

TURKISH ONLINE JOURNAL of QUALITATIVE INQUIRY

Volume 9, Issue 3, July 2018

Editor
Abdullah KUZU



**Journal
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ISSN 1309-6591

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Published in TURKEY

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The Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry (TOJQI) (ISSN 1309-6591) is published quarterly (January, April, July and October) a year at the www.tojqi.net.

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Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop in Turkey: Current Situation, Results and Suggestions¹

Serap Erdoğan², Nalan Kuru Turaşlı³, Nurbanu Parpucu⁴, Gözde Tomris⁵

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the opinions, suggestions and findings of the report emerged as results of Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop organized by Association for the Development of Early Childhood Education in Turkey that is the representative of OMEP in Turkey. The topics covered in the workshop concerning early childhood are education, migration, neglect and abuse, values and family in social context. Discussions were held in the groups based on these topics to identify problems and offer solutions to current problems. Document review from one of the qualitative research methods was used to examine the report. The report was analyzed by content analysis. Based on these they were coded and themes were created. These themes were "Problems-Suggestions on the Functioning of the State and Institutions", "Problems and Suggestions from Individuals", "Problems-Suggestions Based on Society". Findings showed that there are limitations in Turkey in terms of reaching facilities in early childhood so poor or/and immigrant children have become even more limited in this respect. In addition to this, it was emphasized that there are inadequacies in teacher training institutions and in the quality of teachers and various suggestions were given about the studies to be done in order to increase teacher training system and teacher quality. Various solutions and models have proposed in order to realize implementations taking high benefit of children into consideration.

Keywords: *Early childhood and education, early childhood and migration, early childhood and abuse, early childhood and values, early childhood and family in social context.*

¹ The findings of this study were reached as a result of the Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop held in Eskişehir/Turkey on 18-19-20 November 2016.

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Türkiye’de Erken Çocukluk Farkındalık Çalıştayı: Mevcut Durum, Sonuçlar ve Öneriler

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı Türkiye OMEP temsilciliğini yürütmekte olan Türkiye Okul Öncesi Eğitimi Geliştirme Derneği’nin düzenlemiş olduğu Erken Çocukluk Farkındalık Çalıştayı sonucunda ortaya çıkan raporu görüş öneri ve tespitleri açısından incelemektir. Çalıştayda ele alınan konular erken çocukluk bağlamında eğitim, göç, ihmal ve istismar, değerler ve toplumsal bağlamda ailedir. Bu başlıklarda oluşturulan gruplarda sorunların tespiti ve çözüm önerilerinin getirilmesi amacıyla tartışmalar yürütülmüştür. Erken Çocukluk Dönemi Farkındalık Çalıştayı’nın sonuç raporunu incelemek amacıyla nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden doküman incelemesi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada; incelenen dokümanın analizinde içerik analizi kullanılmıştır. Erken Çocukluk Dönemi Farkındalık Çalıştayı Sonuç Raporu detaylı olarak incelenerek, grupların sonuç raporlarına yansıttıkları sorun ve öneri ifadeleri arasındaki benzerlik ve farklılıklar karşılaştırılmış, kodlanmış ve temalar oluşturulmuştur. Bu temalar “Devlet ve Kurumların İşleyişi İle İlgili Sorunlar- Öneriler, “Bireylerden Kaynaklanan Sorunlar- Öneriler, “Toplumsal Kaynaklı Sorunlar ve Toplum Temelli Öneriler” bağlamında incelenmiştir. Çalıştay sonucunda tüm gruplarda elde edilen bulgular; Türkiye’de var olan yasal düzenlemelerin uygulanmasında, denetlenmesinde ve gerekli yaptırımların hayata geçirilmesinde önemli sınırlılıkların yaşandığı, bu durum, yoksul ve/veya göçmen çocuklar söz konusu olduğunda daha da sınırlı bir hale geldiğini göstermektedir. Bunun yanı sıra öğretmen yetiştiren kurumlarda ve öğretmenlerin niteliğinde yetersizliklerin olduğu vurgulanmış ve öğretmen yetiştirme sisteminin ve öğretmen niteliğinin artırılması yönünde yapılacak çalışmalarla ilgili çeşitli öneriler sunulmuştur. Çalıştay kapsamında çocukların yüksek yararını gözetecek uygulamaların hayata geçirilmesi yönünde, çeşitli çözüm önerileri ve modeller geliştirilmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: *Türkiye’de erken çocukluk eğitimi, erken çocukluk ve göç, erken çocukluk ve istismar, erken çocukluk ve değerler, erken çocukluk ve toplumsal bağlamda aile.*

Introduction

It is an important need that stakeholders from different disciplines come together and exchange ideas in scientific studies from time to time. Today, especially in the field of educational sciences, the technique of workshop providing people who are specialized in a certain field with the opportunity to come together and exchange ideas is frequently used. Workshop is a method of work designed to make "quality decisions" on important and sensitive issues by discussing, analyzing the situation/matter and synthesizing ideas in a participatory environment. Generally, it can be defined as a meeting held by those who are specialized in their fields in order to find solutions to current educational problems and add new applications to education. The target of this technique is a joint team meeting where all knowledge and experiences are reflected. Workshop is used in different fields of specialization and preferred in academic knowledge exchange applications in which usually higher level cognitive processes are used (Demirel, 2011; Dilek, 2011). Workshops are held in the field of early childhood education as well as in many different areas, with the participation of all stakeholders in order to make qualified decisions and develop common attitudes.

Early childhood education is the starting point of human development and the period where the child develops fastest in terms of all the developmental stages. In these years, the foundations of learning and behavior patterns, which affect the child's later development, are laid (UNICEF, 2013). Although it is one of the most important educational and developmental periods having lifelong effects, unfortunately the field of early childhood education still faces with many problems in Turkey. The schooling rates in preschool period in Turkey are 39,54 % for 3-5-year-old children, 50,46 % for 4-5-year-old children and 67,17 % for 5-year-old children (MEB; 2016). According to the OECD Report, from 2008 until 2013, Turkey increased the amount of expenditure per capita in elementary and secondary education, but it still ranks the lowest among the OECD countries in relation to the expenditure per student. While the state expenditure per student is 2894 dollars in Turkey, the OECD mean is 8477 dollars (ERG, 2016). The distributions of students to institutions in preschool education are like this: 56.4 % of children attend public nursery schools included within elementary schools, 25.2 % attend public nursery schools, 8.8 % go to private nursery schools, 3.9 % attend institutions dependent to the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and the rest of them enroll

to day care centers opened at firms or companies in accordance with the Labor Law. However, the Society Based Models only cover 1.7 % (ERG, 2016).

In Turkey, there is a need for carrying out both qualitative and quantitative works in order to increase the quality of preschool education rapidly. As one of the works aiming to fulfill this aim, the Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop was held in Eskisehir on the dates of 18th-19th-20th November 2016 under the lead of the Association for the Development of Early Childhood Education in Turkey in collaboration with Ministry of National Education General Directorate of Basic/Primary Education, Association for Child Development and Educators, Association for Private Preschool and Etude Education Institutions, and Eskisehir City Council. The workshop was carried out with the participation of academicians, teachers and representatives of non-governmental organizations performing works on children in different professional fields. The basic aim of the workshop was to put forward basic problems related to "Early Childhood Period" in Turkey and to propose solutions based on scientific grounds. Within this scope, based on the participants' opinions, five headings were determined, namely "Early Childhood and Education", "Early Childhood and Migration", "Early Childhood and Abuse", "Early Childhood and Values" and "Early Childhood and Family within the Social Context", and discussions were held in the groups created under these headings with the aim of determining problems and proposing solutions.

The purpose of this study is to examine the report of the Workshop on Early Childhood Period Awareness in detail and, in this way, determine the current situation and problems of the field of early childhood education in Turkey and finally propose solutions to these problems. At the same time, the study also aims to contribute to the solution of various current problems experienced in the field of early childhood both in Turkey and in the world and put under discussion in the workshop by sharing these solutions with different people and institutions working on early childhood in different countries.

Method

In this study, with the aim of examining the Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop Conclusion Report prepared by the - Association for the Development of Early Childhood

Education in Turkey (TOÖEGD) – OMEP Turkey, the document review method that is one of the qualitative research methods was used. The document review covers "an analysis of written materials containing information about the targeted cases or phenomena for investigation" (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). Although the document review is used in qualitative, research methods as a data triangulation besides observation and interview techniques. It can be used as a qualitative research method (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013).

Data Resources

In the study, the Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop Conclusion Report was investigated as data. In the Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop organized by the Association for the Development of Early Childhood Education in Turkey (TOÖEGD) – OMEP Turkey, five headings were determined, namely "Early Childhood and Education", "Early Childhood and Migration", "Early Childhood and Abuse", "Early Childhood and Values" and "Early Childhood and Family within the Social Context". The groups held discussions including opinions, problems and solutions on the workshop subject for two days. In addition, on the last day, every group presented the reports of their works, which they carried out. Finally, all the group presentations were brought together and the Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop Conclusion Report was composed. Participants from different disciplines participated in the work under five headings. Problems and solutions on these issues were included in the final report. 94 people participated in the Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop and the distribution related to the participants is given in Table 1.

Table 1.

The Distribution Related to the Participants

Participants	Women	Men	Total	
	n	n	n	F
Academicians	42	5	47	50
Non-Governmental Organization Workers	8	-	8	8,5
Preschool Teachers	7	1	8	8,5
Preservice Preschool Teachers	4	3	7	7,4
Psychological Counselors	4	3	7	7,4
Ministry of Family and Social Services	4	2	6	6,4
Administrators of the Preschool Educational Institutions	4	1	5	5,3
Ministry of National Education	2	1	3	3,2
Municipalities	2	1	3	3,2
TOTAL	77	17	94	
Percentage (f)	81,91 %	18,08 %	100 %	100

Ninety-four participants from nine different fields related to the field of early childhood education in Turkey participated in the Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop. As it is seen in Table 1, half of the participants were the academicians working in the field of early childhood education at different universities in Turkey (50 %); they were followed in order of frequency by the non-governmental organization workers servicing in the field of early childhood (8,5 %), the preschool teachers (8,5 %), preschool teaching students and psychological counselors (7,4 %). Moreover, the Ministry of Family and Social Services (6,4 %), the administrators of the preschool educational institutions (5,3 %), the Ministry of National Education (3,2 %) and the municipalities (3,2 %) were represented. A great majority of the participants were composed of women (81,91 %) and 18% of the participants were men. When the general distribution was looked in, it can be stated that the Workshop brought together many different stakeholders working in the field of early childhood education in Turkey and being interested in this field and composed a good representative group.

Data Analysis

Content analysis and descriptive analysis are used as the analysis of the data in the document review method. The content analysis is a scientific approach allowing for the examination of verbal, written and other materials in an objective and systematic way (Tavşancıl ve Aslan, 2001). The descriptive analysis approach allows for the organization of data according to themes put forward by research questions and the presentation of them by taking into account questions or dimensions used in an interview (Çepni, 2009; Yıldırım, ve Şimşek, 2005). In the study, since the existing themes were not used in the analyzed document, content analysis was used for in-depth analysis.

Firstly, the Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop Conclusion Report was examined in detail by the researchers participating in the workshop as both organizers and participators. Then the similarities and differences between the problems and solution suggestions reflected by the groups into conclusion reports were compared. Finally the codes and themes were composed. These themes were examined in terms of "Problems- Suggested Solution related to the Functioning of the State and Institutions", "Individual Based Problems and Suggested Solutions", Social Based Problems and Community Based Suggested Solutions". Then, all the problems and solution suggestions stated by the workshop groups in relation to their own

headings and reflected into the workshop report were classified firstly separately and then mutually over the themes. Moreover, the participants' opinions and solution suggestions included in the conclusion report were summarized and presented within quotations.

Findings

In the Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop, five working groups were composed, namely "Early Childhood and Education", "Early Childhood and Migration", "Early Childhood and Abuse and Neglect", "Early Childhood and Family within the Social Context" and "Early Childhood and Values". In the discussions held in the group works, related to the headings discussed, problems in Turkey and suggestions to solve these problems were presented in the conclusion report.

Table 2.

Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop Report Summary Table

Subtitles	Defined Problems			Suggested Solutions		
	State/ Institutions	Individuals	Social	State/ Institutions	Individuals	Social
	n	n	n	n	n	n
Early Childhood and Education	4	7	7	35	-	3
Early Childhood and Migration	7	1	7	20	-	5
Early Childhood and Abuse and Neglect	5	3	7	27	-	5
Early Childhood and Family within the Social Context	1	1	2	39	-	2
Early Childhood and Values	5	-	1	33	-	-
TOTAL	22	12	24	156	-	15

As it is seen in Table 2, on the above-listed workshop topics, the groups determined 68 problems were in the category of "Problems related to the Functioning of the State and Institutions", 12 problems were in the category of "Problems Arising from Individuals-Individual Based Problems" and 24 problems were in the category of "Social Based Problems". Moreover, in relation to the solutions to these problems, the groups presented 156 suggested solution in relation to the "Problems related to the Functioning of the State and Institutions"

and 15 suggested solutions were in relation to the "Social Based Problems". The problems determined by the working groups and the solution suggestions to these problems were categorized and presented in the following tables:

Table 3.

Early Childhood and Education Problems and Suggested Solutions

Subtitles Covered	Defined Problems			Suggested Solutions		
	State/ Institutions	Individuals	Social	State/ Institutions	Individuals	Social
	n	n	n	n	n	n
1. Application of Quality Standards in Early Childhood Education						
1.A. Teacher Competence	20	4	3	10	-	1
1B. Early Childhood Education Program	7	-	-	11	-	1
1C. Educational Environment	2	-	-	1	-	-
1D. Situation Quality, Management, Leadership	1	1	-	1	-	-
1E. Children's Rights and Society	-	-	2	2	-	-
2. Education and Rehabilitation of Children with Special Needs Developmentally at Risk						
2.A. Orientation, Assessment-Diagnosis and Early Intervention	8	1	1	5	-	1
2B. Mainstreaming Education	2	1	1	5	-	-
TOTAL	40	7	7	35	-	3

As it is seen in Table 3, the participators in the "Early Childhood and Education Problems" group gathered the problems, which they determined in this field and the solution suggestions under two main headings. It was stated that, of these problems, 40 were related to state education policies and functioning of institutions, seven were individual based problems and seven were social based problems. Related to the suggested solutions to the mentioned problems, the participants proposed 35 solutions to the state education policies and the functioning of institutions and 3 solutions to the social based problems.

In relation to the category of "Problems related to the Functioning of the State and Institutions", the problems can be summarized as follows: "problems related to teacher training; problems

related to the contents of teacher training programs; problems related to the quality and quantity of teaching staff members; too many students in undergraduate programs; problems related to the quality and quantity of in-service training programs; problems related to the implementation of the current preschool education program; problems related to physical conditions of educational environments and resources; problems related to the adaptation to primary school; limitedness of current systems aiming at early intervention and lack of a system model in the national context; problems related to limitedness, monitoring and sanctions at the point of transferring legislative regulations, which are in effect in relation to inclusive education, into practice; teachers' being unable to benefit from supportive special educational services sufficiently".

In relation to the category of the "Suggested Solutions to Solve the Problems related to the Functioning of the State and Institutions", the suggestions made by the participants can be summarized as follows: "developing standard measurement tools and special examinations in teacher selection; re-regulation of the system of transition from vocational high school to university; re-regulation of course contents of teacher training programs; inclusion of compulsory courses aiming at children with special needs and under risk; extending the duration of teaching practice; developing policies in order to support teaching staff members to increase their qualities; carrying out needs analysis at a local base in order to determine types of in-service training program in line with teachers' needs; making regulations in relation to the encouragement of mentorship practices to help teachers implement, evaluate and monitor the program; taking in hand the auditing of the preschool education as a special field; carrying out works in collaboration with related ministries in order to develop an early intervention system model which is appropriate for our country; establishing a model at a point of presenting supportive special education services; starting works to take the education of children who are not diagnosed yet but under risk under guarantee; employing field specialists to evaluate the child multi-directionally at Family Health Services and establishing a system with an interdisciplinary approach; giving preschool teachers more support about developmental insufficiency and children who are under risk; strengthening the auditing and sanction mechanism at the point of transferring the existing legislative regulations into practice area in relation to inclusive education empowerment".

Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop in Turkey:
Current Situation, Results and Suggestions

The problems specified by the participant included in the category of "Problems Arising from Individuals - Individual Based Problems" can be summarized as follows: "teaching staff members, teachers and students sometimes fail to develop themselves; lack of intrinsic motivation and adaptation problems; preschool teachers' developmental insufficiency and having insufficient knowledge about what kind of a process they are supposed to follow when referring the child under risk to relevant authorities; teachers' being in need for information about inclusive education and not having encountered insufficient number of good practice examples".

The problems stated by the participants discussed in the category of the "Social Based Problems" are as follows: "society's not giving the profession of teaching the importance which it deserves; children's and families' not being informed about child rights; society's having low awareness level about early childhood education; insufficient social awareness level about inclusive education". The solution suggestions in relation to these determined problems, the ones which can be discussed in the category of "Solution Suggestions to Social Based Problems" can be summarized as follows: "increasing the works aiming to change the viewpoint towards vocational high school students; making regulations to support works aiming to achieve cooperation between families, teachers and experts; carrying out works to make health workers, educators and families conscious about early intervention and early education services".

Table 4.
Early Childhood and Migration Issues Problems and Suggested Solutions

Subtitles Covered	Defined Problems			Suggested Solutions		
	State/ Institutions	Individuals	Social	State / Institutions	Individuals	Social
	n	n	n	n	n	n
Right to life and development	3	-	4	9	-	-
Right to Protection	1	-	2	6	-	1
Right to Participation	3	1	1	5	-	4
TOTAL	7	1	7	20	2	5

As it is seen in Table 4, the participants in the "Early Childhood and Immigration Problems" group gathered the problems and suggested solutions that they determined in this field under three main headings. It was stated that seven of these problems were related to the functioning

of the state and institutions, one of them was individual based, seven of them were social based. However, in relation to the solutions suggested for the mentioned problems, the participants proposed 20 solutions in relation to the functioning of the state and institutions and 5 solutions in relation to the social based problems.

The problems specified by the participants that can be discussed in the category of the "Problems related to the Functioning of the State and Institutions" can be summarized as follows: "insufficient qualitative and quantitative knowledge about immigrant children in the early childhood period; not creating opportunities for children to use their right to act and play; problems related to the maintainability of developmental and educational services given to immigrants; problems related to the meeting of immigrants' needs for housing (inside and outside camp); having most of the immigrant children (especially female children), reaching early childhood educational services and solving the problems related to the unrecorded immigrants' reaching health services and problems which they encounter when solving their health problems and reaching health services".

Moreover, the solutions suggested by the participants to these problems and which can be discussed in the category of the " Suggested Solutions in relation to Problems related to the Functioning of the State and Institutions" can be summarized as follows: " starting and supporting interdisciplinary applied studies to guide policies related to 0-8-year-old immigrant children immediately; recording all children immediately; preparing, generalizing formal, non-formal flexible early childhood education programs; supporting bilingual education in the preschool period and in the first years of primary education (achieving this via dual teachers or bilingual teachers); integrating functional Turkish education given to the person who is primarily in charge of giving care to the child with mother education programs; establishing child-friendly safe playgrounds in places where the child can reach easily; providing support and budget to early childhood education given place in developmental plans related to migration; providing all children with healthy, sufficient and balanced nutrition supports; developing monitoring systems and using them effectively; developing the sensitivity of security forces and having them acquire skills in relation to monitoring; developing safe and child-friendly environments; increasing incentives to achieve the continuity of children's attending educational institutions; increasing disincentives; benefiting from programs to support social acceptance, respect for differences, establishment of empathy and the sense of

belongingness in children in the existing formal, non-formal and informal early childhood education programs; giving information in the social media, media and public institutions; achieving the maintainability of early childhood education; developing programs which are sensitive to social equality in education and having girls benefit from these programs; convincing the state to raise awareness towards creating a common life ground between immigrant children and children of a society receiving migration and giving them support to have them acquire necessary knowledge and skills".

The participants drew attention to individual adaptation problems in the category of "Problems Arising from Individuals - Individual Based Problems". The problems stated by the participants that can be discussed in the category of the "Social Based Problems" can be summarized as follows: "social adjustment and behavior disorders (normalization of violence and becoming aggressive); language problem (use of mother tongue); hunger and malnutrition (breast-feeding, supplementary food, accessing clean water) and problems caused by toxic stress; the society's tolerating immigrant children's working (cleaning windshield, panhandling, etc.); immigrant children's facing with dangers (problems related to statelessness, getting lost, death, child trafficking, abuse); immigrant children's belongingness problem (not having the sense of belongingness, peer rejection); prejudices against immigrants and their being unable to make their voice heard".

The suggestions in relation to the solution of these determined problems that can be discussed in the category of "Suggestions in relation to the Solution of Social Based Problems" can be summarized as follows: "developing children's skills of protecting themselves and asking for help and making mothers, fathers and other care-giving people conscious about this matter and having them acquire skills; raising the awareness of families about the existing educational services; creating environments to have all children seethe with one another and to make them understand one another; raising social awareness (media, social media, public service ad); spending effort to make individuals develop personally about this matter".

Early Childhood and Migration Issues Problems and Suggested Solutions

Subtitles	Defined Problems			Suggested Solutions		
	State/ Institutions	Individuals	Social	State / Institutions	Individuals	Social
	n	n	n	n	n	n
Scope and Awareness of Child Neglect and Abuse	4	1	6	20	-	3
Prevention of Child Neglect and Abuse	1	2	1	7	-	1
TOTAL	5	3	7	27	-	4

As it is seen in Table 5, "the participants in the "Early Childhood and Neglect and Abuse" group gathered the problems and solution suggestions under two main headings. It was stated that five of these problems were related to the functioning of the State, Institutions, 3 were individual based, and seven were social based problems. As solution suggestions to the mentioned problems, the participants suggested 27 solutions to the problems related to the functioning of the State and Institutions and four solutions to the social based problems.

The problems specified by the participants that can be discussed in the category of the "Problems related to the Functioning of the State and Institutions" can be summarized as follows: "insufficient amount of action research on child neglect and abuse in Turkey; having insufficient knowledge about research prepared, implemented and evaluated on this matter in Turkey and in the world; proliferation of neglect and abuse in preschool educational institutions; problems related to the way of dealing with the religious education in public and private institutions in the preschool period; lack of functional, long-term public policies which require making new laws and regulations aiming both to determine the current situation and increase social awareness on this matter in Turkey".

The solution suggestions stated by the participants which can be discussed in relation to the category of the "Solutions Suggested in relation to Problems related to the Functioning of the State and Institutions" can be summarized as follows: "organizing workshops at local level in all the cities with the aim of determining the current situation and developing solution suggestions to prevent child neglect and abuse; increasing the amount of action research and fieldwork on this subject; providing training to all adults and children; addressing the subject of child rights and responsibilities in activities to be performed in preschool education environments; giving courses on rights and responsibilities in all the higher education

institutions, mainly the teacher training institutions, primary education and secondary education institutions; including the course of child neglect and abuse within the compulsory courses in teacher training programs; providing employment possibilities to adults in families; strengthening cooperation between institutions; preparing environments to meet the requirements of children living and working in the street (Municipalities, NGOs, etc.); taking legislative precautions against the use of wrong material and programs about social sexism in mass media; under the lead of the Ministry of National Education and with the support of Other Public Institutions and by bringing various groups together such as universities, non-governmental organizations, etc., preparing a country-based training program and giving this training program to all adults and children; increasing the support given to disadvantaged/at-risk children; loading the materials prepared by such institutions as social service institutions, UNICEF, Save the Children, ICC, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and AÇEV (Mother Child Education Foundation) into the system of the Ministry of National Education and opening them to the use of teachers; the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Labor can provide financial support especially to the families of children being exploited economically in order to prevent child labor".

In relation to the category of "Problems Arising from Individuals - Individual Based Problems", the participants drew attention to the problems that some individuals tend to ignore the problem, some people working with children do not behave sensitively with respect to this matter and fall short of developing themselves.

The problems stated by the participants that can be discussed in the category of the "Social Based Problems" can be listed as follows: "lack of information in adult groups and children from different age groups about child neglect and abuse and also varieties of them; acceptance of emotional and physical abuse as a method of discipline with a traditional approach in our society; disrespecting and neglecting children as a result of emotional and physical abuse and neglect behaviors commonly observed in the society; abusing children by using them to derive income; observing child neglect in the family commonly; adopting attitudes preventing children from acquiring their sexual role identities properly and behaving accordingly at home and school; lack of sufficient social awareness about the ways to follow in case of a child neglect and abuse ".

The solutions suggested to solve these determined problems in the category of “Solutions Suggested to Solve the Social Based Problems” can be summarized as follows: “dealing with the subject of child rights and responsibilities in children's theatres; sharing the idea that giving money to panhandling children will not solve this problem but it will contribute to its continuation with all the parts of the society; using billboards, public service ads and mass media to give information about this matter; raising public awareness in relation to the fact that doing nothing is a crime as much as doing wrong”.

As it is seen in Table 6, the participants in the "Early Childhood Period and Family in Social Context" group gathered the problems which they determined in this field and the solutions which they suggested under five main headings. Of these problems, 11 were related to the functioning of the state and institutions, one was individual based and two were social based problems. In addition, in relation to the solutions suggested to the mentioned problems, the participants suggested 39 solutions to the problems related to the functioning of the state and institutions and two solutions to the social based problems.

