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Dear Reader,

We are pleased to present to you the newest issue of the ELT Research Journal, which brings together five insightful and timely contributions in the field of English Language Teaching and related disciplines. As always, we aim to provide a platform that supports scholarly discussion and encourages further research by academics, teacher educators, and practitioners in the ELT community.

This issue opens with a qualitative case study by Fikri Geçkinli, which explores how EFL teachers' beliefs about language assessment vary according to their teaching experience. Using metaphors and interview data, the study sheds light on how teachers conceptualize assessment and how their professional backgrounds shape these understandings.

The second article by Meltem Baysal-Çalışkan and Salim Razı examines the academic integrity needs of English language learners in higher education. Through a qualitative analysis of interviews with students and instructors, the study highlights the growing challenges posed by generative AI tools and emphasizes the urgent need for targeted integrity training.

In the third study, Nazlı Aykut investigates the academic resilience of physical therapy and rehabilitation students who began university education following the 2023 earthquakes in Türkiye. The article provides valuable insights into the academic and emotional challenges these students face, as well as their coping strategies and support needs.

This issue also features two review articles. Özgür Çelik offers a comprehensive conceptual review on the evolving landscape of foreign language education in the age of artificial intelligence. The paper discusses how AI is reshaping traditional approaches, theories of language learning, and the roles of both teachers and learners.

The final paper by Ahsen Soylu presents a systematic review of flipped classroom practices in EFL contexts. Synthesizing results from recent empirical studies, the article highlights the potential and challenges of integrating flipped learning in language instruction, with implications for learner autonomy and digital pedagogy.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the authors for their important contributions to this issue. We are also deeply grateful to our editors, co-editors,

and reviewers who dedicate their time and expertise to ensuring the quality and rigor of our publication. We hope this issue inspires further inquiry and invites you to consider submitting your work to future volumes of ELT-RJ.

Best regards,

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How Teaching Experience Shapes EFL Teachers' Language Assessment Beliefs: A Case Study

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Abstract

This qualitative research intended to explore the beliefs of 30 EFL teachers at a preparatory school regarding their understanding of language assessment, with a focus on whether these beliefs varied based on their teaching experience. To achieve this, teachers were divided into three categories: novice, experienced, and expert, and asked to describe 'language assessment' employing metaphors. These metaphors, collected through written descriptions, were analyzed and categorized into themes. The identified themes were then compared with insights gathered from semi-structured focus group interviews to examine the influence of teaching experience on teachers' assessment beliefs. The analysis revealed four main themes: assessment as a summative tool, a formative tool, a tool for washback effect, and a reflection of self-efficacy. Findings were discussed in relation to how teaching experience shapes EFL teachers' beliefs about language assessment at this foundation university's preparatory school.

Keywords: Language assessment; EFL teachers; Teaching experience; Assessment beliefs; Metaphor analysis

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Introduction

Language assessment plays a crucial role in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, guiding instructional decisions, measuring student progress, and influencing curriculum development. However, while much research has been conducted on assessment practices, limited attention has been given to the beliefs teachers hold about assessment and how these beliefs evolve with experience (Shohamy, 2001; Stiggins, 2002). Teachers' assessment beliefs are significant since they directly shape classroom practices, influence student learning outcomes, and determine how assessments are designed and implemented (Brookhart, 1998). Despite this importance, there remains a gap in apprehending how teaching experience affects these beliefs, particularly within the context of EFL preparatory schools.

Assessment is not merely a technical process but a socially constructed practice influenced by teachers' perceptions, experiences, and institutional expectations (Davison, 2004). Novice, experienced, and expert teachers may interpret and apply assessment principles differently, shaping their approaches to formative and summative assessment, feedback mechanisms, and student evaluation methods (Remesal, 2011). Without a clear understanding of how experience influences these perceptions, professional development programs may fail to address teachers' specific needs at discrete career stages (Mertler, 2004). Given the growing emphasis on assessment literacy in educational policy (Assessment Reform Group, 2002), it is critical to investigate how instructors conceive assessment according to their degree of expertise.

This study is particularly substantial in light of recent global educational developments that give instructors more responsibility for utilizing assessment as a tool for both grading and learning improvement (Leahy et al., 2005). Understanding how instructors at various levels of experience perceive assessment may assist educators, administrators, and policymakers alter assessment training programs to suit teachers' changing perspectives and practices. This study examines the assessment metaphors employed by novice, experienced, and expert teachers to reveal the underlying conceptual frameworks that affect their assessment approaches. The findings will provide insights that may be used with regard to teacher education and professional development to ensure that assessment training considers instructors' viewpoints and instructional requirements.

Literature Review

Metaphor is a basic cognitive strategy that allows individuals to comprehend abstract ideas via more concrete experiences (Littlemore, 2019). Metaphor is crucial for everyday cognition and communication, and it is not limited to poetry or literary words. Shakespeare's famous phrase, "All the world's a stage," exemplifies how metaphor transforms human perspective by projecting one area of experience onto another (Shakespeare, 1623/2007). Similarly, metaphors are commonly used in language training to help students understand teaching and learning (Cameron, 2003). According to Littlemore (2019), metaphor is profoundly established in human brain processes, influencing both language use and problem-solving techniques. Metaphors in language learning not only promote comprehension, but they also encourage the development of critical thinking skills. When a student's growth is portrayed as a 'journey,' it emphasizes the gradual nature of learning and the problems encountered along the road (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2008). These conceptual metaphors shape how educators and students see the learning process (Cameron 2003).

When considering their pedagogical views and methods, teachers usually use metaphorical language (Zhang & Waring, 2018). This is important because instructors' approaches to education and evaluation are influenced by how they define their duties and responsibilities, as noted by Leung (2014). In contrast to a teacher who sees themselves as a "transmitter of knowledge," a teacher who sees themselves as a "guide" can take a more student-centered approach (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Gaining knowledge of these metaphorical frameworks might help instructors make wiser decisions about their teaching and professional identities. Another area in which metaphor is crucial is assessment. Assessment has historically been contemplated as a "measuring" of student accomplishment, supporting the idea that education is a system with measurable results (Brookhart, 2013). Modern viewpoints, on the other hand, support a more formative strategy, stressing assessment as a learning tool rather than just an endpoint assessment (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Leung (2014) emphasizes the necessity for a comprehensive knowledge of assessment processes by designating that instructors make decisions pertaining to assessments every few minutes in the classroom.

Despite the increasing emphasis on assessment literacy, research indicates that many teachers feel unprepared to design and implement effective assessment strategies (Xu & Brown, 2016). Inadequate training in classroom assessment has been cited as a persistent issue

in teacher education programs (Scarino, 2013). This gap has significant implications, as assessment is not only a means of evaluating student learning but also a mechanism for informing instructional decisions and promoting equity in education (Brookhart, 2013). Assessing English language learners presents special challenges in language instruction since teachers need to consider linguistic, cultural, and environmental factors. Inaccurate readings of competency levels may result from traditional evaluation methods' frequent inability to fully capture the spectrum of learners' abilities. Accordingly, recent studies advocate for more dynamic and thorough evaluation methods that account for students' varying backgrounds and abilities (McNamara & Shohamy, 2008).

Ultimately, educators perform various roles in the assessment process, serving as facilitators, evaluators, and supporters for their students (Scarino, 2013). Nonetheless, there can be occasions when these duties conflict, especially when managing formative and summative assessment needs (Xu & Brown, 2016). Identifying and resolving these issues is essential to foster a more efficient and fair learning atmosphere.

According to current study, EFL teachers' attitudes about language assessment are strongly impacted by their teaching experiences. According to McMillan's (2014) study, instructors' evaluation methodologies evolve over time as a result of continuing reflection on their students' development and personal classroom experiences. More experienced instructors frequently have a better understanding of assessment and how it influences student outcomes (Liu and Xu, 2017). However, because they lack confidence in their ability to offer effective, individualized exams, new teachers may rely more on external evaluations and standardized testing techniques (Smith & Sato, 2018). To address the diverse needs of their students, experienced instructors usually display greater flexibility and a more critical approach to assessment methods, establishing a balance between formative and summative assessments (Crawford, 2019). Furthermore, these educators are more inclined to engage in professional development opportunities associated with assessment, thereby enabling them to refine their assessment competencies and achieve a greater alignment with the needs of their students (Black & Wiliam, 2018). Research conducted by Bell and Cowie (2001) indicates that experienced educators are also more predisposed to employ evaluative data to guide their instructional practices, thereby fostering a more dynamic and learner-centric pedagogical approach.

In contrast, novice teachers, despite possessing a stronger grounding in the theoretical dimensions of assessment, may encounter difficulties in its practical implementation due to their limited teaching experience. Studies showing that instructors' confidence in their assessment skills increases with experience further support this disparity in assessment perceptions between new and seasoned educators (Liu & Xu, 2017). Therefore, more experienced teachers frequently perceive assessment as an essential component of the teaching-learning process that affects instructional decisions and student growth, whereas early career instructors may see it mainly as a tool for assessing accomplishment. These results highlight how crucial it is to take teaching experience into account when analyzing teachers' attitudes about assessment because it seems to have a major impact on how they think about and implement assessment in the classroom.

This study aims to investigate how teachers' metaphorical conceptions of their responsibilities impact their evaluation procedures and decision-making in light of these complications. The following research questions are directly addressed by this:

1. How do novice, experienced, and expert EFL teachers conceptualize language assessment through metaphor?

2. In what ways do beliefs about language assessment differ based on varying levels of teaching experience?

3. How does teaching experience influence EFL teachers' overall beliefs and approaches to language assessment?

Method

This research utilizes a qualitative exploratory approach, incorporating metaphor analysis and focus group discussions to explore the assessment beliefs of English language instructors at a university preparatory program. Rooted in the interpretivist paradigm, the study prioritizes an in-depth understanding of participants' viewpoints within their specific social and professional settings (Creswell, 2013). Since metaphors provide momentous insights into conceptual and cognitive frameworks, metaphor analysis is the primary methodological tool (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). To uncover the implicit views of educators, this approach is widely used in educational research (Saban et al., 2006). Furthermore, by offering a deeper comprehension of instructors' viewpoints and evaluation procedures, focus group talks enhance

metaphor analysis (Krueger & Casey, 2015). The integration of these techniques strengthens both the credibility and comprehensiveness of the study's findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Setting and Participants

Thirty of the fifty-five English instructors who volunteered to teach at the English Preparatory School of a private university in Istanbul participated in this study. Convenience sampling, a non-probability sample technique where people are selected based on pragmatic considerations like accessibility or willingness to participate, was used to choose the participants (Dornyei 2007). The instructors, with four to twenty years of experience teaching English, had duties that embraced deciding on a variety of assessment-related matters, including marking final examinations, grading assignments, and deciding whether or not students passed at the conclusion of the school year. Ten teachers with one to four years of experience were categorized as novice teachers, ten more with six to ten years of experience as experienced teachers, and the remaining ten, who had more than ten years of experience and postgraduate credentials in ELT (three with doctorates and seven with master's degrees), as expert teachers. Every participant displayed a keen interest in language evaluation, which qualified them for this study.

Instrumentation

This qualitative exploratory research examines the assessment beliefs of novice, experienced, and expert English language teachers working in a preparatory school at a private university, with a focus on how their teaching experience influences their views. To address the first research question and uncover the participants' understanding of language assessment, they were asked to complete a written task (Appendix 1), which encapsulated demographic details and an open-ended sentence starter: "A language assessment is like …" Participants were instructed to finish this sentence by using a metaphor and justifying their choice. As Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue, "our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature (p.454)," highlighting the importance of metaphors in understanding teachers' beliefs. The goal of the study was to explore the factors influencing these conceptualizations. To ensure the validity of the findings, the emerging themes were reviewed by two colleagues with doctorates in ELT.

To further strengthen the findings of this qualitative case study, semi-structured focus group interviews (Appendix 2) were conducted with nine randomly selected teachers from each

experience group (novice, experienced, expert) who consented to participate. These interviews aimed to gather their views on assessment practices within the context of this English preparatory school. According to Bryman (2008), the primary goal of interviews in social research is to gather information in accordance with individuals' attitudes, norms, beliefs, and values. Semi-structured focus group interviews were chosen due to their flexibility compared to more rigid methods like structured interviews or surveys. Although the researcher had predefined general topics for discussion, this format allowed for the exploration of emerging ideas during the interviews.

Data Collection Procedure

Data for the metaphor analysis and interviews were gathered over a three-week timeframe. A document (see Appendix 1) was provided to teachers at the preparatory school. This document contained an incomplete sentence that required them to add a metaphor and explain their reasoning behind the choice. Once the sentence was completed, it transformed into a metaphor representing the teachers' beliefs about assessment. Following this, content analysis was employed to evaluate the data. The researcher collaborated with two colleagues to identify themes, ensuring consistency by cross-checking each other's interpretations. The resulting themes were systematically categorized and organized alongside the entire dataset, utilizing a constant comparative approach that comprised multiple readings of the participants' responses (Lalik & Potts, 2001).

After gathering metaphors, interviews with instructors were undertaken concurrently with theme development. Semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted with nine randomly selected instructors (three from each group) who had agreed to participate in the metaphor analysis to get insights into their teaching practices. Following that, two experienced coworkers helped code and evaluate the interviews. The interviews were intended to be wide and initially semi-structured, giving participants the opportunity to tell their stories, explain their understandings, and reflect on their responsibilities in language evaluation.

Data Analysis

This study exploited manual coding, a technique frequently used in small-scale research or by academics who prefer a hands-on, immersive approach to data analysis, to assess the qualitative data. A thorough, methodical study was performed on the data collected in answer to the first research question, which embodied manual coding, the identification of recurrent

patterns, and accuracy verification. Figurative language examples and their associated meanings were closely analyzed and arranged alphabetically throughout the first stage of coding and classification. At this point, everything that did not fit the predetermined standards for metaphors was eliminated. Given that metaphor is always subjective and context-sensitive, the manual nature of the analysis allowed for a more nuanced interpretation of the data (Cameron, 2003). Each validated metaphor was further examined in the next phase of theme creation, and metaphors that had a common topic were grouped to create significant clusters. The final theme categorizations were examined and debated with two colleagues who are experts in language evaluation in order to increase the findings' trustworthiness.

In the concluding step, the metaphors provided by the participating teachers were classified into three groups (novice, experienced, expert) and organized into four themes (assessment as a summative tool, assessment as a formative tool, assessment as a tool for washback effect, and assessment as a reflection of self-efficacy). This was done to explore any potential relationships between teachers' experiences and their beliefs about assessment, incorporating data from focus group semi-structured interviews. Themes were defined as units that emerged from patterns such as "conversation topics, vocabulary, recurring activities, meanings, feelings, or folk sayings and proverbs" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1989, p. 131).

Findings

This section presents the key findings from the metaphor analysis of EFL teachers' views on assessment. The analysis identified four main themes: assessment as a summative tool, assessment as a formative tool, assessment as a tool for washback effect, and assessment as a reflection of self-efficacy. These themes illustrate the ways in which teachers' perceptions of assessment are shaped by their professional experiences, contextual factors, and external expectations. The following sections will explore each theme in greater detail, offering insight into how teachers at distinct stages of their careers approach assessment.

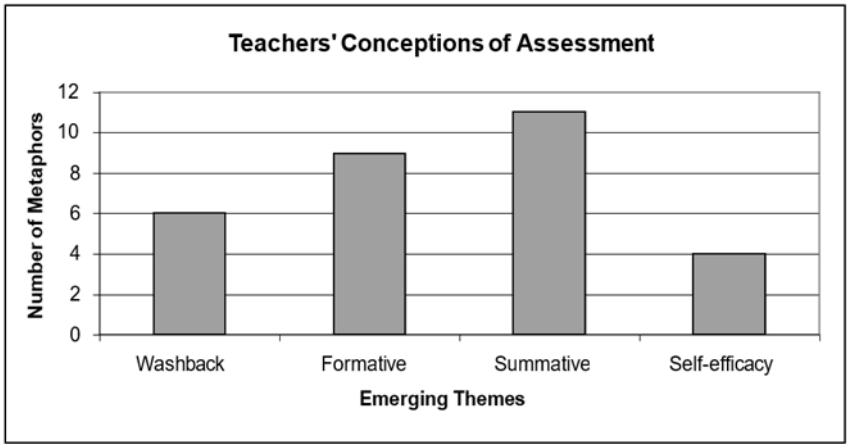

Figure 1. *Teachers' conceptions of assessment*.

An analysis of the 30 metaphors (see Appendix 3) led to the identification of four primary themes, as indicated in Figure 1: (1) assessment viewed as a summative tool (11 out of 30), (2) assessment as a formative tool (9 out of 30), (3) assessment as a tool for washback effect (6 out of 30), and (4) assessment as a reflection of self-efficacy (4 out of 30). The next section will delve deeper into these themes.

Assessment as a Summative Tool

The metaphors categorized under assessment as a summative tool (see Appendix 3) include high-stakes assessments, which carry significant point values and evoke a sense of challenge, likened to barriers, mandatory military service, or compelling a child to eat. They also reflect the acquisition of knowledge (like just enough to eat, quick access to desired information, a bracket for separation, or play dough for shaping) and the evaluation of student learning at the end of an instructional period, measured against established standards or benchmarks (represented as an umbrella of skills, tying knots together, using binoculars for focus, or a measuring tape).

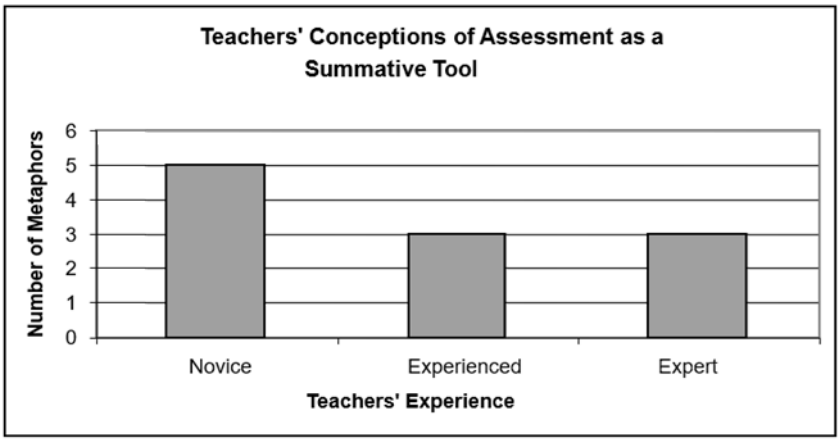

Figure 2. *Teachers' conceptions of assessment as a summative tool.*

Among the four themes, novice teachers predominantly viewed assessment as a summative tool, with 11 out of 30 metaphors falling into this category (Figure 2). This trend indicates a tendency to regard assessment as an endpoint. This perspective may stem from stakeholders' expectations for teachers to provide a comprehensive overview of student success and their own effectiveness. Additionally, novice teachers often have experienced an educational culture dominated by testing throughout their academic careers. Furthermore, while formative assessment is an integral, yet often unnoticed part of teaching, summative assessment tends to be highly visible.

According to Sharpley & Edgar (1986), teachers' judgments of student success play a crucial role in decisions made within classrooms and schools. Although most summative assessments are conducted at the end of a learning period, some can still serve diagnostic purposes. Nevertheless, various studies indicate that practitioners face challenges in effectively responding to the data obtained from summative assessments (Popham, 1999).

