

## 08. Exploring the influence of the Socrates Seminar Technique on anxiety, motivation, and reading comprehension in foreign learners of Turkish<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

This research aims to study the effects of the Socrates Seminar Technique on foreigners' Turkish learning anxiety, motivation, and reading comprehension skills. For this purpose, a pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design with a control group, which is one of the quantitative research methods, was used in this research. The study group of the research consists of 40 B2 level students learning Turkish at Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University, Turkish and Foreign Language Teaching Application and Research Center (BANÜ-TÖMER). To collect the research data, the Reading-Comprehension Achievement Test prepared by the researchers, the "Foreigners' Turkish Learning Anxiety Scale" designed by Sevim (2019a), and the "Motivation Scale for Learning Turkish as a Foreign Language" developed by Sevim (2019b) were used. Simple and predictive statistical methods were used to analyze data obtained via evaluation tools. After evaluating the findings obtained from the research, it was concluded that implementing the Socrates Seminar Technique in course activities led to increased reading comprehension achievement and enhanced motivation among students learning Turkish, while also reducing their anxiety levels associated with learning the language. Additionally, the study aims to provide concrete examples of course activities developed using the Socrates Seminar Technique in the realm of foreign language teaching. This study is intended to benefit both teachers and students, offering practical insights to enhance the teaching process in what is commonly perceived as a challenging domain.

**Keywords:** Teaching Turkish as a foreign language, motivation, anxiety, reading comprehension, Socrates Seminar Technique

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## Sokrat Semineri Tekniđinin Türkçeyi Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğrenenlerin Kaygı, Motivasyon ve Okuma Anlamaya Etkilerinin İncelenmesi<sup>4</sup>

### Öz

Bu araştırma, Sokrates Seminer Tekniđinin yabancıların Türkçe öğrenme kaygısı, motivasyonu ve okuduđunu anlama becerileri üzerindeki etkilerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla bu arařtırmada nicel araştırma yöntemlerinden biri olan ön test-son test kontrol gruplu yarı deneysel desen kullanılmıştır. Arařtırmanın çalışma grubunu Bandırma Onyediy Eylül Üniversitesi Türkçe ve Yabancı Dil Öğretimi Uygulama ve Arařtırma Merkezinde (BANÜ-TÖMER) Türkçe öğrenen B2 düzeyindeki 40 öğrenci oluşturmaktadır. Arařtırma verilerinin toplanması amacıyla arařtırmacılar tarafından hazırlanan Okuma-Anlama Başarı Testi, Sevim (2019a) tarafından tasarlanan "Yabancıların Türkçe Öğrenme Kaygısı Ölçeđi" ve Sevim (2019b) tarafından geliştirilen "Yabancı Dil Olarak Türkçe Öğrenmeye Yönelik Motivasyon Ölçeđi" kullanılmıştır. Deđerlendirme araçlarıyla elde edilen verilerin analizinde basit ve kestirimsel istatistiki yöntemler kullanılmıştır. Arařtırmadan elde edilen bulgular deđerlendirildiđinde Sokrat Semineri Tekniđinin ders etkinliklerinde uygulanmasının Türkçe öğrenen öğrencilerde okuduđunu anlama başarısının ve motivasyonunun artmasına, aynı zamanda dil öğrenmeye ilişkin kaygı düzeylerinin azalmasına neden olduđu sonucuna varılmıştır. Ayrıca yabancı dil öğretimi alanında Sokrat Semineri Tekniđi kullanılarak geliştirilen ders etkinliklerine yönelik somut örneklerin sunulması da amaçlanmaktadır. Bu çalışma, genellikle zorlu bir alan olarak algılanan sil öğretimi alanında öğretim sürecini geliřtirmek için pratik bilgiler sunarak hem öğretmenlere hem de öğrencilere fayda sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yabancı dil olarak Türkçe öğretimi, motivasyon, kaygı, okuduđunu anlama, Sokrat Semineri Tekniđi

### Introduction

The process of "Foreign language teaching" is directly related to many variables. While some variables make this process easier, while the others make it difficult. When we examine the studies on foreign language teaching, it can be easily understood that most of them are carried out to minimize these complicating factors. Although the students' failure in the foreign language learning process was detected as their responsibility and nonproficiency in the 1960s (Pimsleur, Sundland, & McIntyre, 1964), in a study carried out by Dinklage for Harvard students in 1971, the first findings were determined with regard to the students' having problem while learning a foreign language. Also, it was observed that the students had main problems, such as not being able to hear, understand, communicate verbally, and improve their writing skills in the target language, and some differences were made in the curriculum

