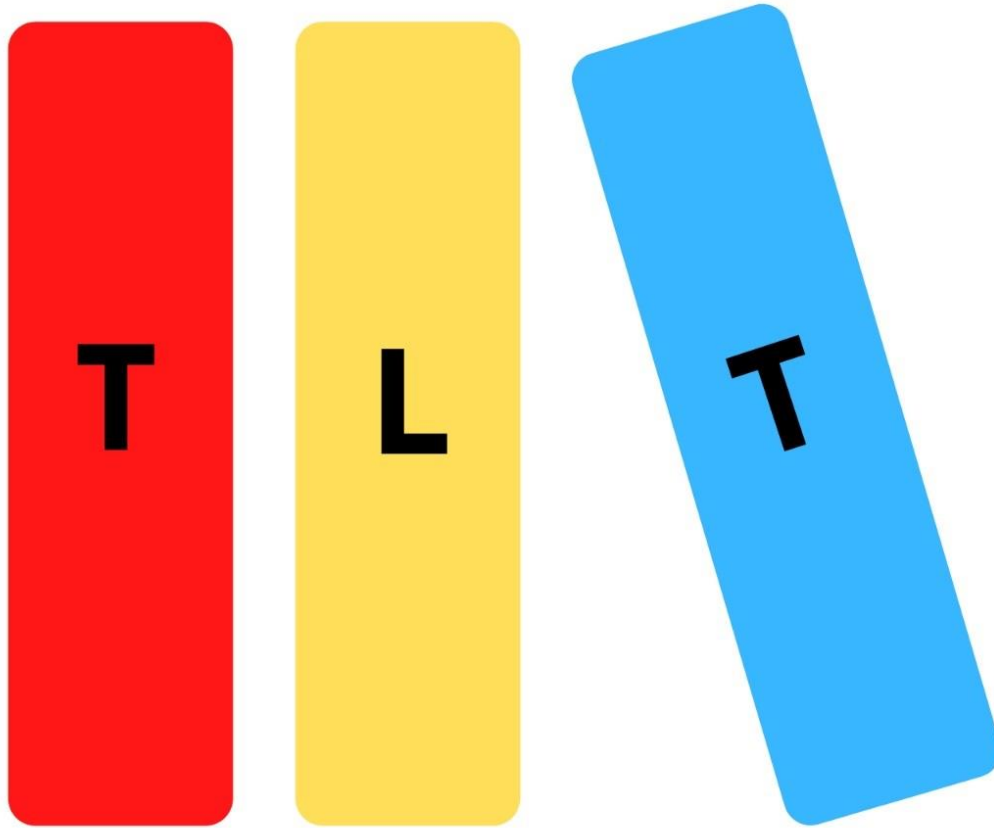


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CONTENT

Pre-service EFL teachers' competencies for teaching young learners

**Hilal Alten
Müge Karakaş
Page: 131-145**

Technology in English vocabulary instruction for K-12- A systematic literature review

**Oğuzcan Yavaş
Ahmet Başal
Page: 146-179**

A research on academic self-perception and academic achievement of secondary school students

**Şenay Bozdağ
Sümer Aktan
Page: 180-212**

Exploratory practice model for and with English language teaching students

**Aylin Köyalan
Page: 213-230**

Delving into the world of Turkish 9th grade EFL students in a flipped classroom context: Analyzing perceptions and experiences

**Nermin Yıldız Yüksel
Gülşah Külekçi
Page: 231-258**

ERRATUM


Structural repetitions and discourse relations in English-Turkish translations of TED talks


**Özgür Şen Bartan
Page: 259-260**

Pre-service EFL teachers' competencies for teaching young learners

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Abstract

This explanatory study aims to identify certain competencies that teachers need to possess for teaching young and very young learners from the perspective of Turkish pre-service EFL teachers who are conducting their practicum studies within the last year of the teacher training program. In this mixed-method research, a Likert-type 5-point scale, which was developed using the Delphi technique, including 29 terms measuring different competencies and related interview questions, was used to collect data. Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' points of view have been evaluated according to the factors and variables in the scale to reveal whether they feel competent enough to teach English to young learners during their teaching practicum and to what extent they implement their theoretical knowledge into classes. Interview questions were addressed to the two of the participants regarding their choices and results of the quantitative data analysis in the next phase of the study. The results at the end of this explanatory research pointed out that some pre-service teachers may get challenged more while teaching young learners for certain reasons.

Keywords

Pre-service teachers, teacher competency, teaching young learners

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Introduction

Learning and teaching are demanding and challenging processes, requiring consideration of various criteria to achieve learners' goals. For instance, learners must develop an awareness of their individual learning styles and understand how they learn best in various contexts and disciplines, as each student has unique learning preferences. As Dierking (1991) also suggests, learning is a complicated process that requires using not only a single method but also a combination of various models so as to complete the aims of the students. The learning process may be influenced by factors like prior knowledge, environment, educational institutions, interaction quality, available resources, motivation, cognitive abilities, and age (Muller & Louw, 2004). These factors affect all kinds of learning in general, including the field of foreign languages as well.

During the process of learning a foreign language, students of all age groups may periodically experience difficulties due to a variety of factors, including cultural differences and unfamiliar contexts (Setiyadi, 2020). Especially young and very young learners might have difficulty in recognizing something totally unfamiliar to them, as this may be the first time that they encounter a foreign language in their life. In addition to this issue, foreign language teachers encounter specific challenges when instructing young learners in their classrooms (Tavakol & Tavakoli, 2022).

There might be lots of different reasons behind this problem that foreign language teachers have in different age groups. For instance, when instructing adult learners or high school students, educators may encounter challenges in fostering motivation for acquiring a new language (Seven, 2020). Especially the students who are late adults might suffer from being unmotivated to learn because they mostly have learnt helplessness. Young and very young learners are generally perceived as being easier to motivate and teach (Fenyvesi, 2020). However, it is challenging to keep them continuously engaged in the activities implemented in the classes since they have pretty short attention span. Also, as Uysal and Yavuz stated (2015), they are quite energetic compared to adults or teenagers; they are active participants and learn by interacting with one another. It is well-recognized by both parents and educators that children possess a very short attention span; they are proficient in imagination and visualization, and they require active engagement to learn effectively (Oktavia et al., 2022). For these reasons, they can be kept engaged in the lessons by means of different activities, especially hands-on experiences and the ones prepared considering the Total Physical Response approach (Khorasgani & Khaneghir, 2017).

Teachers need to recognize their students from different perspectives and be aware of their needs according to age and language levels. However, as mentioned above, there are lots of criteria to be considered when conducting teaching in young learners' classes, such as different learning styles and cognitive development stages. Apart from these, young learners may not develop self-regulation skills and may not control their emotions because they are still learning these step by step, as Moon suggests (2005). Therefore, they need more guidance from their teachers and parents in their learning process. For these reasons, to be able to assist and guide learners more in language learning, teachers should have certain competencies. This topic is a prevalent

research area both in Türkiye and internationally. For instance, according to a study conducted by Copland et al. (2013), EFL teachers may have difficulty in the young learners' classes due to the insufficiency of materials and sources in the Korean context. Also, as Moon (2005) claims, teachers may encounter challenges when teaching young learners since they still develop cognitively and physically. According to Khulel (2021), who conducted a related study in the Indonesian context, teachers perceive that it is difficult to teach them, especially in rural areas, since English is not used daily in the environment where children live. In another study conducted by Berdiyeva (2024), teachers should be knowledgeable about the latest trends, realistic materials, and world issues to create more effective learning environments. However, as demonstrated, the focus is mostly on experienced in-service teachers, with comparatively less attention given to pre-service EFL teachers. In the light of this, in this research, Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' competencies will be explored by identifying to what degree they feel confident enough to teach English to young learners according to their own experiences and perceptions in light of the challenges mentioned.

The research questions that are addressed in this study are as follows;

1. Do the pre-service EFL teachers feel competent enough to teach English to young learners?
2. At which points do the pre-service EFL teachers feel the most and the least competent?
3. Why do pre-service EFL teachers believe that they do not feel competent enough to teach English to young learners?

Literature Review

“In recent decades, teaching and learning English has gained importance not only for adults but also even for very young children” (Tarakçioğlu & Tunçarslan, 2014, p. 67). Characteristics of young learners (7-9) and very young learners (3-6) who are the ones in primary school and kindergarten differ significantly from teenagers, such as high school students, in terms of attention span, learning styles, and the points of views to learn as expected. As children continue to grow both cognitively and physically, their

perspectives and beliefs about languages may evolve correspondingly (Ellis, 2014). They may need more guidance, support, and assistance in learning inside and outside of the classroom, which makes teaching more challenging, especially in crowded classes. For this reason, according to Minalla (2023), teachers should pay close attention to understanding their students from various perspectives, including age, background, diversity, language environment, and cultural influences, in order to effectively address this issue. As stated by Bakhsh (2016, p. 121), “A good teacher of young learners should be aware of all their differences because understanding them can help teachers decide on activities to be used in their teaching processes”. Teachers have a significant impact on young and very young learners' L2 development (Pinter, 2012). According to these, teachers can find the most appropriate materials to implement into their classrooms to enrich learning. They should consider young learners' characteristics, such as their high energy levels and short attention spans (Kimsesiz & Konca, 2023). In this context, employing Total Physical Response (TPR) methods, which incorporate games, songs, and physical activities, can assist teachers in maintaining higher levels of student engagement (Astri et al., 2023).

The challenges of teaching English to young learners can be examined in different sections since these challenges result from certain sub-categories such as insufficient technological tools, budget problems of the educational institutions, lack of equipment and ready-made materials in the schools, narrow / too crowded classrooms and so on (Copland, et al. 2013). Apart from these, difficulties in assessing young learners, the complexity of language learning, and the lack of teacher and student motivation may affect the process. “They easily get bored, losing interest after a short period of time,” as Hashemi and Azizinezhad noted (2011, p. 2084). For these reasons, educators may require a greater variety of classroom activities to capture students' interest and prevent frequent distractions. (Putri & Nurjati, 2023). In addition to this, teachers need to have certain teacher competencies such as self-confidence, reflection, managing, and so on. Also, they need to have a good command of English, as Gurton (2013) also noted, since children are very good at imitating, and they may imitate a mistaken use of language easily.

Teachers' competencies can be classified in various ways, including management skills, language proficiency, communication abilities, and more (Tran & Hua, 2023). Teachers could improve themselves in these areas as they gain more experience in teaching different age groups in certain educational settings. They need to conduct their studies in real-classroom environments so that they could recognize the diversity issue in real life. Therefore, it is compulsory for pre-service teachers in the faculty of education to take "teaching practicum courses" in their last year of the teacher training program so that they can encounter actual classrooms since the knowledge, in theory, is not going to be enough to have the competencies mentioned above, as K m r (2010) also suggested. Applying theoretical knowledge into practice gains more importance nowadays; thanks to this, 21st-century skills are also being added to the curriculum of teacher training programs accordingly. If pre-service teachers are not provided with more practical opportunities and skill-based teaching, they may not feel competent enough to teach especially to the young learners since it is more challenging and requires more efficacy.

Methodology

Setting and Participants

This research is designed as a mixed-method explanatory one, including a quantitative and a qualitative part consecutively. By means of an explanatory design, it is possible to elaborate more detailed information from the participants. As stated by Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell (2018), the explanatory sequential mixed-methods design involves initially collecting quantitative data, which is then further elaborated through subsequent qualitative techniques. In this mixed-method research design, the participants are chosen randomly among the fourth-grade students of the "English Language Teaching" department in a state university. The number of participants is 31. Their age range is between 21 and 28. The number of female participants is 19, whereas the number of male participants is 12. The research has been conducted at the faculty of education with senior students who are also called as pre-service teachers. The participants have at least one semester of teaching practicum practice, which means they all have basic teaching experience. In T rkiye, senior students must pass the teaching practicum course at the

education faculty by conducting their studies mostly in state schools in real-world classrooms. They are required to teach certain subjects according to the curriculum and assist students in practicing what they learned through engaging activities such as mini-drama, instructional games, and so on.

Research Design In this research, a mixed-method explanatory study was applied, using both quantitative and qualitative research methods to fully understand the research problem. This method involves collecting and analyzing quantitative data first, then following up with qualitative data to explain the initial findings (Birgili & Demir, 2022). Mixed-methods research is becoming more popular in social sciences and education for addressing complex questions effectively, especially when understanding the context is essential. Explanatory studies offer deeper insights into research topics that might not be gained by analyzing and evaluating data separately (Bowen et al., 2017). The explanatory sequential design is not just about deciding the order and type of data to collect; it also involves figuring out how to process and present the data, using various techniques that often come with challenges (Toyon, 2021).

Instruments

In conducting this research, a quantitative data collection tool, which is a Likert-type 5-point scale developed by Uztosun (2018) employing the Delphi technique, including 29 terms measuring different competencies, has been used in order to measure to what extent pre-service EFL teachers feel competent in teaching English to young learners and in which categories they feel the most confident. The reliability score of the related items was calculated as .96. After that, semi-structured interview questions regarding the reasons why they did not feel competent enough were asked to the 2 of the participants who volunteered to give more detailed information. These interview questions were prepared based on the answers chosen mostly during the quantitative part of the study. These two participants were chosen randomly.

Procedures

This research has been conducted in three phases; the first phase includes the data collection via a Likert-type 5-point scale consisting of 29 questions under one category which is “competency”. Related questions in the scale measure the teacher competencies under one category, that is, the competencies. Data was collected

voluntarily from senior students of the English Language Teaching department via an online questionnaire. Ethical considerations are valued in this study, and the participants in the Google Forms online program have signed consent forms. The second phase includes the quantitative analysis of data by SPSS software program. In the related program, firstly, the age and gender factors were analyzed to see how many participants were male or female, and then, items in the scale were evaluated accordingly by means of frequency analysis in the descriptive part. The terms in the scale analyzed regarding ascending and descending orders. In the third phase, certain interview questions were addressed to the two of the participants selected employing convenience sampling to underline the reasons why they feel not confident according to the answers they provided in the quantitative part of the study which was conducted first. The answers given by the participants were analyzed with thematic analysis. A qualitative analysis tool, “Atlas.ti,” was used while conducting the thematic analysis. The purpose of using the thematic analysis is to elaborate on what helps pre-service EFL teachers most to improve themselves in that area. According to Kiger and Varpio (2020), thematic analysis is a suitable approach for analyzing a dataset to comprehend the recurring themes that reflect experiences, thoughts, or behaviors.

Findings

Do the pre-service EFL teachers feel competent enough to teach English to young learners & At which points do the pre-service EFL teachers feel the most and the least competent?

Table 1.

Descriptive analysis of the teachers' competencies

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. Give simple instructions while teaching young learners.	4,77	,497
11. Use games in teaching	4,74	,514
6. Teach English appropriate to language level of students	4,68	,541
24. Differentiate between children who have different developmental features	3,81	1,078
25. To grade or assess your learners' English language work	3,61	1,086

20. Implement methods to teach English to young learners (CLT, Audio-lingual, Total Physical Response, etc.)	3.19	1.302
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****Note:** $N = 31$

According to the findings of this study and in the light of the research questions given, it has been shown that teachers feel most competent in the part of “giving simple instructions” ($M = 4.77$), “using games” ($M = 4.74$) and “teaching English appropriately to the levels of students” ($M = 4.68$) whereas they feel the least competent in the part of “using kinesthetic activities mainly” ($M = 3.19$). They also do not consider themselves as confident enough in the part of “focusing on listening and speaking skills” ($M = 3.61$), in addition to the part of “differentiating between children and having different developmental features” ($M = 3.81$), as shown in the table above. A quantity of reasons can be observed as to why pre-service teachers consider themselves as not confident enough in teaching for their practicum courses in young learners' classrooms.

Why do pre-service EFL teachers believe that they do not feel competent enough to teach English to young learners?

According to the results of the thematic analysis, when the two participants were asked why they did not feel competent enough to differentiate between different developmental stages of children, they stated that they did not know about child psychology in detail. Teachers should have a thorough understanding of child psychology to be aware of cognitive and physical developmental stages, language acquisition processes, the critical period for language learning, and children's perspectives on foreign languages. This knowledge enables educators to tailor their teaching strategies effectively to meet the unique needs of young learners. Teachers should be aware of the factors affecting students' social and emotional learning (Nall, 2020). According to Participant A, “Knowing more about child psychology would help me a lot to shape my lessons according to their cognitive and age levels”. Participant B also stated that it is of importance to have more courses separating young and very young learners due to literacy as well. Also, when it was asked them the reason behind not being able to apply physical activities in the classroom, they noted that the classes are crowded and these sorts of activities cause chaos among students. In line with this study, a research conducted by Oliva, Pozo, and Franco (2020) in the Spain context, it

was also revealed that teacher education programs should be improved initially to complete the gaps.

Discussion

In prior studies, it was also demonstrated that there might be some insufficiencies regarding teacher training programs, and therefore, not every pre-service and in-service teacher feels competent enough to teach English to young learners in real-life classrooms. In the study conducted by Uztosun (2016) in Türkiye, it was concluded that teachers feel least competent in using physical activities and managing class time effectively. Similar results have been revealed in this study as well. Also, the perceptions of teachers from different countries about feeling not competent enough to teach in young learners' classes are revealed in the study conducted by Copland, Garton and Burns (2013) with in-service teachers worldwide. According to the findings of this study, for instance, Colombian teachers also underlined as the least competent in the "helping students with learning disabilities" part, whereas Tanzanian teachers underlined the challenge of being proficient in speaking.

In a study conducted by Mudra (2020), it was elaborated that another reason EFL teachers have difficulty in teaching English especially very young learners is that they are not capable of using and interpreting digital instructional materials both inside and outside of the classroom. In another study conducted by Teng (2020), it was stated that since young learners do not have advanced reading skills, teachers need to use a variety of materials. However, this situation may affect them negatively from time to time because it is a time-consuming process, and teachers feel incompetent. Also, according to the findings of the study conducted by Taghizahed and Yourdshahi (2020), EFL teachers should be more knowledgeable and positive about benefitting from digital instructional technologies regarding young learners' characteristics and features. A wide range of digital tools and materials are available online for children and very young learners, making it essential for teachers to receive more specialized training in this area. As shown in these studies as well, pre- and in-service teachers have similar challenges and perceptions about teaching English to young learners.

Conclusion

In summary, it is a quite well-known fact that teaching a foreign language to young learners is a challenging task that requires lots of energy, activity, creativity, and flexibility among EFL teachers. Therefore, they need to have certain competencies regarding teaching this age group, such as self-confidence, giving simple but clear instructions, repetitions, and using kinesthetic activities mostly. This study measured the degree to which EFL teachers feel competent in teaching young learners. According to the data collected from senior students of the ELT department, it is observed that there might be some problematic issues about feeling competent in certain areas, such as adapting materials, having good English pronunciation skills, being motivated, differentiating children with different personalities, and so on. The underlying causes of these challenges may result from overcrowded classrooms, particularly in state schools, where student numbers are substantial. Given that each student has unique learning styles and personality traits, educators are required to identify and address a diverse range of individual needs within a single classroom. When the classrooms include too many students, teachers have difficulty in using drama, demonstration, or acting out activities in the lessons as well. They have also pointed out that they do not feel competent in designing various practical teaching materials. This may result from insufficiency of the budget in the institutions for educational materials and classes' being too crowded. In some classrooms, there is not even a wide area for students to move and show action for drama and acting out activities.

Besides, participants mostly noted that they have difficulty in understanding child psychology, using mainly kinesthetic activities, differentiating children with different personal developments as cognitively or physically, and focusing on teaching listening and speaking skills according to the mean values of the answers given to the form. There might be a quantity of reasons underlying these problems. For instance, as a reason for the first problem, teachers do not take the course "Child Psychology" compulsorily in teacher training programs. Rather, they take it selectively. Nonetheless, all the pre-service teachers should be knowledgeable about child psychology so that they could also be aware of cognitive/physical developmental stages, language acquisition, critical periods, children's points of view toward foreign languages, and so on. Understanding child psychology is crucial for EFL teachers to create effective and

supportive learning environments. Knowledge of child psychology enables teachers to recognize their students' cognitive and emotional development stages, allowing them to tailor their instructional strategies accordingly. By understanding how children think, learn, and interact, teachers can design lessons that are developmentally appropriate, engaging, and responsible to the needs of young learners. This will also assist them in differentiating students according to their personal development and learning styles. Apart from this, pre-service teachers claimed that they have difficulty in using kinesthetic activities such as drama, acting out and simulations in their lessons. Additionally, limited classroom space can restrict movement, hindering the effective execution of TPR methods. Moreover, the diverse learning needs and varying levels of language proficiency among students can make it difficult for teachers to ensure that all learners benefit equally from TPR activities. This problem may result from insufficient school materials and lessons in teacher training programs. This is because the pre-service teachers have only one course about teaching foreign language to young learners in their four-year training program, which is not enough to teach to this age group.

As a result of this study, the perceptions of pre-service EFL teachers regarding their senses about feeling the most and the least effective in terms of teacher competencies have been revealed. According to the results, pre-service teachers feel themselves most confident in terms of giving simple but clear instructions, using gestures/body language, using effective materials, and benefitting from visuals and games, on the one hand. However, on the other hand, they do not feel competent enough to teach English to young learners in terms of certain parametrizes as mentioned before due to several reasons including teacher training programs and school environments. The terms they feel the least competent in are as follows; applying kinesthetic activities, being motivated enough, being able to differentiate and arrange the classes into each student's needs, and so on. In order for pre-service teachers to improve their teaching, some developments may need to be directed.

Implications

Certain implications can be asserted according to the results of this study in guiding pre-service teachers to feel more competent in teaching English to young learners' groups. For instance, the course of "Child Psychology" can be applied as a compulsory one

rather than selective in the faculty of education so that the pre-service teachers gain more insight and awareness into the conscious and subconscious behaviors of children. Also, more courses about teaching English to young learners can be integrated with the schedule of teacher training programs so that pre-service teachers could learn more about the games and activities to implement into their classes. Apart from these, some sorts of musical lessons, such as guitar courses or violin courses, may be integrated as selective courses into the curriculum of teacher training. In this way, teachers can draw students' interest more in the lessons by playing instruments themselves rather than playing them on the smart board and can sing together with students. Lastly, but most importantly, the teaching practicum part of the education faculty can be expanded to two years rather than one year of teaching experience. Thanks to this regulation, pre-service teachers could have more experience of teaching in real-life classrooms rather than only having theoretical presentations before they start working as teachers in educational institutions. Apart from these, a larger group of samples can be used to obtain more generalizable results for further studies.

Ethics Committee Permission Information

This research study was conducted with the Research Ethics Committee approval of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, dated 28.12.2023, and numbered E-84026528-050.99-2400002338.