The problems specified by the participants discussed in the category of the "Problems related to the Functioning of the State and Institutions" can be listed as follows: "not implementing the regulations in accordance with goals; inability to carry out the auditing of the regulations including school-family cooperation at schools; low teacher quality; inability to establish a healthy communication with families at preschool educational institutions; teachers' not knowing well and not receiving sufficient support about the aims and contents of family participation and home visits; insufficiencies related to parents education; insufficient knowledge which people working in the field have about children under risk; celebrating a single day under the name of child rights day; incidences of violation of child rights caused by language differences; courses on child rights and child law are not compulsory at universities".

Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop in Turkey:
Current Situation, Results and Suggestions

Early Childhood and Education Problems and Suggested Solutions

Subtitles	Defined Problems			Suggested Solutions		
	State/ Institution	Individuals	Social	State/ Institutions	Individuals	Social
	n	n	n	n	n	n
The Importance of School-Family Cooperation in Early Childhood Education and Studies	4	-	-	17	-	1
Family Participation and Home Visits in Early Childhood Education	1	-	-	7	-	-
Family Education Practices in Early Childhood Education	2	1	1	7	-	1
Development, Implementation and Maintenance of Developmental and Educational Needs of Children at Risk and Family Oriented Programs	1	-	-	3	-	-
Discussion of Family Institution in the Context of Children's Rights (Regional Differences, Access, Equality, Quality, etc.)	3	-	1	5	-	-
TOTAL	11	1	2	39	-	2

The solutions suggested by the participants to these problems that can be discussed in the category of the "Solutions Suggested to Solve the Problems related to the Functioning of the State and Institutions" can be summarized as follows: "re-arrangement of the regulations (law, regulations, program, etc.) so as to make the definition of school -family relationship and school - family collaboration include the same statements in the practice; making auditing frequently and being clear; increasing the number of projects such as family-friendly schools, etc.; education faculties' accepting students to become teachers according to certain criteria; increasing the number of lesson hours of mother-father education at faculties and carrying out the education both theoretically and practically; making compulsory the carrying out of in-service training programs in cooperation with education faculties compulsory; teachers' having academic mentors about family education and family participation; making teachers' in-service training topics' including family participation compulsory; increasing the family participation lesson hours at both pre-undergraduate and undergraduate levels and arranging the content as practice and theoretical; student teachers' participation in these works before starting their

career; making at least 3 family trainings compulsory at schools separately in the first and second semesters; doing education interactively; employing child development specialists in municipalities, prisons, public education centers and life centers; bringing the requirement of field specialists' (preschool teacher-PCG-psychologist) working cooperatively; providing preschool teachers with the opportunity to become administrators of developmental tests; carrying out workshops together with families of children under risk; administering family training programs to families in order to introduce them child rights and make them become conscious administrators of their contents; drawing attention to child rights starting from the primary education week when schools are opened and including them in the curriculum throughout the educational year; giving training in relation to how to give children child rights in in-service programs; through local administrations and public education centers and as it is required by the article included in the basic education law that basic education is given in Turkish, giving education to parents in Turkish".

In relation to the category of the "Problems Arising from Individuals - Individual Based Problems", the participants mentioned the problem of "students' parents' being unable to choose the correct family education topic which is appropriate for them".

As one of the problems in relation to the category of the "Social Based Problems", the participants mentioned the problem of the lack of knowledge in our society about the necessity and importance of family education. As a solution suggestion to this problem, they stated that social awareness should be raised through supporting family participation via social responsibility projects".

As it is seen in Table 7, "the participants in the "Problems Encountered in relation to the Subject of Early Childhood and Values and Solution Suggestions" group gathered the problems which they determined in this field and their solution suggestions under two main headings. It was stated that five of these problems were related to the functioning of the State and Institutions and one of them was a social based problem. In relation to the solutions suggested for the mentioned problems, the participants suggested 33 solutions in relation to the functioning of the State and Institutions.

Table 7.

Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop in Turkey:
Current Situation, Results and Suggestions

Early Childhood Values Problems and Suggested Solutions

Subtitles	Defined Problems			Suggested Solutions		
	State/ Institutions	Individuals	Social	State/ Institutions	Individuals	Social
	n	n	n	n	n	n
Definition of Values in Early Childhood Education	2	-	1	17	-	-
Scope and Awareness Challenges in Value Education in Early Childhood	2	-	-	16	-	-
TOTAL	5	-	1	33	-	-

The problems stated by the participants discussed in the category of the "Problems related to the Functioning of the State and Institutions" can be listed as follows: "Not having determined the definition and scope of the values in preschool period; limited number of studies made in Turkey on values education in the early childhood period; low teacher quality in relation to the management of the values education process and lack of cooperation with families in the values education process".

The solutions suggested by the participants to these problems in the category of the "Solutions Suggested for the Problems in relation to the Functioning of the State and Institutions" can be summarized as follows: "determining the definition and scope of values; determining universal and cultural values; determining developmental appropriateness characteristics when working on values with preschool children; determining methods related to the teaching of values; informing preservice teachers and servicing teachers about the definition, scope, teaching methods of values and developmental characteristics of preschool children; reviewing the results of studies made in Turkey on values education in the early childhood education; achieving the continuation of values education to be taken in hand in the preschool period during the primary education; carrying out works to increase the media literacy awareness of teachers and families; controlling popular culture contents to which children are exposed; inclusion of universal values, which are free from didactic, lesson-giving and frightening components, in books and child publications; raising public awareness through public service ads aiming at children and families; opening compulsory courses to contribute to values education at teacher training institutions (professional ethics, values education, etc.); determining professional ethics principles of preschool teaching and auditing preservice and servicing teachers' professional ethics practices; carrying out works in relation to school-family

cooperation; teachers' and families' working together on how to give values via family participation activities".

Of the problems mentioned by the participants in the category of the "Social Based Problems" is stated as the "inability to get sufficient support from written, visual and social media.

Moreover, the participants also made a definition work in the workshop and determined the universal values as "responsibility, love, respect, tolerance, sharing, helping, honesty, cooperation / solidarity, justice and self-control" and the cultural (local) values as "child games, meals, toy, architecture, clothes, art, music and special days".

Conclusion and Discussion

In the Awareness of Early Childhood Period Workshop organized by the Association for the Development of Early Childhood Education in Turkey (TOÖEGD) – OMEP Turkey, the sub-headings of "Early Childhood and Education", "Early Childhood and Migration", "Early Childhood and Abuse", "Early Childhood and Values" and "Early Childhood and Family within the Social Context" were taken in hand. In this study examining the conclusion report prepared following the workshop by bringing together the opinions, problems and solutions presented by the participants under the above-mentioned sub-headings, it is observed that some issues were attached more importance by the participants in all the groups in relation to the field of early childhood education in Turkey.

The first of these is "teacher qualities". This issue was the one, which all the groups emphasized most in both the "problems" section and the "solutions" section. In preschool education, the concept of teacher having a special and weighted importance with its aspect of providing guidance to both the child and the family in the development and education process was evaluated by the participants under many headings such as selection of students to become teachers, training of teachers, in-service training of teachers, etc. The common point on which the participants having stated opinions under different headings agreed was the existence of some hitches and insufficiencies in the selection, training (courses and teaching practice which they receive from universities) and appointment of preschool education students and during their servicing process and in-service trainings, which they receive in this process. Moreover,

many suggestions related to the elimination of these hitches and insufficiencies were included in the report. The teacher, one of the most strategical parts of the social system called school, is the first adult, which the preschool child encounters in addition to the family (Oktay, 1991: 56; Bursalioglu, 1981: 81). Studies show that the factor that makes preschool institutions different from one another is the teacher. No matter how good the physical environment, the program and the administration is, it is the teacher's knowledge, competence and personality that make education successful and active (Bekman, 1990; Bedel, 2008; Kesicioğlu, 2012; Kök et al., 2011; Pianta, Stuhlman and Barnett, 2003). For this reason, it can be stated, "A school can only be as good as its teachers". The success of education system depends fundamentally on the qualities of teachers and other personnel to operate and implement the system (Büyükkaragöz and Kesici, 1996: 354). In order for the teacher, who is the most strategical element of the education system, to be able to answer and meet the student's needs, it is of vital importance for them to have professional and field knowledge and transform this knowledge and their personal qualities into experience; shortly, their qualification level is of vital importance. The quality of the teacher affects the quality of the produced education service, hence, the satisfaction which the student and families, who are the "client" of the education system, from the education service which they receive; in other words, whether needs are met (Kuru, 2000). When the existing situation in Turkey is looked in, it really seems necessary to revise teachers' situations both qualitatively and quantitatively immediately both in preservice and in-service periods and find solutions in the short/long run. According to the 2015-2016 HEC data, there are Preschool Education Programs at 72 universities in Turkey. At these universities, a total of 517 academic staff member are working and 35.377 students are enrolled; at the same time, 18.986 preschool teachers had been waiting to be appointed and 4614 students teachers had started to study as new registrations in the preschool education field by the year 2016 (YÖK, 2016).

In the workshop report, all the groups having worked on different topics underlined the fact that increase in the number of teachers is not directly proportionate to the increase in quality. When practices done in the world on teacher education are looked in, it is seen that there is a need for making new regulations to meet the gradually increasing need for preschool teachers in Turkey in a qualitative way. In a study made on this subject, Küçükoğlu and Kızıлтаş (2012) examined the preschool teacher training programs of some countries such as Germany, England, Italy, France, Russia and Turkey. Because of the comparisons, the researchers made

some determinations and suggestions about the preschool teacher training system in Turkey. Some of these were the re-regulation of the terms of admission of students to the preschool teaching program by benefiting from experiences of other countries, developing different criteria for the selection of individuals who are appropriate for the preschool teaching, not making placement just according to the achievement grade in the student selection examination, etc. Besides this, it is considered that it will be useful to regulate the preschool teacher training in Turkey as a five-year training program and give general culture and special field courses in the first three years of the training and then a professional skill and practice weighted successive training in the last two years of training. All these opinions and suggestions overlap the opinions stated by the participants under five headings taken in hand in the workshop in relation to teacher training and its quality.

Another problem having appeared in the workshop commonly in all the groups was "*the lack of sufficient qualitative and quantitative data about the situation of children in the early childhood period in Turkey and the inability of making an effective situation determination*". In the headings discussed in all the groups, the fact that there is insufficient knowledge about the situation of our country's children and insufficient number of studies on this subject was mentioned as a problem and various solutions were suggested. For example, quantitative and qualitative data about the situation of internal and external immigrant children being in the early childhood period in Turkey having received an intensive migration in recent years seem insufficient. While the internal migration was 451.794 in Turkey (TSI, 2015), the number of people having come to our country through external migration was 3.018.452 according to the data taken from the United Nations Higher Commissariat for Refugees (UNHCR, 2016) on 3rd October 2016. It is observed that these figures are changing every moment and the total number of people affected by migration is about 3.470.196. However, although the data in relation to the internal migration in Turkey cannot be reached, it is known that there are 0-4-year-old 364.974 Syrian children having come to our country or was born here and 24.079 children having come to our country from other countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Somalia. While 10% of the Syrian refugees in Turkey are living in camps, 90% of them are living outside camps and they can reach basic services in a limited way (European Commission, 2016). This data in our hand is changing every moment and the lack of an effective and regular tracking system makes it difficult to carry out situation determination and indirectly hinders solution production processes.

A similar situation is true for such subjects as the education related to the early childhood education, nutrition, neglect and abuse, values and their education as well. It is observed that many pieces of quantitative and qualitative data related to the early childhood period are detached and different from one another. It is clear that some compilation studies made in academic field (Berat and Kıldan, 2013; Bertan et al., 2009) contribute to the collection of academic data from time to time. However, it can be stated that there is not a nationwide comprehensive tracking system to bring together all academic studies made on the early childhood period and again statistical data collected from different institutions and organizations giving service in this field. In other words, it was determined that there is a need for bringing together regularly data to be collected from different disciplines, institutions and organizations giving service in the field of early childhood, affecting studies in this field.

Among the problems and solution suggestions discussed in relation to the topics dealt with in the workshop, the mostly emphasized another issue was "the necessity that people, institutions and organizations from different disciplines, fields should work cooperatively for the high benefit of the early childhood period". This situation put forward as a necessity in increasing public awareness in relation to the early childhood period, determining the current situation more easily, developing tracking systems, making the practices of determination of children under risk more functional and effective, reaching more people within a shorter time, etc.

Another interesting result attracting attention in the workshop report was that the groups having worked on five different working topics determined 68 problems in the category of the "Problems related to the Functioning of the State and Institutions", 12 problems in the category of the "Problems Arising from Individuals - Individual Based Problems" and 24 problems in the category of the "Social Based Problems" and, in relation to the solution of these problems, they suggested 156 solutions in the category of the "Solutions Suggested to Solve the Problems related to the Functioning of the State and Institutions" and 15 solutions in the category of the "Solutions Suggested to Solve the Social Based Problems". This result indicates that a great majority of the existing problems related to the early childhood period in Turkey and the solutions suggested to solve these problems might be related to the functioning of the State and Institutions. In other words, it can be stated that the participants regard the functioning of the

state and institutions as the most effective factor at the point of both the problems and the suggestions related to the early childhood period.

Another problem on which the participants having presented opinions under five different headings agreed commonly was that "*there are important difficulties in the implementation, auditing of the existing legislative regulations and putting necessary sanctions into effect in Turkey*". This becomes more limited when destitute and/or immigrant children are the matter of discussion.

The participants mentioned the necessity of making some existing legislative regulations active and effective in addition to issuing new legislative regulations, making some additions to or changing the existing ones in the field of child education. For example, it was emphasized in various sessions that some new legislative regulations are needed with regard to the auditing of preschool education and the existing regulations related to family visits should be actively applied. Moreover, the literature supports these opinions. In different studies made on the subject, the practice of family visits included in the current system is regarded by an important part of teachers as unnecessary and not applied (Yıldız, 2012; Gülcan and Taner, 2011; Bahçeli Kahraman and Taner Derman, 2012).

Finally, another issue taken in hand commonly in the workshop was "the insufficient public awareness in relation to the importance, characteristics of the preschool period, the necessity of preschool education and the sensitivities which are specific to it and the state's not giving enough support". In the UNICEF Report (2016) on the State of World Children, it was mentioned that Turkey has a big economy, plenty of resources and sufficient substructure in terms of protecting child rights. But unfortunately, the opinion that the contribution of these bodies are not sought systematically and, most of the time, they are not integrated with child services and child rights monitoring works supervised by the state" overlaps the opinions stated in the workshop.

Suggestions

In the direction of the findings obtained in all the groups as results of the workshop, the following suggestions can be made;

1. Some legislative regulations should be made to create a platform to make all the public institutions and organizations, non-governmental organizations, universities, private sector and others, which are related to the child work in cooperation with the aim of protecting the high benefits of children and a systematic monitoring system including all these elements, should be developed.
2. It is necessary to speed up and support works to improve the teacher training system and increase teacher quality for raising healthy generations.
3. Various works should be done to increase public awareness about the importance, characteristics of preschool period and the necessity of preschool education and the sensitivities that are specific to it and the state's interest in and support for this education stage should be strengthened.

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A Program Evaluation Study of the Main Course at a Preparatory Program:
A Case Study

Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry (TOJQI)
Volume 9, Issue 3, July 2018: 202-239 / Cilt 9, Sayı 3, Temmuz 2018: 202-239

DOI: 10.17569/tojqi.426886

Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi

**A Program Evaluation Study of the Main Course at a Preparatory Program:
A Case Study**

Gülçin Mutlu¹

Abstract

This study is an evaluation case study and aims to evaluate the English as a foreign language (EFL) preparatory course called Main Course (MC) on the basis of the modified version of Bellon and Handler's (1982) evaluation model. The purpose of this study is twofold: i) analyze the EFL preparatory course with regard to its four fundamental aspects, a) aims and objectives, b) course content and materials, c) course conduct and d) student assessment and outcomes, and ii) identify aspects to be improved in relation to these four areas. The participants of the study included the course instructors and their students in several preparatory classrooms. The study followed a mixed methods design in which the data were collected through questionnaires, interviews and observations. The results revealed that MC was generally effective with regard to the four fundamental aspects as reported by the course instructors and students. The qualitative and quantitative data used to identify the gaps between the current and expected situation of the course in terms of four aspects corroborated to a large extent. However, the results showed inconsistencies between teachers' and students' perceptions especially in terms of the aspects of course content and assessment. For the improvement of the gaps found as a result of the evaluation activities, several recommendations were made such as the inclusion of more practice activities and various types of assessment methods to test student performance in the course and consideration of alignment between the testing and teaching procedures.

Keywords: *Program evaluation, curriculum evaluation, English course evaluation.*

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Hazırlık Programı Temel Dersinin Program Değerlendirme Çalışması: Bir Durum Çalışması

Öz

Bu çalışma bir program değerlendirme durum çalışmasıdır ve bir yabancı dil olarak İngilizce hazırlık programındaki Temel dersin (TD) Bellon ve Handler'ın (1982) değerlendirme modelinin adapte edilmiş hali ile değerlendirilmesini amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmanın amaçları iki şekilde özetlenebilir: i) yabancı dil olarak İngilizce hazırlık programındaki Temel dersinin a) dersin hedefleri ve amaçlar, b) ders içeriği ve materyaller, c) dersin işlenişi ve d) öğrenci değerlendirmesi ve sonuçlar olmak üzere bir dersi oluşturan dört ana öğeye göre değerlendirilmesi ve ii) bu dört temel öğe itibari ile iyileştirilmesi gereken yönlerin belirlenmesi. Çalışma örneklemini hazırlık sınıfının farklı sınıflarında öğrenim gören öğrenciler ve ders öğretim elemanları oluşturmaktadır. Bir karma desen çalışması olan bu değerlendirme çalışmasında veriler anket, görüşme ve yapılan gözlemler aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Çalışma sonuçları İngilizce Temel dersinin öğrenci ve öğretim elemanları görüşlerine göre bir dersi oluşturan dört temel öğe açısından bakıldığında genel olarak etkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu dört temel öğeye göre var olan ve olması istenen durum arasındaki farkı tespit etmek için kullanılan nitel ve nicel verilerin büyük ölçüde örtüştüğü görülmüştür. Fakat sonuçlar özellikle dersin içeriği ve öğrenci değerlendirmesi öğelerinde öğretmen ve öğrenci görüşleri arasında tutarsızlıkların var olduğunu da göstermektedir. Değerlendirme etkinlikleri sonucunda tespit edilen iyileştirilmesi gereken alanlar için öğrenci pratiğine daha fazla imkân veren etkinliklere yer verilmesi, öğrenci performansını ölçmek için farklı ve çeşitli değerlendirme yöntemlerinin derse dahil edilmesi ve öğretim ile değerlendirme öğeleri arasındaki uyuma dikkat edilmesi gibi tavsiyelerde bulunulmuştur:

Anahtar Sözcükler: *Program değerlendirme, öğretim programı değerlendirme, İngilizce ders değerlendirme.*

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Introduction

The recent demands as institutional accreditation, accountability testing, outcomes assessment, quality assurance and control in the global and our local language education agendas resulted in a growing surge of interest and awareness of program evaluation by the language educators (Norris, 2009) as an important vehicle in bringing about some important results and implications for the standardization and improvement of the programs. Program evaluation refers to serious and comprehensive investigation of any system or innovation for the purposes of improving conditions and providing richer educational opportunities and experiences for students (Walberg & Haertel, 1990). According to Brown (2007, p.158), “no curriculum should be considered complete without some form of program evaluation”. Therefore, not only to compete with the contemporary developments and demands in educational contexts but also to provide better educational experiences for all the stakeholders involved in any particular program, program evaluation processes should be made an important and natural component of the program as changing circumstances will automatically and naturally require these once the design, plan and implementation of a specific program have been performed (MacKay, 1998).

Beretta (1992) mentions the evolution of second language program evaluation as a distinct field of inquiry from the studies comparing the impact of teaching techniques (Keating, 1963; Scherer & Wertheiner, 1964 & Smith, 1970) and from those studies affected by Tyler’s (1949) approach in comparing intended outcomes with actual outcomes (McIntyre & Mitchell, 1983; Prabhu, 1987). Given the development of second language program evaluation in our local context, Turkey, it is seen that it is at its infancy in Turkey. In spite of the heightened interest on program evaluation and accreditation practices compared to the past worldwide, there is still a scarcity of program evaluation studies on foreign language education in Turkey with a few attempts in English language teaching programs. In this vein, Erozan (2005) conducted an evaluation case study of 10 language improvement courses at an undergraduate English language teacher education program through qualitative and quantitative methods. Similarly, Yel (2009) evaluated the English curricula for all of the grade levels in a Turkish high school by again using qualitative and quantitative data. Both studies reported the need for

improvement especially in terms of the teaching of listening and speaking skills and some improvements with regard to student assessment. Another investigation into English program evaluation was conducted by Erdem (1999) who included more stakeholders compared to the two studies above into his qualitative and quantitative evaluation activities. In contrast to the need for classroom-related improvements revealed by the two studies above, the results from Erdem's (1999) study indicated a need for improvement with regard to more institutional practices such as the provision of in-service training activities for the teachers and continuous evaluation practices. Given the above studies, it appears that there is a need for program evaluation research related to tertiary foreign language education and this study will attempt to fill in this need.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this evaluation study was to determine the discrepancy between the current status of the MC and the desired status of it in relation to four focus areas as perceived by the teachers and students of the tertiary EFL program and to suggest areas of improvement in these areas. In other words, the study aimed at a) analyzing the MC by considering the different viewpoints with regard to four focus areas and b) identifying aspects that need to be improved. Thus, this evaluation study has sought to investigate the following research questions:

1. What is the current status of the course, MC in terms of its four fundamental aspects, aims and objectives, course content and materials, course conduct, student assessment and outcomes?
2. How do the instructors and the students taking the courses evaluate MC in terms of its four fundamental aspects, namely aims and objectives, course content and materials, course conduct, student assessment and outcomes?
3. What can be done to improve and strengthen the MC in terms of its four fundamental aspects, aims and objectives, course content and materials, course conduct, student assessment and outcomes?

Curriculum Evaluation Model Used in the Study and Rationale for the Chosen Evaluation Model

Based on the researcher's evaluation focus on improvement and formative evaluation, program type and the available conditions, Bellon and Handler (1982) Evaluation model was chosen as an appropriate evaluation model for this study. The evaluation model is credited with its three main elements and four focus areas. The three main elements of the model are *status descriptions*, the *analysis activities* and *curriculum improvement* components. The four focus areas refer to the components of a program, and they are *goals*, *organization*, *operations* and *outcomes*. The first focus area, goals, is related to the desired outcomes and expectations of the program. The second focal point, organization, deals with the organizational influences of the program. It includes such dimensions as available resources (human or physical resources) and organizational processes (decision making, planning processes etc.). The third area of focus, operations, refers to the stage where the curriculum implementation is examined, and where the translation of planned curriculum into the actual program could be observed. The fourth focal point for curriculum improvement, outcomes, refers to the evaluation of both intended and unintended program results.

In order to conduct the evaluation at the course level rather than the broader curriculum level for the purposes of this study, the four focus areas of the original model which are a) goals, b) organization, c) operations and d) outcomes have been replaced with the four main components of a typical course as in the follows respectively: a) *aims and objectives*, b) *course content and materials*, c) *course conduct* and d) *student assessment and outcomes*. On the modified evaluation model, RQ1 included *status descriptions* regarding the four dimensions, RQ2 included the *analysis activities* conducted in terms of these four components and RQ3 included *curriculum improvement* reported again in terms of these components. Figure 1 shows the adapted design of the study also with regard to the data collection tools and sources.

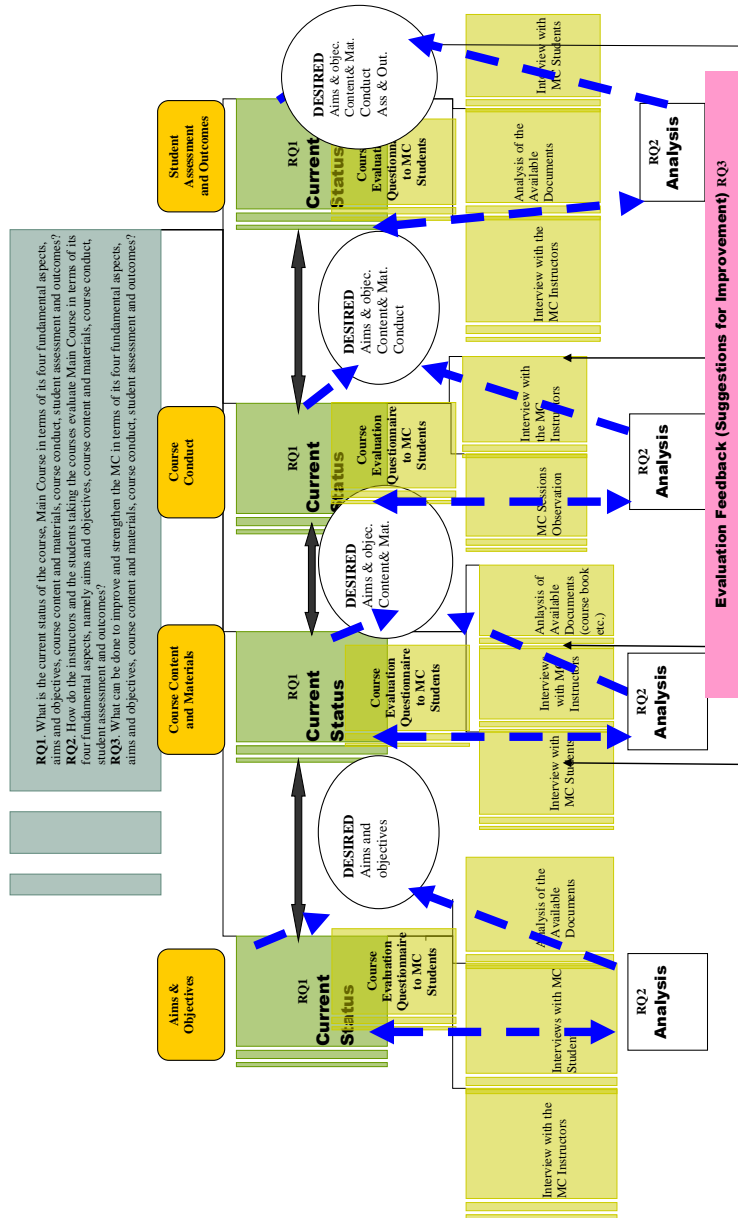


Figure 1. Design of the evaluation study (adapted from Bellon & Handler, 1982, p. 11)

Methodology

This evaluation study has been designed as a case study that attempted to evaluate the MC offered at a preparatory program at a state university for the purposes of improvement through the use of quantitative and qualitative methods. In this regard, this evaluation study followed a mixed methods triangulation design as the aim was to “obtain different but complementary data on the same topic” (Morse, 1991, p. 122).