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for these problems. In the same way, in a study conducted by Ivančević-Otanjac (2016, p. 463), he stated that the difficulties experienced by the students were due to the teachers and the curriculum, and the new strategies and methods to overcome these problems had to be developed and it was required to ease the process of learning a foreign language for the students. It has been understood that the complicating factors are some variables such as the students' perceptions towards the foreign language, their anxiety about learning a foreign language, the physical environment in which the language is taught, the materials and techniques, their attitudes and motivation towards the learning process, the difficulty level of the target language, the environmental factors, their individual differences and their personal and cognitive characteristics (Boylu and Işık, 2017, p. 451).

As a beginning, the definitions of two terms "Motivation and Anxiety" in the field of language learning will be given. The motivation is identified as the eagerness to reach the goal of learning the target language (Gardner, 1985, p. 10) while the anxiety is described as a psychological state; delusion and a fear in language learning (Scovel, 1991, p. 16). Also, motivation is portrayed as the driving force behind individuals' actions, anxiety emerges as a substantial factor that adversely affects motivation due to the fear of failure (Reeve, 2018, p. 3). Power and Kasap (2019) underscore the significant role played by students' motivation and anxiety levels in the foreign language teaching process. The concept of "Foreign Language Anxiety," introduced by Horwitz and Cope (1986), sheds light on the detrimental effects of anxiety on students' motivation to learn a foreign language. Subsequent research on students' motivation further highlights the negative correlation between anxiety levels and language learning success. For example, MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) conducted research in a French classroom setting and found a negative relationship between language learning anxiety, motivation, and students' proficiency in acquiring new vocabulary. They emphasized the significant detrimental impact of anxiety on the language learning process, particularly in hindering the acquisition of new linguistic skills.

Foreign language teaching basically consists of four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Based on the importance of using language in real life and putting it into practice, studies in this field have focused on listening and speaking skills in recent years. According to Richards, although listening skills were previously ignored in foreign language teaching, nowadays, listening and speaking skills are important criteria in university entrance interviews and graduating exams as education in foreign languages becomes crucial in different countries (2003, p. 17). Another researcher, Nunan, emphasized that the necessary attention was not paid to the listening and speaking skills in the process of teaching a foreign language by likening them to the Cinderella character in fairy tales (2002, p. 238). Nevertheless, these skills, which came to the forefront in the 1960s, became more valuable with the increasing importance of verbal language and Krashen's ideas about listening and speaking skills related to the term "comprehensible input" (1982, p. 30) and his emphasis on the importance of listening and speaking skills attracted the education specialists' attention to this field. However, considering that the individual's comprehension and perception process, attention, motivation, and memory are effectively active while reading a text in the target language, it can be easily understood how important the reading skill is in terms of the individual's mental processes (Abdullah, 2005, p. 215) because reading is one of the effective ways to access and comprehend the word and sentence structures, cultural facts and the examples of the lifestyle of the target language. Through reading, which is both a conscious and unconscious, that is, an unplanned thinking process, the individual tries to synthesize experiences and newly learned information (Barnett, 1988; Mikulecky, 2008). In this respect, the abilities of reading comprehension and interpretation are of great importance in order to achieve permanent learning in the process of learning a foreign language. In another study conducted by Kocaöz (2019, p. 139), it was understood that students with poor reading comprehension skills could not succeed in fields such as

mathematics, science, and social sciences. When the studies on reading and its importance are examined, it is clear that reading is not just a process of reading the text and answering questions about it; It is understood that it also includes the skills of thinking, commenting, and speaking on the text. Also, in recent studies on teaching reading comprehension skills, the Socrates Seminar Technique has begun to be preferred by instructors. This technique, given the name of the famous Greek philosopher Socrates and also called as “Finding Method”, can also be defined as a method of helping students find the truth by having them answer the questions prepared priorly in a planned way (Aydın, 2001, p. 56).