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Technology in English vocabulary instruction for K-12: A systematic literature review

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Abstract

Recognizing the crucial role of vocabulary knowledge in foreign language learning, this study conducts a systematic literature review, analyzing 21 theses from the Turkish Council of Higher Education's (YÖK) National Thesis Center from 1990 to 2020, following PRISMA guidelines and What Works Clearinghouse standards, on the integration of technology in English vocabulary instruction across the K-12 education. The study examines the levels, types, benefits, and limitations of technologies used in vocabulary instruction in the determined theses. The findings indicate that theses have explored the use of technological tools such as software applications, mobile apps, and Web 2.0 tools in K-12 English education in Türkiye. These studies primarily concentrate on enhancing receptive vocabulary skills while neglecting productive skills, and are predominantly employed in high schools. Given the significant gaps in primary and middle schools, further research is recommended to explore and expand the use of these technologies to enhance both receptive and productive foundational skills in these educational stages.

Keywords

English language teaching,
Foreign language teaching,
K-12,
Systematic literature review,
Vocabulary teaching.

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Introduction

In Türkiye, despite national efforts to enhance foreign language proficiency, the country ranks 64th among 111 nations, indicating ongoing challenges in language education (EF Education First, 2022). The literature consistently points to deficiencies in Türkiye's foreign language education system (Aydın & Zengin, 2008; Can & Can, 2014; Koru & Akesson, 2011; Şahin & Aykaç, 2022), citing issues such as inadequate textbooks, curriculum gaps, and insufficient vocabulary knowledge as primary concerns (Çatal et al., 2018; Özer & Akay, 2022). Furthermore, despite evidence stressing the importance

of vocabulary for effective communication, there is a strong pedagogical emphasis on grammar over vocabulary, often reflecting traditional teacher preferences rather than curricular requirements. Perceptions of Turkish students also show that non-native English-speaking teachers frequently resort to Turkish and are grammar and textbook-dependent, which limits creativity (Karakaş et al., 2016). The ability to select contextually appropriate words often preserves communication more effectively than grammatical accuracy alone, yet vocabulary instruction remains underemphasized (Barcroft, 2016; De Groot & Van Hell, 2005). Similar to global trends, vocabulary teaching in Türkiye struggles with creating unique, level-appropriate content and effectively implementing teaching strategies, which hinders vocabulary instruction (Çelik & Yavuz, 2018; Yolcu & Akçayoğlu, 2022). Enhancing vocabulary teaching strategies and incorporating technology could significantly improve the effectiveness of foreign language education in Türkiye.

Vocabulary knowledge is essential for enhancing language skills and effective communication, with studies indicating that technology-supported teaching is more effective than traditional methods (Bal, 2018; Salman & Akay, 2022). The term ‘word’ has various definitions. Matthews (1997) defines it as the smallest meaningful unit, while Vygotsky (1986) views it as a mirror of human consciousness. Vocabulary, which includes words, idioms, and proverbs, is the core of both expressing ideas and understanding others (Joffe & Lowe, 2023). This foundation is crucial for clear communication, literacy, and academic success (Qian & Lin, 2020). Extensive vocabulary knowledge, which includes the form, meaning, and usage of words such as spelling, pronunciation, and syntax (Nation, 2001; Read, 2004), is linked to improved comprehension and expression (Zwier & Boers, 2022) and is associated with enhanced writing (Stæhr, 2008) and communication capabilities (Khan et al., 2018). The breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge, crucial for bridging cultural gaps and enhancing personal and academic achievements, reflect the range of known words and the depth of their meanings and uses (Anderson & Freebody, 1981; Marzban & Hadipour, 2012) and supporting language success (Macis et al., 2018; Webb & Nation, 2017). In conclusion, vocabulary development should be prioritized due to its significant role in improving communication skills and facilitating language learning in the target language.

Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982) suggests that learners acquire language most effectively when exposed to comprehensible input that is slightly above their current proficiency level. In terms of vocabulary learning, this implies that encountering language that is appropriately challenging can significantly aid in vocabulary expansion. Building on this idea, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) emphasizes the importance of social interaction and cultural context in the learning process. By introducing the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), Vygotsky stresses how learners can achieve more when supported through collaboration and guidance. These complementary theories indicate that meaningful engagement with language, combined with feedback and peer collaboration, leads to more effective language learning. In this context, Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) aligns well with these principles, as it provides digital tools such as language apps, online forums, and interactive software that facilitate interaction and deliver comprehensible input (Ma, 2017). As a result, these approaches demonstrate the potential of technology to enhance not only vocabulary acquisition but also overall language development.

Since the 1960s, technology has dramatically transformed language teaching, beginning with mainframe computers that applied behaviorist methods like the Audiolingual Method, providing tailored multimedia inputs and immediate feedback (Beatty, 2010; Butler-Pascoe, 2011). Moving into the 1970s, there was a noticeable shift towards Computer-Supported Language Learning (CSLL), adopting communicative approaches with interactive tools such as language games (Warschauer, 1996). By the 1990s, CSLL expanded to include constructivist methods and multimedia resources, enhancing real-world communicative skills (Warschauer & Healey, 1998). The 21st century brought the integration of smart devices and Web 2.0 technologies, further advancing CSLL through interactive platforms, making learning more engaging (Beatty, 2010). Today, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) uses portable devices to allow learning anytime and anywhere, significantly improving language skills (Burston, 2015; Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008). In this context, Basal et al. (2016) note that well-designed mobile apps can effectively enhance vocabulary teaching. On the other hand, Karakas and Kartal (2020) found that English teacher candidates prefer apps that facilitate listening and watching due to their access to authentic materials, although they generally demonstrated low familiarity and usage of these apps. Despite facing

challenges such as financial and technical barriers and the need for ongoing teacher training (Burston, 2014; Ko, 2019), technological advancements continue to enrich personalized learning and extend global access to language education. This overview demonstrates how technology has transformed language learning, guiding the focus of the research on evaluating the use of technology in teaching English vocabulary through postgraduate research in Türkiye.

This study systematically examines theses on the application of technology in teaching English vocabulary in Türkiye, aiming to identify the technologies and tools used, along with their advantages and limitations. Addressing these challenges is key to enhancing the effectiveness of language teaching in Türkiye, with the potential to shift the focus from a predominant emphasis on grammar to a more balanced approach that improves comprehensive language skills. The central aspect of this research is the role of technology and digital tools in overcoming these challenges and filling the gaps in English vocabulary teaching in Türkiye. The study specifically explores how these technologies are implemented in K-12 English vocabulary instruction. The following research questions guided the current study:

- What are the trends in theses written on technologies and tools used in teaching English vocabulary at the K-12 levels in Türkiye?
- What technologies and tools are used for English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels in Türkiye?
- What are the advantages of the technologies and tools used for English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels in Türkiye?
- What are the limitations of the technologies and tools used for English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels in Türkiye?

Methodology

Research Design

In this study, a systematic literature review was utilized to answer the research questions, adhering to predefined scientific methods to minimize bias, regardless of the designs of the studies involved (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). Systematic reviews offer

several advantages over individual studies, which may have flaws in design, implementation, or reporting that could lead to erroneous conclusions. By examining multiple studies, systematic reviews provide a more comprehensive and robust framework, facilitating easier access to information for decision-makers and practitioners compared to sourcing and analyzing individual studies (Gough et al., 2012).

In this systematic review, only theses were included due to their comprehensive and in-depth content. These documents offer detailed methodologies, extensive literature reviews, and thorough discussions, which makes them valuable for exploring vocabulary instruction in English language teaching. Additionally, theses are easily accessible through the Turkish Council of Higher Education (YÖK) National Thesis Center electronic database, ensuring a systematic and replicable data collection process, especially when peer-reviewed articles may not be as easily accessible.

To ensure the accuracy and transparency of the review process, established steps in conducting a systematic literature review were followed. These steps included formulating the research questions, creating a conceptual framework, determining inclusion and exclusion criteria, developing a search strategy, conducting a comprehensive search for relevant studies, screening and selecting studies, assessing the quality of the studies, extracting data, synthesizing the data, and reporting the findings (Newman & Gough, 2020). In the initial phase of the research, research questions were defined, and a conceptual framework was established. Deciding on the target audience, practices, and expected impacts of the research facilitated the design and methodology of the study (Gough et al., 2012). Subsequently, criteria were established to determine which studies would be included or excluded. These criteria included the year of thesis publication, the educational level, focus on English vocabulary teaching, and availability in the YÖK National Thesis Center database.

Following the establishment of criteria, a search strategy was developed, which Gough et al. (2012) identify as crucial for successful systematic literature reviews due to its strong information management. During this phase, keywords, operators, timing, and results were recorded in a search log. Duplicate references from searches using different keywords were noted. After removing duplicates, predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to identify relevant studies, which were then coded into

a different database. The coding included details such as the researcher's name, publication year, type of publication, educational level, class level, research design, number of participants, duration of the application, technology used, and quantitative and qualitative findings.

Following the coding phase, the quality of the studies to be included in the review was assessed. Newman and Gough (2020) caution that publication after peer review does not guarantee the quality of a study, necessitating a critical evaluation across several dimensions. The first dimension involves assessing the suitability of the design of the selected studies to ensure it aligns with the research questions. The second dimension checks the correct application of the research methods. The third dimension determines whether the chosen studies contribute to answering the research questions set by the systematic literature review (Gough, 2007). Moreover, the systematic review's research questions and scope must be considered in the quality assessment (Valentine, 2019).

Given that the research questions and scope of this study pertain to the field of educational sciences, the included studies were evaluated based on the criteria established by the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) (Gough et al., 2012), an initiative of the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences aimed at identifying effective educational interventions and sharing them with stakeholders (What Works Clearinghouse, 2022). The evaluation framework was developed by reviewing the WWC's Procedures and Standards Handbook (What Works Clearinghouse, 2022) and the Evidence Review Protocol for Interventions for English Learners (What Works Clearinghouse, 2020). During the assessment, it was determined that one study (see the appendix) was design-based and did not meet the research design criteria outlined in the guide; therefore, it was not included in the analysis.

The qualitative assessment criteria for research studies are divided into five categories: General, Design, Population, Intervention, and Outcome Eligibility. These categories align with the standards of the American Institutes for Research's What Works Clearinghouse. General Eligibility ensures the research is accessible, complete, and published within the last 20 years. Design Eligibility requires the study to be either fully experimental or quasi-experimental. Population Eligibility assesses if the study

targets English language learners, occurs in a K-12 setting, and is conducted within formal or non-formal educational contexts. Intervention Eligibility checks for the inclusion of educational practices, products, policies, or programs. Lastly, Outcome Eligibility focuses on studies that measure language skills outcomes, particularly vocabulary (What Works Clearinghouse, 2020).

By evaluating research studies based on these WWC criteria, we ensure that they meet the necessary standards for validity and relevance. Each category addresses a critical component of the research, from its accessibility and completeness to its design, participant population, intervention, and outcomes. This thorough evaluation process helps select studies that are methodologically sound and pertinent to the field of education.

Following the evaluations, data from the included studies, such as methods, participant characteristics, and findings, were detailed in tables for clarity. Graphs were also created to facilitate easier examination and interpretation of the data. Thematic analysis was used to summarize and categorize the findings (Gough et al., 2012). Thematic analysis in this study involved a structured process to analyze qualitative data from the selected theses systematically. Initially, all theses were thoroughly reviewed to develop a deep familiarity with the content regarding the research questions. Before bringing codes together into broader themes, the two researchers independently conducted the initial coding of each thesis. They identified and assigned codes to meaningful segments of text based on their relevance to key focus areas, such as types of technologies, educational outcomes, and limitations. After completing their independent coding, the researchers came together to compare their codes, discuss any differences, and resolve them collaboratively to ensure coding reliability. This approach helped consolidate the codes into broader themes like “Learning Outcomes,” “Beneficial Features of Technologies,” and “Limitations”. In the final stage, themes were interpreted and reported in the results section.

To ensure the reliability of these stages and the applicability of the results by decision-makers, as well as the repeatability or updatability of the research by different researchers, it was necessary to report the systematic literature review process (Page et al., 2021). Therefore, this research employed the PRISMA protocol, a widely accepted guideline in academia, which enhances the transparency, completeness, and replicability

of the review process (Page et al., 2021). A detailed process was followed to identify, select, and analyze studies related to the research questions using the PRISMA protocol. A comprehensive search was conducted in the designated database, studies were selected based on pre-determined inclusion and exclusion criteria, and detailed analysis was conducted to obtain the data. Researcher triangulation (Denzin, 2015) was applied to enhance the reliability of the data and findings, with two researchers of different experiences reviewing the coding and categorization processes. Finally, the findings were synthesized.

These methods, based on the PRISMA protocol, enhance the reliability of the findings. The comprehensive database search, adherence to inclusion and exclusion criteria, and detailed data analysis all contribute to the credibility of the results. During the quality assessment phase, the WWC criteria—an initiative aimed at identifying effective research—provided the criteria for evaluating the studies included in this dataset. The evaluation framework was based on the WWC’s Procedures and Standards Handbook and the Evidence Review Protocol for Interventions for English Learners. This systematic methodological approach demonstrates the researcher’s diligence in maintaining specific standards.

Data Set

This study examines 21 theses (19 master’s and 2 doctoral) from the YÖK National Thesis Center in Türkiye, focusing on the use of technology in teaching English vocabulary at the K-12 level. These theses, written in Turkish and English, were selected based on specific criteria and span from 1990 to 2022. The search was conducted on April 17, 2023.

Of the 21 theses, 71.4% were conducted in public schools, while 28.6% were in private schools. Specifically, 68.4% of the master’s theses and all the doctoral theses were conducted in public schools. Three master’s theses did not specify the school type but were later identified as public. The studies included 2 at the primary school level, 8 at the middle school level, and 11 at the high school level. Most primary and high school studies were in public schools, with a few in private schools. Middle school studies covered grades 5 through 8, with one study in a private school at grade 7. One high school study focused on 15-17-year-olds in a private school.

Data Collection

In order to access theses relevant to the research topic and questions, the researchers identified various keywords. Due to the limited search options provided by the general search engine in the database and the lack of support for using logical operators, the selected keywords were used in the search engine under the advanced search tab. In this tab, after entering the words to be searched into the appropriate boxes, the field was chosen as the thesis title and the search type as “include in.” The keywords used in the screening are provided in Table 1.

Table 1.

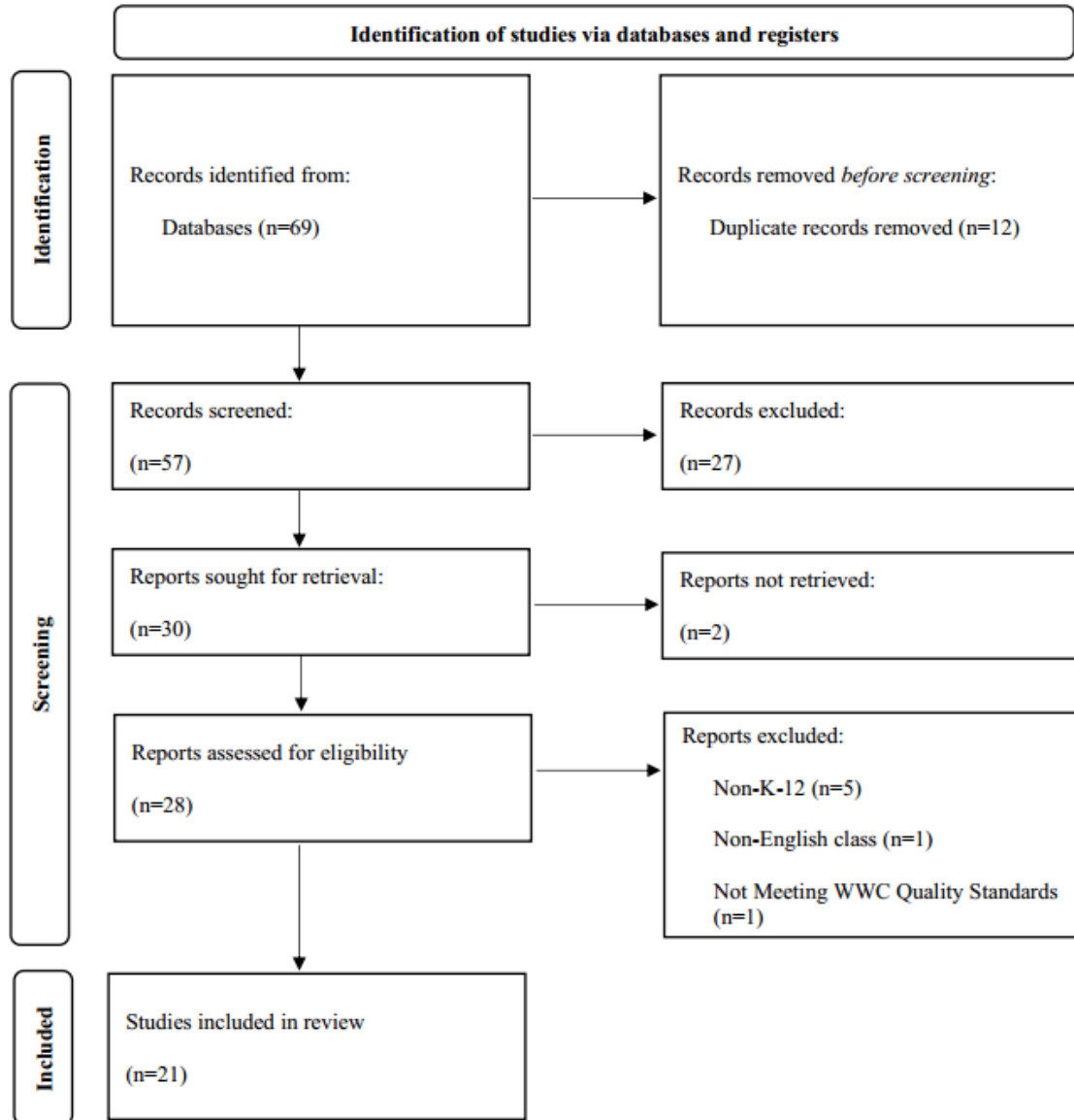
Keywords used in the screening

vocabulary teaching AND technology	vocabulary learning AND digital
vocabulary teaching AND software	vocabulary learning AND mobile
vocabulary teaching AND mobile	vocabulary learning AND computer
vocabulary teaching AND computer	vocabulary learning AND tool
vocabulary teaching AND tool	vocabulary learning AND application
vocabulary teaching AND device	vocabulary learning AND technology
vocabulary teaching AND application	vocabulary learning AND device
vocabulary teaching AND digital	

As a result of the screening, information on a total of 69 studies was accessed. Since similar keywords were used for screening, a review was conducted to detect duplicate studies. Following the detection of duplicates, 57 studies remained for title and abstract review. After reviewing the titles and abstracts, studies conducted outside the K-12 level and in languages other than English were excluded, leaving 30 theses for full-text review. Two theses that were not electronically accessible were removed from the review scope for the purpose of full-text review. Considering the exclusion criteria, the full-text review excluded five studies conducted outside the K-12 level and one study conducted in a language other than English, thus including 22 theses in the quality assessment. The quality assessment of these studies was conducted according to WWC criteria, and as a result of this assessment, one thesis was found unsuitable and removed from the research. Data analysis was conducted with the remaining 21 theses (see the appendix). The data collection process is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Steps of PRISMA 2020 protocol



Data Analysis

To carry out the systematic literature review, criteria for including and excluding studies were established based on factors such as the publication year of the thesis, the educational level of the subjects, the focus on English vocabulary teaching, and their availability in the YÖK National Thesis Center Database. Following this, a comprehensive search strategy was devised using specific keywords, and the search was executed on April 17, 2023, using the advanced search interface of the database. Once

relevant studies were identified, they were meticulously coded into an Excel database, which cataloged descriptive information, details, and findings from each study. The quality of these studies was rigorously evaluated against the standards set by the WWC, ensuring only the most credible studies were included.

The synthesis and analysis process involved tabulating data like methods, participant characteristics, and findings, which were thoroughly analyzed and presented in the results section. This process was vital for generating reliable evidence to aid decision-making. A narrative synthesis was then employed, where details of the included studies were systematically categorized and analyzed, allowing for an integrated understanding of the research topic. Thematic analysis was used to identify significant themes and concepts across different studies, enhancing the coherence and depth of the findings. According to Gough et al. (2012), detailed coding of practices and contexts is essential for the reliability of the evidence provided. Moreover, narrative synthesis aids in integrating findings from different studies coherently, as described by Popay et al. (2006), and involves thematic analysis to identify recurring or significant themes within different study categories (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006; Popay et al., 2006). To ensure the validity and reliability of the entire process, the PRISMA protocol was adhered to, and researcher triangulation was utilized, promoting transparency, completeness, and the reproducibility of the research compilation.

Throughout the research, a comprehensive data search process was followed. This process involved conducting extensive searches in the database, selecting studies based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, and thoroughly analyzing the data. All these procedures enhance the reliability and applicability of the research findings. An Excel table was prepared to facilitate the analysis process and ensure quality assessment, incorporating details including author, year, thesis title, type of thesis, type of school, educational level, grade level, sample size, duration of application, research design, technologies and tools, quantitative findings, and qualitative findings.

Findings

Trends in theses written on technologies and tools used in teaching English vocabulary at the K-12 levels in Türkiye

The distribution of theses related to the trends in the technologies and tools for teaching English vocabulary at K-12 levels in Türkiye has been analyzed over the years (Table 2). The analysis shows an increasing trend in theses about technology use in English vocabulary instruction at K-12 levels, peaking in 2019 ($n = 5$) followed by a decrease in 2021 ($n = 4$) and 2022 ($n = 3$). No theses were found before 2008, but five theses were published over eight years, from 2008 ($n = 1$), 2011 ($n = 1$), and 2015 ($n = 3$). In the six years from 2017 to 2022, 16 theses were published: 2017 ($n = 2$), 2018 ($n = 2$), 2019 ($n = 5$), 2021 ($n = 4$), 2022 ($n = 3$). Regarding educational levels, 52.4% of the research ($n = 11$) on technologies and tools used in English vocabulary instruction at K-12 levels was conducted in high schools, followed by middle schools with 38.1% ($n = 8$), and primary schools with 9.5% ($n = 2$). In terms of vocabulary knowledge dimensions, 90.5% of the theses ($n = 19$) measured only receptive vocabulary knowledge, while 9.5% ($n = 2$) measured both receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge. From these results, it can be stated that receptive vocabulary knowledge was measured in 100% ($n = 21$) of the theses.

Table 2.

Distribution of theses on English vocabulary teaching technologies in k-12 by year and educational level

Year	Total theses	Primary school	Middle school	High school	Receptive vocabulary	Both receptive & productive vocabulary
2008	1	0	0	1	1	0
2011	1	0	1	0	1	0
2015	3	0	1	2	3	0
2017	2	0	1	1	2	0
2018	2	0	1	1	2	0
2019	5	0	2	3	4	1
2021	4	1	1	2	3	1
2022	3	1	1	1	2	1
Total	21	2	8	11	18	3

Technologies and tools that are used for English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels in Türkiye

The study analyzed technologies and tools used in teaching English vocabulary at K-12 levels in Türkiye. Despite having 21 theses included in the research, the number of technologies mentioned reached 24, indicating that some featured multiple technologies or tools. The analysis revealed that 50% ($n = 12$) of the technologies studied were mobile applications. Following mobile apps, devices, learning objects, Web 2.0 tools, and software, each accounted for 12.5% ($n = 3$) of the technologies explored. Among mobile applications, Quizlet emerged as the most utilized, appearing in 58.3% of the theses, followed by Duolingo, Kahoot, Quizizz, Vocastyle, and WhatsApp, each at 8.3%.

