.

Management, Common Compulsory Courses, Assessment and Evaluation and Administrative Affairs and Student Affairs". During the sessions, identified topics were discussed and good practices were shared by the participants. After the sessions, the participants evaluated issues such as the difficulties encountered in the field and possible solutions, and a road map proposal for the field of foreign language education was presented for future planning.

Bridging the Gap: Highlights of the 1st Symposium of the Schools of Foreign Languages in the Aegean Region

Pınar GÜZEL GÜRBÜZ[a], Hüsem KORKMAZ[b], Ali CEYLAN[c], Yunus ÖZDEMİR[d], Süheyla HEREK[e], Seden ÖNSOY[f], Asu PİNAR[g], Saffet DİNÇER[h]

Abstract

Sharing scientific knowledge with all the stakeholders of foreign language teaching is as important as producing it in a systematic way. Besides, sharing effective practices in English language teaching is also as essential as publishing the theoretical findings of the relevant research in the field. Therefore, scientific events such as symposiums in the present context play a crucial role in unearthing the strengths and weaknesses in educational practices in any participating institution. Among the rare attempts and the first one in the Aegean Region of Turkey, the present symposium brought together a dozen universities sharing a number of standard features but implementing different practices for the same or considerably similar learning outcomes. The concurrent sessions held during the symposium cast light on the good practices in various schools of foreign languages offering English language preparatory programs. Topics such as quality assurance and accreditation, assessment and evaluation, curriculum development, leadership and management, professional development, and administrative issues were among the topics visited during the concurrent sessions. In brief, it was concluded that each institution had instances of best English language teaching practices while all had much to learn from others and put into practice for further development.

[a] Corresponding: Pınar GÜZEL GÜRBÜZ, Prof. Dr., Manisa Celal Bayar University, Manisa, Türkiye, pinar.guzel@cbu.edu.tr, Orcid: 0000-0001-5982-2816.

b Hüsem KORKMAZ, Dr., Manisa Celal Bayar University, Manisa, Türkiye. Orcid: 0000-0002-5759-7392.

c Ali CEYLAN, Dr., Manisa Celal Bayar University, Manisa, Türkiye, Orcid: 0000-0002-6509-7304.

[d] Yunus ÖZDEMİR, Dr., Manisa Celal Bayar University, Manisa, Türkiye. Orcid: 0009-0004-0748-4332.

e Süheyla HEREK, Instructor, Manisa Celal Bayar University, Manisa, Türkiye. Orcid: 0000-0002-7698-5753.

f Seden ÖNSOY, Instructor, Manisa Celal Bayar University, Manisa, Türkiye. Orcid: 0009-0000-2299-3216.

g Asu PİNAR, Instructor, Manisa Celal Bayar University, Manisa, Türkiye. Orcid: 0009-0000-0605-7276.

h Saffet DİNÇER, Instructor, Manisa Celal Bayar University, Manisa, Türkiye, Orcid: 0000-0002-5330-7925.

Introduction

Scientific and academic events such as conferences, congresses, and symposiums are known to serve effectively to spread scientific knowledge by sharing the knowledge with the stakeholders and assessing it together in an academic sphere (Mercer, 1995). Moreover, such events are valuable opportunities for people from the same fields of study or interest to come together and be part of a common research and practice community (Wenger, 1998). In this way, they ensure that the cooperation and the knowledge-sharing process will continue after the event, as well. According to Hall and Longman (2008), scientific meetings encourage and spread new ideas and knowledge, and they have a central role in connecting researchers and practitioners from the same or similar professional and academic identities.

For all these reasons, Manisa Celal Bayar University (MCBU) School of Foreign Languages (SFL) intended to bring the academicians of the schools of foreign languages working at 15 different universities in the Aegean Region of Türkiye together to bridge the gaps among the institutions in the same geographical region. It was, in particular, aimed to discuss the key issues in foreign language teaching, suggest solutions to the problems and experiences, and share good practices in the field of foreign language teaching.

Method / Event

The event took place in the form of a one-day symposium rather than a conference to ensure that all the participants representing their institutions could find opportunities to contribute to the discussions. A total of 15 schools of foreign languages were invited to the symposium with no participant quota restrictions. In the end, participants from 11 universities took part in the event which has been the first attempt to bring together the representatives of the schools of foreign languages in the region within an academic context. Dokuz Eylül University, Ege University, İzmir Bakırçay University, İzmir Democracy University, İzmir University of Economics, İzmir Katip Çelebi University, İzmir Institute of Technology, Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University, Pamukkale University, Yaşar University were represented in the symposium as well as the hosting institution Manisa Celal Bayar University. Within the frame of the event, the number of concurrent sessions was determined and held under the following headings:

    Assessment and Evaluation,
    Curriculum Development,
    Leadership and Management,
    Administrative Issues & Student Affairs,
        Professional Development,
        Accreditation.

The participants were allowed to choose the session they would join and were encouraged to actively participate in the sessions. At the end of the day, conclusions drawn from the sessions were compiled by the session reporters and presented by the moderators to all the participants in a debriefing session.

Conclusions and Discussion

Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment is one of the basic components of foreign language teaching. Accordingly, assessment and evaluation units are important in shaping language teaching in the schools of foreign languages or preparatory programmes at universities in Türkiye. Therefore, the assessment and evaluation session of the symposium mainly focused on the problems the assessment units faced and how to overcome or minimize these problems. The main conclusions drawn from the two different sessions were related to six key issues.

The first topic discussed was the excessive workload of the assessment unit members and the place and importance of the assessment units at the schools of foreign languages in Türkiye. Since The Council of Higher Education (YÖK) does not specify any items related to the structure and workload of the assessment and evaluation units and their members in its regulations, the members in the units face many difficulties in terms of their workload and responsibilities. The excessive workloads of academics in higher education in Türkiye have been addressed by many researchers and Cenkseven and Dost (2007) state that excessive workload is among the factors affecting faculty members negatively. Ercan Demirel and Cephe (2015) address the problem in the context of the language instructors working at three different universities in Türkiye and assert that excessive workload along with working in testing and similar units is among the reasons causing burnout for the language instructors. İpek and Kanatlar (2018) also research the causes affecting foreign language instructors' motivation and conclude that excessive workload can be exhausting and demotivating. However, little or no research to date has focused on the workload of the assessment unit members in schools of foreign languages specifically. On the one hand, they have to work really hard in order to prepare tests and other assessment tools such as rubrics and in-class task evaluation forms. On the other hand, they try to keep up with their teaching responsibilities.

All the participants in the assessment and evaluation sessions agreed that it is essential to re-evaluate and re-plan the workload of the unit members for effective assessment. In fact, this issue has had a long history in the context of higher education in Türkiye and has been addressed by many of the schools of foreign languages administrators in yearly meetings held across the country. Since their first meeting held at Sıtkı Koçman University in Muğla in 2008, the administrators of the schools of foreign languages have addressed the need for assessment units (Testing Offices) in the schools of foreign languages. In addition, starting from their sixth meeting held at Sabancı University in 2012 until their last meeting held at Bolu Abant Izzet Baysal University in 2021, they repeatedly included their suggestions about the assessment units in the final declarations of the meetings. They especially focused on the importance of reducing the workload of the assessment unit members and improving their working conditions in the declarations starting from 2012 and onward (YDYO-TR Yöneticiler Platformu, 2022). To the best of our knowledge, no progress has yet been made to solve the problem even though the issue continues to be one of the hot topics in the field.

Increasing the language assessment literacy level of new assessment unit members and facilitating their professional development was another issue discussed in the symposium. Basic terms related to language assessment were presented by the session moderator and assessment concepts were discussed by the participants. Language assessment literacy refers to the language teachers' knowledge about assessing a language (Malone, 2013). According to recent research in the field, language teachers in Türkiye do not have sufficient language assessment knowledge (Mede & Atay, 2017). Another research concludes that factors such as years of experience in language teaching, educational background whether or not instructors

are graduates from an English Language Teaching programme, being graduated from the BA programme including a testing course, and attending training sessions specifically focusing on testing and assessment do not have an effect on language assessment literacy level whereas working as an assessment unit member has an impact on language assessment literacy level of the teachers and there is a significant difference between the ones who are in the assessment units and the ones who are not. (Ölmezler-Öztürk & Aydın, 2019). In line with this study, Yastıbaş & Takkaç, (2018) place importance on self-improvement in language assessment literacy and state that self-improvement in assessment depends on peer-assessed exam preparation processes and gaining experience in test preparation. Therefore, in order to increase the language assessment literacy levels of new unit members it is important to engage them with the assessment processes after sharing with them the basic concepts regarding language assessment essentials.

The next issue discussed in the symposium related to assessment was the exams such as YÖKDİL (Higher Education Foreign Language Test) and YDS (Foreign Language Proficiency Exam) which circumscribe assessment processes employed by the schools of foreign languages and preparatory programs at universities in Türkiye. According to the regulation published by The Council of Higher Education (YÖK) (2016), the students who can get passing scores on the nationwide language proficiency exams such as YÖKDİL and YDS are qualified to be exempt from language education in preparatory schools and can start their studies which are either partly or fully in English. However, this application seems to contradict the language assessment practices used by the preparatory school programmes. The language assessment procedures applied in these programmes include both formative and summative assessment applications in order to evaluate all foreign language skills of students throughout the education year. In this way, students gain confidence through these practices and use all foreign language skills effectively in their social lives and departmental studies. YÖKDİL and YDS exams, on the other hand, only focus on reading comprehension, translation studies, vocabulary and grammar knowledge of the test takers and lack any means of assessing listening skills along with the productive skills of writing and speaking. One study shows that the majority of the participants who took either the YÖKDİL or YDS exam stated that the exams did not really contribute to their foreign language learning processes and had a negative washback effect as they do not include all language skills (Polat, 2020). Therefore, all the participants in the session agreed that the re-evaluation of this application is required.

The exit level for Progressive and Modular System students was also discussed in the symposium. Modular systems refer to modules including different tiered language skills and knowledge levels through which students reach a proficient language level that is gaining popularity in language teaching (Tercan, 2018). However, the exit level of the students learning English in a modular system is a controversial issue in language preparatory programmes in Türkiye. While some preparatory programmes apply B1+ as their exit level, others prefer the B2 level. According to the research conducted by the British Council (2015), most students starting preparatory programmes regardless of their programme types in Türkiye are at beginner levels in English and it is "impossible" for them to reach B2 level at the end of the language preparatory programs which last for eight months (p. 70). A more recent study focusing on the modular system employed at a state university in Türkiye also asserts that a modular system aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) at B1+ as an exit level serves high-quality language education although there are still some problems related to listening and speaking skills (Duru, 2021). In line with these findings,

another study suggests that for an effective language learning program B1 could be the exit level (Coşkun, 2013). Accordingly, the participants in the symposium stressed the importance of having a convenient exit level irrespective of the system employed by the schools of foreign languages. Also, it was generally agreed that B1+ would be a more manageable exit level for modular system programs applied by the schools of foreign languages in Türkiye.

Concerning the exit level of the language programmes, the situation of the repeat students who fail a module and have to repeat it to get to the next level was also discussed. According to a study, students repeating the same module have serious motivation problems (Kuzu et al., 2022). Another study which specifically focuses on the burnout levels of repeat preparatory school students whose exit level is B1 points out that the burnout level of these students reaches the highest levels (Erakman & Mede, 2018). Besides, when the exit level is B2 or above, the motivation problem gets more complicated for the students failing the final module. Most of these students get discouraged and find it meaningless to study the last module twice because their departmental studies are partly in English which only requires thirty per cent of the courses in English. The participants in the session emphasised that the student motivation level in language teaching is very important as it directly affects the teachers' motivation. As a result, the importance of a convenient exit level for a modular system was once more pointed out.

Increasing the weight of formative assessment practices in evaluating writing assignments was the final topic discussed in the assessment session. Formative assessment is a means of assessing students' work during their production processes and involves various strategies focusing on feedback and continuous student engagement (Heritage, 2010, p.19). In the context of higher education in Türkiye, Uzun and Ertok (2020) research the opinions of students about exam-based summative assessment approaches and task-based formative assessment approaches in English language teaching and conclude that majority of the students in the research favour formative assessment approaches over summative ones. The efficiency of using formative assessment tools for writing tasks has also been researched and using a writing portfolio system is proven to be an effective process. Caner (2010) points out the positive impact of a portfolio system in teaching writing skills along with other language skills but also states that it is regarded as a burden by students. This dimension of the portfolio assessment for writing was voiced by some participants in the assessment session. It was also stated that since it requires a lot of time and effort both on teachers' and students' parts, it is difficult to apply in a large scale. Given the large number of students in the preparatory schools in state universities in Türkiye, the application was regarded as impractical.

The assessment session of the symposium was fruitful in that it provided the participants with the opportunity to exchange their ideas about different assessment practices employed in different schools of foreign languages in the Aegean Region. Furthermore, it demonstrated different assessment units in different schools have similar challenges related to assessment and evaluation processes. As a result, it provided insights for the participants and showed the importance of such events for further collaboration in the long run.

Curriculum Development

The curriculum session of the symposium aimed at supporting teachers to consider curriculum planning processes at their schools and sharing experiences to feel more confident

in their understanding of developing high-quality curricula and to improve the understanding of processes in constructing high-quality curricula. The session was held in two parts, each of which lasted 40 minutes. The participants in the sessions were mostly the instructors working in the curriculum units at their schools. Specifically, the session addressed four main themes:

· The role of the curriculum in EFL settings, specifically at Preparatory Schools of Universities

· The curriculum cycle

· Curriculum planning issues in Modular Systems

· The flexibility needed in Curriculum Planning in the changing world.

The goal of a successful educational program and effective curriculum planning must meet the needs and demands of society, the expectations and aims of the educational institution, the beliefs and backgrounds of the teachers and the student profile. Therefore, the curriculum development process requires review, revision, and constant change (Johnson, 2001). In all participant schools, it was seen that the curriculum is in accordance with the descriptive and pedagogical principals of The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), covering all the areas above. The language proficiency levels in the curriculum at participant schools are therefore reflected as A1, A2 (Basic Users) and B1, B2 (Independent Users). In most schools, while the exit level is B1+, in some it is B2. The main purpose of all Preparatory Schools is to provide general English knowledge to students who are not proficient enough and to provide some basic skills for their departments' academic language skills. It was all agreed that while these two objectives can be performed for students at A2 and B1 levels at the beginning of the Preparatory programme, starting with a group that does not speak any English(A1) can cause problems. The other important issue mentioned was the use of formative assessment in the teaching process. Most participants stated that they have increased the weight of alternative measurement tools such as presentations and portfolios in the total evaluation rate.