The Socrates Seminar Technique is called as the question-answer or finding method. This technique has become one of the most preferred techniques in foreign language teaching in recent years because in this technique, many skill areas of the student, such as creative thinking, analysis, interpretation, problem-solving, and cause-effect, become active (Güzel, 2010, p. 145). In this technique, based on text analysis and in which the teacher guides the students by asking questions, the students follow the comments and thoughts of their other friends on the subject and express their own thoughts clearly by synthesizing the information (Kırbař, 2022, p. 147). In a study carried out by Acim for 40 students learning English as a second language, he observed the students while they were making reading activities by using Socrates Seminar Technique and concluded that the students were feeling comfortable during the lessons and learning better (2018, p. 43). Another researcher Epçaçan applied this technique for the students’ reading abilities on 46 students and concluded that the students were more successful while learning a language via reading activities carried out with Socrates Seminar Technique (2013).

In the Socrates Seminar Technique, collaborative learning is facilitated in the classroom by providing students with a text to critically analyze. They are then instructed to arrange themselves into two circles, with one circle nested within the other. Within this setup, students engage in active listening and exchange of new information (Coffey, 2010, p. 2; Copeland, 2005, p. 2). Based on its features that enable students to actively participate in the learning process, work collaboratively, and especially think deeply about the text they read, this study has tried to examine the effects of the Socrates Seminar Technique on foreigners’ Turkish learning anxiety, motivation, and reading comprehension skills. For this purpose, the answers have been searched for the given research questions:

- How does the Socrates Seminar Technique affect the students’ Turkish learning anxiety who learn Turkish as a foreign language?
- What is the effect of the Socrates Seminar Technique on the students’ Turkish learning motivation who learn Turkish as a foreign language?
- How does the Socrates Seminar Technique affect the students’ Turkish reading comprehension skills who learn Turkish as a foreign language?

## Method

### Research Design

In this study, a pretest-posttest semi-experimental design with a control group was employed as the research methodology. Prior to the intervention, both the experimental and control groups underwent assessment using the Reading-Comprehension Achievement Test, as well as scales measuring Foreigners’ Turkish Learning Anxiety and Motivation Towards Learning Turkish as a Foreign Language.

This initial assessment aimed to ascertain the equivalence of participant groups in terms of Turkish reading comprehension, learning anxiety, and motivation. Results indicated no significant differences between the groups across all three variables. Subsequently, following the completion of the experimental intervention, the same measurement tools were administered as post-tests. A comparison of pre-test and post-test average scores between the experimental and control groups facilitated the analysis of intervention effects.

### Study Group

The study group of this research consists of 40 B2 level students learning Turkish at Bandırma Onyedü Eylül University Turkish and Foreign Language Teaching Application and Research Center (BANÜ-TÖMER). Details about the study group are given below in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Information about the students

A Class (Control Group)				B Class (Experimental Group)			
Number of Participants	20			Number of Participants	20		
Level of Education	Turkish Preparation (B2)			Level of Education	Turkish Preparation (B2)		
Gender	Male 55% (11)	Female 45% (9)		Gender	Male 70% (14)	Female 30% (6)	
Age	13-17 5% (1)	18-22 80% (16)	23-27 15% (3)	Age	13-17 10% (2)	18-22 90% (18)	23-27 -
Residence Time in Turkey	1-6 month 40% (8)	6-12 month 60% (12)	1 year + -	Residence Time in Turkey	1-6 month 30% (6)	6-12 month 45% (9)	1 year + 25% (5)
Number of Foreign Language	1-2 50% (10)	3-4 45% (9)	5-6 -	7 + 5% (1)	Number of Foreign Language	1-2 70% (14)	3-4 25% (5)
						5-6 5% (1)	7 + -
Country	Kazakhstan 15% (3)			Country	Kazakhstan 5% (1)		
	Tanzania 5% (1)				Somali 10% (2)		
	Somali 5% (1)				Indonesia 5% (1)		
	Nigeria 5% (1)				Ivory Coast 5% (1)		
	Indonesia 20% (4)				Gabon 10% (2)		
	Kongo 5% (1)				Guinea 15% (3)		
	Mali 10% (2)				Togo 15% (3)		
	Ivory Coast 5% (1)				Sudan 5% (1)		
	Gabon 20% (4)				Cameroon 5% (1)		
	Yemen 5% (1)				Abkhazia 5% (1)		
	Guinea 5% (1)				Egypt 15% (3)		
					Palestine 5% (1)		

In these two groups, which were determined to be similar in terms of anxiety, motivation, and reading-comprehension success through pre-tests, Class A was selected as the control group and Class B as the experimental group.