In the device category, the analysis showed that smartphones, Kinect, and tablets were each featured in one thesis, making up 33.3%, respectively. For Web 2.0 tools, three theses were analyzed, which examined the use of Animaker, Padlet, Powtoon, Voki, and Wordwall. Similarly, three theses were analyzed in the software category, noting the use of Adobe Captivate, DENIS, Hot Potatoes, and Visual Basic as tools for teaching English vocabulary at K-12 levels.

Table 3.

Technologies and tools used in K-12 English vocabulary teaching in Türkiye

Technology Category	Specific Tools/Technologies	Total Theses
Devices	Mobile Phone, Kinect, Tablet	3
	Mobile Phone	1
	Kinect	1
	Tablet	1
Mobile Applications	Duolingo, Kahoot, Quizlet, Quizizz, Vocastyle, WhatsApp	12
	Duolingo	1
	Kahoot	1
	Quizlet	7
	Quizizz	1
	Vocastyle	1
	WhatsApp	1
Web 2.0 Tools	Animaker, Padlet, Powtoon, Voki, Wordwall	3

Technology Category	Specific Tools/Technologies	Total Theses
	Animaker	1
	Padlet	1
	Powtoon	1
	Voki	1
	Wordwall	1
Learning Objects	Not Specified	3
	Adobe Captivate, DENIS, Hot Potatoes, Visual Basic	3
Software	Adobe Captivate	1
	DENIS	1
	Hot Potatoes	1
	Visual Basic	1

The analysis of the distribution of mobile application usage over the years in teaching English vocabulary at K-12 levels has shown an increasing trend in the number of theses investigating this area. There were no theses on the effectiveness of mobile apps in this context until 2015, but by 2021, the number peaked at four theses. Similarly, an analysis of the usage of Web 2.0 tools over the years has indicated a recent increase in the number of theses. Before 2018, there were no theses specifically focused on this topic, but 2022 saw the highest number of theses written.

For device usage in teaching English vocabulary at K-12 levels, the distribution over the years shows that no theses met the criteria before 2011. However, studies started appearing with two theses published in 2015 and one in 2018, totaling three. The analysis of the usage of learning objects in the context of English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels also shows a spread over the years. One thesis was published in 2008, 2011, and 2019, making a total of three. Finally, the analysis of software usage in teaching English vocabulary at K-12 levels also shows a distribution over several years. Theses were published in 2008, 2015, and 2019, each year contributing one thesis, totaling three.

Table 4

Yearly distribution of technologies and tools in K-12 English vocabulary teaching

Year	Mobile Apps	Web 2.0 Tools	Devices	Learning Objects	Software
2008	0	0	0	1	1
2011	0	0	1	1	0
2015	0	0	2	0	1
2018	0	0	1	0	0
2019	2	1	0	1	1
2021	4	0	0	0	0
2022	4	2	0	0	0

Advantages of the technologies and tools used for English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels in Türkiye

The theses were analyzed in terms of the advantages of technologies and tools used in English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels. As a result of the analysis, three main themes and sub-themes related to these themes were revealed. The main themes are *learning outcomes*, *measured vocabulary knowledge dimension*, and *beneficial features of technologies*. As shown in Table 5, the layout categorizes the learning outcomes into academic achievement and affective outcomes which are further detailed into motivation, positive experience, and perception of benefits. It also includes a measured vocabulary knowledge theme divided into receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge. Additionally, it outlines beneficial features of technologies that enhance learning, including portability, a variety of apps, multimedia capabilities like visuals and audio features, handwriting input, competitive and motivational elements like ranking systems, motivational music, timers, and a colorful interface.

Table 5

Themes, subthemes, and details of the advantages

Theme	Subtheme	Category/Detail
Learning Outcomes	Academic Achievement	
	Affective Outcomes	Motivation
		Positive Experience
		Perception of Benefits

Theme	Subtheme	Category/Detail
Measured Vocabulary Knowledge	Receptive Vocabulary Knowledge	
	Productive Vocabulary Knowledge	
Beneficial Features of Technologies		Portability
		Variety of Apps
		Multimedia (Use of and ability to add visuals, having a speaker)
		Handwriting Input
		Competitive and Motivational Elements (ranking system, motivational music, timer)
		Colorful interface

Learning Outcomes

Two subthemes have been identified under the main theme of learning outcomes as a result of analyzing theses published on the technologies and tools used in English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels in Türkiye.

Academic Achievement

Regarding the subtheme of academic achievement, 20 theses have been examined. In 19 of these theses (Albayrak, 2015; Anlamış, 2018; Atalan, 2022; Bekar, 2019; Bilcan, 2019; Çaparlar, 2021; Çınar, 2019; Gelir, 2015; Gürkan, 2018b; Kılıç, 2019; Kocaman, 2015; Kurtoğlu, 2021; Özcan, 2017; Özer, 2017; Şahin, 2022; Salman, 2022; Söğüt, 2021; Yardım, 2011; Zengin, 2019), it has been found that the use of technology and tools in English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels positively contributed to the development of students' vocabulary. In one study (Bayraktar, 2008), while the use of additional textual explanations in the native language in multimedia had a positive effect on the development of the group's vocabulary, the use of additional visuals in the native language, or additional textual or visual explanations in a foreign language, did not significantly contribute to the development of students' vocabulary.

In the analysis of 12 studies on mobile applications, it was found that 11 theses investigated the subtheme of academic achievement. In all these theses (Atalan, 2022; Bilcan, 2019; Çaparlar, 2021; Çınar, 2019; Gürkan, 2018b; Kılıç, 2019; Kurtoğlu, 2021;

Özcan, 2017; Özer, 2017; Salman, 2022; Söğüt, 2021), it was stated that mobile applications used in vocabulary instruction positively contributed to the development of students' vocabulary.

Çınar (2019) researched the impact of Quizlet on students' vocabulary learning. In a four-week study with 71 students at the 9th-grade level, an experimental and a control group were formed. The control group received vocabulary instruction as specified in the curriculum, whereas the experimental group used the Quizlet application for vocabulary studies before class, differing from the control group. At the end of four weeks, the results of the tests showed that the Quizlet group's achievement scores were significantly higher than those of the control group. Additionally, a retention test administered three weeks after the final test found that retention scores were significantly higher in favor of the experimental group.

Söğüt (2021) investigated the impact of MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) on English vocabulary learning. In the eight-week study with 30 students from 7th and 8th grades, both the experimental and control groups were taught the curriculum in the same manner. Additionally, students in the experimental groups were asked to study specified topics on Duolingo outside of class regularly. According to the achievement test results, there was no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the control groups. In contrast, a significant positive difference was observed between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental groups.

All three studies (Bekar, 2019; Şahin, 2022; Salman, 2022) on Web 2.0 tools found that Web 2.0 tools enhanced students' vocabulary development in English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels.

Bekar (2019) investigated the impact of digital storytelling on vocabulary learning and the retention of words. In the 11-week study with 28 third-grade students, words were taught through five digital stories created using the Animaker tool. The analysis at the end of the process indicated that digital storytelling positively affected students' vocabulary learning.

There are three theses (Albayrak, 2015; Anlamış, 2018; Gelir, 2015) focusing on the use of devices. All studies showed that using devices in English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels positively impacted students' vocabulary learning.

Gelir (2015) researched the effectiveness of tablet computers in English vocabulary teaching. The four-week study involved 60 students from the 9th grade. Students in the experimental group watched videos on tablets, read texts, and completed various activities related to the target words. The control group, meanwhile, conducted their vocabulary studies through the textbook as specified in the curriculum. The analysis of the achievement scores between the experimental and control groups showed that the experimental group's scores were significantly higher.

An examination regarding the learning objects revealed three studies. Two of these (Yardımcı, 2011; Zengin, 2019) determined that the use of learning objects in English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels positively contributed to students' vocabulary learning.

Three theses investigated the use of software. Two studies (Kocaman, 2015; Zengin, 2019) found that using software in English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels provided positive contributions. However, another study (Bayraktar, 2008) indicated that three out of four different learning objects prepared using software did not contribute positively to vocabulary teaching. Kocaman (2015) investigated the impact of computer-assisted vocabulary teaching on vocabulary learning. In an 8-week study with 68 sixth-grade students, contents were used that had been prepared with DENIS software, explicitly developed for vocabulary teaching, and Hot Potatoes software. Analyzing the pre-test, mid-test, and post-test scores indicated that the software used significantly increased the students' vocabulary scores.

Affective outcomes

Regarding the subtheme of affective outcomes, 15 theses (Anlamış, 2018; Aslan, 2021; Atalan, 2022; Bilcan, 2019; Çaparlar, 2021; Çınar, 2019; Gelir, 2015; Kılıç, 2019; Kocaman, 2015; Kurtoğlu, 2021; Özcan, 2017; Özer, 2017; Şahin, 2022; Salman, 2022; Söğüt, 2021) have been examined. Three categories related to this subtheme have been identified: motivation, positive experience, and perception of benefits.

In the *motivation category*, there are 8 thesis studies (Anlamış, 2018; Bilcan, 2019; Çaparlar, 2021; Çınar, 2019; Gelir, 2015; Kocaman, 2015; Kurtoğlu, 2021; Şahin,

2022). All studies have indicated that using technology in English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels motivates students and enhances their motivation for vocabulary learning.

Gelir (2015) studied the effectiveness of tablet computers in English vocabulary teaching, where ninth-grade students mentioned in interviews that the use of tablet computers increased their motivation for learning vocabulary. One student expressed, “Playing vocabulary games on a tablet computer is fun and motivating for me” (p.91). Another student mentioned, “Using a tablet computer has improved my vocabulary learning performance, and now I am more willing to undertake more vocabulary tasks on the tablet” (p.92).

In the *positive experience* category, there are 10 thesis studies (Atalan, 2022; Bilcan, 2019; Çaparlar, 2021; Çinar, 2019; Gelir, 2015; Kılıç, 2019; Kocaman, 2015; Kurtoğlu, 2021; Özer, 2017; Söğüt, 2021) mentioning the students’ experiences being positive with the technology and tools used in English vocabulary teaching. These studies have shown that students have had positive experiences using the technologies.

Kurtoğlu (2021) conducted a five-week study with 29 seventh-grade students using the Quizlet and Kahoot applications for vocabulary teaching. After the application, students reported in interviews that the applications were easy to use. One student said about Kahoot, “Kahoot! is an easy application to use in the classroom because answering the questions is very easy” (p.77). Another student mentioned Quizlet: “I don’t struggle using Quizlet. It has a simple interface” (p. 83).

In the *perception of benefits* category, there are 9 thesis studies (Anlamış, 2018; Atalan, 2022; Gelir, 2015; Kılıç, 2019; Kocaman, 2015; Kurtoğlu, 2021; Özcan, 2017; Şahin, 2022; Salman, 2022). In all studies, students have stated that they found the use of technology in English vocabulary teaching beneficial. In a study by Kocaman (2015), students found the DENIS software beneficial for vocabulary teaching. Students commented, “It was very beneficial for me. I loved the study. I wish it never ended” (p.98) and “I have improved my English vocabulary. My performance in English class has increased” (p.99).

In Özcan’s (2017) thesis “The Use of Mobile Environment Software in Language Education: An Example of Collocational Vocabulary Teaching,” students expressed that mobile applications were beneficial in language teaching. For example,

one student said, “We didn’t go into detail in the class, but I saw visually included words used in sentences in this application. It became more memorable” (p.76). Another student expressed, “It was more beneficial in terms of constructing sentences and learning how to use words” (p.77). Another student commented on using WhatsApp for vocabulary teaching, “I can look up forgotten words from my phone whenever and wherever I want” (p.78).

Measured Vocabulary Knowledge

The analysis of theses on technologies and tools used in English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels in Türkiye has determined two subthemes related to the main theme of measured vocabulary knowledge.

Receptive Vocabulary Knowledge

All the theses included in the analysis ($n = 21$) measured receptive (passive) vocabulary knowledge in the tests applied while investigating the effectiveness of technology and tool use in English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels. It was determined that in 9 of these theses (Anlamış, 2018; Aslan, 2021; Bayraktar, 2008; Çaparlar, 2021; Gelir, 2015; Kılıç, 2019; Kurtoğlu, 2021; Salman, 2022; Zengin, 2019), multiple-choice measurement tools were used to measure vocabulary knowledge. Söğüt (2021), in a study following an intervention, used a vocabulary achievement test that assessed the effectiveness of an application in English vocabulary teaching with question types, including matching visuals with words, writing the word shown in a visual, and selecting the correct word to fill in the blanks in sentences from multiple choices.

In his thesis, Yardım (2011) explored the effectiveness of computer-supported versus teacher-supported story narration in vocabulary teaching. He used tools in the pre-test and post-test, including visual and word matching, writing the word given with missing letters and visuals, and completing puzzles based on visuals. Bekar (2019) simplified the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale in his thesis, investigating the impact of digital storytelling on vocabulary learning and retention to measure whether students recognized the words.

Productive Vocabulary Knowledge

Upon examining the theses included in the analysis, it was found that both receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge was measured in 2 theses (Atalan, 2022; Özer, 2017). In these two studies investigating the use of the Quizlet application in English vocabulary teaching, forms were used that measured both receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge related to the spelling of words, as well as the grammatically correct usage of words in sentences. Students were asked to write the words they heard correctly to measure productive vocabulary knowledge related to spelling and to create new sentences using the given words correctly in a grammatical context.

Beneficial Features of Technologies

The analysis of 9 theses (Anlamış, 2018; Atalan, 2022; Çaparlar, 2021; Gelir, 2015; Kılıç, 2019; Kurtoğlu, 2021; Özcan, 2017; Özer, 2017; Salman, 2022) has shown that they describe the beneficial features of technologies and tools used in English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels in Türkiye.

Özcan (2017) showed that mobile application software provides the ability to study anytime and anywhere due to its *portability*, and the use of visuals in applications was listed among its beneficial features. Students have commented on this topic: “The difference with these applications was the visuals included in vocabulary teaching.” (p.77), “The visuals had a positive effect.” (p.80), and “We can learn words better. It provides the opportunity to learn with visuals...” (p.81). Moreover, students mentioned the benefits of the portability of these technologies, saying, “With my phone, I have the opportunity to learn in any setting I want.” (p.82) and “We find opportunities to learn on our own, outside of the classroom, in any setting.” (p.82).

In Gelir’s (2015) study that examined the effectiveness of tablet computers in English vocabulary teaching, the beneficial features of tablet devices included the *variety of applications, handwriting input capability, portability*, and having a speaker. Regarding the handwriting recognition feature, a student stated, “Improved handwriting recognition features and the stylus help me write new words easily.” (p.84). Another student described the beneficial feature of the tablet device as “Being able to learn how a new word is pronounced is a great feature for me.” (p.85). Kurtoğlu (2021) compared the effects of Quizlet and Kahoot applications in English vocabulary teaching, noting

Kahoot’s beneficial features as the ranking system, colorful interface, motivating music, and the competitive feeling created by the timer. The ability to add visuals was mentioned among the beneficial features of the Quizlet application.

A student commented on Kahoot’s ranking system, “Seeing myself on the podium positively affected me.” (p.76). Another student mentioned, “Kahoot! is preferred over word lists because it has motivating music and colorful options” (p.78), stressing the music and interface features. Another student spoke of the timer, “Kahoot! is useful because there is a time limit, competition, and fun.” (p.80). Regarding the feature of adding visuals in Quizlet, a student remarked, “Effective visuals make it more memorable and better than memorizing words from word lists.” (p.88).

Limitations of the technologies and tools used for English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels in Türkiye

The limitations of the technologies and tools used in English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels in Türkiye are analyzed through these. The analysis has revealed two main themes and associated sub-themes. The main themes identified are *learning outcomes*, and *the lacking features of technologies*. The subthemes are detailed under the main themes.

Table 6.

Subthemes and details of limitations of the technologies and tools

Theme	Subtheme	Category/Detail
Learning Outcomes	Limited Effectiveness	
	Neutral and Adverse Affective Outcomes	Student Boredom Dissatisfaction Demotivation
Lacking Features of and Limitations of Technologies		Lack of voice recording and speaking mode Not working without internet Device/screen freeze Poor sound output Touchscreen causing eye fatigue and not feeling like a physical keyboard

Theme	Subtheme	Category/Detail
		Lack of a developed spaced repetition technique
		Use of abbreviations not allowed

Learning Outcomes

Limited Effectiveness

This subtheme includes two thesis studies (Bayraktar, 2008; Özer, 2017). The studies show that using technology may offer benefits comparable to traditional methods without showing a substantial advantage, thus demonstrating their limited effectiveness.

Bayraktar (2008) explored the effect of using native language textual and visual explanations, as well as foreign language textual and visual explanations in multimedia-assisted reading texts on vocabulary learning. Seventy-nine eleventh-grade students were divided into four explanation groups, and the study lasted one lesson for each group. Comparing the pre-test and post-test results, a significant increase was noted only in the native language textual explanation group, favoring the post-test results. No significant difference was found between the pre-test and post-test scores within the other three groups. The result suggests that using native language textual explanations is more effective in enhancing vocabulary learning compared to other explanation types, indicating a potential limitation in the effectiveness of technology use in English vocabulary instruction.

Özer (2017) investigated the impact of mobile-assisted vocabulary learning on recall, using Quizlet for the experimental group and a vocabulary notebook for the control group. Conducted with 89 ninth-grade students, the study found significant differences between the pre-test, post-test, and retention test results for both interventions. However, there was no significant difference between the post-test and retention test scores of the two groups. The finding indicates that both mobile-assisted vocabulary learning using Quizlet and traditional vocabulary notebooks were effective for vocabulary recall, but neither method showed a significant difference in long-term retention between the groups. This suggests that while mobile tools can be as effective as traditional methods, they do not necessarily offer superior retention benefits.

Neutral and Adverse Affective Outcomes

Five studies (Atalan, 2022; Kocaman, 2015; Kurtoğlu, 2021; Salman, 2022; Zengin, 2019) discussing limitations under the neutral and adverse affective outcomes subtheme have been reviewed. Zengin (2019) applied an attitude scale in his study on the effects of educational computer games (experimental group) versus the traditional method specified in the curriculum (control group) on vocabulary teaching. The analysis of the results from the attitude scale showed no difference between the attitudes of the two groups, nor was a difference detected between the pre-test and post-test results of the experimental group. The result demonstrates that there was no significant difference in students' attitudes between those who used educational computer games and those who followed traditional methods. This suggests that educational games did not have a notable impact on students' attitudes toward vocabulary learning.

In one study, a student commented, "...but it was sometimes boring because we were repeating the words over and over again." (Kocaman, 2015; p.100), expressing boredom. Another study (Kurtoğlu, 2021) mentioned how the ranking system in the Kahoot app negatively impacted a student's motivation, stating, "I was disappointed when I couldn't see my name on the podium." (p.76). These observations suggest that repetitive vocabulary exercises can lead to boredom, and the ranking system in the Kahoot app could demotivate students, as a student expressed disappointment when they did not make it to the podium.

Four thesis studies (Atalan, 2022; Kocaman, 2015; Kurtoğlu, 2021; Salman, 2022) have discussed dissatisfaction. Kurtoğlu (2021) reported issues faced by three students using Kahoot for vocabulary teaching. Similarly, a student in a study by Kocaman (2015) mentioned finding the computer-assisted vocabulary teaching process exhausting (p.99). In a study by Salman (2022), students expressed difficulties with the mandatory membership for using Web 2.0 tools (p.70). The subtheme "Neutral and Adverse Affective Outcomes" shows the mixed emotional impacts of using various technologies in vocabulary teaching. This reveals that while technologies are often adopted to enhance vocabulary learning, their affective outcomes can be neutral or even negative. The reviewed studies demonstrate that the use of technologies, such as computer games and interactive apps, does not necessarily translate into positive

emotional engagement. Instead, they can lead to feelings of boredom, dissatisfaction, and demotivation among students. This stresses the importance of critically assessing the emotional and psychological effects of technologies.

Lacking Features and Limitations of Technologies

This section discusses the lacking features and limitations of technologies. Eight thesis studies (Atalan, 2022; Çaparlar, 2021; Çinar, 2019; Gelir, 2015; Kocaman, 2015; Kurtoğlu, 2021; Özcan, 2017; Salman, 2022) have indicated that there are features of the technologies and tools used in English vocabulary teaching at K-12 levels in Türkiye that need to be improved.

In a study investigating the impact of Quizlet on vocabulary teaching (Atalan, 2022), it was stated that adding a voice recording feature and developing the spaced repetition technique were necessary. Another study (Çaparlar, 2021) pointed out that the writing section of the app does not accept abbreviations, the matching of example sentences with visuals is not clear, and there is a lack of a feature for recording and improving pronunciation. One participant stated, “I would like to add a feature to Quizlet that allows me to record my pronunciation of words and example sentences and give us feedback on whether it is correct or not because there is no practice related to speaking.” (p.117), expressing a desire for the development of the application. These observations point out feature limitations and application-specific issues in Quizlet, suggesting a need for enhancements in its user experience and interface.

Çinar (2019) conducted a study where students suggested that Quizlet should work without an internet connection and include a speaking mode. In a thesis investigating the effectiveness of tablet computers in vocabulary teaching (Gelir, 2015), reported drawbacks by students included device and screen freezing due to poor hardware, poor sound output, the touch screen not providing a physical keyboard feel, and causing eye fatigue. These issues indicate hardware and performance problems as well as user experience limitations, pointing out the need for better device compatibility and more user-friendly features.

Other studies mentioned limitations such as the time counter in the Kahoot app making it difficult to focus on the questions (Kurtoğlu, 2021), encountering the same words repeatedly in the DENIS software being boring (Kocaman, 2015), problems with

internet access during the use of the WhatsApp application (Özcan, 2017), and the obligation to register to use Web 2.0 tools (Salman, 2022). These findings show user interface limitations and application-specific issues, indicating that design choices and technical requirements can negatively impact user experience.

Discussion

This in-depth analysis examined the trends, applications, and outcomes of using technology in teaching English vocabulary at K-12 levels in Türkiye. A systematic literature review of 21 theses from the period 2008 to 2022 demonstrates a significant trend: an increased reliance on technology post-2015, which represents 90.5% of the studies reviewed, indicating a pivot towards more digitally enhanced learning environments. This trend is further supported by findings from Dağdeler (2023), Dehghanzadeh et al. (2021), and Turan and Akdag-Cimen (2020), all of whom stress the effectiveness of technology in elevating student educational outcomes.

The majority of research focuses on high school settings (52.4%), with comparatively less attention to middle (38.1%) and elementary levels (9.5%). This pattern suggests a critical need to broaden technology integration into earlier educational stages to support foundational vocabulary skills. Parents' concerns regarding the impact of technology on young children might be influencing this hesitancy (Atalan & Akgül, 2021; Auxier et al., 2020; Uçar, 2023).