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Participants

The subjects involved in this evaluation were MC learners and MC staff (instructors). Given the MC learners in more detail, the school had a total of 80 students according to the records at the department secretary. However, 5 of them dropped the course for several reasons. Therefore, when the study was conducted, the target population was 75 at the preparatory department, and there were a total of four classes at the preparatory department. 32 students from four different classes (16 males and 16 females) attended the questionnaire part, and hence the response rate has been calculated as 43 percent. For the interviews, six students recommended by their teachers as information-rich participants were contacted and volunteer students from those participated in the interviews. The ages of the students ranged between 18 and 20.

Given the MC instructors, out of the six responsible from the preparatory program, three volunteered to take part in this study. These three female teachers taught the MC in both of the semesters. They were all non-native speakers of English. Their age range was between 28 and 35, and they had teaching experience ranging between 5 to 13 years. As there is team teaching in the MC, first and second teacher taught in the same class, while the second teacher taught as a partner to another MC teacher (not attending the study) in another class, and the third instructor taught as a partner to two other classes. Hence, the teachers included in this study taught in all of the four MC classes of the program.

Data Collection Instruments

Course evaluation questionnaire

The course evaluation questionnaire was adapted from Erozan (2005), and the questionnaire aimed to elicit information on student perceptions with regard to the four fundamentals of a course, course aims and objectives, course content and materials, course conduct and student assessment procedures and also on their suggestions for the improvement of the MC. The questionnaire included five sections which were designed as student background and

competency information, MC aims and objectives, MC content and materials, MC conduct and teaching-learning process and finally student assessment and performance. There were also open-ended items in the questionnaire to derive their suggestions as to the improvement of these components.

The course evaluation questionnaires were validated through taking expert opinions from two experts, one from an expert in the field of English language teaching and other from the field of educational sciences. Previous studies conducted by Erozan (2005) and Yel (2009) also reported the effectiveness of this questionnaire as a data collection tool.

Interviews

In order to gather further in-depth data about the students' perceptions and suggestions concerning the four dimensions of the course, interviews were performed with the students and the teachers. The questions of the interviews were parallel to those of the questionnaires in that as with the questionnaires, the researcher again aimed to gather data about the current status of the program, teachers' and students' opinions or evaluation of the procedures employed at each dimension of the course and their suggestions for the betterment of the course in each dimension. The interview schedules were adapted from Erozan (2005), and some questions were either deleted or combined with the others for the purposes of this present study.

Observations

Observations were performed in one of the preparatory classes of the department for 14 class hours. The aim of the observations was to gather information concerning mainly the teaching-learning process and course conduct. Using the observation form devised by Erozan (2005), the researcher took notes on the following: tasks, activities and methods used, student behavior, teacher behavior and the general atmosphere of the classroom.

Documents

As needed, examinations of available documents such as exam tools and sample exam papers, course books, other course materials and available documents concerning the rules and

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structure of the preparatory program received from the administration and course instructors were performed in order to provide support for the above data collection tools.

Data Analysis

The data from the open-ended sections of the questionnaires were analyzed by means of listing the data under the four main evaluation dimensions it belonged to and then grouping the similar answers. The closed items in the questionnaires were analyzed by means of descriptive statistics. In order to analyze the results from the interviews, cross-case strategy in which the researcher grouped the answers, ideas and issues given by each participant into central themes was employed (Patton, 2002) following the transcription of the spoken data. Given the analyses for the MC session observations, the researcher used the key themes from the observation sheet or identified new codes/headings so as to arrive at holistic comments about the whole group.

Findings

RQ1: What is the current status of the course, Main Course in terms of its four fundamental aspects, aims and objectives, course content and materials, course conduct, student assessment and outcomes?

Course Aims and Objectives

The current aims and objectives of the program have been elicited with the help of the data obtained through teacher and student interviews and also from the analysis of the available documents concerning the general regulations in the program. In the teacher interviews, developing students' whole skills in English and developing students' proficiencies from elementary level to intermediate level of English were among the most recurring course goals. Parallel to what one of the instructors mentioned with the proficiency levels above, most of the students stated that this course aims to help students finish the preparatory year at the intermediate level of proficiency and it aims to develop all language skills. One instructor

reported the objectives already given in their textbook as their course objectives and she stated as follows in a critical way:

“What the book offers as course aims is what we take as our MC aims, and this is not something true, we should determine our objectives depending on our context and learner characteristics, not on the book.” (Teacher B)

There was no specific preparatory program goals and objectives document and the only document was the general rules and regulations document prepared when the program was first started in 2006. In order to gain more information about the course objectives and later use them in the course questionnaire to ask the perceptions of the students about the actualization of these course objectives, the researcher came together with the volunteer MC instructors to formulate a set of objectives for the MC. The researcher and course instructors worked on the objectives in the light of the textbook they used, and also by means of the teachers' opinions and suggestions on the final list. At the end, a list of objectives ($n = 41$) specified for speaking, listening, reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar was compiled (see Table 1 & Table 3 in the section including findings for RQ2 below for sample objectives).

Course Content and Materials

According to the reports of all three MC teachers, course content encompasses language skills which are the four skills of language (reading, writing, listening and speaking) and also grammar and vocabulary knowledge. As they take the course book to specify their content, analyses of the course book also showed that listening tasks, conversation strategies, writing tasks, reading passages and grammar recognition exercises in the course book make up the content for the MC. Given the materials used for the MC, they have one main textbook. It has four subsequent strands, A, B, C and D. Other course materials include interactive white board format of the course book and a separate grammar textbook. There were also teacher-prepared videos for the students to watch and later to talk and write about.

Course Conduct

The teaching-learning process of the MC is explained in relation to the data elicited via observations and teacher interviews. According to the observations, the teachers usually

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started the classes with making a connection with an earlier class or students' previous background knowledge. For the Modules A and B of the textbook, almost half of the observed class time in MC was spent on teacher lecturing the grammar topic, however, there is always question-answer pattern (interaction) between the teacher and the students especially as a warm-up to the grammar topic. There was always a pair or group work environment following the discussion of the grammar point or before the discussion of it as a type of lead-in for the students, and it seems that the teacher always tried to form a context to present the grammar topic to come. While working on the Modules C and D, students listened to an audio text and work on the follow-up questions and later they move to a speaking, reading or writing task. According to the interview results, MC instructors stated that the teaching-learning process in sometimes student-centered and sometimes teacher-centered. One of them asserted as in the following:

“I follow no specific methods in the classroom. I am into eclecticism, I believe in the power of using every approach when needed. I certainly disregard asking students directly perform speaking and writing. I think that giving language input within a task or within a daily activity would be more effective. In such context, students feel more relaxed. When I provide them with tasks, daily events or game-like activities, they more strive to join in the activities and they get more motivated. At that point, I offer the key language points as the students are ready now, and this makes my lesson more quality.” (Teacher A)

Student Assessment and Course Outcomes

On the basis of the data elicited from the teacher interviews and the available documents, MC has several assessment tools. Students' MC performance is calculated mainly based on two major assessment procedures: in-year grade (50%) and final grade (50%). When calculating the in-year grade, several assessments methods are included in it. These methods and their percentages are explained as follows: pop quizzes (10%), common quizzes (20%), three midterm exams (60%) and class participation (10%). Given the formats of exams in more detail, final exam exhibits the same format as the three midterms in that all is formed on the basis of 50 percent distribution for grammar and vocabulary and the remaining 50 is given to the all other language skills. Common quizzes are administered following the completion of

the six units of the textbook, and they include two main components, a paper-based and an oral exam part.

RQ2: How do the instructors and the students taking the courses evaluate the current situation of the course, Main Course in terms of its four fundamental aspects, namely aims and objectives, course content and materials, course conduct, student assessment and outcomes?

Course Aims and Objectives

The course evaluation questionnaire related to this dimension show that the average score of the means of the respondents on the perceived fulfillment of the list of course objectives ($n = 41$) was found to be 3.78 ($SD = .64$) on a scale of 1 to 5. The range of agreement (mean scores) was between 2.20 and 4.93 on the five-point Likert scale. This mean score on the realization of objectives part of the questionnaire implies that the respondents almost agree with the realization of the objectives listed in the questionnaire.

Table 1 below shows, with means and standard deviations, the ten most agreed objectives of the MC as reported by the questionnaire respondents. It is seen that half of the objectives that have been reported to be fulfilled belongs to the speaking skills among those ten in comparison to three reading and two listening objectives.

Table 1

The Ten Most Agreed Objectives of the MC

Objective No	Objectives	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skill Category
14	commenting/elaborating on the listened material	4.12	.79	Listening
17	asking for clarification	4.12	.75	Speaking
18	asking questions	4.09	.89	Speaking
15	initiating and maintaining discussions	4.09	1.03	Speaking

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21	describe a photograph / picture	4.03	.98	Speaking
2	identifying points of reference	4.03	1.00	Reading
3	guessing the meaning of unknown words (in a given reading)	4.00	.72	Reading
22	manage conversation more effectively by using conversation strategies	3.97	1.09	Speaking
13	listening by note-taking	3.97	1.03	Listening
4	making inferences from a reading text	3.97	.91	Reading

Table 2 displays the means of agreement for the respondents on the six language skills, which means that respondents appeared to confirm the realization of objectives regarding the listening skill over others, while the objectives for grammar were the least agreed one with regard to their realization (perceived fulfillment) by the questionnaire respondents.

Table 2

Mean Scores for the Objectives on the Language Skills

Language Skill	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Listening	3.89	.66
Speaking	3.86	.74
Reading	3.77	.57
Vocabulary	3.73	.90
Writing	3.73	.93
Grammar	3.64	.78

Table 3 below shows, with means and standard deviations, the ten least agreed objectives of the MC as reported by the questionnaire respondents. It is observed from the table that there is no listening objective that have been reported to be least fulfilled among the items, and that there are more objectives related to reading skills in comparison other skills.

Table 3

The Ten Least Agreed Objectives of the MC

Objective No	Objectives	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skill Category
31	gain new grammar in natural contexts (conversation, interviews and phone messages etc.)	3.68	1.11	Grammar
23	communicate by using everyday language	3.68	1.11	Speaking
6	identifying key ideas in a text	3.66	.83	Reading
38	use new vocabulary in meaningful and personalized interactions with classmates	3.62	1.13	Vocabulary
20	give reasons	3.62	1.18	Speaking
30	engage in real-world writing tasks such as e-mail messages, letters, short articles	3.56	1.24	Writing
5	deducing the underlying meaning in sentences or parts of a text	3.53	.95	Reading
40	customize vocabulary learning	3.5	1.21	Vocabulary
7	recognizing the relationship between ideas in a text	3.48	1.03	Reading
34	apply the appropriate grammar rules in their language practices (as freer practices)	3.41	1.10	Grammar

Given the means on a five-point Likert scale on the entire objectives part of the questionnaire and also the categorization of these objectives in skills, it has been revealed that respondents' degree of confirmation for the realization of the great majority objectives fell within somewhere that could be categorized as closer to the point of agreement on the entire objectives part of the questionnaire, as well as on the skills categories. Given the question of which type of language skills respondents showed confirmation over others, it is seen that the students appear to more agree on the realization of listening objectives followed marginally by the speaking objectives.

In addressing whether the course met students' expectations, almost 69 (Strongly Agree and Agree) percent of the respondents reported to the question "MC met my expectations" positively ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 1.12$). Given the question "MC met my needs", 61.5 (Strongly Agree and Agree aggregated) percent of the students reported that the MC answered to their needs with regard to listening, almost 69 percent with regard to speaking, almost 73 percent

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with regard to writing, and 71 percent with regard to reading skills. The Table 4 below presents the above results.

Table 4
Expectations and Needs Met by the MC

Questions	SA	A	NS	D	SD	M	SD
MC met my expectations	8 (25.8)	14 (45.2)	5 (16.1)	2 (6.5)	2 (6.5)	3.77	1.12
MC met my needs in terms of listening skills	3 (11.5)	13 (50)	5 (19.2)	3 (11.5)	2 (7.7)	3.46	1.10
MC met my needs in terms of speaking skills	4 (15.4)	14 (53.8)	3 (11.5)	4 (15.4)	1 (3.8)	3.61	1.06
MC met my needs in terms of writing skills	4 (12.9)	19 (61.3)	3 (9.7)	3 (9.7)	2 (6.5)	3.64	1.05
MC met my needs in terms of reading skills	7 (22.6)	15 (48.4)	7 (22.6)	1 (3.2)	1 (3.2)	3.84	.93

**Note.* SA: Strongly agree / A: Agree / NS: Not sure / D: Disagree / SD: Strongly disagree.

**Note.* f(%)

In the interviews conducted with the students taking MC, all of the students stated that the course met their expectations and needs to a great extent. One of them further explained that the course helped him to be more knowledgeable in grammar as something he expected when coming to the preparatory school. One of them explained as follows:

“When I first decided to come to the preparatory school, I had very big expectations. If I say my expectations have not been met, it would be impossible to say like this, but I can say that my expectations were met up to 80 percent in talking about percentages. For example, what has not been met? I would expect different level classes at the prep school”. (Student A)

On the other hand, the second student stated he had expected his listening skills to improve more, but he can’t say that his listening did improve as the other skills did. He argued:

“Our listening skills could have been better. My writing is OK in that I can express myself by writing. My speaking is so so, I can speak English. Our instruction for speaking development was good, we learn a lot of everyday language to use. However, in listening I always feel this difficulty when listening to videos, songs, texts and radio, for instance”. (Student C)

Paralleling to what the students said with respect to the achievement of objectives, one of the MC instructors said that she believed that they achieved most of the objectives. She further explained as in the follows:

“I believe that we achieved most of we aim with this course. However, there are some variations among students in relation to the fulfillment of the objectives. These variations are observed in students themselves in relation to different language skills and also among students. There could be a huge variation in one student’s listening and writing development for example. Or while some students in one class could graduate at the intermediate level, there were those who were still at the elementary level. Therefore, the objectives have been achieved to most extent, but there are these variations”. (Teacher A)

Course Content and Materials

It has been seen that in general, students taking MC have somewhat positive attitudes toward most of the issues in MC concerning course content and materials given the means of items on the questionnaire. Table 5 demonstrates the opinions of the respondents on several issues relevant to course content and materials.

Table 5

Students’ Opinions about MC Content and Materials

Items	SA	A	NS	D	SD	M	SD
	f						
1. The course materials provided me with what I needed to know or do.	7	16	5	3	1	3.78	1.01
2. The course materials were appropriate to my interests.	5	15	8	4	-	3.66	.90
3. The course materials fit my long term goals in terms of listening skills.	4	15	10	3	-	3.62	.83
4. The course materials fit my long term goals in terms of speaking skills	4	13	8	7	-	3.44	.98
5. The course materials fit my long term goals in terms of reading skills.	4	12	14	2	-	3.56	.80
6. The course materials fit my long term goals in terms of writing skills.	7	11	10	2	2	3.59	1.10
7. The topics and themes in the materials were interesting.	10	11	8	3	-	3.87	.97

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Items	SA	A	NS	D	SD	M	SD
8. The course materials offered continuity (between earlier and later parts).	11	11	6	3	1	3.87	1.10
9. The listening skills taught in MC were useful for improving my general listening ability in English.	4	17	4	6	1	3.53	1.05
10. The speaking skills taught in MC were useful for improving my general speaking ability in English.	2	15	10	3	1	3.45	.89
11. The reading skills taught in MC were useful for improving my general reading ability in English.	5	18	7	1	1	3.78	.87
12. The writing skills taught in MC were useful for improving my general writing ability in English.	6	15	6	1	4	3.56	1.22
13. The topics were presented sequentially, i.e. building upon prior learning.	9	12	6	5	-	3.78	1.04
14. MC course pack was appropriately priced.	2	4	2	4	19	1.90	1.35
15. The materials were in line with the course objectives.	4	19	6	2	1	3.72	.89
16. Course materials were sufficient to improve my listening skills.	6	12	7	5	2	3.47	1.16
17. Course materials were sufficient to improve my speaking skills.	3	12	13	2	2	3.37	.07
18. Course materials were sufficient to improve my reading skills.	6	10	12	1	1	3.63	.96
19. Course materials were sufficient to improve my writing skills.	7	9	9	3	2	3.53	1.17
20. It was easy to use the course materials.	7	14	7	3	1	3.72	1.02
21. Exercises/tasks in the ELT 121 course pack were effective in improving my listening skills.	4	16	7	5	-	3.59	.91
22. Exercises/tasks in the ELT 121 course pack were effective in improving my speaking skills.	5	16	6	4	1	3.62	1.01
23. Exercises/tasks in the ELT 121 course pack were effective in improving my reading skills.	3	20	6	1	2	3.66	.94
24. Exercises/tasks in the ELT 121 course pack were effective in improving my writing skills.	8	14	8	1	1	3.84	.95
25. The course materials had variety.	4	12	11	4	1	3.44	.98
26. I had difficulty in following the course materials.	2	7	10	8	5	2.78	1.16
27. The course materials helped me to improve my listening skills.	5	13	10	4	-	3.59	.91
28. The course materials helped me to improve my speaking skills.	7	12	9	2	1	3.71	1.01
29. The course materials helped me to improve my reading skills.	6	17	7	2	-	3.84	.81

Items	SA	A	NS	D	SD	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	<i>f</i>						
30. The course materials helped me to improve my writing skills	6	16	9	1	-	3.84	.77
31. The course materials were visually attractive.	10	12	6	3	1	3.84	1.08
32. The materials were appropriate to our proficiency level in English.	4	16	7	3	1	3.61	.95
33. There was a need for supplementary materials to improve my listening skills. (i.e. supplementary materials should have been used)	5	15	5	3	4	3.44	1.24
34. There was a need for supplementary materials to improve my speaking skills. (i.e. supplementary materials should have been used)	6	14	7	3	2	3.59	1.10
35. There was a need for supplementary materials to improve my reading skills. (i.e. supplementary materials should have been used)	4	14	6	3	4	3.35	1.23
36. There was a need for supplementary materials to improve my writing skills. (i.e. supplementary materials should have been used)	6	16	4	2	4	3.56	1.24

While the respondents found the course materials and course content useful for improving their reading ability (Items 11 ($M = 3.78$, $SD = .87$), 18 ($M = 3.63$, $SD = .96$), 23 ($M = 3.66$, $SD = .94$) and 29 ($M = 3.84$, $SD = .81$), and they found them less useful respectively for writing ability (Items 12 ($M = 3.56$, $SD = 1.22$), 19 ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 1.17$), 24 ($M = 3.84$, $SD = .95$) and 30 ($M = 3.84$, $SD = .77$)), listening ability (Items 9 ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 1.05$), 16 ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 1.16$), 21 ($M = 3.59$, $SD = .91$) and 27 ($M = 3.59$, $SD = .91$)) and speaking ability (Item 10 ($M = 3.45$, $SD = .89$), 17 ($M = 3.37$, $SD = .07$), 22 ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 1.01$) and 28 ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 1.01$)).

In contrast, in the teacher interviews, all the teachers expressed their dissatisfaction with the course materials' usefulness for the development of reading skills. The teachers were expecting the book to offer and teach more strategies for better reading comprehension. For the other skills, two of the interviewed teachers asserted that they were happy with what the materials offered, but one teacher who is mostly teaching Modules A and B pointed out a need for the book to provide more and varied contexts for grammar use so that the students could see the grammar they learn in different contexts, and she says "the more the depth of processing is, the more they learn".

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Moreover, students positively evaluated (almost agreed with) such issues regarding course content materials as interesting topics and themes ($M = 3.87$, $SD = 1.10$), parallelism between course objectives and materials (Item 3 ($M = 3.62$, $SD = .83$) for listening, Item 5 ($M = 3.56$, $SD = .80$ for reading, Item 6 ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 1.10$ for writing and item 4 ($M = 3.44$, $SD = .98$) for speaking), continuity between the parts of the course materials ($M = 3.87$, $SD = 1.10$), easiness to use the course materials ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 1.02$), visual attractiveness of the course materials ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 1.08$) and appropriacy of the course materials to students proficiency levels ($M = 3.61$, $SD = .95$). There was only one item (Item 14) which stood different from the others in that students showed almost no agreement ($M = 1.90$, $SD = 1.35$), and thus it seems that students have some problems about the cost of the books. In line with the above evaluations of the students, the MC instructors agreed with the interesting topics, continuity among the modules, visual attractiveness and easiness to use the materials.

Given the course materials, as shown above in Table 6, the students believed in the usefulness of materials used in the MC with textbook being the most favored course material among others (aggregated 87 % for Strongly Agree and Agree), the grammar book being the least favored one (aggregated 48 % for Strongly Agree and Agree). It is also evident that respondents also liked the handouts teachers prepared and the workbook accompanied to the course book.

Table 6
Students' Opinions about the Usefulness of MC Materials

Questions	SA	A	NS	D	SD	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Coursebook	15 (48.4)	12 (38.7)	1 (3.2)	1(3.2)	2 (6.5)	4.19	1.11
Workbook	12 (40)	10 (33.3)	5 (16.7)	2 (6.7)	1 (3.3)	4.00	1.08
Grammar Book	6 (19.4)	9 (29)	5 (16.1)	7 (22.6)	4 (12.9)	3.19	1.35
Online Textbook Tool	6 (20)	12 (40)	4 (13.3)	4 (13.3)	4 (13.3)	3.40	1.33
Handouts prepared by the teachers	17 (53.1)	9 (28.1)	3 (9.4)	1(3.1)	2 (6.3)	4.19	1.15
Reading exercises assigned	6 (18.8)	12 (37.5)	7 (21.9)	3 (9.4)	4 (12.5)	3.41	1.27
Ekstra videos	7 (22.6)	13 (41.9)	3 (9.7)	4 (12.9)	4 (12.9)	3.48	1.34

*Note. SA: Strongly agree / A: Agree / NS: Not sure / D: Disagree / SD: Strongly disagree; *f* (%)

In relation to the specific course materials used, all of the interviewed students expressed their dislike with the grammar book during the interviews, which is also put forth by two of the teachers interviewed. The students were mostly positive about the topics and themes covered in the textbook. Likewise, all of the teachers reported that they were satisfied with the course materials and content covered. One teacher said:

“This course book is a very daily course book. I think there was nothing that would not interest the students. Students were encouraged to work with daily language and some other formal content. Therefore, the book included these two poles, formal and informal content. I heard some students asking why we deal with job interviews for example. I do not think that this topic is not an interest to the students. However, because of the students’ current situation, they do not expect to talk about this topic, but they will have to expect it for their future, and they are not aware of it for now. I mean this job interview may work for their future use, but now they do not care about it.” (Teacher C)

Most of the interviewed students reported their satisfaction with the teacher prepared handouts especially for learning the phrases and expressions in English. For the use of the accompanying online tool, all the teachers were in agreement that the technological tools offered by the course book were not used efficiently by the students. One of the teachers mentioned as follows:

“There are lots of technological tools offered for the students to use for self-study purposes. For some reasons, either because of technological constraints, or their own reasons, they do not use these tools. We should find a way for it because students need these creative and rich practices.” (Teacher B)

Course Conduct

The results of the course evaluation questionnaire (Table 7) show that the range of agreement (mean scores) was between 2.19 and 5.00 on the five-point Likert scale. This mean score implies that the students evaluated the teaching-learning process in the positive direction.

The results also reveal that (see Table 7) the students considered the teachers’ use of audio-visual aids ($M = 4.28$, $SD = .81$), teacher encouragement for student participation ($M = 4.26$, $SD = .68$), teachers’ use of board ($M = 4.12$, $SD = .83$), good student-teacher interaction ($M = 4.12$, $SD = .97$), teacher help ($M = 4.06$, $SD = .98$), efficient class time use ($M = 4.06$, $SD = .99$) as the most effective aspects of the teaching-learning process. Conversely, individual work

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($M = 2.78$, $SD = 1.29$), and use of only English in class ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.16$), were considered to be the least effective aspects.

