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**Developing Attitudes Scale towards German Reading:
A Study on Reliability and Validity**

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to develop a scale for German teacher candidates' attitude towards the German reading. The scale was applied to 156 students who were enrolled in the Foreign Language Teaching Department of the Education Faculty, at a Turkish state University. Out of 156 students, %14.1 (n=22) were preparation class, %26.3 (n=41) were first grade, %29,5 (n=46) were second grade, %19.8 (n=31) were third grade and %10.3 (n=16) were fourth grade students. In the scale, there were 34 items. To test the validity exploratory factor analysis was used and to determine the reliability, Cronbach coefficient was used. According to the exploratory factor analysis, a construct with 17 items and 1 dimension was achieved. The Cronbach's alpha value for the scale was found as 0.72. In addition, the SAS (University Edition) analysis program was used to determine whether the attitudes of the students differed in terms of gender, income and education level of mother and father. The other findings of the study revealed that the students generally had moderate level of attitude towards German reading and the attitude scores did not change according to gender and education level of parents. However, the attitude scores changed according to the income. It is amazing that the students, whose incomes level was highest, had low level of attitude towards German reading. It can be said that high income level affected the German reading attitudes negatively.

Key Words: Reading in a Foreign Language, Attitudes towards German Reading, Reliability, Validity.

1. Introduction

English is the most important language of global science and technology and is expanding into many countries and regions, where it has not traditionally been spoken before (Jessner and Cenoz 2000). Because of this importance of English; there are many studies on learning and teaching English and new studies are being added to the literature every day to develop four language skills. Researchers dealing with English language can easily find necessary materials such as Questionnaires on language skills. When the English dominance is taken into account, it is more difficult to the other language researchers to find materials in the literature, that they need. Although the German language has an important place in Turkey (broadly explained below), it is almost impossible to find a Questionnaire towards German Reading in literature. It is intended to overcome this deficiency with this study. Through this study, it is aimed to provide research material for the German language researchers.

Reading is one of the most important actions that reveal the relationship between language and thought. It means decoding the written text and is a process being able to understand through language, what is written.

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It is also possible to see the importance of reading on the language development. The studies (Sternberg 1987a; West and Stanovich 1991; Horst et al. 1998) have claimed that, in first language acquisition research, it is well established that reading is one of the main ways of learning new words, and that people who do more reading know more words. And who know more words use the language more effectively in all language skills. Display quotations of over 40 words, or as needed.

Kaniuka (2010) also attempted to explore the relationship between successful reading instruction and students' attitudes towards reading, and he concluded that students who received effective reading instruction had higher scores with regard to their attitudes toward reading. The results of his study suggest that it is possible to help learners' build positive feelings towards reading by providing them with successful reading instruction.

Reading is critical not only for first language education, but also second/foreign language learning. Language is like a window to the world. Who knows more language, expands this window to the world more through the reading.

Especially in our country, the foreign language has come into prominence since 1980 (Arslan 2013). This attention to foreign language reflects to researches in language skills. A review of the literature confirms that there are studies on foreign language skills so much so that it cannot be counted. But unfortunately, these studies almost only focus on first foreign language education, so English. In our rapidly developing world English has become the mother tongue of the world. The importance of English is an undeniable fact. But there are so many reasons to learn another foreign language except from English. These reasons differ from country to country according to the cultural relationship and financial dealings. For example, from our country many of Turks arrived in Germany to work as an immigrant at the beginning of 1960s. After this date, economic and cultural relations between the two countries has become to increase. This also increased the importance of German in Turkey. The relations between the two countries and reflection of these relations on the language are actually based more than a century, until the end of the period of the Ottoman Empire. Since political and military affairs were discussed closely with the German officials during the period of Ottoman Sultan II. Abdulhamid, this intimacy reflected in everyday life and has enabled German language to be popular among the people of Ottoman Empire towards the end of the 1800s (Ortaylı 1981). This interest in the German language continued at the beginning of 1900s. During the Second Constitutional Era of the Ottoman Empire German has firstly become as an elective course in a high school (1908) and then in 1910 it has added as mandatory to the curriculum in this school. In subsequent years German became widespread in almost all schools. The sympathy on the German language reached its peak before I. World War. Because of the World wars teaching of foreign languages came to a standstill like in all over the world. After the establishment of the republic of Turkey the sympathy on the German language also continued and German has maintained its place in the curriculum. (Genc 2003)

In all over the world, there are several studies on teaching, learning, school and school system developing or using an attitude questionnaire (Ramos et al. 2014; Boyle et al. 2013; Kulac 2011; Sharkness and DeAngelo 2011; Semerci 1998; zhao et al. 2017). When the literature is reviewed, there are almost no studies using a scale towards German Language in Turkey despite its importance.