In all academic programmes, a curriculum design cycle includes needing analysis, setting objectives, material design, instructional activities, assessment, and evaluation parts. The dynamic nature of the cycle allows for curriculum modification or improvement via action plans and feedback. Throughout the year, the curriculum development units of the schools work on the components of the cycle to meet the needs and objectives of the school. During this part of the session, it was discussed how important it is to prepare weekly flow charts that direct the instructors on what to do and how to do it on each day of the curriculum plan. In this way, depending on the feedback from the instructors at the end of each week, the following flow can be rearranged and improved. At the end of this part, the participants of the session pointed out the fact that as the curriculum unit members of the schools must deal with all these issues in addition to their normal teaching duties, it increases their workload, which leads to exhaustion and motivational problems. The comparison between the participants from the state and private universities regarding their weekly lesson hours revealed that the number of lesson hours of curriculum members at private universities is much less than the ones at state universities.

Most universities in Türkiye have a one-year compulsory English preparatory programme for students whose departments have English as the medium of instruction. Two systems in preparatory programs, the modular system and progressive system, characterize the

regulation and organization of courses, the assessment and evaluation procedures, classroom practices and material development and design (Eraslan, 2019). The modular system can be defined as "a unit of work in a course of instruction that is virtually self-contained and a method of teaching that is based on the building up of skills and knowledge in discrete units" (Sejpal, 2013, p.169). While in a progressive system, English teaching is given throughout the year depending on learners' English level according to the placement test done at the beginning of the education year, in a modular system English is taught in different modules at the same time. Students move forward or fall behind their current levels (Eraslan, 2019). Because the English levels of the preparatory class students at MCBU were not as good as expected, the modular system started to be implemented from the 2021-2022 academic year onwards. In the curriculum session, the modular system was discussed regarding the implementation of the curriculum, and it was agreed that the effectiveness of the system largely depends on the number of students enrolling in the preparatory schools as it requires more classrooms, instructors and materials. This conclusion supports the findings of Coşkun (2013), who in his research found out that the modular system was ineffective because the resources of the school could not provide repeat classes with the extra materials and academic assignments and the number of instructors was not enough. Regarding curricular issues, the programme for the students who repeat the same level in the Modular system was also discussed. While some schools run the repeat class curriculum with the same instructional materials, some change the textbooks in these classes. In addition, these students enrol in the same classes as the students who have moved up the same level for the first time in some schools, whereas in some preparatory programmes there are classes where all the repeat students follow a specific curriculum plan. The conclusions drawn from the discussion on these issues were that it is not so effective to use the same textbooks with these students as they have already used them, and also they get bored in the lessons since they do not encounter new tasks. Furthermore, placing repeat students in the same class as new students may embarrass repeaters or reduce the motivation of new students. It was agreed that especially in State universities, expecting repeat students to buy new textbooks in the same module is not realistic, and it was suggested that the repeat class curriculum can be supplemented by the online materials of the books and more emphasis can be given to workbook tasks.

Based on the social, economic, political and technological developments in the 21st century, expectations about the individual qualities needed are changing. In addition, these changes also affect education systems and the knowledge, skills and competencies that individuals must acquire (Cansoy, 2018). In this part of the session, it was discussed that it is necessary to make some necessary changes while planning the curriculum depending on the issues above. Firstly, the integration of technology in education is a real need for the students who grow up with the technology of the 21st century (Chapelle, 2003). Therefore, integrating the use of technological tools in the instructional activities to reach our curriculum objectives is a must, not a choice. Secondly, soft skills, also called generic skills, are emphasized in higher education today. These skills are personal and professional qualities that learners have in their professional lives in addition to their technical skills, and these skills such as leadership, communication, planning, adaptability, cultural awareness and relationship building can be emphasized more in our curriculum. Lastly, in today's education, students are expected to be active learners in the learning process. Therefore, in addition to planning for their academic achievement, we need to help them improve skills such as communication and interaction with society. In this regard, collaborative learning is essential for developing students' social

interaction skills (Ghavifekr, 2020). At the end of this part, all participants agreed on the fact that concepts such as digital integration, collaborative learning, and generic (soft) skills must be added to the curriculum planning process.

The curriculum session was very productive and guided for the participants to exchange information, identify common problems and propose solutions. The common view of all participants was that such meetings and symposiums should be held more frequently and regularly because curriculum groups in the participating schools want to feel that they are not alone in the systems they apply and the decisions they make.

Leadership and Management

The Leadership and management session of the symposium aimed to gather leaders including managers and unit heads to discuss the issues they had faced in managing their teams and the ways how to overcome those issues. The session lasted 50 minutes. There were 18 participants in the session and their roles varied from school directors to instructors. In the first part of the session, recent stressors related to their work were discussed. Two main themes emerged from the discussion and they were classified according to the duties of the instructors in their institutions. The first theme was named "Stressors for Staff with an Administrative Duty" and the second was named "Stressors for Staff without an Administrative Duty". The issues under these headings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Stressors for the Instructors

Stressors for Staff with an Administrative Duty	Stressors for Staff without an Administrative Duty
Very busy schedule	Workload
The high number of international students	Extra duties (like translation)
Lack of staff & contracted teachers	Strict schedules
Instructors refuse to get more lessons, extra hours and duties	Co-workers
Workload	Coordinators
Private problems of instructors (health or psychological)	Adaptation after Covid
Some instructors come late & skip exam duties. Other instructors have to cover their lessons.	Adaptation to new materials
Instructors refuse to teach evening classes because of money & long hours	Lack of facilities
Lack of facilities	Short notice duties
Translation tasks are given by the upper administration	The difficulty of work and private life balance
Lack of classroom	

In the later stages of the session, the psychological safety of the teachers was discussed. In this part, whether the psychological safety of the instructors was good or bad and how they could empower their psychological safety were the core of the session. In light of the discussions, delivering how to overcome those stressors and how to empower the psychological safety and well-being of the instructors may contribute to handling the issues mentioned in the session.

Professional Development

The Professional Development session of the symposium aimed at sharing ideas, experiences and practices of professional development units at preparatory schools of both state and private universities in the Aegean Region. The session was held in two parts, each of which lasted 40 minutes. The participants in the sessions were mostly the instructors working in the professional development units at their institutions. The first session addressed the practices of each institution whereas the second part addressed the problems and solutions during the practices.

Accreditation

The term "accreditation" cannot actually be used interchangeably with "quality assurance" although they may easily be misinterpreted in educational settings. Reeves (2019) emphasizes the distinction by describing the state of being "accredited" as the ultimate resulting mark of an institution or accreditation program carrying out the audit process. In the accreditation session of the symposium, therefore, the focus was more on the accreditation rather than the quality assurance process in general.

Internationalization of higher education all around the world has brought along the ever-growing interest in quality assurance and accreditation of educational practices by specialized bodies, and English language teaching programs were no exception, either (Harvey, 2006; Staub, 2019). Besides, there is evidence showing the need for a stronger focus on quality assurance in English language teaching in Türkiye (Staub, 2019) due to a number of deficiencies in foreign language learning (British Council, 2015). Lastly, the requirement of accountability as a result of the decrease in trust of state institutions has increased the popularity of quality assurance and accreditation endeavours (Kinser, 2014).

Among the leading conclusions drawn from the discussions in the accreditation session, one is noteworthy since it also points to the difference between accreditation and quality assurance as two distinct but related concepts: "the focus should be on quality assurance; accreditation is the natural result". The expression was further clarified by putting emphasis on the standardization of the practices and procedures, having an institutional policy of quality assurance, institutional transparency, and the learning outcome. Yet, above all, the quality itself should be put in the centre.

Dr. Donald Staub, the Chair of the concurrent session, noted that quality in a program could be found in the learning, teaching, and management components. In other words, all the major processes in an English language program should reflect the quality.

As the quality assurance labelling authorities, major accreditation schemes in Türkiye were also among the issues discussed. It was concluded that CEA, EAQUALS and DEDAK are the common schemes in the country and their standards are more or less the same although they are named differently. The examples presented by Dr. Staub were clear indicators of the similarity of the standards across different schemes. Another important point to consider is that accreditation standards are not prescriptive, and they do not force institutions to take any action, but the proof is required for any standard in all the accreditation schemes.

In brief, the session provided the participants with insights into a number of major themes regarding quality assurance and accreditation in English language programs in Türkiye.

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EFL Learning Motivation of Tertiary Level
Turkish Vocational School Students

Hüsem KORKMAZ[a]

Abstract

This study aims to find out the motivational levels of tertiary-level Turkish vocational school students to learn English at school, and possible factors that may motivate them to learn English in the instructional context. With this purpose, 116 students were given a motivation questionnaire (MQ) which was accompanied by an open-ended section to explore the overall motivation level of the students and the participants' thoughts about the possible motivators towards learning English. Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data revealed that there was a low level of motivation towards learning English at school and this resulted from several factors such as student/teacher-related factors, curriculum issues, administrative issues, and institutional concerns.

Cite as: Korkmaz, H. (2022). *EFL Learning Motivation of Tertiary Level Turkish Vocational School Students*. Manisa Celal Bayar University International Journal of English Language Studies. 1 (1); 16-28. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7915584

[a] Hüsem KORKMAZ, Dr., Manisa Celal Bayar University, husem.korkmaz@cbu.edu.tr, 0000-0002-5759-7392.

Introduction

Motivation is one of the key factors affecting the teaching and learning process. According to Chomsky (1988), ninety-nine per cent of teaching is whether you can make your students motivated to learn the content using the materials. In this respect, it can be concluded that motivation is an indispensable component of any teaching action. Such an important component of the teaching and learning process has doubtlessly attracted the attention of researchers. There has been research in the literature discussing the effects of motivation on learning (Genç & Aydın, 2017; Harmer, 2001; Liu, 2007; Ryan & Deci, 2000), on language learning in specific (Dörnyei, 2001), and more specifically on teaching English to Turkish EFL students (Kocabaş, 2009).

Research on motivation in education focuses more on the importance of motivating students, the effects of motivation on students' achievement and the correlation between motivation and learner attitudes (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005). In addition to these, researchers have so far investigated the factors that motivate and demotivate the teachers and students to teach and to learn English as a foreign language (Dörnyei, 1994), the relationship between motivation and certain concepts like self-esteem, attitudes, classroom management, and burn-out (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003).

However, there is still a need for research examining the EFL learning motivation of tertiary-level Vocational School students, and the factors that may motivate them to learn English as a foreign language. Additionally, there are also some practical concerns of English language instructors teaching at Vocational Schools all around Türkiye about the motivational levels of their students at these schools. Most of these instructors complain about the students' attitudes towards them or the courses. They find the students both unsuccessful in EFL and unwilling to learn a foreign language. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a need for investigating English learning de/motivation of vocational school students and uncovering the possible motivators to increase their interest in learning English as a foreign language. Hence, this study aims to identify the current motivational level of vocational school students to learn English as a foreign language, and to find out possible motivating factors for the students to learn English at school.

Motivation

Harmer (2001) defines motivation as "any kind of internal drive that urges a person to do something" (pp. 5). Ryan and Deci (2000) also make a similar definition and explain being motivated as being "moved". In other words, motivation is a factor that makes the person take action towards a goal or the desired end.

Though it is frequently used in education and will be dealt with in the context of language education in this paper, motivation is not merely an educational term. One of the earliest definitions of motivation was made by Maslow (1954) as "a basic drive towards needs". Since then, many definitions have been made to explain the phenomena. Dörnyei (1998), for example, defines motivation as "any goal-directed action". For Bandura (1997), on the other hand, only actions are not enough to show the existence or the level of motivation. Commitment, efficacy, and effort are other factors determining the level of motivation.

Types of Motivation

Motivation is a broad concept and should be dealt with under several headings to identify different types and facets of motivation. First of all, according to Deci and Ryan (1985), motivation results from either intrinsic or extrinsic factors and thus, motivation can be examined under two names related to the source of the drives: Intrinsic Motivation and Extrinsic Motivation. As their names also suggest, intrinsic motivation is more related to the "self", whereas extrinsic motivation is about others, context, and external conditions.

Another distinction between the types of motivation is made by Gardner and Lambert (1972). They state that motivation may be integrative or instrumental according to the purpose of the drives. For example, a language learner may desire to be part of the target culture and community while learning a foreign language and in this context integrative motivation is the driving force for learning. If the primary concern for learning a foreign language is to get a promotion in the workplace, then instrumental motivation is in action.

Though rarely mentioned in the literature there are several other types of motivation proposed such as achievement motivation (Atkinson, 2000), and effectiveness motivation (Harter, 1978). In short, it can be seen that the classification of motivation types has been done either according to the source or the aim of the drives that lead a person to act in a certain way.

Motivation in Language Learning

Motivation, according to Gardner (1985), is an indispensable part of learning, and he believes that when motivated, the learner longs for having something, realizing an aim, or accomplishing a desire. When we consider the foreign language learning context in this study, this motivation will be towards learning English as a foreign language.

In language classrooms, some students learn earlier, easier and better than some others. Likewise, some students are more positive towards learning than others. According to Csizér and Dörnyei (2005), those differences mostly stem from the level of motivation towards learning the language. He also proposes that motivation is among the main factors affecting performance in second/foreign language learning along with age and personality.

Research also shows that this type of motivation is also effective in language learning (Liu, 2007). Lightbrown and Spada (2006) focus on the purpose of motivation and state that the students' communication needs and attitudes towards the target language culture determine the ultimate success of language learning. In this context, the learners have two types of motivation: instrumental and integrative.

Context is one of the key determinants of any phenomenon to occur or disappear. For this reason, in order to have better insight into the motivation of Turkish EFL learners in a specific context, research related to such learners and context should also be covered. Though few in number, research in Turkish university settings show that university-level EFL learners in Türkiye are not very motivated to learn a foreign language. For instance, in a recent case study by Öztürk and Gürbüz (2013), it was found that tertiary-level preparatory class EFL learners were mostly extrinsically and instrumentally motivated. In other words, they did not have intrinsic motives to learn English.

Research has so far provided us with various definitions of motivation, the importance of motivation in language learning, and motivation studies in Turkish tertiary-level foreign language education. However, there is no research investigating the specific context of Vocational Schools with their unique student profile and educational atmosphere. So, this study attempts to have a deeper insight into EFL learning motivation in the Turkish Vocational School context by answering the following research questions:

1)What is the motivation level of the students at Vocational Schools to learn English as a foreign language?

2)What are the possible motivators for the students at Vocational Schools to learn English as a foreign language?

