



Journal of Language Research

ISSN 2602-4578





<https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/jlr>

**Volume 3, Issue 1 (December, 2019)**

# JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE RESEARCH (JLR)

## Editors-in-Chief

**Dr. Emrah EKMEKÇİ**  
Ondokuz Mayıs University

**Dr. İsmail YAMAN**  
Ondokuz Mayıs University

## Editors

**Adnan Yılmaz**  
*Sinop University, Turkey*

**Ahmet Önal**  
*Süleyman Demirel University, Turkey*

**Cafer Özdemir**  
*Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey*

**Lulzime Kamberi**  
*University of Tetova, North Macedonia*

**Müfit Şenel**  
*Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey*

**Nevzat Bakır**  
*Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey*

**Rıfat Günday**  
*Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey*

**Tuğba Elif Toprak**  
*İzmir Bakırçay University, Turkey*

## Supervisory Board

**Abdülvahit Çakır**  
*Gazi University, Turkey*

**Atta Gebril**  
*The American University in Cairo, Egypt*

**Cem Balçıkanlı**  
*Gazi University, Turkey*

**Dinçay Köksal**  
*Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University,  
Turkey*

**Fatma Feryal Çubukçu**  
*Dokuz Eylül University, Turkey*

**Henryk Jankowski**  
*Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland*

**Işıl Atlı**  
*Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland*

**İskender Hakkı Sarıgöz**  
*Gazi University, Turkey*

**Janice Bland**  
*University of Vechta, Germany*

**Katarzyna Stefaniak-Rak**  
*Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland*

**İsmail Hakkı Mirici**  
*Near East University, Cyprus*

**Kemal Sinan Özmen**  
*Gazi University, Turkey*

**Nashwa Nashaat Sobhy**  
*San Jorge University, Spain*

**Paşa Tefrik Cephe**  
*Gazi University, Turkey*

**Ute Smit**  
*University of Vienna, Austria*

# INDEXES



## Table of Contents

An Investigation into the Employment of English Language Teachers in the Private Sector in Turkey .....	1
<b><i>İsmail Yaman</i></b>	
English Language Needs of Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School Students .....	14
<b><i>Büşra İlgör</i></b>	
A Comparative Study on Polar Questions in Turkish and English: Realizing the Dichotomy While Teaching.....	26
<b><i>Ahmet Can Uyar</i></b>	
Book Review: Autonomy, Agency, and Identity in Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language .....	38
<b><i>Hale Nur Söyler, İsmail Yaman</i></b>	
Book Review: Critical Pedagogy in ELT: Reunderstanding the Teacher Roles .....	40
<b><i>Özge Aygün, İsmail Yaman</i></b>	

## An Investigation into the Employment of English Language Teachers in the Private Sector in Turkey

Dr. İsmail Yaman<sup>1</sup>, Ondokuz Mayıs University, ELT Programme,  
[ismail.yaman@omu.edu.tr](mailto:ismail.yaman@omu.edu.tr)

Mustafa Şahin<sup>2</sup>, Ministry of National Education, [mmustafassahinn@gmail.com](mailto:mmustafassahinn@gmail.com)

**Recommended citation:** Yaman, İ., Şahin, M. (2019). An Investigation into the Employment of English Language Teachers in the Private Sector in Turkey. *Journal of Language Research (JLR)*, 3(1), 1-13.

**Abstract:** English language teaching (ELT) and the training of English language teachers have long been important issues in Turkey. However, the related discussions and studies about ELT and English language teachers have mostly concentrated on the systems and issues in the public education sector. Aiming to fill this gap about the involvement of the private sector, this qualitative study intends to find out details concerning the role of the private sector in terms of the employment of English language teachers. To this end, the document analysis method was adopted and the keyword ‘İngilizce öğretmeni’ (English language teacher) was scanned in detail on *kariyer.net*, a popular job advertisement website in Turkey. The obtained 173 relevant advertisements were then put into content analysis in terms of variables including city distribution, experience preferences, nationality preferences, graduated programme preferences, certificate preferences, place of employment, working hours, and special features. The findings have been presented in detailed tables and interpreted with reference to the research questions of the study.