Table 7
Students' Opinions about the Teaching-Learning Process

Items	SA	A	NS	D	SD	M	SD
	f						
1. There was an efficient use of time in class.	5	9	1		1	4.06	.99
2. There was a good student-teacher interaction in the course.	14	11	4	3	-	4.12	.97
3. The students had cooperative relationships with each other.	12	14	3	1	2	4.03	1.09
4. A variety of activities was used in the course.	8	13	6	4	1	3.72	1.08
5. The teacher was teaching in an interesting way.	10	9	9	4	-	3.78	1.04
6. It was easy to follow the teacher.	7	17	5	2	1	3.84	.95
7. The teacher's instructions were clear.	10	12	8	1	1	3.91	.99
8. The teaching methodology of the teacher was effective in our learning.	9	15	6	1	1	3.94	.95
9. The teacher was encouraging us to participate in the lessons.	12	15	4	-	-	4.26	.68
10. The teacher used audio-visual aids (OHP, video, tape-recorder, etc.) effectively in the lessons.	15	12	4	1	-	4.28	.81
11. The teacher was using the board effectively.	11	16	3	2	-	4.12	.83
12. The teacher was giving equal attention to all students in the class.	8	14	4	5	1	3.72	1.11
13. The teacher corrected our mistakes in an effective way.	9	16	3	3	1	3.91	1.03
14. I preferred to work individually in class.	3	7	9	6	7	2.78	1.29
15. I preferred to work with (a) partner(s) in class.	8	16	6	1	1	3.91	.93
16. I used only English in class.	3	8	11	6	4	3.00	1.16
17. The lessons were taught in an interesting way.	5	16	8	2	1	3.69	.93
18. Other students helped me to learn in this course.	5	19	4	1	3	3.69	1.09
19. The teacher helped me to learn in this course.	10	18	2	-	2	4.06	.98
20. The teacher was giving sufficient feedback on our performance.	7	16	7	-	2	3.81	.99
21. The students were giving sufficient feedback on each other's performance.	5	17	8	-	2	3.72	.96

* SA: Strongly agree / A: Agree / NS: Not sure / D: Disagree / SD: Strongly disagree

In line with the questionnaire results on the learning-teaching process, in the interviews, most students emphasized the good and friendly teacher behavior as the most important characteristics of the English class. Accordingly, students had positive attitudes about the teacher roles and student-teacher interaction. As is also understood with the results of the observations, there was a good classroom interaction. No student disciplinary problems arose during the observed class time. The observation results also showed that the students were accustomed to work in cooperation, in peers and groups. When the teacher arranged the groups or provided the instruction, students tended to directly start working in their peers or groups. One thing realized during the observation was the frequent use of students' native language (i.e. Turkish) among the students, and there were also frequent instances that they asked most of their questions in Turkish to the MC teachers.

Given the frequency of methods employed in the MC, as depicted in Table 8, teacher questioning ($M = 3.39, SD = .67$), teacher lecture ($M = 3.35, SD = .61$), assignments ($M = 3.31, SD = .78$), teacher's correcting mistakes ($M = 3.28, SD = .58$) and computer-aided activities ($M = 3.19, SD = .69$) were included as the most frequent activities, while songs ($M = 2.25, SD = 1.05$), games ($M = 2.40, SD = .93$), student peer evaluation ($M = 2.53, SD = .94$), role-plays ($M = 2.57, SD = 1.10$) and projects ($M = 2.59, SD = .98$) were considered the five least frequent methods employed in the MC as perceived by the students. Given the least used activities and methods, it would be meaningful to contend that those methods of discussion, projects, role-plays, student peer evaluation, games and songs show mean values relatively lower than the rest (all below point 2.00) with regard to sufficiency of use. Given the average means for the methods used, only two of the methods (games and songs) have been observed to have means close to 2 (not sufficient) on a 4- (more than I want) point scale, which would mean that these two methods have been used marginally in these classes and point out to a need to practice them more. It is also seen that most methods (excluding the two above) have been employed at the level of sufficiency (i.e. means above 2.00).

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Table 8

Activities and Methods Used in the MC

	More than I wanted	The right amount	Not sufficient	None	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Teacher questioning	14 (45.2)	16 (51.6)	1 (3.2)	-	3.39	.67
Teacher lecture	13 (41.9)	16 (51.6)	2 (6.5)	-	3.35	.61
Assignment/Homework	15 (46.9)	13 (40.6)	3 (9.4)	1 (3.1)	3.31	.78
Teacher correction of mistakes	11 (34.4)	19 (59.4)	2 (6.3)	-	3.28	.58
Computer-aided activities	11 (34.4)	16 (50.00)	5 (15.6)	-	3.19	.69
Pair work	11 (34.4)	15 (46.9)	6 (18.8)	-	3.16	.72
Group work	9 (28.1)	18 (56.3)	4 (12.4)	1 (3.1)	3.09	.73
Reading aloud by students	7 (21.9)	20 (62.5)	4 (12.5)	1 (3.1)	3.03	.69
Tape/CD listening	11 (34.4)	13 (40.6)	5 (15.6)	3 (9.4)	3.00	.95
Reading aloud by teachers	6 (18.8)	20 (62.5)	4 (12.5)	2 (6.3)	2.94	.75
Video sessions	8 (25.00)	13 (40.6)	10 (31.3)	1 (3.1)	2.87	.83
Student self-correction	4 (12.5)	19 (59.4)	6 (18.8)	3 (9.4)	2.75	.80
Student presentations	10 (31.3)	9 (28.1)	8 (25.00)	5 (15.6)	2.75	1.08
Student self-evaluation	3 (9.4)	18 (56.3)	10 (31.3)	1 (3.1)	2.72	.68
Student peer-correction	3 (9.4)	18 (56.3)	10 (31.3)	1 (3.1)	2.72	.68
Translation	5 (16.1)	15 (48.4)	8 (25.8)	3 (9.7)	2.71	.86
Individual silent study	2 (6.3)	21 (65.6)	6 (18.8)	3 (9.4)	2.69	.74
Discussion	3 (9.4)	16 (50.00)	10 (31.3)	3 (9.4)	2.59	.78
Projects	6 (18.8)	12 (37.5)	9 (28.1)	5 (15.6)	2.59	.98
Role-plays	7 (23.3)	10 (33.3)	6 (20.00)	7 (23.3)	2.57	1.10
Student peer evaluation	5 (15.6)	12 (37.5)	10 (31.3)	5 (15.6)	2.53	.95
Games	4 (13.3)	9 (30.00)	12 (40.00)	5 (16.7)	2.40	.93
Songs	4 (12.5)	10 (31.3)	8 (25.0)	4 (12.5)	2.25	1.05

Note. SA: Strongly agree / A: Agree / NS: Not sure / D: Disagree / SD: Strongly disagree
Note. *f*(%)

In the interviews, half of the students said that all the activities and tasks were interesting and useful. On the other hand, the remaining students said the activities were good, but more could have been done by using variety of activities and tasks such as discussions, role-plays,

presentation activities and use of videos and films. For instance, one student pointed out the need for presentation activities as in the following:

“Due to the professions we will have in the future, we will be communicating with people, and presentation will be a part of this communication at the work place. Moreover, while preparing your presentation you are learning new things and developing your research skills as well.” (Student E)

When talking about the teaching-learning process with the teachers, working with partner teachers arouse as a problem area. One teacher reported as follows:

“Though we need to follow the same book and same procedures in the MC, the teaching-learning process of the MC classrooms are too different from one another. I know they cannot be the same to 100 percent, but they should have a lot in common. Those teaching the MC are not in good contact with one another unless they have a good relationship in their social life. I think if we come together to discuss our teaching, we will all benefit from it. There should be more interaction between the colleagues.” (Teacher C)

Parallel to what the above teacher suggests, another MC instructor complains about the difficulty to work with a partner as in the following:

“If you have a partner that you could get on well, it is good. However, my partner is not very willing to work together. What I mean is that she sees her lesson as a separate lesson from mine, and when I ask her whether she did an activity for the students, for example, she says, “this is your duty, I cannot do that”. I think we should work together for this course. We should come together and discuss the things.” (Teacher A)

Student Assessment and Outcomes

The results of the student questionnaire showed that the majority of the students possessed positive opinions about the assessment procedures of MC as represented in Table 9.

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Table 9

Students' Opinions about the Assessment Procedures of the MC

	SA	A	NS	D	SD		
	<i>f</i>					<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. We were assessed on the things we practiced in the lessons.	16	7	-	2	-	4.48	.87
2. The directions on the tests were clear.	11	12	5	3	-	4.00	.97
3. We were informed about the evaluation criteria before our exams.	7	17	4	3		3.90	.87
4. The test questions were difficult.	4	12	10	5	-	3.48	.93
5. The test results demonstrate my actual proficiency / ability in English.	3	12	7	9	-	3.29	1.01
6. The test results demonstrate my actual proficiency / ability in speaking skills	4	12	9	6	-	3.45	.96
7. The test results demonstrate my actual proficiency / ability in reading skills.	3	17	2	8	1	3.42	1.09
8. The test results demonstrate my actual proficiency / ability in listening skills	2	16	7	3	2	3.43	1.01
9. The test results demonstrate my actual proficiency / ability in writing skills	2	14	8	5	2	3.29	1.04
10. My listening skills have been correctly measured in the course.	4	16	6	4	1	3.58	.99
11. My speaking skills have been correctly measured in the course.	5	11	10	4	1	3.48	1.03
12. My writing skills have been correctly measured in the course.	3	19	6	2	-	3.77	.73
13. My reading skills have been correctly measured in the course.	4	14	7	4	-	3.62	.90
14. The grading was fair.	7	11	8	4	1	3.61	1.08
15. HW/assignments were relevant to the course aims.	9	15	6	1	-	4.03	.79
16. My performance in this course was good.	6	15	6	3	-	3.80	.89
17. My listening skills have improved after this course.	4	18	5	4	-	3.71	.86
18. My speaking skills have improved after this course.	6	19	5	1	-	3.97	.71
19. My reading skills have improved after this course.	6	19	5	1		3.97	.71
20. My writing skills have improved after this course.	7	18	5	1		4.00	.73

	SA	A	NS	D	SD		
	f					M	SD
21. I received sufficient feedback on my performance in the lesson.	3	19	5	3	1	3.64	.91
22. I received sufficient feedback on my performance in the tests.	3	15	7	3	1	3.55	.95

Note. SA: Strongly agree / A: Agree / NS: Not sure / D: Disagree / SD: Strongly disagree

The results reveal that the students expressed agreement with the issues concerning being assessed on the things they have practiced in the lessons ($M = 4.48$, $SD = .87$), relevancy of assignments to the course aims ($M = 4.03$, $SD = .79$) and the clarity of the directions on the tests ($M = 4.00$, $SD = .97$). Somehow agreement is also expressed with the issue concerning being informed about the evaluation criteria before the exams ($M = 3.90$, $SD = .93$), correct measurement of the language skills (writing ($M = 3.77$, $SD = .73$), reading ($M = 3.62$, $SD = .90$), listening ($M = 3.58$, $SD = .99$) and speaking ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.03$)). It seems that students expressed comparatively less agreement for the correct measurement of speaking skills in comparison to other skills. As to the issue regarding test results being representative of students' actual performance, it is apparent that students have some concerns as none of the average means exceeded 3.50 in each specific language skill and in English in general, which would mean that students are closer to the not sure end in terms of this issue. Respondents almost agreed on their performance in the MC ($M = 3.80$, $SD = .89$), the feedback received about their performances in the lessons ($M = 3.64$, $SD = .91$) and also in the exams ($M = 3.55$, $SD = .95$). However, the degree of agreement is less in the feedback in the exam results in comparison to this in the lessons. Related to their performance in the MC, respondents agreed on their language skills being improved after this course with the writing skills exhibiting the highest degree of improvement ($M = 4.00$, $SD = .73$) and the listening the least degree of improvement ($M = 3.71$, $SD = .86$).

When the students were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of each measurement tools in the course, they identified pop quizzes as the most effective assessment tool ($M = 4.16$, $SD = .73$; see Table 10) and the oral quiz the less effective one ($M = 3.90$, $SD = .92$). However, given the means on the all assessment tools of the MC, it would be meaningful to conclude that students agreed on the effectiveness of all of the assessment procedures.

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Table 10

Students' Opinions about the MC Assessment Tools

	SA	A	NS	D	SD	M	SD
Pop quizzesz	10 (32.3)	17 (54.8)	3 (9.7)	1 (3.2)	-	4.16	.73
Common quizzesz	9 (29)	15 (48.4)	7 (22.6)	-	-	4.06	.73
Class participation	10 (32.3)	13 (41.9)	8 (25.8)	-	-	4.06	.77
Midterms	6 (20)	16 (53.3)	7 (23.3)	1 (3.3)	-	3.90	.76
Final exams	9 (30)	11 (36.7)	10 (33.3)	-	-	3.97	.81
Oral quizzesz	8 (26.7)	13 (43.3)	8 (26.7)	1 (3.3)	-	3.90	.92

*Note. SA: Strongly agree / A: Agree / NS: Not sure / D: Disagree / SD: Strongly disagree

*Note. f(%)

In in the interviews, when the teachers were asked about the correct measurement of the language skills, three of the teachers responded their concerns with the testing of grammar.

One of these teachers said the following:

“I have doubts about the relevance what is taught and what is tested. I am not an expert in that area, but should check it. For example, we try to teach the grammar contextually, that is, in a contextualized way. However, in the exams, we asked such questions that require rote-memorization and decontextualized sentences. Moreover, now that we have an integrated-skills course, we need to have a balance between the language skills. However, in the exams half of the paper is prepared for grammar testing, and the remaining half is given to the testing of all language skills. If meaning is more important than the form, why is it so?” (Teacher B)

When students were interviewed if the assessment procedures reflected their real performance, half of the students reported that they were happy about the assessment tools. The remaining half, however, mentioned their concerns with the measurement of speaking in that they believe that they did not reflect their actual performance, and their in-class performance are usually better than the exam performance. In order to have a little more concrete proof of the effect of the course on students' performance, all the results of one class on each and every examination tool was examined, and their mean scores on the three midterm exams and a final exam, among the common quizzes themselves were compared. Given the means from the three midterms

with the final exam mean score, it appears that there is a descending trend in the scores towards the end of the year (see Figure 2 and Figure 3).

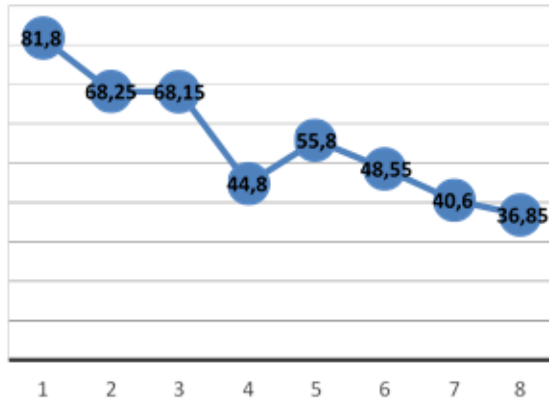


Figure 2. Comparison of the results on the means for common quizzes (1,2,3,4,5,6,7 & 8) as assessment tools

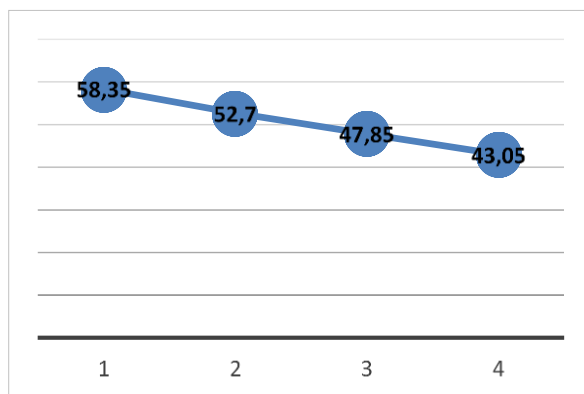


Figure 3. comparison of the results on the means for midterms (1, 2 & 3) and final (4) as assessment tools

RQ3: What can be done to improve and strengthen the MC in terms of its four fundamental aspects, aims and objectives, course content and materials, course conduct and student assessment and outcomes?

Course Aims and Objectives

When students were asked to specify what other skills they would like to have been developed in the MC, they suggested that the course should aim at providing more practice skills with everyday language, more practice with speaking and listening skills and also with

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pronunciation, more strategies for learning vocabulary, the need for the language use (as compared to language forms). The incorporation of target language culture within the course objectives was another recurring theme according to the interview data. One of the students pointed out this need by saying: “There should be some culture in the MC as it would be difficult to separate language from the culture. Therefore, MC may aim to give some knowledge on the target culture”.

In the interviews, all three MC instructors suggested that some objectives concerning reading strategies and the integration of technology to the MC. Given the teachers’ other recommendations, teachers insistently stated that next year they should revise the objectives, and set objectives before they choose the book so that they will have objectives independent of the course book. These teachers also made a suggestion in terms of adding objectives concerning students’ developing individual study skills (through technology use) so that they could work individually and thus practice more. Other than the reading objectives, teachers also reported some revisions as to the grammar objectives in the form of adding some objectives about the contextual use of grammar. In this essence, one teacher stated “Students should be able to practice the same grammar pattern in more than one context”.

Course Content and Materials

When the students were asked to suggest changes in relation to topics/themes, skills taught and the materials used, most of the students seemed happy with what they had in the MC as content and materials. However, rather than suggesting major changes, the students opted to suggest more practice opportunities with the course content. In terms of the inclusions regarding the course materials, students stated that more videos, presentation and discussion activities, more listening materials (CDs) should be used in this course. In the interviews, when students were asked to suggest topic/themes and also skills that could be incorporated to the MC, several students added that the presentation and research skills should be more emphasized in this course.

Course Conduct

Given the responses of the students to the course evaluation questionnaire regarding how frequently they would like the listed activities and methods to be used in the MC, it is seen that video sessions, teacher correction of mistakes, questioning by the teacher, computer-aided activities, teacher correction of the mistakes were the most desired methods by the students (see Table 11). Group work, tape/CD listening, games and teacher lecturing were also highly suggested to be used in the MC by the students. It is also seen that assignments, students' doing self-correction and peer correction, individual silent study and student peer evaluation were comparatively less desired methods for use in the MC. Given the mean scores of the questionnaire respondents on the methods items, it is seen from the Table 11 below that several items (teacher correction of the students' mistakes ($M = 2.50$, $SD = .51$), video sessions ($M = 2.56$, $SD = .50$), teacher lecture ($M = 2.56$, $SD = .50$) and pair work ($M = 2.53$, $SD = .62$) were preferred more compared to the others. Students' preferred frequency of use of the listed methods shows a direction from sometimes to frequently though mean values point out a need for sometimes frequency of use for the majority of the items on the list.

Table 11

Activities and Methods Students Would Like to be Used in MC

	Frequentlu	Sometimes	Never	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Teacher questioning	16 (50)	15 (46.9)	1 (3.1)	2.47	.57
Teacher lecture	14 (43.8)	18 (56.3)	-	2.56	.50
Assignment/Homework	7 (23.3)	19 (63.3)	4 (13.3)	2.10	.61
Teacher correction of mistakes	16 (50)	16 (50)	-	2.50	.51
Computer-aided activities	16 (3.1)	15 (46.9)	1 (3.1)	2.47	.58
Pair work	16 (50.00)	14 (43.8)	1 (3.1)	2.53	.62
Group work	15 (46.9)	13 (40.6)	3 (9.4)	2.48	.71
Reading aloud by students	10 (31.3)	19 (59.4)	3 (9.4)	2.22	.61
Tape/CD listening	15 (48.4)	14 (45.2)	2 (6.5)	2.42	.62
Reading aloud by teachers	12 (37.5)	18 (56.3)	2 (6.3)	2.31	.59
Video sessions	18 (43.8)	14 (56.3)	-	2.56	.50
Student self-correction	9 (28.1)	21(65.6)	2 (6.3)	2.22	.55

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	Frequentlu	Sometimes	Never	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Student presentations	10 (31.3)	20 (62.5)	2 (6.3)	2.25	.58
Student self-evaluation	8 (25.0)	21 (65.6)	3 (9.4)	2.16	.57
Student peer-correction	4 (12.5)	24 (75.00)	2 (6.3)	2.07	.45
Translation	12 (37.5)	17 (53.1)	13 (9.4)	2.28	.63
Individual silent study	6 (18.8)	23 (71.9)	3 (9.4)	2.09	.53
Discussion	11 (34.4)	17 (53.1)	3 (9.4)	2.31	.69
Projects	10 (31.3)	18 (56.3)	4 (12.5)	2.19	.64
Role-plays	11 (34.4)	17 (53.1)	4 (12.5)	2.22	.66
Student peer evaluation	7 (21.9)	18 (56.3)	7 (21.9)	2.00	.67
Games	14 (43.8)	14 (43.8)	4 (9.4)	2.41	.71
Songs	11 (34.5)	18 (56.3)	3 (9.4)	2.25	.62

*Note. SA: Strongly agree / A: Agree / NS: Not sure / D: Disagree / SD: Strongly disagree

*Note. *f*(%)

For the question concerning the desired teacher behavior in the open-ended part of the questionnaire, most students agreed that their teachers are already doing well, and others recommended that the teacher should provide more opportunities for students to practice, force students to do the tasks and assignments, provide more fun opportunities like games, films and activities, behave more sensitively and also friendly towards the students and individual care for the students of different proficiency levels. Given the desired student behavior, while most says nothing, others suggested more opinion sharing and discussions among peers, peers being a model with their good use of grammar and pronunciation, students' speaking only in English and students behaving more disciplined in the class time.

For the question "How should teaching-learning process be in MC so that it would help the students a lot?" in the open-ended part of the questionnaire, students recommended a decrease in the class hours, having more variety of tasks and activities so as to make the class fun, more film watching activities and students performing more actively in the lessons. Basically, it appears that students desire a more practice and fun-based teaching learning process. Some of the students argued that the activities done in MC were sufficient and they suggested no other

activities, while the remaining suggested including presentations, more video viewing and more discussion activities in teaching-learning process.

Student Assessment and Course Outcomes

For the question “How else your language skills (including all) could be better measured in the MC?”, some students provided suggestions such as giving more listening tests and more careful marking of students’ essays. In the interviews, one of the students said she is not that knowledgeable about how the students’ performance should be measured, but she is happy with the system in the MC, whereas some students suggested that in-class performance should be taken into consideration more in the assessment of the students. Given the assignments, respondents recommend that teachers should force the students to finish and work on the assignments.

Two of the teachers recommended that the grammar should be tested in the way it has been taught. If the book is teaching grammar contextually, it is not appropriate to test grammar in isolated sentences; therefore, the teachers should revise their exam questions especially in relation to grammar.

Discussion of the Results

In relation to the evaluation of the aims and objectives of the MC, both the teachers and the students of the MC evaluated the realization (their perceived fulfillment) of the existing MC objectives positively. It is also seen that speaking strategies were reported to be fulfilled by most of the students, which has been also supported by one of the teachers. There is also consistency on the realization of the listening objectives between the questionnaire results showing a comparably lower mean for the meeting of listening expectations and what one student reported with the comparably slower development of the listening skills. There are concerns over the objectives of grammar, and this is reflected in what one of the teachers wish to include new grammar objectives and the questionnaire results for the grammar objectives being the least realized skills objectives among others. For the testing or actualization of

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grammar goals, Prabhu (1987) reported similar concerns especially for the testability of the realization of the objectives related to grammar in the famous Bangalore Project.

With respect to the materials, both the MC teachers and the students were generally happy with the materials used in the course with the textbook being the most favored one in the questionnaire and the interview results. It is important to note that students reported their satisfaction with the handouts prepared or provided by the teachers. Both the students and teachers also had an agreement about the ineffectiveness of the grammar book and the need for students' practice. However, it seems that the teachers attribute the lack of practice to irresponsible student behaviors, whereas the students to the lack of varied activities, skills and tasks. Erozan (2005) reported consistent results in relation to the absence of various types of class activities in the undergraduate EFL teacher program.

MC students generally evaluated the teaching-learning process positively in that, as shown by the questionnaire results, the teacher was helpful, encouraging of student participation, and there was a good student-teacher interaction. It also appears from the most frequent class methods and activities that the teachers are more active than the students, which has been also confirmed with the teacher interviews. This is also evident with the least used activities (songs, games, student peer evaluation, role-plays and projects and methods of the classroom. Likewise, in Yel's (2009), Erozan's (2005) and Öner and Mede's (2015) studies, students frequently reported the need for the presence of varied types of activities.

The results from the student evaluation questionnaire reveal that majority of the students had positive opinions about the effectiveness of the assessment procedures. It was indicated that students also agree to some extent with the correct measurement of the skills in the MC; but, it is striking that the least agreed-on skills in terms of its being correctly measured is speaking. In the questionnaires, the highest degree of improvement in the language skills was reported with the writing skills and the lowest with the listening skills, which has been also supported with the insights from the teacher and student interviews. Similarly, Sharp (1990) also reported that students experienced problems with their listening skills development in his evaluation of a four-month English course aiming to upgrade the English level of students for entering a university faculty. In the same vein, the results of Yel's (2009) evaluation for the English high

school curricula revealed students' needs that are related to reading and writing skills were met more than their listening and speaking skills. Oral quizzes have been reported to be the least effective assessment tools by the students when compared to other skills, and this finding is consistent with the opinion that speaking skills being the least agreed-on skills among the students in terms of its being correctly measured. With respect to the exam scores and their comparison, it seems that there is a decrease in student performance from the beginning towards the end of the semester. A probable explanation for this gap may be the existence of a gap between what is taught and what is tested as also put forth by one of the MC instructors and documented in the exam papers examined by the researcher. Such a gap was also found by Yel (2009) in that the students reported assessment procedures as non-congruent with the course objectives.

Suggestions for the Current MC

In the light of the results of the current study, the following recommendations are made for the improvement of the MC.

1. Conducting *needs assessment* should be an important and inevitable component of the future MC design procedures. Information gathered from the needs assessment might be used in the determination of course aims and objectives, in the selection of the content and materials, in the selection of classroom activities and in also designing assessment tools.
2. Variety of tasks and activities (discussions, role-plays, debates, projects etc.) that will provide opportunities for the students to be more active in the classroom should be offered.
3. There should be more practice opportunities for the students in the teaching-learning process.
4. Listening skills should be emphasized and practiced more in the teaching-learning practice.
5. There should be in-service training sessions for the MC teachers which will provide training on the alternative assessment methods and techniques.
6. The grammar book chosen for this year should be changed in line with the expectations and requirements of the students.