Methodology

Context and participants

The study was conducted at a Vocational School at MCBU. There are three vocational programs and evening classes in these programs. According to the regulations of the Council of Turkish Higher Education, all first-year students at Turkish universities have to take obligatory Foreign Language 1 and Foreign Language 2 courses in the fall and spring terms respectively. These courses are 2-hour weekly courses in which elementary-level basic grammar, vocabulary, listening, speaking, and writing skills are covered. Due to some technical restrictions, time constraints, and crowded classes, some of these skills such as listening, speaking, and writing are not focused on much. Thus, these courses primarily consist of elementary-level grammar and vocabulary topics accompanied, to some extent, by other skills. Of all the 438 students enrolled in the compulsory English courses at the School, 120 volunteered to take part in the study and respond to the questionnaires. Four of these participants did not respond to the questionnaire although they were willing to participate at the beginning of the study. Thus, a total of 116 students actually took in this exploratory study.

The reason for choosing this specific setting to collect data for the current study was not only convenience but also the existence of motivational problems observed by the instructors of the vocational programs and the language instructors who have worked in this institution. So, difficulty in motivating the students and the learning atmosphere were the factors directing the researcher to choose a Vocational School of a state university as the research setting.

Participants of this study were selected through convenience sampling and 120 first-year vocational program students at a Vocational School of a state university in Türkiye participated in the study. All the participants took Foreign Language 1 course during the fall term of the 2013-2014 academic year. Foreign Language 1 and 2 are offered as obligatory English language courses in the fall and spring terms of the first year at all the universities in Türkiye. Among the participants, there are students from all over the country, and from all high school types. There is also gender balance among the participants. Due to ethical issues, all the participants and the administrators of the School were informed about the study and the participants were those who volunteered to take part in the study.

Instruments

The instrument used in this study was the Motivation Questionnaire (MQ) which included 35 Likert-scale (5 points) items. Each item in the MQ had five choices to be marked by the participants: Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Neither Disagree nor Agree (N), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA). The MQ was originally produced by Gardner (1985) and used to define the attitudes towards the target language, target culture and learning the target language. In this sense, the MQ is a useful tool for identifying the motivation level and underlying factors of motivation or demotivation towards learning a language. In this study, an adaptation of the same questionnaire by Colak (2008) which was also used in a similar research setting at a Turkish university was employed. All the reliability checks of the questionnaire were made by the researcher in the aforementioned study. Finally, with the purpose of identifying any motivating factors that the participants of the study could find useful for their language learning, an open-ended question was added to the end of the questionnaire.

Data Collection and Analysis

The Motivation Questionnaire (MQ) was delivered to the students who volunteered to take part in the study before their regular class hours. They were first informed about the study, the purpose, and the ethical concerns, and then asked to respond to the items in the questionnaire. Since their proficiency in English was not high enough to understand the items in the original version, a translated version of the MQ was employed in this study. The MQ was translated into Turkish by the researcher and, in order to check for any inconveniences and detect any critical changes in the meaning of the items, it was back-translated by a professional interpreter who was also employed at a School of Foreign Languages of a state university.

In order to answer the second research question, the participants were asked to answer an open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire. However, a relatively low numbers of participants answered this part properly (n=32). This open-ended part investigated the possible motivators for the students' language learning. The participants were asked to list and explain the factors that would motivate them (or motivate them more if already motivated) to learn English at school.

The data collected through the questionnaires were quantitatively analyzed using SPSS for Mac 2013. For the analysis, in order to find the frequencies of the responses to the items in the questionnaire, descriptive calculations were run on the SPSS by the researcher. The results were also descriptively presented and a motivational profile of the students was demonstrated in this study. The responses to the open-ended questions at the end of the questionnaire were analyzed qualitatively in order to identify possible motivators for students to learn English as a foreign language which also shaped the second research question of this study.

Results

Participants' Motivation to Learn English at School

The first research question aimed at finding out the motivation levels of the 120 students who participated in the study. They were asked to answer a total of thirty-six items on a five-point Likert scale and 4 of the 120 questionnaires returned were eliminated during data analysis due to missing answers. The scores obtained were between 36 and 180. The participants whose total scores were between 36 and 107 were labelled as having low motivation to learn English. If the scores were between 108 and 143, they were accepted as students with a moderate level of motivation. Those who scored above 144 were considered highly motivated students.

In order to determine the motivation levels of the participants to learn English, descriptive statistics were used and the mean scores were calculated. As seen in Table 1, the analysis of their scores indicated that the students had low levels of motivation to learn English (M=99.35).

Table 1. Participants' Level of Motivation

	N	M	SD
Learning motivation	116	99.35	15.12

Apart from the general motivation of the whole group, counts and percentages of students with low, moderate and high levels of motivation were computed through descriptive statistics. The analysis of the data revealed that 63 of the 116 participants had a low level of motivation while only 16 of them were found highly motivated. The remaining 37 participants' motivation levels were moderate (see Table 2).

Table 2. Motivation Level Distribution within the Sample

	f	%
Low	63	54.3
Moderate	37	31.9
High	16	13.8
	116	100

Moreover, Figure 1 below demonstrates that a majority of the participants in the present study had low motivation levels (54.3%). Only 13.8% were found to be highly motivated and 31.9% had moderate levels of motivation to learn English. That is a clear indicator of the fact that the overall motivation level of the students learning English at a Vocational School of a state university was relatively low.
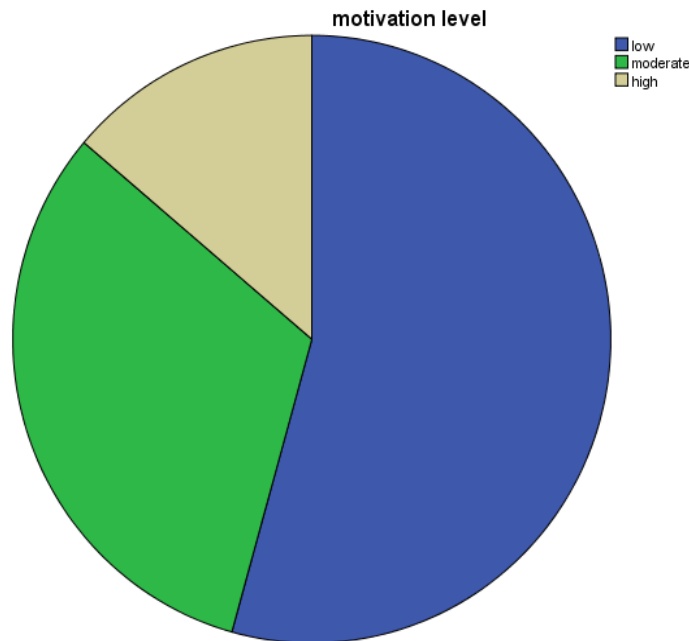
Figure 1. Motivation Level Distribution within the Sample

Motivating Factors to Learn English at School

As to the second research question, the respondents of the MQ were also given an open-ended question in order to find out what they thought the possible motivators for the students at Vocational Schools to learn English as a foreign language were.

In this section, the participants were expected to make a list of the factors that would motivate them to learn English at school, and briefly explain the importance of these factors. Out of 116 students who responded to the questionnaire items properly, only 32 students responded to this item which provided valuable insight into their views of motivating factors that would promote English learning at school.

Qualitative analysis of these 32 responses revealed that the factors mentioned by the students could be classified under several headings such as "teacher-related factors", "institutional factors", "curriculum-related factors", "student-related factors", and "other factors" (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Frequency of motivating factors in all the responses

As shown in Figure 2 above, the most frequently mentioned motivators are curriculum-related ones with a frequency of 23 responses in a total of 32. In other words, 23 of 32 students mentioned curriculum-related factors as possibly motivating ones. For instance, the students found the "2 hours of weekly classes" too less 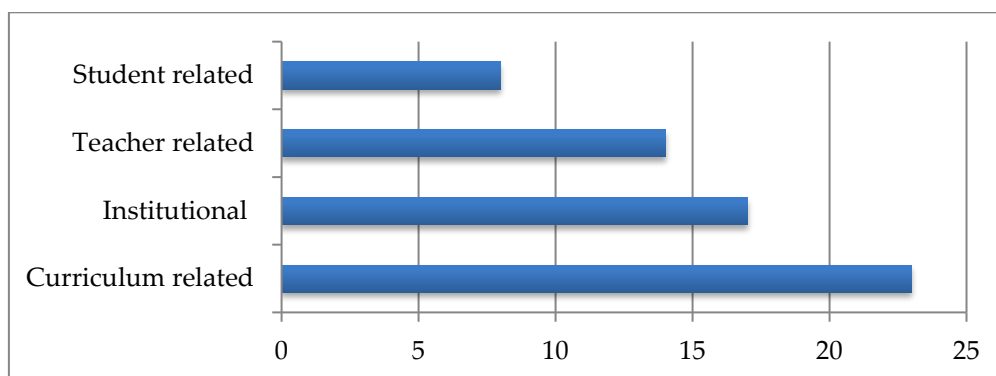to teach any subject. That is why some of the students perceive English classes as kind of a "passtime" at school and they believe that there should more hours of English classes if they are to be given a better language education. On the other hand, one of the participants says:

"The curriculum itself is the most demotivating factor now. But it can be made motivating by making some changes. For example, books can be changed. They do not let us talk, communicate… They always ask us to fill in the blanks or complete something. That does not happen in real life in Çeşme or Didim. I know that." (P9)

In this response, it can be understood that most of the students are not satisfied with the textbooks used in Vocational Schools. They find communicative skills more motivating than grammar and vocabulary exercises that dominate the current instructional materials. Along with class hours and teaching materials, there are some other curriculum-related concerns listed by the participants such as "national language teaching policies, assessment criteria for language learning, being forced to memorize by the system itself etc."

The second most frequently mentioned factors can be summarized under the heading of institutional factors which were included in 17 of the responses. Most of these factors are related to administrative and physical issues in the research setting. The following response of a student is a clear example of such concerns:

"I sometimes feel really disappointed by the conditions at this school. Imagine, English classes are full of students. We are 68 students in our class. They don't divide the classes. They say that there aren't enough teachers and there is no space for all of us. But why do you accept more students every year? I cannot practise what I learn in such a class. We cannot concentrate to learn in this class. The teacher wants to use a computer and projection tool but he cannot. Because in my class, they are all broken! We talked to the vice-director of the school but he said that there is not enough money in the budget to replace the old and broken tools." (P3)

This comment and some other instances in the student responses point to the physical and technological problems experienced in vocational schools in the Turkish context. Even if the managers of these schools try to fix such problems they occasionally confront with financial or bureaucratic problems. In this response, the student concludes that many of his friends are aware of the importance of English in their academic and professional lives, and if all these matters are fixed, the students will definitely be more motivated to learn English at school.

Among the teacher-related motivating factors which were mentioned in 14 of the responses, "the use of a variety of language teaching techniques, more interaction in the language classrooms, more tolerance to the errors made in classes, and less strict attitudes towards the students" were mentioned by the respondents of the study. The responses under this title also serve as a source of valuable feedback from the students of the researcher who also taught these classes. Two of the quotations from the students' responses were especially purposive:

"The teacher should recall that it is an English class and let us talk more. We know that he likes discipline but his strictness made us feel uneasy while participating in the activities. A less strict and more tolerant teacher makes his students more motivated." (P20)

"I am afraid of making mistakes in class. He doesn't react badly, indeed. But his general discipline makes me nervous. I don't know, maybe I can be more motivated in a female teacher's class." (P14)

In these responses, we can see examples of the motivating factors mentioned under the teacher-related factors heading. Here, it can be inferred that the attitude of the teacher plays a vital role in English language classes. Attempts of the teacher to ensure discipline in language classes may sometimes hinder learning by reducing the motivation of learners. In addition to these answers, the participants also mentioned "a smiling teacher face, rewarding attitudes of the teacher, more positive reinforcement, and more guidance for extensive English learning" as possible motivators to learn English at school.

Student-related concerns were the least mentioned ones among the other factors. One of the participants summarized the student-related motivational factors very well in her critical comment:

"Motivation is something personal. If one really wants to learn, he learns. I know it from my boyfriend. He works in Foça at a hotel and knows English better than me and he doesn't study at a school. No need to blame anyone else, we, the students are not willing to learn any subject. English is one of them. Personally, I never liked English and nobody can teach me by force…" (P4)

This clear reflection of student-related motivational factors by one of the female students is a good representative of similar ideas in several other responses, as well. Most of the eight responses which commented on student-related factors mentioned that motivation is a personal variable, and one should do much to increase their own motivation before blaming someone else for their demotivation to learn. At this point, the importance of intrinsic motivation, and intrinsic reinforcement to motivate oneself becomes more clear.

Along with all these factors being classified and presented under several different headings, there are some other factors that the students find potentially motivating to learn English at school. For instance, some of the students state that they would be more motivated if they were informed about the advantages of learning English in their field of study (i.e. Public Relations, Finance), and in their future careers. Some others suggest that online language learning which includes natives from all around the world would be quite motivating for them to learn English. Finally, there are also participants who state that being motivated to learn at school is useless, and instead of this, they should be allowed to learn at home or somewhere else outside the school.

Discussion and Conclusions

This study is an investigation into the motivation levels of tertiary-level Turkish Vocational School students, and the factors that can motivate these students to learn English at school. With this perspective, the researcher aimed to answer two research questions: (1) What is the motivation level of the students at Vocational Schools to learn English as a foreign language?

(2) What are the possible motivators for the students at Vocational Schools to learn English as a foreign language?

The first part of the results section presents the descriptive frequencies of the respondents to the items in the questionnaire. The questionnaire results revealed that most of the Vocational School students had a low level of motivation to learn English at school. As mentioned in the introduction section of the present study, it is not a surprising finding since many of the teachers teaching in similar educational contexts frequently complain about the demotivation of students to learn English. More than half of the sample supported the claims of the teachers complaining about such demotivation. However, there were still many students who had moderate levels of motivation towards learning English, and even high levels of motivation to learn English at school. Since motivation is a key concern affecting the quality of education (Gardner, 1985), the number of highly motivated students in the study setting is not satisfactory to ensure a high-quality education. Therefore, it can be inferred that the overall motivation level towards learning English at these schools is relatively low and far from being satisfactory for an educator. In light of these findings, the second research question was intended to find out possible motivators to learn English at school. In order not to cause any bias, this item was designed in such a way that it asked the students to list and explain the motivating factors or 'more' motivating factors depending on their levels of motivation. Because there were also some students whose motivation to learn was already high.