## Data Collection

While collecting the research data, the Reading-Comprehension Achievement Test prepared by the researchers, the "Foreigners' Turkish Learning Anxiety Scale" designed by Sevim (2019a), and the "Motivation Scale for Learning Turkish as a Foreign Language" developed by Sevim (2019b) were used. The scales prepared by Sevim (2019a, 2019b) consist of 22 items and are in a 5-point Likert Scale; "I completely agree, I substantially agree, I am undecided, I partly agree, I completely disagree". In addition to the scales applied to the experimental and control groups as pre-test and post-test at the beginning and end of the four weeks of the application, four texts, a text for each week, were read in the classroom to measure the students' success via reading activities. Also, by comparing the answers the students gave to the questions related to the texts, the effect of the Socrates Seminar Technique on success, students' anxiety, and motivation were examined.

## Motivation Scale for Learning Turkish as a Foreign Language

In the study, the "Motivation Scale for Learning Turkish as a Foreign Language" developed by Sevim (2019b) was first used in the control and experimental groups as a pre-test and post-test. The scale consists of 22 items and is on a 5-point Likert Scale; "I completely agree, I substantially agree, I am undecided, I partly agree, I completely disagree." After analyzing the content of the scale, it has been understood that it was primarily prepared to determine the reasons why students want to learn Turkish and also how the students will benefit from the Turkish learning process. Similarly, it can be said that another purpose of the scale is to determine the factors that motivate them to learn Turkish. An increase in the score obtained from the scale means that motivation increases positively.

## Foreigners' Turkish Learning Anxiety Scale

Another scale applied to both groups as a pre-test and post-test is the "Foreigners' Turkish Learning Anxiety Scale" developed by Sevim (2019a). The scale consists of 22 items and is on a 5-point Likert Scale; "I completely agree, I substantially agree, I am undecided, I partly agree, I completely disagree. When the scale items are examined, it is understood that the aim is to identify the factors that negatively affect students during the lesson and reduce their eagerness to learn. The increase in the score obtained from the scale means that the anxiety level increases.

## Reading Comprehension Achievement Test

To measure the students' reading comprehension achievements, an achievement test was prepared for reading comprehension skills in both the experimental and control groups based on the reading texts used in the research. An achievement test question repository consisting of ten questions related to each text and a total of 40 questions was created. Experts' opinions were asked for the validity of the test, and a draft achievement test consisting of 20 questions was completed by eliminating half of the questions. The prepared draft test was applied to the groups consisting of 85 students in total, in which these texts were previously read. Item difficulty values of the test items were found to be between 0.42 and 0.65. As the item difficulty approaches 0.00, the item is interpreted as difficult, and as it approaches 1.00, the item is interpreted as easy. While developing the test, in terms of the capacity of an item to distinguish between those who know and those who do not know and the high reliability of the item, items with difficulty values around 0.50 are preferred. It was determined that the item discrimination values for the achievement test ranged between 0.25 and 0.63. Questions with item discrimination values below

0.20 should be removed from the test; Values between 0.20 and 0.40 are items that need correction; Values above 0.40 are very good items (Tan, 2005). Due to the application of both item difficulty and item discrimination values for the T-test, the Reading-Comprehension Achievement Test was put into its final form and used. The Kuder-Richardson-20 value of reliability, which was calculated by giving 1 point to the questions of the academic achievement test that were correctly answered and 0 points to the questions that were unanswered or answered incorrectly, was found to be 0.81. Based on this value, it can be said that the reliability of the test is at a high level. The lowest score that can be obtained from the Reading Comprehension Achievement Test is 0, while the highest score is 100.

### Reading Texts

Four different reading texts were determined for four weeks, two lesson hours per week, to be used in the control and experimental groups. These texts are entitled *Aşk Mektupları*, *Karadeniz Bölgesi*, *Kuzucuk*, and *Yıldızlar Kaymasın*. These texts were selected by taking expert opinions regarding their suitability for the B2 level. Information about the reading texts is given in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Information about Reading Texts

	Title	Number of Words
1. Week	<i>Aşk Mektupları</i>	643
2. Week	<i>Karadeniz Bölgesi</i>	827
3. Week	<i>Kuzucuk</i>	853
4. Week	<i>Yıldızlar Kaymasın</i>	566

### Analysis of Data

Simple and predictive statistical methods were used to analyze the data obtained from the scales, and for the analyses to be reliable, the data were examined twice with the support of both researchers and an expert in the field of statistics. In the experimental group where the Socrates Seminar Technique was used, the opinions of two faculty members who are experts in the fields of Turkish and Educational Sciences were taken while determining the questions to be asked to the students in the preliminary preparation part of the course in order to involve the students in the communication process and to encourage them to think and interpret, which are the primary purposes of the technique and also appropriate questions for the students were prepared. In addition, it was stated that the reading texts and achievement test results applied to the students would not affect the grades of the B2 level education that the students continued, thus ensuring that they were more easily involved in the process.