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7. Various sources of information should be taken into consideration for the course assessment. As suggested by the students, their in-class speaking performance should be incorporated to their final performance grade in speaking.
8. For the reported communication problems for the MC team teachers, forming a MC committee or coordinating office are recommended, and the MC committee should be responsible for the a) determination of the common methods and activities to be used in the teaching-learning process, b) determination of the assessment procedures to be employed, c) determination of the content to be taught or if needed the adaptations or supplementations to the book. For the sake of following the same standards, the committee should prepare set of guidelines or information on each of the three components above.
9. Reading strategies or strategic reading should be incorporated to the course content, and vocabulary exercises and learning strategies should accompany them.
10. Students should be guided, trained and monitored for the use of the internet tools provided to them so that they develop their study skills.
11. Students should be provided with more contexts so that they could see and practice a grammar point in another context, which, in turn, develop their use of language. New context opportunities (in reading passages) should be incorporated to the current course content.
12. There should be a relationship and consistency between the teaching and testing procedures.

Suggestions for Future Evaluation Studies

The evaluation model used in the current study is a flexible one. It could be used to evaluate a program at the macro level, or a course at the micro level. It could be even adapted to evaluate only one of the four focus areas. Using the adaptation performed for the purposes of this study, a further study may use the model with another discipline area course.

The same study could be performed by including a more quantitative data for the outcomes dimension of the current study. This will add to the value of evaluation in that the researchers could present the effect of program on students' learning. The effect of the course or program on learning is of perhaps the most important issue in the educational settings as adding to students' cognitive student outcomes are often regarded as the preliminary duty of a course or a school system.

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Metaphoric Perceptions of Middle School Students About the Concept of Secularism¹

Muzaffer Çatak²

Abstract

Social studies is an important course in middle schools. Social studies, however, varies in scope as social studies benefit from social sciences' knowledge production. Social studies include social sciences' topics as well as such topics as social responsibility, socialization, social relations. These topics are directly or indirectly linked to the concept of secularism. The concept of secularism influences and shapes the political, social, military and even economic structures of a given country. The purpose of this study, by way of metaphor, is to examine the concept of secularism that students learn in social studies courses. In this study, the descriptive survey model was used and the content analysis was used in determining the categories and themes. The study group consists of students from two middle schools located in Siirt province center. The prepared forms were applied to 155 students. In determining the sample, convenience sampling was utilized from non-random sampling methods. As a result, when metaphors, categories and category ratios related to secularism are examined and they were found as 35% socially and culturally, 25% politically and administratively, 16% religiously, 13% legally and 11% in the sense of belonging. Considering the ratios, it is seen that they are considered in terms of social and cultural the most and in terms of legal and sense of belonging the least. The categorization of the secularism concept by the students at a high rate socially and culturally and politically and administratively is assessed as positive by considering the definition and structure of the concept.

Keywords: *Secularism; social studies, metaphor, qualitative research.*

¹ This study is a developed and modified form of the report presented at the International Symposium on Social Studies Education (USBES VI) held during 4-6 May, 2017 at Anadolu University.

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Ortaokul Öğrencilerinin Laiklik Kavramına İlişkin Metaforik Algıları

Öz

Sosyal bilgiler mihver bir ders olduğundan ortaokullarda önemli bir yeri vardır. Bununla beraber sosyal bilgiler, sosyal bilimlerin bilgi üretiminden faydalandığı için kapsam bakımından çeşitlilik göstermektedir. Sosyal bilgiler, sosyal bilimlerin yanında öğrencilerin toplumsal sorumluluk, sosyalleşme, toplumsal ilişkiler gibi unsurlara da önem vermektedir. Bu unsurlar, laiklik kavramı ile doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak birbirleriyle bağlantılıdır. Bu kavram bir ülkenin baştan ayağa siyasi, sosyal, askeri hatta ekonomik olarak neredeyse bütün yapılarını etkilemekte ve şekillendirmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı; öğrencilerin, sosyal bilgiler dersi ile edindikleri laiklik kavramını, metafor yolu ile nasıl algıladıklarını ortaya koyarak incelemektir. Bu çalışmada tarama modeli kullanılmış olup, kategorilerin ve temaların belirlenmesinde ise içerik analizinden faydalanılmıştır. Çalışma grubunu, Siirt il merkezinde yer alan iki ortaokulun öğrencileri oluşturmaktadır. Hazırlanmış olan form 155 öğrenciye uygulanmıştır. Örneklemin belirlenmesinde seçkisiz olmayan örnekleme yöntemlerinden uygun örnekleme kullanılmıştır. Sonuç olarak, laiklikle ilgili oluşturulan metaforlar, kategoriler ve kategorilerin oranları incelendiğinde; sosyal ve kültürel açıdan %35, siyasi ve idari açıdan %25, dini açıdan %16, hukuki açıdan %13, ahlak açısından %11 olduğu görülmektedir. Oranlara bakıldığında en fazla sosyal- kültürel ile siyasi - idari açıdan ele alındığı, en az ise hukuki ve ahlak açısından ele alındığı görülmektedir. Öğrencilerin laiklik kavramını sosyal- kültürel ve siyasi- idari açıdan yüksek oranda kategorileştirmesi, kavramın tanımı ve yapısı göz önünde bulundurulduğunda olumlu olarak değerlendirilmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Laiklik, sosyal bilgiler; metafor; nitel araştırma.

Introduction

The root of the word secularism is the adjective 'laikos' in the ancient Greek and the word 'laos' meaning 'people, crowd, mass'. Hence 'laikos' means 'of public, crowd, mass'. With the spread of Christianity, the people involved in the church were called 'derici' and the believing community was called 'iaici' in Latin. This word entered Turkish during the Constitutionalism Period first and was translated to Turkish as 'ladini'. The word ladini means non-religious (Dinçkol, 2002). In another resource, secularism: 'laikos' originates from Latin 'laicus' and means dealing with world affairs as separate from religious affairs and religious authority. In the legal sense, secularism is the separation of the state and religious affairs and the impartiality of the state for attaining liberty of conscience. In other words, secularism is the situation where the state does not stand between God and his servants and the religion does not interfere with the state affairs (Saray, 2006). When secularism is conceived as a triangle, preventing the religious guardianship of state, institutions constitute one side of the triangle. The second side of the triangle, when pointing to the right or the freedom to believe and not to believe in the individual and social belief, while the last edge of the triangle expresses the equality of different religions and non-religious beliefs by the law (Albayrak, 2015).

Democracy in secularism comprises of fundamental attributes including tolerance, equity, and liberty (Özturanlı, 1999). In this context, it is clear that secularism is a crucial factor for the progress of the country securely towards modern civilization (Akgün, 2006). Tolerance is needed for the progress and development of a country and this can only be attained with the principle of secularism. Tolerance, which exists in the nature of Turkish people and Islam's core, directly harmonizes with the sentiment of respecting the thoughts and believes of others. Considering the history of Turkish states, the people of foreign origin living there maintained their own language, religion and culture in content (Saray, 2006).

In France, with the law of 1905, religion and the state separated from each other by certain lines. The state did not finance religious services and abandoned these services to religious societies. In the French Constitution, the "secular" phrase, which states the nature of the state, has been included since 1946 (Gişi, 2015). Starting from the 1920s in Turkey, a secular

republic project has been implemented based on the French model. Despite secularism in Turkey took France as an example, it does not simulate secularism practiced in France substantially. It is advocated that France separated the state and religion fundamentally and Turkey keeps religion under control (Kahraman, 2008). Turkey, positive and/or negative additions, secularism has become a proper state system to its cultural code (Dağcı & Dal, 2014).

Considering the secularism concept in the constitutions formed after the establishment of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, secularism was not discussed in 1921 Constitution and the provision that the state religion was Islam was added with the amendments made on October 29, 1923. Though there were provisions against secularism in 1924 Constitution, these provisions were removed with the amendment made in 1928. In this Constitution, the secularism term was used once and the way for the secularization of the new Turkish State was paved. The secularism term took place 7 times in 1961 Constitution. The term was used as a component of national, democratic and social state in general. Hence, it was a powerful constitution as far as the secularism was concerned. In 1982 Constitution, secularism was emphasized more. Secularism was used 10 times including the initial and provisional provisions and it was expressed as a part of democratic republic in general (Ertan, 2007). Secularism is a psycho-social phenomenon (Paker & Cesur, 2013), characterized by an ideological polarization in one direction and the examination of the existing relations between groups. The concept of secularism has become as a political material by political parties and different extremities rather than human rights, freedom of religion and belief in the agenda of Turkey. As a consequence of anti-Islam, Islamophobia and psychological pressure and ethnic nationalism which in developed democratic countries such as USA and Europe, the perception and attitudes of people in different circles towards secularism have become controversial today. The concept of secularism remains to be current as a political issue in Turkey frequently in discussions. Even in the developed democratic countries, the perceptions and attitudes of people about the secularism concept turned out to be discussed today in the political or social relationships. Whereas the concept of secularism is regarded to be virtually equal to atheism by some sections of the citizens of the Republic of Turkey, it is the foundation of the values for some sections and it is in the central position of politics for some others. The resolution of these extremists will be possible by the gaining and shaping of this knowledge correctly by the students in their minds.

Social studies teaching, which is the lead of this core class, is a duty with the highest professional and conscious responsibility in terms of teaching the values and crucial concepts for the country. Social studies teachers can ensure various interpretations of the concept of secularism by the students as well as learning of the concept objectively. In this context, it is clear how important the social studies teachers are for becoming a good citizen even though only a concept.

Social Studies Lesson and The Concept Secularism

Considering the social studies program, it is seen that 160 concepts were used in the 4th grade through the 7th grade. Considering the concept of secularity on the class basis, there is no secularity concept in the 4th-grade social studies class. Social studies are taught at the beginners level in the 5th and 6th grades. In the 7th-grade social studies class, on the other hand, this concept is taught by social studies teachers at the development level (Bilgili, 2016). The concept of secularism is taught at the reinforcement level by social studies teachers in the textbook of Turkey Republic revolution history and Kemalism.

In the academic year 2017-2018, the fifth-grade textbook used in the social studies class, the sixth and seventh-grade social studies and the eighth- grade Turkish Republic reforming history and Kemalism teacher guidebooks have been examined in terms of secularism. When the fifth-grade social studies textbook (Evirgen et al. 2017) is evaluated in this respect, secularism must be given at the beginners level to the fifth-grade students, but it is seen that the concept of secularism is not included in the book of this course. The removal of the fifth-grade teacher's guidebook reduces the chances of students facing the concept of secularism.

When the concept of secularism is examined in the sixth grade social studies teacher manual (Karakaya et al. 2017), the learning field: power, management and society; it is seen that this concept has passed in three different places within the topic of "The Adventure of Democracy" which is the sixth unit in the unit. The subjects taught here to take part in the constitution of secularism and the abolition of the caliphate, the state structure of the Republic of Turkey and the Unification of Education Law. As it is known, in the 5th and 6th grade, the concept of secularism is given to students at the beginners level. Without

introducing the concept of secularism directly in the fifth-grade textbook, entering the above-mentioned topics in the sixth-grade textbook will definitely make the cognitive perception of the students difficult. In the sixth grade book, the concept of secularism is given as a gap filling. This concept is given in accordance with the beginners level.

It is seen that the concept of secularism is repeated nine times in the seventh-grade social studies teacher guidebook (Unal et al). When they are assessed in general, the field of learning is: science, technology, and society; the unit is "science in time" and it is seen that the concept of secularism passed twice in this unit. The concept of secularism is repeated 6 times in the "living democracy" unit within learning area the power, government and society. In the workbook, it is seen that the concept of secularism is between the test items, but the test cannot be related to secularism and this workbook seems to be very weak in terms of the development level of secularism.

In the eighth- grade Turkish Republic reforming history and Kemalism teacher guidebooks (Ataş, 2017), (Başol et al., 2017), the concept of secularism was used at the level of reinforcement. When the social studies curriculum (4-7) published by the Ministry of National Education (2017a) is examined in terms of standards, it is determined that the concept of secularism is not directly given. Again in the Turkish Republic reforming history and Kemalism Teaching Program published by the Ministry of National Education (2017b), it has been determined that expressions aiming to standards, the concept of secularism are not included in this program.

If the purpose and purpose of this study are to be mentioned, In Siirt province, it is known that there are around 60 religious schools operating outside the Tillo Medressehs (theological school attached to a mosque) and there are sects (Keser & Seyidoğlu, 2017). Since the people living in this city have a generally conservative way of life, it would be interesting to see how students as part of the community perceive the concept of secularism. In addition, the place of secularism in curriculum and textbooks and the investigation of the teaching level of secularism constitute another component of this study.

The purpose of this study is; it is to examine how students perceive the concept of secularism, which they acquired through social studies lessons, through metaphor. At the same time, In

the curriculum and social studies books, the concept of secularism; level, standards, spiral structure, and the subject of this concept will be examined in relation to each other. Another aim is to try to minimize the shortcomings that are obtained as a result of this the examined. In addition to this, the other questions that need to be answered are:

- 1- What is the relationship between the definition and structure of secularism and the metaphors that students create?
- 2- Among the metaphors created by students, what is the proportion of students who place extreme points on the concept of secularism?
- 3- Metaphors obtained from students, in which category and at what rate was collected; these collected categories will be evaluated according to the definition of the concept of secularism.

Methodology

Research Pattern

In this study, a descriptive survey model was used. Descriptive survey research is generally called researches on larger subjects than on other studies, in which characteristics such as a subject or interest, ability, attitude are identified (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak et al., 2014). According to Karakaya (2014), it is a research used in social sciences which are used widely on large groups, in which individuals' opinions about facts and events, their attitudes, facts, and events are described. Again, according to Robson (2017), it is necessary to collect data in a standard form with a relatively large number of individuals in descriptive survey research and to select individuals who represent the universe. In this study, metaphor applied to students as stated in the definition of descriptive survey research; the opinions, interests, and attitudes of the students in an indirect way towards the concept of secularism were searched.

Study Group

The study group consisted of the secondary school students enrolled in two secondary schools located in Siirt city center in the middle of the second semester of the academic year of 2016-2017. The prepared forms was applied to 155 students. In determining the sample,

convenience sampling was utilized from non-random sampling methods (Büyüköztürk et al. 2014). The data on the study group are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

The Frequency and Proportional Distribution of the Students in the Study Group Based on the Grades they are Enrolled and their Gender

Section	Gender				Total	
	Male		Female		Frequency (f)	Ratio (%)
	Frequency (f)	Ratio (%)	Frequency (f)	Ratio (%)		
5 th Grade	23	57,5	17	42,5	40	26
6 th Grade	26	65	14	35	40	26
7 th Grade	23	62	14	38	37	24
8 th Grade	16	42	22	58	38	24
Total	88	57	67	43	155	100

Out of 155 students making up the study group, 88 (57%) were males and 67 (43%) were females and their distributions within the classes themselves were respectively; 5th grade (26%), 6th grade (26%), 7th grade (24%) and 8th grade (24%). Excluding the 8th grade, the number of girls was lower than that of the boys.

Table 2

From The Study Group, The Frequency and The Proportional Distributions of The Students Who Answer The Forms and didn't Answer According to The Classes They are Situated

Section	Responding		Nonresponding		Total	
	Frequency (f)	Ratio (%)	Frequency (f)	Ratio (%)	Frequency (f)	Ratio (%)
	5 th Grade	17	42,5	23	47,5	40
6 th Grade	24	60	16	40	40	26,5
7 th Grade	20	54	17	46	37	23
8 th Grade	19	50	19	50	38	24
Total	80	52	75	48	155	100

Out of 155 students who made up the study group, 80 (52%) answered the secularism forms and 75 (48%) did not answer the forms. Considering the students who answered the forms and who did not answer it based on their class, the 6th grade was the class with highest responding rate scoring 24 (60%) and the 5th grade was the class with the lowest responding rate scoring 17 (42.5%). Considering the ratios of the nonresponding students, the 8th grade had the highest ratio scoring 19 (50%) and the 6th grade had the lowest ratio scoring 16 (40%).

Data Collection

A form, which included the statement ‘*secularism is similar tobecause.....*’, in order to determine the perception of the secondary school students in Siirt city center about the concept of secularism. It was explained that metaphors, i. e. resemblance, could be made by anything (tangible, intangible, living and unliving beings) and the students were asked to write the reasoning for the metaphor in the ‘because...’ section. The participants were allowed in the classroom a 10 minute period for relaying their thoughts by focusing only on one metaphor. These forms were filled by the students and make up the fundamental data source of this research as a document.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The qualitative data derived at the end of the study were resolved according to the content analysis. The content analysis aimed to acquire the concepts and relationships that could explain the collected data. The primary procedure carried out in the content analysis was to combine the similar data in the framework of specific concepts and themes and to organize and interpret them in a fashion for the readers to comprehend them (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

The data derived from the study group were analyzed in five stages as (1) coding and sorting, (2) compilation of sample metaphors, (3) category development, (4) validity and reliability and (5) sending the data to the computer environment (Saban, 2009; Coşkun, 2010). The studies conducted on this issue are given below.

Coding and Sorting Stage: 155 forms were distributed to the students. 75 of the 155 students surveyed are using the expressions and signs such as "?", "What is this!", "I do not know this" on these forms they answer when they do the sex and class coding on the form. 80 of the 155 students were able to produce a metaphor for the concept of secularism. These metaphors produced are numbered again by the researcher. In short, in this research, while the concept of secularism was evaluated over 155 students, categorization was carried out using the metaphors obtained from 80 students.

The Example Metaphor Compilation Stage: The metaphors listed in this stage were reviewed and an example metaphor statement representing each metaphor was selected from the forms filled by the students. The purpose was to improve the validity of the analysis process and interpretations by using these data.

The Category Improvement Stage: The conceptualization of the 'secularism' phenomena of each metaphor image by the students was studied based on 80 metaphors formed by the students. Moreover, the metaphors formed by the students were studied in terms of their attributes about the 'secularism' concept. In order to generate a category, the metaphors that were formed by the students were grouped based on their subject and explanations. The relationship of the metaphors within themselves and between the groups was analyzed and five conceptual categories were generated.

The Validity and Reliability Stage: To achieve reliability, the list consisting of 80 metaphors and the list consisting of 5 conceptual categories were submitted to experts and he was asked to match the first list with the second list. The list generated by the experts and the list generated by the researcher were compared and their identities and differences were determined and then the reliability of the study was estimated with the formula of Miles and Hubermann (1994) '*Reliability = (opinion identity) : (opinion identity + opinion difference) x 100*'. It was seen that the experts related the 6 metaphors with different categories. In the reliability analysis made accordingly, the study reliability was estimated as 0.92.5. The procedure is formulated as follows:

$$[\text{Reliability} = ((74) : (74+6)) \times 100 = \text{Reliability} = 0,92.5]$$

In qualitative studies, the desired reliability level is achieved when the conformity between the expert's and researcher's assessments is 0,90 and higher (Saban, 2008).

The Stage of Sending the Data to the Computer Environment: All data were sent to the computer environment and the number of participants (f) representing the 80 metaphors and 5 conceptual categories and their ratio (%) were estimated.

Findings

In the results section, the metaphors developed by the students about the 'secularism' concept with the forms and the 5 categories generated based on these metaphors were supported by the example statements developed by the students.

The Metaphors about the 'Secularism' Concept

The metaphors generated about the 'secularism' concept by the students are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

The Metaphors generated by the Students about the 'Secularism' Concept and the Number of the Students Representing them and their Percentages

Item	Generated Metaphors	Frequency (f)	Item	Generated Metaphors	Frequency (f)	Item	Generated Metaphors	Frequency (f)
1	Religion	9	16	Atheism	1	31	Republic	1
2	State	6	17	Arasat	1	32	National	1
3	Innovation	6	18	Religion	1	33	Independence	1
4	Right	5	19	Respect	1	34	World	1
5	Equity	5	20	Constitution	1	35	Society	1
6	Justice	3	21	Renovation	1	36	Islam	1
7	Friendship	3	22	Family bond	1	37	Nationality	1
8	Law	2	23	Technology	1	38	Turkey	1
9	Country	2	24	Good manners	1	39	Separator	1
10	Peace	2	25	Willpower	1	40	A clock	1
11	Education	2	26	Liberty	1	41	Mind	1
12	Separation	2	27	Atatürk	1	42	Unity	1
13	Democracy	2	28	Brotherhood	1	43	Presidency	1
14	Social Studies	2	29	Human	1		TOTAL	80
15	Home country	1	30	Election	1			

Table 3 shows that the frequencies were between 2 and 9 of 14 metaphors from 43 metaphors, and 29 metaphors have been a frequency. A total of 80 metaphors were generated by students.

The students formed the following metaphors the most; *Religion* (f=9), state (f=6), innovation (f=6), *right* (f=5), equity (f=5), justice (f=3), *friendship* (f=3); law, country, peace, education, separation, democracy, social studies (f=2).

The Distribution of Metaphors about the Concept of ‘Secularism’ based on the Categories

The concept of secularism expresses the separation of religion and state affairs by improving the scope of politics, law, and religion in time and the mind is dominant in the social, political, economic and legal order of the state (Akbiyık, 2001). While the categories were being created, the metaphors created by the students and their explanations have been taken into consideration. With regard to the concept of secularism, the above explanations show that the identity with made together with the formation of the categories are compatible with each other.

Considering the metaphors of the students about the concept of ‘secularism’ based on the categories, there are 5 categories as in terms of ‘politics and administration, social and cultural, religion, law and belonging (Table 4). There are also common metaphors included in more than one category, and these are state and right metaphors.

Table 4

The Metaphor Categories Formed by the Students about the Concept of ‘Secularism’

Item	Categories	Metaphor Names	Metaphor	Metaphor	
				Frequency (f)	Ratio (%)
1	Politically and administratively	Liberty, independence, presidency, State, democracy, separation, separator, respect, country, family bonds, a clock, peace.	12	20	25
2	Socially and culturally	Election, republic, world, unity, good manners, education, renovation,	16	28	35

Item	Categories	Metaphor Names	Metaphor	Metaphor	
				Frequency (f)	Ratio (%)
		innovation, technology, mind, brotherhood, friendship, state, national, equity, Atatürk.			
3	In terms of religion	Religion, atheism, Islam, human, religion.	5	13	16
4	In terms of law	Constitution, justice, arasat, right, law.	5	10	13
5	In terms of belonging	Willpower, Turkey, Nationality, right, society, Social studies, home country.	7	9	11
		Total	45	80	100

The Categories for the Concept of ‘Secularism’

Politically and Administratively

The students prioritized the secularism concept in this category as political and administrative metaphors. The metaphors included in this category are; liberty (f=1), independence (f=1), presidency (f=1), state (f=5), Democracy (f=2), separation (f=2), separator (f=1), respect (f=1), country (f=2), family bonds (f=1), a clock (f=1) and peace (f=2). 12 metaphors formed by 20 students were included for the generation of this category. These metaphors contain a 25% ratio within the total metaphors. The metaphor examples of this category are as follows:

“Secularism resembles the state because it is mandatory that there must be secularism in the state.”

“Secularism resembles separation because the religion and state affairs are separate.”

“Secularism resembles the state because the state does not discriminate against the public.”

“Secularism resembles respect because respect is so important for the state as much as it is important for the people.”

“Secularism resembles democracy because secularism improves democracy”.
“Secularism resembles liberty because secularism is liberty.”

“Secularism resembles the separator because it separates the religion and state affairs from each other.”

“Secularism resembles the state because secularism is in trust of the state.”
“Secularism resembles separation because it is the ruling of the religion and the state separately.”

“Secularism resembles family bonds because if these bonds are broken nothing withstands. The state should protect these bonds.”

“Secularism resembles peace because secularism brings peace to the country.”
“Secularism resembles a clock because the state should keep the religion and politics separately like the hour-hand and minute-hand.”

Socially and Culturally

16 metaphors that are united socially and culturally are included in this category. These are election (f=1), Republic (f=1), world (f=1), unity (f=1), good manners (f=1), Education (f=2), renovation (f=6), innovation (f=1), Technology (f=1), mind (f=1), brotherhood (f=1), friendship (f=3), state (f=1), national (f=1), Equity (f=5) and Atatürk (f=1). This category included 28 students. Its ratio to the total metaphors is 35%. The example metaphors are as follows:

“Secularism resembles the Republic because it is a principle of Atatürk.”

“Secularism resembles the nation because secularism is national”.

“Secularism resembles the mind because Atatürk was smart. It is one of his principles.”

“Secularism resembles the unity because secularism has caused the unity”.

“Secularism resembles the world because there is unity in the world like there is unity in secularism”.

“Secularism resembles friendship because friendship does not discriminate against religion”.

“Secularism resembles good manners because a person is secular as much as he/she has good manners”.

“Secularism resembles equity because when they say secularism I recall equity first”.

“Secularism resembles equity because equity equals secularism.”

“Secularism resembles Atatürk because secularism is one of Atatürk principles”.
“Secularism resembles brotherhood because secularism improves brotherhood senses”.

“Secularism resembles elections because we reach our own decision like in an election. People can be secular as well”.

“Secularism resembles equity because it is against discrimination”.

In Terms of Religion

In this category, there are 5 metaphors prioritizing secularism in terms of religion. These are religion (f=9), atheism (f=1), Islam (f=1), people (f=1) and religion (f=1). These metaphors were formed by 13 students. Its ratio to the total metaphor is 16%. The example metaphors are as follows:

“Secularism resembles Islam because Islam respects everyone’s religion”.

“Secularism resembles religion because secularism is a principle respecting everyone’s religion.”

“Secularism resembles religious affairs because religious affairs should deal with religion”.

“Secularism resembles atheism because religion and state affairs are separated by secularism.”

“Secularism resembles people because people have privacy like religion is private. They live as they wish.”