Assessment as a Formative Tool

Assessment, regarded as a formative tool designed by skilled educators, ranked as the second most common metaphor derived from the data (see Appendix 3). These metaphors illustrate that assessment is perceived as a continuous process—likened to a formula, assembling jigsaw pieces, starting anew, or serving as a guidebook—and as a means of reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses present in teaching and learning, depicted as a mirror, collaborative effort, learning through mistakes, meticulous observation, or overseeing success.

Many educators view formative assessment as "a systematic process to continually gather evidence about student learning" (Heritage, 2007, p. 141), which also helps identify strengths and weaknesses to bridge gaps in learning (Gallagher & Worth, 2008). Although formative approaches to teaching and assessment are generally embraced by educators and policymakers, several challenges hinder broader implementation. These embrace the conflict between formative and summative assessments concerning accountability for student success, the inconsistency between assessments and evaluations, and concerns that formative assessments may require too many resources and time to be feasible.

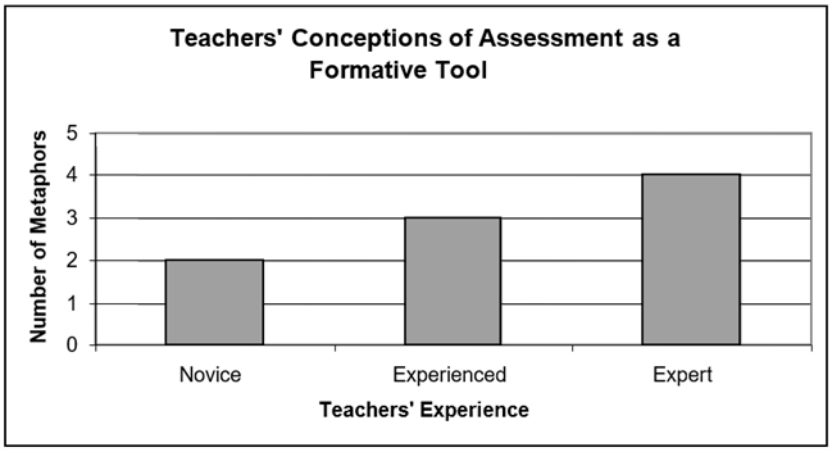

Figure 3. *Teachers' conceptions of assessment as a formative tool.*

Figure 3 illustrates that, within this theme, the metaphors generated by expert teachers surpass those from both experienced and novice educators. This suggests that teachers in the latter categories may be apprehensive about the resource demands and additional workload that formative assessment could impose on their daily routines. Furthermore, many teachers tend to focus on preparing students for summative tests and examinations because schools hold them accountable for student performance.

Nevertheless, Martinez and Martinez (1992) note that formative assessments yield greater learning improvements for less experienced teachers compared to their more seasoned counterparts. Developing a broad range of instructional strategies necessitates both time and experience, thus enabling collaboration between experienced and inexperienced teachers to enhance their pedagogical content knowledge. While novice teachers benefit from the insights of their more experienced colleagues, veteran teachers can also gain from reflecting on student learning experiences.

Assessment as a Washback Effect Tool

The washback effect can be succinctly defined as "the impact of testing on teaching and learning" (Gates, 1995). Various metaphors, such as a refill, mathematical proofing, checklist, two-way interaction, checkup, and sunshine after planting, were categorized as tools reflecting the washback effect of assessment (see Appendix 3).

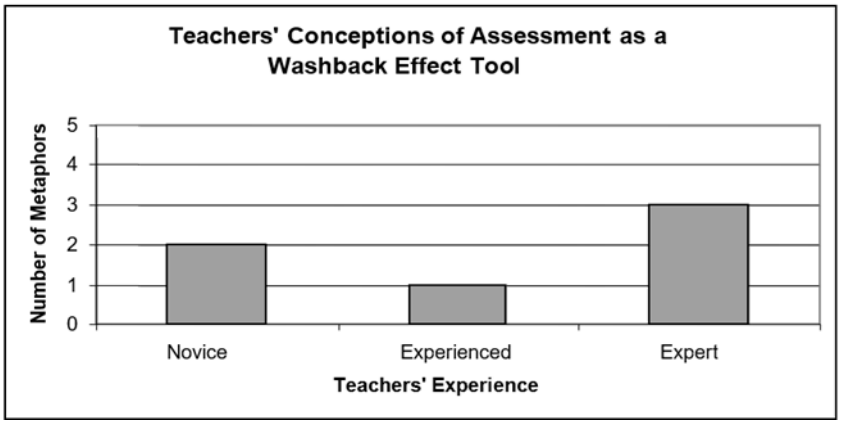

Figure 4. *Teachers' conceptions of assessment as a washback effect tool.*

An examination of the metaphors related to this theme reveals that experienced educators place significant emphasis on the influence of washback on their views about assessment (Figure 4). This observation may indicate that seasoned teachers possess a deeper understanding of the features of an assessment system where outcomes carry high-stakes implications. Meanwhile, novice teachers, who ranked this influence second, mentioned during interviews that they, too, had felt the impact of washback in their own educational experiences.

Fullilove (1992, p. 131) also noted that "the nature and strength of this washback effect, along with its benefits or drawbacks, largely depend on the overall educational system, the nature of other stakeholders involved in developing or establishing competing curricula, and, of course, the types of examinations being considered."

Assessment as a Sign of Self-Efficacy

In his book Self-efficacy: The Exercise of Control, Bandura (1997) describes self-efficacy as the belief in one's own abilities to plan and carry out the actions needed to achieve specific goals (p. 3). Within this study, only four out of thirty metaphors were categorized under assessment as a reflection of self-efficacy. These metaphors primarily focused on

demonstrating capabilities, such as creating a best-selling film, navigating successfully, excelling at cooking, and painting.

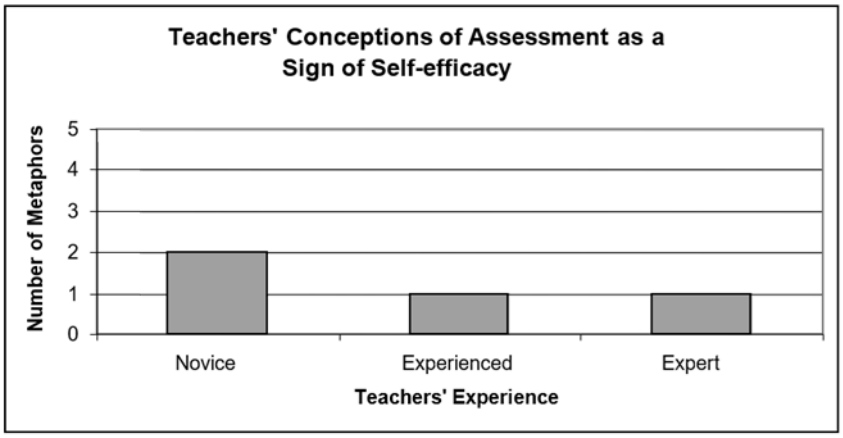

Figure 5. *Teachers' conceptions of assessment as a sign of self-efficacy.*

Among the four themes, assessment as an indicator of self-efficacy had the fewest metaphors (see Figure 5), which may suggest that teachers do not generally associate assessment with beliefs in their capabilities. Gist and Mitchell (1992) recommend considering certain questions to evaluate one's abilities: What are the demands of various tasks? To what extent does an individual attribute their successes or failures to themselves? How does each performance influence their self-efficacy? Consequently, the teachers' tendency to attribute failures to external factors may explain the limited number of metaphors relating to self-efficacy. This could also indicate that they view success as the result of a combination of personal characteristics, actions, and environmental factors.

Additionally, novice teachers tend to connect language assessment with self-efficacy more than their experienced counterparts. While some studies reflect a positive relationship between years of experience and teachers' efficacy beliefs (Lin & Tsai, 1999), others present conflicting findings (Woolfolk, 1990). Furthermore, research by Gorrell and Dharmadasa (1994) reveals mixed outcomes. Ultimately, some scholars assert that there is no significant correlation between teachers' years of experience and their efficacy beliefs (e.g., Guskey, 1987). This brief review of the literature suggests that there is no consistent consensus with regard to the relationship between these two variables.

Discussion and Conclusion

Similar to findings in previous research (e.g., Remesal, 2011; Yin, 2010; Sahinkarakas, 2012), the data collected in this study supports the notion that teachers possess a range of beliefs that influence their instructional and assessment methods. Consequently, the beliefs and roles of teachers play a crucial role in enhancing their assessment practices. An analysis of the metaphors generated by the teachers in this study led to two primary conclusions: assessment as a summative tool and assessment as a formative tool.

A significant number of novice teachers in this study acknowledged the role of assessment as a summative tool, which suggests that they may be inclined to meet stakeholders' expectations for a comprehensive overview of their students' achievements. According to educational literature, summative assessment, sometimes referred to as "evaluation of learning," is one of the two main forms of evaluation (Stiggins, 2002; Earl, 2003). Summative tests are frequently utilized in this setting to provide grades to students at the conclusion of a course or project, as is seen in other educational environments. This type of evaluation has little effect on the learning process, but it can have an impact on how instructors create their classes and what is offered to students.

Sahinkarakas (2012) discovered that inexperienced instructors predominantly saw assessment as summative, utilizing it to evaluate student performance and award grades, reflecting a more conventional viewpoint. Findings of this study detected a similar pattern, with inexperienced instructors emphasizing summative evaluation, which was often influenced by external expectations. However, more experienced instructors in both studies understood assessment's dual purpose, admitting its function in summative evaluation while also appreciating its potential to give feedback that improves learning. This represents that as instructors acquire experience, their perspective of assessment evolves, incorporating both evaluative and developmental aims.

The second primary category, which was also the second most endorsed role of assessment by experienced teachers in this study, is the view of assessment as a formative tool. This perspective may stem from the belief among expert teachers that formative assessments contribute to greater learning outcomes. Formative assessment is often described as "assessment for learning," ongoing assessment, or dynamic assessment (Stiggins, 2002; Derrich and Ecclestone, 2006). When evidence from such assessments is used to tailor teaching to meet student needs, it is classified as formative assessment, which aims to assist students in

enhancing their learning. However, the implementation of formative assessment often lacks clear guidelines and objectives, presenting challenges for teachers and teacher educators and highlighting the necessity for more defined frameworks.

In a research on teachers' metaphors for assessment, Sahinkarakas (2012) discovered that formative assessment was crucial to instructors' perspectives on assessment. Regardless of their degree of expertise, many teachers stressed the importance of formative assessment in fostering student learning, according to her research. Common metaphors used to explain how formative evaluations help pupils include "a road with traffic lights" and "a close friend pointing the way." Our own research supports this, as seasoned educators have also emphasized the importance of formative evaluation in raising student achievement. Nevertheless, Sahinkarakas also noted that even while formative assessment was widely acknowledged to be important, instructors still had trouble putting it into practice. This problem is also evident in our study, where a prevalent problem was the lack of defined instructions and objectives.

Findings of this study suggest many critical approaches for enhancing assessment processes in education. One important lesson is the need to improve instructors' assessment literacy, particularly in the area of formative assessment. While inexperienced instructors tend to think of assessment as purely summative, with the goal of achieving external standards and presenting a summary of student success, more experienced teachers understand its potential to stimulate deeper learning via continual feedback. Despite this awareness, both rookie and experienced instructors face obstacles when attempting to perform formative assessments, particularly in the absence of clear rules and established frameworks. To address these challenges, it is noteworthy that teacher training programs and policymakers offer clearer, more practical resources to support teachers in effectively using formative assessments. Furthermore, the integration of metacognitive strategies into the curriculum could be instrumental in helping students reflect on their learning, enhancing their self-efficacy, and improving overall learning outcomes. By providing clearer frameworks, practical guidance, and a focus on reflective learning, educational stakeholders can better support teachers in utilizing assessment as a tool for continuous student development.

As for the limitations, in the preparatory school, there are approximately 55 EFL teachers; however, only 30 participated in this research. The study employed a convenience sampling method due to constraints in time and opportunities. While other stakeholders play a significant role in the assessment process, they were not included in this research.

The chosen sample size, sampling framework, and methodology present difficulties in generalizing the findings to the wider population of teachers and preparatory schools throughout Turkey. Nevertheless, the results may yield some insights applicable to other preparatory schools with similar conditions, suggesting what the outcomes might look like if a larger sample and varied sampling methods were utilized. This case study has played a crucial role in establishing a foundation for further investigations in a field that is increasingly attracting the interest of educators, parents, and policymakers.

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APPENDIX

Metaphor Analysis

The purpose of this study is to explore English language teachers' beliefs regarding language assessment. All your information will remain confidential.

Participant Information Form

Mark the items that apply to you with a check.

1. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female
2. Bachelor's degree (field of study): _____
3. Postgraduate degree: ☐ Master's ☐ Doctorate
4. Years of professional experience: _____ year(s)

Metaphor Completion Task

Complete the sentence below by incorporating a metaphor and explaining your reasoning behind that choice.

A language assessment (test) is like …… because …….

Appendix: Interview Questions

1. Can you explain how the grading system works in this preparatory school?
2. How do you feel about the assessment methods currently used in this preparatory school?
3. Do you have any suggestions for improving student assessments within the EFL setting of this preparatory school?
4. What responsibilities do teachers have regarding assessment in this preparatory school?
5. How do you view your responsibilities in evaluating students?

EFL Teachers' Metaphorical Perceptions of Assessment in ELT

Key Concepts	Associated Metaphors
Washback	a refill, mathematical proofing, checklist, two-way interaction, a checkup, sunshine after planting
Formative	a formula, putting jigsaw pieces together, a restarting process, a mirror, a collaborative work, a guidebook, learning driving through mistakes, strenuous bird watching, riding herd on success
Summative	a barrier, a quick access to what you want, just enough to eat, a play dough to shape, forcing a baby to eat, compulsory military service, an umbrella of skills, a knot tying things together, a bracket to separate, a measuring tape, looking through binoculars to focus
Self-Efficacy	making a best-seller film, ability to navigate, a successful cooking, a painting

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Investigating Academic Integrity Needs of English Language Learners in Higher Education

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Abstract

Academic integrity is fundamental to higher education, ensuring the authenticity of scholarly work and fostering ethical development among students. The prevailing availability of academic writing services and generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools has amplified the challenges of maintaining integrity, particularly for English Language Learners (ELLs) moving into university settings. This study investigated the specific academic integrity needs of ELLs in a preparatory program of a School of Foreign Languages. Using a qualitative design, data were collected through semi-structured focus group interviews with 80 undergraduate ELLs and individual interviews with four English language instructors. Thematic analysis revealed substantial knowledge gaps, misconceptions, and systemic obstacles that hinder the effective development of academic integrity. Results highlighted the necessity of comprehensive training in academic integrity principles, plagiarism prevention strategies, ethical citation and referencing techniques, and the responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) -powered tools in academic writing. This study proposed context-specific, needs-driven interventions addressing the linguistic, technological, and institutional challenges faced by ELLs. It offers practical insights to promote academic integrity culture in higher educational contexts.

Keywords: Academic integrity; English language learners; GenAI; Higher education; Plagiarism

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Introduction

Academic integrity could be defined as the foundation of higher education. It encompasses values such as honesty, fairness, trust, respect and responsibility and protects the credibility of academic work (Bertram Gallant, 2017; Eaton, 2021). Upholding integrity ensures the authenticity of academic work and supports environments where ethical values are etched in students' intellectual and professional development. However, particularly English Language Learners (ELLs) in higher education institutions face linguistic, cultural and technological barriers due to evolving challenges to academic integrity. The prevalent accessibility of academic writing services, contract cheating platforms, and generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools has further complicated the landscape (Ellis et al., 2018; Khan, 2024; Moya et al., 2023). In this context, understanding the needs of ELLs in terms of academic integrity has become a critical issue. These students often encounter challenges related to linguistic barriers, academic writing conventions, and the ethical use of technology in scholarly work. It is essential to engage with these needs to provide ELLs with greater understanding of academic integrity and equip them with the necessary skills to overcome the possible complexities of higher education without resorting to unethical practices.

GenAI tools can assist students with language and content generation, but they also raise ethical concerns about originality, accountability, and academic conventions (Dobrin, 2023). ELLs, in particular, are at higher risk of accidental plagiarism due to their limited experience with academic English. Many are unfamiliar with expectations around paraphrasing, citation, and source attribution (Bloch, 2012; Pecorari, 2015). As a result, students often struggle with issues like patchwriting, improper paraphrasing, and over-reliance on direct copying often because they have not received sufficient training in these areas (Evans & Youmans, 2000; Howard, 1993). Cultural background also plays a role with regard to this concern. In certain educational systems, memorization and collaborative learning are common practices. Students from these backgrounds often struggle to adapt to academic norms that emphasize independent work and strict citation standards (Hayes & Introna, 2005). The sudden shift in expectations can create uncertainty, especially when institutional support is lacking. As a result, some students look for easier ways to meet academic demands. Without clear guidance, many non-native English speakers rely on GenAI tools or direct copying, often without realizing they are involved in academic misconduct.

Although prior research has explored academic misconduct, especially plagiarism, broadly, there is still limited understanding of the specific knowledge and instructional needs of ELLs in relation to academic integrity. Addressing this gap is essential for guiding ELLs in complying with academic expectations. In this regard, context-specific and inclusive interventions that effectively target the challenges faced by ELLs are increasingly necessary. This study sought to address this gap by investigating the academic integrity needs of ELLs in preparatory programs. By identifying knowledge gaps and challenges, as well as institutional shortcomings, this research provided actionable insights to foster a culture of academic integrity that aligns with students' unique learning contexts. All in all, this study focused on the following research questions:

1) What do ELLs currently understand about academic integrity, and what misconceptions or gaps exist in their knowledge?

2) What challenges and barriers do ELLs face in adhering to ethical academic practices, and how do technological advancements influence these challenges?

3) How do instructors perceive their role in promoting academic integrity, and what institutional limitations hinder effective academic integrity education?

Approaches to Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to quality education and reflects a commitment to ethical conduct in teaching, learning, and research. (Eaton, 2021; Guerrero-Dib et al., 2020). Bertram Gallant (2017) argues that integrity is more than following rules; it demands an environment where ethical values guide academic and professional conduct. Research shows that academic integrity underpins intellectual growth, self-control and social norms and it ensures that students engage in learning processes authentically (Curtis et al., 2018). However, the erosion of academic integrity has become more apparent with the rise of academic writing services and technological advancements. Ellis et al. (2018) state that contract cheating, where students pay for or delegate assignments, has increased due to online platforms that lead to unethical practices. At the same time, GenAI tools complicate the distinction between legitimate support and academic misconduct. These technologies introduce new ethical concerns for both students and institutions, making it harder to define clear boundaries (Khan, 2024; Moya et al., 2023). Despite these growing challenges, many existing interventions remain reactive.

Institutions often depend on punitive measures like text-matching software, which focuses on detection rather than prevention. As a result, deeper issues which cause academic misconduct are frequently overlooked. However, there has been a growing preference and need for more proactive and educational strategies in recent years (Curtis et al., 2018; Sefcik et al., 2020). Stephens et al. (2021) highlight the significance of contextual influences over individual traits in accounting for variations in academic misconduct, highlighting the role of institutional culture, peer behavior, and perceived norms.

Linguistic Barriers and ELLs' Susceptibility to Misconduct

ELLs face some challenges in adhering to academic integrity standards because of their limited proficiency in academic English. This hinders their ability to paraphrase, synthesize, and critically evaluate sources and possibly manipulates them into unintentional plagiarism (Pecorari, 2015; Storch, 2009). Abasi and Graves (2008) observe that nonnative English students often lack the linguistic flexibility to articulate complex ideas in their own words and this cause them to rely on direct copying or patchwriting. Bloch (2012) adds that making distinction between original and paraphrased content presents substantial difficulties for students who try to develop their academic language proficiency. Nonetheless, as Hu (2015) emphasizes, plagiarism in second language writing is often unintentional and the reasons behind these undeliberate actions are linguistic and cultural challenges rather than deliberate misconduct.