Before analyzing the data, the skewness-kurtosis values of the data were examined from the descriptive statistics options to find out whether they adapted to a normal distribution, which is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Skewness-Kurtosis Values of the Data

Test	Group	Skewness	Kurtosis
Achievement Pre-test	Control	-,027	-,874
	Experimental	-,093	-1,014
Achievement Post-test	Control	-1,175	1,179
	Experimental	-,583	-,632

Motivation Pre-test	Control	,576	-,065
	Experimental	,751	-,136
Motivation Post-test	Control	,574	-,478
	Experimental	,550	,269
Anxiety Pre-test	Control	,512	-,220
	Experimental	-,347	,993
Anxiety Post-test	Control	-1,051	,652
	Experimental	-,475	,544

When Table 3 is examined, it is understood that the Skewness and Kurtosis values of the data are between -1.5 and +1.5, in which case the data comply with the normal distribution and parametric test methods can be used (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013). Therefore, the T-test was used to compare groups and independent samples.

### Procedure

The process steps followed in the research are as follows:

- Essential permissions were obtained before applying the measurement tools and reading texts, and the necessary official correspondence was made with Bandırma Onyedil Eylül University, Turkish and Foreign Language Teaching Application and Research Center (BANÜ-TÖMER) for the study groups.
- The Reading Comprehension Achievement Test and anxiety and motivation scales were applied by classroom instructors as a pre-test before the 4-week study in both groups.
- After the pre-tests were completed, in the 4-week study, the texts selected by the researchers and confirmed by expert opinions were used in both the experimental and control groups by the plan.
- In the Reading-Comprehension activities, the current curriculum was followed in the control group.
- In the experimental group, reading text studies were carried out in accordance with the application steps of the Socrates Seminar Technique. Firstly, the reading passages were distributed to the students one day before the lesson where the activity would be held, and they were asked to read them once at home. When the students came to the class, the information that the Socrates Seminar Technique would be used was shared with the students, and it was stated to the students that the main thing in the process was for the students to be able to express their ideas comfortably, to be in communication, to listen to the ideas of their friends, and to develop their ability to comment on the text in order to answer following questions more easily about the reading text. Since the instructor played the role of moderator, he asked the students open-ended questions about the text, which he had prepared in advance and which would allow the students to talk for a long time and allow them to exchange ideas with each other. Finally, he asked them to answer questions about the text.

## Findings

### Findings regarding the first research question

The pre-test average anxiety scores of the experimental and control groups were analyzed with the unpaired T-test, and the findings are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Comparison of Pre-Test Average Anxiety Scores of Groups

	Test	N	X̄	t	p
Pre-test	Control	20	77,53	1,148	,883
	Experimental	20	75,38		

The pre-test average anxiety scores of the control and experimental groups were compared with the unpaired T-test, and it was understood that there was no significant difference between the groups in terms of anxiety before the application ( $t=1,148$ ;  $p=.88$ ). With this finding, it was determined that the anxiety levels of the groups were similar to each other before the application.

Post-test average anxiety scores of the experimental and control groups were analyzed with unpaired T-test and the findings are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Comparison of Post-Test Average Anxiety Scores of Groups

	Test	N	X̄	t	p
Post-test	Control	20	76,19	3,064	,027
	Experimental	20	67,00		

The post-test average anxiety scores of the control and experimental groups were compared with the unpaired T-test, and it was understood that there was a significant difference between the groups in terms of anxiety after the application in favor of the experimental group ( $t=3,064$ ;  $p=.02$ ). In other words, it can be said that the Socrates Seminar technique applied in the experimental group is significantly more effective in terms of anxiety than the current curriculum applied in the control group. At the same time, the correlation coefficient called eta-square ( $\eta^2$ ) was also calculated for the influence quantity in the analysis of unpaired T-test. Partial eta-square value  $\eta^2 < .06$  points to low;  $.06 \leq \eta^2 < .14$  points to median;  $\eta^2 \geq .14$  points to profound effect (Büyüköztürk ve diğerleri, 2018; Kilmen, 2015; Miles ve Shevlin, 2001). In the calculations made, the  $\eta^2$  value was determined as .26. Based on this parameter, it can be said that the effect size is high.