In Terms of Legally

In this category, metaphors emphasizing the secularism concept were formed by 10 students. The ratio of this metaphor to the other categories is 13%. These metaphors are as follows: Constitution (f=1), justice (f=3), Arasat (f=1), right (f=3), law (f=2). The example metaphors about this category are given below:

“Secularism resembles law because it is like the Sun within the law.”

“Secularism resembles justice because secularism is just.”

“Secularism resembles friendship because we are all friends. We don’t discriminate against religion and race.”

“Secularism resembles justice because there is secularism within justice.”

“Secularism resembles Constitution because it has a crucial place within our Constitution”.

“Secularism resembles arast because religion and state affairs in law should be separate like the Heaven and Hell.”

“Secularism resembles the right because it is our legal right.”

In Terms of Belonging

A total of 7 metaphors formed by 9 students are about the secularism concept consisting of belonging and the ratio of these metaphors to the total metaphors is 11%. In this category, the following metaphors were formed by the students; willpower (f=1), Turkey (f=1), nationalism (f=1), right (f=2), society (f=1), Social sciences (f=2) and home country (f=1). The metaphor examples of this category are as follows:

“Secularism resembles the society because it belongs to the society.”

“Secularism resembles rights because we deserve rights.”

“Secularism resembles rights because we have rights.”

“Secularism resembles nationalism because nationalism must be secular.”

“Secularism resembles willpower because willpower belongs to people and secularism belongs to the state.”

“Secularism resembles home country because there is secularism in my country.”

“Secularism resembles social studies class because I learned about it for the first time in this class.”

“Secularism resembles social studies because I learned about this subject in the 5th grade first. Therefore, it reminds me of it.”

“Secularism resembles Turkey because Turkey is secular.”

Discussion and Conclusion

When the concept of secularism is examined in the programs and social books, secularism should be given at the beginner level to the fifth-grade students, it is seen that the concept of secularism is not mentioned in this book. While the concept of secularism is not directly included in the fifth-grade textbook, the secularism subjects in the sixth-grade textbook are likely to difficult students' concept acquisition. According to the fifth and sixth-grade social studies textbooks of the seventh-grade social studies textbook seems to have been prepared the concept of secularism in more accordance with the student level. It has been seen that the worksheets and workbooks in the social studies book are very weak in terms of secularism. In the standards determined according to the classes in the programs, the absence of the concept of secularism has been regarded as a deficiency.

Considering the ratios of the categories on secularism, it was uncovered that the ratio was 35% socially and culturally, 25% politically and administratively, 16% in terms of religion, 13% legally and 11% in terms of belonging. Considering these, it is seen that secularism was dealt with socially and culturally and politically and administratively the most and it was dealt with in terms of law and belonging the least. Based on these data, it is assessed positively that the students categorized the secularism concept socially and culturally and politically and administratively the most considering the definition and structure of the concept.

Socio-cultural and Political- administrative are seen to be the most expressed with 60% among metaphor categories. Even when evaluated only with these categories, it is seen that students have an understanding of secularism. In his study, Arthur (2009) states that secularism has become increasingly understood, while secularism is not fully aligned with socio-political philosophy, boundaries between them are largely in harmony with each other and this harmony is strictly aimed at creating public awareness in people.

Gökdeniz (2016) purported in his work titled “Religion and Conscience Liberty” that people should not be judged in terms of religion and conscience and they must be respected. Considering that the secularism must be 16% in the secularism category and considering the

student opinions in the context of religion and conscience, it is seen that the data support this opinion.

In the study of Öztaş (2016) titled 'The Outlook on the Secularism Concept of the Printed Press in Turkey', it was aimed to analyze the outlook to the secularism in the conceptual secularism discussions based on columns of the primary national newspapers published in Turkey. It was stated in this study that there were two principal discussion areas were formed, namely tolerant and strict in the macro analysis discussions for the meaning of secularism in the newspapers, and the tolerant headings prioritized liberty, liberalism, democracy, and pluralism as a value. Excluding the liberalism, the students used the liberty, democracy and pluralism expressions the most and it resembled the above-stated study.

Out of 155 students making up the study group, 80 students (52%) answered the forms and 75 students (48%) did not answer the forms. Nearly 50% of the students did not answer the forms and this showed that the students did not adopt the concepts related with secularism adequately. Considering the forms, it was uncovered that there were expressions on the forms such as “?”, “what is this?” and “I know about it”...generally.

Considering the ratio between the students who answered in the class basis and the students who did not answer, it is seen that the 6th grade answered the most scoring 24 (60%) and the 5th grade answered the least scoring 17 (42.5%). Considering the ratios among the students who did not answer, the 8th grade had the highest ratio with 19 (50%) and the 6th grade had the lowest ratio with 16 (40%). It was exhibited that despite the concept of secularism was at the reinforcement level for the 8th graders, the least number of responses to the form was unexpected.

Students can perceive this concept differently, for secularism is an abstract concept. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the teaching of this concept, especially considering the difficulty of learning the abstract concepts of the students in the elementary school age (Ulusoy, 2010). It is seen that the majority of the students who answered the form adapted the concept of secularism and the negative opinion of a student was included as well namely “*secularism resembles atheism because religious affairs and state affairs are separated from each other by secularism*”. This student's view shows the existence

misconception about secularism. Grigoriadis (2009) states that the term 'secular' in Turkey is viewed not only as a separation of religion and state affairs but also as "irreligion" among masses. It would be wrong to see this misconception only in Turkey. Hart (2016), for instance, states that when discussing today's use of the word of secularism, secularism can sometimes be considered sociological subversion of religious sanctity.

Suggestions

1. The concepts of secularism should be added to the fifth grade social studies the textbooks and workbooks
2. The sixth grade social studies textbook should be revisited according to the level of students acquiring the concept of secularism.
3. The concepts of secularism in fifth, sixth and seventh-grade social studies textbooks should be harmonized with each other. Any discrepancies, if any, should be removed.
4. New standards regarding the concept of secularism (especially for students in 7th and 8th grades) should be established in Social Studies and the Turkish Republic Reforming History and Kemalism Curriculums.
5. The concept of secularism has been found as being weak in Social Studies workbooks (especially in the 7th grade) in terms of students' concept acquisition. The elimination of this deficiency will facilitate the acquisition of this concept and reduce the likelihood of the conceptual confusion.
6. In particular, more abstract concepts such as the concept of secularism should be considered as a whole in textbooks.

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The Digital Storytelling Adventures of the Teacher Candidates ¹

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Abstract

The digital stories enable the students to understand the nature of science easier by means of technology. In this context, it is essential that there are the teachers, who are able to educate the creative thinking individuals that are dominant to the scientific processes and to offer any learning environments in which qualified education can be provided to their students. For this purpose, the science teacher candidates are required to create digital stories on the science subjects and achievements of 3rd and 4th grades by using the technology. An interview form designed by the researchers was prepared to determine the opinions of the teacher candidates about their experience in digital story preparation and the use of digital story in science teaching. With this interview form, the data of the researchers was collected by taking the voice record of the teacher candidates. The interviews were solved by descriptive analysis technique. As a result, the teacher candidates stated that the digital stories should be included in the science lessons, that the digital stories paid attention to the subject, and were fun and avocatory, and that permanent learning was provided. The teacher candidates stated that they would benefit from the digital stories in their professional lives, that the digital stories would be effective in science teaching, and that the teacher candidates notices the importance of using the technology in the science courses in these applications.

Keywords: *Science, digital storytelling, teacher candidate.*

¹ The initial findings of the study were presented at the “Vth International Eurasian Educational Research Congress” held in Antalya (Turkey) on 5th May 2018.

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Geliş tarihi: 23.05.2018, Kabul tarihi: 30.07.2018

Öğretmen Adaylarının Dijital Öykü Serüvenleri

Öz

Öğretim sürecinde teknoloji kullanımı etkili öğrenme ortamları sağlamakta, anlamayı kolaylaştırmaktadır. Eğitimde yeni yaklaşımlara ihtiyaç duyulması ve yeni yaklaşımlardan olan dijital öykülemenin ihtiyaçlara cevap verebilecek nitelikte olması, dijital öyküleme yönteminin önemini artırmıştır. Dijital öyküler öğrencilerin teknoloji yardımıyla fen bilimlerinin doğasını daha kolay anlamalarını sağlar. Bu bağlamda, bilimsel süreçlere hâkim, yaratıcı düşünen bireyleri yetiştirecek ve bu alanlarda öğrencilerine nitelikli eğitim verilebilecek öğrenme ortamları sunabilecek öğretmenlerin olması önem kazanmaktadır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda Fen Bilimleri öğretmen adaylarının teknolojiyi kullanarak 3 ve 4.sınıf fen bilimleri konu ve kazanımlarına yönelik dijital öyküler oluşturmaları istenmiştir. Öğretmen adaylarının dijital öykü hazırlama sürecinde yaşadıkları deneyimlerinin ve dijital öykülerin fen öğretiminde kullanılmasına ilişkin görüşlerinin belirlenmesi için araştırmacılar tarafından yapılandırılmış görüşme formu hazırlanmıştır. Bu görüşme formu ile öğretmen adaylarının ses kaydı alınarak araştırmanın verileri toplanmıştır. Görüşmeler betimsel analiz tekniği ile çözümlenmiştir. Sonuç olarak, öğretmen adayları fen bilimleri derslerinde dijital öykülere yer verilmesi gerektiğini, dijital öykülerin konuya dikkat çektiğini, eğlenceli ve merak uyandırıcı olduğunu ve bu sayede kalıcı öğrenmenin sağlanacağını ifade etmişlerdir. Öğretmen adayları mesleki yaşantılarında dijital öykülerden faydalanacaklarını, fen bilimleri öğretiminde dijital öykülerin etkili olacağını ve bu uygulamalarla fen bilimleri derslerinde teknoloji kullanımının önemini farkına vardıklarını belirtmişlerdir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Fen bilimleri, dijital öyküleme, öğretmen adayı.

Introduction

Today, the rapid development of the information and communication technologies has accompanied the effective use of technology in the teaching process. Increasing use of technology in in-class activities, the subjects such as increase of technology use and teaching integration of technology has become more important day by day. As a result of the developments in the information technologies, and visual and audio material computer animation, simulation, etc. have been developed and used in education (Schnotz, 2001). Development of educational programs and the provision of internet connection in the schools support the use of technology in education. The use of technology facilitates the learning, providing effective learning environments in the teaching process (Gömleksiz, 2004).

The use of technology in education has increased more day by day since the courses begin to be taught by using tablet PCs or computers in the schools. Nowadays, the individuals are expected to have an effective communication, to work flexibly and harmoniously in team spirit and in cooperation, to become information-media and technology literate, to think creatively and critically, to solve any problems, to produce anything, to develop their social and cultural skills, know how learn, and to have any skills of 21st century such as self-arrangement capability. The education systems should also be organized so that training programs can gain these skills to train individuals with these skills. The education and training activities should be organized in this way, and the methods and techniques to be used should serve this purpose, and new approaches should be adopted to ensure that the learning environments that support interaction and cooperation and are rich with the technological tools and software are developed (Kotluk & Kocakaya, 2015).

One of these approaches can be the digital storytelling method. The use of technology in the teaching process provides effective learning environments, making it easier to understand. The fact that the new approaches are required in education and the fact that the digital storytelling among the new approaches has a nature to capable of responding to needs has increased the importance of digital storytelling method. It may also be preferred as a learning tool because digital story may be used in the schools (Balaman, 2016). Digital storytelling is an education

technology having almost all skills in gaining the skills of 21st century (Jakes, 2006). Digital storytelling is a version of the traditional story modernized by technology.

Digital storytelling includes the steps of writing the stories related to the selected topic, recording the written story through the microphone, creating the images, adding the sound and images to the software, combining the added images to sound, giving the movie any effects if the software is appropriate and converting the work into video format (Balaman, 2016).

The stories can be used as effective tools for learning, because they may be remembered easily. Through digital storytelling, the children not only make the learning fun, attractive and creative, but also contribute to development of their reading, listening, writing and speaking skills. Since the digital stories are story-based, they address to most senses. Therefore, the digital stories have a potential to focus the student on the course among several different learning styles by implementing both individual and team works. Any persons, who create or apply the digital stories, have a strong learning, reflection, self-discovery, liberation, empathy and discovery potential (Boase, 2008; Cole, Street & Felt, 2013; Raven & O'Donnell, 2010). However, in the story efficiencies, the children find an opportunity to solve any problems, to reveal their imagination, to develop their creativeness and to reflect their experiences in their inner world. It prevents the students from being bored by helping them to focus their interest on the subject. With the digital storytelling, the scientific words, definitions, terms and theories, which constitute the basis of science and which are difficult to understand frequently used contents, are presented to students in a more comprehensible, pleasurable and interesting way (Tsou, Wang & Tzeng, cited by Suwardy, Pan & Seow, 2013)

The digital stories help students to understand the nature of science easier by means of technology. In this context, it is important that teachers are able to educate creative thinking individuals in scientific processes and to offer learning environments in which qualified education can be provided to their students. By preparing a digital story, a teacher candidate, who writes her own story about any subject, may implement a more permanent learning by taking part in high level cognitive activities such as synthesis and evaluation (Turgut & Kışla, 2015). For this purpose, the science teacher candidates are required to create digital stories on the science subjects and achievements of 3rd and 4th grades by using the technology. Thus, any answers to the following questions are required in our study:

- What are the experiences of the science candidates on the science subjects and achievements of 3rd and 4th grades?
- What are the opinions of the science teacher candidates about use of the digital story in science teaching?

Methodology

This study, which aims at determining the opinions of the teacher candidates about their digital story creation experiences and the use of the digital stories in science teaching is based on the basic qualitative research design, because the main purpose of the qualitative research is to understand the complex world of human experiences and human behaviors from the point of view of the participants. In this research, basic qualitative research design is adopted because it aims to determine what experiences of science teacher candidates to create a digital story are and how opinions of the teacher candidates about use of the digital stories in teaching science.

Participants

The participants of the study were students, who study in the second grade of science education in the department of mathematics and science education in the spring semester of 2016-2017 academic year and receive the course “life language chemistry” as an elective course. The students, who were included in the study, were determined according to the criterion sampling. In this context, the fact that the teacher candidates were willing and volunteer to participate in the research, received the compulsory computer courses and were successful was determined as a criterion. The study was conducted with 7 students who met both of such criteria.

Data Collection

The research data was obtained in 20 lessons totally within the scope of the course “life science chemistry,” which is opened in 2nd grade of science education and an elective course. Because the students, who participated in the research, were expected to create a digital story by using the GoAnimate software, firstly the participants were provided with a training by a field

specialist on use and application of the GoAnimate software program and then on the scope and characteristics of the digital stories to be created by the researchers. Then, the teacher candidates selected the subject on the science teaching program and achievements of 3rd and 4th grades, and conducted any researches and preparations on the contents of the stories to be created in accordance with such subject and achievements selected by them. They prepared the scenarios and each of them wrote according to these scenarios. Finally, they transformed these scenarios to a digital story by using the GoAnimate software (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Digital story creation stages

After this stage of the research, the opinions were gathered by the researchers in the structured interview form prepared to determine the opinions of the prospective teachers about their experience during the digital story preparation process and the use of the digital stories in science teaching. The first part of the structured interview form consists of questions about to determine the opinions of the prospective teachers about their experience during the digital story preparation process. The questions including the opinions of the teacher candidates on use of the stories and digital studies in science teaching is related to use of the stories in science, advantages and disadvantages of the stories in science teaching, use of the technology in the story applications in the science teaching, digital stories, use of the digital stories in professional life

Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using the descriptive analysis technique. The descriptive analysis is a type of qualitative data analysis that summarizes and interprets the data obtained by various data collection techniques according to pre-determined themes. In this type of analysis, the researcher can often give a place to the direct references to reflect the opinions of the individuals interviewed or observed by the researcher dramatically. The main purpose of this type of analysis is to present the obtained findings in a summarized and interpreted way to the reader (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2003). In this context, the interview questions asked in the study were determined as the main themes. In the study, a code was assigned to each teacher candidate. In the study, the participants' responses to the interview questions were addressed in a clear and simple way, and furthermore, any direct quotations were drawn from the opinions of the participants.

Table 1

The Unit, Subject and Achievement Correlations of the Digital Stories.

Teacher Candidate	Story Name	Unit	Subject	Achievement
T ₁	Ali and his Plant	F.3.6. Journey to the World of Creatures / Creatures and Life	F.3.6.1 We Know the Creatures Around Us.	F.3.6.1. 2 He/She observes the life cycle of a plant.
T ₂	Little Dreams	F.3.6. Journey to the World of Creatures / Creatures and Life	F.3.6.2. Me and My Environment	F.3.6.2. 6 He/She makes a research and offers any solutions to protect the environment.
T ₃	I'm Wet and Sank.	F.4.4. Characteristics of the Substance/Substance and Its Nature	F.4.4.1. Characteristics of the Substance	F.4.4.1.1. He/She describes the basic characteristics that characterize the substance by using five sense organs.
T ₄	Ali Is In the Kitchen.	F.3.4. We Know the Substance / Substance and Its Nature F.4.4. Characteristics of the Substance/Substance and Its Nature	F.4.4.1. Characteristics of the Substance F.4.4.2. Measurable Properties of the Substance	F.4.4.1.1. He/She describes the basic characteristics that characterize the substance by using five sense organs. F.4.4.2.1. He/She measures masses and volumes of different substances. F.4.4.2.2. He/She defines the substance by using its measurable properties.

T ₅	A Birthday Surprise	F.3.4. We Know the Substance / Substance and Its Nature F.4.4. Characteristics of the Substance/Substance and Its Nature	F.3.4.2. States of the Substance F.4.4.3. States of the Substance	F.4.4.1.1. He/She describes the basic characteristics that characterize the substance by using five sense organs. F.4.4.3.1. It compares the basic characteristics for states of the substances. F.4.4.3.2. He/She gives examples for different states of the same substance.
T ₆	Is the Ice Cold?	F.4.4. Characteristics of the Substance/Substance and Its Nature	F.4.4.4. Change of the Substance by Heat Effect	F.4.4.4.1. He/She designs the tests on heating and cooling of the materials. F.4.4.4.2. He/She designs the tests that the materials change their state by heat effect.
T ₇	One Daye of Observer Civan	F.4.4. Characteristics of the Substance/Substance and Its Nature	F.4.4.5. Pure Substance and Mixture	F.4.4.5.1. He/She classifies the substances used often by him/her in his/her daily life as pure substances and mixtures and describes their differences. F.4.4.5.2. He selects the suitable one among the useable methods in sorting the mixtures encountered by him/her in his/her daily life.

Findings

The findings obtained the data collected in this study, which aimed to determine the opinions of the Science Teacher candidates about their experiences on creation of the digital stories and the use of the digital stories in the science teaching, were found out by addressing directly the digital story images and the statements of the teacher candidates. Firstly, the names and related units, subjects and achievements of the digital stories prepared by the teacher candidates are given in Table 1.

As the examples of the digital stories created by the teacher candidates, the display images for the digital story “Birthday Surprise” prepared by T₅ on the subject and achievements of the science course of 3rd and 4th grades are shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Images of the digital story “Birthday Surprise.”

The findings are evaluated under two main themes as the experiences of the teacher candidates on digital story creation and their opinions on the use of digital stories in science teaching.

The Experiences of the Teacher Candidates on Digital Story Creation

By considering the expressions of the students on the experiences of the teacher candidates on 'digital story creation,' the experiences of the teacher candidates on writing and transferring their stories to the digital media were evaluated under two sub-themes

Story writing experience

Firstly, the teacher candidates made their stories written. Their experiences in this process are seen in the following expressions:

“...I think I can write a story. I have already attempted to write a story even in an unprofessional way, and my knowledge was also refreshed. There will be characters in story certainly, but I think I will make these characters fantastic because I think it will be more interesting...” (T1).

“...I took the notes that will facilitate my job in the story creation stage by finding the example substances for all features that characterize the substance. I searched as a subject on the characteristics specified in the achievements. The story writing phase should consist of 3 main chapters: Introduction, development and result. I must always use the same time frame during the story. My draft plan is ready...” (T3).

“...What can I do before beginning the story? How can I be fun? How can I pay attention? Can the story be understood according to the mass that I want to teach? I thought things like that its heading must be avocatory. I planned to write my story in the form of a test for purpose of allowing the substances to talk things in the form of fables or allowing the children to notice things that they always encounter in their daily life, but are unobtrusive...” (T4).

“...But, because it is an easy and fun subject, it will be fun to tell, research and narrate for me. I also think of writing a dialogue through characters, taking the interests and skills of Grade 4 children into account and writing them to draw attention to the subject. In order to write a good story, I must give importance to subject integrity, event pattern, time, space and character concepts. Since the granular and hollow structure was not included in the 4th grade level, it was necessary to explain it by simplifying it more without talking about this concept. I had difficulty to state any particular achievements based on some restrictions. I was indecisive whether I can find appropriate materials in the digital story section to describe the spaces and concepts I have designed in my draft story materially and discretely by adding people and emotions ...”(T5).

“...I didn't have difficulty a little bit to create characters or draw attention while I describe the characters or achievements of the story, but I think that I will have a little bit to correlate the event and characters each other. First thing that I pay attention is to draw attention and not to bore. The content images are for type sizes. Actually, it was the challenge for me. Other things to do are easier than that, so it is easier to tell by dividing the story. Other thing to be done is describe the subject, that is, the story by dividing it. It is more interesting to describe the frozen, melting and state change with a character basis by making the ice, water and vapor a character. It was difficult to adapt it to the 4th grade students. I tried to choose a simple expression and a simple presentation. I would write it by making it a character, but when I tried, I could not it. I wrote and finished it as a simple story...” (T6).

From the statements, it is seen that the teacher candidates are aware that the story must have a title, that they should take a place to the characters, and that events should be arranged as introduction development and result, when the given story creation training and previous knowledge of the teacher candidates are also considered. Furthermore they stated that the story and the characters in it should be attention grabbing, and how the story will draw attention, and how to make it fun. However, it is seen from their expressions that they must write their stories in line with specific issues and achievements.

Digital story creation experience

After the teacher candidates write their stories, they digitized these stories by using the GoAnimate software. In this process, they made the steps of vocalizing and recording the written stories through the microphone, creating the images, adding the sound and images to the software, combining the added images to sound, giving the movie any effects if the software is appropriate and converting the work into video format. Experiences in this process are given in the following statements:

“...I had to change the subject and event pattern, because I could not find the things that I wanted in digitizing the events and subjects. However, the new story was good, but the digital version of my story was highly incomplete due to the software...”(T1).

“...I experienced many positive and negative things, but I had a lot of fun while I do it at the beginning. I studied the Goanimate software in more detail and made a nice study. If you examine the negative aspects of the software, I had a great difficulty to understand, because it was not in Turkish. Also it is so complicated and I cannot do exactly what I want. I was a good study. I appreciate the course teacher...”(T2)

“I am very happy because I learn to use and prepare a digital story. But I spent a lot of time in creating it. I tried to find a lot of people to vocalize. I couldn't find any children to vocalize the child character in my study. It was difficult for me. I realized that I did by researching a lot of information. It helped me to understand this subject completely”(T4).

“...Obviously I don't like to use a computer too much. But I think that it is useful for me to learn how to use these software programs, because I know that our era is technology era and that many students will use computers better than me in the future. When I vocalized and prepared the stages in the Goanimate software, I tried very hard. I tried to describe the information that I wanted to give with shorter sentences, because sometimes the recording duration of the scenes is long and sometimes the duration of the dialogs is long. It was necessary to extend the stages, because only one character could talk in the Goanimate software in each scene. Since I did not have a personal computer and I was prepared upon a long effort, I experienced any time-related problems in correcting the stages and adding the voice. I made an effort a little bit more, because I could not find suitable images in the Goanimate software and I had to adhere to the script...”(T5).

“...It was clear in my head. Lastly, departing from negotiations between the municipal employees I studied the pure substances and mixtures, but I think I will have difficulty to provide these images in the software. When I transferred it to the computer program, I thought to change some dialogs of the story that I have prepared and instead to complete it with another sentence in accordance with the achievements...” (T7)

The teacher candidates stated that they had difficulty to use the GoAnimate software, that they couldn't find the things that they wanted in the software, that they could not understand because it was not in Turkish, they spent a lot of time, that they had difficulty to vocalize for different characters, that recorded the stages together with the voice, and therefore that they changed the stages. The teacher candidates stated they learnt something, they had developed themselves and had a lot of fun in this process, while they researched anything, even if they had difficulty to use the software.

Opinions of the Teacher Candidates on the Use of Stories and Digital Stories in Science Teaching

After the teacher candidates wrote the stories and transferred these stories to digital media and created their digital stories, they stated their opinions on the use of stories and digital stories in science teaching, taking their experience into consideration. The questions asked in the structured interview forms prepared by the researchers were accepted as the main theme and the opinions of the teacher candidates were collected under 5 main themes as seen in Figure 3.

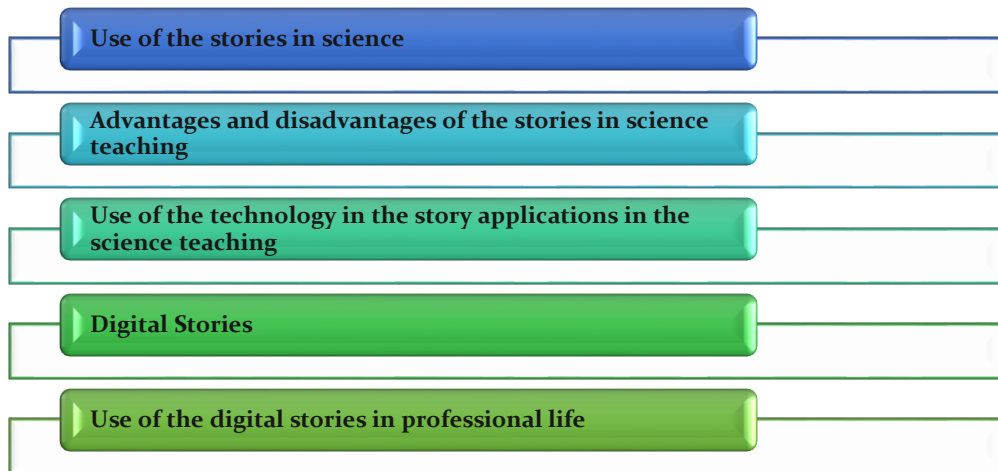


Figure 3. The themes including the opinions of the teacher candidates on use of the stories and digital studies in science teaching.