**Keywords:** English language teaching, private sector, employment, teacher

### INTRODUCTION

English language teaching (ELT) is attached great importance in Turkey as part of the general trend all over the world. The steps taken towards teaching English in the national education system over the years are a clear reflection of this policy. The English language began to be offered to the students in public schools in Grade 2 at primary level as of the 2012-2013 academic year. Furthermore, English has long been taught in Grade 1 or even in kindergarten in private schools as part of this ‘early age’ principle. Along with such system-related developments, the curricula for English language courses at both primary-elementary and secondary levels have undergone some changes and revisions. In this context, the latest curricular revision was put into effect in 2018. Considering all these, learning and teaching English in Turkey appear to be a highly significant issue. This high significance attached to ELT in Turkey renders the employment of English language teachers a highly important issue, as well. Since a considerable number of English language teachers have been employed by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) for many years in Turkey, English language teacher employment has been widely evaluated in the context of ELT in the public education system (Seferoğlu, 2004; Kırkgöz, 2007; Demirpolat, 2015; Yaman, 2018, 2019). However, the role of the private sector concerning the employment of English language teachers in Turkey has not been a topic for the available studies in the ELT literature. Probably, this is because of the high probability for prospective English language teachers to be employed by the MoNE. Table 1 below displays the data about March 2018 and March 2019 language teacher appointment by the MoNE.

<sup>1</sup> ORCID: 0000-0003-1323-4909

<sup>2</sup> ORCID: 0000-0002-9586-1529

Submitted: 12.08.2019

Accepted: 31.10.2019



**Table 1. Data on March 2018 and March 2019 Language Teacher Appointment by the MoNE**

Branch	Quota (March 2018)	Quota (March 2019)
German	98	200
Arabic	140	190
French	3	1
English	2002	1960
Russian	1	5
Turkish Language and Literature	370	509
Turkish	1450	1149
Living Languages and Dialects (Kurdish - Kurmanci)	2	-
Living Languages and Dialects (Kurdih - Zazaki)	1	-

(MoNE, 2018; MoNE, 2019)

It is clear from Table 1 that English language teachers receive by far the largest quota among other language teacher categories and such high employment rates may imply a 'guarantee' for them to be employed by the state. Nevertheless, a broader look at the picture brings different variables that take important roles in this process. First, the latest data by the Council of Higher Education (CoHE, 2018) show that a total of 3528 prospective English language teachers graduated from undergraduate ELT programmes at faculties of education at Turkish universities in 2018. The number of the 2018 ELT graduates may seem promising considering the recent employment quote (March-2018: 2002; March-2019: 1960). However, official data about the 2018 Public Personnel Selection Examination (KPSS) by the Assessment, Selection and Placement Center (OSYM, 2018) reveal that 11917 candidates took the Field Knowledge Test on ELT that is a required part of the whole Public Personnel Selection Examination. This high figure reminds us the fact that not only ELT graduates but also graduates of some other programmes become potential candidates to be employed as English language teachers by the MoNE. Table 2 below shows the numerical data about the undergraduate programmes the graduates of which become such candidates.

**Table 2. Distribution of the English-related Programmes at Turkish Universities (2018 Data)**

Programme	State University	Foundation University	Total
English Language Teaching	47	16	63
English Language and Literature	44	17	61
Translation-Interpreting (English-Turkish)	14	14	28
American Culture and Literature	5	3	8
English Linguistics	2	-	2
Translation Studies (English)	1	1	2

(OSYM, 2018)

Table 2 makes it clear that the number of the active English-related non-ELT programmes is higher than that of ELT programmes at Turkish universities. Especially the programmes of English Language and Literature and Translation-Interpreting (English-Turkish) are commonly offered at Turkish universities. At this point, having a look at the policy of the MoNE regarding the employment of English language teachers may be useful. Prospective teachers in Turkey are normally educated by education faculties at universities. This is the case for English language teachers, too. However, through a teacher training certification called 'pedagogical formation' the graduates of other English-related undergraduate programmes possess the right to participate in the KPSS examination and then get appointed to a state school as an English language teacher under the MoNE. This policy, which was once actually planned to compensate for the huge demand for new teachers at state schools, has been applied for many years in Turkey. Although the graduates of the faculties of education are now numerically adequate considering the MoNE's demand for new teachers, the validity of the pedagogical formation certificate is still in effect. That is, the graduates of the English-related non-ELT programmes (see Table 2) as well as ELT programmes become potential English language teachers for both the MoNE and private sector in Turkey.