The studies exclusively explored receptive vocabulary, with only 9.5% addressing productive vocabulary, possibly due to the complexities in assessing these skills. This observation is consistent with Uchihara and Saito (2019) and Read (2000) and aligns with Yang et al. (2021), which noted a similar focus in language studies. In the current research, despite a strong preference for mobile applications like Quizlet, which facilitate accessible learning (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008; Kukulska-Hulme, 2020), there is a notable underutilization of other technologies such as Web 2.0 tools and specific software.

While mobile apps and Web 2.0 tools like Animaker and Padlet have shown potential in enhancing interactive learning (Beatty, 2010; Ko, 2019), their adoption is

not as widespread as expected. This indicates a research gap and a practical disparity in the usage of various educational technologies, which could otherwise contribute to more engaging learning experiences (Başal & Gürol, 2014; Dos Santos, 2021). Therefore, further investigation into the barriers to widespread adoption and strategies to overcome these obstacles is essential to fully leverage the benefits of these technologies in educational settings.

Research indicates that technology use in vocabulary teaching not only improves achievement scores but also supports positive affective outcomes. Students report increased motivation and enjoyment in their learning experiences, supporting broader educational benefits (Golonka et al., 2014; Seibert Hanson & Brown, 2020; Zou et al., 2021). However, the repetitive nature of some content delivered via technological means can diminish the learning experience, pinpointing an area for improvement in how content is presented (Burston, 2015; Lin & Lin, 2019). Addressing this challenge could enhance the effectiveness of technology in education, making learning more dynamic and engaging.

In sum, while the increasing trend of technology use in English vocabulary teaching at the K-12 levels in Türkiye is evident, especially at the high school level, a critical need remains for more thorough research into effective use and broader application of technological tools. Addressing this gap could significantly enhance the vocabulary learning process across all educational levels. Therefore, it is imperative to develop targeted strategies that promote technology integration in a way that maximizes its impact on student learning outcomes.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the systematic review of the theses, we suggest that technology has improved vocabulary acquisition and student engagement in English language learning at the K-12 levels in Türkiye. However, its application predominantly focused on receptive rather than productive vocabulary skills. This gap pinpoints a critical area for future educational technology deployment, emphasizing the need to balance both aspects of vocabulary learning to ensure comprehensive language development. Moreover, the review showed a notable increase in the use of technology to enhance vocabulary

acquisition at the K-12 levels in Türkiye, with a particularly strong focus on high schools. However, this emphasis demonstrates a significant gap in integrating and exploring technological tools in primary and middle school settings, where foundational language skills are crucial. To enhance vocabulary teaching, future research should focus on integrating technology at lower educational levels, emphasizing both receptive and productive skills. It is crucial to explore innovative technologies that engage students actively, going beyond mere passive learning. By doing so, we can bridge existing gaps and create effective language learning environments that prepare students for real-world communication.

Limitations

The emphasis on accessible theses from YÖK National Thesis Center overlooked relevant peer-reviewed studies that could provide additional insights. To address this limitation, future research should include peer-reviewed articles to offer a more balanced view of technology's role in vocabulary teaching. This broader analysis would help mitigate potential biases associated with relying solely on theses.

Ethics Committee Permission Information

This research was a systematic literature review and did not involve human participants. Accordingly, the study did not require approval from an ethics committee, as it exclusively involved the analysis of previously published data and did not include any direct human experimentation or intervention.

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APPENDIX

List of theses analyzed in the systematic literature review data set

- 1) Albayrak, M. Ş. (2015). Kinect kullanılan 3 boyutlu sanal gerçeklik uygulamalarının ilkökul öğrencilerinin yabancı dilde kelime öğrenimine etkisi (Publication No. 407086) [Master's Thesis, Fatih University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 2) Anlamış, Z. (2018). Cep telefonu destekli video kelime sunumlarının lise öğrencilerinin kelime öğrenmeleri ve materyal motivasyonları üzerine etkisinin incelenmesi (Publication No. 531194) [Master's Thesis, Mersin University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 3) Aslan, A. (2021). The effects of students' attitudes towards digital technology on English vocabulary learning via mobile devices (Publication No. 698735) [Master's Thesis, Yeditepe University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 4) Atalan, E. (2022). The use of Quizlet in teaching vocabulary to 9th grade EFL students (Publication No. 757619) [Master's Thesis, Anadolu University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 5) Bayraktar, S. (2008). The effectiveness of computer glosses on vocabulary learning. L1 or L2 glosses: With or without pictures? (Publication No. 229240) [Master's Thesis, Anadolu University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 6) Bekar, N. C. (2019). Exploring the effects of digital storytelling on young learners' motivation, vocabulary learning and retention in foreign language teaching (Publication No. 545761) [Master's Thesis, Çukurova University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 7) Bilcan, G. (2019). Learning vocabulary with a computer-based vocabulary flashcard tool in a Turkish EFL high school context (Publication No. 555123) [Master's Thesis, Anadolu University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 8) Çaparlar, İ. (2021). İngilizce kelime öğrenmede çevrimiçi uygulamaların etkileri ve öğrenen görüşleri: Quizlet uygulaması (Publication No. 687695) [Master's Thesis, Balıkesir University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 9) Çinar, İ. (2019). Quizlet çevrimiçi kelime uygulamasının ortaöğretim öğrencilerinin kelime öğrenmelerine ve İngilizce dersine yönelik tutumlarına etkisi (Publication No. 557345) [Master's Thesis, Eskişehir Osmangazi University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 10) *****Ergin, D. (2022). A suggested mobile vocabulary instruction application: WorDBook. (Publication No. 730063) [Master's Thesis, Selçuk University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre [This study was not included in the dataset because it did not meet the quality assessment criteria. Nitelik değerlendirme kriterlerine uymadığı için veri setine dâhil edilmedi].
- 11) Gelir, F. T. (2015). The effectiveness of using tablet computers in teaching vocabulary to Turkish EFL teenage students (Publication No. 412150) [Master's Thesis, Erciyes University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 12) Gürkan, S. (2018b). The effects of hypermedia annotation types and learning styles on mobile assisted vocabulary learning, recall and retention (Publication No. 497567) [Doctoral dissertation, Yeditepe University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 13) Kılıç, T. (2019). The impact of vocabulary learning strategies and computer assisted language learning on vocabulary development of Turkish high school students (Publication No. 555079) [Master's Thesis, Bahçeşehir University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 14) Kocaman, O. (2015). Effects of computer assisted vocabulary instruction on vocabulary learning and vocabulary learning strategies (Publication No. 384124) [Doctoral dissertation, Yeditepe University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 15) Kurtoğlu, U. (2021). Vocabulary teaching through Web 2.0 tools: A comparison of Kahoot! and Quizlet (Publication No. 705495) [Master's Thesis, Trakya University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 16) Özcan, M. S. (2017). Mobil ortam yazılımlarının dil eğitiminde kullanımı: Eşdizimsel kelime öğretimi örneği (Publication No. 488167) [Master's Thesis, Yıldız Teknik University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 17) Özer, Y. E. (2017). Mobile-assisted vocabulary learning and its effect on vocabulary recall (Publication No. 460593) [Master's Thesis, Yeditepe University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
- 18) Salman, M. (2022). Web 2.0 araçlarının ortaokul öğrencilerinin yabancı dilde kelime öğrenme stratejilerine ve başarılarına etkisinin incelenmesi: bir karma yöntem araştırması (Publication No. 748322) [Master's Thesis, Mersin University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
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- 21) Yardım, S. (2011). The effect of computer assisted and teacher-led storytelling on vocabulary learning of 5th grade students (Publication No. 290543) [Master's Thesis, Gazi University]. YÖK National Thesis Centre.
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***** did not meet the research design criteria outlined in the guide, and, therefore, was not included in the analysis.

A research on academic self-perception and academic achievement of secondary school students

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Abstract

The aim of the present study is to investigate the connection between academic self-perception and academic achievement of seventh-grade secondary school students in English courses. Additionally, the study aims to explore the relationship between various demographic factors and academic achievement in English. A predictive correlational research design and causal comparison methods were employed. The sample consisted of 906 volunteer seventh-grade students from public secondary schools in Alteylül and Karesi, Balıkesir Province. The 19-item, 4-point Likert-type "Academic Self-Perception Scale," developed by Liu, Wang, and Parkins (2005), was adapted into Turkish by the researchers for this study. An original measurement tool was also utilized to assess achievement in English language courses. Demographic variables were analyzed using t-tests, ANOVA, and structural equation modeling. Pearson correlation analysis, simple linear regression analysis, and stepwise multiple hierarchical regression analysis were applied to determine the relationship between academic self-perception and achievement in English language courses. Results indicated a significant, positive, and moderate relationship between academic self-perception and achievement in English language courses. Regression analysis revealed that academic self-perception significantly predicts achievement in English language courses. Furthermore, achievement in English language courses varied significantly based on the variables of having a study room and the father's level of education.

Keywords

Academic Self-Perception, Achievement in English Language Courses, Secondary School Students

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Introduction

Learning a foreign language is a crucial process that involves the development of individuals' skills in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing the target language. Mastering these skills allows individuals to communicate effectively and facilitates both emotional growth and cultural understanding. Foreign language learning not only

increases self-confidence but also helps individuals appreciate different cultural perspectives, contributing to the idea of global citizenship (English Proficiency Index [EPI], 2023; Luo et al., 2022; Patel & Jain, 2008; Weatherford, 1986).

The importance of English in global communication has been shaped by historical processes and has become the common language used widely throughout the world (Demirel, 1993; Dornyei & Csizer, 2002; Yaman, 2018). This prominence is historically linked to the Industrial Revolution, which began in the 18th and 19th centuries; and has become evident in the use of English in international communication and diplomacy (Demirel, 1993; Demirpolat, 2015; Yaman, 2018). However, statistics on English proficiency in Türkiye and results from national exams indicate that students are performing at a basic skill level (EPI, 2023). According to the EF English Proficiency Index (EPI, 2023), Türkiye ranks 66th among 113 countries and 33rd among 34 countries in Europe. In examining the 2023 LGS (High School Entrance Examination) results, the average English score for 8th-grade students was only 4.91 out of 10 questions. These results suggest that students in Türkiye are not achieving the desired level of English proficiency at national and international levels (Altan, 2017; British Council & TEPAV, 2013; Yaman, 2018).

In this context, it is evident that numerous factors affect students' success in learning English (Burns, 1982; Işık, 2008). Student-related difficulties may arise from issues such as a lack of regular study habits and motivation, while teachers' communication skills, the quality of teaching materials, and the inadequacies of educational programs are also significant factors (Acat, 2002; Alptekin, 2012; Aybek, 2019; Bayraktaroğlu, 2012). A crucial factor that has the potential to influence learning processes is students' perceptions of their academic abilities. Academic self-perception encompasses students' evaluations of their academic abilities, achievement, and learning process, as well as their view of themselves as learners (Bridges & Hayek, 2006; Giofrè et al., 2017; Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley et al., 2006; Kurtz-Costes & Schneider, 1994). Research shows that students with high academic self-perception adopt a more positive approach to learning processes and exhibit greater motivation (Marsh et al., 2001).

To enhance the language learning process and increase student achievement, it is essential to consider the effects of academic self-perception on English language learning (Aran & Yılmaz, 2021; Guay et al., 2003; İncirci, 2021; Lawrence, 2006; Liu et al., 2023; Kenç & Oktay, 2002; Marsh et al., 2001; Parvez & Shakir, 2014; Rosenberg, 1979).

Additionally, various demographic variables are expected to impact students' achievement in English language courses. These variables include gender, possession of a study room, attendance at kindergarten or preschool, and parental education level. This study aims to examine the relationship between the achievement level of secondary school students (seventh grade) in English and their academic self-perception, along with these demographic variables. The sub-objectives of the research are organized as follows:

1. What is the level of academic self-perception among students?
2. What is the level of students' academic achievement in English course?
3. Is there a significant difference in students' achievement according to:
 - Gender,
 - Possession of a study room,
 - Attendance at kindergarten/preschool?
4. Does the academic achievement of students in English course differ significantly according to the level of parental education?
5. What is the level of relationship between academic self-perception and academic achievement of students?
6. What is the predictive power of students' academic self-perception level on their academic achievement in English?

Academic Self-Perception and Academic Achievement

Academic self-perception refers to how students evaluate their academic abilities, skills, and achievements, forming beliefs about themselves based on these evaluations. This perception encompasses students' attitudes toward their performance, expectations of

success, and assessments of their academic skills. It plays a crucial role in shaping students' approaches to learning by influencing their participation in the educational process, motivation, and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Marsh & Yeung, 1997; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990).

This concept is multidimensional, comprising both cognitive and affective components that interact with the learning experiences, successes, and failures students encounter throughout their education. As a result of these interactions, students may develop either positive or negative self-evaluations (Ramos-Sánchez & Nichols, 2007; Yeager & Dweck, 2012). Strong self-awareness is crucial for emotional intelligence and personal development.

Academic achievement is typically defined by indicators such as grades, test scores, and overall performance (Marsh & Martin, 2011; Rosenberg, 1979; Sibanda et al., 2015). Objective measures, including standardized test scores and projects, provide tangible assessments of academic achievement (Marsh, 1990; Steinmayr et al., 2014). Additionally, the concept of academic achievement is associated with various competencies, such as communication skills, mathematics, and science, highlighting the multifaceted effects of education (Genesee et al., 2006; Kan'an, 2018).

Academic self-perception significantly influences students' evaluations, beliefs, and perceptions about their roles in the educational process. It plays a crucial role in shaping how students assess their abilities and potential, set their expectations for success, and define their educational goals (Lawrence, 2006; Marsh & Parker, 1984; Shavelson & Bolus, 1982). Moreover, the level of academic self-perception can have a significant impact on a student's academic performance (Jennings, 2015; Rechtschaffen, 2016; Schoeberlein et al., 2009).

Research by Marsh and Martin (2011) explores the relationship between academic self-perception and academic achievement through the "Reciprocal Effects" Model. This model highlights the direct and indirect effects of academic self-perception on academic achievement. The study provides a multidimensional perspective by focusing on specific components of self-perception; however, the limited sample size and the young age group raise questions about the generalizability of its findings.

Another study by İşmar and Şehitoğlu (2021) examines the relationship between academic self-perception and academic achievement among 50 middle school students. In this research, academic self-perception is viewed as an abstract and emotional personality trait, while academic achievement is considered a concrete outcome. The narrow sample size limits the applicability of the findings for practitioners.

Barker, Dowson, and McInerney (2005) conducted a study to explain academic achievement by establishing a relationship between self-perception and motivational goal theories. They longitudinally examined the connections between goal theory, academic self-perception, and achievement among high school students. Their findings revealed moderate to strong correlations between academic self-perception and academic achievement; however, these correlations were only valid for specific courses, suggesting the need for a broader perspective. Furthermore, the low correlations between matched and unmatched domains indicate that academic self-perception may be a valid indicator primarily for certain disciplines.

In a longitudinal study by Marsh et al. (2001), it was observed that students who perceived themselves as competent and capable in English actively participated in class. Conversely, students with a negative academic self-perception in English exhibited low levels of performance and achievement.

Another study by Kenç and Oktay (2002) investigated the impact of high school students' self-perception on their academic achievement. The results indicated a positive and significant relationship between the two variables, highlighting that self-perception, self-esteem, parental attitudes, and relationships significantly influence academic achievement. While the findings showed a positive but low-level relationship between academic self-perception scores and academic grades, the authors suggested that further studies should be conducted in diverse samples and contexts.

Academic Self-Perception and English Language Teaching

Language skills encompass comprehension, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, and grammar in a student's first language (Chomsky, 1957; Patel et al., 2023; Pinker, 2007). These skills are essential for understanding oral and written communication and expressing thoughts and feelings effectively. A student's desire to enhance their

language abilities and communicate is closely linked to their social interactions and academic success (EF English Proficiency Index, 2023; Patel & Jain, 2008).

Learning a foreign language learning, particularly English, has become vital in a globalized world. Proficiency in English opens up career opportunities and facilitates participation in international platforms (Göksu, 2018). English serves as a medium of instruction across various fields, enabling access to diverse knowledge (British Council, 2013; Dornyei & Csizér, 2002). Teaching English from an early age helps students develop essential skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, and grammar, thereby reinforcing their communication skills and self-perception (Srisopha, 2022; Yaman, 2018; Council of Europe [CoE], 2001; Ministry of National Education [MoNE], 2018).

Students' attitudes, motivation, and achievement in English shape their perceptions of academic competence (Adi Badiozaman et al., 2019; Aran & Yılmaz, 2021; Marsh & Yeung, 1997). Consequently, English classes significantly influence both language acquisition and students' overall academic self-perception. Their academic self-perception in English impacts their general academic identity (Genesee et al., 2006).

This reciprocal relationship highlights the interaction between English performance and academic self-perception (Barker et al., 2005; Meshkat & Hosseini, 2015). Research indicates that academic self-perception is shaped by contextual factors and positively correlates with performance in English courses (Aran & Yılmaz, 2021; Byrne, 1990; Calero, 2012; Kuh et al., 2006; Saracaloğlu & Varol, 2007). Therefore, fostering a positive academic self-perception by considering individual differences is crucial.

Calero's (2012) doctoral dissertation focuses on 5th-grade students learning English as a second language. The study examines how academic self-perception affects these students' academic achievement and second language acquisition. It argues that a positive academic self-perception can lead to better academic performance and motivation to learn. The study also investigates the effects of variables such as teacher-student relationships, self-regulation skills, parental academic support, and students' first language proficiency on academic achievement. However, while this research

focused on 5th-grade students and measured the effects of attitudes toward academic self-perception, it did not provide specific suggestions for improving these attitudes.

The research conducted by Parvez and Shakir (2014) defined academic self-perception as how students perceive their abilities, competencies, and values in an academic environment, suggesting that academic self-perception plays a role in English language course success. The authors noted a positive relationship between academic self-perception and performance in language learning courses, positing that these perceptions can potentially improve when students are placed in high-achieving groups. However, the study did not detail which specific contextual variables influenced academic self-perception, potentially limiting the generalizability of its findings.

Overall, studies on the relationship between academic self-perception and achievement in English language courses provide important insights, but limitations and shortcomings in these studies should be considered. In particular, examining the experiences of students across different age groups may contribute to obtaining more comprehensive and generalizable results. The gaps in this area present important research opportunities for future studies.

Achievement in English in Relation to Demographic Variables

Several demographic variables play an essential role in determining success in English courses. One of the primary variables is gender, which has been examined in numerous studies. Aydın (2006) found that female students tend to perform better in learning English than their male counterparts. This finding suggests that gender may influence the effectiveness of language acquisition strategies or motivation levels in learning environments. Similarly, Martin and Hoover (1987) reported that gender creates distinct patterns of academic achievement, with female students scoring higher on English achievement tests compared to male students. Conversely, Hyde (2005), in her study on the "Gender Similarity Hypothesis," found that gender did not significantly affect success in many psychological variables. Additionally, research by DordiNejad and Porghoveh (2014) examined the gender of English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers and its relationship with students' perceived achievement. Their findings indicated that factors other than gender were more influential in determining teacher success.

Another demographic variable that can impact students' academic achievement is the presence of a dedicated study room. Numerous studies have concluded that having a study room positively affects academic achievement and motivation (Badie, 2023; Ekmekyermezoğlu, 2010; Fatmawaty & Anam, 2022; Savaž & Grel, 2014; Yelkpiieri et al., 2017).

In addition to gender and study space, preschool or kindergarten attendance is another variable that may influence English language achievement. Many studies indicate that early educational experiences significantly shape children's language acquisition and overall academic performance (Eweniyi, 2012; Bani et al., 2022). However, some research suggests that preschool or kindergarten experiences may not have a significant impact on academic achievement (Milligan, 2012).

The level of parental education is also a critical variable. Numerous studies suggest that a high level of parental education correlates positively with student achievement (Butler, 2014; Frome & Eccles, 1998; Leibovitz, 1977; Marzulina et al., 2018; Pishghadam & Zabihi, 2011). Conversely, some studies indicate that parental education may not significantly affect student achievement (Glaesser & Cooper, 2012).

In conclusion, it can be said that the concepts of academic self-perception and academic achievement are closely interrelated. Academic self-perception plays a critical role in shaping students' academic outcomes by influencing their motivation, goal-setting, and overall academic performance. In addition, it is predicted that some demographic factors emphasized are also linked to academic achievement. The reviewed studies emphasize the importance of self-concept in driving academic success, yet the limited generalizability of some findings—due to small sample sizes and contextual differences—suggests the need for further research involving more diverse populations and educational contexts.

This study aims to fill these gaps by exploring the multifaceted nature of academic self-concept, some demographic variables, and their role in fostering achievement across different disciplines. By examining how academic self-perception and some demographic variables influence student performance in various contexts, this research can offer valuable insights into how educators might create more effective learning environments and improve academic outcomes. Ultimately, this research will

contribute to the expanding body of literature and provide practical recommendations for educators seeking to enhance student achievement.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design employed in this study is a predictive correlational design, which falls under the category of quantitative research. Additionally, a causal-comparison method was used to investigate the effects of demographic variables. In causal-comparison studies, the goal is to identify the causes or consequences of existing differences between variables (Fraenkel et al., 2011). Predictive correlational research is defined as the process of predicting the unknown value of one variable based on the known value of one or more other variables by examining the relationships among them (Büyüköztürk et al., 2013).

Participants

The study population consists of 4,673 seventh-grade students from middle schools in Balıkesir Province during the 2022–2023 academic year. The selection of seventh-grade students was intentional, as this age group is able to recognize and reflect on their individual characteristics, which facilitates the development of awareness regarding their academic self-perception.

A cluster sampling method was employed to determine the study sample. In the first stage, ten middle schools were randomly selected from a total of 25 schools. In the second stage, 906 volunteer seventh-grade students were randomly chosen from the selected schools.

Data Collection Tools

A demographic information form was developed to gather data on students' gender, parental education levels, preschool or kindergarten attendance, and the availability of a dedicated study room. The form included categories for parental education levels: "primary school," "secondary school," "high school," and "university."

To assess students' academic self-perception, the researchers adapted the 19-item, 4-point Likert-type "Academic Self-Perception Scale," originally developed by Liu et al. (2005). This scale was translated into Turkish and specifically tailored for the English course. During the adaptation process, the item "I often think about dropping out of school" was removed to avoid introducing negative suggestions to students, resulting in an 18-item final version. The scale includes two factors: "Confidence," with nine items, and "Effort," with nine items.

To evaluate students' academic achievement, a 20-question multiple-choice test was created. This test was aligned with the first three units of the seventh-grade English Language Teaching (ELT) curriculum of the Ministry of National Education.