Qualitative analysis of the responses to the open-ended part of the research instrument of the study revealed a long list of factors or concerns that are found to be motivating or demotivating by the students taking part in this study. This finding is in line with the research in the literature which proposes that motivational factors vary a lot from personal motives to external drives (Dörnyei, 1994a). After a detailed analysis of the student responses and comments, it was observed that the students thought curriculum-related and institutional factors were mostly responsible for demotivating the students to learn English at school and changes under these two headings would work well and motivate them. Similarly, though not many in number, there were participants who expressed that teacher-related factors were also important in motivating the students to learn English at school. As Deci and Ryan (1985) also stated in their experimental study, the source of motivational factors varied in our sample and made the type of learner motivation either intrinsic (i.e. student-related factors, attitudes, internal drives…) or extrinsic (i.e. teacher-related factors, reinforcement, curriculum…). Though few, some of the participants of the present study (n=8) also put emphasis on the student's own attitude, willingness and efforts as important determinants of motivation towards learning English at school.

As mentioned several times in this paper, motivation has a profound effect on students' foreign language learning. Although there have been studies conducted about the language learning motivation of Turkish students in various settings and school types, the current research is one of the pioneering studies done in a tertiary-level vocational school setting. For this reason, its results are of valuable sources of information about the motivation levels of students towards learning English at vocational schools, and about the factors that may motivate this specific group of learners.

Descriptive analysis of the data collected from the participants of this study revealed that vocational school students had a relatively low level of English language learning motivation due to various reasons. These reasons are listed and explained by some of the students who responded to the second part of the data collection instrument; the motivation questionnaire. The students criticized some of the current factors such as the physical conditions of the classes, lack of technological tools, inconvenient learning atmosphere, and improper language teaching

curriculum and stated that changes in these variables would motivate them more to learn English as a foreign language at school. They also focused on the role of the teacher and the course materials in motivating the students to learn English. The teacher's positive attitudes towards the students, more freedom in language classes, less strict discipline, more tolerant error corrections, and more guidance from the teacher were among the factors that were listed as possible motivators towards learning English at school. On the other hand, more interactive and more communicatively designed course materials would increase the motivation of the students, as well.

This study does not only fill the gap in the literature by making an investigation of motivation with the specific student profile and in the specific research setting of vocational schools in Türkiye. It also provides the teachers, administrators, and publishers with valuable insight into the issue of language teaching at Turkish vocational schools. Drawing on the findings presented in this study, they may help the students increase their motivation to learn a foreign language in these schools.

Since this study was conducted with a limited number of participants, in a limited time, and at a single institution, it can be further improved and made more comprehensive by employing more participants, by tracking the changes in the students' motivation levels after making changes on aforementioned variables, and by including more institutions to come up with more generalizable findings.

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The Effects of Practicing Vocabulary via Plickers on the 4th Year Turkish Students' Vocabulary Acquisition in EFL Classes

Nilgün İNER[a], Hatice Sevgi IRK[b], Melis CEYLAN[c], Semih ÜSTÜN[d]

Abstract

Although the role of mobile assisted language learning tools in vocabulary teaching in language classrooms has attracted a lot of interest from the researchers in last few decades, the studies focus on higher education and there is no research on the impact of MALL in K12 language learning context, which we address by using specifically Plickers in a primary school in Türkiye. A quasi-experimental study design which involved four intact classes, two of which were administered into the experimental group and the other two were used as the control group was adopted in the study. The study was carried out with the participation of 85 Turkish 4th grade students whose age range is 9-10. The experimental group consisted of 44 students who used Plickers in the vocabulary class while there were 41 students who received traditional handouts in the control group. The data was collected via a vocabulary test relevant to the lesson content. Paired samples t-test to analyse pre-test and post-test results and independent samples t-test to see if there is a statistically significant difference between the groups were used in the analysis of the data. The results showed that there was a significant difference between the experimental group's pre-test and post-test scores, and the experimental group got slightly higher scores than the control group did in the post-test.

Keywords

Vocabulary Teaching
Language Learning
Mobile Assisted Language Learning
Plickers

[a] Corresponding: Nilgün İNER, Instructor., İzmir Bakırçay University, İzmir, Türkiye, nilgun.iner@bakircay.edu.tr, Orcid: 0000-0002-2750-6541.
[b] Hatice Sevgi IRK, Instructor, Yaşar University, İzmir, Türkiye, Orcid: 0000-0002-5809-0868.
[c] Melis CEYLAN, Instructor, Manisa Celal Bayar University, Manisa, Türkiye, Orcid: 0000-0002-1394-9026.
[d] Semih ÜSTÜN, Instructor, Adana Alparslan Türkeş Science and Technology University, İzmir, Türkiye, Orcid: 0000-0002-5461-5663.

Introduction

There is no doubt that using technology in ESL or EFL classrooms have been of great interest in the field of education. With advancements in current technology, it has become an indispensable part of language classrooms. Ball (2011) explains that technology use in ESL teaching promotes learner motivation, autonomy, and engagement gives instant feedback and eases the tracking progress. Accordingly, Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) suggest that ESL teachers integrate technology into their teaching.

Computers and mobile devices are among the most popular tools to incorporate technology in language classrooms. Stockwell and Hubbard also (as cited in Bozdogan, 2015) claim that the particular features of MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) make it a junction point of CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) and m-learning.

Teaching vocabulary has always been one of the most critical and challenging phases of ESL/EFL and it has become one of the trending topics to be investigated in the MALL context recently. Researchers such as Wu (2014), Cabrera, Castillo, González, Quiñónez, and Ochoa (2018) and Wang and Chen (2015) have conducted studies which focus on the vocabulary acquisition of adolescents. There have also been several studies related to the use of technology in vocabulary teaching in the Turkish context such as Başoğlu and Akdemir (2010), Kılıçkaya and Krajka (2010), Ağca and Özdemir (2013) and Bozdogan (2015). However, these studies were implemented only in universities. Plickers has specifically been used in studies as well; the disciplines of they have investigated are not relevant to EFL context, though.

Use of Technology in Teaching and Learning Vocabulary

Teachers use technology very often to visualize words or concepts, especially during vocabulary teaching since studies like Lu's (2008), which points out that technology integration leads to more efficient vocabulary learning compared to traditional methods, have recently increased. As Anderson and Freebody (1981) stated that the vocabulary range of learners is a key factor in comprehending texts in broad terms, researchers have conducted some studies that support using MALL in the classroom. For instance, Wu (2014) conducted a study on the impact of using smartphones in an ESL classroom during vocabulary teaching and the results demonstrated that students who received treatment with a JAVA application (Word Learning) outperformed those in the control group. The previous study concurs with Cabrera et al. (2018) who conducted research on the use of Pixton in a high school in Ecuador. They found out that the experimental group who used Plickers while acquiring vocabulary outperformed the control group regarding their grammar and vocabulary scores. A similar study conducted by Ağca and Özdemir (2013) examined the effectiveness of mobile learning on vocabulary acquisition and reported that students scored significantly higher on the post-test after the treatment. In parallel with their research, Kılıçkaya and Krajka (2010) also claimed that the use of an online tool, WordCamp, in the experimental group benefited learners acquiring vocabulary better compared to the control group and the learners in the experimental group were superior in retaining the vocabulary in the long term according to the results of delayed post-test. Wang and Chen (2015) carried out similar research on university students in Taiwan, and it was revealed that the experimental group that practised vocabulary through iPad App, Learn British English WordPower, significantly outperformed the control group in the post-test results and students' attitude was observed to be constructive

regarding the survey conducted after the implementation. Likewise, Başoğlu and Akdemir (2010) suggested that using vocabulary learning applications via mobile phones benefitted learners' vocabulary acquisition and these applications promote learners' vocabulary acquisition better than paper-based flashcards do.

As seen in the studies, mobile-assisted language learning tools mostly tend to have positive effects on language learning. However, a few studies in the literature have sceptical views on using MALL in the classroom. For instance, Bozdogan (2015) refers to the existing research by saying students are reluctant to use their mobile devices which are considered as their personal belongings for educational goals. Likewise, Stockwell (2008) stated that learner preparedness might vary across learners and while some learners approach the use of technology with excitement, others might not accept it as a learning tool, and they may be reluctant to use it in the learning environment.

However, studies in literature generally focused on university students or other disciplines such as Mathematics or Engineering. In the EFL context, especially at the K12 level, there are no studies examining the effectiveness of MALL or specifically Plickers. In order to fill the gap this study aimed to investigate whether practising vocabulary via Plickers, a MALL tool has a greater impact on 4th graders' vocabulary test scores than practising by using traditional methods does. In line with the aim of the study, this study sought an answer to the following research question:

1. Does practising vocabulary via Plickers, a MALL tool, have a greater impact on 4th graders' vocabulary test scores than practising by using traditional methods?

Methodology

Design

Pre-test – Post-test control group design as a Quasi-Experimental Design was utilized in the study (Creswell, 2014). Campbell and Stanley (1963) state that quasi-experimental designs can be considered as almost a true experiment when the researcher can adapt his data collection procedures to experimental design in a genuine social setting although he cannot be in full control of the time and the participants in terms of randomization and exposure. In this study, there were four intact classes involved in sampling. Two of them were administered to the experimental group and exactly received the same treatment. The other two were presented with the same traditional methods and materials as the control group. The treatment lasted for three weeks (6 hours in total). As the participants of the study were accessible to the researchers, convenience sampling was used regarding Castillo's (2009) definition which states that "convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher".

Participants

In total, 85 4th-grade students studying in a private primary school in Turkey took part in the study carried out by the researchers. The students were at the age of 9-10. The sample consisted of 48 female and 37 male students. They had been learning English for at least 5 years. Although their experience range was close, the proficiency level of the students varied

slightly based on the compulsory language tests they took throughout the year. 44 of the students were in the experimental group in which the treatment was using Plickers in teaching vocabulary and there were 41 students in the control group in which hard copies of the activities were used as a treatment.

Setting / Context

This study was held with students who were studying at a private primary school in the academic year 2018-2019. There are 42 teachers and 447 students at the school. The sample of this study consists of the 4th graders. They have 10 hours of English lessons a week. Those are regular face-to-face language classes, and none of the students is bilingual. The school aims to prepare students for secondary school which has an intense curriculum which requires students to get involved in challenging pre-lesson activities as well as post-lesson duties that combine hard skills such as reading and writing with soft skills such as collaboration and critical thinking.

Data Collection Tools

The Vocabulary Test

The vocabulary taught in the lessons were the ones that were included in the curriculum of the school related to the grade. Therefore, the vocabulary test prepared by the researchers which consists of fifteen multiple-choice items with gaps in the sentences was in line with the curriculum.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data gathered was analysed via SPSS 25. Before the analysis of the data, a test of normality was conducted in order to determine whether to use parametric or non-parametric tests in the analysis of the data gathered in the study.

Table 1. Test of Normality

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Group	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
PRETEST	Experimental	.136	44	.039	.951	44	.059
	Control	.142	41	.036	.969	41	.331
POSTTEST	Experimental	.177	44	.001	.938	44	.020
	Control	.115	41	.197	.965	41	.240

As is seen in Table 1, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests show that post-test results for the experimental group (p (44)<.05) were not distributed normally. However, Field (2009) claimed that parametric tests can still be used even if the data is not normally distributed. Therefore, it was concluded that paired samples t-test and independent samples t-test was used in the analysis of the data. To answer the research question, paired samples t-test was

used to analyse the pre-test and post-test results of experimental and control groups. In addition, independent samples t-test was used to see whether there was a statistically significant difference between the scores of students in the experimental and control groups in the pre-test and post-test.

Results

This study aimed to investigate whether practising vocabulary via Plickers, a MALL tool has a greater impact on 4th graders' vocabulary test scores than practising by using traditional methods does. In order to analyse the data, paired-sample t-tests and independent samples t-tests were utilized. The results are given in this section.

The Impact of Using Plickers in Practising Vocabulary

The first research question was stated as "Does practising vocabulary via Plickers, a MALL tool, have a greater impact on 4th graders' vocabulary test scores than practising by using traditional methods?

In order to find the impact of using Plickers in practising vocabulary on 4th graders EFL learners' vocabulary scores, pre-test and post-test results of the experimental and control groups were analysed by using paired samples t-test. The results of paired samples t-test are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Paired Samples t-test Results Comparing Pre-test and Post-test Scores

Group	Test	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Experimental	Pre-test	3.66	44	1.988	.300	-19.582	43	.000
	Post-test	11.2	44	2.946	.444			
Control	Pre-test	4.71	41	2.04	.319	-12.789	40	.000
	Post-test	10.12	41	3.164	.494			

A paired-sample t-test was conducted to compare pre-test (M= 3.66; SD= 1.988) and post-test (M= 11.20; SD= 2.946) scores on the vocabulary test. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between the two scores regarding the vocabulary test (t (43) = .000. p < .05).

A paired-sample t-test was conducted to compare pre-test (M= 4.71; SD= 2.040) and post-test (M= 10.12, SD= 3.164) scores on the vocabulary test. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between the two scores regarding the vocabulary test (t (40) = .000. p < .05).5

A paired-sample t-test was conducted to compare pre-test (M= 4.71; SD= 2.040) and post-test (M= 10.12, SD= 3.164) scores on the vocabulary test. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between the two scores regarding the vocabulary test (t (40) = .000. p < .05).

In addition effect size of the analysis was calculated. As a result, the effect size for the Pre-test (Cohen's d=.48) and Post-test (Cohen's d=.35) were found both at the medium level.

Furthermore, independent samples t-test was utilized in order to find whether the students' vocabulary test score means differ significantly according to the group they were in. The results of the independent samples t-test are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Independent Samples t-test Results Comparing Experimental and Control Groups

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. Level
Pre-test	Experimental	44	3.66	1.988	-2.399	83	0.019	**p<.05**
	Control	41	4.71	2.04				
Post-test	Experimental	44	11.2	2.946	1.634	83	0.106	p>.05
	Control	41	10.12	3.164				

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare two instructional groups' pre-test and post-test scores on vocabulary. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between the two scores regarding pre-test (t (83) = 82.218; p < .05) for Plickers (M= 3.66; SD= 1.988) and traditional groups (M= 4.71; SD= 2.040). The traditional group (M= 4.71; SD= 2.040) outperformed the Plickers group (M= 3.66; SD= 1.988) in the pre-test on vocabulary. However, there was no significant effect of being in the experimental group or control group considering post-test scores on vocabulary (t (83) = 81.348; p > .05) although the Plickers group (M= 11.20, SD= 2.946) had slightly higher scores on the delayed post-test as compared to the online group (M= 10.12; SD= 3.164).