2. Objectives of the study

The purpose of this study was to develop and validate a new scale of attitudes towards German reading. According to validity and reliability results it was aimed to identify the attitudes of the candidate German language teachers on German reading.

The Statement of the sub- problems

The following questions have been tried to be answered in accordance with the aim of the study;

- What is the attitude level of the candidate German language teachers towards German reading?
- Is there any difference between attitude scores of female and male candidates?
- Is there any difference between attitude scores of students according to the Income?
- Is there any difference between attitude scores of students according to education level of mother?
- Is there any difference between attitude scores of students according to education level of father?

3. Method

3.1. Survey Sampling

Survey sampling consisted of 156 candidate teachers who are studying german language teaching at a Turkish state University. Out of 156 students, % 14.1 (n=22) were preparation class, %26.3 (n=41) were first grade, %29.5 (n=46) were second grade, %19.8 (n=31) were third grade and %10.3 (n=16) were fourth grade students.

3.2. Data Collection

Data were collected through the scale of "attitudes towards reading in German" developed and validated by the researchers in this study. First of a scale includes 34 items was prepared as an item pool. While preparing these items literature about German reading has reviewed. After factor analysis and calculating reliability values it was decided to remove 17 items from the scale. At the end of the analysis a scale with 17 items were found to be used.

3.3. Data Analysis

Construct validity was investigated by exploratory factor analysis. Garson (2004) states that the aim of factor analysis is to ascertain the fundamental structure of a comparatively large set of variables (Walker and Fraser 2005). Only those items with a factor loading of at least 0.50 (Fish and Dane 2000) were taken to the scale. In the development of the scale, the scale was assessed for internal consistency and the Cronbach's alpha was calculated. To determine the attitude score levels of candidates, mean, median, mode and standard deviation was examined. A score out of the questionnaire with 17 items was obtained in order to make analysis based on variables. Without the items 11, 16 and 17, other answers were added. Since they were negative questions, the answers of 11, 16 and 17 were subtracted from 6 (Because of the Likert scale). ANOVA, a statistical test, was used to determine if the educational level of parents, the income level and gender affected the scores of students.

Limitations of The Study

3.4. Limitations of The Study

The students who were participated and filled the questionnaire in this study were accepted that they answered the items in the questionnaire honestly and correctly. Also, the universe of this study was limited to the German department of only one Turkish state Universtiy. Questionnaire could be conducted more than 156 students as in this study.

4. Findings

4.1. Exploratory factor analysis

As the scale was developed to evaluate the attitude in general, items were prepared for only one dimension. Therefore, while doing the factor analysis factor number was fixed to one dimension. Table I represents the items' factor loadings and total variance.

Table 1. Variance and Factor Loadings for 17-Itemed Attitudes towards German Reading

Item	Factor loading
I1	.636
I2	.564
I3	.626
I4	.565
I5	.612
I6	.620
I7	.611
I8	.671
I9	.579
I10	.758
I11	.621
I12	.647
I13	.703
I14	.641
I15	.708
I16	.555
I17	.649
% Variance	40.39

N=156, KMO =0.90

The factor analysis result shows us that 17 items has factor loadings above 0.50 and the total variance of the scale is 40.39%. Büyüköztürk (2011) states that 30% explained variance is enough for one-dimensional scale. Büyüköztürk (2011) also adds that the factor loadings are most appropriate level above 0.45

4.2. Reliability Results

To determine the internal consistency and reliability of the scale the value of Cronbach's alpha was calculated. Table 2 presents the Cronbach's Alfa value of the scale.

Table 2. Cronbach's Alfa Value of the Scale

Scale	Cronbach's alpha
Attitudes Towards German Reading	0.72

Büyüköztürk (2011) tells about the Cronbach's Alfa value that 0.70 and above is enough for a reliable scale.