Considering the details about the employment of English language teachers by the MoNE, it is possible to say that the policy of the MoNE has changed over the years. During specific periods of time in the past, graduates of language-related (non-English) programmes who completed a 40-credit English certification process, graduates of various programmes at English-medium instruction (EMI) universities, and graduates of other programmes in faculties of education who did a minor in ELT programmes in addition to the graduates of ELT and English-related non-ELT programmes were appointed as English language teachers by MoNE (Seferoğlu, 2004; Yaman, 2019). However, today only graduates of ELT and English-related non-ELT programmes are appointed as English language teachers by the MoNE. Figure 1 below introduces the basics of The Teacher Strategy Paper (2017-2023) released by the MoNE (2017).

**Figure 1. Main Themes of the Teacher Strategy Paper**



(MoNE, 2017, p.11)

The Teacher Strategy Paper (2017-2023) was released by the MoNE in 2017 and has become an important reference document concerning not only the current system about the teaching profession but also the 2023 vision. Figure 1 makes it clear that the first phase of the teacher training and development strategy adopted by the MoNE is pre-service teacher training. This phase involves the undergraduate education offered in ELT programmes and pedagogical formation education offered to the graduates of English-related non-ELT programmes. The second phase involves the selection and employment of prospective teachers and the current system requires teacher candidates to take KPSS exam including the Field Knowledge Test on ELT. Following KPSS an oral interview is conducted with the candidates. Then they make preferences for the vacancies announced by the MoNE in accordance with their overall scores. The successful teacher candidates get appointed to a state school under the MoNE and start one-year candidacy and compliance training during their first year of the teaching profession, which constitutes the third phase. Those who complete this third phase successfully become permanent teachers for the MoNE. The other themes handled in the strategy paper (career development and reward system, the status of the teaching profession, continuous professional development) are related to the future careers of the permanent teachers who have completed all of the first three phases successfully. These points apply to all branches of teaching including English language teachers.

Considering the figures in Table 1 and all the figures and details discussed about the current English language teacher employment system under the MoNE, getting employed by the MoNE is





probably a priority goal for prospective English language teachers. Despite this tendency, not all English teachers work in the public sector. The fact that English is the most popular language in the world has led to the emergence of large-scale private ELT sectors. Particularly in 2015, the significant increase in the number of private schools as a result of the closure of private exam preparation courses has naturally led to an increase in the private sector's need for English teachers. In addition, the number of private language schools and language courses is increasing day by day and these organizations are trying to employ qualified English teachers for short or long periods.

The available literature on ELT in Turkey covers various aspects about English language teachers but private sector employment. For instance, motivation to become English language teachers (e.g. Topkaya & Uztosun, 2012; Erten, 2014), English language teachers' burn-out levels (e.g. Mede, 2009; Demirel & Cephe, 2015; reflective practices (e.g. Yaylı, 2009; Yeşilbursa, 2010), technology use (e.g. Aydın, 2013; Kılıçkaya, 2015), teacher education (e.g. Seferoğlu, 2004; Yaman, 2018) and many other specific dimensions concerning the English language teachers in Turkey have been extensively studied by Turkish ELT experts. Nevertheless, the involvement of the private sector in the employment of English language teachers in Turkey has not been examined so far. Therefore, the current study aims to fill this important gap in the literature and provide a framework for prospective studies. To this end, *kariyer.net* that is a popular job advertisement website in Turkey has been examined in order to find out the details about the employment of English language teachers by the private sector in Turkey.

The website (*kariyer.net*) started in 1999 and is a broad platform that hosts over 60000 job advertisements offered by various private sector institutions. It enables employers to specify the specific features they want their prospective employees to possess. The offered advertisements are so diverse that they range from marketing and engineering to security and education. The website is continuously updated; that is new advertisements can be added to the system each passing hour. Briefly, within the context of this study, it can be described as a meeting platform for both prospective employers of English language teachers in the private sector and prospective English language teachers.