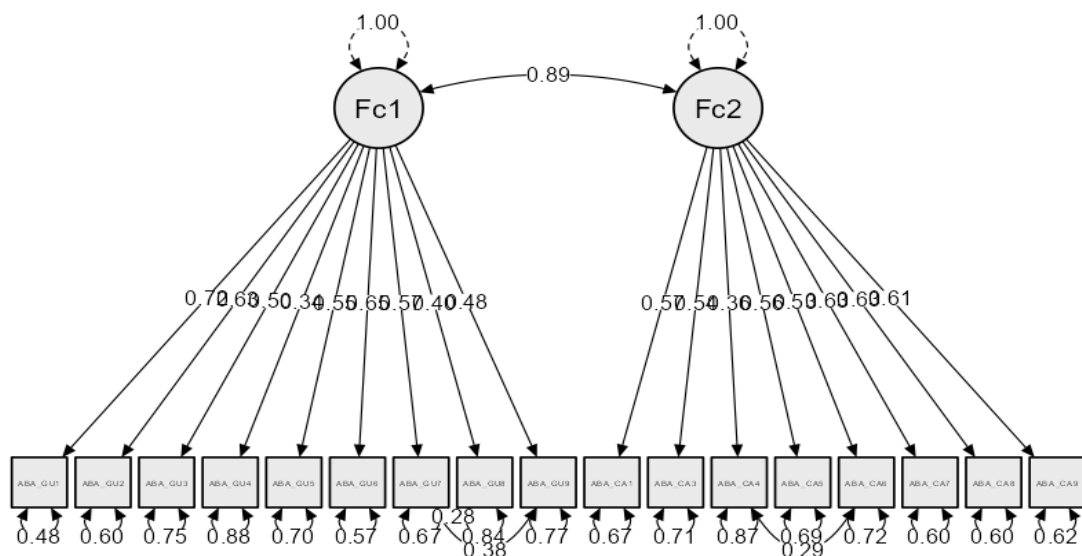
Development of Data Collection Tools

Academic Self-Perception Scale Development

The scale was completed by 906 secondary school students (458 girls and 448 boys) to confirm the factorial structure of the Academic Self-Perception Scale. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) using the Diagonal Weighted Least Squares (DWLS) method was applied to the data collected from the participants. The results of the analysis are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Path Diagram of Academic Self-Perception Scale



Three modifications were made during the analysis to achieve an acceptable fit for the chi-squared value relative to the degrees of freedom (df). These adjustments were necessary to improve the model fit and ensure the interpretability of the results. The model-data fit values presented in the table reflect the third modification of the CFA, which confirmed the two-factor, 18-item structure of the scale. The chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio was calculated as 4.1 ($475.726 - 115 = 4.1$), indicating an acceptable fit. Additionally, the other fit indices fell within the excellent fit category, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

Academic Self-Perception Scale CFA 3rd Modification

CFA Fit Index	Study Findings	Goodness of Fit Indices		
		Excellent fit	Acceptable Fit	
Chi-square degrees of freedom	X ² / sd	475.726/115=4.1	≤ 2	≤ 5
Fit Index	GFI	0.97	≥ .95	≥ .90
Comparative Fit Index	CFI	0.96	≥ .95	≥ .90
Non-Normed Fit Index	NNFI	0.95	≥ .95	≥ .90
Normed Fit Index	NFI	0.94	≥ .95	≥ .90
Incremental Fit Index	IFI	0.96	≥ .95	≥ .90
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual	SRMR	0.065	≤ .05	≤ .08
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	RMSEA	0.059	≤ .05	≤ .08

Scale Reliability

The reliability of the scale was assessed using two metrics. The overall Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was .854, indicating a good level of internal consistency, while the Omega value was .860, further supporting the reliability of the scale. For the sub-dimensions of the Academic Self-Perception Scale, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for "Confidence" was .796, and the Omega value was .797. For the "Effort" sub-dimension, the Alpha coefficient was .747, and the Omega value was .761. These results collectively demonstrate that the scale exhibits strong reliability.

Achievement Test Development

The development of the academic achievement test for 7th-grade students in the English language course followed several important steps to ensure its validity and reliability. Initially, the curriculum objectives from the Ministry of National Education's 7th-grade English Language Teaching Program were reviewed, and a total of 7 learning outcomes were selected from the first three units. A specification table was prepared to match the selected outcomes with test items. Based on this, 20 questions were created, with seven items from the first two units and six items from the third unit, focusing on knowledge and comprehension levels.

To ensure the items' appropriateness for the students' level, the questions were reviewed by two English teachers. Additionally, the questions were read aloud to students to assess their clarity and comprehensibility. Following these steps, a pilot study was conducted with a group of 109 students to assess the test's validity and reliability. Based on Şencan (2005), the sample size was deemed sufficient for item analysis as it met the requirement of being five times the number of items in the test.

The academic achievement test was then evaluated using several statistical measures. The arithmetic mean score was 12.826, with a standard deviation of 6.52, indicating the variability of the test scores. The variance was calculated at 42.510. The Kuder-Richardson 20 (KR-20) value was .942, reflecting high reliability for the test items. The difficulty index was .641, indicating medium difficulty, while the discrimination index was .710, suggesting that the test effectively differentiates between high and low achievers. Additionally, the biserial correlation coefficient was .688, further supporting the test's validity. The details regarding item discrimination index, item difficulty index and biserial correlation for each test item are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Index and Test Statistics for Achievement Test

Item Number	Item discrimination index	Item difficulty index	Biserial correlation
1	.40	.83	.72
2	.69	.69	.88
3	.84	.61	.91
4	.83	.60	1.0

5	.83	.56	.97
6	.64	.69	.82
7	.83	.66	1.0
8	.74	.72	.92
9	.69	.65	.91
10	.80	.64	.96
11	.68	.58	.75
12	.66	.70	.88
<i>Table continued</i>			
13	.77	.65	.92
14	.81	.59	.95
15	.66	.65	.90
16	.65	.40	.74
17	.86	.61	1.0
18	.66	.58	.85
19	.44	.75	.69
20	.74	.67	.92
K	\bar{X}	SS	SS ²
20	12.826	6.52	42.510

Overall, the analysis reveals that the academic achievement test is reliable, moderately difficult, and possesses good discriminatory power, making it a valid assessment tool.

Procedure

The demographic information form, academic self-perception scale, and academic achievement test were administered to 906 volunteer seventh-grade middle school students during the 2022–2023 academic year, following the acquisition of legal and Ethics Committee approval. Throughout the data collection process, the researchers acted as supervisors and informed students that participation was voluntary and that their scores would not affect their school grades. Additionally, a brief information sheet was provided, explaining the scale, the achievement test, the scope of the information to be completed, and the overall purpose of the study. The information sheet also stated that the data collected would be used for scientific research purposes and would be kept confidential.

Data Analysis

The participants' data were prepared for analysis using the MS Excel program. After removing the data with incorrect and incomplete coding, the remaining 906 data were examined for their suitability for analysis. Then, normality, skewness, and kurtosis values were analyzed using the SPSS Program. Since the data showed normal distribution, parametric statistics were used.

Results

Students' levels of academic self-perception

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Academic Self-Perception Scale Sub-Dimensions

Sub-Dimension	Min.	Max.	Average	Sd	Skewness	Kurtosis
Trust	1.11	4.00	2.90	.587	-.102	-.589
Effort	1.00	4.00	2.93	.527	-.336	-.126
ASPS	1.39	4.00	2.92	.501	-.166	-.511

The scale showed normal distribution characteristics since the skewness and kurtosis coefficients were within the ± 1 range. The mean values of both sub-dimensions were very close to each other.

Students' academic achievement levels in English courses

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for the Academic Achievement Test for the English Course

	Min.	Max.	Average	Sd	Skewness	Kurtosis
Academic Achievement Test for English Course	2.00	20.00	12.82	6.52	-.127	-1.758

The lowest score is two correct answers, and the highest score is twenty correct answers. The mean ($M = 12.82$) and standard deviation ($SD = 6.52$) of the test were calculated. Regarding the normality assumption of the test, the skewness and kurtosis coefficients are within the range of ± 2 , indicating that the test is normally distributed.

Students' gender

Table 5

Independent Sample t-Test Results Regarding Achievement in English Language Courses and Gender

Academic Achievement Test for English Course	Gender	N	Average	Sd	t	df	p
	Male	448	13.37	5.91	.513	904	.608*
	Female	458	13.16	6.07			

* $p > .05$

Before the analysis, *Levene's test* was performed to determine whether the variances of the data set were identical ($F = .752, p > .05$). In the analysis conducted to assess the difference in seventh-grade students' academic achievement levels in the English course based on gender, no significant difference was found ($t(df) = .513, p > .05$).

Possession of a study room for students

Table 6

Independent Sample t-Test Results Regarding Academic Achievement Scores According to the Variable of Possession of a Study Room

Academic Achievement Test for English Course	Availability of a study room	N	Average	Sd	t	df	p
	Available	834	13.41	6.02	2.46	904	.014*
	Unavailable	72	11.60	5.46			

* $p < .05$

Before the analysis, *Levene's Test* ($F = .431, p > .05$) was performed to find that the variances were homogeneously distributed. A significant difference ($t = 2.46, p < .05$) was determined in favor of the students who had a study room.

Students' attendance at kindergarten and/or nursery school

Table 7

Independent Sample t-Test Results Regarding Academic Achievement Scores According to the Variable of Attending Kindergarten/Preschool

Academic Achievement Test for English Course	Kindergarten- preschool attendance	N	Average	Sd	t	df	p
	Yes	834	13.23	5.96	-.616	904	.538*
	No	72	13.68	6.35			

* $p > .05$

Levene's test ($F = .548, p > .05$) was used to determine whether the variances were identical in the data set. There was no statistically significant difference ($t = -0.616, p > .05$).

Parental education levels of students

Table 8

ANOVA Results of English Academic Achievement Test Scores According to Parents' Education Level

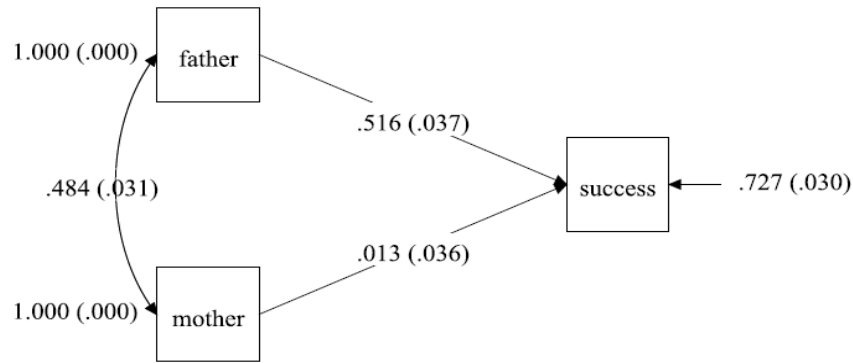
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	p
Mother's level of education	Between Groups	60.735	3	20.245	.562	.640*
	Within Groups	32486.744	902	36.016		
	Total	32547.479	905			
Father's level of education	Between Groups	68.065	3	22.688	.630	.596*
	Within Groups	32479.414	902	36.008		
	Total	32547.479	905			

* $p > .05$

The variances related to the mother's ($F = .646, p > .05$) and the father's education level ($F = .577, p > .05$) are the same. According to ANOVA analysis, there was no significant difference between the average education levels of the parents. However, many studies in the literature contradict this, so further analysis was conducted to address this variable in more depth.

Figure 2

Structural Equation Model Path Diagram of Academic Achievement Test for English Course According to Parents' Education Level



Since the parental education level variable is categorical, a structural equation model analysis was conducted to examine its relationship with academic achievement level. Accordingly, *STDYX Standardization* results indicate that there is a significant relationship between fathers' level of education and students' achievement in English language courses, and that the relationship between mothers' and fathers' level of education is positive and significant. However, it was found that there was no significant relationship between the mother's education level and academic achievement.

Table 9

STDYX Standardization Results

STDYX Standardization	Est.	S.E.	Est/S.E.	p
Success on Father Ed. Level	0.516	0.037	14.07	.000***
Success on Mother Ed. Level	0.013	0.036	0.36	0.71
Mother Ed. Level with Father Ed. Level	0.484	0.031	15.71	.000***
Father Ed. Level Means	2.812	0.078	35.94	.000***
Mother Ed. Level Means	2.724	0.075	36.41	.000***
Success R ²	0.273	0.030	9.06	.000***

*** $p < .001$

CFI (Comparative Fit Index) and *TLI* (Tucker-Lewis Index) are important indices used to assess the fit of structural equation models. While *CFI* assesses the fit of

the model by comparing it to an independent model, TLI assesses the fit by taking model complexity into account. Generally, values of 0.90 and above are considered acceptable fit, and values of 0.95 and above are considered good fit. In this study, the fit of the proposed model was evaluated using CFI and TLI indices (CFI = 1.000; TLI = 1.000). It shows that the model provides an excellent fit with the data. These fit values are considered as a positive sign in terms of the theoretical validity and overall structural integrity of the model.

The relation between academic achievement and academic self-perception

Table 10

Pearson Correlation Analysis Results of the Relationship between Academic Achievement in English Course and Academic Self-Perception

	Academic Self-Perception
Academic Achievement Test for English Course	.466*

** $p < .01$

There is a significant ($p < .01$; $r = .466$) relationship between academic achievement and academic self-perception. Therefore, as the participants' academic self-perception levels increase, their academic achievement in the English course increases.

The results of the correlation analysis showing the relationship between the sub-dimensions of confidence and effort and academic achievement in the English course are given in Table 8.

Table 11

Pearson Correlation Analysis Results of the Relationship between Academic Achievement in English Course and Academic Self-Perception Sub-Dimensions

	Academic Achievement Test for English Course	Trust	Effort
Academic Achievement Test for English Course			
Trust	.479**		
Effort	.352**	.618**	

** $p < .01$

There is a significant ($p < .01$), positive, and moderate ($r = .479$, $r = .352$) relationship between academic achievement in English course and the sub-dimensions of academic self-perception, confidence, and effort. In addition, there is a significant, moderate, and positive relationship between the sub-dimensions of academic self-perception.

The power of academic self-perception levels to predict academic achievement

Before the analysis, it was determined that the variables were normally distributed. In addition, it was checked whether the autocorrelation value, which is the other assumption of simple linear regression analysis, was between 1-3, and the Durbin-Watson value ($DW = 1.887$) was found. After determining that the prerequisites were met, the ANOVA table was analyzed. It is concluded that the independent variable is a significant predictor ($F = 250.257$, $p = .00$).

Table 12

The Predictive Power of Academic Self-Perception Level on Academic Achievement in English Course Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Model	R	R ²	Corrected R ²	Beta	Sr ²	t	p
Model 1	.466	.217	.216				
Academic Self-Perception				.466	.466	15.820	.000*

* $p < .05$

The level of academic self-perception explains 21.7% of the total variance of students' academic achievement in English language courses ($R = .466$, $R^2 = .217$).

Before the regression analysis, it was determined whether the necessary conditions were met. The first of these conditions is the absence of multicollinearity. For this, the results in the correlation table were checked, and it was determined that these results were below the upper limit of .850. For autocorrelation, the Durbin-Watson value was examined, and it was determined that it was between 1-3 ($DW = 1.871$). Based on the values, the data set was found to be suitable for multiple hierarchical regression. In the regression analysis, multiple hierarchical regression analysis was determined as a stepwise method.

Table 13

Multiple Regression Analysis Results of Academic Self-Perception Sub-Dimensions Predicting Academic Achievement in English Lesson

Model	R	R ²	Corrected R ²	Beta	Sr ²	t	p
Model 1	.479	.229	.228				
Trust				.479	.479	16.400	.000*
Model 2	.484	.234	.233				
Trust				.423	.355	11.410	.000*
Effort				.091	.082	2.461	.014*

* $p < .05$

Multiple hierarchical regression analysis was applied in 3 stages. In Model 1, the Trust sub-dimension was applied as the first stage. Accordingly, the Trust sub-dimension explained 22.9% of the total variance in students' academic achievement in English language courses ($R = .479$, $R^2 = .229$). Beta value ($\beta = .479$) and t value ($t = 16.400$; $p < .05$) are significant. Step 2 is shown in Model 2. According to this model, the Effort sub-dimension explains 23.4% of the variance related to students' academic achievement level ($R = .484$, $R^2 = .234$). When these results are analyzed, the Effort sub-dimension contributed 0.5% to the model. Beta values of the variables were calculated as (Trust $\beta = .423$, Effort $\beta = 0.91$). The t values of the variables were statistically significant ($t = 11.410$; $t = 2.461$; $p < .05$).

Conclusion and Discussion

Students' gender

There was no significant difference ($t = .513$, $p > .05$) in the achievement test based on the gender variable. While some studies suggest that English achievement differs between genders (Aydın, 2006; Martin & Hoover, 1987), many others indicate that gender does not have a significant effect on achievement in English courses (Hyde, 2005; DordiNejad & Porghoveh, 2014).

The lack of a significant difference in this study may be attributed to language skills and their relationship with individual characteristics, learning strategies, and motivation. It can be inferred that potential differences between girls and boys are likely

influenced not only by gender itself but also by indirect factors such as social expectations, motivation levels, socialization experiences, educational methods, and learning environments.

Possession of a study room for students

A total of 834 students reported having a study room. The mean score of students with a study room on the English achievement test was significantly higher than that of students without a study room ($t = 2.46, p = .014$). These findings align with similar studies in the literature, suggesting that having an individual study space positively impacts academic performance in English lessons. Such spaces are crucial for enhancing attention and concentration, as well as providing emotional and physical comfort tailored to students' individual learning needs (Ekmekyermezoğlu, 2010). A dedicated study room can help students minimize the negative effects of external distractions, create an organized and motivating study environment, and support effective study routines and time management (Fatmawaty & Anam, 2022; Savaž & Grel, 2014; Yelkperci et al., 2017).

Students' attendance at kindergarten and/or nursery school

A total of 834 students reported that they had attended kindergarten or preschool ($t = -.616, p > .05$). No statistically significant difference was found between the groups. Contrary to these findings, research suggests that early childhood education can enhance overall academic achievement by supporting cognitive, social, and emotional development. It is predicted that students who attend preschool will develop a positive attitude towards learning and gain experience in foundational academic skills (Bani et al., 2022; Daniels, 1995; Eweniyi, 2012). One of the few studies supporting the research findings was conducted by Milligan (2012), which indicates that students' preschool or kindergarten experience does not significantly affect their academic achievement in English. Achievement in English can often vary based on individual differences, program designs, teacher qualifications, continuity of practice, and family factors. Additionally, there is a need for long-term follow-up studies and research with larger sample sizes. Therefore, while attending kindergarten or nursery school may provide short-term advantages for seventh-grade secondary school students, its long-term

impact can vary and is influenced by numerous factors, complicating the evaluation of its effects.

Parental education levels of students

According to the ANOVA results, the variances related to mothers' ($F = .646, p > .05$) and fathers' education levels ($F = .577, p > .05$) were found to be identical, with no significant difference between the averages. A review of the literature revealed that many studies have indicated a correlation between the educational levels of parents and students' achievements in English language courses, with both increasing or decreasing in the same direction (Butler, 2014; Leibovitz, 1977; Marzulina et al., 2018; Pishghadam & Zabihi, 2011). It has been emphasized that children's vocabulary, reading habits, attitudes towards learning, and social skills can improve when parents possess a high level of education (Frome & Eccles, 1998).

For this reason, structural equation modeling was applied in further analysis, revealing a positive relationship between fathers' education levels and students' achievement, as well as a positive correlation between the educational levels of both mothers and fathers. The influence of fathers' education may stem from the structure of the sample; in the seventh-grade age group, fathers might play a more significant role in the educational process and serve as role models for their children, inspiring them regarding education and career aspirations. Additionally, the evolving roles of fathers in modern society may shift family support dynamics, strengthen emotional attachments, and enhance children's motivation. Changing societal perceptions may also lead to increased contributions from fathers in education, positively impacting children's academic achievement.

The relation between academic achievement and academic self-perception

According to the academic self-perception scale, the mean scores of the students were 2.90 in the confidence sub-dimension and 2.93 in the effort sub-dimension. The overall average for the scale was 2.92. This indicates that the students' academic self-perception related to the English course is at a medium level. Since the participants were selected from volunteer students, it can be interpreted that those with positive feelings and thoughts towards foreign language lessons may have been more willing to participate in

the study. Therefore, the moderate level of academic self-perception may be explained by the causal and correlational relationships of the relevant variables with academic self-perception.

The difficulty index of the English achievement test was calculated as .641, and the discrimination index was .710, indicating that the test is of medium difficulty and discriminative. The minimum score was two correct answers, while the maximum was 20 correct answers. The arithmetic mean of the achievement test scores was calculated as 12.82. Considering the standard deviation of 6.52 and the variance of 42.510, it can be inferred that students' achievement in the English course is generally at an intermediate level. The distribution shows a wide spread around the mean, implying a diverse range of achievement among students. The similar moderate levels of academic self-perception further indicate a mutual interaction between academic achievement and academic self-perception, suggesting these concepts may increase and decrease in direct proportion.

According to the results of the Pearson correlation analysis, a significant ($p < .01$), positive, and moderate ($r = .466$) relationship was found between the variables. Thus, as the level of academic self-perception increases, academic achievement in the English course also increases. Additionally, a significant ($p < .01$) and moderate ($r = .479$, $r = .352$) relationship was observed between the level of academic achievement and the sub-dimensions of academic self-perception.

The results of the regression analysis revealed that the level of academic self-perception explained 21.7% of the total variance in students' academic achievement in English. This indicates that some of the students' achievement levels in English can be attributed to their academic self-perceptions. In this context, students' beliefs, confidence, and efforts regarding their abilities and academic skills play a crucial role in enhancing their English skills. A positive academic self-perception in the English language learning process can be considered one of the key factors for improving language skills and increasing achievement. The confidence sub-dimension explained 22.9% of the total variance in students' academic achievement in the English course. In comparison, the effort sub-dimension explained 23.4% of the variance, thereby predicting achievement in English courses. Students' confidence in their abilities may

lead to more effort and thus positively affect their achievement in English courses. Moreover, increased confidence and effort levels among students may significantly contribute to improving language skills and enhancing academic achievement.

Numerous studies in Turkey and abroad support the findings of this research. According to Byrne (1990), academic self-perception is influenced by absolute academic achievement levels and how students perceive themselves in social comparison groups. Consequently, a positive academic self-perception may contribute to higher levels of academic achievement, while a negative self-perception may hinder performance. Barker (2005) emphasized that academic self-perception significantly impacts academic achievement by affecting students' motivation, effort, and engagement in academic pursuits. In general, a positive academic self-perception enhances English language course achievement by motivating students, encouraging them to exert effort, and increasing their belief in success, whereas a negative academic self-perception diminishes academic achievement due to low motivation, lack of self-confidence, and reduced willingness to put in effort (Kenç & Oktay, 2002; Marsh, 2001; Marsh & Martin, 2011; Saracaloğlu & Varol, 2007; Shavelson & Bolus, 1982; Sibanda et al., 2015; Steinmayr et al., 2014).