Discussion

The efficiency of Mobile assisted language learning (MALL) tools in learning and teaching has been discussed and investigated by many researchers (Kılıçkaya & Krajka, 2010; Wang & Chen, 2015; Bozdoğan, 2015; Stockwell, 2008) for about two decades. Furthermore, the effects of MALL on learning and teaching vocabulary have been proven in the studies of Başoğlu and Akdemir (2010) in addition to the study of Wang and Chen (2015). In order to investigate the effectiveness of MALL tools in learning and teaching vocabulary, this study adopted Plickers as a treatment for this study since Plickers is claimed to help the teacher in preparing, executing, and examining formative assessment (Masita &Fitri, 2020). Accordingly, this study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of Plickers, a MALL tool, in teaching vocabulary by comparing pre-test and post-test scores of 4th graders that they got in vocabulary and to test whether using Plickers in teaching vocabulary is more effective than traditional ways of teaching vocabulary for 4th graders.

As a result of the study, it was found that there was a significant difference between the experimental group's pre-test and post-test scores. This finding can be interpreted as the fact

that using Plickers in vocabulary teaching and learning is an effective tool in an EFL classroom. In addition, it was also found that the experimental group got slightly higher scores than the control group according to the post-test results even though the difference between groups was not significant. This result can indicate that students in the experimental group caught up with and surpassed the control group in vocabulary knowledge by using Plickers. The findings of this study are in line with the findings of the studies on the use of different MALL tools in teaching and learning vocabulary and which found out that using MALL tools was effective in vocabulary teaching and learning (Ağca & Özdemir, 2013; Anderson & Freebody, 1981; Cabrera et al., 2018; Ellis, 1995; Kılıçkaya & Krajka, 2010; Lu, 2008; Wang & Chen, 2015; Wu, 2014).

In addition to its impact on teaching and learning vocabulary, Babacan and Güler (2022) found that using Plickers has a significant positive impact on the academic achievement of students. Similarly, Sasmiko et al. (2019) put forward that using Plickers in teaching vocabulary has a positive impact on students' academic achievement in reading skills while learning a foreign language. Moreover, it was claimed that using Plickers in teaching and learning language has a positive impact on the motivation of the students in learning vocabulary (Babacan & Güler, 2022; Hassan & Haşim, 2021; Masita &Fitri, 2020; Sasmiko et al., 2019).

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate whether practising vocabulary via Plickers, a MALL tool has a greater impact on 4th graders' vocabulary test scores than practising by using traditional methods does. In order to analyse the data, paired-sample t-tests and independent samples t-tests were utilized.

As a result, a significant difference was found between the pre-test and post-test scores of the students in the Plickers group on vocabulary. This result shows us that using Plickers is an effective way of teaching vocabulary in an EFL classroom. t-test for independent samples was used in order to compare the pre-test and post-test results of the experimental group using Plickers to teach vocabulary to 4th graders and the control group using traditional tools. A significant difference was found between the pre-test scores of the learners in the experimental group using Plickers to teach vocabulary to 4th graders and the control group using traditional tools. The significant difference was in favour of the control group when compared to the experimental group. That is to say, the control group started with an advantage over the experimental group. However, there was not any significant difference between groups in terms of post-test results. Although there is not any significant difference between groups in terms of the mean scores of the students in the post-test, the experimental group has a slightly higher mean score than the control group. This result indicates that students in the experimental group caught up with and surpassed the control group in vocabulary knowledge by using Plickers.

Accordingly, these results can have a couple of implications for EFL teachers. The first implication is that EFL teachers can use Plickers in order to enhance their vocabulary teaching and their students' vocabulary learning to be more effective. The second implication is that EFL teachers can benefit from MALL tools in their classes not only for vocabulary teaching but also for other topics that they teach. In addition, there is also a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the control group and the findings revealed that traditional

methods are also effective in promoting vocabulary acquisition of the learners, and they are as effective as using Plickers.

However, this study has some limitations. First of all, this study was carried out with 85 4th graders and this study can be expanded with a larger sample. In addition, this study was carried out in a short time period, so this can be a drawback. At this point, a longitudinal study can be designed to test the effectiveness of Plickers. Another drawback may be the design of the pre-test and post-test as the items were provided in a cloze multiple-choice test, which may have made it possible to choose the correct option by chance for the students. One last limitation is that there were some cognates regarding the theme, which may have caused students to find context clues in other items in the test. Therefore, it can be suggested that a longitudinal design with a redeveloped pre-test and post-test may give more solid results.

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The Role of Model Text Use in Writing Instruction

Behçet ERDEN[a]

Abstract

Writing is undoubtedly one of the most difficult skills to acquire in second language learning settings. Frequently, it is seen as an individual-based skill and considered to be a redundant and time-consuming skill, especially among state schools in Turkey. Most of the writing sections in course books are either totally left out or not studied enough. The purpose of this study is to share the findings of a classroom research study which aims to help students of a state university to overcome their problems in writing via model text use under the umbrella of cooperative learning. The study uses the mixed method and the sampling method benefitted is convenience-sampling. Students' actual written works and their reflections on the process were used as main sources of data to capture the perceptions and thoughts of 22 students on whether model text use in writing instruction aids them to produce better writing. In addition, by processing the collected data, it was also measured whether there was a relationship between writing performance and gender. Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data revealed that subjects of the study do better when they deal with the task by analyzing a model text of the same genre prior to actual writing. As for the relationship between gender and writing performance, no correlation was found between the two. Since the integration of model text use and cooperative learning approach during writing instruction remain largely unexplored in the field, this study will hopefully assist the ones interested in the issue.

Keywords

Model Text Use
Cooperative Learning
L2 Writing

[a] Corresponding: Behçet ERDEN, Instructor., Gebze Technical University, Gebze/Kocaeli, Türkiye, berden@gtu.edu.tr, Orcid: 0000-0003-4339-2385.

Introduction

Writing is one of the two productive skills that demonstrate other skills acquired in the target language; therefore, it is widely accepted to be difficult for language learners. While portraying the current level of a language learner, productive skills are called on. Since becoming proficient at the skill is seen as so crucial, teachers often put emphasis on grammar structures and, as a result, students place more effort into mastering grammar and the requirements of writing such as content and organization are ignored. It is a well-known fact that writing requires conscious preparation; planning, and organization of ideas. Therefore, it is not realistic to expect one to write automatically, without any arrangements. Rao (2007) states that writing is both a mean to express oneself ideas and feelings and an indicator which facilitates the acquisition of other study skills the students need in their academic settings such as synthesizing and analyzing. In addition to speaking, writing is a must have skill not only for daily life but for academic situations as well. In order to reach communicative competence, learners are to have a good level of writing skill. They should always be aware of the fact that they will be asked to produce kinds of written works ranging from informal paragraphs to academic papers throughout the years they spend as students. With reference to this belief, writing is naturally a multifaceted procedure that entails combining various mechanisms of language, so it takes time to be proficient at. Therefore, it should be considered as important as other skills and this paramount skill in order not to cause stress on students about writing, more attention must be paid on the instruction of this paramount skill.

Reading

Reading is a lifelong skill to be used both at school and throughout life According to Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson (1985), reading is a basic life skill. It is crucial for an individual's academic and overall success in life. Opportunities for personal fulfilment and professional success will surely be lost without a strong reading foundation. The ability to read provides numerous opportunities to language users. Brown (1987) claims that reading provides students with the opportunity to examine the correct use of grammar, how the sentences are composed and how the sentences are logically connected to form texts. It allows them to study new vocabulary to use in correct contexts and lets them gain experience. However, learning to read in another language can be more challenging than that of a native language. In order to eliminate the problems, language teachers must try to find ways to make reading practices easier and more productive. Reading is a complex process with its phonetic language systems, and so learning to read is accepted to be better through formal settings like learning to write. However, for the practicability, it is so convenient a skill that many activities on each stage (pre-, while-, post) of reading can be conducted for the benefit of students. It is this flexibility which makes reading sufficient enough to be integrated with writing.

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning, or CL, is a teaching technique that is based on the innate human desire to work together. It is understood from the description of the CL approach that students work in small groups and receive awards and recognition based on how well their groups accomplish (Slavin, 1980). According to Mandal (2009), the premise behind the CL techniques is rewarding groups rather than individuals, so students are expected to be encouraged to assist one another in mastering academic material. In cooperative group work, each team member is accountable for not just understanding the material being taught, but also assisting

other team members in learning and fostering an environment of success. It can be claimed that when pupils collaborate, they learn more successfully. Slavin (1980), asserts that students will gain more from discussing each other's ideas when working in groups rather than alone. Richards and Renandya (2002) concur that CL is one of the strategies teachers employ to promote group cooperation and receive active engagement from every member. According to Ahangari & Samadian (2014), as it offers the most opportunities for student-student interaction with consequential input and output in a supportive environment, CL has been proven to be an efficient and productive teaching technique for developing learners' linguistic, social, and communication skills. Johnson and Johnson (2000) outline five fundamental elements of CL:(a) Positive Interdependence: Student team members rely on one another to complete the assigned task by sharing their thoughts and opinions; (b) Individual and Group Accountability: Each student team member is accountable for providing their individual portion of the work and mastering all necessary material for the success of the group; (c) Face-to-Face Promotive Interaction: CL also places a strong emphasis on small-group interaction. Group members play a crucial role by giving and receiving feedback and motivating one another to reach the common objectives; (d) Small-Group and Interpersonal Skills: These are the fundamental abilities for effective teamwork. To encourage teamwork, build trust, and improve communication, group members must develop interpersonal skills, which are commonly known as active learning, encouraging, and supporting others; (e) Group processing: This means reviewing the group session, describing what member actions were and/or were not helpful, and deciding which actions to continue or change.

In sum, as Artz and Newman (1990) state, CL is a collective learning activity to accomplish a common objective. Its basis for learning is established on the socially structured information sharing of student team members, each of whom is in charge of their own learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Pair Work

Many theories and language teaching approaches highlight the importance of pair work as a form of collaborative learning. Richards and Schmidt (2002) simply define pair work as a learning activity that involves learners to work together in pairs. Increased opportunities for students to use English in class is one of the key reasons to promote pair work in the English language classroom. Due to the fact that "students feel less anxiety when they are working "privately" than when they are "on the show" in front of the entire class," working in pairs helps students reduce their anxiety when studying (Doff, 1990). Pair studies allow students to collaborate with one another and learn new information together, increasing the likelihood that a task will be successfully completed. Because pair work activities assist teachers in reducing teacher talking time (TTT), which is desired to be as minimal as possible, they have become increasingly important in language teaching.

Group Work

Working in groups is a practice that has a long history in English language instruction. It is regarded as a beneficial technique (Chen &Hird, 2006). It's been noted as one of the common methods of teaching and learning, and it's developed into a crucial component of the toolkit used in language instruction. (Pica, 1987) Additionally, it is emphasized as a way to give the learners a chance to practice the target language. Vygotsky's writings were the forerunners in

elevating group work and student engagement in the classroom. Given that group work is based on collaboration, it is also deemed to be a time-saving activity. In this study, it was students' own choice to study in groups as they wished to work on the writing material more collaboratively in a social context.

Model Text Use

Recently, experts in the field of second language writing have pushed for the use of model texts as effective pedagogical resources for teaching students how to write in L2 contexts. The genre-based approach is where the idea of modeling first arose. The genre-based approach's goal is to help students become aware of the structure and intent of various text forms, guiding them as they evaluate these elements and then re-creating them in their writing. According to Hammond et al. (1992), there are three steps that make up a genre-based approach to writing instruction: modeling, collaborative text negotiation between teachers and students, and independent text construction by students. Learners get the chance to analyze the goal, general organization, and linguistic elements of the target text they will be writing during the modeling stage. While constructing the texts cooperatively, the teacher plays a crucial role in scaffolding students' writing by giving information about the characteristics of various text types. At this stage, students perform written tasks that require them to utilize the necessary language forms. In the last phase, known as the independent production of text, students create their own texts by selecting themes, doing their research, and writing several drafts. The idea of modeling and the explicit teaching of the genre are two aspects of genre-based writing exercises that stand out. According to Hyland (2004), the modeling phase helps students explore the genre and comprehend its rhetorical frames and formulaic sequences. Bastian (2010) states that the explicit teaching of genre encourages awareness of its norms and highlights the importance of reflection on its usage and purpose. According to Hyland (2003), since they give students the chance to increase their understanding of the targeted rhetorical norms, models are highly appreciated in genre-based writing teaching. The results of a study by Macbeth (2010) show that the modeling gives less proficient L2 writers the assistance they need to produce important writing elements including thesis statements, subject phrases, and supporting sentences. Models, according to Macbeth, aid education and provide students with concise guidance on how to produce their writing. In addition, according to Swales (1990), the presence of models enables students to concentrate on a text's formal and functional elements as well as the compelling connections that link them. Model texts are a typical strategy used by writing teachers to help learners tackle new and obscure genres. Model texts give students a tangible representation of what the final output should look like and help them digest the rhetorical devices, etiquette, and organizational elements of the text. Learning to recognize and become aware of rhetorical styles can help L2 students use their knowledge more imaginatively in future writing assignments.

Regardless of the advantages that modeling may offer in aiding students in producing written work, a number of issues have been highlighted by academics. The most frequent is that using model texts does not really help when it comes to explaining meaning in L2 writing. According to Bawarshi (2000), modeling ignores the natural processes of learning and creativity and impairs students' ability to think creatively about the topic (Badger &White, 2000). Models might be taken incorrectly as a formulaic writing style that leads students to assume there is just one accepted pattern for writing a particular genre. Smagorinsky (1992) further claims that students are more inclined to employ models inaccurately or far too directly to their own

rhetorical context. In order to prevent this result, Macbeth (2010) advices teachers to assist learners as they move from writing in an oversimplified and synthetic style to modifying model elements for their own needs.

In order to fill the gap, this study aimed to investigate whether model text use in writing instruction in a cooperative way has an effect on students' writing performances. In line with the aim of the study, this study sought answers to the following research questions:

1. Does model text use in writing instruction affect learners' writing performances?

2. Is there a relationship between gender and writing performance?

Methodology

Research Design

A mixed methods research design was used for the current study and the sampling method best suited to the study was convenience sampling. According to Creswell (2014), in convenience (non-probable) sampling, participants are selected according to convenience and availability. For the quantitative part, data collected through the learners' actual written works and the interviews were analyzed to reach a conclusion along with the writing scores of the participants. The students' papers were graded by two instructors for inter-rater reliability. With this respect, a quasi-experimental design was employed since the study included both the control and the experimental group. As for the qualitative aspect of the research, reflection papers from the students were used as the actual source of data.