All things considered, addressing this complexity requires an educative approach that teaches strategies like paraphrasing, summarizing, and citation within supportive learning environments. Bretag (2007), similarly, emphasizes that inadequate academic writing skills are a key driver of unintentional misconduct among these students. Without targeted interventions, students remain susceptible to breaches of integrity, which undermines their confidence and academic progress.

Cultural differences, on the other hand, further complicate ELLs' understandings of academic integrity. Bista (2011) mentions that adversity in reconciling these distinct expectations causes uncertainty and anxiety about academic misconduct among international students. Fass-Holmes (2017) argues that when combined with inadequate institutional support, cultural misalignments drive ELLs toward academic integrity violations. These interconnected challenges make it clear that academic integrity violations among ELLs stem not from deliberate dishonesty but from structural and pedagogical gaps that remain

insufficiently handled. Linguistic barriers, cultural expectations, and the varying degrees of institutional guidance all contribute to an environment where students may unintentionally violate integrity standards. Therefore, rather than relying solely on punitive measures, institutions must prioritize targeted academic support. There is an urgent need for an environment where students develop the necessary skills to engage with sources ethically and confidently. Without such a shift, the risk of misinterpretation and unjust academic penalties will persist, ultimately hindering students' intellectual growth and their ability to meet the expectations of academic discourse.

Technological Influences on Academic Integrity

The thriving role of technology in education has reshaped how institutions approach academic integrity. Text-matching tools like Turnitin have become a mainstay in detecting plagiarism and serve as the first line of defense against academic misconduct. While effective in many cases, these tools alone cannot address underlying issues, such as students' struggles with understanding academic writing conventions or developing the skills needed to cite and paraphrase properly. Research designates that text-matching tools work best when combined with educational programs that help students build a genuine appreciation for the principles of academic integrity (Mphahlele & McKenna, 2019; Razı, 2016, 2017; Youmans, 2011).

Recently, the rise of generative AI tools has added new layers of complexity to this conversation. These technologies are sometimes misused by students who lack clear guidance on their ethical use. Khan (2024) points out that the absence of detailed policies leaves many students unsure about how to use AI responsibly. Similarly, Moya et al. (2023) stress the importance of integrating technology literacy into academic integrity education. Institutions can ensure that technology becomes a resource for learning rather than a shortcut to misconduct by teaching students how to employ these tools effectively and ethically.

At its core, this shift stresses a broader reality: academic integrity cannot be safeguarded solely through detection mechanisms or punitive responses. While technology continues to evolve, institutional policies and pedagogical approaches must evolve alongside it. A proactive approach, one that balances oversight with education, will be key to fostering a culture where students apprehend the ethical boundaries of GenAI.

The Need for Tailored Interventions

There is flourishing recognition in research for taking a proactive, educational approach to promote academic integrity. Sefcik et al. (2020) emphasize that interventions work best when they are customized to meet the specific challenges students face. Programs and online academic integrity modules that offer step-by-step training on essential skills such as paraphrasing, citation, and ethical research practices have displayed great potential. They reduce instances of academic misconduct and enhance a stronger awareness of ethical values among students (Curtis et al., 2018; Sefcik et al., 2020).

Despite these advancements, a noticeable gap persists when it comes to addressing the specific needs of ELLs. These students often encounter unique barriers, from overcoming language proficiency issues to understanding cultural differences in how intellectual ownership is perceived. To address these gaps, institutions need to design learning environments that go beyond simply enforcing rules. Educational programs that combine practical, hands-on training with cultural awareness can help students internalize the principles of academic integrity. Such interventions empower all students, regardless of their linguistic or cultural background, to confidently and ethically engage with academic work. Moreover, integrating academic integrity education into the broader curriculum can ensure these values are reinforced throughout a student's learning journey (Bretag et al., 2011; Eaton et al., 2017). By integrating discussions about integrity into everyday coursework, institutions can normalize ethical scholarships, making it feel less like a separate task and more like a natural part of the learning process.

By combining cultural sensitivity with proactive strategies, institutions can create a supportive environment where students learn to value and practice academic integrity in meaningful ways. Comprehensive needs analysis should serve as the starting point to understand their current knowledge, skills, and challenges. By means of this execution, institutions can create more inclusive and effective interventions specified to the unique experiences and requirements of ELLs.

Ultimately, academic integrity education should not be an isolated effort but an integral part of students' academic development. Without a deliberate and structured approach that considers linguistic, cultural, and cognitive barriers, integrity policies risk becoming punitive rather than formative. A well-designed framework that integrates ethical values into everyday learning experiences not only mitigates the risk of misconduct but also cultivates a deeper

understanding of responsible academic engagement. When students are provided with the right tools and guided through an inclusive, skill-oriented approach, they are more likely to internalize integrity as a fundamental academic value rather than a mere compliance requirement.

Methodology

Needs Analysis Framework

Needs analysis (NA) is a systematic process for identifying and understanding the specific learning needs of a target group in a defined educational context (Brown, 1995). By adopting a Target Situation Analysis framework (Robinson, 1991), the study aimed to identify what students need to know and employ to comply with academic integrity principles. In the context of this study, NA played a crucial role in exploring the academic integrity knowledge, experiences, challenges, and support needs of ELLs. Additionally, interviews with English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instructors offered complementary perspectives on their roles in encouraging academic integrity and the institutional practices influencing this process.

The rationale for conducting the NA was multifaceted. First, the study aimed to understand areas where students lacked knowledge or held misconceptions which are critical for identifying specific challenges that could impede their academic development. Second, the study sought to explore the challenges and uncertainties students face regarding academic integrity. Third, the NA revolved around uncovering the specific characteristics and preferences of preparatory class students, which could influence their approach to academic integrity. Finally, the study emphasized understanding academic integrity as a collective responsibility and a cultural norm within higher educational institutions, with NA providing insights into perceptions of both students and instructors.

Data Collection

A qualitative approach was adopted for this study, utilizing semi-structured focus group interviews with students and individual interviews with EAP instructors to gather detailed insights into the perceptions, experiences, and challenges of both groups. Focus group interviews accommodate an in-depth understanding of students' needs and expectations (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Swales & Feak, 2004). The interview protocols were designed to address predefined categories, incorporating awareness of academic integrity, understanding of plagiarism, and institutional challenges, ensuring a structured yet flexible approach to data

collection. To ensure validity, the interview questions were reviewed by experts, and a pilot study was conducted with a small group of students and one instructor. This process resulted in minor revisions in the student protocol (see Appendix A) and no modifications in the instructor protocol (see Appendix B). The final version of the interview protocols was implemented across the target population (see Appendix A & B).

Participants in the study included 80 undergraduate ELLs who had completed their compulsory English preparatory year and four EAP instructors. The English preparatory program is mandatory for students in specific departments, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, English Language Teaching, and English Translation and Interpretation. Sampling ensured representation across these departments, with voluntary participation. The distribution of participants embraced 20 students and one instructor from each discipline, providing a balanced perspective across the institution.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was conducted on the qualitative data using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework. To begin, all interview transcripts were read multiple times to foster familiarity and capture initial impressions. A set of a priori codes, drawn from both the interview prompts and key literature, was then created. When participants discussed the meaning of academic integrity and their definitions of plagiarism, codes addressing conceptual understanding and plagiarism awareness emerged, informed by Bretag's (2007) insights into language competence and integrity as well as Eaton's (2021) examination of plagiarism in higher education. Questions about other forms of misconduct yielded codes related to awareness of additional violations, grounded in McCabe, Treviño, and Butterfield's (2001) typology. Descriptions of why integrity is important and how to prevent violations generated codes on perceived significance and preventive practices, aligning with Bertram Gallant's (2017) framing of integrity as a teaching and learning issue. When participants described referencing behaviors and collaborative experiences, codes captured citation practices and group-work dynamics, again reflecting Bertram Gallant's (2017) pedagogical perspective. Finally, discussions of prior instruction and institutional support needs prompted codes on existing training and desired resources, informed by Bretag et al.'s (2011) core elements of exemplary integrity policies. Throughout this process, *MAXQDA* (version 24.6.0) facilitated systematic organization, hierarchical coding, and frequency counts.

To establish credibility, the study employed systematic coding procedures, maintained consistency in data interpretation, and engaged in reflexive analysis to minimize researcher bias (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability was enhanced by providing rich, contextualized descriptions of participants' experiences, allowing insights to be applicable to similar educational settings. Additionally, trustworthiness was reinforced through an iterative coding process, researcher reflexivity, and a transparent audit trail, ensuring methodological rigor and reliability (Shenton, 2004). To preserve participants' anonymity, researchers assigned coded names during transcription. For example, "1ELT2" referred to the second speaker in a focus group of first-year English Language Teaching department students, while "EAPI3" identified the third EAP instructor interviewed.

Results

The analysis was generated by including both groups' responses in parallel, uncovering overlapping concerns and complementary insights. Table 1 shows details of the coding system.

Table 1. Thematic Analysis of the Need Analysis

Theme	Category	Code (Frequency)
Academic integrity understanding and awareness	Definition of academic integrity	No definition (*f* = 8) Basic (*f* = 41) Moderate (*f* = 21) Advanced (*f* = 10)
	Definition of plagiarism	Inaccurate (*f* = 4) No definition (*f* = 7) Basic (*f* = 32) Moderate (*f* = 31) Comprehensive (*f* = 4)
	Awareness of other academic misconduct types	Limited (*f* = 42) Moderate (*f* = 31) Full (*f* = 7)
Importance of academic integrity	Perspectives on academic integrity	Superficial acknowledgment (*f* = 22) Personal growth and academic success (*f* = 45) Professional and ethical perspectives (*f* = 13)
Academic integrity practices and strategies	Strategies to prevent misconduct	Basic (*f* = 42) General (*f* = 27) Specific (*f* = 6)
	Citation and referencing	Effective tool use (*f* = 4) Limited tool use (*f* = 6) Manual/basic approach (*f* = 48) No knowledge (*f* = 19)
	Collaboration	Negative experiences (*f* = 12)

		Positive experiences (*f* = 16) Moderate group participation (*f* = 23) No experience (*f* = 28)
Academic integrity training and institutional support	Prior training	Formal training (*f* = 1) Basic informal training (*f* = 2) No formal training/minimal informal guidance (*f* = 71)
	Desired training topics	Ai tools (*f* = 5) Clear guidelines (*f* = 7) General training (*f* = 32) Specific training (*f* = 22) Comprehensive training (*f* = 8)
	Preferred timing of training	No training need (*f* = 2) Prep year (*f* = 54) Departmental-specific (*f* = 8) Prep/departmental (*f* = 16)
	Institutional and lecturer support needs	Dedicated support (*f* = 22) Specific guidance (*f* = 53) Basic assistance (*f* = 5)

The theme of understanding and awareness of academic integrity revealed varying levels of conceptualization among students and perspectives from instructors. In defining academic integrity, students demonstrated a range of understanding, from *no definition* (*f* = 8) to basic understanding (*f* = 41), which mostly emphasized honesty and originality. For example, one student participant disclosed, *"I know it's important, but I'm not sure exactly why"* (4ELT2) while another student had an imprecise expression "*Academic integrity is fulfilling the learner's needs and checking their progress."* Conversely, a smaller number of interviewees reflected a *moderate understanding* (*f* = 21), often referencing citation practices, while only some participants demonstrated an *advanced understanding* (*f* = 10) that connected academic integrity to broader ethical principles. As one student noted, *"Academic honesty is crucial if we want our work to be respected or if we want to progress in our field"* (3EEE1). Instructors, on the other hand, emphasized layers of academic integrity such as honesty, responsibility, and respect in their definitions. They highlighted academic integrity as foundational to credibility and trust in educational and professional contexts. One instructor stated, "*Academic integrity is not just about avoiding plagiarism; it is about fostering a culture of genuine learning and respect for intellectual contributions"* (EAPI1). These insights reflect the broader perspective of instructors, who view academic integrity as integral to ethical academic and professional environments.

In terms of being aware of plagiarism and misconduct, most students described plagiarism as *using someone else's work without proper attribution* (*f* = 32). However, few responses were entirely inaccurate (*f* = 4), while a high number of participants demonstrated a *moderate understanding* (*f* = 31) that included ethical implications. Only few participants provided *comprehensive definitions* (*f* = 4) addressing subtler aspects, such as self-plagiarism or improper paraphrasing. Instructors endorsed these concerns, with one stating, *"Many students know plagiarism is wrong but struggle with understanding proper citation practices"* (EAPI2). Students' *awareness of other misconduct types* (*f* = 42), on the other hand, such as collusion, data fabrication, and contract cheating, was predominantly limited with high numbers of moderate awareness (*f* = 31) and only few participants demonstrating *full awareness* (*f* = 7). However, there were two emerging concerns in terms of other misconduct types. First, the ethical use of artificial intelligence emerged as a contemporary challenge. While some students mentioned using AI tools like ChatGPT for research inspiration, they expressed concerns related to ethical boundaries and potential misuse. The second emerging concern was unequal contributions in group projects. One student explained, *"I think about students working on group projects or assignments where some don't contribute, yet they receive the same credit as those who do the work"* (4EEE1). To address this, another participant proposed strategies such as working with trusted peers and ensuring fair task distribution, stating, *"I've always worked with friends I know well, and we divided the tasks equally. Everyone contributed fairly"* (4EEE1).

Although students and instructors emphasized discrete aspects of the issue, they collectively acknowledged the importance of academic integrity. Students primarily associated it with personal, academic, and professional success, identifying its connection *to personal growth and academic success* (*f* = 45). One participant remarked, "*Regular cheaters won't be able to complete their graduation theses independently, as it requires original work and effort"* (3IMT1). A smaller subset of interviewees associated it with *ethical career development and institutional reputation* (*f* = 13), as noted by one student: *"If any plagiarism or misconduct is discovered, it undermines both our personal credibility and that of the institution we represent"* (3EEE1). However, a subset of responses reflected a *superficial acknowledgment of academic integrity* (*f* = 22), focusing on compliance with technicalities like citation rather than embracing its intrinsic layers. Instructors added depth to this discussion by emphasizing that academic integrity is essential for fostering genuine learning and respect for intellectual work. One instructor, on the other hand, remarked, "*Academic integrity is foundational to credibility and*

trust, not only in academia but also in professional environments" (EAPI1). Another instructor participant highlighted its prominence for promoting ethical career development and institutional trustworthiness.

Students' academic integrity practices and strategies varied widely. Many students expressed that they rely on *basic strategies* (*f* = 42), such as paraphrasing and consulting lecturers, while fewer employed more *comprehensive strategies* (*f* = 27) like cross-checking sources. Citation and referencing were significant challenges, with the majority relying on error-prone *manual methods* (*f* = 48). Only a small number used *tools* (*f* = 6) like Zotero or Mendeley effectively. Students expressed frustration with finding reliable sources, particularly due to language barriers, as one participant noted, *"Since most academic materials are in English, it's difficult to find reliable sources"* (4EEE2). Instructors advocated for proactive teaching practices to address these challenges. All four instructors emphasized the value of defining expectations and establishing class norms early in the academic term. Personalized assignments that demand creativity or personal reflection were also highlighted as effective strategies to discourage dishonesty. One instructor explained, *"Assignments that require genuine engagement reduce opportunities for plagiarism"* (EAPI3). The instructors also identified several challenges in fostering academic integrity, particularly concerning students' awareness and technological influences. All four instructors noted that students often lack a deep understanding of integrity principles, especially around proper citation and avoiding inadvertent misconduct. Two participants highlighted the challenges posed by artificial intelligence tools, emphasizing the need for clear guidelines to manage their ethical use. One instructor shared, *"The widespread use of AI for assignments creates a new layer of complexity in promoting academic integrity"* (EAPI1). Institutional challenges, such as the absence of standardized training and inconsistent enforcement of policies, were also flagged by three instructors as barriers to cultivating a culture of integrity.

Academic integrity training and institutional support was the other critical theme for both groups. The need for academic integrity was evident with most participants reporting *no formal training on academic integrity* (*f* = 71) and only minimal informal guidance (*f* = 2). Students expressed strong support for early educational interventions, with many advocating preparatory-year training due to its less demanding academic workload. One student participant explained, *"it would be better to start early, as the prep year is less intense compared to the department courses. Starting early would be much more effective than learning it from scratch later"* (1EEE1). Another student participant clarified, "*I think such training is essential,*

especially since many of us are hearing these concepts for the first time. It would help us be better prepared for projects and research" (4EEE4). Additionally, some participants suggested ongoing reinforcement following the preparatory year to ensure retention, with one noting, *"Having it from the start of university to the end would be valuable"* (4ELT4). Students also emphasized the substantiality of clear guidelines and mentorship, with one suggesting, "*Each department should have a designated lecturer for students to consult about research and academic integrity*" (3EEE5). Another participant highlighted the value of applied learning, proposing, *"Having academic integrity training as a course, particularly in translation studies, would be beneficial. It could be a module within academic writing"* (4IMT3). In line with that, proposed solutions from the instructors focused on structured training and institutional support. All four instructors strongly advocated for introducing academic integrity training during the preparatory year, with ongoing reinforcement as students advance through their studies. One instructor participant observed, *"Training should start early and evolve as students encounter more complex academic challenges"* (EAPI4).

Training needs on academic integrity was also a key focus for students, with the majority emphasizing *general training to build foundational knowledge* (*f* = 32) and ethical practices essential for academic and professional success One student noted, *"Knowing the principles and definitions would help guide behavior in real life, and everything else would follow naturally"* (3IMT2). Several students expressed *the need for specific interventions* (*f* = 22) on topics like paraphrasing and citation techniques, particularly in the early stages of their education to ensure good practices from the start. As stated by one student, *"Training on how to integrate sources properly into our work would be beneficial. A foundational session on ethics and citation practices early on would be beneficial"* (3ELT4). Another student group highlighted the importance of *clear guidelines* (*f = 7),* advocating for standardized expectations and detailed instructions to eliminate confusion in their academic work Some students also stressed *the need for ethical training on AI tools* (*f* = 5), pointing out risks like unintentional plagiarism when using technologies such as ChatGPT). Finally, a notable minority called for *comprehensive training or mandatory training* (*f* = 8) that would address complex issues, including the types of plagiarism and advanced ethical scenarios, to provide a thorough understanding of academic integrity. One student participant remarked, *"Making academic integrity a mandatory class would help immensely. As someone with ADHD, I'd appreciate a structured pace that accommodates all students, making it part of the academic curriculum"* (3IMT5). On the other hand, two instructors recommended faculty-wide workshops and

resources to ensure consistency in understanding and implementing integrity principles among educators. Clear and enforceable institutional policies were also emphasized, with one instructor asserting, "*Institutions need standardized policies and consistent application to uphold academic standards*" (EAPI4).

Discussion

Results of this study indicate noteworthy gaps in students' understanding, awareness, and application of academic integrity principles. Some participants demonstrated only a superficial grasp of plagiarism, primarily defining it as copying without attribution. On the other hand, others represented a more comprehensive understanding, linking it to broader concepts such as honesty, originality, and ethical responsibility. These results resonate with existing research (e.g., Howard, 1995; McGowan, 2008; Pecorari, 2015; Sefcik et al., 2020) suggesting that plagiarism among ELLs is not always an intentional violation. It is rather a consequence of insufficient guidance and a lack of familiarity with academic writing conventions. Moreover, instructors in this study framed academic integrity as fundamental to credibility and scholarly ethics while students often viewed it through a narrower lens, primarily as a matter of compliance. This contrast features the need for customized educational interventions that both clarify integrity principles and enhance a deeper understanding of their broader implications within academic and professional contexts.