Under the framework of the above-mentioned points, the current study aims to seek answers for the following research questions:

1. What is the numerical distribution of the job advertisements about different branches of teaching?
2. What is the city distribution of the job advertisements about English language teachers?
3. What is the tendency about experience preferences in the job advertisements about English language teachers?
4. What is the tendency about nationality preferences in the job advertisements about English language teachers?
5. What is the tendency about graduated programme preferences in the job advertisements about English language teachers?
6. What is the tendency about certificate preferences in the job advertisements about English language teachers?
7. What is the tendency about the place of employment in the job advertisements about English language teachers?
8. What is the tendency about working hours in the job advertisements about English language teachers?
9. What kind of special features are expected from the candidates in the job advertisements about English language teachers?



## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design and Setting

The current study is a qualitative one that employs document analysis as the major data collection method. Document analysis that is frequently used as part of qualitative studies is “a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material” (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). Aiming to find out the details concerning the employment of English language teachers by the private sector in Turkey, this study focuses on a popular job advertisement website in Turkey, *kariyer.net*, and involves reviewing the job advertisements about English language teachers on this website.

### Data Collection and Analysis

The data in this study were collected and analysed based on a three-step model. According to Bowen (2009), ‘document analysis involves skimming (superficial examination), reading (thorough examination), and interpretation’ (p. 32). In the skimming step, the keywords for teaching branches in Turkey including ‘İngilizce öğretmeni’ (English language teacher) were searched on *kariyer.net* on July 14, 2019. The search was conducted at a specific time so that updates on the website would not interfere with the results of the study. The search for ‘İngilizce öğretmeni’ produced 173 advertisements that appeared to be truly related to the employment of English language teachers. In the reading step, the filtered 173 advertisements on English language teachers were taken into thorough examination through content analysis. They were read in detail to find out details about variables including city distribution, experience preferences, nationality preferences, graduated programme preferences, working hours, certificate preferences, place of employment, and other specific requirements. The findings were noted down and categorized under these codes: ‘city’, ‘experience’, ‘nationality’, ‘graduation’, ‘hours’, ‘certificate’, ‘place’, and ‘other’. First, all of the advertisements were categorized in accordance with their cities under the ‘city’ code. Then, all of the other variables were examined on the basis of the city distribution of the advertisements. Finally, in the interpretation step, the categorized findings were evaluated in detail to reach a useful picture concerning the employment of English language teachers by the private sector in Turkey.

## FINDINGS

The findings of the study are presented and discussed below considering each research question.

### Research Question 1:

What is the numerical distribution of the job advertisements about different branches of teaching?

To answer the 1<sup>st</sup> research question we searched the keywords for teaching branches in Turkish education system on *kariyer.net*. The results of the search are presented in Table 3 below.

**Table 3. Branch-based Distribution of the Job Advertisements about Teachers**

No	Branch	Frequency
1	English Language Teacher	173
2	Primary School Teacher	86
3	Early Childhood Teacher	70
4	Mathematics Teacher	69
5	Turkish Teacher	50
6	Psychological Counselling and Guidance Teacher	36
7	Physics Teacher	36
8	Chemistry Teacher	30
9	Physical Education and Sports Teacher	30
10	Biology Teacher	27
11	Music Teacher	24



12	German Language Teacher	22
13	Science Teacher	18
14	Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Teacher	15
15	Computer and Instructional Technologies Teacher	13
16	Geography Teacher	12
17	Arts-Crafts Teacher	9
18	History Teacher	8
19	Social Sciences Teacher	8
20	French Language Teacher	3
21	Special Education Teacher	2
22	Russian Language Teacher	2
23	Chinese Language Teacher	2
24	Arabic Language Teacher	1

Table 3 shows that English language teachers receive by far the highest number of job advertisements among all teaching branches. They are followed by primary school teachers, early childhood teachers, mathematics teachers, and Turkish teachers consecutively. Although this finding is a result of a specific search on a specific platform (kariyer.net), it suggests that the employment of English language teachers by private sector is more probable than other branches. That is, the graduates of ELT programmes and English-related non-ELT programmes possess a considerable chance to be hired in private sector.

**Research Question 2.** What is the city distribution of the job advertisements about English language teachers?

To answer the 2<sup>nd</sup> research question each of the 173 advertisements was scanned for city information and the results are presented in Table 4 below.