Setting and Participants

The study was conducted in the school of foreign languages of a public university. The lesson in which the study was carried out was writing and each week they received 3 hours of writing instruction. The study consisted of three cycles and each cycle lasted for a two-week period which counts for eighteen hours of writing treatment in total. Regular face-to-face language courses are offered in every course. The school strives to prepare students for their departments, where the majority of them will need to attend vocational lectures. The subjects attended the study were 44 preparatory class students, 22 of whom were assigned as the control group and the other 22 constituted the experimental group, consisting of six female and sixteen male students. The age range is between 18 and 27 and their level of English is intermediate. These students were never taught using CL before by their teachers. Because of ethical considerations, all of the participants and school administrators were informed about the study, and the participants were the ones who willingly consented to participate.

Table1. Characteristics of the Participants

Gender	Control		Experimental		
	n	%	n	%	
Female	10	45,5%	16	72,7%	0,01*
Male	12	54,5%	6	27,3%	

*Significant difference at 0.05 level

Data Collection Tools

Students' writing papers were used as the actual data collection tool. In addition to the written works of students, reflection papers from the groups were used in order to get more in-depth data about their thoughts.

Data Collection Procedure

The first week started with the brainstorming session. The students were asked to discuss and find a problem area on which they want to study to improve themselves. To find a common ground, first they discussed in small groups and in the end, the whole class declared that they wanted to study essay writing as they were supposed to write in their mid-term and final exams. During this period, the teacher was just in the role of a facilitator and only when some questions arose, the teacher provided some help, otherwise he remained silent. The aim in doing so was to help learners to be more autonomous. As Dewey (1916) emphasized, "the starting points of activities must be the learner's own felt needs so that educational aims must be those of the learners rather than those of the teachers". In the second lesson, students were asked to write an opinion essay on "Part-time Jobs". The students were given 40 minutes to prepare an essay that was at least 250 words long. After they wrote their papers, the researcher collected them to assess. In the last session of the first week, the teacher asked students to set up their groups as they wished. It was up to students to choose their group members because the researcher wanted them to feel comfortable through the study. There were 6 groups in total (4 groups of 4/2 groups of 3).Each team member was given a role to perform, and those roles changed every session so that everyone had a chance to play different roles during the treatment. According to Johnson & Johnson (1994), it was expected that assigning roles and duties to the team members would lead to high-quality learning and encourage the learners' individual accountability and positive interdependence. In the first lesson of the second week, after deciding on the groups as well as roles, the learners started to search for model texts. While doing so, most of them got help from the internet and the others tried to find sample texts from either the course book or the writing book itself. The following session was the investigation phase in which the students offered some sample texts that they had found, and among those, they chose one to study in detail. As a class, they agreed to work on the same text. Before they started to focus on the model, the teacher projected the sample and read it aloud. While he was reading, the students listened to the sample text and followed it in silence. That was the only moment the teacher participated in the process actively. Then, they started to study the model in detail by finding the topic sentence, transitions, supporting details, and so on. They tried to use the information they learned in previous classes by activating their schemata. During this process, the students were expected to exchange ideas, brainstorm and discuss on the topic. The last lesson of the second week was the implementation session. As the learners investigated the model text in depth, each group discussed a topic that they would like to write about, and then, they constructed their outlines collaboratively and wrote the first drafts. The researcher collected all of the written products and distributed them randomly among groups with a view to having learners discover their own mistakes and try to correct them within groups. Moreover, as stated previously, this perspective in teaching helps learners to be more autonomous, which has become a crucial issue in recent years. After they finished analyzing the papers, the researcher collected them to keep till the next session. The third week was determined to be the evaluation week. The researcher distributed the papers to the groups, and asked them to write their second drafts according to the feedback they had

received in the previous week. After they finished, the teacher requested one team member from each group to take the lead and present their work. Then the teacher provided complete feedback for each work. The second and third cycles followed a similar procedure as in the first one. In each set, it was up to students to find a problem area and study it by changing the roles assigned to them. In the seventh week, the post-test was administered. They received their post-test on the same topic after having completed six weeks of CL courses. It was important to have them write in the same genre for all students because it would be more realistic to use the grades of the works in the same genre as post-test data at the end of the study. In addition to this, the teacher also asked the students to write a reflection paper about the whole process to gain a better visualization of the image they have in their minds. At the end of the study, one member of each group read their reflections on the activity in front of the class.

Data Analysis Procedure

Before and after the study, the written outputs of students' were graded by two teachers to ensure inter-reliability since one of the aims of the study was to see the effects of integrated writing on students' writing scores. To ensure the reliability of the rating, students' writings were evaluated by the researcher and another experienced rater independently using the writing rubric. Inter-rate reliability was measured by averaging the scores given to each student by the two raters. Apart from this, while grading papers, a reliable and valid rubric was benefitted. The rubric was designed by the testing unit of the School of Foreign Languages of the university where the study was conducted. As Silvestri and Oescher (2006) state, a reliable rubric gives objectivity and sets of standards which detain the grader from subjectivity. Another data analyzing method is using SPSS. According to Chen (2010), SPSS is both professional statistical software and a tool with powerful functions for teachers to carry out research in language teaching. The writing grades of both groups were scientifically and statistically analyzed via SPSS.

Findings

The study aims to investigate whether model text use in writing instruction in a cooperative way has an effect on students writing performances. For the analysis of the data, descriptive statistics are presented with frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation values. The Kolmogrov-Smirnov test was used to examine the normality levels of the distributions of test scores. As a result of the analysis, it was observed that the distribution of pre-test, post-test and developmental levels were in accordance with the normal distribution ($p>0.05$). In addition, since the Skewness-Kurtosis levels were between 1.5 and -1.5, it was observed that the normal test assumption was met.

Table 1. Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
	Statistic	p	Skewness-Kurtosis
Pre.Experiment	0,961	0,144	1,10-0,89
Post.Experiment	0,978	0,549	0,87-1,03
Progress %	0,132	0,054	1,33-1,25

In order to investigate the pre-test and post-test score differences of the students, a paired *t*-test was used. In addition, an independent sample t-test was applied to examine the difference in test scores according to gender. The chi-square test was applied to examine the difference in gender distributions in the groups. P values less than 0.05 were considered statistically significant in the study. Analyses were made with the SPSS 22.0 package program.

The Effect of Model Text Use on Writing Performance

There are two research questions of the study. The first one is "Does model text use in writing instruction affect learners' writing performances?" and the other one is "Is there a relationship between gender and writing performance?" In order to reach conclusions for these two questions, the findings of the analysis are given in this section.

Table 2. Test Scores in Groups by Gender

		Gender	X±s.s.	p
Control	pre. experiment	Female	64,1±9,43	0,71
		Male	66,17±14,73	
	post. experiment	Female	66,9±9,87	0,65
		Male	69,42±14,93	
	Progress%	Female	0,05±0,08	0,82
		Male	0,06±0,14	
Experimental	pre. experiment	Female	69,5±12,39	0,50
		Male	65,5±11,18	
	post. experiment	Female	81,94±9,88	0,20
		Male	75,5±10,97	
	Progress%	Female	0,2±0,14	0,54
		Male	0,16±0,08	

It was observed that the pre-test, post-test and progress levels of both control and experimental groups were not different according to gender (p>0.05). It can be stated that the pre-test and post-test scores of the participants are not different in the groups according to their genders. Furthermore, when the experimental group is considered, the training given is perceived similarly on the basis of male and female individuals, and their development does not differ.

Table 3. Score Distribution

	Control X±s.s.	Experimental X±s.s.	
Pre. Experiment	65,23±12,36	68,41±11,95	0,39
Post. Experiment	68,27±12,66	80,18±10,34	0,01*
Progress %	%5±%11	%19±%13	0,01*

*Significant difference at 0.05 level

The result of the analysis showed that the pre-test scores were not significantly different in the control and experimental groups (p=0.39). It was determined that the post-test scores were at significantly different levels in the control and experimental groups. In addition, it was observed that the post-test scores of the experimental group were higher than those of the control group (p=0.01). The experimental group showed significant improvement in the post-tests compared to the pre-test levels. Improvement was not significant in the control group. Compared to the initial level, the control group showed an average of 5% improvement, while the development of the experimental group was 19% on average and significantly higher than the control group (p=0.01).

Table 4. Within-Groups

	Pre. Experiment X±s.s.	Post. Experiment X±s.s.	p
Control	65,23±12,36	68,27±12,66	0,07
Experimental	68,41±11,95	80,18±10,34	0,01*

*Significant difference at 0.05 level

The results indicate that the pre- and post-test scores in the control group were not significantly different (p=0.07). In the experimental group, it can be stated that the pre-test and post-test levels differed significantly. It was also found that the post-test scores were significantly higher than the pre-test scores, and the experimental group showed significant improvement (p=0.01). In sum, while the experimental group showed significant improvement, no significant improvement was observed in the control group. Therefore, based on the results of the analysis, it can be stated that the education given in which the experiment was successful has a developing effect on the writing development of the students.

Learner Reflections

In recent years, the use of reflection to promote meaningful learning has found increasing support from educators. Basically, reflection can be defined as "a form of thinking" used to organize partially "complicated, ill-structured ideas". It is the act of building on what is already known to reach a solution that may be either anticipated or unexpected. (Moon, 2013). Bearing in mind that there were some biased and unrealistic comments due to the level of the classroom and the students' attitude towards lessons and based on the data I obtained, I can say that the study was mostly beneficial for students. The study consisted of 4 groups of 4 and 2 groups of 3 with a total population of 22 students. One group of four female students stated that they liked the activity, but it would better be in reading lessons as the study is mostly based on speaking skills. They further suggested that writing sample sentences on the vocabulary they learned would be better prior to the writing activity. Another group which consists of three male students said that working individually was a lot better than group work but collecting ideas as a group was easier. They also stated that the activity was informative but difficult to follow since one of the group members was writing, others were just watching him. They further added that they were able to write a paragraph in a shorter time, but they were not happy about not getting individual feedback. The third group consisting of four female students said that they did not like writing together as they believed that they could write better individually. They also stated that they collected more ideas than when they were writing alone, but sometimes they could not agree on the ideas they gathered. For the feelings

about the activity one of the students said, she felt angry because her partner did not understand her, and added that she did not want to study in the same way as she could not get along well with other team members. One other group consisting of two male and two female students said that they were able to gather more ideas. They also expressed their satisfaction about the activity by claiming to have understood each other while working together. They said that they were able to learn the unknown vocabulary via brainstorming as well as writing. They were also happy to study cooperatively as it made the activity easier. In addition, they highlighted the value of reading prior to writing. They also added that the activity was different, but they liked it and suggested conducting more activities like this one because while sharing ideas, better thoughts came into existence. They stated that more heads are better than one. Another group with four female students also made positive comments on the activity. They said that writing in collaboration meant more distinct ideas, and it took less time to finish writing the paragraph. They suggested doing all activities like that as that one was much easier and relaxing because working with others lowered the pressure they felt while writing. The sixth and final commentary was from two female and a male student forming a group. They claimed that the activity was really beneficial for them because they practised teamwork and were able to gather more ideas. They added that it was different because they were used to study individually while performing such tasks. However, they stated that even though they liked the activity, they did not want other activities to be studied in the same way as it took time and caused a mess, which resulted in tiredness. In the light of the comments made on the study; however, the positive ones outweigh the negative reflections, and the number of comments and their reasons for the negative ones are also remarkable.

Limitations

Considering the study entirely, it is possible to consider the activity as a beneficial one, but there are also some limitations. The first limitation is the motivation of the students. It affects the activity a lot as some participants may show no sign of engagement. In the current study, few of the participants wrote unrealistic reflections even though they were not aware of what was being studied. The other limitation is about the freedom given to students while forming group members to study with. At the end of the study, some claimed that they were not able to study with others, but it was their choice to work together. At this point, it could be better for a teacher to assign students into groups according to their levels, but personal relations would still cause a problem. Apart from that, some groups could make totally negative comments, but thanks to observations, it was apparent that these members just leaned on the high-level students in their groups. Another limitation is setting the correct time because as they are university students, it is difficult to conduct a study with a whole class participation. The final limitation is the use of smartphones. During the investigation phase, most of the learners use their smartphones to search for model texts, so this can create a distraction. They may surf on the net, especially on social networking websites, without paying attention to the studied topic.

Discussion and Conclusion

Bearing in mind that there were some biased and unrealistic comments due to the nature of the activity and the students' attitudes towards writing lessons, the study was mostly beneficial for the students. Based on the results of the data, it can be interpreted that model text use in writing instruction improves students' writing skills. It was apparent by the

observations that during the process in all the sessions, most of the students were engaged with the activity. In the first week, after forming their groups, they brainstormed for ideas and topics to write about. Most of them were observed to study eagerly because such freedom to choose friends to study with and the opportunity to find their own topics was given them for the first time. As a result, they began to develop positive attitudes from the very beginning. Writing was the skill that they had more problems with, but through collaborative and cooperative work, it was surprising to observe them working in confidence. Compared to other writing classes, they were so relaxed, and they seemed to know what they were doing even if there was no intervention by the teacher. This brings to mind the concept of learner autonomy. Nunan`s (1999) theory concentrates on classroom-based foreign language learners, whose autonomy grows and changes through five stages: (1) awareness - the learner is the recipient of the information; (2) involvement - the learner is the reviewer and selector among given options; (3) intervention - learner adopts official goals; (4) creation - the learner is the inventor, originator and creator of his/her own goals; (5) transcendence – learner identifies their own interests and creates goals relevant to those. In addition to that, students felt the confidence of not being alone. Writing is commonly viewed as one of the individually studied skills, but in contrast to that view, the learners studied in groups and as a result of that, they have developed a sense of confidence in a positive way. Furthermore, different from their usual writing lessons, this set of lessons was planned based on a model text use which aids students and gives them relevant knowledge about the structure and type of writing they are expected to produce. From this perspective, the activity also hosts a kind of reading-writing integration in it. According to Krashen (1993), learners do not learn to write by writing; instead, they develop writing style through reading. The division between teaching reading and writing in the EFL classroom, which entails a considerable lack of emphasis on the reading–writing connections, is a major cause of the weakness in the students' writing ability. Hao and Sivell, (2002) argue that teaching writing in isolation of reading probably hinders the development of writing skills. They add that when reading is not integrated into writing instruction, "the knowledge and skills students have acquired in reading cannot be transferred to writing". Therefore, the division could lead the EFL students to experience much difficulty in both language and rhetoric when they start a writing assignment. Moreover, students can broaden their vocabulary and deepen their knowledge by reading. Reading appears to play a key role in the development of expressive language abilities and "writing" is one of these (Yakıcı et al., 2006). In addition to observations, students' reflections also provided valuable data about students' improvement. Except for some, most of the students pointed out that they liked the activity and got benefit from it. More than half said they managed to fulfil the activity easier and faster than the usual writing lessons, which is another significance of the study as they struggle to write their paragraphs within a time limitation. Some also stated that because they studied with friends, it was easy for them to learn unknown vocabulary by asking each other. In this way, they also experienced the value of collaboration. Considering the process as a whole, this insight will make a lot of contributions to their studying habits. They gained an understanding of how to overcome problems in skills learning and it is apparent that most of the learners will apply what they learned throughout the sessions to other subject areas. In this context, a study by Soori and Zamani (2012) revealed that most language features were used equally by male and female writers. Based on this, it is possible to conclude that there is no relationship between gender and writing success. All in all, through the data, gathered both during and at the end of the activity, although the results of the study revealed no relationship

between gender and writing performance, it is understood that model text use in writing instruction worked well in developing learners' writing skills and aided students to create positive attitudes towards writing as well as being more autonomous. It is advisable for language teachers to conduct their writing lessons with the aid of a model text use approach in order to lower students' level of stress, let their students discover, and help them to be more autonomous learners.