4.3. Attitude levels of German Language Teaching Candidates towards German Reading

To determine the attitude score levels of candidates mean, median, mode and standard deviation were examined. Obtained results have been summed up in the Table 3.

Table 3. German Reading Attitude Levels of German Language Teaching Candidates

Analysis Variable: Attitude_Score Attitude Score							
Mean	Median	Mode	Std Dev	Minimum	Maximum	Lower Quartile	Upper Quartile
40.0064103	39.00000	36.00000	10.8190375	18.00000	81.00000	32.50000	47.50000

Attitude levels of German Language Teaching Candidates towards German Reading according to gender

To compare the scores of attitudes female and male students independent sample t-test was used.

Table 4. T- test results of German Reading Attitude Levels of German Language Teaching Candidates According to Gender

Gender	N	Mean	Std Dev	Std Err	Minimum	Maximum
W	131	40.0076	10.6911	0.9341	18.0000	81.0000
M	25	40.0000	11.6976	2.3395	18.0000	61.0000
Diff (1-2)		0.00763	10.8541	2.3689		
P Value	0.99					

As result of the T-test P value has been found as 0.99. It means that there is no significant difference between the attitudes scores according to the gender. Females and males have nearly the same scores in German reading attitudes.

4.4. Attitude levels of German Language Teaching Candidates towards German Reading according to education level of mother

Table 5. ANOVA results of German Reading Attitude Levels of German Language Teacher Candidates According to education level of mother

Analysis Variable: Attitude_Score Attitude Score			
Mother's Education Level	N Obs	Mean	Std Dev
Elementary School	116	40.2241379	11.4216318
High School	31	39.3548387	9.2070567
Faculty	9	39.4444444	8.4869180
P Value	0.93		

P value has been found as 0.93. This means that the educational level of mothers did not affect the scores of students' attitudes.

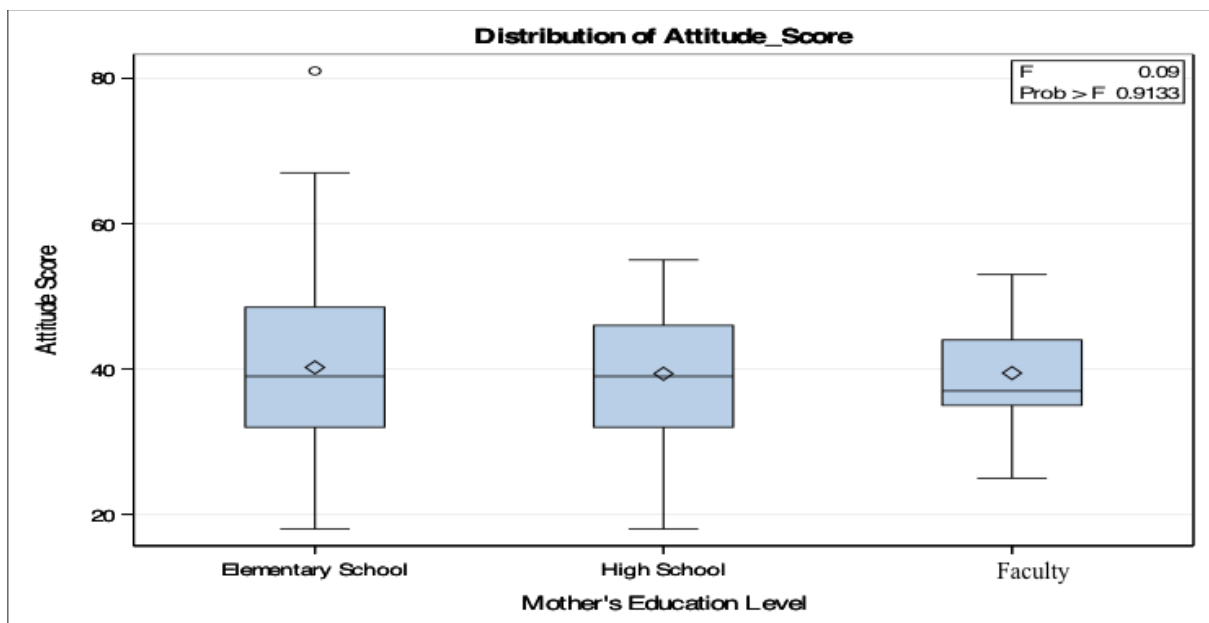


Figure 1. Boxplot of Mother Education Level

4.5. Attitude levels of German language teaching candidates towards German reading according to education level of father