The examples of the prospective teachers were given under each theme and it was endeavored to explain their opinions on the use of the stories and digital stories in science teaching.

Use of the stories in science

When the statements about the use of the teacher candidates in science are analyzed, it is determined that the use of the stories make a positive contribution.

*“...The use of the stories is a necessary method to deceive easily the described events used not only in our department, but also in all sections. The topics we want to describe in the stories are placed in a fiction and if we make that fiction interesting, the stories become more striking and our students will understand them easily and will not forget them easily, because they are in a certain fiction...”(T1).
“...Story is a good helper to feature the creativity. Thanks to the stories, the students are more productive in the classroom ...” (T2).*

“...Placing a story in the science courses draws attention of students as well as attracts interest, curiosity and desire, because I think that it is more fun to the course. It creates an environment in which they can both have fun and learn...”(Ö5).

“...The stories make it easy to attract children's attention. The course contributes to the longer and more efficient understanding process, while the course is taught ...”(T6).

“...Since the science course is a course based on visualization, if we communicate some topics and concepts verbally, this never leads to permanent expressions in the mind of the student. But, I believe, with this story method, it will lead to any associations in mind through the relevant images while it transfers the necessary subject, and thus I believe that I will have obtained a fun course content at the same time, while we have fun...”(T7).

The teacher candidates have said that the use of the science in science could be used not only in the field of sciences, but also in all learning fields. They pointed out that, upon the use of stories, the courses would be more interesting and more fun and thus would inspire curiosity and desire.

It is seen in the expression of the teacher candidates that the students will focus on the courses for a longer time and create a more efficient learning environment.

Advantages and disadvantages of using the stories in science teaching

The teacher candidates' expressions are given under two main themes: Advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages

The teacher candidates have expressed a lot of positive opinions about the use of the stories in science:

“...It allows us to describe anything to the children in an easier and understandable way. It provides a more memorability than a normal expression. It increases the interest of the children to the subject. The Children's imagination evolves...” (T1).

“...It provides effective, fun, thought-provoking, curious learning. It gives ability to remember the learnt subject easier and imagine it concretely and improves the desire of learning and the interest of students in the course ...”(T5).

“...It may improve the ability to conceive at a young age and make the learning easier...”(T6).

“...It may provide more permanent information skills by a fun story technique rather than the information which impose to memorize any boring verbal information...”(T7).

The teacher candidates stated that, if the science subjects were explained to the students in an easier and understandable way, this was important and made a great contribution to permanent learning. They also stated that it was efficient in making any discrete subjects concrete in majority of science, fun, intriguing, and would increase the interest of the students to the course.

Disadvantages

The teacher candidates also expressed any negative as well as many positive opinions about the use of the stories in science.

“...If the explained subject is heavy and incomprehensible, the children will have difficulty in understanding and the interest to the subject will be reduced. If any violent or negative examples are found in the stories, students may do the wrong things, thinking that this is the right thing to do...” (T1)

“...In the stories, the children sing excessively into the imaginary, and when too many unreal characters are used (fairy, magic, talks of inanimate beings, etc.), they isolate themselves from the real world. Disadvantages include their the desire that the courses are taught just like a story...”(T5).

“...It can make it difficult to gain reading habits. It may be described by a shape story up to the high school subjects, but afterwards we will not have such a chance and there may be any problem for a transition period ...”(T6).

“...I think that it must be treated sensitively when using the story technique. An incorrect image or incomplete information leads the student to imagine the incorrect information in his mind...”(T7).

In the expressions of the teacher candidates, it is stated that, while the story technique is used, selection of the topics and the fictionalized events and characters can cause the students to get overwhelmed in the world of imagination and can have a negative effect on their abstraction from the real world. The teacher candidates stated that the disadvantages of the use of the stories included the facts that they could cause a greater ambiguity in the subjects situations that were heavy and difficult to understand, and there were any attitudes to constitute violence and negative examples unintentionally.

Use of the technology in the story applications in the science teaching

The teacher candidates emphasize the importance of using the technology in the science courses. The teachers, who follow any developments in information technology, will league together with the students, who follow and use the technology closely, in more permanent learning environments by using them in computer animations, simulations, visual and audio materials.

“...We need to adapt to the use of different applications on the computer for story use. This is an example of the fact that both teachers and students use technology in the most positive way positively. Its result will be good, even if correlation of the technology to the course forces the teacher a little bit...” (T3)

“...According my idea on use of the technology, it is essential that there are things to draw attention of the children. The subject should never be deviated while using it, and all students should be taken into account when using ...”(T4)

“...We can prepare them as any cartoons or videos by using the websites such as Goanimate, Prezi, Toondo, Powtoon, etc. while the stories were transferred to the technological media. Or we can share videos with our students by creating a school blog (which can be created from the blogging tab in our gmail site tools)...”(T5)

“...The information that is desired to be given may be narrated by many animation software programs, and in these software programs, the information may be correlated and applied to the necessary characters. It will be an advantage for us to be fully informed about the use of programs to obtain healthier data...”(T7)

The teacher candidates believe that technology should be used without deviating from the subject that animations can be applied in the courses by using the simulation and animation programs, and that technological communication with students can also be provided by blogs. Even if we think that adapting the technology to the courses will force teachers a little bit, both teachers and students point out that technology is important to use positively in the most useful way.

Digital Storytelling

When the expressions of the teachers on the digital storytelling are examined, it can be said that digital storytelling forms effective and remarkable learning environments in terms of today's technology era and technology children.

“...The digital storytelling is better than normal story, because normal story tries to hear and understand the students only, but in the digital storytelling, visualization will also enter into story and make the students easier, and their interest the required subject and event will be higher...” (T1)

“...Through the digital storytelling, the students understand and learn better. The digital storytelling is also very helpful to draw attention of the students to the course and enable them to participate in it. The images always draw attention. But, students should not get used to it, because they don't have to be lazy to write. Everything cannot be learned by watching or listening...” (T2)

“...Because our era is the technology era, and most of the children are very interested in any tools such as tablet PCs, computers, telephones, etc. in using the technology, they contribute positively to the presentation of digital media as a story in their courses and also create an impression in the student's mind. The parents, who complain that their children play a lot of computer games, may find positive feedback to their teachers when their children listen to lessons instead of playing games on the computer. This makes the teacher happy because it makes the course effective...” (T5).

“...If the images are also in normal story, the digital story cannot hold its place in digital storytelling. There are a lot of advantages in using it for dubbing, and today's children's curiosity to technology is to many and they never leave their tablet PCs from their hands....”(T6).

The teacher candidates stated that the students would not draw attention of the students too much, because only texts and pictures exist in the stories, but digital stories would be more interesting by using the dubbing and animations as well as the digital story, that it would contribute to the motivation and permanent learning of the courses by the studies. They state that today's technology is important for children to use this kind of technology with both educational and entertaining activities consciously. They think that, if the students make use of technology intentionally instead of playing games constantly, this will make both teachers and parents happy.

Use of the digital stories in professional life

Teacher candidates stated that they would use the digital storytelling method, when they were teachers.

"...I find myself sufficient. I already learned the digital stories. Now I have more knowledge on these matters. I find myself sufficient on qualification. I don't understand a perfect digital story, but I do it. I can prepare the content, subject and images very easy. I think to use it frequently when I am a teacher..."(T2)

"...Firstly, my first job will to do the digital storytelling as we did in the course. And while the course is taught, the relevant video demonstrations, the presentations that I have prepared by the students and computers will be under my hand during the experiment demos..."(T3)

"...I can find myself sufficient now. I can use these software programs to give any achievements based on more abstract concepts that are difficult for students to understand, when I am teachers. But I also think that I can do stages and dubbings better in programs. While I watch the videos of our friends, I think I have developed a more different point of view about the course subjects, while we watch the videos of our colleagues in the classroom..."(T5)

"...It is definitely a technique that I would like to use in my future teaching experience. Now I do not think that I have the ability to use the applications exactly. If I develop a little, I think I can make the story appropriate to the achievements..."(T7)

The teacher candidates stated that they would use the digital storytelling in their professional life, but they would take steps to improve themselves, even if they found h to prepare a digital story as a result of these applications. They also expressed that they developed different

perspectives on the subject of science and that they would frequently use it in their professional lives.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this research, we aimed to determine the opinions of science candidates about the use of the stories and digital stories in science teaching by considering their experiences after writing the story about the achievements of the 3rd and 4th class science lessons and creating these the digital stories. The findings obtained from the data were evaluated under two main headings: The experiences of teacher candidates about the digital story creation and the opinions about the use of digital stories in science teaching. The experiences of the teacher candidates' experiences are divided into two sub-themes: Story writing experience and digital story creation experience. The opinions of prospective teachers on the use of stories and digital stories in science teaching are collected under 5 main themes: "The use of the science stories," "the advantages and disadvantages of using the science stories," "the use of technology in scientific science," "digital storytelling," and "the use of digital story in professional life." While teacher candidates created their stories, they created existing story writing experiences and post-training stories they received. In this process, they designed their stories by taking the introduction, development and result steps toward the achievements into account, and they defined the characters. They take care that they are interesting and fun, when they determine the events and characters. They stated that they had difficulty to relate the events in the story to the achievements. In the study that Sancar-Tokmak, Sürmeli and Özgelen (2012) conducted with the science teacher candidates, it is stated that the section that the teacher candidates have mostly difficulty is a story writing stage, and at this stage, they expressed that they prepared stories that contain misconceptions, that they changed the stories because they don't these stories interesting, that they could not descend to the student' level when they write the appropriate story for achievements, and that the story writing stage requires creativity. In this context, it is important that the written story is adapted well to the course subject and provide the necessary background for digital storytelling (Turgut & Kışla, 2015).

After the teacher candidates wrote their stories, they digitized them by using the GoAnimate software. It is observed that the teacher candidates have difficulty to use the GoAnimate

software. In their study, Kapucu, Eren and Avcı (2014) concluded that the teacher candidates had difficulty to prepare the educational animations by using the GoAnimate software and that it would be difficult to adapt the prepared educational animations to each topic. They argued that they could not find what they wanted in the software, they couldn't understand it, because the software language was English and that the preparation process was time-consuming. Furthermore, they had difficulty to make dubbing for different characters and when they were combined with the sound, the stages deviated, and they had to change their stories many times. Robin and McNeil (2012) emphasize the key components of the digital story process. These components include selecting a meaningful topic, developing a well-structured text, working with high-quality media files, and incorporating an on-going evaluation process into the students. Although the teacher candidates stated that they had difficulty in using the program, they said that these difficulties and the events they had experienced developed themselves in using the program. They expressed that they learned while researching and that they had a lot of fun and developed their creativity during the process. The opinions that the digital story process is fun events that support active learning in the classroom environment are supported by various studies (Hung, Hwang, & Huang, 2012; Kocaman-Karoğlu, 2014; Wang & Zhan, 2010).

It is concluded that the stories are used under the theme of "the use of the stories in science" which consists of the opinions of the teacher candidates about the use of stories and digital stories in science teaching, is useful in terms of making the courses more interesting and fun and giving students curiosity and attention and focusing on the lesson. Similar results can also be observed in the study, where the pinions of the teachers on the benefits of doing digital storytelling practices with pre-school students are examined. Especially, it is observed that the digital story applications are interesting experiences that contribute to the development of technological and visualization skills, which are remarkable, fun, support active participation, contribute to achievement of concrete experiences, enable to work on the product, support the emergence of different skills (Kocaman- Karoğlu, 2016). Emphasis has also been placed on the fact that the use of stories should not be limited to science classes.

Under the theme of "Advantages and disadvantages of using stories in science", which is formed by the opinions of the teacher candidates about the use of short stories and digital stories in science teaching, the teacher candidates think that, in addition to the advantages of using

stories, they may have disadvantages if they are not used carelessly and correctly. As a positive opinion, they stated that it is a great contribution to the learning permanently what is important in terms of telling science subjects to students more easily and comprehensibly.

They are an effective, amusing, intriguing, and augmenting of the interest of the students in the concretization of abstract subjects in a large part of the sciences. Students will be able to easily configure their knowledge by linking science lessons with everyday events through digital stories. Thus, the students will not get bored and will be able to learn more easily by associating their knowledge with their previous learning (Kahraman, 2013). Van Gils (2005) also emphasized that the use of the digital stories in education is a curiosity and an effective way for active learning, adding to teaching diversity, enabling education to be personalized, interesting and relevant to real-life situations. As a negative opinion, they pointed out that the students could get away from the real world by getting too much in the world of fantasy, and the carelessly prepared stories could lead to meaning and concept confusion unintentionally. They pointed out the disadvantages of using the stories include violence or negative behaviors in expression of the events.

Under the theme of "Using technology in science teaching", which is based on the opinions of the teacher candidates about the use of short stories and digital stories in science teaching, the teacher candidates think that the use of technology in science teaching can be achieved by using blogs with technological communication with the students, where applications can be done in class by using different animation analogies and animation programs. In this regard, they stressed that although teachers may have difficulty in time and preparation for implementation.

The teacher candidates under the theme of "digital storytelling ", which is formed by the opinions of the teacher candidates about the use of stories and digital stories in science teaching, are more interesting because they are created from voices and animations together with pictures, unlike normal stories. They stated that students will be effective in motivational and permanent learning.

In his study, Erişti (2016) concludes that the digital storytelling approach is an effective environment for qualified learners who can avoid using their limited time to learn effectively and efficiently based on lack of motivation. According to traditional methods, the use of

animation in the teaching of abstract and complex subjects has been found to be more effective in increasing student achievement (Aksoy, 2013; Pekdağ, 2010; Rohendi, 2012). Also, instead of spending inefficient time with technological tools, students will be happy with their beneficial activities to make use of technology with their correct and conscious use of their learning.

The teacher candidates stated that they would use the digital stories in their professional life under the theme of "using the digital story in professional life", which is made up of teacher candidates' views on the use of short stories and digital storytelling in science teaching. In this sense, they have expressed that they are aware of the need for both students and students to include applications to prepare digital stories and to develop them in spite of the fact that they see themselves adequately. In this way they have said that the creativity of both students and teachers will improve.

Senemoğlu (2007) emphasized that, in order to develop creativity, the teacher must first be equipped with these qualities before him, and that his creative qualities must carry him first. Growth of creative generations is possible with the teachers who can think fluently, flexibly and originally, and organize the necessary environments for it. In this context, it is important for the teacher candidates participating in the research to be aware of their imagination and creativity and to give opinions in positive terms. By means of digital storytelling, different viewpoints have taught that they have developed their happiness in getting out of a uniform science teaching and will often use it in their professional lives. Effective participation in digital storytelling process; creative thinking skills, imagination, research skills and technological competencies are developing; motivations and academic achievements are also increasing (Duman & Göcen, 2015; Duveskog, Tedre, Sedano, & Sutinen, 2012; Hung, Hwang, & Huang, 2012; Jakes & Brennan, 2005; Karataş, Bozkurt, & Hava, 2016; Kocaman-Karoğlu, 2016; Ohler, 2006; Özpınar, 2017; Robin, 2008; Yang & Wu, 2012).

When all these main and subscale results are evaluated, it can be said that teacher candidates should be included in digital sciences in science courses, that digital stories pay attention to the subject, they are fun and curious, and that permanent learning is possible. In the studies done in the related literature, it is seen that the students of digital storytelling have positively influenced and improved the course success (Barrett, 2006; Demirer, 2013; Doğan, 2007;

Hung, Hwang, & Huang, 2012; Yang & Wu, 2012; Yüksel, Robin, & McNeil, 2011). There are also studies that show a better and more in-depth understanding of the learning experience that facilitates learning (Barrett, 2006; Bromberg, Techatassanasoontorn, & Andrade 2013; Dupain & Maguire, 2005;). The teacher candidates have stated that digital fictions in science teaching will be effective in their professional lives, and that these practices make them aware of their own deficiencies in the use of technology in science lessons and as teacher candidates. As a result of the findings and conclusions obtained from this research, studies on the use of digital stories in science should be increased and training and lessons should be given to prospective teachers so that they can improve themselves. They must acquire skills to prepare and prepare scientific stories supplemented by technology.

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The Effects of a Mobile Assisted Vocabulary Learning Application on Vocabulary Learning

Serkan Gürkan¹

Abstract

The improvements in technology have made it inevitable to use it in language learning process. Thus, the mobile assisted language learning (MALL) has gained importance recently. Besides, it is an undeniable fact that learning styles affect language learning process and use of MALL applications. Accordingly, this study aims to define students' views on the effects of a mobile assisted vocabulary learning (MAVL) application (VocaStyle), which was developed by the researcher, on their learning process and their learning styles' impact on their views. The study was in descriptive case study design. The data was gathered with semi-structured interview form. Ten participants were interviewed, five of which were aural learners and five of which were visual learners. The data was analyzed with thematic content analysis. The findings revealed that students found the MAVL application effective, motivating and useful. The findings also indicated that participants found video and graphic annotations more useful and their views changed depending on their learning styles.

Keywords: *Mobile assisted language learning, EFL students, hypermedia annotation, vocabulary learning.*

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Received: 19.03.2018 Accepted: 31.07.2018

Mobil Destekli Kelime Öğrenimi Uygulamasının Kelime Öğrenimine Etkisi

Öz

Son yıllarda yaşanan gelişmeler teknolojinin dil öğrenme sürecinde kullanılmasını kaçınılmaz hale getirmiştir. Buna bağlı olarak mobil destekli dil öğrenimi son yıllarda önem kazanmıştır. Mobil destekli dil öğreniminin yanı sıra, dil öğrenme stillerinin dil öğrenme sürecini ve mobil destekli dil öğrenimi uygulamalarının kullanımını etkilediği reddedilemez bir gerçektir. Bahsedilen bu bilgiler ışığında tasarlanan bu çalışmanın amacı, öğrencilerin araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen mobil destekli bir kelime öğrenimi uygulamasının (VocaStyle) ve dil öğrenme stillerinin öğrenme süreçlerine etkisi ile ilgili görüşlerini belirlemektir. Araştırma, nitel araştırma desenlerinden durum çalışması modelinde tasarlanmıştır. Araştırma verileri yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu ile toplanmıştır. Araştırma kapsamında çalışma grubunu oluşturan 10 katılımcı ile görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Bahsedilen 10 katılımcı 5'i işitsel, 5'i görsel öğrenciler olacak şekilde belirlenmiştir. Veri analizi sürecinde tematik içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma bulguları, öğrencilerin mobil destekli kelime uygulamasını yararlı, etkili ve güdüleyici bulduklarını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Araştırma kapsamında elde edilen başka bir bulgu ise öğrencilerin açıklayıcı eklere ilişkin görüşlerinin öğrenme stillerine göre değiştiğidir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Mobil destekli dil öğrenimi, İngilizce öğrencileri, hipermetin açıklayıcı ekler, kelime öğrenimi.

Introduction

The use of technology in education in general and in English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as Foreign Language (EFL) learning has gained great popularity among educators and scholars as there are many educational institutions adopting new technologies in the conventional classroom environment that includes smart boards, projectors, audio systems and computers. Thus, mobile phones, tablets, computers and many diverse forms of information technologies are in use in today's language learning environments. The invention of wireless technology and the development in mobile technology world have gained much popularity in education field. Mobile devices include features of connectivity, social interactivity, context sensitivity, portability and individuality which personal computers may not do (Klopfer, Sheldon, Perry & Chen, 2012). Mobile devices have transformed the way we learn and expanded our horizons by making learning portable, real-time, cooperative (Kukulska-Hulme, 2009; Wong & Looi, 2011). In the light of these developments and the increasing attention Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), a great number of studies have been done to examine the possible effects of mobile technologies on language learning. One of these studies was conducted by Kukulska-Hulme (2010) and emphasized that mobile technologies provide learners with new tools to communicate and collaborate with each other by supplying lectures, tutorials and activities after the lesson, all of which reinforces learners during language learning process. Another study about mobile assisted language learning was conducted by Kim (2011). In this study, the effect of SMS text messaging on vocabulary learning was examined. Kim (2011) found out that students that used SMS text messaging after classes improved their vocabulary knowledge more by learning more words, and students gave positive feedback on using SMS text messaging for learning new vocabulary items. Kim (2011) emphasized that the reason for this improvement and positive feedback was interactivity in using new words. These studies show that MALL can be considered as beneficial for all learners, since almost every L2 learner has a mobile device today, and as a result of this, mobile devices may offer equal opportunities to L2 learners. Having these in mind, it is possible to say that mobile activities should be improved to cover four language skills, grammar, pronunciation and especially vocabulary learning, which is a "key to foreign language learning" (Masshady, Lotfi & Noura, 2012).

There have been a number of theories on mobile assisted language learning. This study relates to two of these theories which are Dual Coding Theory (DCT) (Paivio, 1990) and Generative Theory of Multimedia Learning (Mayer, 2001). While the former theory postulates the idea of pictorial-verbal system for knowledge construction in which a verbal system deals directly with language and a nonverbal (pictorial) system deals with non-linguistic objects, elements, and events; the latter theory puts forward that information, both verbal and visual, is accessed consecutively in short-term memory. Then the working memory comes into play as the place where the information is processed with both verbal and visual representations to get a holistic form leading to a more complete understanding of the information.

As well as the commonly accepted role of technology in language learning environments as an effective tool, the place of learning styles, on the other hand, is of crucial importance not only in just any form of learning but also in language learning. Learning styles are preferred ways of learning unconsciously that differ from one learner to other. They are students' approaches during learning something new or to cope up with a new problematic educational situation (Oxford, Ehrman, & Lavine, 1991). They are also defined as differences among students in the use of various senses to comprehend, organize and retain experience (Reid, 1987). Thus, it is reasonable to comment that learners have different styles in getting new information in language learning and the effectiveness of teaching without taking into account of the existence of these different learning styles is questionable.

There have been many researchers (Dunn & Dunn, 1978; Gregorc, 1979; Dunn, 1983, 1984; Kolb, 1984; Reid, 1987; Fleming, 2001; Duff, 2004) who conducted studies on learning styles and some learning styles models were suggested by these researchers. In this study, Reid's (1987) classification is used. Reid (1987) identified learning style preferences as the perceptual channels through which learners like to learn best. These channels are classified into auditory (learning by listening to audios, tapes and people), visual (learning by reading and studying charts, graphics and diagrams), kinesthetic (learning by physical participation), tactile (hands-on, learning by doing, e.g. doing lab experiments, building models), group (learning by studying with other learners in a group), and individual learning (studying in isolation).

Among many components of language learning as learning styles, vocabulary and reading also have attracted much attention of researchers lately. Vocabulary learning is an indispensable part of learning a new language (Nation, 2001). Much vocabulary might be learnt incidentally

through reading (Nagy, 1997). Tassana-Ngam (2004) states that vocabulary is quite influential on reading skill. It might facilitate particularly comprehension of second language learners on a written text on the condition that the learners' vocabulary knowledge is lower or below the threshold minimum of approximately 3,000 words. Reading "large quantities of materials that is within learners' linguistic competence" (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 259), facilitates vocabulary learning by providing chances for inferring word meaning in context (Krashen, 2003).

There have been many studies revealing strong relationship between reading and vocabulary development (Gettys, Imhof & Kautz, 2001; Cobb, 2007; Brown, Waring, Dankaewbua, 2008; Kweon & Kim, 2008). Much of the vocabulary might be learned through reading incidentally, yet reading alone may not be sufficient all the time to extract necessary lexical information from the text. Mobile assisted language learning techniques might provide solutions to the problem of improving lexical knowledge not only by reading texts, but also using annotations. Use of annotations is believed to be an influential technique for vocabulary development. Annotations are regarded to be practical in reading in the second language; words or phrases that are not familiar with the learners' actual competence may be provided through annotations (Widdowson, 1984). The term annotation can be defined as the added extra virtual information to an object (Wither, DiVerdi, Höllerer, 2009). In vocabulary learning process, annotations can be in the form of text, graphic, audio or video, and they are added to a word in order to help learners to understand its meaning. Previous research on annotations yield controversial findings regarding the effectiveness of annotations and which annotation types are more effective (Wesche & Paribakht, 1996; Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001; Nation, 2001; Rott, Williams, and Cameron, 2002). Nation (2001), Wesche and Paribakht (1996) Rott, Williams, and Cameron (2002) examined the impact of annotations for incidental vocabulary learning for printed materials and revealed findings indicating vocabulary enhancement. On the other hand, Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) thought that using annotations was not an influential way of enhancing vocabulary learning. Most of the studies have been carried out through computerized conditions but there have been no studies concentrating on the relationship between the use of multimedia annotation types (text, pictures, audio, and video) and different learning styles and its effects on Mobile Assisted Vocabulary Learning (MAVL). Models for annotation technologies, their advantages, disadvantages and influence on readers and the characteristics of the annotations were reviewed in Wolfe's (2002) article.