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Two Epic Heroes:
The Anglo-Saxon Beowulf And The Turkish Oghuz Khan
A Comparative Study

Harun DOĞRUYOL[a]

Abstract

The concept of World Literature was put forward by Goethe approximately more than two centuries ago. The rise of nationalism in the European continent in the 18th century accelerated the interest in the others' literary works among the European nations. This interest legitimizes the need for a scientific view in the field. The idea of Comparative Literature has been around since then. French school filled the gap first. It has an empiric and a positivist perspective and looks for evidence of cause-effect, source-receiver relation. Literariness is not a concern. In the 20th century, the centre of gravity for Comparative Literature moved to America. For the American school, the text is everything and searching for aesthetic values and literariness are the main goals of the Comparative Literature. The elitist point of view in the 18th century has been abandoned. There is no hierarchy between the texts and similarities and differences have the same value. In this sense, comparative studies try to analyse the texts belonging to different nations to disclose the universal components of literature.

Anglo-Saxon epic Beowulf and Turkish epic Oguz Khan which are the focus of this study bear similarities and differences from the perspective of universal epic heritage. In this study, I analyse the literary aspects and historical values of these two epics from the perspectives of Comparative Literature.

[a] Corresponding: Harun DOĞRUYOL, Instructor., Manisa Celal Bayar University, Manisa, Türkiye, harun.dogruyol@cbu.edu.tr, Orcid: 0000-0002-7001-5844.

Introduction

Epic as a literary genre dominates the whole of ancient times. The societies organized as tribes created epics throughout the world no matter where they lived. These giant stories in verse narrate the stories of national mighty heroes who saved their communities. "Epic is a long verse narrative on a serious subject, told in a formal and elevated style, and centred on a heroic or quasi-divine figure whose actions depend on the fate of a tribe, a nation, or (in the instance of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*) the human race" (Abrams, 1999:76). Anglo Saxon epic Beowulf and the Turkish epic *Oghuz Khan* have the universal characteristics of the epic. They are anonymous and formed by the society itself in due course.

The epic hero is the main agent in the narration. The epic revolves around the national hero and his heroic actions. He has some supernatural features and enormous physical power which are divine signs. The aim of the hero is to protect his community and to provide salvation to his people:

> An epic is a long narration poem concerning events important to the history or mythology of a nation or race of a people, featuring a hero or heroes of high position within that society whose deeds represent characteristics viewed as beneficial by her his society. The action of the poems covers a large portion of the hero's world and includes his interaction with the supernatural forces, and deities. (McDonald, 2002: 232).

The appearance of a hero is the first part of the narration then there emerges tension such as natural disasters, war, invasion, and migration. At first glance, the hero does not seem suitable for the task. Beowulf is underestimated in his boyhood, Oghuz and Rama are outcasts for a while before they learn their societies' values. Achilles is a misfit. This hero must go through some phases, venturing into the underworld, a dark forest, or a cave. Aeneas, Beowulf, Gilgamesh, Rama, Oghuz, and other heroes go to the places alone, which signifies a kind of spiritual journey. They suffer for a while and reach a mental state. At this stage, they become heroes.

The epic hero must have a divine connection to legitimize his heroic and brutal action. The hero protects a citadel, stabilizes society, and exterminates the outer dangers that threaten the nation. But sometimes he is tempted to commit a sin of pride: hybris and his action is redemption from the sin and finally, these actions liberate him from these burdens. In this sense, he develops an ego consciousness. "Their special role suggests that the essential function of the heroic myth is the development of the individual's ego consciousness [….]" (Henderson, 1968: 101).

Before encountering the evil, which is symbolized by a monster, the hero must gain his own identity and develop awareness. This phase is called *initiation*. (Henderson,1968: 120). The hero fluctuates between his own wish and that of society. He sacrifices himself for the society and gains eternal fame. "The hero's symbolic death becomes, as it were, the achievement of that maturity" (Henderson, 1968: 103). The lonely fight with the monster symbolizes the individual and spiritual struggle to reach an idealized state to serve his nation. Through this process, he has an epiphany and reaches the maturation.

The hero has two identities "[…] simultaneously, a powerful individual and a functionary of his society. These two roles are in constant tension until; at the end, they merge and become one in the person of the hero king." (Henderson, 120). The hero represents the values of a particular community at a certain time. All this narration has a practical aim: to teach the new

generation the behavioural codes of a certain society. The epics teach the members of a particular society the appropriate behaviour and values.

"They earn lasting fame –the only kind of immortality possible for human beings- by performing great deeds that help their community... (Henderson, 1968: 120). The epic hero struggling with evil, generally symbolized by a dragon, frees his people from the feeling of impotence and misery. Human beings' primitive fears, instincts and expectations, primordial images shape a universal collective consciousness common to all humans. One can observe these components in the epics. "The hero figure is an archetype which has existed since time immemorial" (Jung, 1964: 60-61).

The tribal system is the cradle of the epics. In this community, people are vulnerable to outer dangers and are in constant fear of being wiped out. They long for a saviour with a suprahuman quality. They create epics about mighty national heroes and their heroic actions. Anglo-Saxons and Turks continued the tribal system throughout the Middle Ages. They were migrating and trying to survive in hostile lands. That's why they kept this literary tradition for a long time. Epic as a literary genre belongs to ancient times. The Middle Ages is relatively a late period for its existence.

The Comparison of Beowulf and Oghuz Khan on Thematical and Structural Bases

We can call these two epics Middle Age Epics because their formation and emergence took place relatively late. *Beowulf* is supposed to have been written between the 7th and 10th centuries. The events in the epic are assumed to have taken place around the 6th century in Scandinavia. The Germanic tribes brought this epic to England during the migration, and monks recorded it. As the Anglo-Saxons lost their connection with their motherland this epic was forgotten for a long time. The only copy barely survived in the 18th century in a fire. "[It was] transcribed and titled, retranscribed and edited, translated, and adapted, interpreted, and reinterpreted, until it has become canonical. For decades it has been a set book on English syllabuses at university level all over the world." (Heaney, 2001: VII). In the 19th century, an interest began to emerge in *Beowulf*. Today people seem to have rediscovered *Beowulf*.

> "In 1936, the Oxford scholar and teacher J.R.R. Tolkien published an epoch-making paper entitled: Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics which took for granted the poem's integrity and distinction as a work of art and proceeded to show in what this integrity and distinction inhered. He assumed that the poet had felt his way through the inherited material—the fabulous elements and the traditional accounts of a heroic past—and by a combination of creative intuition and conscious structuring had arrived at a unity of effect and a balanced order. He assumed, in other words, that the poet of Beowulf was an imaginative writer rather than some kind of back-formation derived from nineteenth-century folklore and philology. Tolkien's brilliant literary treatment changed the way the poem was valued and initiated a new era—and new terms—of appreciation." (Heaney, 2001: VIII-IX).

On the other hand, there are three versions of *Oghuz Khan*. The first version of *Oghuz Khan* was recorded in 14th A.C. The events in the epic are supposed to date back to 1st and 2nd B.C. This first text is free from Islamic effects. The pure pagan view is obvious. The two other versions denote the characteristics of the Islamic era. In Islamic versions mythological pagan

elements are eradicated. A transition from a mighty pagan hero to a prophet-type hero can be observed.

The epic *Oghuz Khan* has continued its legacy in a very wide geography for a long time. Some of the elements of *Oghuz Khan* could be encountered in Chinese and in Frisian records. "There is always a political bond among the Turkish states established in the world." (Öztürk, 2000:28). The first known Turkish epic *Yaratılış* is accepted as the beginning of the Turkish epic tradition and there are references to *Oghuz Khan*. The condition of *Beowulf* is different. It had been forgotten for a long time before it was rediscovered in the 18th century. There is only one version which is the mixture of pagan and Christian views.

Beowulf was formed in the pagan world and then was reinterpreted with Christian ideas. "It has often been observed that all the scriptural references in *Beowulf* are to the Old Testament." (Heaney, 2001: XV). Beowulf's divine connection and his holy mission are set in the beginning. "Holy God, out of kindness/has sent this man to us/to save us from Grendel's terror." (*Beowulf*, episode three, 406-408). The hero Beowulf should be a welfare provider in times of peace, and a warrior in times of war. "Shield had a son/child for his yard/sent by God/to comfort the people." (*Beowulf*, episode one, 13-19). Beowulf starts with the funeral of the legendary king of Danes: Shield Sheafson. In this part, there is a definition of an ideal chief. "Shield, the son of Sheaf/took many an enemy's chair/terrified many a warrior." (Beowulf, episode one, 1-3). Beowulf is invited by the Danish king to fight against the monster that bothers people. He is to pay the blood feud that his father owes the Danish King. The Geats and the Danes support each other. Beowulf kills the monster. After his successful journey, he returns to his homeland. People expect that he would claim the throne. He kills the monster; he fulfils the mission, and he has the right to be the king. As he is the strongest, no one can stop him. The Queen offers him the throne. Beowulf watches the convention which is a praised quality of a mighty hero. He does not want the crown as there is an heir. He accepts the throne when the only heir dies.

> Hygelac's death is obviously an important event in Beowulf in that it eventually leads to the hero's accession to the Geatish throne, and it is one of the many occasions for Beowulf to show his heroism: it is who kills Degrhren presumably Hycleac's slayer and who performs one of his astounding swimming feats after the encounter. (Reichl, 2000:136).

The question of the epic is represented by monsters in *Beowulf*. The identities of the monsters are important. Each stands for different ideas. Grendel, the first monster, could be interpreted as a sign, a warning, or a mystery from God. The stable universe is threatened by this demonic figure (Grendel) descended from Cain's clan who kills his brother Abel, the first crime in the world. Grendel lives in marshes. Cain is a kind of outlaw who is condemned and cursed by God in the Bible. The monster has no father but has a mother to pursue his blood feud. The trouble that bothers society is caused by natural forces. As nature is always depicted as a mother, the monster must have a mother, not a father. This demon is described as insensible to human sorrow which means it does not know the extent of the damage, he gives to the people. It does its job routinely like any power of nature. "The evil creature, grim and hungry/grabbed thirty warriors/and went home laughing." (*Beowulf*, episode two, 127-129).

The methods the Danes use to get rid of Grendel are despised because the rituals are pagan not Christian. On the other hand, Beowulf struggles to overcome the monster relying on pagan heroic concepts and pagan traditions. This problematic situation continues until the end of the

epic. Beowulf must fight with Grendel's mother, the second monster. The monster is female because evil breeds from her. There is another pagan vision working here: vengeance. In Christianity, vengeance is not welcomed. Two parallel ideas lie side by side. The mother comes to take the revenge of her child.

> Grendel's mother, a monster
>
> woman, she who lived in
>
> the terrible water,
>
> the cold streams,
>
> thought of her misery. (*Beowulf*, episode six, 1570,1574).

The third confrontation of Beowulf with a new monster takes place in his homeland when he is old. His first and second fight with the demonic monsters is an adventure and a challenge for Beowulf, but this third fight is an obligation, a debt to be paid to his nation. He has already proved himself to be the best warrior of his age. This unavoidable confrontation implies that this is his fate, and his end is not very far. He never thinks about his end when he is young nevertheless, he knows that this is his last battle.

The third monster is awakened by a careless man. In other words, the cycle of nature is disturbed. This fight is not started by the hero. The hero has to correct somebody's mistake. He suffers for the others which makes him the hero. "Often must a warrior suffer for another's mistake." (*Beowulf*, episode twelve, 3700-3701). The intruder enters the cave of the dragon and takes a cup from the treasure. Dragons always protect a mythological treasure, because they hinder the transfer of the richness. The hero must terminate the dragon to get the treasure and deliver it to his nation. He is a provider for his nation as well as a big warrior. The old wise Beowulf kills the monster at the cost of his life.

The listeners of that time must have been aware the fact of that the concept of the hero is beginning to change. Beowulf saves people with violent and heroic actions slaying the monster, but now there is a different hero: Jesus who saves his nation by blessing, teaching, and purification. "Christ's acts in redeeming the world, and the missions and martyrdoms of his saints could be interpreted according to suprabiblical concepts of hero." (Sander, 2000: 20). Two different cultures exist together contradicting each other.

In the Middle Ages, the hero concept began to change. Instead of a wild brutal hero, people longed for a saint-type hero. This new point of view is observed in the two other Islamic versions of *Oghuz Khan*. The earlier one was written by a famous Mongolian historian Residuddin in the 14th century in "Camui't-Tevarih", the other one "Secere-i Terakkime" was written by Ebulgazi Bahaddir Khan in the 17th century. Oghuz's life indicates similarities with the life of the Islamic prophet. Oghuz fights with his family and relatives instead of a mythological monster in these Islamic versions. In Residuddin's version of "Camui't-Tevarih" Oghuz Khan is said to be the descendant of the third son of Noah, *Yasef*, after the flood. He fights against his father, family, and relatives on the ground that they are pagans. In Secere-i Terakkime by Ebulgazi Bahaddir, Oghuz Khan utters his own name when he is one year old. He begins to say the name of God in Arabic: *Allah*. There are some supernatural elements in his birth, he does not suck milk from his mother. He gives his messages to his mother through dreams. His mother changes her beliefs, and then Oghuz starts to drink his mother's milk when he is two years old. He is handsome, mature, and dignified. On every occasion, he tries

to say his gratitude to God. He does not sleep with his first two wives on the ground that they are pagans. His third wife accepts his belief and becomes a Muslim. When his father learns that Oghuz becomes a Muslim, he wants to kill him. Oghuz is in the mid-region between the supernatural hero and the prophet. It is difficult to call the Islamic versions as epics because they lack the basic specialities of the epic genre: they are not in verse; they are in prose.