Students' limited awareness of broader forms of misconduct, such as collusion, contract cheating, and self-plagiarism, further emphasize the need for comprehensive academic integrity education. Although most participants could define plagiarism as copying without proper attribution, few demonstrated an awareness of subtler forms of academic misconduct. This observation is parallel with Pecorari's (2015) argument that unintentional plagiarism frequently arises from students' difficulties in paraphrasing and reinterpreting complex ideas. Many first-year students struggle with academic conventions due to limited prior exposure. These challenges are often compounded by academic pressures such as tight deadlines and high expectations. In the end, these complexities may inadvertently push students toward copying as a coping mechanism (Meyers et al., 2023). Closing these gaps requires moving beyond a rule-focused approach to academic integrity and instead providing students with the skills and strategies needed to engage with sources responsibly, develop their own academic voice.

Beyond these traditional concerns, the emergence of GenAI tools has introduced new ethical challenges. It further complicated students' engagement with academic integrity.

Participants expressed both optimism and apprehension about tools such as ChatGPT. They obviously recognize their potential to enhance academic writing, but they also have concerns with regard to ethical boundaries. These results support the findings of recent studies emphasizing the necessity of clear institutional policies and structured training to guide students in the responsible use of AI tools (Moya et al., 2023). Similarly, Khan (2024) highlights the complexities that AI tools introduce, she notes that students often misuse them due to inadequate training and a lack of explicit guidelines. While institutions have begun to address these concerns, a more structured and proactive approach is requisite to ensure students use AI tools effectively while maintaining ethical academic practices. Without clear guidance, students risk engaging with these technologies in ways that blur the distinction between legitimate academic support and misconduct.

The prestige of early interventions emerged as a central theme in this study. The preparatory year presents a critical opportunity to introduce structured and scaffolded training on academic integrity. It has the potential of enabling students to build foundational skills before encountering more complex academic challenges. Many participants supported the notion of implementing such training early because their academic workloads are comparatively lighter in this period. This result reinforces arguments that proactive, needs-based interventions reduce unintentional misconduct and foster ethical academic practices (Sefcik et al., 2020). To strengthen these efforts, institutions can integrate structured academic integrity training into preparatory-year curricula, incorporating interactive and guided exercises on ethical source use, and discipline-specific discussions. Incorporated formative assessments, such as plagiarism self-check activities, citation practices, and peer-reviewed paraphrasing tasks, can further reinforce ethical writing habits.

Furthermore, students emphasized the eminence of continuous reinforcement, most of them advocated for academic integrity support to be implemented across multiple years rather than treated as a one-time requirement. Instructors echoed this perspective, noting that sustained engagement with integrity principles is essential for long-term retention and application. Rather than approaching academic integrity as a set of isolated rules, embedding it within coursework through discipline-specific integrity discussions and real-world case analyses can encourage students to engage with ethical scholarship in a meaningful and sustained manner. To accomplish this, instructor engagement plays a critical role. Without their active involvement, even the most comprehensive policies have a risk of being ineffective. Instructors in this study highlighted proactive strategies such as setting clear expectations early

in the term and designing personalized assignments that minimize opportunities for plagiarism. These approaches align with Turnitin's (2020) recommendations, which emphasize the importance of combining institutional policies with accessible resources and mentorship to cultivate a culture of integrity beyond mere compliance. To enhance academic integrity beyond policy enforcement, instructors emphasized the need for assessment designs that discourage misconduct while fostering independent academic work. Strategies such as staged writing assignments with iterative feedback and process-based evaluations can help students develop ethical writing habits while reducing cases of last-minute academic dishonesty. Additionally, integrating discipline-specific integrity discussions within coursework rather than treating academic integrity as a separate administrative concern allows students to engage with ethical decision-making in a meaningful and applied context.

Institutional support emerged as another critical factor in fostering academic integrity. The majority of student participants reported receiving no formal training on academic integrity. This exhibits the immediate need for standardized, institution-wide programs. They advocated for applied learning opportunities, suggesting that academic integrity training should take part in academic writing courses or included as modules in discipline-specific programs. These results correspond with Bretag et al. (2011), emphasizing that comprehensive academic integrity policies must be accompanied by accessible resources, consistent enforcement, and clear guidelines. Many students also highlighted the role of mentorship, proposing the creation of department-specific roles to provide guidance on research ethics and integrity-related concerns. Instructors shared similar perspectives, stressing the importance of faculty-wide workshops to ensure a shared understanding and consistent application of integrity principles across departments.

Although culture was not a dominant theme in this study, its influence remains relevant in shaping students' engagement with academic integrity. Some participants mentioned cultural discrepancies as a factor influencing their perceptions of plagiarism and academic conventions. This observation aligns with Sowden (2005) and Liu (2005), who punctuate the role of cultural conditioning in shaping students' understanding of intellectual property and academic misconduct. While acknowledging these diversities is important, the broader focus should remain on developing inclusive interventions that respect students' diverse backgrounds while reinforcing universal academic principles. The Council of Europe (n.d.) and ENQA (2020) similarly highlight the value of cross-cultural support in fostering ethical academic practices and ensuring student success in diverse educational settings.

Ultimately, promoting academic integrity requires a holistic approach that prioritizes education, empowerment, and inclusion. Structured training programs, transparent policies, and sustained institutional support are essential for equipping students with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet academic expectations with confidence. These results contribute to the broader academic integrity discourse by offering insights into the specific challenges faced by ELLs, a group often overlooked in mainstream integrity discussions. By centering their perspectives, this study underscores the need for targeted, responsive interventions that extend beyond policy enforcement. Embedding integrity education within disciplinary contexts, ensuring ongoing instructor engagement, and providing institution-wide support can create a more inclusive academic environment. In such an environment academic integrity will not merely be a requirement but a deep imprint on the heart and mind.

Conclusion

This study sheds light on the critical academic integrity challenges faced by ELLs in preparatory programs. The results reveal a fragmented understanding of plagiarism, limited awareness of various forms of academic misconduct, and systemic gaps in institutional training and support. Additionally, emerging concerns such as the ethical use of GenAI and issues of fairness in group work add complexity to the academic integrity landscape. Engaging with these issues requires higher education institutions to create a well-designed and need-based response that suits the linguistic, cultural, and technological realities of ELLs. Specifically, the following strategies are essential:

1. Foundational training: To introduce scaffolded modules during the preparatory year to manage key topics such as plagiarism, paraphrasing, citation practices, and AI ethics.
2. Practical support: To provide hands-on training for citation tools, plagiarism prevention strategies, and the ethical use of AI in academic work.
3. Institutional consistency: To establish clear guidelines, standardized policies, and ongoing training to reinforce integrity principles.

By implementing these strategies, institutions can foster a culture of academic integrity that equips ELLs with the skills and confidence to navigate academic challenges ethically and successfully. This approach not only enhances their academic preparedness but also contributes to their professional growth by internalizing integrity as a core value in their educational journey.

Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research

This study offers constructive insights into the academic integrity challenges faced by ELLs, but several limitations should be considered. The research was conducted within the context of a single institution, which may limit the generalizability of the results. Another limitation lies in the reliance on self-reported data from both students and instructors. While participants were encouraged to share their experiences openly, self-reported data can be influenced by biases. Additionally, while the results highlighted emerging concerns such as the ethical use of GenAI and fairness in group work, these topics were not explored in depth. Both areas require further investigation to develop strategies that address these specific challenges within the broader academic integrity framework. Future research should explore the long-term impact of inclusive interventions on ELLs' academic success and their ability to adapt to evolving academic demands. Understanding how these interventions influence students' development will further inform strategies to cultivate academic integrity in diverse and dynamic educational contexts.

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Contribution Rate of the Researchers

The first and second authors collaboratively designed the study and jointly developed the data collection tools. The first author executed the data collection process, while data analysis was conducted together. The manuscript was drafted by the first author and revised by the second author before the final version was submitted.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this study.

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APPENDIX

Student Interview

1. What is your definition of academic integrity?

2. Can you explain plagiarism?

3. What do you know about other academic misconduct types?

4. How important do you think academic integrity is necessary for your academic success?

5. Regarding academic works in English language, such as tasks, papers, presentations, and end-of-term projects, what strategies do you employ to prevent academic integrity violations?

6. When you blend external resources such as academic publications in your academic life, how do you ensure that these sources were properly cited and referenced?

7. Have you ever collaborated with other students on an academic work? If yes, please describe the collaboration process.

8. Have you ever received (in)formal training or instruction on academic integrity? If yes, please describe the training or instruction. If no, do you think it is useful to have training?

a. What would you like to learn about academic integrity (e,g. definition and principles of academic integrity; avoiding plagiarism; proper paraphrasing, quoting, outsourcing and referencing; learning prevailing citation style for your field (APA, Chicago, MLA))

b. Do you think there should be academic integrity training in English preparation year before you move to your department?

9. How can your instructors and institution support you in upholding academic integrity principles in your academic work?

APPENDIX B

Instructor Interview

1. How do you define academic integrity and its importance?
2. What strategies do you employ to encourage your students to act with integrity?

(How do you ensure that syllabus design, assessments and assignments are designed to promote academic integrity?)

3. What are your opinions about your students' academic integrity knowledge and awareness?
4. How do you communicate with students about the consequences of academic misconduct, and what resources are available to support students who may be struggling with academic integrity?
5. Are there any forms of academic integrity training for your students in your faculty? If yes, please describe them. If no, do you think it is necessary to train students

    a. before they start their education in their departments?

    b. throughout their education in their departments?

    c. both

6. How would you work with other faculty members or administrators to address issues related to academic integrity in your institution?

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Academic Resilience of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Students After the Earthquake in Turkey

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Abstract

Academic resilience could be defined as the ability of students to effectively manage academic difficulties, anxiety, and academic pressure (Radhamani & Kalaivani, 2021). Corresponding to this notion, this study intends to examine the academic resilience of second-year physical therapy and rehabilitation students who started their undergraduate education after the February 6, 2023 earthquakes. A phenomenological approach, in particular, was used to learn about the students' first-hand experiences. This study was conducted with 22 second-year students studying at Hatay Mustafa Kemal University, Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation and taking the Vocational English course in the spring semester of 2024-2025 academic year. Participants were selected using the convenience sampling method according to their readiness and reachability in the class. In this study, the data obtained through semi-structured interviews were analysed using the thematic analysis method emphasized by Braun and Clarke (2006). Findings were examined under three themes: the difficulties students face in their academic lives, strategies to cope with difficulties, and the support needed to improve their academic resilience. As a result of the findings, a number of factors affecting student resilience and strategies developed to cope with these factors have emerged.

Keywords: Academic resilience; coping strategies; higher education; earthquake

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Introduction

The term academic resilience has been considered as prominent in studies conducted in the field of education, especially in the context of students who are experiencing great difficulties. According to Yeager and Dweck (2012), academic resilience is the ability of students to maintain motivation, persist in their efforts, and overcome obstacles in the face of academic difficulties in order to achieve success. Where difficulties are acute, resilience is essential for ongoing success (Radhamani & Kalaivani, 2021). This is quite relevant for students who experience catastrophic events such as natural disasters that seriously affect their academic lives.

On February 6, 2023, the Kahramanmaraş Earthquakes with magnitudes of 7.7 and 7.6 had a devastating effect on 11 cities in Türkiye and caused many deaths (AFAD, 2023). Described as the "Disaster of the Century", these earthquakes caused the death of more than 50,000 people (TRTHaber, 2023). Such a major disaster causes psychological collapse in addition to massive physical destruction for survivors and interruption in education.

Studies (Faye et al., 2018; Cénat et al., 2020) have revealed that traumatic events such as earthquakes cause an increase in anxiety, fear, and depression levels in affected people. In this context, Nasir (2023) suggested that psychological resilience is important in reducing the negative effects of these experiences on people and helps with adaptation to daily life after a disaster. Kim & Oh (2019) emphasize that resilience is of great importance for university students since they need to balance their academic responsibilities with coping strategies for their emotional and psychological concerns. In this respect, it is suggested that students with high psychological resilience develop better after trauma and overcome academic difficulties more easily (Kim & Oh, 2019).

The earthquakes that occurred in Türkiye unfortunately affected every aspect of life, including higher education. For this reason, universities continued online education for a while in order to minimize the obstacle to education (Telli & Altun, 2023; Özer, 2023). However, as Gutierrez et al. (2005) stated in their study, these sudden changes in education can negatively affect students' social interactions, academic motivations and learning experiences. In this context, Uysal and Yenal (2014) stated that such a disaster makes the academic journey of university students, who are individuals in the identity and independence development phase, difficult.

Students went through the devastating experience of the February 6, 2023 earthquake and survived and started their university education in the following academic year experienced both personal and academic difficulties. The fact that these students continue their education in higher education despite the trauma and stress disorder caused by such a devastating event is significant for us to understand how academic resistance is displayed in this context. According to Izadpanah (2022), resilience within the academic context includes various variables such as coping mechanisms, emotional support, and self-directed learning strategies.

The concept of self-directed learning (SDL) is a key element of academic resilience because it improves students' problem-solving skills, keeps them motivated in the face of challenges, and encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning (Izadpanah, 2022). Furthermore, educational institutions have a major role in developing resilience by providing psychological well-being support and implementing continuous learning strategies for students who have survived disasters (Telli & Altun, 2023). With respect to this, providing mental and academic support to students who survived the earthquake is essential for both their academic success and their health.

This study intends to examine the academic resilience of second-year physical therapy and rehabilitation students who started their undergraduate education after the February 6, 2023 earthquakes. The study specifically aims to determine the main components of the concept of resilience, namely coping strategies, social support mechanisms, self-regulation techniques, and how these students cope with academic difficulties after the earthquake disaster. Identifying the factors that play a role in ensuring resilience may be meaningful for educators and authorities to take targeted actions to support students coping with academic and mental difficulties. In this context, this study aims to shed light on the following research questions:

1) How do second-year physical therapy and rehabilitation students who survived the February 6, 2023 earthquakes describe and develop their academic resilience?

2) What experiences impact their academic resilience in the wake of the earthquake?

Methodology

Research Design

This study was prepared as a qualitative case study with the aim of examining the academic resilience of physical therapy and rehabilitation department students who started their university education after February 6, 2023. A phenomenological approach, in particular, was used to learn about the students' first-hand experiences. The use of a phenomenological approach was appropriate for in-depth investigation of students' academic experiences following the earthquake disaster from their own perspectives.

Participants

This study was conducted with second-year students studying at Hatay Mustafa Kemal University, Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation in the spring semester of 2024-2025 academic year. Participants were selected employing the convenience sampling method according to their readiness and reachability in the class. All students in the class were invited to participate voluntarily in the study. 22 of them, involving participants of different genders, agreed to participate and completed the interview form. Demographic details were not included in the analysis as they were not essential to the purpose of the study. The sample was not decided on to stand for a large population, but was selected to obtain rich and comprehensive data in accordance with the purpose of the study.

Data Collection Tools

Data were collected through the use of a semi-structured interview form including three open-ended questions. These questions were designed to analyse students' opinions, difficulties experienced and coping strategies in the context of academic resilience, especially after the earthquake disaster. Although participants of the study were physical therapy and rehabilitation students taking the Vocational English course, the interview questions were not directly related to this course. The course setting facilitated the data collection and sample selection purposes.

The interview questions were prepared subsequent to extensive research in the relevant literature and by considering the purpose of the study, the academic difficulties experienced by the students, the strategies they developed in response to these adversities, and the support mechanisms they needed to increase their resilience. The interview questions were as follows:

What challenges you the most academically? What strategies do you use to cope with difficult times? What kind of support do you need to develop your academic resilience?

The form was prepared via Google Forms, which facilitated participants' access by allowing time-independent contributions. Before the actual form was distributed, a pilot application was conducted with two students to check the clarity and appropriateness of the interview form. Necessary revisions were carried out based on their feedback, and the final version of the interview form was sent to the entire class via a common online link. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and their consent was obtained prior to participation. Returns were gathered anonymously.

Data Analysis

In this study, the data obtained through semi-structured interviews were analysed using the thematic analysis method emphasized by Braun and Clarke (2006). In the initial stage, all interviews were literally written down to confirm accuracy. Second, open coding was used to identify common ideas and sequences in the participants' responses. The resulting codes were divided into larger categories, mainly based on resilience aspects and coping strategies. For the reliability of the results, verification was requested from the participants regarding the verification of the researcher's understanding through member checking. Ethical considerations were adhered to at every stage of the study; consent forms were obtained before the interviews and participant information was kept confidential. In addition, peer debriefing was used in data analysis, which aimed to ensure the trustworthiness and dependability of the findings by discussing the themes that emerged with the fellow researcher.

Results and Discussion

In this study, the data were analysed in accordance with the thematic analysis method proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The themes that emerged from the participants' answers to the open-ended questions are presented under each question title with the participants' excerpts.

Table 1. Difficulties faced by students in their academic lives

Theme	Subcategory	Codes	Frequency (f)
Academic workload	Course intensity, electives	too many courses, group assignments	6
Exam stress	Test anxiety	Exam apprehension, Apprehension about low grades	6
Psychological aspects	Ambiguity, Anxiety about future	Pressure, ambiguity, nervousness	6
Physical and social aspects	Distance, marriage, sleep	distance, marital status, sleep issues	4
Time management	Insufficient time management	Time management, Deficit of focus	3
Absence of academic support	Faculty behaviour, communication	uncertain course schedules, communication problems	2

As seen in Table 1, academic workload, time management and exam stress were most frequently cited as the difficulties students encountered in their academic lives after the earthquake (f=6 for each). In addition, physical and social aspects (f=4), time management (f=3) and absence of academic support (f=2) were other difficulties cited by students. These findings suggest that students need diverse support systems.

Considering academic workload, most students claimed that the large number of courses, elective courses, and group assignments caused excessive load on their academic lives:

"Too many courses" (P11)

"Some elective courses feel unnecessary" (P17)

In terms of exam stress, students stressed that they experienced exam anxiety and were afraid of getting low grades:

"I'm already afraid of the exams, to be honest" (P3)

"I get way too stressed during exams" (P4)

Regarding psychological aspects, students stated that there is uncertainty and anxiety in their academic lives and that they are worried about the future:

"Ambiguity", "Anxiety about future" (P9, P10)

As for physical and social aspects, students specified the effects of home-school distance, sleep problems and marital status on their academic performance:

"Distance to school, age, and being married" (P11)

"My irregular sleep pattern" (P20)

The final two themes, time management and absence of academic support, revealed that students had difficulties in time management and effective planning of time, and in addition to these, uncertainties in course schedules and communication problems with professors create some difficulties in their academic lives with the following words:

"Time management" (P1)

"I get distracted easily and can't concentrate" (P8)

According to these findings, the participants stated that the most difficult points in their academic lives were intense homework, exam anxiety and stress related to their academic performance, and these results are compatible with prior studies in terms of examination anxiety and academic assignment load, which are important risk indicators of poor academic performance. In this regard, Martin and Marsh (2008) addressed these academic difficulties and obstacles with the concepts of Academic Buoyancy and Academic Resilience in their study. According to their definitions, academic buoyancy is the challenges in students' academic lives, such as exam anxiety, not being able to meet assignment deadlines, and low exam grades. Academic resilience, on the other hand, is defined as more than daily obstacles. In this context, based on the study findings and the earthquakes that occurred on February 6, while many students may show academic buoyancy due to excessive course load and exam anxiety, other students, especially those who survived the disaster, may need more systematic support to create deeper and longer-term academic resilience. In addition, environmental and psychological factors such as the distance of the school from the student, the student's age, and marital status were also found to have a negative effect on students' academic engagement. These challenges seem to increase students' psychological stress and decrease their adjusting capacity. This finding agrees with Mwangi et al. (2017) study, which suggested that both internal and external factors can reduce students' ability to keep their academic resilience, especially when support from academic institutional is inadequate.