Research shows that academic self-perception is a crucial predictor of academic achievement and that students with a high academic self-perception tend to perform better academically (Burger & Naudé, 2019; Calero, 2012; Choi, 2005; Harter & Leahy, 2001; İşmar & Şehitoğlu, 2021; Joseph & Newman, 2010; Maehr & Braskamp, 1986; Marsh & Craven, 2006; Marsh & Hau, 2004; Parvez & Shakir, 2014; Sanchez & Sanchez-Roda, 2003). Therefore, improving academic self-perception is of critical importance for educational systems.

In conclusion, this analysis highlights the essential interaction between academic self-perception and performance in English language classes. The results emphasize the importance of foreign language teachers and educators focusing on strategies to strengthen language skills and students' academic self-perception.

Implications and Suggestions

The results indicate that as students' academic self-perception increases, their academic achievement in English also rises. Therefore, there is a pressing need to develop strategies aimed at strengthening students' academic self-perception. Educational institutions and teachers can enhance students' academic achievement by employing teaching methods that cultivate a positive academic self-perception during the English learning process.

Establishing incentive mechanisms, such as providing regular feedback and creating a supportive learning environment, can help accurately reflect students' strengths and weaknesses while offering opportunities for improvement. By fostering students' belief in their own abilities, they are more likely to approach English lessons with greater motivation, confidence, and a willingness to improve their academic performance.

The availability of an individual study space can also significantly impact students' academic achievement. Collaboration with parents and family members is essential in creating a positive environment that supports students' English language learning and overall success.

Concrete examples of activities to enhance students' academic self-perception include:

1. **Workshops:** Organizing sessions that guide students in setting short- and long-term academic goals, including strategies for achieving these goals.
2. **Mentoring Programs:** Pairing younger students with upper-level students or teachers to boost their academic confidence.
3. **Inspirational Events:** Hosting gatherings where students share success stories to motivate their peers and strengthen academic self-perception.
4. **Project-Based Activities:** Encouraging students to pursue projects in their areas of interest, fostering collaboration and problem-solving skills while enhancing their feelings about their academic abilities.

5. **Competitions and Fairs:** Organizing academic quiz competitions, science fairs, creative activities, and collaborative study groups to showcase students' talents and boost engagement.
6. **Emotional Intelligence Workshops:** Sessions that help students better understand themselves and evaluate their learning processes.
7. **Informative Seminars:** Engaging families in the educational process to inform them about supporting their children's academic success and improving their perspectives.

Given the relationship between academic self-perception and achievement in English courses, more customized and individualized assessment strategies can be beneficial. Personalized feedback will support students' development and help identify any factors that may hinder their academic self-perception.

Additionally, incorporating technology and multimedia tools, such as virtual reality and online platforms, into English lessons can create interactive and engaging learning environments that contribute to the development of both academic self-perception and achievement.

Ethics Committee Permission Information

This research study was conducted with the approval of the Research Ethics Committee of Balıkesir University (Approval No: 2022/05, dated October 11, 2022).

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Exploratory practice model for and with English language teaching students

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Abstract

This study reports on practitioner research in which undergraduate-level English language learners studying in an English Language Teaching program were taught how to conduct practitioner research, specifically the exploratory practice model, to highlight the importance of exploring the language classroom issues and to improve their instructional skills by engaging in research. During the 2023-2024 academic year fall term, the instructor, who is also the author of this study, introduced practitioner research. The students participated in all phases of the collective exploration of the instructor's puzzlement, addressing the problem of English language anxiety among silent students. First, Paphamihel's (2002) English Language Anxiety Scale was used to measure the students' anxiety levels. Secondly, two volunteer students were co-researchers, who watched the lesson recordings to identify the silent students. Finally, those students were interviewed to investigate the reasons for their anxiety and silence. Our findings indicated that their silence could be attributed to personal issues, not the course or the course tutor.

Keywords

Practitioner research, exploratory research, pre-service teacher education, language anxiety, silent students.

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Introduction

It has not been long since the teacher's authority gained a different perspective. The focus on teacher-led classes has been changed to student-centered classes, giving more opportunities to use more discussions and pair and group work activities, requiring more student participation and engagement (Tang, 2023). In contemporary classrooms, teachers are expected to design activities that keep students active, engaged, and in good relationships with each other so that they interact more, not only with their teachers but also with their peers. However, in many cases, it is not possible to have the equal participation of all the students in classroom activities.

In today's multicultural and diverse classroom environments, instructors still face the problem of silent students (Sequeira, 2021) who do not partake in the activities or participate only minimally during class time. Students may demonstrate different types of behavior while interacting with different groups of people. For Saka and Meriç (2021) and Asmalı (2019), students find speaking with friends easy, and their cultural background influences their interaction with peers. For some researchers, like Bista (2011), if teachers can help silent students from different cultures to participate more in classroom discussions, all students would benefit from this interaction.

Similarly, the Department of English Language Teaching (ELT) at Final International University had silent students. The instructor, who is also the author of this study, found that puzzling and drew on this puzzlement to engage in practitioner research. She observed that the students who came to class tended to sit in the classroom silently, wait for the lesson to finish, and leave the class without interacting with others. Drawing on her puzzlement, she decided to conduct a seven-week-long practitioner research, more specifically, an exploratory practice project, to find out why some students were silent in the classroom and take the initiative to deal with this instructional problem while also demonstrating practitioner research as a tool for prospective language educators to explore and tackle classroom-based issues. With this aim in mind, the third-year students were taught exploratory practice and took part in every stage of the research procedure, except for the planning phase, which was done by the researcher, so that when they became teachers, they could conduct one themselves and be equipped with a way of solving classroom problems.

Literature Review

Silent students as a language classroom phenomenon

Quite a number of researchers have dealt with the issue of silent students in various environments, highlighting the importance of interaction. Börekçi and Aydın (2018) mentioned that interaction directly influenced every individual, causing changes in the mental and emotional well-being of human beings. Likewise, Wilkinson and Olliver-Gray (2006) argued that a learning environment should be created in the classroom where all the students could participate in whole-class discussions since it would make

teachers' job difficult to understand whether they achieved lesson objectives or not when students kept silent.

Another important theme regarding the reasons for silence can be considered as culture, upbringing, or values (Yamat et al., 2013; Yates & Trang, 2012; Aghazadeh & Abedi, 2014). More specifically, Yamat, Fisher, and Rich (2013) attributed student silence to cultural issues – an Asian identity in their case. Peng et al. (2023) looked at “the relationship between cultural distance and classroom silence” (p. 1), claiming that when the students felt culturally distant, their silence increased in order to protect themselves, which caused a decrease in their learning. Yates and Trang (2012) argued that students from Asian cultures did not value classroom participation, unlike their Anglo-western counterparts. To illustrate, Japanese students regarded interaction in the classroom as irrelevant.

Staying silent in the language classroom might also be a multidimensional issue. Some students may be silent because they may not have prepared for the class, whereas others may be silent due to linguistic limitations or lack of motivation to present their ideas in front of others (Giray et al., 2022). Some researchers have found a relationship between silence and teacher behavior, curriculum, materials used, etc. In the study conducted by Martin (2013), the correlation between the curriculum and student silence was studied. The results showed that the students thought the schools were not very important in developing their communication skills, and they rarely experienced oral assessments. In short, they were not given enough opportunities in the classroom. The students believed that neither the secondary nor the higher secondary syllabi were enough to improve their listening and speaking skills. To sum up, their reluctance to speak was attributed to the failure of the curriculum to provide enough opportunities to the students.

Some researchers believe that silence may result in students' failure in exams (Khorasgani et al., 2022), or some students may even drop the course if this silence continues. Such possibilities have led a lot of researchers to explore methods and strategies aiming at engaging silent students more during class time. It is based on such a criticality that the author of the recent study decided to exert agency and conduct

practitioner research to explore the issue of silent students in her language classroom further.

Silent students and foreign language anxiety

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) has been a popular topic in educational linguistics since the 1980s. FLA is defined as a “distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). Along with its connection to cultural issues, it is also considered one of the psychological factors in the process of learning (Abdulrahman, 2023). In his study, Abdulrahman (2023) stated that psychological factors have a great effect on students.

Many studies were conducted to understand the instructional consequences of FLA. Zgutowicz (2009) tried to find out its effects on language learners' decisions to participate in discussions in English in a middle school classroom. To collect data, Paphamihel's (2002) English Anxiety Scale (ELAS) was used, and after interviewing 30 sixth-grade students, it was concluded that language anxiety was an important factor in students' decisions to use English. In another study conducted by Juhana (2012), three data collection techniques, including observations, questionnaires, and interviews, were used to see whether psychological factors hindered students from speaking or not. The results showed five psychological factors, ranked from highest to lowest prevalence: fear of making mistakes (37%), shyness (26%), anxiety (18%), lack of confidence (13%), and lack of motivation (6%). In Suleimenova's (2013) study, the researcher focused on the anxiety of Kazakh students. To collect data, Suleimenova used semi-structured interview questions, a version of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz et al. (1986), and classroom observations. The results indicated that the students felt overwhelmed by the fear of failure, panic, and the presence of new material. Similarly, Aghazadeh and Abedi (2014) intended to understand the causes of Iranian students' reluctance to actively participate in discussions. The research results indicated that lack of motivation and confidence, anxiety, and introvertedness were the reasons for silence in the classroom. In a more recent study, Giray et al. (2022) aimed to determine university students' anxiety levels in the English language in Metro Manila, The Philippines. The results were analyzed under four topics: The first was the lack of language skills. Secondly, they had personal

insecurities and low confidence. Thirdly, they felt other people judged them. Lastly, their high level of anxiety resulted in a lack of motivation and interest.

Finally, there are some examples of research that combine all of the above mentioned factors. For example, in China, Xie (2010) searched for why some students were silent. They seldom answered, initiated questions, or mentioned their opinions, and when they did, the answers were very brief. The findings revealed that the students' passive role could be related to factors like culture, limited language resources, anxiety, and the absence of opportunities for interaction as a result of too much teacher control. The last example is the research conducted by Savaşçı (2014), who wanted to see the reasons for student silence. Her students participated in reading, listening, and writing classes but they were silent in the English as a foreign language (EFL) speaking class. The results were similar to the results mentioned in the previous studies. Anxiety, fear of being despised, teacher strategy, and culture were the factors influencing the students' motivation to speak in a negative way.

In sum, many studies have demonstrated the connection between silent learners and FLA, along with cultural factors. Therefore, the author of the current study needed to go beyond conventional methods of researching FLA and incorporate exploratory elements of practitioner research into the well-established ways of researching anxiety in the language classroom setting, aiming to fill the gap in the literature. With that in mind, and drawing on her puzzlement as the instructor (i.e., why are some students particularly silent in my class?), the author worked on the following research questions:

- What was the level of FLA among the silent students?
- What were the underlying factors that resulted in their silence in the classroom?

Method

Exploratory practice was utilized in this practitioner research. Accordingly, the instructor's puzzlement drove the practitioner research while volunteering students were included into the collective exploration of the puzzlement intentionally and explicitly. Smith and Rebolledo's framework for conducting exploratory practitioner research (2018, p. 22) was adopted to guide this study.

More specifically, the instructor began with “Plan[ning] to explore (plan questions and how to get data).” At this phase, the instructor reflected on her practice and chose an area to focus on. The author also ideated the puzzlement, identified the research questions, and decided on ways of collecting data at this stage. Secondly, in the “Explore (gather data)” phase, data were collected to be analyzed and interpreted later on. This was followed by the third phase, “Analyse and reflect (answer the questions on the basis of the data),” in which the puzzle was clarified, and action was planned.

As Allwright (2005) puts forward, exploratory practice brings together practice pedagogy and research in the classroom and helps teachers “... to develop their own understanding of life in the language classroom” (p.361). In exploratory practice, an instructor’s aim is not to overcome an existing issue (i.e., silent students) but to explore it in a collective meaning-making, radically positioning learners as co-researchers. For Allwright (2005), practitioner research is devoted to understanding classroom life quality. So, the emphasis is on understanding, not taking action or solving a problem. In this research type, the students are seen as practitioners, as they are also responsible for developing classroom life as much as teachers. Its emphasis is on puzzling, and it “... places learners, teachers, and researchers as co-investigators at the heart of the research-practice nexus” (Hanks, 2019, p.143).

Participants

The study was undertaken at an international private university in Kyrenia, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The participants were nineteen female and seven male students, aged between nineteen and twenty-one. Out of twenty-six students in total, twenty-four of them were Turkish, one Russian, and one Moroccan by nationality. They were third-year students at the Faculty of Education, Department of English Language Teaching, where the medium of education was English. The study was conducted as a part of the ‘Special Teaching Methods’ course, in which the students learn different research methods in order to help them identify their problems in the classroom and try to solve them to improve their teaching.

Data collection and procedure

The study employed three methods of collecting data: surveys, observations, and interviews. The survey, given to the students in English, was an adapted version of a

scale based on the English Language Anxiety Scale (ELAS) from Pappamihel (2002). As mentioned by Pappamihel (p. 334), the scale has “an internal consistency reliability of .89.” The original version consists of twenty Likert-type questions both in English and Spanish, with ten questions in English and ten Spanish equivalents. In this study, since the students did not know Spanish, only the English version was used, reducing the number of questions to ten. ELAS aims to evaluate the anxiety levels of English language students when learning foreign languages. Students rated responses on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

In the first stage, the students were given a lecture about FLA and its possible effects on causing silence in the classroom. Later, all the participants (twenty-six in total) were given the scale to detect the ones with high levels of anxiety. Students who scored twenty-six and above in the survey were regarded as language learners with higher FLA. The students were asked to write their names because later on, only the ones with high scores were going to be the focus of this study.

In the second stage, observation, the silent students were detected by the researcher with the help of two students. This was done by watching the lesson recordings from the Learning Management System (LMS), where all the lessons were recorded. In total, five lessons were observed. The observers were given a sheet with all the students’ names. Each time a student participated in the lesson, they coded the participation into the classroom interaction for that particular student. Later, the three observers came together, and their codings were compared to identify the silent students. The comparison of codings revealed that of the nine students with high anxiety scores, three did not have a problem participating in the lessons. So, only the remaining six students were identified as focal participants and were invited to an interview.

In the third stage, the six silent students who were detected by watching the recordings were interviewed face-to-face, using semi-structured questions. While preparing the questions, the researcher asked the students to suggest some questions first, then, from that collection, the researcher consolidated the suggested questions, omitting the repeated or irrelevant ones after member-checking the final slate of interview questions with the students. The interviews were conducted by the two students to get more reliable results since the second part was about the teacher. The

interview consisted of eighteen questions, divided into two sub-categories. The interview was designed in English, and the students' answers were recorded using an audio-recorder device. In the first part, consisting of ten questions, the focus was on the student's characteristics, perceptions, and abilities. The second part, consisting of eight questions, was designed to examine the relationship between the reluctance to speak and teacher-related points. The findings from these interview questions gave some idea about the internal and external factors affecting student participation. The questions are presented in Table 1:

Table 1.

Interview questions that were created collectively in the exploratory practice

Questions related to characteristics, perceptions, and abilities of reticent students	Are you an extrovert or an introvert person?
	Are you a shy person?
	Do you like your classroom?
	Do you like your classmates?
	Do you have any health problems that hinder you from speaking?
	Do you have big problems you have difficulty solving?
	Do you have financial problems?
	Do you have difficulties understanding the coursebook/materials?
	Are you motivated to come to the course?
	Are you happy to be in this department?
Questions related to course or teacher-based issues	Are the classroom activities suitable for your level?
	Does the teacher give you enough time and opportunity to speak?
	How does the teacher approach you? Does she consider your personal characteristics?
	Do you have difficulties understanding the teacher?
	Does the teacher treat you badly?
	Is the teacher fair?
	When you get low grades, do you blame your teacher?
	Have you ever been reprimanded by the teacher?

Data analysis

The FLA scale results were analyzed by looking at the frequencies and descriptively evaluating the total scores taken from the scale. Since the highest score that can be taken from the scale was fifty, the students with a score of twenty-six and above were taken

as the ones with high anxiety. Only those students were invited to the next phase of data collection, which comprised the student-led interviews. For the current classroom-based study, the FLA scale was used as a survey to promote conceptual understanding of FLA among language learners while engaging them in the research procedure. In other words, it is important to highlight that the FLA scale was used to contribute to the collective meaning-making of the instructor and the language learners in an academic and established way. For this reason, the instructor did not run generic quantitative analyses of the scale results and only used it as a survey to gauge interest among learners. That said, the instructor relied on previous studies, which confirmed the validity and reliability of the FLA scale (Khalaf & Omara, 2022; Yim, 2014; Yim & Yu, 2011).

Findings

Surveying the level of foreign language anxiety among learners

In terms of the first research question, ‘What was the level of FLA among the silent students?’, it was discovered that out of twenty-six students, nine of them got scores above twenty-six, which showed a high level of anxiety. Table 2 shows the scores and frequencies (Yaratan, 2020).>

Table 2.

FLA Scale Scores

Scores taken from the FLA Scale	f	Anxiety Level
5 -9	4	Very Relaxed
10 – 14	2	
15 – 19	3	Relaxed
20 – 24	6	
25 – 29	3	Anxious
30 – 34	2	
35 – 39	3	Very Anxious
40 – 44	1	

As can be seen from Table 2, nine students were detected to be either ‘anxious’ or ‘very anxious.’ At that stage, the decision was to interview those nine students with high levels

of anxiety. However, as explained above, the number was reduced to six after the lesson observations.

Detecting the students who remained silent during the sessions

The lesson observations were conducted in a classroom of twenty-six students. Since it was an English medium department, students were encouraged to speak in English during the lessons. Moreover, there were students from different cultural and national backgrounds in the department, such as Libya, Morocco, Russia, Iran, Pakistan, etc. Since they did not know Turkish, all the students were institutionally encouraged to use English during the sessions. However, it should be noted that not all these nationalities are observed in every course. For example, in this study, only students from Russia, Morocco, and Turkey took the Special Teaching Methods course.

Data from the observations demonstrated that the instructor mostly explained the topic and then directed questions to check understanding, which were answered by non-silent students. It was seen that most of the students were able to participate verbally in the lesson activities. After waiting for some time, the instructor nominated the silent ones several times in each lesson. Most of the silent students did not volunteer to talk at all.

Exploring the factors for staying silent

In terms of the second research question, ‘What are the underlying factors that result in students’ silence in the classroom?’, the following findings were detected:

The findings related to the characteristics, perceptions, and abilities of silent students

Inductive coding of the interviews revealed that many students attributed their behavior in the classroom and their level of participation to perceptions and abilities. To illustrate, five out of six students said they believed they were introverts; one said it differed depending on where and who s/he was with. Below are some examples from the interview data:

Student 3: “I like interacting with others and sharing my problems with my friends. I can express myself easily.”

Student 6: “When I am with close Turkish friends, I feel I am an extrovert, but in class discussions with classmates, I am an introvert.”

Shyness was a recurrent issue that emerged in the interviews. Three of them said they were shy; two said it depended on the situation. One said s/he was not shy. Examples were:

Student 1: “I am shy, especially when I meet new people.”

Student 2: “I am sometimes shy, depending on the situation.”

Student 3: “I think I am talkative. I am not shy at all.”

About the classroom environment, five students said they liked their classroom, but one student was not so sure about it. They all said they liked their classmates.

Student 6: “So so! I am not sure about some of my classmates.”

Student 5: “I like almost all of them.”

In terms of health problems, none of them had such a problem. Similarly, five of them did not have big problems in their lives in general. Only one said s/he had some problems with her family. Four of them did not have financial problems, and two of them had difficulty paying for their general expenses.

Student 5: “My problems are just like anybody else’s, not very important.”

Student 6: “Sometimes I disagree with some decisions of my father.”

Student 4: “In Cyprus, the rents are very high. I have to work part-time.”

Student 6: “In some months, I have trouble paying my bills.”

Similar to perceived characteristic features such as being an introvert or extrovert and shyness, perceived linguistic abilities also emerged as an important factor underlying the silent behavior among language learners. To be specific, five of them commented that they often experienced difficulties in understanding the coursebook, lesson materials, or instructions. One said s/he found almost all of the materials difficult to comprehend, as illustrated in the data excerpts below:

Student 2: “Some parts in the book are difficult to understand; I ask my friends to explain.”

Student 3: “When I am bored or tired, I have difficulty understanding the material.”

Student 5: “When I read the topic beforehand, I can understand, but when I don’t, I have difficulty.”

Student 6: “I have difficulty understanding the lessons in LMS. I study with a friend.”

The final personal attribution that emerged in the interview data was their perceived motivation in studying English. Three of the learners were motivated to come to the course; one was sometimes motivated, and two were not motivated at all.

Student 1: “I am not sure of being an English teacher. I might find another job.”

Student 6: “Sometimes I don’t want to study English. I find it difficult and boring.”

Relatedly, their motivation was not only related to studying English as a language learner but also studying in an English major program, pointing out a more social aspect of their motivation or the lack of it. Four were happy to be in that department; two were not happy (one wanted to study psychology instead, and the other wanted to study arts).

Student 4: “I didn’t want to be an English teacher; my family forced me. I am mostly unmotivated.”

Student 6: “I wanted to study arts at Arkin University but my parents rejected.”

The findings related to course or teacher-based issues

The teacher’s implementation of the topics and her behavior in the classroom were among the important issues that emerged in the interviews. There were points about the difficulty level of the activities and understanding the teacher. To illustrate, four students said the classroom activities brought to the sessions were generally suitable for them, but two of them said they had difficulty coping with the tasks given.

Student 5: “Sometimes I ask my friends to repeat the instructions.”

Student 6: “I cannot understand the tasks, cannot finish them.”

Secondly, all of them reported that they found the time given to the students to speak adequate. For example:

Student 1: “Our class is not a big one, so we have enough time to speak and tell our opinions.”

Student 2: “The teacher tries to make everybody speak.”

Student 4: “When we do pair or group work activities, we all speak more.”

Another point was about understanding the teacher. The responses revealed that the students did not have a problem with this issue. Five students said they did not have any difficulties understanding her. Only one said s/he sometimes had difficulties because of her lack of background knowledge. Examples were:

Student 5: “I sometimes have difficulties understanding, but I can always ask the teacher to explain again.”

Yet another point was about the teacher’s behavior towards the students in general. All the students said the teacher approached them in a kind and considerate way and was careful with their personal characteristics. None of them said that the teacher behaved them in a bad way. All of them said she was very kind. To illustrate:

Student 3: “Our teacher does not judge us.”

Student 4: “The teacher is not authoritative; she is kind.”

Student 6: “The teacher helped me when I forgot to send the assignment on time. She always helps us.”

Student 1: “The teacher never behaves in a rude way.”

Student 3: “The teacher is always calm and kind.”

The last point concerning the teacher was about her fairness. Four students said the teacher was fair. Two of them said she was sometimes fair, and she never reprimanded them, as can be seen in the examples:

Student 2: “She is a fair teacher.”

Student 4: “Sometimes she is not fair in giving grades.”

Student 5: “She has been unfair a few times.”

Student 1: “She never does such a thing (reprimanding)”

Student 2: “She doesn’t reprimand us.”

Student 3: “ I have never been reprimanded by her.”