Table 6. ANOVA results of German Reading Attitude Levels of German Language Teacher Candidates According to education level of father

Analysis Variable: Attitude_Score Attitude Score			
Father's Education Level	N Obs	Mean	Std Dev
Elementary School	82	39.5731707	9.3055545
High School	52	40.9807692	11.1311088
Faculty	20	40.8500000	14.8865004
Master	2	24.0000000	2.8284271
P value 0.17			

P value has been found as 0.17. This means that the educational level of fathers did not affect the scores of students' attitudes.

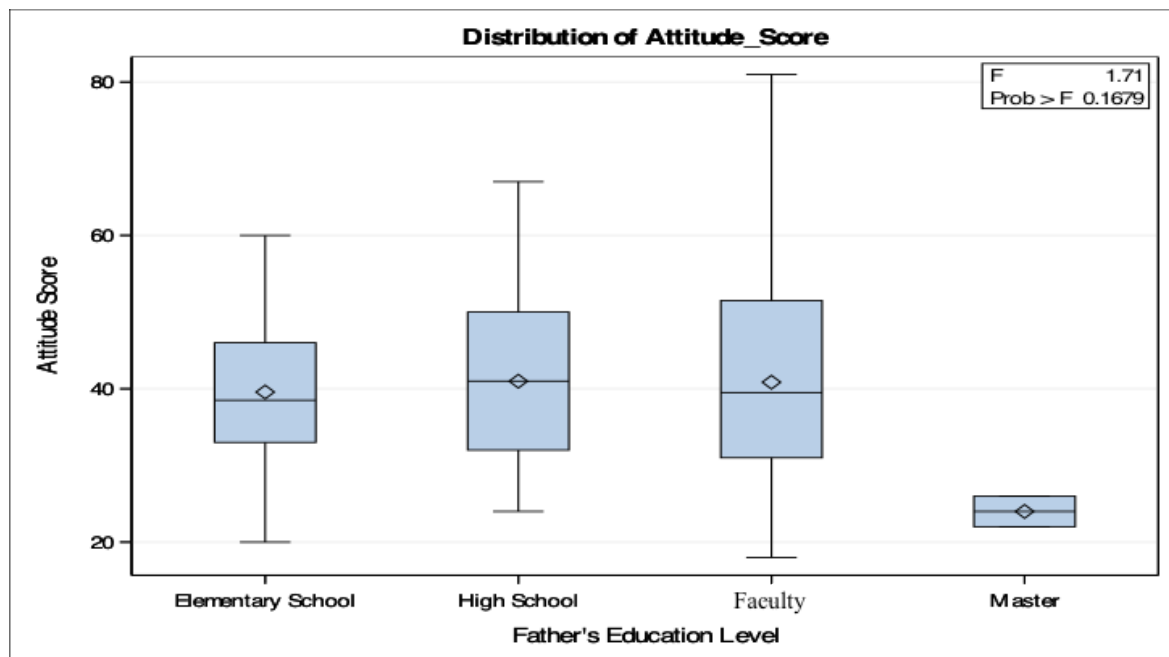


Figure 2. Boxplot of Father Education Level

4.6. Attitude levels of German Language Teaching Candidates towards German Reading according to income of family

Table 7. ANOVA results of German Reading Attitude Levels of German Language Teacher Candidates According to income of family

Analysis Variable: Attitude_Score Attitude Score			
Income	N Obs	Mean	Std Dev
1000-2000TL	78	40.4871795	9.1520257
2000-3000TL	48	38.6666667	10.6737565
3000-4000TL	18	46.9444444	14.6908224
More than 4000TL	12	31.8333333	9.0336073
P value 0.0013			

P value has been found as 0.0013. This means that income of family affected the reading attitudes score of students. It is amazing that the students, whose income level was highest, had low level of attitude towards German reading. It can be said that high income level affected the German reading attitudes negatively.