Table 2. Coping strategies in difficult times

Theme	Subcategory	Codes	Frequency (f)
Emotional Regulation	Taking up hobbies, rest	Watching movies, music, knitting	7
Social Support	Guidance, counselling	Taking advice, counsel	5
Ignoring and Repression	Letting things slide, silence	Silence, refusal	4
Goal-directedness	Setting goal, motivation	Target, motivation	3
Physical Activity	Exercise, breathwork	Exercise, deep breathing	2

According to Table 2, the most frequently cited coping strategies were emotional regulation (f=7), social support (f=5), ignoring and repression (f=4), goal-orientedness (f=3) and finally physical activity (f=2), respectively. These findings suggest that students most often use emotional regulation strategies to cope with difficult times, along with seeking social support, but also make use of emotion ignoring and repression, goal-directedness, and physical activity, but to a lesser extent.

Considering emotional regulation, most students expressed individual relaxation activities such as watching movies and listening to music to feel better during difficult times:

"I spend time on myself, focus on my hobbies, knit, and watch movies" (P4)

"I sleep" (P15)

In terms of social support, students argued that they receive guidance and advice from trusted individuals during difficult times.

"I take advice from people I trust… Sometimes I make decisions alone" (P16)

"I receive help" (P11)

Regarding ignoring and repression, some students said that during difficult times in their academic lives, they sometimes go with the flow, while others act as if everything is going well.

"I stay quiet and act like there's no problem" (P12)

"I just let it flow" (P14)

The remaining two themes, goal-directedness and physical activity, showed that students' orientation towards their goals, self-motivation, and moreover, breathing and physical exercises contribute positively to their resilience.

"Focusing on my future goals" (P8)

"Motivating myself" (P18)

"I listen to music", "I take deep breaths" (P7, P21)

The strategies used by students to cope with difficult times were mostly related to regulating their emotions, seeking social support, and individual activities. In this context, they stated that they tried to cope with stressful and anxious situations with activities such as starting a new hobby, listening to music, and doing sports. This finding agrees with Polat (2023) and Keener et al.'s (2021) studies in which it was observed that individuals with high psychological resilience tend to cope better with difficult situations. Furthermore, when people who survive devastating events such as earthquakes receive psychological support, it can change their resilience levels, which reveals the effectiveness of coping strategies (Sirin Gok et al., 2024). As a result of these findings, emotional and social support mechanisms are important in students' psychological resilience and thus in their academic resilience.

Table 3. Support Needs in Increasing Academic Resilience

Theme	**Subcategory**	**Codes**	**Frequency (f)**
Psychological Support	Therapy, confidence, attention	Mental health support, relience	8
Social Support	Family, peers, teachers	family support, academic attention	6
Structural Support	Institutional adaptability, basic necessities	Remote course opportunities, need for enough sleep	5
Financial Support	Financial aids, income	money, career opportunities	4
Social Activities	Social interaction	extracurricular activities	2

Table 3 shows that the most frequently emphasized needs of students are psychological support (f=8) and social support (f=6). In addition to these supports, students also request structural support (f=5), financial support (f=4) and social activities (f=2). The fact that

students are in this diverse requirement reveals that their resilience needs to be supported both individually and environmentally and institutionally.

Psychological support, which was the most frequently mentioned need by students, was viewed as the essential facet of their resilience:

> "Psychological and emotional support" (P16)
>
> "It would be beneficial if students had counsellors they could reach out to whenever they needed" (P17)

Considering social support, family, peers and teachers support were regarded as necessary:

> "Support from family and friends" (P22)
>
> "I wish teachers would communicate more effectively with students" (P15)

As for structural and financial support, some students claimed that they were in need of physical resources, basic needs as well as financial aids such as money and career opportunities:

> "It would be better if some of the courses were given as remote courses" (P11)
>
> "Quality sleep environment, stress management" (P12)
>
> "I need money" (P18)

Regarding social activities, some students mentioned the lack of social activities and emphasized their need to socialize:

> "We need more social activities" (P14)

According to the results, psychological and moral support was the most prominent support in increasing students' academic resilience. The results also support the findings of Sirin Gok et al.'s (2024) study, in which the necessity of emotional needs such as peer and teacher attention and/or therapy support on students' academic success is addressed. Moreover, it is suggested that institutional supports such as distance education opportunities and flexible class hours will make it easier for students to cope with academic difficulties (Keener et al., 2021). In this context, Van Hoek et al. (2019) emphasized that academic and psychological support for students studying in difficult environments where disasters such as earthquakes occur will

positively reflect on their resilience and therefore their academic success. That's why, it is noteworthy to develop flexible and student-centred methods within the scope of teaching and learning policy.

This study was conducted to examine the academic resilience of a group of students who survived the February 6, 2023 earthquakes and started their higher education in September. The findings were examined under three themes: the difficulties students face in their academic lives, strategies to cope with them, and the support needed to improve their academic resilience. As a result of the findings, many factors affecting student resilience and strategies developed to cope with these factors have emerged.

Conclusion

The present study investigated the academic resilience of students who survived the February 6, 2023 earthquakes and started their higher education in the same year, and three themes emerged: difficulties faced by students in their academic lives, coping strategies in difficult times and support needs in increasing academic resilience. According to the findings, although the students experienced some difficulties in psychological, physical and social aspects in their academic lives, it was concluded that their resilience was shaped by emotional regulation, social and psychological support. This study has been a necessary step in revealing the factors affecting the academic resilience of students who started higher education under difficult conditions. The difficulties that students encountered in their academic lives, the strategies they developed and the supports they needed can shed light on the developments to be made in the higher education system. These findings of the study indicate that in addition to psychological support, structural preparations such as policies for affiliated schools and educational planning should be integrated to improve academic resilience. Ultimately, this study makes a contribution to the growing collection of studies that reveal that student resilience is not stable and emerges through correlational and environmental aspects, especially after distressing experiences such as earthquakes.

The Conflict of Interest Statement

I hereby declare that I have no conflicting interests with respect to any parties involved in this study.

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The Research and Publication Ethics Statement

Data collection for this study was initiated after obtaining ethical approval from the University's Social and Humanities Ethics Committee on 20.05.2025.

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Evolution of Foreign Language Education in the Age of AI

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Abstract

With the impact of technology, the nature of knowledge (from static to dynamic and from acquired to co-constructed) and learning theories (from behaviourist/approaches to constructivism) have been redefined. This paradigm shift has transformed the roles of the teacher (facilitator) and the student (active learner) and has brought personalised learning and 21st-century skills to the forefront. With the acceleration of this effect by artificial intelligence, language teaching and learning have also been radically affected within this framework. In this context, this conceptual study examines the transformative effect of artificial intelligence on foreign language education. In this study, firstly, the historical development of language teaching methods and the place of AI in this development are discussed. Then, how AI can restructure existing language acquisition theories is mentioned. Finally, the adversities that may be encountered in AI-supported language education are addressed.

Keywords: Foreign Language Teaching; GenAI; AI in Language Education; Second Language Acquisition

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Introduction

The transformation of education by technology is not only an instrumental change but also brings along fundamental theoretical questions such as the nature of knowledge, the purpose of education, learning and teaching processes. With the intervention of technology in education, questions such as what knowledge is and what the relationship between us and knowledge is have come to the fore. The traditional educational paradigm considered knowledge as a static phenomenon acquired in a certain place, from certain people, in a linear process (Erdoğan Coşkun, 2022). However, technological transformation has begun to dominate a new epistemological understanding in which knowledge is dynamic, multi-sourced and constantly evolving. Knowledge is no longer only transferred from teacher to student, but has become a phenomenon that is collectively constructed, constantly updated and developed within social network structures (Martínez & Frutos, 2018). This paradigm shift, which redefines the relationship between us and knowledge, has also affected learning theories, and classical approaches such as behaviourist and cognitive learning approaches have been replaced by connectionist and constructivist learning models. With these new approaches, the act of learning has moved from being an individual and closed process to an experience based on interaction and co-operation and taking place within social networks.

This paradigm shift, which has deeply affected educational approaches and learning theories, has also had important reflections in educational practices. For many years, there has been a need for a fundamental shift from classical approaches such as behaviourist and cognitive learning models to constructivist and connectionist learning models. However, this desired shift often remained unachieved due to limitations in resources, teacher professional development, and other constraints. Now, with the emergence of AI, we have the chance to address these long-standing challenges which are expected to allow us for a more complete realisation of constructivist principles in language education. The emergence of virtual learning environments has redefined the concept of the classroom. Learning is no longer confined to a physical space; instead, new teaching environments have been developed that operate independently of time and location. The relationship between teacher and student has also been redefined in this process. In the traditional approach, while the teacher is the source of knowledge and the person who transfers knowledge to the student, the student is in the role of 'knowledge carrier' who receives knowledge from the teacher who is the source of knowledge. With the new paradigm shift, the teacher has assumed the role of the designer and facilitator of the learning process, while the student has taken the role of the person who accesses

information and synthesises the information in different forms (Patel et al., 2021). Another element of technology intervention is personalised learning experiences. Thanks to the technology that provides the opportunity to offer the infrastructure of learning processes specific to the needs of each student, adaptive learning systems have moved away from uniform learning processes (Kara & Sevim, 2013). Along with all these, 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, digital literacy and collaboration, which are the natural outcomes of technology intervention in education, have become an integral part of learning processes.

Both instrumental and theoretical transformation of education supported by technology has gained momentum in recent years with AI, especially generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). Inspired by the neural structure of the human brain, AI is an advanced technology that aims to simulate human intelligence and cognitive processes by computer systems (Naveed Uddin, 2019). This technology incorporates the ability to learn from data, pattern recognition, logical inference and problem solving using complex algorithms and computational models. AI is based on sub-branches such as deep learning and machine learning. These systems can extract meaningful patterns by processing large data sets, make generalisations from these patterns and apply what they have learned to new situations. Just as educators create instructional designs, methods, and strategies by considering variables like students' learning styles, strengths and weaknesses, interests, and learning speeds, AI also makes decisions by evaluating similar factors. However, it can analyse data at a scale and speed that human instructors cannot perform due to limited time and capacity. From this point of view, AI has the potential to be the biggest supporter of both the student and the teacher in the teaching and learning process (Tang, 2024).

The transformation of education by technology is the result of a process ranging from simple technological tools to complex digital systems, but it is necessary to open a separate parenthesis for AI in this transformation process. The reason for this is the autonomous decision-making ability and adaptive learning capacity of AI, unlike other technological tools and systems (Borah et al., 2024). While traditional educational technologies mostly have a static and linear structure, AI has the power to radically change the theory and practice of education with its dynamic structure that can learn on its own, can be fed with big data and can constantly optimise itself. This capacity for change has the power to penetrate deeply into areas such as teaching, learning, design, assessment and evaluation, which are the most basic components of education and training processes. By means of this power, educational

technologies will have a more substantial role in learning and teaching processes than ever before. In this respect, this study aims to contribute to the current scholarship by offering a conceptual analysis of how AI is fundamentally reshaping foreign language education, from its historical methodologies to its theoretical underpinnings and practical challenges.

The Evolution of Language Teaching and the Rise of AI

Historically, foreign language teaching has been shaped and changed according to the needs of learners and the context of the time. Throughout different periods, various methods have emerged, evolved, or been completely abandoned due to their specific characteristics and dynamics. One of the most important reasons for the transformation in language learning methods and techniques is technological developments (Zhao, 2013). The limitations and failures of traditional methods have led to the emergence of new methods on the axis of new technologies with each developing technology. Before discussing the effects of AI in language teaching, it would be appropriate to examine the main traditional approaches to language teaching.

Since the 19th century, the widely used Grammar Translation Method has largely shaped foreign language learning through the teaching of grammar rules and text translations. Students focus on memorising grammar rules and translating texts to improve their reading and writing skills in the target language. This method prioritises the correct learning of grammar rules over the practical use of the language (Zimmerman, 1996). However, this approach does not contribute sufficiently to the development of speaking and listening skills and makes it difficult to use the knowledge learnt in real life (Piantaggini, 2020).

Communicative Language Teaching, popularised after the 1970s, focuses on the use of language as a means of communication. Students learn how language is used in natural contexts and aim to be able to communicate effectively in real life. This method employs interactive activities and simulations to develop speaking and listening skills. However, the fact that classroom interactions do not always reflect real life and the lack of structured grammar instruction are among the criticisms of this approach (Didenko & Pichugova, 2016).

Task Based Learning, another unique learning method, develops students' language skills through specific tasks or projects. Students learn through activities that require the use of language for a specific purpose. For example, they work on tasks such as ordering at a restaurant or asking for directions. Task-based learning allows students to explore the

functional use of language, but some students may struggle with the lack of a grammar-based approach (Gray & Smithers, 2019). Moreover, the natural and systematic teaching of grammar can sometimes be overlooked.

Similarly, many different language teaching methods have been developed in line with the needs but have not been successfully implemented due to certain limitations. One of these limitations is the one-way focus of these methods. While grammar-based methods neglected communication, communication-based methods neglected grammar education. In addition, their distance from real-life applications prevented the pragmatic use of language and artificial interaction attempts failed. Another important limitation is the fundamental deficiency of such methods in individualising the learning and teaching processes. These shortcomings resulted in learners having learning experiences that were not suitable for their learning speed, individual differences and interests. As a result, traditional language teaching methods may be insufficient to meet the needs and expectations of learners. These shortcomings, especially with the new opportunities offered by technological developments, have paved the way for the rise of AI-assisted approaches in language teaching. AI has a significant potential in the evolution of language teaching by offering innovative solutions such as personalised learning, automatic feedback and simulation of real-life scenarios.

AI's Transformative Impact on Language Education

AI, with its potential to overcome the aforementioned limitations of traditional teaching methods, is causing radical changes in the field of language education and redefining existing learning theories and practices. Expanding the traditional boundaries of language teaching, AI makes teaching processes more effective, personalised and interactive. This transformation can be analysed through how language learning theories are restructured by AI and how teaching practices are revolutionised. AI has the potential to make educational processes more effective by challenging and transforming traditional language teaching methods. In particular, AI has had a profound impact on language acquisition theories, reshaping both theoretical approaches and making practical applications more dynamic and personalised.

An example of the impact of AI on language acquisition theories is Stephan Krashen's Input Hypothesis. According to Krashen, learners develop their language skills best when they are exposed to comprehensible input in the target language (Krashen, 1985). However, it has been criticised that this theory does not give enough importance to output (Swain, 1993). By redefining this theory, AI technologies create the opportunity to present both input and output

in a more balanced way. For instance, AI-supported language learning apps encourage learners to produce immediate responses by processing their language inputs in real-time and providing feedback or adjusting the inputs in a way that the learner can understand. Recent empirical studies further demonstrate how intelligent tutoring systems leverage AI to provide precisely calibrated comprehensible input, adapting difficulty levels dynamically to learner proficiency and performance (Wang, 2025; Zhou, 2024). This real-time adaptation ensures that learners consistently receive input just beyond their current level, optimising acquisition. In this way, the language acquisition process becomes more interactive and result-oriented.

Similarly, according to Lev Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, language learning takes place through social interaction and environmental factors (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995). AI can take this theory to a broader framework. AI has the ability to create environments that provide learners with experiences that enhance their understanding of global and cultural contexts. For example, through AI-based simulations and dialogues, students can experience interacting with people from different parts of the world. Research on AI-driven virtual reality environments has shown particular promise in facilitating authentic social interactions and deep cultural immersion, allowing learners to navigate real-world linguistic and cultural contexts in a safe, simulated space (Betaubun et al., 2023; Lou, 2025). AI creates virtual conversation partners and role-play scenarios that model real-world language use to enable students to better understand socio-cultural contexts. In this way, language learning takes place in a broader cultural context and the social dimension of language is explored more deeply.

Following the redefinition of traditional language teaching methods by AI, it is important to examine how this technology is integrated into modern teaching approaches. AI can revolutionise language learning processes, especially by making communicative and task-based methods more effective and personalised. For example, AI further strengthens contemporary language teaching approaches such as communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based learning (TBL). AI increases the effectiveness of these approaches with adaptive learning technologies that personalise learning processes. AI-powered applications offer personalised course content by analysing students' language skills and learning speed. These contents, which are adjusted according to students' learning styles, enrich the learning experience by providing tasks and activities suitable for the specific needs of each student. Communicative activities are made more effective with interactive simulations and role-playing games supported by AI. Such tasks become more efficient thanks to AI's ability to offer instant feedback and performance tracking.

In addition, AI monitors the progress of students' language skills, analysing which areas they struggle or are strong in. In this way, AI-based systems optimise the learning process by adapting lesson plans and tasks according to the student's performance. For example, for a learner with pronunciation difficulties, AI can provide specific pronunciation exercises, or for a learner who wants to reinforce certain grammar rules, AI can provide relevant exercises. This personalisation makes language learning more effective and learner-centred.

One of the most important contributions of AI to traditional language acquisition methods and techniques is its role in creating student-centred environments. AI creates more interactive and dynamic learning experiences by crossing the boundaries of traditional classroom environments. For example, AI-based chatbots function as virtual conversation partners for students to practice their language skills. These bots provide feedback by analysing students' speaking speed, pronunciation and sentence structure. Moreover, students can practice with these chatbots at any time of the day, regardless of time and place, making the language learning process continuous and accessible. AI makes learning more fun and motivating by using interactive games, simulations and multimedia tools to keep students engaged.

Another important advantage of AI is its ability to provide instant feedback (Tay, 2024). When students are doing speaking or writing exercises, AI systems instantly detect errors and offer suggestions on how to correct them. For example, when a student uses an incorrect grammatical structure, the system highlights this error and shows the correct structure. In pronunciation problems, AI-supported software provides students with examples of correct pronunciation and allows them to practice. Such dynamic feedback allows students to quickly recognise and correct their mistakes, thus accelerating the learning process.

Furthermore, AI encourages students to manage their own learning process, making learning more autonomous and student-centred. AI-based platforms help students track their progress, set personal goals and chart their own learning paths. Students can choose which skills they want to work on and progress at their own pace. This provides a more motivating and effective experience by customising language learning to the learner's interests and needs (Yang, 2024).

As a result, AI reshapes the theoretical and practical foundations of language education, offering more dynamic, interactive and personalised learning environments. The innovative solutions offered by AI not only make language learning more accessible but also develop

modern approaches that enable learners to use their language skills effectively in the real world. This transformation further increases the importance of AI-based solutions in the future of language education. Table 1 serves as a crucial conceptual framework, categorising traditional language teaching methods and showing their core principles through the lens of GenAI's potential support and associated challenges. This framework is vital for understanding the effective integration of AI across diverse pedagogical approaches.