The last issue was about the grades of students. Five of them said their grades were low but that it was their own fault, and they were aware of their need to study more. One said both the teacher and himself/herself were to blame. The examples were:

Student 4: “My grade is low, but I know I should improve my English.”

Student 6: “My grade is low. I am not a graduate of the language department from high school. I have pronunciation and grammar mistakes.”

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the instructor first aimed to demonstrate to the third-year language learners an example of classroom-based practitioner research and second, to explore the reasons for student silence in her classroom collaboratively with her students.

Anxiety was the primary issue that was investigated since it was known that high levels of it could make the students silent and reluctant to take part in classroom activities (Horwitz et al., 1986; Pappamihel, 2002). Using the ELAS (Pappamihel, 2002) as a survey, an important proportion of the learners (nine out of twenty-six) were found to experience high levels of FLA. The findings of the current study were in alignment with previous studies, which demonstrated foreign language anxiety in similar contexts (e.g., Turkey and Northern Cyprus) (Uştuk & Aydın, 2015; Elaldi, 2016).

While exploring the factors underlying anxiety, several issues, including personality-related problems, emerged. More specifically, those issues included shyness, motivation (Juhana, 2012), or introvertedness (Aghazadeh & Abedi, 2014). Also, learners’ perceived linguistic abilities constituted another anxiety-provoking factor that resulted in silence among students. This included difficulty in keeping abreast with the curriculum, materials, and teacher instructions, which also corroborated the prior research (e.g., Martin, 2013).

In a nutshell, the results gathered from all of the above-mentioned points showed that the reasons for being silent could be attributed to high levels of anxiety, lack of necessary background knowledge and language barrier (English, in this study); difficulty of understanding materials and lastly, some personality traits like being shy and introvert. However, as mentioned before, the aim of the study was to explore issues within our context. It was meant to enhance learning and help students in their educational journeys. The findings cannot be generalized but are believed to be valuable for practitioners working in similar contexts.

Practical implications

As a practitioner research exploring student silence in English language classrooms, the current study provides implications regarding language teaching practice. Teachers of silent students should try to explore the underlying factors of silent behavior in the language classroom. In the context of the current practitioner research, many of the factors were related to the ‘perceptions’ of learners, such as the perceived characteristic traits or perceived language abilities. This shows that understanding learners’ perceptions of self and self-efficacy is of critical importance for language instructors who are experiencing similar problems. Language teachers also need to take into account that language learners often face challenges in their social relationships with their colleagues or families that may influence their level of motivation. As Bao (2023, p. 87) mentioned, “[learners] struggle with themselves, with the present and with the past). So, it is the teachers’ job to find ways to help these students to become more active in the classroom. For Juma et al. (2022), there is a relationship between teachers’ immediacy, students’ silence, and hopelessness.

Limitations of the study

The study was conducted with a small number of students, so the results cannot be generalized. In such studies, the researcher— in this case, the instructor—identifies a problem, seeks to understand its causes, and proposes potential solutions. If the study were repeated with a larger group of students, we would gather more quantitative data, leading to more reliable results.

Additionally, the junior students engaged in learning about the research process could have benefited from greater involvement in the study's planning phase. Participation was limited to a small number of students, as only those who volunteered were included. As Allwright (2005, p. 353) stated, "...the learners... should be seen as classroom practitioners developing their own understanding of language classroom life." Thus, increased participation would enhance the overall outcome.

Ethics Committee Permission Information

This study was administered with the approval of The Research Ethics Committee, Final International University, dated 24.09.2024 and numbered 14/100/89.

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Delving into the world of Turkish 9th grade EFL students in a flipped classroom context: Analyzing perceptions and experiences

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Abstract

Flipped classroom, which combines online and face-to-face learning, is an innovative model. This study examined the 9th grade Turkish students' experiences learning English in a flipped classroom. Nineteen students from a high school in İzmir participated in the study. An intrinsic case study was employed as a qualitative research design to investigate the effectiveness of the flipped classroom from the viewpoint of 9th grade EFL students. Data were collected through student journals, teacher journals, and focus group interviews. The data collected was analyzed by using thematic analysis. The results showed that the flipped classroom model enhanced the students' language skills, especially in speaking, and encouraged active participation, motivation, and collaboration. Most of the students found the model more time-efficient compared to traditional classrooms. Furthermore, the students valued the flexibility of learning at their own pace but reported challenges such as adapting to the model, inadequate preparation, and internet connectivity issues.

Keywords

Flipped Classroom Model, K-12 EFL student perceptions, K-12 EFL student experiences, English as a foreign language

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Introduction

In recent years, educators have paid considerable attention to the Flipped Classroom Model (FCM) due to technological advancements. The FCM is a student-centered approach that prioritizes active, peer, and collaborative learning, wherein learners assume responsibility for their learning process. In flipped classrooms, students do preliminary online tasks designated by the instructor before class time and participate in collaborative and active learning activities during the class period (Reidsema et al., 2017). In other words, the FCM offers students more active learning environments by

implementing activities like homework that are frequently performed outside of the classroom in traditional classroom settings. Bergmann and Sams (2012) suggest that the model allows students to learn at their own pace at home and deepen their understanding through interactive class activities.

Likewise, Başal (2015) highlights how technology will undoubtedly play an integral role in education in the twenty-first century. Many research studies suggest that digital learning enhances students' anticipation and participation in the learning experience owing to the accessibility, mobility, and interactivity of mobile devices. (Murdock & Williams, 2011; Thorne et al., 2009). Namely, technology integration in education enhances students' motivation to explore their potential, skills, and talents, fostering greater autonomy in their learning experience.

English Language Teaching (ELT) holds global significance owing to the prominence of English in sectors including education, commerce, and medicine. The primary goal of the English Language Teaching Curriculum in Türkiye is to use language effectively (Ministry of National Education [MoNE], 2018). However, inadequate time is designated for English language instruction in elementary, middle, and high schools to successfully improve students' linguistic proficiency. Consequently, educators strive to pursue more innovative, cost- and time-effective, student-centered learning methodologies to deal with the challenges of teaching the target language within the EFL framework.

The FCM can overcome the identified difficulties by offering a time-efficient, collaborative, autonomous, and student-centered learning setting in the classroom. To address this, the Ministry of National Education in Türkiye (MoNE) redesigned its curriculum to include communicative language teaching. However, problems still exist in primary and secondary public schools in teaching English as a foreign language. In this regard, research by Demirtaş and Erdem (2015), Dinçer and Koç (2020), and Gürel and Demirhan-İşcan (2020) highlight problems such as limited class time, inadequate teaching materials, large class sizes, challenges in evaluating speaking and listening competencies, and coursebooks that fail to fulfill the demands of students.

Kırkgöz (2009) emphasizes a divergence between language education policies at the macro level and how they are carried out in the classroom at the micro level. She

contends that although the curricula are designed according to communicative language teaching methodologies, the implementation of learner-centered and communicative teaching methods is limited in EFL classes. This constraint is due to limited class time and the prevailing strategy of teacher-centered EFL instruction. Özmat and Senemoğlu (2021) also explored the challenges faced by English learners in Ankara's public secondary and high schools. They conducted a survey with 2317 students and discovered that there were a number of concerns that were prevalent, such as a lack of communicative practice in textbooks, inadequate use of visual and audio aids, inadequate training in listening and speaking, lack of language learning strategies, low self-confidence, and classroom management problems.

Based on the insights from the studies mentioned above, this research suggests that the Flipped Classroom Model (FCM) could offer solutions that are encountered in English language teaching, especially in public high schools. Additionally, implementing flipped English classes could foster learner-centered, communicative, and collaborative learning environments. This student-centered model promotes active, peer-based, and collaborative learning, with students responsible for their education. In the FCM, students complete online tasks before class and participate in interactive activities during class time (Reidsema et al., 2017). This shifts traditional homework into class time, creating a more engaging learning environment. Şensöz and Erdemir (2022) reviewed studies on the flipped classroom model in ELT in Türkiye, finding that few focused on K-12 students and most used mixed or quantitative methods. Similarly, Turan and Akdağ-Çimen (2020) found that most flipped learning studies targeted university students, with fewer focusing on K-12 participants.

Considering the insights from the studies above, this study aims to address this gap by using a qualitative research design as an intrinsic case study in a science high school to explore flipped English classrooms with K-12 students. Given the limited research on high school students' experiences with the FCM in EFL, this study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of learner perceptions and experiences at this level. The researcher aims to explore student motivation and challenges to assist instructors considering the FCM for their EFL courses.

Literature Review

Theoretical framework of the flipped classroom model

In the light of the principles of FCM, it can be asserted that constructivism and social constructivism theories have a close connection to the FCM, as they highlight active learning, student involvement, and learners' building up their knowledge throughout the process of learning. As defined by Gagnon and Collay (2005), constructivism involves learners building understanding through interaction with prior and new knowledge, guided by teachers who facilitate rather than solely transmit knowledge (Brown, 2014). The FCM advocates for active participation, ownership of learning, meaningful learning, and personalization, all of which are fundamental to constructivist learning theory. The FCM requires learners to be independent and self-regulated to adapt to 21st-century technological innovations in education. Tucker (2012) asserts that the implementation of the FCM enhances the learning environment by fostering greater student engagement and motivation, consistent with the theory of constructivist learning.

As a type of constructivist learning theory, social constructivism, developed by Vygotsky (1978), emphasizes social interaction and collaborative learning, with the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) highlighting the gap between learners' current and potential abilities. Collaborative learning within the ZPD involves working with more knowledgeable peers or experts to accomplish tasks (Vygotsky, 1981; Feryok, 2017). Gruba (2004) states that "social constructivists promote close ties between authentic activities, collaborative learning, a variety of materials, the student ownership of outcomes, and critical reflection" (p. 3). Social constructivist learning theory argues that learners engage in educational settings characterized by interactive, collaborative, and reflective processes. During the in-class sessions of the FCM, students are required to collaborate effectively in groups to set objectives, exchange ideas, and make decisions. Furthermore, students communicate with each other in flipped classrooms via extracurricular activities such as forums and online interactions. Upon revising the fundamental principles of social constructivism, it becomes apparent that the FCM, as a learner-centered model, is grounded on this learning theory.

Students perception of the flipped classroom model in ESL/EFL contexts

Research on the FCM generally indicates that students have positive perceptions toward the model, though some negative experiences are noted. Mehring (2016) was one of the first to explore the use of FCM in EFL, highlighting its ability to create student-centered, active learning environments through digital tools. Han (2015) further explored the model's potential in second language acquisition, finding that it enhances learner autonomy and improves language learning outcomes. Webb and Doman (2020) studied the FCM in various settings, including the USA, Macau, and Colombia, and found that the use of digital tools increased student engagement and positive attitudes toward flipped learning. Similarly, despite some challenges, Shahani et al. (2021) and Nguyen (2018) reported positive perceptions and improvements in language competence among EFL learners using flipped learning.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Ma and Luo (2022) implemented the FCM online for Chinese EFL undergraduates, revealing generally positive student perceptions, though some less motivated students found challenges with online platforms and interaction. Other studies, like those by Zainuddin and Perera (2019) and Shih and Huang (2020), emphasized the FCM's ability to enhance autonomous learning and metacognitive strategies in language learning.

Some studies have also focused on the FCM's impact on specific language skills. For example, Köroğlu and Çakır (2017) found that the FCM significantly improved speaking skills among pre-service English teachers, while Özkurkudis and Bümen (2019) reported that it was time-saving for teaching grammar in writing lessons. Studies such as Li and Zhou (2021) and Yakop et al. (2023) highlighted the effectiveness of the FCM in improving speaking skills and learning experiences through digital platforms.

Some studies indicate that flipped classrooms enhance autonomy and engagement but can be difficult to adapt to initially. Farrah and Qawasmeh (2018) and Hung (2015) noted that flipped classrooms encourage active learning and self-reliance. Chen Hsieh et al. (2017) found improvements in interaction and speaking skills. However, some studies, such as Chou (2020) and Han et al. (2023), highlight challenges with adapting to the model and managing course content. This finding was similarly reflected in Nguyen (2018), who examined students' perceptions of English instruction

in flipped classrooms. She noted that some students were reluctant to adjust to the new model, and adhering to the flipped learning instructions proved initially difficult.

For effective implementation, it is essential to consider student readiness and personal characteristics, such as self-directed learning and motivation (Hao, 2016). Overall, while flipped classrooms offer significant benefits, they require thoughtful planning to address potential challenges. Ye (2022) investigated the FCM in Chinese primary and secondary schools, finding that it promotes engagement, self-study skills, and higher-order thinking. However, challenges such as increased workload for teachers and insufficient self-study abilities among students were noted.

In Türkiye, studies on the FCM are mostly implemented in universities. For example, Başal (2015) found that flipped classrooms help English learners by promoting self-paced learning and participation but stressed the importance of active in-class activities. Akçor (2018) reported increased motivation and flexibility among pre-service teachers but mentioned that poor internet access sometimes hindered the preparation of learners. Çavdar (2018) emphasized the importance of engaging videos to improve student interaction and learning responsibility. Although the FCM is widely used in higher education, its application in K-12 settings is less explored. In Turkish context, studies by Kırmızı and Kömeç (2020) and Ayçiçek and Yanpar-Yelken (2018) were conducted to bridge this gap. These studies found positive impacts of the FCM on student engagement, autonomy, and motivation, but also highlighted challenges like resistance to new learning models and the time required for teachers to prepare flipped lessons. Overall, these studies provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of flipped learning on language teaching, highlighting its advantages as well as its drawbacks.

Methodology

Research design

This study used a qualitative research design, which focuses on understanding participants' experiences of a particular phenomenon within a specific context and time (Heigham & Croker, 2009). The qualitative research approach is longitudinal, enabling

the researcher to acquire a deep and comprehensive understanding of the participants (Croker, 2009). This study aims to investigate the perceptions and experiences of 9th grade EFL students in flipped English classrooms. The study is also designed as an intrinsic case study which focuses on gaining a deep understanding of a specific case without attempting to generalize the findings or compare them with other cases (Stake, 1995). The aim is to examine the experiences and perspectives of the 9th grade EFL students in flipped English classrooms, without extending the findings beyond this specific case or making comparisons with other cases. This study addresses the following research question to understand the impact of flipped classrooms on EFL classes at a public science high school:

What are the perceptions and experiences of Turkish 9th grade EFL students at a science high school who are learning English as a foreign language in a flipped classroom?

Setting and participants

The study was conducted during the first semester of the 2022-2023 academic year at Menemen Şehit Ahmet Özsoy Science High School. The participants in the study are 14–15-year-old students familiar with using particular technological tools and applications for subject-based learning. Although they have backgrounds in technology, this is their first experience with the FCM in the context of English language learning. To reduce the students' anxieties, the researcher arranged a meeting and described the model comprehensively, underlining each phase of the implementation procedure. The participants were informed about the study's goal, and the researcher indicated that their participation was voluntary. The students who volunteered to participate in the study have received consent forms for their parents to sign.

The study lasted 8 weeks, and the EFL flipped classroom content was aligned with the 9th-grade curriculum of the MoNE. The participant students attended English lessons for 4 hours per week, with each session lasting 40 minutes. The 'Teenwise' coursebook for 9th grades, provided by the MoNE, was used for the flipped English class. The researcher also created multiple tasks and resources for both in-class and out-of-class activities to improve the flipped learning experience.

To implement the FCM, the researcher prepared lesson plans and tasks for the flipped English class, which included pre-class, in-class, and post-class sessions. Lesson videos were recorded using "Zoom" application. The FCM was delivered through the free blended learning platform "Google Classroom." The researcher benefited from the Web 2.0 tools such as JeopardyLabs, Kahoot, Padlet, Vocaroo, Mentimeter, Wordwall, CapCut, and Canva.

Two sample weekly plans for the FCM implemented in this study are given below:

Table 1

Weekly plans for the FCM

Week & Duration	Objectives	Pre-class Assignments	In-class Activities	Post-Class Activities
1 st Week 4 hours	Students: -introduce themselves and talk about their hobbies, families, and friends. -ask for directions and give directions.	Students: -watch videos on the online platform Google Classroom, take notes and practice the given expressions. -do the pre-class tasks.	-Checking the understanding of students with a quiz. -Peer work listening activity. -Collaborative reading activity -Peer work listening activity -Role-play activity to ask for and give directions	Students: -write a paragraph to introduce themselves by using the Web 2.0 tool "Padlet". - use the Web 2.0 tool "Vocaroo" and record their voice describing directions from their home to the school.
2 nd Week 4 hours	Students: -talk about people from different cultures, cities, and countries. - ask and answer questions about location of things and places. (place of prepositions)	Students: -watch videos on the online platform Google Classroom, take notes and practice the given expressions. -do the pre-class tasks.	-Checking their understanding by using the Web 2.0 to "Mentimeter". -Collaborative reading activity -Circle Chat-Speaking Activity -Describe and draw, collaborative speaking activity.	Students: - use the Web 2.0 tool "Vocaroo" and record their voice describing their rooms.

Data collection tools and process

This study included three data collection instruments: students' journals, teacher's journals, and focus group interviews. The researcher prepared questions for journal entries and focus group interviews, which were reviewed by an external academic expert. After reaching a consensus, the data collection tools were ready for use.

Students kept weekly journals, which were collected every Friday after scheduled meetings to encourage them to share detailed insights. The questions raised in the journals were divided into three separate categories as follows: "opinions related to the out-of-class process", "opinions related to the in-class process", and "general evaluation of the Flipped Classroom Model". The researcher established a relaxed environment and assured the students of their entire sincerity, emphasizing that all provided information would remain confidential. The journal writing lasted 40 minutes.

The researcher additionally monitored each lesson and kept journals. The teacher journal as a checklist contained questions about students' experiences in learning English via the Flipped Classroom Model. In addition to Yes or No answers, the teacher journal, designed as a checklist, had a section for "additional information." Additionally, the researcher requested the support of a colleague who devoted four hours to observing the flipped English lessons. The observer utilized the researcher's prepared observation sheet and checklist to log her findings and take notes during the lesson. This assisted the teacher-researcher in analyzing the collected data from a different perspective.

For the third data collection method, this study utilized focus group interviews. The participants were interviewed, and their experiences were audio-recorded. Focus group interviews are superior to individual interviews in gathering more profound and detailed data owing to their group dynamics.

Krueger and Casey (2000) point out that focus group interviews provide "a more natural environment than that of individual interviews because participants are influencing and influenced by others just as they are in real life" (p.11). The participants answered semi-structured focus group interview questions in a relaxed and conversational manner, as Yin (2014) recommended. Two focus group interviews were conducted in the fourth and eighth weeks with different students to gather their

experiences and perceptions. Six students participated in each interview. The interviews were held in the school library, recorded, and later transcribed.

Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, a common qualitative method for identifying and organizing patterns and themes (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Key themes from students' journals, the teacher's journals, and focus group interviews were systematically identified and organized based on the research questions. The researcher followed Braun and Clarke's (2012) six phases of thematic analysis: familiarizing with the data, generating initial codes, identifying themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report.

Trustworthiness of the study

In this qualitative case study, the researcher played an active role throughout the entire process, spending significant time with participants and assuming various roles. Following Heigham and Croker's (2009) advice, the researcher built close relationships with participants to gain a comprehensive understanding. Pre-meetings were held to inform students about the study and obtain parental consent. The researcher kept detailed journals of each lesson and collaborated with a colleague who observed the classes using a prepared checklist, providing an additional perspective. Weekly meetings encouraged authentic student journal entries without influencing their responses. Focus group interviews were conducted with pre-prepared and additional questions, recorded, transcribed, and translated into English. To maintain objectivity, the researcher did not read student journals until after completing her own entries.

To ensure the study's trustworthiness, the researcher applied the four criteria outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985): confirmability, credibility, transferability, and dependability.

- **Confirmability:** To ensure findings were shaped by participants' views rather than researcher bias, the researcher used an iterative process of continuous data analysis and determined themes based on participants' perspectives.

- **Credibility:** The study's credibility was established through triangulation, involving data collection from multiple sources (students' journals, teacher's journals, and focus group interviews).
- **Transferability:** Detailed descriptions of the research context and participants were provided to enable the findings to apply to other settings. The researcher ensured that data reflected authentic experiences by organizing meetings where the students documented their genuine experiences with the flipped English classroom.
- **Dependability:** The researcher analyzed data repeatedly to ensure consistency and sought verification from an external academic expert. The same expert also checked translations of interview data and journal entries.

Findings

The study systematically organized and identified key themes from the students' journals, the teacher's journal-checklist, and focus group interviews, correlating them with the research question. Observations based on the researcher's journal notes were presented for each theme. The themes that emerged from the study are presented below:

Time efficiency

The data analysis revealed that time efficiency was the most prominent theme in the study. The participant students noted that the FCM was more time-efficient than traditional classrooms. They appreciated how the model allowed them to learn lesson content at home via videos, freeing up class time for interactive and engaging activities.

In this regard one participant said the following explanations:

“In conventional face-to-face classes, teachers spend most of the class time teaching the topic, and there is not enough time left to implement engaging activities. However, in the flipped English classes, there was plenty of time to practice our English language skills since we learned the lesson content at home. The model helps us practice more and get better at using what we have learned in English.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 1, Male).

Additionally, the participant students provided another perspective on the FCM's time efficiency. They observed significant improvements in their English skills over the

8-week period, attributing this progress to the ample in-class practice time provided by the model. One participant shared:

“Even though I have been learning English since I was in primary school, I had a hard time making correct sentences while speaking. But in the flipped English classes that went on for 8 weeks, I did much better and improved my English language skills noticeably.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 2, Male).

The participants’ statements align with the researcher's observations. A notable observation by the researcher was the consensus among students that the FCM effectively optimizes in-class time. The researcher also observed that the model significantly accelerated skill development within 8 weeks. This indicates that extensive in-class practice and discussion sessions led to significant advances in their language skills.

Language skills

The analyzed data shows that adopting the FCM led to a significant improvement in participants' language skills. The model's emphasis on interactive learning and practical application was crucial in enhancing these skills, making language skills the second most prominent theme in the study. One participant expressed her views on how the model enhanced her language proficiency:

“At the beginning of the academic year, I had had very limited vocabulary in English. I could hardly speak in English, and it was challenging for me to understand something I listened to in English. However, since we started to learn English in the flipped classroom, I recognized that I gained a lot of new vocabulary. Our teacher made vocabulary teaching memorable for us. Because she used visuals and interesting examples in the videos. Additionally, in the class she made us use the new vocabulary in various interactive activities. As we did many speaking and listening activities in groups and pairs, I improved my speaking and listening skills as well. Now, I can speak English more fluently and I improved my English listening skills.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 3, Female).

Another participant indicated that the shift from traditional middle school English classes to the flipped English class enhanced his language learning experience. Incorporating speaking and listening activities with reading and writing tasks was crucial in improving his English fluency. The participant's statements are as follows:

“In middle school, English classes predominantly focused on reading and writing activities. Opportunities for speaking and listening activities were less. *However, the implementation of flipped English classes resulted in a transformation. In addition to reading and writing tasks, we participated in several speaking and listening activities. This model contributed to my proficiency in spoken English.*” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 5, Male).