### Findings regarding the second research question

The pre-test average motivation scores of the experimental and control groups were analyzed with unpaired T-test and the findings are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Comparison of Pre-Test Average Motivation Scores of Groups

Test	Test	N	X̄	t	p
Pre-test	Control	20	47,53	1,297	,199
	Experimental	20	45,38		

Pre-test average motivation scores of the control and experimental groups were compared with unpaired T-test, and it was understood that there was no significant difference between the groups in terms of motivation before the application ( $t=.1,297$ ;  $p=.19$ ). In other words, the motivation levels of the groups were similar to each other before the application.

Post-test average motivation scores of the experimental and control groups were analyzed with unpaired T-test and the findings are shown in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Comparison of Pre-Test Average Motivation Scores of Groups

Test	Test	N	X̄	t	p
Post-test	Control	20	46,19	-4,575	,00
	Experimental	20	52,00		

The post-test average motivation scores of the control and experimental groups were compared with the unpaired T-test, and after the application, it was understood that there was a significant difference between the groups in terms of motivation in favor of the experimental group ( $t=-4,575$ ;  $p=.00$ ). In other words, it can be said that the method applied in the experimental group is significantly more effective in terms of motivation than the current curriculum used in the control group. At the same time, the correlation coefficient called eta-square ( $\eta^2$ ) was also calculated for the effect size in the unpaired T-test. In the calculations made, the  $\eta^2$  value was determined as .24. Based on this parameter, it can be said that the effect size is high.

### Findings regarding the third research question

The pre-test average success scores of the experimental and control groups were analyzed with unpaired T-test and the findings are shown in Table 8.

**Table 8.** Comparison of Pre-Test Average Achievement Scores of Groups

Test	Test	N	X̄	t	p
Pre-test	Control	20	66,42	,221	,772
	Experimental	20	65,35		

Pre-test average achievement scores of the control and experimental groups were compared using an unpaired T-test, and it was understood that there was no significant difference between the groups in terms of success before the application. In other words, the success levels of the groups were similar to each other before the application.

The post-test average success scores of the experimental and control groups were analyzed with unpaired T-test and the findings are shown in Table 9.

**Table 9.** Comparison of Post-Test Average Achievement Scores of Groups

Test	Test	N	X̄	t	p
Post-test	Control	20	71,00	-2,314	,01
	Experimental	20	79,65		

Post-test average achievement scores of the control and experimental groups were compared with unpaired T-test and after the application, it was determined that there was a significant difference between the groups in terms of success in favor of the experimental group ( $t=-2,314$ ;  $p=,01$ ). In other words, it can be said that the method applied in the experimental group is significantly effective in terms of success compared to the current curriculum applied in the control group.

At the same time, the correlation coefficient called eta-square ( $\eta^2$ ) was also calculated for the effect size in the unpaired T-test. In the calculations made, the  $\eta^2$  value was determined as .07. Based on this parameter, it can be said that the effect size is median.

## Results and Discussion

After the 4-week study conducted in the control and experimental groups and comparing the pre-test and post-test average scores of the students' reading-comprehension achievements with their anxiety and motivation towards learning Turkish in these groups, the classroom activities were practiced applying the Socrates Seminar technique for four weeks. When the findings obtained from the study were evaluated, it was concluded that the activities increased the reading comprehension success and motivation of students learning Turkish as a foreign language and reduced their anxiety towards learning Turkish.

The study has overtly revealed that the absence of desired levels of motivation and anxiety, which can be considered determinants of the effectiveness of the learning process and, at the same time, vital steps for students to participate in the process actively, is essential for the academic success of the students. It is also known that many studies have been conducted showing that students have more difficulty in the process of learning a foreign language and cannot achieve the desired success (Gardner et al., 1987a; Gardner et al., 1987b; Sparks and Ganschow, 1993a and 1993b). Providing a quality foreign language learning environment requires effective methods, increasing students' motivation and reducing anxiety. Likewise, Gardner and Lambert (1959) state in their many studies that there is a direct relationship between the success rates of students learning a foreign language and their motivation and anxiety and that there is a direct proportion between motivation and success. In a study they conducted on students studying the French language in Canada, they even indicated that motivated students who studied the language not only because they had to learn the language but also because it was a part of the culture to which that language belonged achieved serious success. In another study, Crookes and Schmidt (1991, p. 480) signify that motivation and success expressions directly proportionally affect each other in the language learning process and that the state of being motivated leading students to success and students' active participation in activities are correlated to each other. In this study, in the experimental group, in which the activities prepared according to the Socrates Seminar technique were used, students took a more active role in the learning process, understood the text better that they read through the questions asked to them, and participated more willingly in reading-comprehension activities, too. This success achieved by the experimental group students revealed a significant difference compared to the control group in terms of both anxiety and motivation.