Table 1. Traditional language teaching methods and GenAI

Overarching Approach	**Core Principles**	**GenAI Support**	**Challenges with GenAI Integration**
Structural/ Formalist Approaches	- Focus: Advanced grammar/phonology accuracy. - Method: Explicit rule teaching, translation, repetition, habit formation.	- Instant, detailed grammar explanations. - Targeted practice exercise generation. - Powerful translation tools. - Endless drill variations. - Immediate feedback on grammatical form.	- Threatens perceived value of deep linguistic analysis & rigorous cognitive effort. - Risk of superficial language grasp. - Challenges core pedagogical assumptions of these methods.
Cognitive Approaches	- Learning: Active mental process (acquiring, storing, retrieving knowledge). - Emphasis: Meaningful learning, active information processing, learner constructs understanding; errors seen as natural.	- Personalized learning paths. - Interactive problem-solving scenarios. - Metacognitive support.	- Ease of answers: risk of reduced depth in cognitive processing. - Incorrect info risk: necessitates careful critical engagement. - Over-simplification risk: may lead to superficial understanding.
Communicative Approaches	- Goal: Communicative competence development. - Emphasis: Authentic materials, real-life tasks, fluency; key processes include interaction & meaning negotiation.	- Simulated interaction: Chatbots as conversation partners. - Task design & material generation assistance for teachers. - Instant feedback on communicative attempts.	- Over-reliance risk: could diminish crucial human-to-human interaction. - Real-world complexity: may not be fully replicated by AI.

Humanistic/ Affective Approaches	- Focus: Whole learner (emotions, feelings); aims to lower anxiety, foster support. - Central: Learner autonomy, self-confidence, intrinsic motivation.	- Low-anxiety, non-judgmental practice space (especially speaking); helps lower affective filter. - Learner autonomy support (self-paced exploration, topic choice). - Tailored language sample/instruction generation.	- Lacks true human empathy, understanding, or nuanced guidance crucial for these methods. - Cannot replace essential human connection & affective support.

Assessing Traditional Language Teaching Methods through a GenAI Lens

The emergence of Gen AI and its tremendous impact on language teaching and learning necessitates a closer examination of the transformational power of GenAI on traditional language teaching methods and their core principles. Rather than focusing on distinct language teaching methods, we can broadly categorize them into four overarching categories as (1) Structural/Formalist Approaches (e.g., Grammar-Translation Method, Audiolingual Method), (2) Cognitive Approaches (representing a move to understanding language learning as an active mental process, theories like Information Processing Theory, Schema Theory, and elements of Krashen's Monitor Model), (3) Communicative Approaches (e.g., Communicative Language Teaching - CLT, Task-Based Language Learning - TBLL) and (4) Humanistic/Affective Approaches (e.g., The Silent Way, Community Language Learning - CLL, Total Physical Response - TPR).

Structural/Formalist Approaches

The core principle of structuralist/formalist approaches, such as the grammar translation method or audio-lingual method, is advanced accuracy in grammar and/or phonology (Siregar, 2018). Such approaches dictate explicit teaching of grammar rules, translation and repetition through habit formation (Vireak & Bunrosy, 2024). Generative AI can significantly support these methods by providing instant, detailed explanations of grammatical structures, generating numerous targeted practice exercises, and offering powerful translation tools for comparative analysis. Furthermore, GenAI can create endless variations of drills crucial for pattern practice and deliver immediate feedback on grammatical form in written outputs. However, the integration of GenAI with these approaches comes with some challenges. GenAI poses a

potential threat to the perceived value of deep linguistic analysis and the rigorous cognitive effort traditionally associated with these methods. If learners can bypass the intensive process of grammatical analysis, pattern recognition, and rule internalisation by relying on GenAI, this can lead to a superficial grasp of the language structure. This directly challenges the core pedagogical assumption of such methods.

Cognitive Approaches

Cognitive approaches shifted the focus in language teaching towards understanding learning as an active mental process of acquiring, storing, and retrieving knowledge, rather than mere habit formation (Ellis, 1999). These approaches emphasise meaningful learning, where learners actively process information, make connections to existing knowledge, and construct their own understanding, with errors viewed as natural indicators of this developmental process. Generative AI can align with these principles by creating personalised learning paths that adapt to individual cognitive processing, offering interactive problem-solving scenarios where learners can query the AI and test hypotheses, and providing metacognitive support to help learners reflect on their strategies. However, the ease with which GenAI provides answers might risk reducing the depth of cognitive processing if learners become passive recipients. Furthermore, the potential for GenAI to generate plausible but incorrect information necessitates careful critical engagement from learners to avoid internalizing errors, and there's a risk that GenAI might over-simplify complex linguistic phenomena which can lead to a more superficial understanding than desired by a truly cognitive engagement.

Communicative Approaches

Communicative approaches, such as Communicative Language Teaching and Task-Based Language Learning prioritise the development of communicative competence (Shahi, 2022). These methods emphasise authentic materials, real-life tasks, and fluency, with interaction and negotiation of meaning being key classroom processes (Richards, 2005). GenAI offers significant support by providing simulated interaction through sophisticated chatbots that can act as conversation partners for practising dialogues and role-plays, thereby potentially offering an authentic, interactional language learning environment. It can also assist teachers in designing communicative tasks and generating diverse, relevant materials, while offering personalised scenarios to increase engagement and provide instant feedback on communicative attempts. Despite these strengths, over-reliance on AI for practice could also diminish crucial

human-to-human interaction, and the complexity of real-world communication may not be fully replicated, while the ease of generating solutions with GenAI might undermine the critical thinking and language use processes central to TBLL if not carefully managed.

Humanistic/Affective Approaches

Humanistic and affective approaches, methods like The Silent Way, Community Language Learning, and Total Physical Response, place strong emphasis on the whole learner, including their emotions and feelings, aiming to lower anxiety and foster a supportive, non-threatening learning environment (Rahman, 2008). Central to these approaches are learner autonomy, self-confidence, and intrinsic motivation. GenAI can contribute by offering a low-anxiety, non-judgmental space for practice, especially for speaking, which can help lower the affective filter. It can also support learner autonomy by allowing individuals to explore language at their own pace and choose topics of interest, and potentially generate tailored language samples or instructions that align with the teacher's facilitative role in methods like CLL or TPR. However, the core of these methods relies heavily on the nuanced teacher-student relationship and genuine interpersonal dynamics, elements where GenAI inherently falls short as it cannot replicate true human empathy, understanding, or guidance crucial in approaches like The Silent Way or the community-building aspect of CLL. Thus, while GenAI can be a supportive tool, it cannot replace the essential human connection and affective support that are the hallmarks of these pedagogical philosophies.

Challenges in AI-Assisted Language Education

While AI significantly contributes to language education, it also brings a variety of complex challenges. These challenges are critical issues that need to be addressed to ensure that this technology is used effectively, fairly and safely. Issues such as data privacy, digital equity, ethical questions and AI literacy are the main challenges that need to be addressed in AI-supported language education.

One of the most important issues in the integration of AI into language education is data security (Yunina, 2023). AI-based language learning platforms collect large amounts of data to better understand students' learning processes and provide customised feedback. These data include learners' personal information, performance analyses, and language skills. In addition, some systems may also contain sensitive data of learners' audio and video. However, this data collection process raises important concerns about data privacy and security. In particular, strict

data security measures are required to protect students' identities and to ensure that the information collected is not misused. While data security related to artificial intelligence is an important and unresolved issue in all fields, the use of artificial intelligence in the language learning process, where there is a lot of personal data, also has its share of data privacy problems.

Another important problem to be considered in the integration of artificial intelligence into language education is the problem of equal access. Access to AI-supported language learning tools is not provided equally throughout the world. Especially in low-income regions and countries with inadequate digital infrastructure, students have serious difficulties in accessing these technologies (Gao, 2024). This digital inequality can further deepen the inequality of opportunity in education. In order for AI to be used in education in a fair and inclusive way, it is important to develop educational policies, improve technological infrastructure and provide more students with these innovative tools. These efforts are necessary to ensure that everyone can equally benefit from the advantages offered by artificial intelligence.

One of the major problems encountered in AI-based language education is the lack of AI literacy among both students and teachers (Lérias et al., 2024). AI literacy refers to the ability of users to understand, effectively use and critically evaluate AI systems. However, many teachers and students do not have sufficient knowledge about what AI is, how it works, how it should be used. This lack of knowledge makes it difficult to use AI-based tools effectively and consciously and may lead to misunderstandings or misapplications. In addition, users who do not fully grasp the potential of artificial intelligence may not be able to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by these technologies.

Another problem in the integration of AI into education is ethical issues, and these concerns also manifest themselves in language education. The impartiality, transparency, and ability of AI algorithms to conduct fair assessments are among the controversial issues (Zhai & Nehm, 2023). For example, AI systems may create non-objective feedback or cultural biases in language learning processes. This may increase the risk of students being exposed to unfair assessments. Furthermore, the proliferation of AI may reduce teacher-student interactions, which may lead to a weakening of a human-centred understanding of education. Maintaining the human element and the empathic bond in education is also of great importance in AI-assisted language education. One of the main challenges in AI-assisted education is that

teachers should not lose their guiding role in the classroom and students should not be condemned to an interaction limited only to technological solutions. Language learning is not just memorising grammar rules, but also understanding cultural nuances, being able to empathise and developing effective communication skills. In this context, although AI cannot fully replace human beings, it is important to balance teachers' critical abilities such as cultural understanding, emotional intelligence and mentoring with AI tools. Achieving this balance requires teachers to shift from the traditional 'teacher' role to more of a 'facilitator' role. Thus, teachers do not only teach students grammar or communication skills, but also raise awareness about the correct and ethical use of these tools. This approach, which combines the possibilities offered by AI with a student-centred learning experience, aims to offer an educational process balanced with both technology and the human element.

The challenges faced in AI-supported language education are complex issues that need to be resolved to ensure responsible and effective use of these technologies. Issues such as data privacy, digital equity, lack of AI literacy and ethical issues need to be addressed through the collaborative work of educators, technology developers and policy makers. Overcoming these challenges is important to maximise the potential of AI in language education while at the same time guaranteeing students' safety, equity and ethical learning environments.

Conclusion

AI-supported language education has led to radical changes in both theoretical and practical dimensions. This technology has reshaped traditional language teaching methods, making educational processes more personalised, interactive and effective. AI's capabilities such as instant feedback, customised content and data analysis transform learning into a more dynamic and learner-centred experience. While traditional approaches based on knowledge transfer have been replaced by adaptive learning methods offered by AI, language learning theories have become more flexible and adaptive to individual needs. However, these innovations also necessitate the preservation of the human dimension of education. Language education is a process that requires not only the transmission of language rules but also empathy, cultural awareness and meaningful human interactions. Therefore, integrating AI into teaching processes makes the critical roles of instructors such as guidance, cultural bonding and emotional intelligence even more important.

While AI offers great opportunities in education, it has also brought various challenges with it such as data privacy, digital equity and ethical concerns. Overcoming these challenges

is inevitable for the effective and safe use of AI. Educators, technology developers and policy makers must work together to ensure the responsible use of AI and ensure that these technologies enrich students' learning experiences while remaining in balance with the human element. AI-enabled education represents a multidimensional transformation process that requires developing more sustainable and inclusive solutions in education, considering both its advantages and risks. This transformation redefines not only the teaching and learning processes but also the future building blocks of language education.

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Evaluating the Effectiveness of Flipped Classroom Pedagogy in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Instruction: A Systematic Review of Empirical Studies

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Abstract

This systematic review thoroughly examines the efficacy of flipped classrooms in language instruction, specifically within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. By synthesizing findings from 18 empirical studies published between 2015 and 2024, the review evaluates the transformative role of digital technologies, self-regulated learning, and student attitudes in shaping educational achievements. The analysis highlights the pivotal contributions of platforms such as Moodle, Kahoot, and Zoom in fostering student engagement, enhancing motivation, and promoting active learning. Furthermore, self-regulated learning emerged as a cornerstone for cultivating autonomy and academic success among learners. However, significant challenges, embracing disparities in technological access and differences in student preparedness, underscore the need for well-structured scaffolding and meticulous implementation strategies. This review consolidates best practices for educators and identifies key areas for future research, reaffirming the potential of flipped classrooms to revolutionize active, student-centered learning environments in language education.

Keywords: Flipped classroom; Self-regulated learning; Digital tools; Challenges

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Introduction

The flipped classroom model has emerged as an innovative and popular teaching approach in language education, particularly within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting. By delivering content outside the classroom—primarily through video lectures—this approach allows in-class time to focus on interactive, student-centered activities (van Alten et al., 2021). Research indicates that the model enhances student engagement and leads to improved academic performance (Kong et al., 2020; Guo, 2022), which is vital for developing communicative competence in language learners (Hwang et al., 2021).

A meta-analysis conducted by van Alten et al. (2021) underscores the positive impact of flipped classrooms on student satisfaction and learning outcomes. Low-proficiency EFL students, in particular, benefit from this model, as it facilitates meaningful interactions with content, allowing them to engage at their own pace (Kong et al., 2020). This increased engagement fosters greater confidence in their language abilities, essential for motivation (Chen, 2023).

The importance of technology in the flipped classroom cannot be underestimated. The integration of digital tools, including massive open online courses (MOOCs) and game-based learning platforms, has been linked to increased student motivation and improved learning outcomes across diverse educational settings (Chen et al., 2020; Ekmekci, 2017). These tools facilitate flexible learning experiences and cater to various learning styles, promoting inclusivity and accessibility in language education (Hwang et al., 2021). Furthermore, studies suggest that effective implementation of flipped classrooms is often contingent upon students' self-regulated learning abilities, which empower them to take ownership of their academic journeys (Chen, 2023).

Peer assessment strategies within the flipped classroom also enhance collaborative skills and critical thinking (Chen, 2023). Engaging in peer feedback fosters a sense of community and shared responsibility, which is essential in language learning environments (Hwang et al., 2021). Moreover, flipped classrooms are associated with improved self-efficacy among students. A meta-analysis indicates that students in flipped learning environments exhibit greater confidence in their academic capabilities, correlating with higher levels of engagement and better learning outcomes (van Alten et al., 2021). This underscores the necessity of supportive learning environments that empower students.

Despite these encouraging findings, there remains a gap in understanding how flipped classrooms affect student satisfaction and perceived learning specifically in language contexts (Liu, 2021). Liu (2021) emphasizes the prominence of online self-regulated learning in improving student experiences in flipped language classes, which suggests that fostering autonomy is essential for success in these environments.

In exploring the realm of flipped learning within language education, Baig (2021) highlights that while interest is growing, significant research gaps persist. Despite several systematic reviews addressing flipped learning, few focus explicitly on its application in English Language Teaching (ELT) (Fisher, 2020; Presti, 2016). This lack of focused inquiry is essential, since it restricts our knowledge of how to properly adapt flipped classrooms for language instruction. Additionally, existing literature often overlooks the specific challenges and advantages associated with implementing flipped classrooms in EFL contexts (Amiryousefi, 2017; Çetin Koroğlu & Çakır, 2017). Therefore, this study seeks to contribute to the field by addressing the following research questions:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What are the tools that are being used in the flipped classroom to support teaching and learning in higher education?

Research Question 2 (RQ2): What is the influence of self-regulated learning practices and student attitudes on the overall efficacy of the flipped classroom structure in language education?

Research Question 3 (RQ3): What particular obstacles do educators confront when using flipped classrooms for language instruction, and what techniques may reduce these obstacles?

Literature Review

Tools Used in Flipped Classrooms for Language Education

In language instruction, the effectiveness of flipped classrooms is significantly influenced by the resources and technology employed. Various studies underscore the eminence of digital platforms and resources that facilitate this instructional model. Tsai (2019) emphasizes the role of technology in promoting learner autonomy, stating that effective tools can empower students to engage with materials independently and take ownership of their

learning process. In language learning, where autonomy can boost engagement and motivation, this is especially substantial.

Gok et al. (2021) examined the effects of an online flipped classroom on foreign language classroom anxiety, highlighting the effectiveness of video conferencing tools and interactive platforms. By the means of this study, it was noticed that these technologies promote a more dynamic and interesting learning environment in addition to supporting the delivery of insight. Lindeiner-Stráský et al. (2020) further discuss the utilization of online learning platforms that allow for collaborative learning, suggesting that such tools enhance student interaction and participation in flipped environments.

Multimedia resource integration is also momentous. Babintseva et al. (2023) explored the role of gamified technologies within flipped classrooms, reporting that these tools improve engagement and learning outcomes by catering to diverse learning styles. Anane (2022) conducted a study on gamified flipped learning in a French language class, revealing that such approaches significantly flourished student motivation and positive perceptions of the learning experience.

Diningrat et al. (2023) examined how an extended flipped classroom style affected, noting that using a combination of online resources and in-class activities effectively supports students' reading comprehension. Various methods to instructional tools can significantly strengthen language learning outcomes, according to their research. Furthermore, Liu, Sands-

Meyer, and Audran (2018) discovered that the use of student response systems (SRS) in flipped classrooms positively impacted English grammar learning, implying that more student involvement and comprehension may be promoted by interactive technologies.

The impact of discrete digital tool types in flipped classes on student involvement varies. Research indicates that interactive learning tools, including educational games and multimedia content, significantly enhance student motivation (Ekmekci, 2017; Hwang & Wang, 2021). Specifically, Chen (2020) emphasizes that such tools can foster collaborative engagement among students, facilitating a more dynamic learning atmosphere. Different digital tools used in flipped classrooms have distinct effects on student engagement.

According to Chen (2020) and Ekmekci (2017), MOOCs and instructional games have the greatest impact on students' incentives.

Moreover, Birová, Ruiz-Cecilia, and Guijarro-Ojeda (2023) highlight the importance of incorporating diverse digital tools in teacher training programs, which can empower pre-service teachers to effectively utilize flipped classrooms in their future practices. This emphasis on preparation aligns with findings from Hernández-Nanclares and Pérez- Rodríguez (2016), who reported high student satisfaction with blended instructional designs that incorporated a variety of technological tools.

In conclusion, a variety of technology tools and multimedia materials must be integrated for flipped classrooms to be successful in language instruction. In addition to, making it easier to present content, these tools encourage active learning and engagement, both of which are critical for successful language acquisition.

Key Factors Impacting the Effectiveness of Flipped Classrooms in Language Education

Self-regulated learning strategies are essential for assessing how well flipped classrooms work in language instruction. Liu et al. (2023) discuss how students' self-regulation skills directly influence their learning outcomes in flipped environments. According to their

research, students who successfully manage their time and study habits have a better ability to interact with pre-class materials and take an active part in class discussions.

Tsai (2019) further highlights the necessity of promoting learner autonomy within the flipped classroom framework. Students can interact fully with the course material when they have developed self-regulation skills, which is fundamental in language learning when motivation and engagement are crucial. Birová et al. (2023) provide evidence that pre-service teachers who employed self-regulated learning strategies saw improvements in their teaching practices and student engagement, reinforcing the connection between self-regulation and effective learning outcomes.

Nevertheless, there still exist issues with encouraging self-control in all students. Cripps et al. (2023) highlight that many students struggle with time management and motivation in flipped classrooms, which can hinder their ability to engage fully with pre-class activities. Due to this adversity, students may participate to differing degrees, with some feeling pressured by the autonomy needed in flipped learning settings.

Learning outcomes and student engagement are also strongly impacted by their attitudes towards the flipped classroom framework. Gok et al. (2021) found that students who held

positive perceptions of the flipped classroom experienced reduced anxiety and increased motivation to participate in class activities. This aligns with the findings of Hernández-Nanclares and Pérez-Rodríguez (2016), which indicated that student satisfaction with blended instructional designs positively correlated with overall learning experiences.