The researcher's observations align with the students' statements. Initially, the students in this study had a low proficiency in English and struggled with oral

expression. However, within 8 weeks of completing the flipped English classes, most students showed noticeable improvement in their language skills. The researcher attributed this progress to the intentional inclusion of various speaking and listening activities, such as group discussions, oral presentations, dialogues, and listening comprehension exercises, which helped develop their communicative skills.

Learner autonomy

Learner autonomy emerged as another prominent theme in the study. The participants reported taking control of their learning process, making independent decisions about what and how they learned. The FCM fostered this self-directed learning approach, making learner autonomy a central concept in the study. One participant shared her experience with the FCM, particularly focusing on the pre-class aspect of the model:

“Before each flipped English class, we had to watch videos to prepare. I planned my schedule to save time for these videos and pre-class activities like quizzes and forum discussions. Taking notes during the videos was necessary for my learning and reviewing. If I didn't understand something, I would rewind and watch it again until it was clear. This preparation helped me understand and participate more during class.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 6, Female).

One participant highlighted the necessity and importance of self-regulated learning for the successful implementation of the model, stating:

“As we started to learn English with the FCM, I realized that I had to use my time efficiently. Because, we had to watch the videos and learn the lesson topic before class time. Therefore, I planned my day to watch the videos and do tasks to participate in the in-class time more effectively. Shortly, I became self-disciplined thanks to this model.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 5, Male).

The researcher observed that the students who initially struggled with time management and taking responsibility for their own learning found it challenging to adapt to the FCM. Despite being informed about the weekly agenda and assignments through the WhatsApp group and Google Classroom, they had difficulty developing self-regulation skills during the first three weeks of implementation. However, after three to four weeks, the students began to become more self-autonomous.

Learner engagement

The data analyzed indicates that the FCM significantly impacted students' learning experiences and outcomes, closely linked to the concept of learner engagement. The flipped English class increased student participation, interaction, and enjoyment, as the active and engaging learning environment fostered their learning. Consequently, learner engagement appeared as a significant theme of the study. One participant

explained her experience with the model by contrasting it with conventional English classes:

“In conventional English classes, we used to listen to teacher and write down what the teacher told us. However, in the flipped English class, we took part in many activities such as role play, acting a dialogue out and group games, instead of just sitting and listening to teacher. We were active during the in-class time. As we learned English with fun, I can still remember even the words in the first week of the flipped English class.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 3, Female).

All participants reported that the FCM enhanced their engagement by offering a more enjoyable and active learning environment compared to conventional English classes. One participant’s statement illustrates this clearly:

“When I was in primary and middle school, I did not enjoy English classes, and I had difficulty learning English. But now, in the flipped English classes, it is easy and enjoyable for me to learn English. We engage in a lot of interactive activities in the flipped English classes, and we are active all the time. Because we engage in a variety of enjoyable activities that make the learning process dynamic and interesting.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 8, Female).

Based on her observations, the researcher found similar results. Her notes indicated that flipped learning significantly increased student engagement. Most students actively participated in various activities, such as group discussions, role plays, and problem-solving exercises, which contrasted with the passive listening often seen in conventional classrooms.

Motivation

The study found that FCM, with its emphasis on interaction and active learning, fostered a constructive and engaging classroom environment. The participants stated that this atmosphere enhanced their sense of belonging and motivation. As a result, motivation emerged as a significant theme. One participant noted increased motivation towards the English subject since starting the flipped class:

“I was one of those students who did not like English class at all. However, as I started to learn English in the flipped class, I have been more motivated to learn English. The activities during the in-class time were fun and engaging. We did many interactive group activities. This created a positive learning environment for us.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 9, Female).

The participants' experiences revealed that motivation in the FCM was fostered through active engagement, diverse activities, positive environments, student-centered approaches, and collaborative learning. These factors combined to create an environment where students were more motivated to learn and participate. Additionally, the use of Web 2.0 tools like Vocarro, Jeopardylabs, Mentimeter, and Canva played a

key role in enhancing motivation. In this regard, one of the participants made the following comment:

“Compared to conventional face-to-face classes, I feel more motivated in the flipped English class. Because the class time in the flipped learning is more engaging and enjoyable. Instead of listening to the teacher and taking notes, we are involved in many group activities in the classroom. During in-class time we played games using apps such as Kahoot and Jeopardy labs, this was fun for me and for my classmates.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 1, Male).

The researcher’s observations support the idea that the FCM significantly boosts student motivation. The transition from passive to active participation, the implementation of entertaining and interactive activities, and the establishment of a positive classroom environment all enhanced student motivation.

Collaborative skills

Another prominent theme from the data was collaborative skills. The results showed that interactive tasks and group activities in the FCM encouraged students to engage more with their peers, promoting collaborative language learning. The majority of the participants indicated frequent group and pair work in the flipped English class, which helped them improve collaborative skills. One participant's quote illustrates this:

“Because we learned the lesson contents at home by watching the videos, we had more time to engage in a lot of group and pair works in class in the FCM. In contrast to conventional face-to-face classes, we implemented activities such as role-plays and acting-out dialogues in the flipped English class.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 10, Female).

Participating in group and pair activities during in-class sessions was crucial for helping shy students develop communicative and collaborative skills. Despite the initial challenge of adapting to these activities, they became transformative experiences for many, as reflected in one participant's statement:

“I am usually a quiet person. At first, talking in English during class group activities made me nervous, especially when our teacher encouraged us to join in. These new activities were a bit hard for me in the beginning. But as time went on, I got used to them. Now, I feel more comfortable talking to my classmates. I am not as shy as before, and I am doing well in the group activities because I have adapted group and peer work activities.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 3, Female).

The researcher observed that flipped learning significantly enhanced students' collaborative skills. Many students actively participated in group discussions, exchanged ideas during peer work, and frequently took on the role of peer tutors, helping classmates with challenging concepts. Initially, the students struggled with collaborative activities due to limited prior experience and fear of making mistakes. However, within 3-4 weeks, they adapted to these activities and became more comfortable and engaged.

Effective learning environment

All participants expressed a strong preference for continuing English in the flipped classrooms, finding the model more effective than conventional methods. They noted that the FCM positively impacted their English learning and expressed intent to use it to further improve their proficiency. Consequently, the theme of an effective learning environment emerged as a key finding in the study. One participant highlighted the effectiveness of the FCM as follows:

“I wish we had learned English in the flipped classes at middle and primary school. I have been studying English in conventional English classes for 6 years, but unfortunately, I could not achieve a noticeable success in learning English language. It was a waste of time. I want to continue learning English in the flipped classes, because it benefited me a lot in a short time.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 6, Female).

The participants emphasized numerous reasons for the efficacy of the FCM. One participant revealed an intense enthusiasm for expanding their learning English in a flipped classroom, appreciating its inventive approach and the advantages of incorporating technology into the learning environment:

“I want to continue learning English in the flipped classes, because it is more innovative and modern. Integrating technology into English classes help us learn more effectively. It is more motivating and interesting for me to use technology to learn.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 12, Male).

One participant even recommended that the MoNE promote the adoption of the FCM in public schools, citing the model's effectiveness and its potential to improve language education on a larger scale. He highlighted the broader and more comprehensive language learning experience provided by the FCM, noting its positive impact on his language skills development, especially in speaking. The participant's statements are as follows:

“Thanks to this model, I developed multiple language skills. During my time in middle school, English classes primarily focused on reading and writing. However, in the flipped English classes, I had the opportunity to enhance my speaking skills. As a result, I can now speak English much more fluently. I believe the Ministry of National Education should encourage public schools to adopt this model.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 5, Male).

The researcher observed that integrating technology into English classes was crucial to the perceived effectiveness of the FCM. The students recognized technology's role in enhancing their learning experiences, noting increased engagement and motivation. They regarded technology as a tool for dynamic and innovative learning.

Accessibility of Resources

The results showed that the FCM supports flexible and personalized learning by enabling the students to access materials at their convenience, fostering adaptable and self-directed learning. Consequently, accessibility of resources emerged as a significant theme. One participant commented:

“While we were watching the videos, we were taking notes in order to be prepared for the in-class time. We could watch videos anytime we wanted, depending on our own schedule. The summary of each lesson in the form PDF was also available on the Google Classroom. So, anytime we wanted, we could access all the materials related to English lesson.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 4, Female).

This accessibility allowed the students to review and revisit content as needed, enhancing their understanding. The students viewed the FCM positively compared to conventional face-to-face classes. For instance, one participant expressed her perceptions as follows:

“Before we started using the FCM in English classes, I did not have the chance to review lessons. I used to listen to the teacher in class to learn a topic, and that was it. However, in the flipped English classes, I can now watch a video again and again if I do not understand something.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 9, Female).

Similarly, the researcher noticed that in the flipped English class, the students were able to access instructional materials, such as pre-recorded video lectures, at their own pace. They could view course materials on Google Classroom anytime, allowing them to manage their learning independently.

Insufficient Preparation

In the study, some participants reported inadequate engagement with pre-class materials, such as videos and quizzes, leading to unpreparedness for in-class sessions. Consequently, insufficient preparation emerged as a significant theme. One participant explained his lack of completion of pre-class tasks. Initially, the participant doubted the usefulness of watching the pre-class videos, unsure of their contribution to his learning. However, his perspective changed when he realized that skipping these videos impeded his understanding of the subject.

"At first, I ignored the videos, thinking they wouldn't help me much. Later, I realized that skipping them made it hard to participate in activities during class time. I found that without watching the videos first, understanding the topics for English class was difficult.." (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 12, Male).

Some participants offered various reasons for not being prepared for in-class time. Some noted that he occasionally missed watching the videos due to other commitments, such as homework, highlighting the difficulty of balancing multiple responsibilities. Others mentioned two reasons for not watching the videos: boredom with the format and time constraints. These factors such as balancing commitments, managing boredom, and time limitations affected the students' ability to consistently access resources in the FCM. Their comments are as follows:

“Sometimes I did not watch the videos, because I had homework to do and I could not find time to watch some videos.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 13, Male).

Some participants were well-prepared for in-class time but were disturbed by their classmates' lack of preparation. One participant experienced disruption and an inability to concentrate when his peers were unprepared during in-class activities. The participant's comment is as follows:

“Some of my classmates failed to watch the films at home before the in-class time. This posed a challenge for me, since their lack of understanding of the issue limited their capacity to participate in in-class activities and achieve satisfactory performance. Consequently, they broke their connection with the class and began discussing things unrelated to the subject matter. This troubled me, as I was unable to concentrate on the tasks during in-class time.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 5, Male).

The researcher observed that the participants had varied perceptions regarding the value of pre-class materials, especially videos. Even though the students were informed about pre-class tasks and assignments via WhatsApp and the weekly schedule on Google Classroom, some were not sufficiently attentive and often cited different reasons for not being prepared for in-class time.

Adjusting to the Flipped Classroom Model

In the study, adjusting to the FCM was a highly significant theme. Many participants initially reported difficulties transitioning from conventional studying methods to the FCM, posing a substantial challenge during the early weeks of implementation. This adaptation period was a significant obstacle to the model's successful execution. However, through developing new skills and sustained efforts, the participants eventually adapted to the model and reaped its benefits. One participant reflected on this adjustment process by stating:

“Initially, we encountered challenges in adapting to the flipped English lessons due to our conventional study habits. We were unable to organize our time efficiently to watch the videos before in-class time. Sometimes, we missed watching videos. At other times, we watched the videos without focusing. But a

few weeks later, we got new skills, including planning and time management. Ultimately, we succeeded in adjusting to the model.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 15, Male).

While some students struggled to adapt to the FCM due to limited self-regulation skills, others found it challenging because they preferred traditional face-to-face learning methods. One participant shared her thoughts on this:

“At first, I found it difficult to adapt to the FCM since we learned English by listening to the teacher in traditional classes. In the beginning, watching the videos at home in isolation, without direct interaction with the teacher, became somewhat difficult. However, after a few weeks, I adapted to it.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 3, Female).

It is important to note that pre-class tasks were just one of the reasons why shy students struggled to adjust to the FCM. Some students found it challenging to participate in collaborative tasks during in-class time because they were not accustomed to such activities due to their prior learning experiences in primary and middle school. One participant shared:

"At first, I faced difficulties participating in group activities in class due to my lack of experience with collaborative work in elementary and middle school. So I was anxious about speaking in English and engaging in these activities. Gradually, I developed confidence and became more relaxed with speaking English and participating in group activities.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 3, Female).

The researcher observed that students needed an adjustment period of about 3-4 weeks to adapt to the flipped English class model. Initially, some students resisted and were apprehensive about learning English through videos rather than direct teacher interaction. Besides the challenge of watching videos, the students also struggled with participating in collaborative in-class activities, such as role-plays and discussions, which were new to them due to their prior traditional learning experiences. This unfamiliarity led to anxiety and stress, as they feared making mistakes and being judged by their peers.

Internet Connection

Poor internet connection was identified as a significant barrier to the successful implementation of the FCM. Most participants reported that they faced challenges in downloading and watching lesson videos due to unreliable internet access, making it a prominent theme in the category of negative student perceptions. The participants shared specific difficulties they encountered with connectivity issues, which hindered their ability to fully engage with the model as follows:

“Because of poor internet connection, sometimes I could not download the videos.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 13, Male).

“Sometimes I had problems with downloading the videos because of poor internet connection.” (Answered in Turkish, translated into English) (Participant 11, Male).

The researcher observed that poor internet connectivity led to delays in accessing essential resources needed for pre-class preparation. The students facing connectivity issues often showed signs of frustration, which hindered their engagement and interaction with peers and instructors during in-class activities.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study's findings align with several other studies in the existing literature, highlighting positive student perceptions of the FCM. The favorable perceptions reported in this study are consistent with results from various researchers, such as Mehring (2016), Hung (2015), Bařal (2015), Webb and Doman (2020), Shahani et al. (2021), Ma and Luo (2022), Yakop et al. (2023) and, Han et al. (2023). These studies indicate that students generally have positive perceptions of flipped learning environments. Additionally, the study's results regarding student satisfaction with flipped learning are in line with findings from Ayçiçek and Yanpar-Yelken (2018) and Kırmızı and Kömeç (2020), suggesting that students are satisfied with the FCM in secondary school settings.

One significant advantage of the FCM highlighted by the study is its ability to save time for English language practice. By shifting content delivery outside of class through videos and other preparatory tasks, the model allows classroom time to be used for interactive, communicative, and collaborative activities, which enhances language skills. This result of the study is in line with the findings of the studies by Baker (2000); Bařal (2015); Farrah and Qawasmeh (2018) and Özkurkudis and Bümen (2019).

The FCM also proposes solutions to common problems encountered in teaching English as a foreign language in public high schools, including restricted class hours, unmotivated students, boring course materials, and overcrowded classrooms. By encouraging independent engagement outside of class, the model optimizes in-class time for interactive and communicative language learning, addressing these practical challenges effectively.

The results of this study are also consistent with those of Kırmızı and Kömeç (2020) and Yakop et al. (2023) who found that the FCM significantly improved EFL learners' language skills, particularly in speaking and listening. This consistency with other research indicates that the model is effective in encouraging active learning and providing more chances for meaningful communication among students.

Another important finding is that the FCM promotes learner autonomy by encouraging students to take greater responsibility for their learning. In this study, students were responsible for independently viewing video lessons as part of their homework assignments, which empowered them to become more autonomous learners. The FCM also created an active learning environment where students participated in engaging, hands-on activities during class, fostering a dynamic and participatory learning atmosphere. The studies by Han (2015), Hung (2015) and Zainuddin and Perera (2019) reached similar conclusions, finding that the model encourages students to take more responsibility in a learner-centered environment, promoting greater autonomy in their learning.

The qualitative findings of the study indicate that the FCM is more engaging and enjoyable than traditional face-to-face classes, leading to higher levels of student enjoyment and motivation, particularly during in-class time. This does not imply that conventional classes are uninteresting, but rather that the FCM significantly enhances student enthusiasm and engagement. This finding is supported by the research showing that the FCM effectively engages students in active participation during classroom sessions (Mehring, 2016; Hung, 2015; Başal, 2015; Webb & Doman, 2020; Han et al., 2023).

The study concludes that the FCM aligns with constructivist learning theory principles by promoting both independent and collaborative learning. In constructivist settings, teachers assist students in generating new knowledge rooted in their existing cognitive frameworks. (Brown, 2014). This study provided a flipped learning environment that allowed students to construct knowledge based on their schemas. Additionally, consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) emphasis on social interaction and cooperative learning, the study established cooperative and interactive learning

environments within the FCM, requiring students to engage in interactive activities during class sessions.

The FCM also offers a more flexible learning environment, allowing students to access educational content anytime and anywhere to meet their individual needs. The study found that students in the flipped classroom could learn outside the traditional classroom setting, taking advantage of technology to facilitate flexible learning options. At this point, this study aligns with the findings of previous research by Çavdar (2018), Webb and Doman (2020) and, Han et al. (2023).

Despite the positive perception of the FCM, the study highlights several challenges students may face, particularly related to preparation levels. As in this study, a lack of sufficient student preparation before in-class time has been highlighted as a concern in the study by Chen Hsieh et al. (2017). In this current study, the teacher-researcher encouraged pupils to take part in in-class activities in spite of initial challenges.

This success may be attributed to the strong study habits and self-discipline of students in a science high school, who are typically selected based on national exams and have above-average intelligence and self-regulation skills. However, students who lack self-regulation skills may struggle to adapt to the autonomous learning environment of the FCM (Rasheed et al., 2020). The model's success largely depends on students' readiness to take responsibility for their learning and develop self-regulated learning skills.

The process of adapting to the FCM was a key focus in the findings. Initially, some students expressed concerns about understanding the lesson material when watching videos at home without the immediate support of a teacher. Since this was their first experience with a learning model that emphasized their active involvement and introduced innovative methods, they encountered a new way of engaging in collaborative and interactive activities during class. Similar observations were made by Chou (2020) and Han et al. (2023), who noted that students faced initial challenges in adapting to the FCM.

The study suggests that implementing the FCM in all high schools in Türkiye may not be feasible due to the need for self-disciplined and autonomous learners who

can thrive in innovative learning environments. Therefore, it is recommended that students receive training in self-regulation skills and autonomous learning before introducing the model. With these skills, the FCM is expected to yield more favorable outcomes in achieving educational objectives.

To ensure the success of the FCM, it is essential for learners to be both willing and capable of taking responsibility for their learning and possess strong self-regulated learning skills. The effectiveness of the FCM can vary significantly depending on the characteristics and readiness of the student population, making it more suitable for certain high schools than others. This study, along with those conducted by Hao (2016) and Ma and Luo (2022), highlights the importance of educators considering students' personal traits, unique situations, interests, self-regulation abilities, and the learning environment to maximize the benefits of the FCM.

A key challenge in implementing the FCM is the significant role of teachers in facilitating the model effectively. Teachers are responsible for designing and preparing engaging instructional materials, including videos, readings, and online assignments that students interact with outside of class. In-class time is then focused on interactive and collaborative activities. This process requires considerable time, effort, and expertise from teachers, as highlighted in the study by Başal (2015). One of the most challenging aspects is creating high-quality, engaging instructional videos and assignments. Therefore, successful implementation of the FCM demands adequate training and support for teachers to help them develop the necessary skills and understanding of educational theories like constructivism and social constructivism. This conclusion is echoed in the research by Ayçiçek and Yanpar-Yelken (2018) and Başal (2015).

Finally, implementing the FCM in high schools, particularly in rural areas with inadequate or non-existent internet access or where students lack the necessary technological devices, poses significant challenges. Even in this study, technical issues such as unreliable internet connections created obstacles, despite the school's efforts to provide necessary resources. This highlights the need for infrastructure improvements and access to technology to fully realize the benefits of the FCM in diverse educational settings.

Implications

Taking into account the results of this study, more research on the FCM may be utilized in language instruction at the elementary and middle school levels as well as in various high school settings, including general (academic) schools and vocational schools, where there is currently little research. For language teachers, mastering the FCM is crucial, requiring thorough preparation, active student engagement, and adaptability. Teachers should create engaging instructional videos and guide students in effective self-regulated learning strategies, such as time management and note-taking, to ensure successful participation. Educational institutions, including the MoNE, should provide professional development opportunities, ensure access to necessary technological resources, and support both teachers and students in adapting to the flipped learning model. Additionally, the MoNE could assist teachers by offering high-quality instructional videos or training, facilitating broader adoption of the FCM in public schools.

Ethics Committee Permission Information

This research study was conducted with the Research Ethics Committee approval of Dokuz Eylül University, dated 19.07.2022 and numbered E-87347630-659-315316

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ERRATUM

**ERRATUM: Structural repetitions and discourse relations in
English-Turkish translations of TED talks**

Upon the author’s request, content related amendments for the previously published article (see Bartan, 2022) were included in the current erratum. These amendments are listed in Table 1.

Table 1.

Amendments requested by the author

Page	Original content	Amended content	Rationale
186	“TED-MDB corpora”	"a corpus of Ted Talks, selected from English and Turkish parts of TED-MDB corpus and a new talk annotated for English and Turkish by a group of researchers, totally"	As TED-MDB corpus consists of multilingual texts.
189	“TED-MDB corpora”	"study corpus"	As TED-MDB corpus consists of multilingual texts.
192	“for this study by a group of annotators, and checked by another annotator in order to determine inter-annotator agreement”	“by the author, Aytaç Çeltek, and Zeynep Başer and checked by Deniz Zeyrek” (Başer et al., 2021; Çeltek et al., 2021; Şen Bartan et al., 2021; Zeyrek, 2021).	The additional text was annotated by the mentioned researchers.
192	“seven”	“six”	The additional text needs to be excluded from the TED-MDB corpus.
192	“in Table 3, there is the distribution of repetitions at the beginning (N 42) in the TED-MDB corpus in three texts.”	“in Table 2, there is the distribution of repetitions at the beginning (N 42) in the study corpus in three texts.”	As TED-MDB corpus consists of multilingual texts.
193	Table 2: “TED-MDB”	“study”	As TED-MDB corpus consists of multilingual texts.
196	Table 6: “TED-MDB”	“study”	As TED-MDB corpus consists of multilingual texts.

197	“in the TED-MDB bilingual corpora (English-Turkish)”	Deleted.	As TED-MDB corpus consists of multilingual texts.
201	NA	Başer, Z., Çeltek, A., Şen Bartan, Ö., Zeyrek, D. (2021). “Extending TED Multilingual Discourse Bank for an annotated English-Turkish parallel corpus: How discourse relations are translated into Turkish”, 20th International Conference on Turkish Linguistics-ICTL20 Anadolu University August 2-4, 2021.	The additional text was annotated by the previously mentioned researchers and explained in detail in the added references.

Çeltek, A. Başer, Z., Şen Bartan, Ö., Zeyrek, D.(2021). Factors determining explicitation vs. implicitation of discourse relations in Turkish translated texts: what happens to ands in and-parentheticals? 20th International Conference on Turkish Linguistics-ICTL20 Anadolu University August 2-4, 2021.

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