**Table 4. General Indicators Including City Information**

	City	Freq. Number	Experience		Nationality		Graduation Programme		Working Hours		Certificate		Place of Employment		
			Y	N	T	N	Only ELT	Others included	Full-time	Part-time	Y	N	Lang. Course	Private School	Other
1	İstanbul	71	58	13	58	13	6	65	60	11	52	19	13	54	4
2	Ankara	35	28	7	30	5	5	30	33	2	23	12	8	26	1
3	Bursa	10	7	3	8	2	3	7	9	1	8	2	1	9	-
4	Adana	9	9	-	9	-	-	9	8	1	7	2	2	7	-
5	Gaziantep	5	4	1	5	-	-	5	5	-	4	1	2	3	-
6	İzmir	5	3	2	2	3	1	4	5	-	4	1	-	5	-
7	Kocaeli	5	3	2	3	2	1	4	4	1	5	-	-	5	-
8	Manisa	4	3	1	1	2	-	3	3	-	2	1	3	-	-
9	Afyon	2	-	2	2	-	1	1	2	-	1	1	-	2	-
10	Antalya	2	2	-	2	-	1	1	2	-	1	1	-	2	-
11	Balıkesir	2	1	1	1	1	-	2	1	1	-	2	2	-	-
12	Çanakkale	2	1	1	2	-	-	2	2	-	2	-	1	1	-
13	Kayseri	2	2	-	2	-	1	1	2	-	2	-	-	2	-
14	Sakarya	2	2	-	1	1	-	2	2	-	1	1	-	2	-
15	Samsun	2	2	-	-	2	-	2	2	-	2	-	-	2	-
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Turkey – wide Total	173	135	38	139	34	20	153	153	20	124	49	37	129	7



Table 4 makes it clear that a total of 173 relevant advertisements were reached and İstanbul, as expected, appears to be the city with the highest number of English language teacher advertisements on *kariyer.net*. It is followed by Ankara, Bursa, Adana, Kocaeli, İzmir, and Gaziantep. This finding is not surprising, indeed. It can be concluded that the population of the cities is the key determinant factor in view of their chance to offer job advertisements for English language teachers.

**Research Question 3.** What is the tendency about experience preferences in the job advertisements about English language teachers?

To answer the 3<sup>rd</sup> research question, the contents of the covered advertisements were examined in terms of whether they require the candidates to possess a specific period of teaching experience or not. Table 4 above shows that 135 of the analysed advertisements ask for experience while only 38 of them do not include any requirement concerning experience. That is, those with no teaching experience do not have the opportunity to apply for most of the advertisements. To find out in-depth information about the experience dimension, 135 advertisements with experience requirement were further analysed and the results are presented in Table 5 below.

**Table 5. Details about the Experience Preferences in the Advertisements**

	City	at least 1-3 year(s)	at least 3-5 years	at least 5-8 years	at least 8-10 years	over 10 years	maximum 10 years	maximum 20 years
1	İstanbul	26	18	10	-	-	3	1
2	Ankara	10	11	1	1	1	4	-
3	Bursa	3	3	-	-	-	-	1
4	Adana	4	4	1	-	-	-	-
5	Gaziantep	-	1	2	-	-	1	-
6	İzmir	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
7	Kocaeli	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
8	Manisa	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
9	Afyon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	Antalya	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Turkey – wide Total	57	46	17	1	1	10	3

Table 5 clearly shows quite interesting results concerning the experience requirements of the advertisements. The majority of the analysed 135 advertisements ask for at least 1-3 year(s) (57) and at least 3-5 years (46) of experience. In addition, 17 advertisements require at least 5-8 years, 1 advertisement at least 8-10 years, and 1 advertisement over 10 years of experience. The interesting point here is that 10 advertisements asked for maximum 10 years and 3 advertisements required maximum 20 years of experience. These figures clearly show that most of the private sector advertisements require the candidates to have a certain period of experience to apply for the offered teaching positions; however, considering the highly dynamic role English language teachers undertake in the classroom, a considerable amount of advertisements appear to expect the candidates to be not only experienced but also young and dynamic.

**Research Question 4.** What is the tendency about nationality preferences in the job advertisements about English language teachers?