Moreover, Anane (2022) revealed that gamified approaches in language classes not only enhanced engagement but also helped shape positive attitudes toward the flipped model. Students expressed increased motivation and a desire to participate in their education when play and competition were incorporated. Pratiwi et al. (2024) also supported this notion, highlighting that gamified strategies effectively address diverse learning preferences and improve vocabulary acquisition in language education.

In overall, student attitudes and self-regulated learning strategies are critical to the success of flipped classrooms in language instruction. Instructors must concentrate on helping students become more adept at self-regulation and cultivating favorable opinions of the flipped learning environment to optimize the advantages of this teaching approach. As seen in Chart 1 below, the relationship between self-regulated learning and student satisfaction underscores the importance of fostering autonomous learning habits among students.

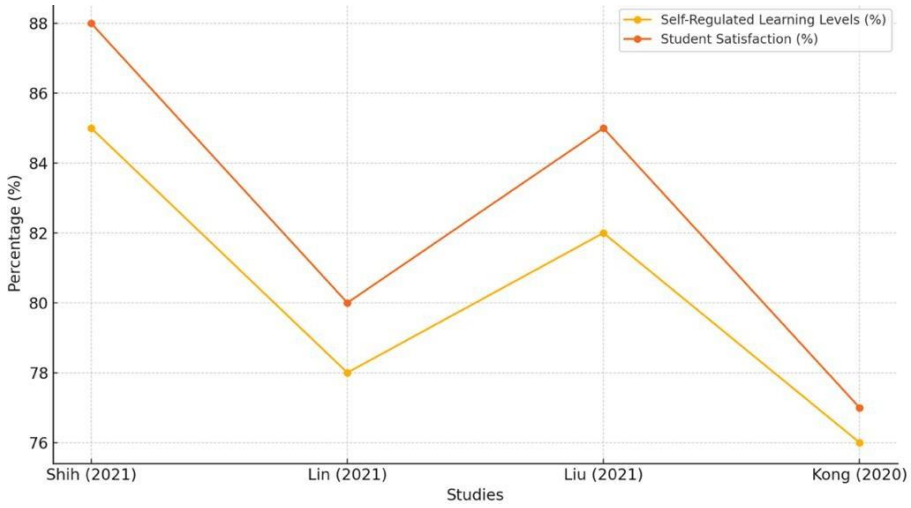

Figure 1. *Correlation Between Self-Regulated Learning and Student Satisfaction in Flipped Classrooms*

Diverse digital tools used in flipped classrooms have different effects on student engagement. According to Chen (2020) and Ekmekci (2017), MOOCs and instructional games have the greatest impact on students' incentives.

Challenges Faced by Educators in Implementing Flipped Classrooms

Despite the benefits of flipped classrooms, teachers face several difficulties when putting them into practice. It can be intimidating to go from standard teaching approaches to the flipped approach. Liu et al. (2023) emphasize the need for educators to adapt their instructional strategies and materials effectively, which often requires significant time and effort. Birová et al. (2023) highlight the resistance some students may exhibit towards the flipped classroom model, particularly if they are unaccustomed to its demands, such as engaging with pre-class materials. Teachers must give students enough assistance and direction because this resistance can cause disengagement and dissatisfaction. Gondra and Aguiló-Mora (2024) suggest that ongoing professional development and training for educators are crucial to overcoming these challenges. Offering teachers the abilities and information they need to successfully use flipped classrooms can improve student learning in general. They provide training sessions and workshops that emphasize modern strategies and best practices for classroom flipping. Additionally, Irianti et al. (2024) explored the impact of flipped classrooms on critical thinking in public speaking classes, noting that while the model can foster essential skills, teachers need to be mindful of what extra help pupils might need to succeed in these kinds of settings. This finding emphasizes how crucial it is to regularly assess and modify teaching strategies to fulfil the requirements of students, in addition to putting the flipped structure into practice. Finally, while flipped classrooms can enhance language skills, technical issues and access to technology can pose significant barriers to effective implementation. For the flipped classroom approach to be successful, it is imperative that all students have access to the technologies they need. In result, even though flipped classrooms have a lot of potential to improve language instruction, teachers still face several obstacles that need to be overcome. These strains can be lessened, and the flipped model can be implemented more successfully with focused professional development, continuous assistance, and a dedication to modifying procedures in response to student input. Significant gaps in the literature still exist despite the flipped classroom model's growing popularity, especially when it comes to its use in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. Existing studies often overlook specific challenges faced by educators and students, such as the effective integration of technology and the cultivation of self-regulated learning practices (Amiryousefi, 2017; Liu, 2021). Moreover, while some research highlights the benefits of the flipped classroom approach, there is insufficient exploration of how these methods can be tailored to enhance student satisfaction and perceived

learning outcomes in language education (van Alten et al., 2021; Hwang et al., 2021). By combining the most effective practices for implementing flipped classrooms in EFL settings and synthesizing existing research, this review seeks to fill these distinguished gaps. By focusing on the tools, strategies, and challenges unique to this educational context, this review contributes valuable knowledge that can inform educators and researchers, ultimately leading to improved teaching and learning experiences in language education (Kong et al., 2020; Chen, 2023).

Methodology

This article has adopted the systematic review methodology that involves a methodical, rigorous process for finding, selection and evaluation of relevant research in an accessible way. Unlike traditional literature reviews, which may synthesize research more narratively, systematic reviews follow strict methodological protocols that ensure replicability and minimize bias (Anane, 2022). Systematic reviews identify studies to be embraced based on specific inclusion and exclusion criteria; conduct thorough searches in all designated databases; and systematically categorize and examine the findings based on the research aims. This rigorous methodology enhances the reliability and precision of the review's conclusions, allowing for a thorough examination of themes in flipped classroom research (Arif & Irfana, 2019, & Guijarro-Ojeda, 2023). This study is based on a systematic approach in which three major steps are followed: (1) article selection, (2) coding, and (3) data analysis. The description of these steps is particularized in the following subsections.

Article selection

With an objective of making a comprehensive assessment on the effectiveness of flipped classrooms in EFL instruction, the article selection followed strict criteria meant to justify the inclusion of the most relevant and high-quality articles. All articles were sourced from the Web of Science database, with great emphasis placed on journals indexed in the Arts & Humanities Citation Index (AH&CI), the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), and the Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI). This ensured that all publications were peer-reviewed and met the high standards of quality research established by these renowned indicators (Diningrat et al., 2023; Etemadfar, Soozandehfar, & Namaziandost, 2020). Search terms were constructed by using Boolean operators to group relevant words, such as 'flipped classroom', 'language learning', and 'English', parsing results to articles published between 2014 and 2023. This time frame was selected to capture recent trends, particularly those related to digital and gamified

components that have become increasingly significant in flipped classroom practices (Cripps et al., 2023).

The article selection process adhered to explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure transparency, consistency, and replicability. Included studies were: (a) published in English to maintain linguistic consistency, (b) empirical studies presenting original research data on flipped classroom implementation in EFL contexts, (c) indexed in AH&CI, ESCI, or SSCI, ensuring academic credibility, (d) conducted within classroom settings focused on English language learning and digital or blended instructional methodologies, with full text available, and (f) published in peer-reviewed journals.

Excluded studies encapsulated those not meeting these criteria, such as: (a) articles published in languages other than English, (b) those not applying flipped classroom methodologies, (c) purely theoretical or non-empirical works (e.g., literature reviews, editorials), and (d) studies conducted in non-English language contexts or extracurricular settings (Diningrat et al., 2023; Etemadfar, Soozandehfar, & Namaziandost, 2020).

The selection process began with an initial search in the Web of Science database, yielding 293 articles. After performing a duplicate check, which confirmed no duplicates, the selection was filtered to embrace only those articles indexed in A&HCI, ESCI, or SSCI, narrowing the total to 206 articles. A screening of titles and abstracts excluded 14 non-empirical studies, bringing the count to 192 articles. The language screening excluded 12 non-English publications, further reducing the publications to 180 articles. The last step entailed a full-text article review, with emphasis on the usage of the flipped classroom model in English language teaching. What this rigorous process detected was that there were 31 relevant articles, and thus this formed the final dataset to be included in this systematic review.

Coding

Based on the research questions and key themes identified in the literature on flipped classrooms in language teaching, I developed a coding book to systematically analyse the data. The process was guided by content analysis methods (e.g., Etemadfar et al., 2020a) to ensure a thorough and structured evaluation of the relevant studies. The following characteristics were systematically coded for each empirical study:

- Years of publication
- Context (country, educational level, proficiency)
- Theoretical Framework
- Methodology **(**quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods)
- Research Approach
- Digital tools and technologies used in the flipped classroom
- Advantages of Flipped Classroom
- Obstacles faced by educators in implementing the flipped classroom
- Student attitudes towards the flipped classroom model
- Factors influencing student attitudes

In accordance with each study, the tools and technologies mentioned, pedagogical strategies employed, and ways in which student engagement was encouraged were highlighted.

Information referring to self-regulated learning practices and attitudes was also coded, since these are considered an important aspect of flipped classrooms in language education.

To respond to Research Question 1 (RQ1): What are the tools being utilized in the Flipped Classroom to support teaching and learning in higher education? I focused on the extraction of specific tools, such as digital platforms, software, or multimedia resources, mentioned in the studies. For example, studies identified potential tools used in flipped classroom instruction, including interactive video, LMS, mobile application, and online quiz, which were coded under the category "Flipped Classroom Tools and Technologies." For example, in the study by Anane (2022), tools such as Moodle and Kahoot were used to enhance engagement and interaction in the flipped classroom, particularly in a gamified French language learning setting. The use of these tools "increased engagement and personalized learning" (Anane, 2022). Additionally, YouTube and Google Classroom were mentioned in several studies, including Sohrabi and Iraj (2016), where the combination of YouTube videos and Google Classroom was identified as a key method for enhancing speaking and listening skills.

The use of Zoom and Google Meet was also prevalent in several studies, providing platforms for synchronous interaction and collaborative activities.

In light of the second research question, to what extent do the practices of self-regulated learning and student attitudes impact the general effectiveness of the flipped classroom structure within language education? I coded the data related to self-regulation practices such as setting goals, managing time, and reflecting, in addition to the students' attitudes toward flipped learning. These practices were fundamental in understanding how they contributed or hindered the learning process within a flipped classroom environment. For example, Fraga & Harmon (2014) noted that self-regulated learning practices positively influenced student outcomes, with students showing greater autonomy and improved academic performance.

Similarly, in Tsai (2019), it was observed that students with higher levels of learner autonomy experienced better outcomes in flipped language classrooms. On the other hand, challenges such as student resistance to the flipped model and issues with time management were also highlighted. In Etemadfar et al. (2020a), students struggled with balancing the flexibility of the flipped classroom with the need for disciplined self-regulation, particularly in critical thinking and listening comprehension tasks. These challenges reflected the need for scaffolding and proper guidance to help students adopt the use of self-regulated learning strategies.

With regard to the last research question (RQ3), “what specific challenges do educators face when using flipped classrooms for language teaching, and what methods can mitigate these challenges?” I focused on the kinds of challenges that were reported by instructors in flipped classroom settings, such as technology limitations, student resistance, and lack of engagement. Technology access was identified as a major obstacle, with many students facing issues related to internet access and device compatibility. Similarly, Khodabandeh (2022) highlighted that the lack of familiarity with the required technology (e.g., augmented reality tools) proved quite a challenge to both students and instructors. In addition, the instructors faced resistance to the flipped model, mainly when the students were not used to being responsible for learning out of the class. To overcome these obstacles, various strategies were employed. In Sohrabi & Iraj (2016), instructors provided clear guidelines for pre-class activities and ensured consistent support through online tutorials. Some educators employed active learning techniques to enhance student participation, fostering engagement through peer collaboration and personalized feedback. In Birova et al. (2023), teachers employed collaborative learning

methods to foster a supportive classroom environment, which helped alleviate resistance and improve student engagement.

Data Analysis

Having collated the database of the 35 selected studies on flipped classrooms in EFL instruction, a comprehensive worksheet was made cataloguing the following categories to address the research questions: (1) general characteristics of the studies, including year of publication, country where the study was conducted, sample size, and educational level; (2) theoretical frameworks; (3) technological tools used; (4) student attitudes and perceptions; (5) challenges in implementation. The next step incorporated categorizing the information by these main themes. Following that, statistical tables and graphical representations—charts and figures were generated—to highlight common trends and major differences in the findings, therefore, presenting a clear overview of the current state of flipped classroom studies in the field of language teaching.

Findings

This section presents the findings of our systematic review of the effectiveness of the flipped classroom (FC) model in language education. The data is organized and interpreted to address the research questions concerning tools and technologies in flipped classrooms, the impact of self-regulated learning and student attitudes, and the challenges faced during implementation. A total of 18 articles were analysed, with data collected from studies published between 2015 and 2024. The systematic review highlights the growing interest in flipped classrooms within language education, as illustrated by Figure 2. The steady increase in research publications focused on flipped classrooms in language education, with a notable increase in 2023 accounting for 44% of studies. This trend reflects the growing adoption of the flipped classroom model, driven by advancements in digital technologies and the increasing emphasis on student-centred learning environments (van Alten et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2020).

However, the apparent decline in publication volume in 2024 should be interpreted with caution. This decrease may be attributed to the partial nature of the data collection year, as the year had not yet concluded at the time of this review. Furthermore, delays in indexing and the typical lag in academic publication cycles, particularly during the first half of a calendar year, may have contributed to the lower count. Embodying this consideration allows for a more balanced and accurate interpretation of publication trends across the reviewed period.

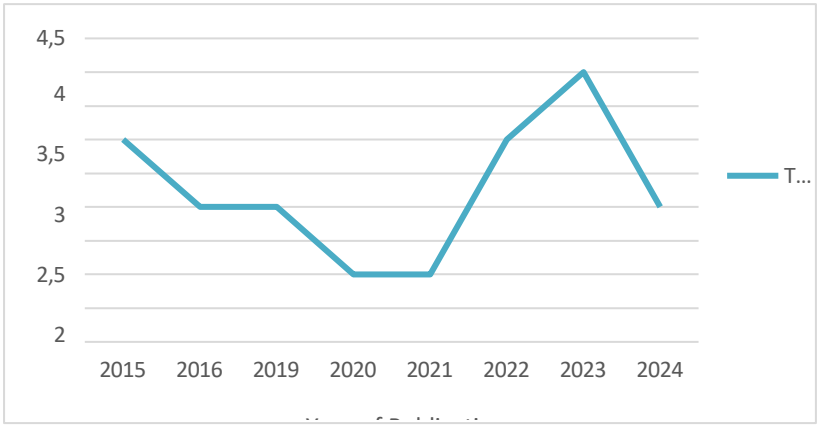

Figure 2. *Trend of publication volume during 2015–2024 (N = 18).*

Figure 3 displays the distribution of studies across different countries. Indonesia has 2 studies, followed by the UAE and China with 1 study each. Iran, the United States, and Taiwan each have 3 studies per category, reflecting a significant research focus in these areas. Pakistan and Slovakia also have 3 studies, while other countries like Spain and Cyprus have just 1 study each. This distribution indicates varying levels of research activity across regions. Additionally, Figure 4 shows that most studies were conducted in the United States, Taiwan and Iran (50% of studies) and Indonesia (11%). This geographical distribution highlights the adoption of flipped classrooms across both English-dominant and non-English-speaking regions, emphasizing their relevance in diverse educational contexts (Tsai, 2019). The strong representation of non-English-speaking countries supports findings in the literature that flipped classrooms are particularly effective in EFL and ESL settings, as they allow for individualized learning and enhanced student autonomy (Hernández-Nanclares & Pérez-Rodríguez, 2016).

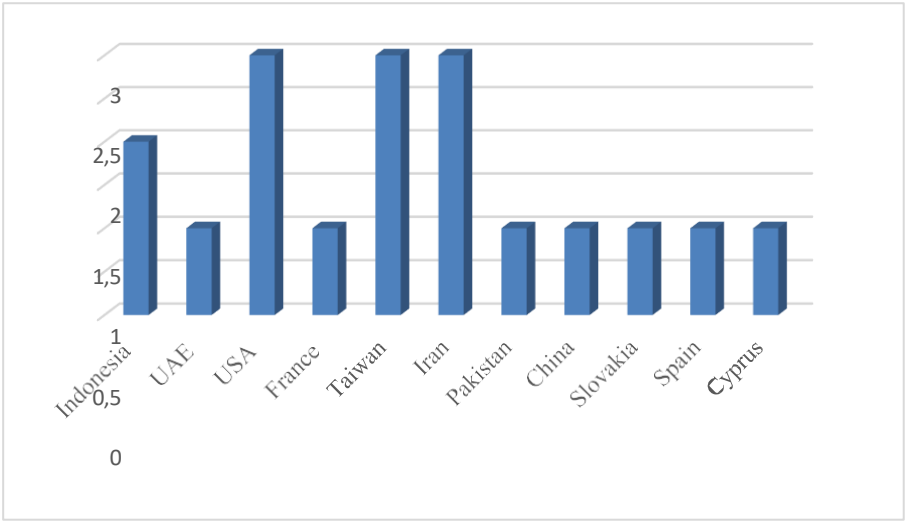

Figure 3. *Article count by the country of research site (N = 18).*

Figure 4 categorizes studies by education level. University and Undergraduate studies are the most frequent with 4 studies, reflecting a strong emphasis on higher education research. Higher education levels each have 3 studies, indicating a moderate level of research activity. Private language institutes have 1 study, while elementary education and engineering student studies also have 1 study each. Preservice teachers and postgraduate studies are the least represented with only 1 study each, suggesting a gap in research focus in these segments.

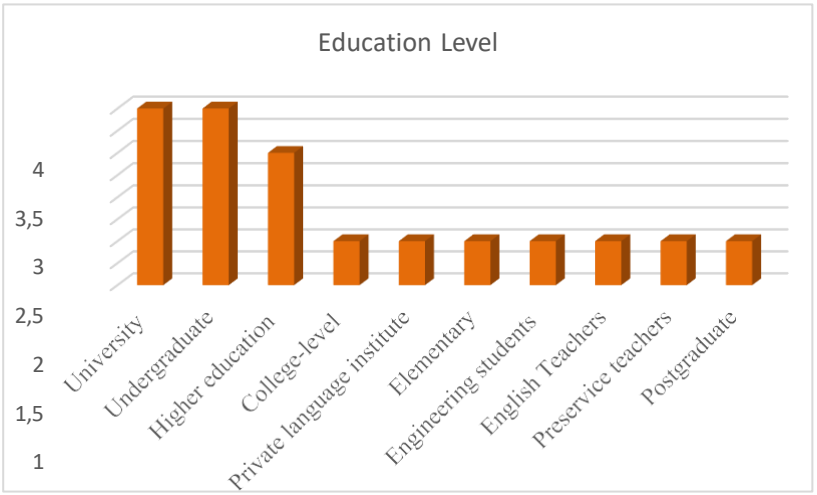

Figure 4. *The education levels of the samples of the reviewed articles.*

Based on **Figure 5** *Constructivism* and *Active Learning* are the most dominant theoretical frameworks, each accounting for 13% of the studies reviewed. This suggests a strong focus on learner-centred approaches that emphasize knowledge construction and active participation. Frameworks like *Bloom's Taxonomy*, *Gamification in Language Learning*, and *Flipped Classroom* each contribute 9%, reflecting moderate attention to structured learning objectives, motivational strategies, and cognitive processing. Several other theoretical frameworks, including *Inquiry-Based Learning*, *Cognitive Load Theory*, *Experiential Learning Theory*, and *Socio-cultural Constructivism*, make smaller contributions, ranging from 4% to 5%. This diversity in theoretical foundations demonstrates that researchers are drawing from a wide range of learning theories to address various aspects of the teaching and learning process.