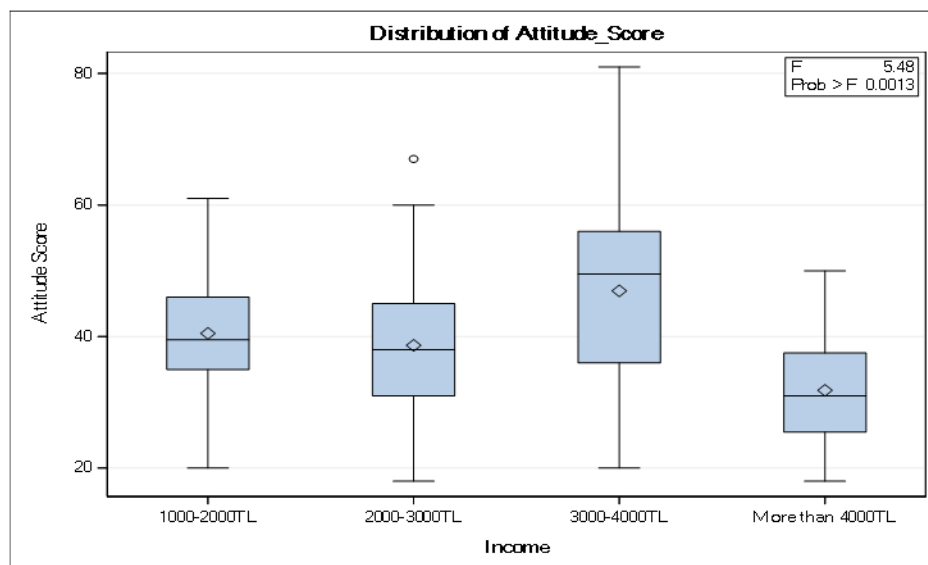


Figure 3. Boxplot of Income

Table 8. Income Comparisons

Comparisons significant at the 0.05 level are indicated by ***.

Income Comparison	Difference Between Means	Simultaneous 95% Confidence Limits		
		Lower	Upper	
3000-4000TL - 1000-2000TL	6.457	-0.592	13.507	
3000-4000TL – 2000-3000TL	8.278	0.827	15.729	***
3000-4000 TL – 4000TL-more	15.111	5.064	25.158	***
1000-2000TL – 3000-4000TL	-6.457	-13.507	0.592	
1000-2000TL – 2000-3000TL	1.821	-3.125	6.766	
1000-2000TL – 4000TL-more	8.654	0.294	17.013	***
2000-3000TL – 3000-4000TL	-8.278	-15.729	-0.827	***
2000-3000TL – 1000-2000TL	-1.821	-6.766	3.125	
2000-3000TL – 4000TL-more	6.833	-1.868	15.534	
4000TL-more – 3000-4000TL	-15.111	-25.158	-5.064	***
4000TL-more – 1000-2000TL	-8.654	-17.013	-0.294	***
4000TL-more – 2000-3000TL	-6.833	-15.534	1.868	

The significant comparisons were indicated by *** . (Tukey HSD test results)

5. Conclusion

In this study, it was tried to develop an attitude scale towards reading in German. The factor loadings of the scale with 17-items vary between 0.555 and 0.758. The total variance explained by the scale is 40.39%. The Cronbach's alpha value was found as 0.72. Taking these values into account, it can be said that this scale is a valid test. The other findings of the study revealed that the students generally had moderate level of attitude towards German reading and the attitude scores did not change according to gender and education of parents. However, it was found that the attitude scores changed according to the income. It is surprising that the students, whose income level was the highest ones, had low level of attitude towards German reading. It can be said that high income level affected the German reading attitudes negatively.

Recommendations

Studies on German language teaching in Turkey are generally based on literature review. Studies like this paper would provide more concrete data. In this way, the foreign language teaching problems can be defined more clearly such researches should be applied in different foreign language departments and results should be compared each other in order to identify the common problems and offer solutions.

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Appendices 1: The developed Scale in English

Dear Teacher Candidate,

The purpose of this survey is to get your views about reading foreign languages. Your sincere answers will be used only for the purpose of the research and will be kept strictly confidential. Thank you for your contributions.

Your gender: (W)..... (M).....