The pagan version puts forward this divine connection of Oghuz in the introduction starting with supernatural birth.

> That day Moon Khan gave birth to a boy
>
> Bluish, sky-blue was his face
>
> Reddish was his mouth, like a fire was his colour of face
>
> Crimson were his eyes, dark was his face
>
> His eyebrows were more beautiful than fairies', how black!
>
> He came to his mother's breast he took it and sucked milk
>
> He did not want to suck milk anymore
>
> He wanted raw meat, meal and, food
>
> He wanted wine from his surroundings and, wanted to have fun
>
> Immediately, he started to talk, utter and say
>
> After forty days he started to walk and play (*Oghuz Khan*, 2-8).

In this pagan version, Oghuz's mother, who is the goddess of the Moon, has holy signs during the birth. "Their eyes brightened up, became colourful, filled in light/That day Ay Khan gave birth to a boy." (*Oghuz Khan*, 3-4). "Bluish, sky-blue was his face." (*Oghuz Khan*, 7). "When Oghuz is born, his face colour is a sign that he descends from the sky, and carries the colour of the God." (Ögel, 1971:49). Oghuz's birth and childhood are depicted in a heroic and mythological style in detail. The growth of a supernatural child is extraordinarily fast. He wants raw meat when he begins to talk. Oghuz gives up sucking milk at once because it is a sign of weakness. Eating raw meat indicates brutal strength and savagery which are praised and idealized qualities in the pagan world. Oghuz talks and walks immediately after he is born. According to Ögel. "In an old Altaic myth, a child speaks after he is born and would like to live with the wolves for seven days, then he grows immediately." (Ögel, 1971:49). There is not much information about the early life of Beowulf (It is implied that as a boy, he is lazy and good for nothing).

The identities of the monsters and the enemies have so many connotations in both epics Beowulf fights with three mythological monsters, whereas Oghuz Fights with a rhino. After the rhino, Oghuz fights against three men: Golden Khan, Urum Khan, and Uruz Khan. Oghuz tries to make them surrender and control their lands. Killing the monster is not the only aim for Oghuz, it is a step towards social acceptance. The identity of the monster is not important. Killing the rhino, he declares himself the khan of his nation.

> In the forest did a big rhinoceros live
>
> It ate and didn't let either animal or human live
>
> It attacked herds and always ate horses

It troubled people, took their lives. (*Oghuz Khan*, 15-18).

Oghuz prays for God after finishing his knot job: killing the monster. God sends him two goddesses inside light as wives. Oghuz marries the daughter of the sky and the daughter of the ground. He becomes the ruler of the things between the sky and the ground. He reconciles the sky and the ground. Having their approval, he strengthens his position. The daughter of the ground is in the hollow of a trunk which is in the middle of an island in a lake. The tree is a common mythological element symbolizing the fertility of the ground with its roots deep in the ground. The figure of the light and tree and their combination is another figure. The light and the tree are archetypal motifs of humanity. "Jung believes that archetypes originated through the repeated experiences of our early ancestors" (Feist, 1990:163). The tree is a means for the divine messages because its roots are in the ground and its branches are towards the sky. It connects these two worlds.

Light is present whenever there is a divine message in the epic. The fear of darkness, night animals, risk of sudden attack finish when the sun comes out. It is a relief. The figure of light is a symbol of divinity in both epics. As soon as Beowulf terminates the monster, God's enemy, a light descends from heaven for approval of his holy, heroic action. "Suddenly light glittered/a light brightened within/as bright and clear as/the candle of the sky." (*Beowulf*, episode six, 2033-2036).

Oghuz has six sons. "Sun, Moon, Star go to the east" and "Sky, Mountain and Sea go to the west" (*Oghuz Khan*, 127). The sons of the sky go to the east where the sun rises, and the sons of the ground go to the west where it sets. This represents the connection with nature and the holiness attributed to it. Their expedition over a huge area in all directions signifies the wish of a nation to conquer vast lands. "The sun in the sky should become our nation's flag. The sky should become our tent" (*Oghuz Khan*, 59). In *Oghuz Khan*, the figure of a bow represents the sky, and it is the symbol of the ruling. Oghuz would have 24 grandsons that stand for 24 different Oghuz tribes.

The divine connection reveals itself in different ways in epics. Oghuz confronts the wolf while leading his army. When the morning was about to break, a light entered his tent. A male wolf appeared, breathing "O! Oghuz I will lead your army." (*Oghuz Khan*, 76-80). In his first confrontation, this sky blue, azure-coloured wolf which has a connection with the sky inspires and directs the army. This sacred animal comes to Oghuz's tent inside a light and guides him during his military expeditions. Oghuz is exposed to divine messages through this wolf. It's a revelation of God's purpose; moreover, this figure is the personification of the God of the sky. In the second confrontation, the wolf helps Oghuz when he is in trouble in a military march. "The holy wolf with blue hair and blue mane appeared. India, Tangut too became Oghuz land." (*Oghuz Khan*, 149-150). In the last confrontation, it ensures Oghuz's conquest of the land.

The epic hero has a superpower to come over difficulties. Beowulf is unequally strong when tearing apart the monster's arm. "Has the strength of thirty men /in his hand grip." (*Beowulf*, episode three, 404-405). He has extraordinary swimming ability. He tells his swimming contest that takes five days in an icy sea. Beowulf makes this speech while Unferth, the mock hero, is trying to insult his fame. As the pagans do not believe in the afterworld, life in this world is a goal itself and fame can make their name immortal, so it should be defended. "With naked swords in hand/to ward off whales." (*Beowulf*, episode three, 601-606). Oghuz suprahuman

power by birth. He is identified with the power of the wild animals which was praised and honoured.

> His feet were as if they were ox's feet
>
> His ankles were as if they were wolf's ankles
>
> His shoulders were similar to that of sable's
>
> His chest is identical to that of a big bear's
>
> He was a human but full of hairs
>
> His body was covered with hairs. (*Oghuz Khan*, 9-11).

The epic hero is not alone on his sacred mission. This young hero does not have the experience to fulfil his job. There is always a wise man to help the heroes in the narration. This old wise man is an archetype which symbolizes the source of universal mystic knowledge. "He appears in fairy tales as the king, the sage, or the magician who comes to the aid of the troubled hero and, through superior wisdom, helps him escape from his current misadventures." (Feist, 1990:168). The one who directs Beowulf is the old Danish king: Hrothgar. The old king is a role model for young Beowulf. Beowulf learns how to be a good and impartial king. He behaves in compliance with the advice of the wise king and sacrifices himself for the welfare of his nation. King Hrothgar is depicted as a grey-haired old and wise man who stands for the father figure and a role model for Beowulf.

> The woman who bore you,
>
> Beowulf, if she yet lives,
>
> may say the Eternal Maker
>
> was kind in her childbearing.
>
> Now, Beowulf, best of warriors,
>
> I love you as a son. (Beowulf, episode five, 1118-1123).
>
> He wants to make sure that Beowulf would be a wise king when he gets older.
>
> Now is your strength famous
>
> ………………………………
>
> Bright eyes
>
> do diminish and go dark. (*Beowulf*, 2354-2364).

The king rewards him and establishes a new connection: a kind of father-son relationship. The reward is the gold, the embodiment of worldly riches and success. Peace is provided even though they have some suspicions in their mind. At the banquet, the Queen gives her idea about the future of the kingdom and who will be the next king. The bard tells another story about a Danes princess who is used as a peace tool by marrying another tribe leader. Using women as peace providers is a common tradition in the pagan world which is criticized implicitly.

"The mighty one arose/surrounded by warriors/a mighty band of men." (*Beowulf*, episode three, 427-429). Unlike Beowulf, Oghuz has a huge army. The one who helped him is praised,

and their names and contributions are mentioned distinctively. One of his warriors brings his horse back from a very cold mountain. His name becomes Karluk which means snowy. One of his men invents an oxcart, one invents a raft, another opens the door of the golden house. They are strong and useful men. "There was a very brave very alp chief in the army/He was neither afraid of God nor Satan/He was not bothered with fatigue and cold." (*Oghuz Khan*, 121-122). Apart from Unferth, a mock hero and Wiglaf, the successor of Beowulf, we do not know any men around Beowulf, but they are worth to be the friends of Beowulf.

In his last lonely fight, it is implied that Beowulf has a fate, and he is moving towards it. He accepts the unavoidable.

> That was sorrow
>
> to the good man,
>
> …………………
>
> His heart surged
>
> with gloomy thoughts,
>
> which was not
>
> his usual way. (*Beowulf*, episode nine, 2604-2073).

Oghuz Khan's and other characters' emotional state is no big concern in the epic. This may be because of the optimistic atmosphere. Oghuz seems happy and satisfied with his actions. In other versions of *Oghuz Khan* (in "Camui't-Tevarih" by Residuddin and in "Secere-i Terakkime" by Ebulgazi Bahaddir Khan) Oghuz kills his father on the ground that Kara Khan does not watch the tradition. This may be the only tragic event. In the Islamic version, he fights against his father because his father is pagan. The theme of 'hybris' does not exist in *Oghuz Khan*. In mythological stories, the gods, goddesses and women provoke the heroes. They cause jealousy, hatred, and conflicts. There is no such theme in the narration of *Oghuz Khan*. Women are friends of the hero who help him with deeds. "The deities in Turkish epics are the protectors who make the epic hero more successful and stronger." (Öztürk, 2000: 27).

The fight is the most important scene for the epics. The hero must prove his worth during the struggle. Beowulf is reckless in his first two fights, but in his last fight, he is thoughtful, dignified, and careful as he is an old king. Beowulf and Oghuz are wise, and solemn in their old ages. In their last moments, the two heroes make a speech summarizing their life, and their heroic deeds, trying to prove the worth of their life, and how glorious it is to find meaning in it. In some parts of the narration, the mighty hero exalts his deeds with boastful speeches. *Beowulf* speaks and praises his past actions to ensure his future deeds. This speech implies the sacred mission and summarizes his life.

> "I am Hygelac's kinsman and warrior.
>
> I have undertaken many
>
> glorious deeds. I learned
>
> of Grendel in my native land.
>
> ……………………………..
>
> when I endured pain all night,

killing water monsters,

grinding them to bits,

to avenge for the Geats. (Beowulf, episode three, 441-458).

Oghuz makes almost the same speech.

"I have made happy most of my friends"

Thank God I have paid my debt

To the God of Sky

I give this country to you; this country is now yours." (*Oghuz Khan*, 188-191).

Both heroes spend their entire lives for the benefit of their own people. They make their name known and finish their mission in this world. "I have traded/my old life for /the people's needs. (*Beowulf*, episode twelve, 3288-3289).

He said "O! my sons"

"So many wars have I been through, so many borders have I crossed"

"So many spears and arrows have I thrown"

"So long distances have I travelled on horse, so many enemies did I make cry"

"I have made happy most of my friends." (*Oghuz Khan*, 183-185).

Beowulf starts with a funeral of a legendary heroic king Shield Sheafson and finishes with another funeral of the legendary heroic king Beowulf. *Oghuz Khan* starts with the birth of Oghuz and finishes with his last speech. When the heroes have their final years in the world, they leave their heirs.

Conclusion

Beowulf and *Oghuz Khan* are the narrations of national heroes in verse. They bear the well-established components of the epic tradition. These glamorous heroes having divine connections are entitled to solve an epic question that lies at the heart of the story to give salvation to their nation. They go through different and difficult phases. Some of the phases are portrayed as individual and emotional challenges.

Oghuz and Beowulf are purely pagan heroes, on the other hand, their stories are reinterpreted in the light of monotheist religions: Islam and Christianity. These two epic heroes represent different cultural codes simultaneously which make them unique pieces of epic tradition. *Beowulf* has only one version whereas *Oghuz Khan* has one pagan and two Islamic versions. ("Camui't-Tevarih" by Residuddin and "Secere-i Terakkime" by Ebulgazi Bahaddir Khan)

The epic questions are usually portrayed as monsters in stories. Slaying that monster relieves the troubles of the people. Beowulf kills three mythological monsters to pay his father's debt to the King Hrothgar. The last encounter is a summary of his life. He fulfils his mission and God's purpose leaving a safe country to his nation. Oghuz after killing the monster starts a military campaign against the kings who deny his sovereignty.

These two epics denote the pictures of two nations at a certain time at a certain place. Through them, we can pursue the customs, lifestyles, beliefs, and even daily lives of the people of the age. *Oghuz Khan* and *Beowulf* are the outputs of oral literature. They were written down after

a period of circulation among the people. As they are the stories of real human conditions, they will continue to draw the attention of people and continue to become a source of inspiration for generations.

NOTES

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[1] In the Middle Ages, epic is replaced by romance. Knights with noble lineages replace the mighty heroes. The myths turn into legends. The subject of the romances is about few people, not the whole nation. The knight tries to protect his honour while serving a noblewoman. There is universal tension between good and evil represented by a good knight and a bad knight. The supernatural elements still exist in the narration. The characters are stereotypes. The end of the stories is always the same: the good wins and love comes over every obstacle. Some adventures are adulterous; the goal is always worldly a materialistic one. The main concern is not the martial one but love and fantasies. "Unlike romance, epic does not divorce the hero from his court and society its historic or pseudohistorical deeds generally appear more realistic or credible than those of romance" (see Carolyn Craft, *Romance in Companion to Old English and Middle English Literature*, 335). *Beowulf* and *Oghuz Khan* are wild characters, not romantic ones. They belong to a certain social structure which praises heroic actions, not love stories.

[2] The life of the famous Huns leader, Mete (Mao-tun) resembles that of Oghuz's. They both revolted against their fathers and overthrew them and started a big military campaign on a vast area.

[3] Zeki Velidi Togan transcribed the pagan version of Oghuz Khan into modern Turkish.

[4] In *Genesis*, Karayhan is the God who creates the first human, Kişi, "The struggle between Oghuz and Karahan may represent the struggle between the God Karayhan and Kişi." (see Mustafa Aça, *Oğuznamecilik Geleneği ve Andalp Oğuznamesi*, 157)

[5] Residuddin recorded the pagan version in his book too. It occupies a small place in his book, so thanks to him we have the pagan version.

[6] The numbers in the epic: two, four, six, twelve, twenty-four is a constitution of a calendar. Ancient Turks have a year made up of twenty-four mouths. Each of his sons has four children constituting a total of twenty-four Turkish tribes. The similarities between the life of Oghuz and the legendary khan of Huns are striking: Mete (Mau-tun). "The army of the Mete (Mau-tun) is made up of twenty-four divisions bound to six edges. Like Oghuz's six sons. These six edges are divided into two. With the names left and right they divided the empire as east and west" (see Bahaeddin Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 71).

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