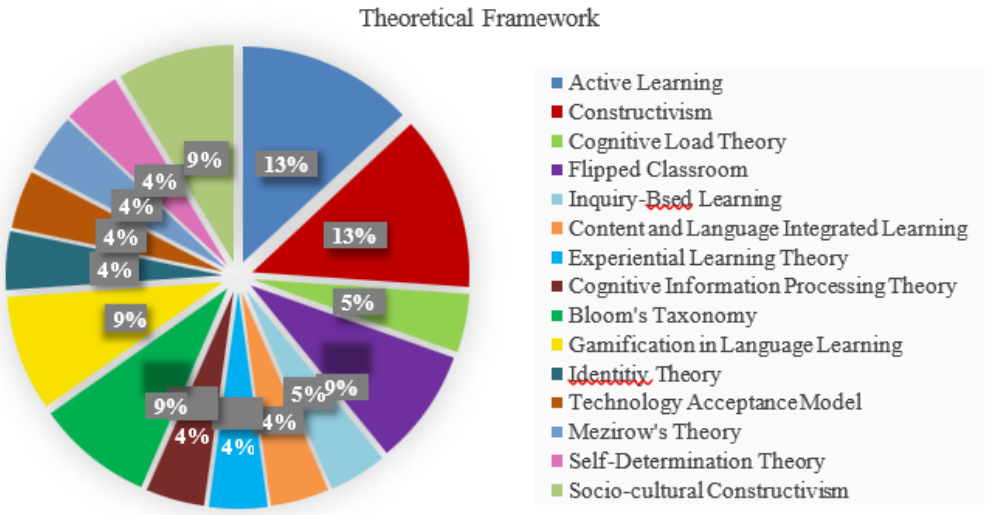

Figure 5. *Theoretical Frameworks used in the reviewed articles.*

Figure 6 designates the distribution of research methods used in the reviewed studies. With experimental designs making up the majority of the studies (35 percent), there is a clear emphasis on examining the causal impacts of flipped classroom teaching. A growing trend of integrating both quantitative and qualitative data to create a more nuanced picture of flipped classroom outcomes is shown in the 23% of mixed-methods techniques that come next. 18% of the studies are quantitative in nature, with a focus on quantifiable factors like academic achievement. Qualitative studies represent 12%, suggesting a concentration on studying learners' experiences and perceptions in deeper depth. A further 12% of research are descriptive in nature, offering a summary of the flipped classroom approach without exploring causality. As illustrated in Figure 6, this distribution indicates a preponderance of experimental and mixed-methods techniques, with less frequent but no less significant use of quantitative, qualitative, and descriptive methodologies to investigate divergent facets of flipped classroom teaching.

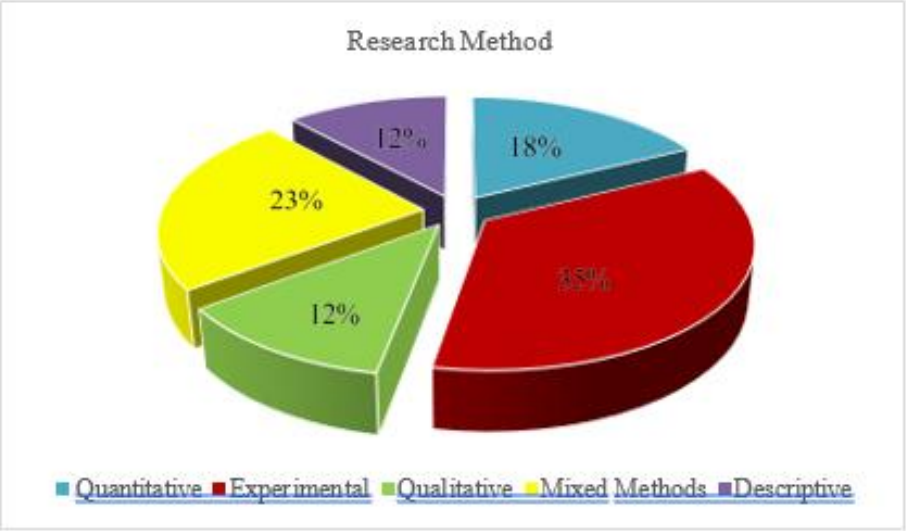

Figure 6. *The distribution of reported study designs.*

The findings indicate a significant reliance on digital tools to support teaching and learning processes. Tools such as PowerPoints, Quizlet, and Zoom are the most frequently utilized, each nearing a value of 2.0 on the scale, showcasing their popularity and accessibility in educational contexts. Other tools, comprising Google Meet, TED Talks, and Coursera, show moderate levels of usage, averaging slightly above 1.0. These tools provide additional platforms for content delivery, engagement, and professional development. Less frequently used tools, such as Wenjuanxing, PollEverywhere, and iClicker, also contribute to the overall technological landscape, indicating that while they are less common, they still play a role in supporting interactive and student-centred learning. This overall distribution highlights a balance between traditional, widely used tools and emerging technologies that are gradually being integrated into educational practices.

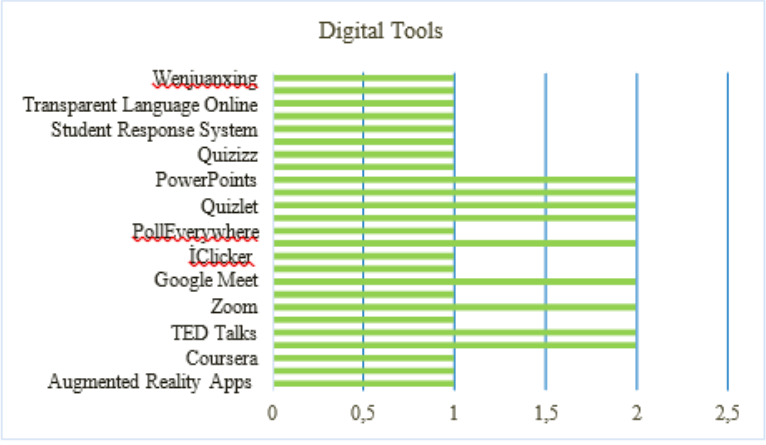

Figure 7. *Technological Tools Frequently Used in Flipped Classrooms*

Figure 8 presents data on student attitudes toward flipped classrooms. Out of the total responses, the overwhelming majority (14 instances) reflect positive attitudes toward the flipped classroom approach. This constitutes 82.3% of the total attitudes recorded. In contrast, neutral attitudes account for only 2 instances (11.8%), representing limited neutrality among students. Mixed attitudes and N/A responses are equally low, each with 1 instance (5.9%). This distribution demonstrates a clear predominance of positive reception to the flipped classroom model, aligning with findings from studies such as Fraga and Harmon (2014), who noted increased student participation in flipped learning environments. Such high levels of positive attitudes indicate that flipped classrooms are generally well-received by learners. However, the small representation of neutral, mixed, or non-assessed responses highlights areas that may warrant further qualitative investigation to determine specific concerns or barriers.

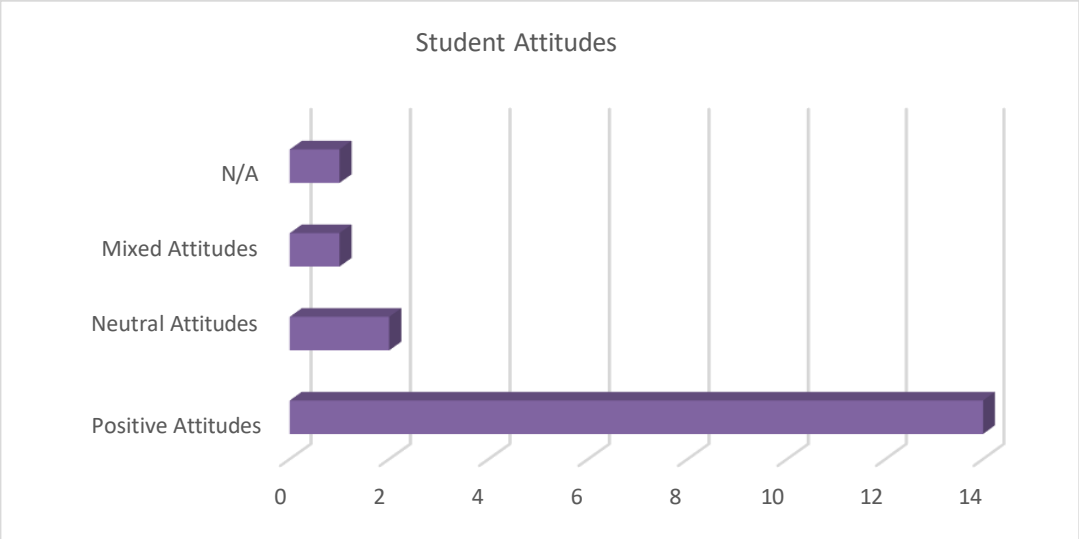

Figure 8. *Students' Attitudes Toward Flipped Classrooms*

Table 1 categorizes factors influencing student attitudes across various studies, highlighting the diversity of elements impacting flipped classroom perceptions. The most frequently mentioned factor is learning activities, noted 4 times (Fischer & Yang, 2022). This suggests that engaging and structured learning activities play a critical role in shaping positive attitudes. Digital tools and technology use follow, with 3 mentions each (Etemadfar et al., 2020; Khodabandeh, 2022), reflecting the growing reliance on and perception of technological integration. Issues such as technology access (2 mentions) and preparation time (1 mention) underscore concerns related to resource availability and educator workload. Several studies also highlight individualized and flexible instructional practices (Arif & Irfana, 2019), familiarity with the approach (Cripps et al., 2023), and external factors like working memory capacity

(Diningrat et al., 2023) or distractions (Pratiwi et al., 2024). These elements, though individually less frequent, emphasize the multi-dimensional nature of student attitudes and the importance of contextual variables. Overall, the factors underscore that both technological infrastructure and pedagogical strategies significantly impact student perceptions. Addressing these areas could enhance flipped classroom effectiveness, particularly in contexts where technological readiness or instructional clarity remains a challenge.

Table 1. Factors Influencing Student Attitudes Toward Flipped Classrooms

Studies	Factors Influencing Student Attitudes	Frequency
Fischer, I. D. & Yang, J. C. (2022)	Learning activities	4
Etemadfar, P. et al. (2020)	Digital tools	3
Khodabandeh, F. (2022)	Technology Use	3
Liu, C. et al. (2018)	Technology access	2
Anane, C. (2022)	Preparation time	1
Anane, C. (2022)	Task clarity	1
Arif, S. & Irfana, O. (2019)	Individualized instruction	1
Arif, S. & Irfana, O. (2019)	Flexibility in pacing learning tasks	1
Birova, L. et al. (2023)	Time constraints	1
Cripps, J. H. et al. (2023)	Familiarity with flipped approach	1
Cripps, J. H. et al. (2023)	Consistency in teaching style	1
Diningrat, S. W. M. et al. (2023)	Working Memory Capacity (WMC)	1
Etemadfar, P. et al. (2020a)	Integration of cooperative learning	1
Fraga, L. M. & Harmon, J. (2014)	Resistance to new instructional models	1
Hernández-Nanclares, N. & Pérez-Rodríguez, M. (2016)	Active in-class discussions	1
Liu, C. et al. (2018)	Motivation to participate	1
Luo, S. & Zou, D. (2024)	Anxiety related to technology integration	1
Luo, S. & Zou, D. (2024)	Unfamiliarity with flipped teaching methods	1
Pratiwi, D. I. et al. (2024)	Distraction issues	1
Sengul, F. et al. (2022)	Scheduling flexibility	1
Sohrabi, B. & Iraj, H. (2016)	Challenges with English materials	1
Tsai, Y. (2019)	Opportunities for self-regulation	1

Finally, Table 2 highlights challenges faced by educators during the implementation of flipped classrooms, categorized by their frequency across studies. The most cited challenge is technical issues, appearing in 5 studies (Diningrat et al., 2023). This underscores the consistent

difficulty of integrating digital tools and platforms into flipped classroom models. Time management emerges as the second most frequent challenge, noted in 3 instances (Arif & Irfana, 2019). Educators struggle with balancing instructional time both inside and outside the classroom. Other significant concerns encompass motivation (2 mentions), as well as issues such as distractions from digital tools (Pratiwi et al., 2024), resistance to new methods (Fraga & Harmon, 2014), and language barriers (Hernández-Nanclares & Pérez-Rodríguez, 2016). Additional challenges—like adapting content to a flipped format (Cripps et al., 2023) and addressing student autonomy levels (Tsai, 2019)—reflect the nuanced demands placed on educators. Notably, less frequent but impactful challenges cover anxiety about technology integration (Luo & Zou, 2024) and limited student participation (Fischer & Yang, 2022). The diversity of challenges suggests that successful flipped classroom implementation requires addressing both technical and pedagogical hurdles. Institutional support, professional development, and tailored scaffolding can mitigate these challenges and ensure smoother adoption.

Table 2. Challenges Faced by Educators in Implementing Flipped Classrooms

Studies Mentioning the Challenge	Challenge Category	Frequency
Diningrat et al. (2023)	Technical issues	5
Arif, S. & Irfana, O. (2019)	Time Management	3
Anane, C. (2022)	Motivation	2
Arif, S. & Irfana, O. (2019)	Individual pace adjustment	1
Cripps, J. H. et al. (2023)	Need for additional outside-of-class support	1
Pratiwi, D. I. et al. (2024)	Distractions from digital tools	1
Hernández-Nanclares, N. & Pérez-Rodríguez, M. (2016)	Language barriers	1
Etemadfar, P. et al. (2020)	Limited resources	1
Fischer, I. D. & Yang, J. C. (2022)	Limited student participation	1
Fraga, L. M. & Harmon, J. (2014)	Resistance to new methods	1
Jensen, J. L. et al. (2015)	Student resistance	1
Tsai, Y. (2019)	Varied comfort levels with autonomy and digital tools	1
Luo, S. & Zou, D. (2024)	Anxiety about effective integration of technology	1
Cripps, J. H. et al. (2023)	Need for additional outside-of-class support	1
Cripps, J. H. et al. (2023)	Adapting content to flipped format	1

Discussion

The current systematic review investigated the efficacy of flipped classrooms in the context of language teaching through a synthesis of findings gathered from 18 empirical studies published between 2015 and 2024. The current study represents a broad approach to the impact of FCs on language learning by synthesizing the tools and technologies used, the importance of self-directed learning and students' perception, as well as the challenges encountered during implementation. The analysis highlights the important role of digital tools within flipped classroom environments. It is found that Moodle, Kahoot, and Zoom are among the most frequently used platforms for enabling asynchronous learning, thereby increasing learner engagement towards learning (Sohrabi & Iraj, 2016; Anane, 2022). The latter finds some resonance in the constructivist paradigms in which students take an active role in knowledge acquisition through digital and collaborative means (Chen et al., 2020). While these tools enormously improve the learning experience, their efficacy strongly depends on the issues of accessibility and technological reliability. This echoes the finding by Pratiwi et al. (2024), where it was highlighted that technical problems related to device compatibility and internet connectivity are among the major persistent barriers, especially in resource-constrained settings. The second central theme from the findings relates to self-regulated learning practices. Flipped classrooms require a high level of autonomy, as students have to engage with preparatory materials before the class on their own (Liu et al., 2018). Students with high self- regulation—time management, goal setting, and self-reflection—can profit more from the flipped model, which yields etter learning outcomes and increased engagement (Tsai, 2019). However, students have different self-regulation abilities, which pose a great challenge because those with low levels of autonomy will not be able to endure the pace and therefore may lower the effectiveness of the model (Cripps et al., 2023). That means teachers should help students in developing their self-regulation abilities and provide extra support for students who might have problems with self-directed learning. The findings also elucidate the influence of well- designed learning activities and well-structured task designs on student attitudes. As shown in Table 1, factors such as clarity of tasks and the time given for preparation determine students' perceptions of flipped classrooms (Fischer & Yang, 2022; Anane, 2022). Interactive and interesting activities that take into consideration individual learning needs lead to positive attitudes and increase motivation while poorly designed tasks can lead to frustration and dislike. This is in line with the previous findings that emphasize the significant role of learner- centric activities within a supportive learning environment (Hernández-Nanclares & Pérez- Rodríguez,

2016; Hwang et al., 2021). Practical and logistical challenges in implementing the flipped classroom by instructors, as summarized in Table 2, are thus challenges that could easily jeopardize the effectiveness of this model. The most reported were the technical challenges found in 28% of the studies, followed by issues in managing time effectively at 17% and opposition by students to new instructional approaches also at 17% (Arif & Irfana, 2019; Pratiwi et al., 2024). The findings clearly illustrate the need for professional development activities designed to offer instructors competencies to appropriately employ both technology and instructional strategies. Such difficulties can be overcome by providing training sessions and workshops on flipped classroom design, as suggested by Sohrabi and Iraj (2016). The comparison of the findings with the existing literature puts into relief the transformative potential of flipped classrooms in language teaching. In line with the studies by van Alten et al. (2021) and Hwang et al. (2021), this analysis confirms that flipped classrooms heighten students' engagement, active learning, and language proficiency. Nonetheless, this review adds a new dimension to the discussion by identifying specific tools, task frameworks, and methodologies which align with contexts of English language teaching and therefore provide practical insights for teachers.

Conclusion

This study systematically reviewed 18 empirical, peer-reviewed articles on the effectiveness of the flipped classroom in EFL instruction, published between 2015 and 2024. The studies were analysed in terms of their distribution across time, geographical contexts, and educational levels, and their foci of investigation, theoretical frameworks, technological tools, and methodological approaches. These findings present that the interest in Flipped Classroom pedagogy is growing in EFL contexts, especially during the last years, reaching its peak in the number of studies in 2023. The use of digital tools such as Moodle, Kahoot, and Zoom to favour asynchronous and collaborative learning was discussed in the selected articles. Gamified and multimedia resources were as well reported very frequently to raise students' engagement and motivation.

Most of the studies used an experimental or mixed-methods design, showing a preference for measurable outcomes while capturing qualitative insights. Research was mostly conducted in higher education settings, with limited representation in K-12 or community-based contexts. The learners in the reviewed studies were mostly university students learning English as a foreign language. Other findings included that self-regulated learning and the

attitude of the students themselves would be important components in the efficacy of flipped classroom learning. Challenges identified as faced by the learners included the disparities in technologies, time management issues, and the level of preparedness of students. The above findings agree with the literature reviewed, which has further emphasized scaffolding tailored to fit specific needs, especially, for professional development of instructors. The review has reflected an advance in the application of flipped classrooms in language education but also points out lacunae that need further exploration.

Specifically, future research should focus on (a) the use of flipped classrooms in primary and secondary education; (b) long-term impacts on language proficiency and learner autonomy; (c) strategies to address technological and infrastructural barriers; (d) the flipped classrooms application in under-researched regions and learner populations; and (e) innovative uses of emerging technologies, such as augmented reality, virtual reality, and adaptive learning systems. Future systematic reviews should look to extend the scope to non-English publications and unpublished studies to provide a wider understanding of flipped classrooms across diverse educational contexts. By addressing such gaps, both researchers and practitioners could be better positioned to realize fully the potential of flipped classrooms for creating student-centered, interactive, and equitable learning environments in language education.

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