Advantages of Annotations

1. Developing understanding of source material
2. Quote for later review
3. Enable critical thinking
4. Comprehend and comment
5. Record intermediate and unselfconscious reaction to text

Effects of Annotations

1. Developing recall of emphasizing items
2. Affect perception of specific arguments
3. Decrease tendencies to unnecessarily summarize

All of information given above about advantages of annotations underlines the fact that use of technology in today's language learning environment can be thought as useful, and a mobile assisted language learning application including annotations could be beneficial for students with different learning styles. Thus, this study aims to examine students' views on the effects of a mobile assisted language learning application on their vocabulary learning process. Within the scope of this, the following sub-questions were sought answers:

- 1) What do students think about use of hypermedia annotations during vocabulary learning process?
- 2) What are the students' perceptions concerning the role of hypermedia annotations in learning vocabulary?

Method

Research Design

This study is in case study research design, which is a qualitative research method. In a case study, it is aimed to examine one or more situation with regard to time and context, and it should be examined within its boundaries (Creswell, 2007). This study is a descriptive case study in that it focuses on identifying students' views on the benefits of mobile assisted vocabulary learning application.

Context and Participants

This study took place in 2016-2017 academic year in a state school in which Fatih Project is applied in Kocaeli, Turkey. The medium of instruction is English and students take 4 hours of English courses per week with a curriculum which was applied in all secondary schools in Turkey. The students have both paper-based coursebooks and electronic equivalents of their coursebook in their tablet computers which are delivered to all students in each school covered in Fatih Project. In selection of participants purposive sampling method was used. Participants of the study were 10 students who are enrolled in 10th grade classes of a state elementary school in which multimedia learning was benefited. They shared similar educational backgrounds. To identify their learning styles, the researcher conducted Perceptual Learning Styles Questionnaire (Reid, 1987) to 49 students who benefited from multimedia assisted language learning. According to the results, five students were chosen among aural learners and five more chosen among visual learners.

For the requirement of this study an Android Application (VOCASTYLE) was developed by the researcher. The software was designed to supplement the English coursebook “Yes You Can” A.2.2 which is in use in the 10th grade of state schools in which multimedia learning is prevalent. It aims to support vocabulary learning of students. In this vein, target words from the reading texts were selected totally from the related coursebook. In this study a Prior knowledge test (VKS) Wesche and Paribakht (1996) was used as one week before the treatment in order to identify whether participants are familiar with any of the target words which were selected from the from reading texts in the English coursebook “Yes You Can” A.2.2 by their teachers at the state school. After the analysis of the results of VKS, the familiar words were extracted from the target word list and final version of 38 words of target word list was formed. Then these words were provided with annotations with the help of Vocastyle app. While learners come across to an unfamiliar vocabulary in a hypermedia reading text in Vocastyle, a number of different annotations (text, audio, graphic and video) were provided. Once they clicked on the target word, options appeared regarding which type of annotations they selected (Figure 1). According to their preferences they were exposed to the glosses as much as they want.

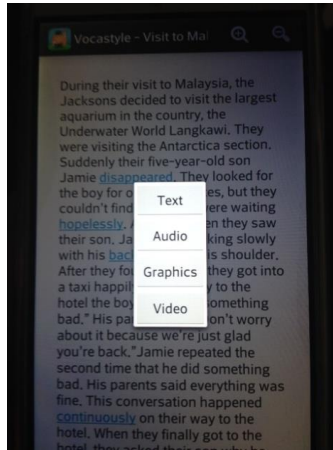


Figure 1. Annotation types for a specific vocabulary

Once they preferred textual gloss they saw the word class, English equivalent, an example sentence and a synonym of the target word (Figure 2).

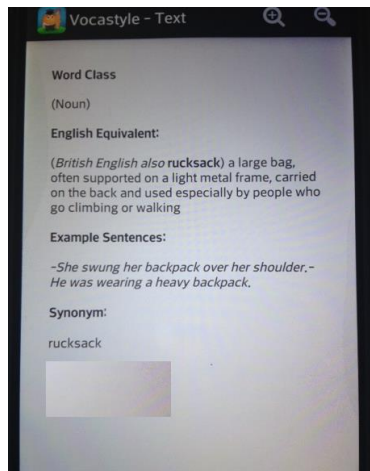


Figure 2. Sample text annotation for a specific vocabulary

Once they preferred audio, they could listen to aural input for the textual information from a native speaker. Students see a black screen so no figure was added for audio annotation here. When they preferred graphics they could see a picture related to the target word (Figure 3).

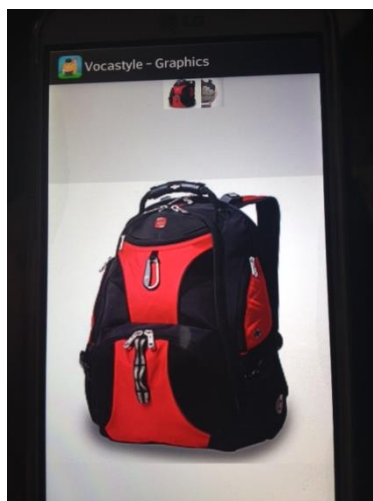


Figure 3. Sample graphic annotation for a specific vocabulary

Finally, If their preference was video, they could watch a short video clip of the target word (Figure 4). Then they were able to see their preferred annotation types as many times as they wish.

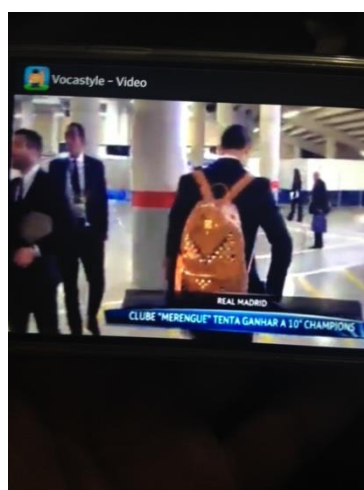


Figure 4. Sample video annotation for a specific vocabulary

Data Collection Tool

The data was collected through semi structured interview form. The questions are presented below:

1. What do you think about mobile assisted language learning?
 - a. Do you think VocaStyle help you comprehend the main text? If yes, please give examples from your experiences.

2. How do you learn vocabulary better? By seeing or hearing it? Considering your choice, what type of annotations did you like most and find beneficial? Why?
3. Were the annotations useful? Which ones did you prefer the most? Why?
4. What do you suggest to improve Vocastyle?

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to have a better insight of participants about many components of the application and the process. Accordingly, interview questions were developed and, to ensure reliability and validity of the data collection instrument of the study, questions were sent to two experts from English Language Department and a Mobile application expert. These experts were asked to assess about the interview questions. After getting their positive feedback, the interview was piloted to 2 students from another school that had multimedia learning experience. These two students were asked to use Vocastyle software for a week and then they were asked about clarity of the questions, length of the interview, relations between the aim of the study and context of questions. Necessary corrections were done in the light of comments. Making sure that no big problems occurred both in using the application and in interviews, interviews were applied to real participants of the study.

Each interview lasted about one and a half hour. Digital voice recording was used by the researcher and data were transcribed verbatim. All personal identifiers were removed in order to protect anonymity of the participants. Thus, each participant was given a personal code (e.g., “S1V” refers to the student one who is a visual learner and S1A refers to the student who is auditory learner).

Data Analysis

A thematic analysis was conducted to the quantitative data in order to identify themes and sub-themes. Firstly, researcher analysed all interviews to get familiar with the data. Then the researcher conducted an open coding approach. After this coding, the researcher asked two other experts for independent coding. At the end of the process of coding first transcript, the researcher and specialists came together to compare the codes and categories, and to agree on the themes. During this process, the interrelater reliability was calculated and found out as 0.85, which is bigger than 0.70 and thus accepted as good harmony (Tavşancıl & Aslan,2001) With this meeting, codes and categories were developed, and themes were formed. The four main themes and sub-themes can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1

Main Themes and Sub-themes

Main Themes	Sub-themes
Multimedia Learning and Annotations	Text Audio Graphic Video
The navigation	
The content	
The motivation	

Findings

The themes and the sub-themes will be discussed in detail, including students' excerpts in this section.

Multimedia Learning and Annotations

The first theme emerged from students' answers was multimedia learning and annotations. Students evaluated each type of annotation, and it was seen that they emphasized each annotation had both positive and negative aspects. Each type of annotation will be discussed, including students' utterances.

Text

Some of the students found text annotations useful, because annotations helped them by giving meanings of the words and by providing example sentences. Some utterances of students are presented below:

“The Vocastyle made meanings of the words more understandable by using them in a sentence.” (S2A)

“The Vocastyle helped me learn more words, because it had synonyms for each word.” (S1V)

“I didn’t have to carry a dictionary with me through this mobile assisted language learning process, because the text annotations in the Vocastyle included the meanings of the unknown words.” (S9V)

“I liked clicking on text annotations, because I like learning meanings of words in English and seeing example sentences. The Vocastyle provided me with this opportunity.” (S6A)

However, the other students found text annotations difficult to understand and they emphasized they expected to see antonyms of the words, as well as synonyms. Some utterances of students are presented below:

“In text annotations, I expected to see antonyms of the words, as well as synonyms. Because I was curious about the antonyms when I saw there were synonyms. So, antonyms can be added to the Vocastyle.” (S3V)

“For some words, the English meanings were difficult. There were unknown words in the meanings. I could give an example for it: In the English description of ‘pigeon’, there were a few unknown words, I couldn’t understand them. The words in the descriptions could be easier.” (S7V)

Audio

Most of the students who are auditory learners found audio annotations beneficial, because they liked hearing the pronunciation of the word from a native speaker. Some of the utterances of students are presented below:

“I know that, the spelling and the pronunciation of the words are different from each other in English. So, I try to read the word in the way that it is written if I don’t hear the pronunciation of it. As a result of this, I learn both meaning and pronunciation of the word wrongly. Therefore, audio annotations helped me a lot.” (S8A)

“I didn’t know the pronunciation of the words, and the Vocastyle taught me a lot.” (S3V)

“Without help from a teacher, I could learn the pronunciation of a word, thanks to Vocastyle!” (S10A)

“The audio annotations were what I like most about the Vocastyle. Hearing a native speaker pronouncing the words was an exciting experience for me.” (S4A)

“I liked audio annotations. It really helped me to learn pronunciations of the words. I remember how I was shocked when I heard the pronunciation of the word ‘deteriorate’. I had seen that word before using Vocastyle, but I realized I pronounced it very wrongly when I listened to it by clicking on the programme.” (S2A)

Even though most of the students found audio annotations useful, a student who is a visual learner emphasized it was beneficial but it wasn't helpful enough for learning the new word. The students' utterance can be seen below:

“Learning pronunciation of the new words was beneficial. But, I believe it didn't help me learn the new word. Other annotations were more useful for me. Audio just helped me learn correct pronunciation of the word. I believe I could learn the words without it, as well.” (S5V)

Graphic

Like other annotations, some students found graphic annotations useful because of the fact that they visualized the words that helped students remember and learn the meaning of the word. Most of the students who found graphic annotations useful were visual learners. Some of the utterances of the students can be seen below:

“I like seeing things when learning. So I really like graphics.” (S1V)

“I really liked the graphics in the programme. They were fun. I remember the graphic for ‘mouth-watering’ included a cartoon character, Homer Simpson. I can still remember its facial impression, a ‘watery’ mouth! I believe I will never forget its meaning again.” (S7V)

“I can learn by seeing. So, I found the pictures in the Vocastyle very useful for me to understand the meanings of the words. However I should mention that some pictures for abstract words didn't match with the meaning of the word. But, they were not much, maybe one or two.” (S5V)

“Hypermedia annotations helped me learn new words. Especially the graphic annotations were very beneficial for me. I really like learning new words by looking at pictures related to them since secondary school. I used dictionaries with pictures since then, maybe I got used to learning in this way. And the Vocastyle gave me the chance to learn meanings of new words by looking at pictures related to them, which was fun for me. And there were at least 2 pictures for each word, which was great!” (S9V)

“Learning a new word with the help of different annotations was a great experience. When I had difficulty in understanding the text for a word, I could click on graphic or video annotations. I found the graphics most beneficial, because I know that I can learn better by looking at pictures about new words.” (S5V)

As it can be seen in students' answers, graphic annotations were helpful for them. However, a student emphasized that some graphic annotations did not match with the meaning of some abstract words.

Video

The students' answers showed that the video annotations appealed both visual and auditory learners. Most of the students found video annotations helpful. Some utterances of students are presented below:

“The videos were very helpful. I really enjoyed watching them, and I could remember the meanings of the words easily thanks to videos.” (S3V)

“The videos drew my attention a lot. So I clicked on the words, watched the videos, and learned the meaning by having fun.” (S4A)

“I could understand the content better by watching the videos.” (S1V)

“Videos helped me have more clear images in my mind. For instance, I had difficulty in remembering the meaning of ‘sightseeing tour’ before watching the video. But now, I don’t forget its meaning.” (S5V)

“I think all annotations were useful for us. I can learn better by seeing or watching things. Because of this, I clicked on video annotations mostly. They were very helpful for me. They made meanings clear.” (S8A)

“What I liked most about the Vocastyle was videos about words. I clicked on videos many times while learning. Especially for concrete words, the videos were very beneficial”. (S2A)

“Hypermedia annotations really helped me comprehend the main text. For example, the reading text ‘Recycling’ became more understandable for me with the help of annotations, especially the videos. As far as I remember, there was the word ‘charity’. The video for this word was about Angelina Jolie, and I am a big fan of her. When I watched the video, I really enjoyed it and it helped me understand whole context better.” (S10A)

“I think mobile assisted language learning should be used more frequently in our era. Most of us use smart phones, and all of us have tablets thanks to Fatih project.

The Vocastyle was very beneficial for me. I feel that I really improved my vocabulary knowledge by using this software. It increased my motivation. If I had just read the text from the book, I would have got bored. However, I didn't. I really enjoyed clicking on annotations when I wanted to learn the meaning of words. Especially the videos were very useful in visualizing the concepts. They were catchy, made me learn and remember the meanings of the words.” (S7V)

Although most students found the video annotations quite useful, two of the students emphasized the videos were sometimes a bit complicated and sometimes a bit longer. The utterances of these students can be seen below:

“Some videos could be clearer. For example, the video for ‘magnificent’ did not give the direct meaning. There was only a waterfall, at first I thought ‘magnificent’ means ‘şelale’. With the help of other annotations, I could get the true meaning.” (S9V)

“It was very fun for me to use the Vocastyle. I could say it was great to use it while learning new vocabulary, instead of just reading the text from the book, writing down the meanings of the words on my notebook. However, I could say that some videos, not all of them, could be shorter. I really liked 30 second-videos. But some of them were more than one and half minutes, which demotivated me. For example the video for ‘patronage’ was about one and half a minute, and after 40-45 seconds I lost my concentration.” (S6A)

The Navigation

The second theme is the navigation of the Vocastyle, which can be considered as important in terms of user-friendliness of the software. Students emphasized that the Vocastyle is a user-friendly software. All students' utterances about the navigation are presented below:

“I really found mobile assisted learning beneficial. The software we used, Vocastyle, really helped me learn the vocabulary in the units better. It helped me learn in my own pace. I had the opportunity to click on the annotation I wanted, as much as I needed (...) I would like to add that the Vocastyle was clear and easy to use. (S1V)

The hypermedia annotations enabled me to understand the text better. The biggest role belongs to the Vocastyle's being student-friendly. It was always available for us, on our tablets, to go back and click on the annotations about the word we had difficulty in remembering. I didn't have to click annotations of one word, learn it, and then continue with the next one. I could start with the word I wanted and continue with the one I wanted. It really helped me.” (S3V)

“Thanks to Vocastyle, I liked mobile assisted learning process. Firstly, the Vocastyle was simple and clear. It was easy to use. I didn’t have any complexity while using it. I could go back easily by clicking on my tablet’s back button. Also the units were separated. Each unit and each text had a picture next to their names which made me remember it more easily. (S6A)I must say that I need more repetition than my classmates while I am learning a new word. Sometimes our teachers couldn’t repeat as much as I need. In this aspect, the Vocastyle helped me. I could go back and forth, clicked on the word and its annotations whenever I needed. Also it was quite simple to use. Considering these, I took advantage of mobile assisted learning and I liked it.” (S9V)

“I really liked mobile assisted learning (...) I wish mobile assisted learning was used for our other lessons, as well. Since I learned more by using the Vocastyle, I wish similar software was available for our other lessons. Honestly, I liked the Vocastyle, because it was easy to use. Just click on the unit’s name, and then clicked on the text you wanted to study. There you are! If you click on the wrong unit or text, just click on back button.” (S2A)

“Mobile assisted learning helped me a lot (...) I know I am a slow learner. Also, I can be lazy sometimes. With the Vocastyle, I could learn words at my own pace. I didn’t have to hurry which made me motivated and feel ready for learning more.” (S7V)

“When we talked with my classmates, most of us said we found hypermedia annotations beneficial. They really made us learn new words by understanding better. Using the software was very simple for us, and it made the process easier. Clicking on the annotation we wanted and going back to it when we needed was the best part of the Vocastyle.” (S4A)

“Mobile assisted learning is very helpful. However, we should keep in mind that the software used is quite important. Sometimes I surf on the web and find some other online software for learning a subject in Science, for example. I came across some software which forced me to learn step by step. I mean, I had to learn one thing, then go on with the next one. But, I couldn’t go back when I had to. But the Vocastyle wasn’t like that. It enabled me to learn starting with the word I wanted, and -the best of it- I could go back and repeat whenever I needed.” (S10A)

“Learning with mobile applications is great! The Vocastyle showed me this. It was a well-organised, clean, easy to use application. It didn’t crash while I was using it, I could go back easily when I wanted, I didn’t have to hurry since it didn’t have any time constraints. All of these made me enjoy mobile assisted learning.” (S8A)

Content

The third theme is about the Vocastyle's content. Students evaluated the software mainly in terms of language used and information provided. Some of the utterances are presented below:

“Language of the Vocastyle was simple and easy to understand (...) Information was clear and easy to understand.” (S1V)

“The reading texts were presented nicely and really organised.” (S5V)

“I was able to understand the content because we can see a lot of examples there.” (S6A)

“The Vocastyle was very useful and enough for basic understanding of the subject.” (S10A)

Motivation

Students explained that the Vocastyle facilitated their language learning process. They emphasized that this software increased their motivation, which is an important aspect of language learning process. Some of the students' utterances are presented below:

“I found the software quite motivating (...) Mobile software is really practical way of learning unknown vocabulary. I could access it anytime.” (S7V)

“The coursebook is quite boring but the software made it very interesting.” (S2A)

“I love learning things from internet and Vocastyle helped me learn new words with pictures and videos.” (S9V)

“I can't say I'm good at learning vocabulary but Vocastyle attracted my attention and made me concentrate more. It was more interesting than boring power point slides.” (S3V)

“Vocastyle increased my motivation towards English lessons cause I learn better by seeing and it supplied various pictures and videos related with the pictures.” (S10A)

“The software was working offline which enabled us full access anywhere, anytime even we don't have internet connection. I like using it this way because we don't have internet connection at home.” (S5V)

According to students' answers, the software helped them during language learning process, since it was more enjoyable than listening to a teacher and they could access it without internet connection, which made it more useful and accessible.

Discussion, Conclusion and Implications

Interview findings showed that students found video annotations and graphic annotations much more motivating and interesting than others. This finding is in line with many studies in literature either directly on multimedia learning or use of annotations in foreign language learning. Türk and Erçetin (2014) found that presenting verbal and visual information simultaneously is more influential and motivating. Ariew and Ercetin (2004) explored whether there is a link between reading comprehension and the use of different types of hypermedia annotations. Ultimately, data derived from questionnaires and interviews demonstrated that the participants' attitudes toward reading were positively affected by hypermedia reading. Hoven and Palalas (2011) concentrated on the mobile-assisted component of English for Specific Purposes course that focused on listening and speaking skills in a Canadian college. It was found out that student had positive attitudes towards using the mobile resources and displayed higher listening and speaking performances. Frohberg, Goth, and Schwabe (2009) classified 102 mobile projects on learning and noticed that most activities of mobile learning happened across diverse environments, and occurred in places such as classrooms and workplaces. Considering the instructional roles of mobile devices in educational environments, these devices have mostly been regarded, firstly, as stimulative and motivational tools rather than content-carrying digital tools. Findings obtained from interviews also showed that the nature of multimedia software made video, audio and graphic annotations much more advantageous than text annotation. Many participants remarked that watching the video or seeing a picture explaining the target word is more motivating, interesting and funnier than reading textual explanations corresponding to target word.

Interview data indicated that many students who have visual perceptual styles remarked that videos and graphics facilitated their learning more compared to auditory learners who claimed that audio and videos helped them more in learning the target words. This finding contradicts with Ross and Schulz (1999) who examined the interrelation between cognitive learning styles (concrete random, abstract random, concrete sequential and abstract sequential) and computer-assisted instruction. They found that dominant learning styles of the participants did not cause a significant difference in interaction patterns of participants with CAI software. The researchers implicated that Computer-Assisted Instruction is effective to some extent but might not be suitable for all types of learners.

The interviewees also remarked that multimedia annotations helped them in learning target vocabulary much. Many of them remarked that video, graphic and audio annotations were really helpful during the process. Some of them commented that text annotations were boring and they mostly did not preferred text annotations in the existence of videos, graphics and audios. With specific reference to text annotations some of the students remarked that text annotations were useful, because annotations helped them by giving meanings of the words and by providing example sentences. On the other hand, there were some other students who found text annotations difficult to understand and they stressed that they anticipated to see antonyms of the words, as well as synonyms. Thus, antonyms of target words might have been added to provide a better picture to learners and equivalents of the target words should have been checked over and over again. Some corrections or adaptations to equivalents to text annotations might contribute to efficiency of text annotations.

On the part of audio annotations, findings indicated that students who are auditory learners found audio annotations beneficial, because they liked hearing the pronunciation of the word from a native speaker and visual learners found it a little bit redundant as they tend to rely mostly on visual annotations. This finding is not surprising as this study gives an opportunity to learners to learn through their own learning style. Therefore, auditory learners presumably would prefer audio annotations and visual learners would prefer visual annotations more.

From the perspective of graphic annotations, as well as the previous annotations, some students found graphic annotations useful because of the fact that they visualized the words that helped students remember and learn the meaning of the word. Most of the students who found graphic annotations useful were visual learners. On the other hand, a student emphasized that some graphic annotations did not match with the meaning of some abstract words. This finding should be approached cautiously and related target words and their graphic annotations should be checked. If there are some mismatches they should be replaced by correct ones. Even if there is only one student remarked this, there might be some misunderstandings especially in abstract words which might have led students to incorrect learnings. However, taken together, graphic annotations were found really effective and helpful in terms of learning new target vocabulary by making them more visual and memorable. Finally, for video annotations, findings indicated that they appealed both visual and auditory learners by using dual channel input simultaneously. Most of the students found video annotations helpful, there were also some student who favour

for video annotations but who have some concerns about it. For example, some of the videos were much longer up to 40-45 seconds while most of them were in reasonable length and there were a few videos which might not be compatible enough with the target word it had intended to match. Even if those video(s) are not much in number (1-2), they might have affected the results. However, taken together most of the learners think these annotations were catchy, kept them motivated and made them more enthusiastic as well as making the target words more memorable.

The findings above are in line with Dual Code Theory (Paivio, 1990) and Generative Theory of Multimedia Learning Theory (Mayer, 2001). Generally, when language learners are offered both verbal and visual input via multimedia, they choose and arrange helpful information accordingly into different models. Thus, the relationships can be established to construct a kind of structure which is mental and meaningful. In fact, linguistic elements, specifically words, in verbal models offer discrete and linear information, but a holistic and nonlinear type of information is offered by pictures in other models. Therefore, learners can have better comprehension when they incorporate knowledge structures into the related models (Ariew, 2006). The findings above are also in congruence with the findings of the following studies. Chen and Chang (2011) explored the moderating effect of L2 English proficiency upon presentation mode and found that there was no moderating effect since student having dual mode scored performed better than the students who had access only to audio across proficiency levels. In another study, Xu (2010) examined the effect of L1, L2, and L1 + L2 annotations on L2 vocabulary learning and found that L1 annotations were more effective in enhancing L2 vocabulary learning than L2 and L1 + L2 annotations. In the same line, the study by Hulstijn, Hollander, and Greidanus (1996) lent support to the effectiveness of L1 annotations on enhancing L2 vocabulary learning.

In the light of the conclusions of the study there are a number of implications with respect to aspects multimedia assisted vocabulary learning, multimedia annotations and learning styles. Firstly, material developers should consider that in today's world where technology surrounds us from all aspects, technology, more precisely, multimedia should be integrated into EFL curricula. More specifically, in the light of the results of this study, multimedia annotated vocabulary teaching should be stressed. More coursebooks and supplementary materials should be designed and annotations should be embedded to related parts with great scrutiny. By doing this practitioners and designers should take into account that annotations should be appropriate

to the target word. Apart from that the way they are presented, simultaneous or linear, and diverse combinations of annotations (text+picture, text+audio, etc.) should be given in accordance to learning styles of learners. However, as discussed above preparing multimedia annotations for every learning style is not an easy task. Therefore software designer and material developers should work hand in hand to prepare really efficient applications which enable diversity in different types of multimedia annotations for each learning style.

The present study has a number of limitations. Firstly, treatment lasted only 4 weeks due. Longer period of time allotted to treatment could have given different findings. Secondly, this study concentrated on only two perceptual learning styles, visual and auditory. Therefore the findings cannot be generalized to all learning styles. In addition, the treatment was limited only with 10th grade EFL learners. Treatment to different grades could have given different findings.

Finally a number of suggestions can be made for further research. Firstly, the content can be widened and a qualitative research design can be used to analyze the students' views on benefits of Mobile Assisted Language Learning. Secondly, another study might be conducted to examine the effect of different type of annotations on vocabulary learning. Third, a longitudinal study with longer period of use of the software might be carried out to see effects.

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