In the light of the relevant literature, it is seen that the Socrates Seminar is compared with different methods and techniques or used together with different methods and techniques in studies aimed at determining the effect of the Socrates Seminar on reading skills, other skills based on reading skills, and the factors affecting reading (Tan Hatun, 2023, p. 35). However, it is understood that many studies have been conducted on the effect of the Socrates Seminar technique, specifically on reading comprehension

and motivation. In these studies, it was concluded that the Socrates Seminar had positive effects on improving the reading-comprehension skills of the participants, increasing student participation and students' interest and motivation in reading (Acim, 2018; Tan Hatun, 2023; Waddell, 2011; Watkins, 2017; Worley, 2019). Similar results were also obtained in this study, which examined the effects of the Socrates Seminar technique on the reading comprehension skills, anxiety, and motivation levels of those learning Turkish as a foreign language. The study confirmed that those who learned Turkish as a foreign language tended to thoroughly interpret what they read through the Socrates Seminar activities, and their Turkish learning anxiety levels decreased significantly compared to the control group, along with the increase in active participation. Since it whips in all the substantial components of high motivation to learn, low anxiety, and, as a result, academic success, which can be considered critical steps for the student in the process of learning a foreign language, the Socrates Seminar technique has both relieved instructors and has eliminated the challenge of using very different methods together.

Considering the relevant literature, anyone trying to learn a foreign language may not feel competent in the language he/she is trying to learn and may become excited during the communication process, and therefore, feel fear of communication is one of the situations likely to be experienced in the process of learning a foreign language. This case also applies to those who learn Turkish as a foreign language. These students may feel incompetent in using Turkish in classroom activities, social communication, and exams (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1987). As a result of such situations as communication anxiety, the fear of being negatively evaluated, and test anxiety, the student's motivation may decrease, and his/her success may be negatively affected by these variables (Horwitz and Young, 1991). At this stage, to take advantage of methods and techniques such as the Socrates Seminar, in which students can actively take part in the process, critically ponder what they read and more thoroughly interpret it, and become stakeholders in constituting the meaningful whole by activating their personal talents, normalizes students' anxiety levels, preserves and even increases their motivation; and depending on all these, it allows the development of reading-comprehension capacities. This study is considered to be quite significant in terms of revealing the relationship between anxiety, motivation, and success factors.

In summary, this study carried out for foreign learners of Turkish, reveals that the application of the Socrates Seminar Technique in the process of teaching Turkish is an effective method. Also, the results obtained from the study revealed that the teaching process carried out using this technique contributed positively to the students' motivation and anxiety, and at the same time, they showed a significant improvement in their reading comprehension skills. With this study, it has been understood that the Socrates Seminar Technique, which was used by making the students active in the courses and enabling them to interpret the texts comprehensively they read, was effective in terms of anxiety, motivation, and reading comprehension skills in the process of learning a foreign language.

While teaching Turkish or any other foreign language, there are some problems we encounter as teachers: Most of the students are unwilling to attend the courses, they are unmotivated for the new learnings, and especially while communicating, they are anxious about using the target language. The Socrates Seminar Technique enables to solve these problems and this technique in which bilateral communication is very significant and encourages students to think and comment can be preferred by the teachers and the foreign language teaching process can be made more effective. This technique can promote a positive learning environment by enabling academic success and students' personal development during the foreign language learning process. Considering all this, applying this technique will be a good opportunity for both teachers and students to achieve permanent and effective learning and teaching. In addition, in further studies on this subject, the willingness of the teachers to apply such

techniques in the courses is an important factor, and detailed information about the technique should be given to the teachers and the students in the experimental group beforehand. The fact that both teachers and students do not have detailed knowledge about the technique can seriously affect the results of the study., and the students should be informed that the process is more important than the product in the application of this technique and active participation is necessary.

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