Your Mother's Education:

Elementary School () High School () License () Master () Ph.D ()

Your Father's Education:

Elementary School () High School () License () Master () Ph.D ()

Monthly Income Status of Family

1000-2000 TL () 2000-3000 TL () 3000-4000 TL () 4000 TL - ()

The statements in this survey are concerned with the way you feel about reading in German.

Please read each of the statements carefully. After you read each statement, decide if you agree or disagree with the statement.

A Scale towards Reading in German					
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNCERTAIN	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. I get a lot of enjoyment from reading in German					
2. I am a good reader in German.					
3. It's a good feeling to be able to read German.					
4. I buy German books to read.					
5. If I read on an interesting subject in German, I do not understand how the time has passed.					
6. I see that other language skills such as writing and speaking have improved as long as the skill of reading German has improved.					
7. I try to develop my German skill by reading daily at least one German paragraph					
8. I try to read something in German in my spare time.					
9. I am eager to read German text.					
10. I like German Reading lessons					
11. I hate reading German					
12. German reading is a hobby for me.					
13. Whenever I find time, I read something in					
14. I trust myself while reading in German. I understand what I read in the general sense; though there are places that I do not understand.					
15. I like studying reading skill in German courses.					
16. I do not spend more time on the first reading, if I do not understand a German text and I give up					
17. I am afraid of reading something in German because of unknown words.					

Appendices 2: The developed Scale in German

Lieber Lehrerkandidat / Liebe Lehrerkandidatin,

Der Zweck dieser Umfrage ist Ihre Meinung zum Lesen auf Deutsch zu bekommen. Ihre aufrichtigen Antworten werden nur dann für Zwecke der Forschung benutzt und streng vertraulich behandelt werden. Vielen Dank für Ihre Beiträge.

Ihr Geschlecht: (W)..... (M).....

Mutterschulabschluss:

Grundschule () Gymnasien () Fakultät () Magister () Ph.D ()

Vaterschulabschluss:

Grundschule () Gymnasien () Fakultät () Magister () Ph.D ()

Monatliches Einkommen Ihrer Familie

1000-2000 TL () 2000-3000 TL () 3000-4000 TL () 4000 TL - ()

Hier ist eine Reihe von Aussagen aufgelistet, denen man zustimmen kann oder die man ablehnen kann. Lesen Sie bitte jede Aussage sorgfältig und kreuze jede Antwortkategorie an.

Eine Einstellungsskala für das Lesen auf Deutsch					
	STIMME STARK ZU	STIMME ZU	WEDER NOCH	LEHNE AB	LEHNE STARK AB
1. Ich habe viel Freude am Lesen auf Deutsch					
2. Ich bin ein guter Leser auf Deutsch.					
3. Es ist ein gutes Gefühl, Deutsch lesen zu können.					
4. Ich kaufe deutsche Bücher zum Lesen.					
5. Wenn ich etwas interessantes auf Deutsch gelesen habe, verstehe ich nicht, wie die Zeit vergangen ist					
6. Ich denke, dass sich andere Sprachfertigkeiten wie Schreiben und Sprechen verbessert haben, solange sich die Lesefertigkeit verbessert hat.					
7. Ich versuche, meine Deutschkenntnisse zu verbessern, indem ich täglich mindestens einen deutschen Absatz lese.					
8. Ich versuche etwas auf Deutsch zu lesen					
9. Ich bin bereitwillig, deutsch zu lesen.					
10. Ich mag deutschen Leseunterricht					
11 Ich hasse Lesen auf Deutsch					
12. Lesen auf Deutsch ist ein Hobby für mich					
13. Immer wenn ich die Zeit habe, lese ich etwas auf Deutsch.					
14. Ich vertraue mir beim Lesen auf Deutsch. Ich verstehe, was ich im allgemeinen Sinne lese; Obwohl es manche Stelle gibt, die ich nicht verstehe					
15. Ich mag mich mit der Lesefertigkeit im Deutschunterricht beschäftigen.					
16. Ich verbringe nicht mehr Zeit beim ersten Lesen, wenn ich einen deutschen Text nicht verstehe und ich höre damit auf.					
17 Vor den unbekanntenen Worten habe ich Angst, etwas auf Deutsch zu lesen					