To answer the 4<sup>th</sup> research question, the contents of the covered advertisements were examined in terms of nationality preferences. As Table 4 clearly shows, 139 advertisements ask for Turkish candidates for the positions while 34 of them require native English speaking teachers (NESTs). This finding is quite important in that employing NESTs instead of Non-native English speaking teachers



(Non-NESTs) has always been a hot topic about ELT in Turkey. As Medgyes (1992) and Selvi (2014) underline, both NESTs and Non-NESTs possess some advantages and disadvantages in terms of employability. While Non-NESTs may have problems especially in terms of language proficiency, their pedagogical competence and familiarity with ELT processes in Turkey may render them advantageous. On the other hand, while some NESTs may encounter problems about pedagogical aspects and learner characteristics their language proficiency and ‘native speaker brand’ may render them advantageous, which makes them preferable for private schools and courses in terms of marketing and promotion. In the light of this information on NESTs and Non-NESTs, the existence of 34 advertisements with ‘NESTs’ limitation can be interpreted on the basis of marketing and promotion motivations of the private sector employers. On the other hand, that the overwhelming majority of the advertisements (139) are for Non-NESTs shows that most of the ELT practices in the private sector of Turkey, as is the case with the public education, are carried out through Non-NESTs. That is, ELT programmes and other alternative ways to become English language teachers in Turkey hold a key responsibility for the training of prospective teachers for both the public and private sector.

**Research Question 5.** What is the tendency about graduated programme preferences in the job advertisements about English language teachers?

To answer the 5<sup>th</sup> research question, the contents of the covered advertisements were examined in terms of graduated programme preferences and the findings (see Table 4 above) indicate that only 20 advertisements require the candidates to hold an ELT diploma. The remaining 153 advertisements are open to both ELT graduates and the graduates of other English-related non-ELT programmes (i.e. English Language and Literature, Translation-Interpreting (English-Turkish), American Culture and Literature, English Linguistics, Translation Studies (English)). As discussed in the introduction part, the MoNE has long adopted an inclusive policy for the graduates of other English-related non-ELT programmes; and this finding displays a similar policy in the private sector.

**Research Question 6.** What is the tendency about certificate preferences in the job advertisements about English language teachers?

To answer the 6<sup>th</sup> research question, the contents of the covered advertisements were examined in terms of certificate preferences. According to the figures in Table 4 above, 124 of the advertisements prefer the candidates to have a certain certificate while 49 of them do not include any such information. The details about the certificate information in the advertisements are introduced in Tale 6 below.

**Table 6. Details about the Certificate Preferences in the Advertisements**

	City	Pedagogical Formation	CELTA	DELTA	TESOL	TEFL	TOEFL	IELTS
1	İstanbul	42	10	10	10	8	2	2
2	Ankara	18	2	2	2	5	4	4
3	Bursa	7	1	1	1	-	-	-
4	Adana	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	Gaziantep	2	1	2	2	1	-	-
6	İzmir	2	1	-	1	1	-	-
7	Kocaeli	4	1	1	1	1	-	-
8	Manisa	-	1	-	1	1	-	-
9	Afyon	-	1	1	1	1	-	-
10	Antalya	-	1	1	1	1	-	-
	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Turkey – wide Total	86	20	18	20	20	6	6



According to the data in Table 6, the total frequency (176) appears higher than the frequency given for the advertisements with a specific certificate requirement in Table 4 (124). That is because some of the advertisements include the names of more than one certificate in an optional manner (e.g. CELTA/DELTA, TOEFL/IELTS, etc.). As for the details, 86 of the advertisements require possessing a pedagogical formation certificate, 20 of them CELTA (Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), 18 of them DELTA (Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), 20 of them TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), 20 of them TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language), 6 of them TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), and 6 of them IELTS (The International English Language Testing System) certificate. As discussed earlier in this manuscript, the MoNE requires the graduates of English-related non-ELT programmes to possess a pedagogical formation certificate; and these findings demonstrate that its significance is also recognized by the private sector. The other certificates (i.e. CELTA, DELTA, TESOL, TEFL) hold an international status and broadly enable their holders to practice ELT anywhere in the world. A further analysis on the advertisements with a requirement to possess one of these international certificates reveals that they are widely included in advertisements that seek especially NESTs to employ. As discussed above within the context of the 4<sup>th</sup> research question, NESTs may encounter problems in view of pedagogical skills; and considering this it can be concluded that the employers aim to eliminate this possibility with NESTs. Therefore, that a considerable amount of advertisements require such certificates can be regarded as a quite expected finding. On the other hand, TOEFL and IELTS are international tests of English and cannot be considered as teaching certificates. However, the analysed advertisements (6+6) except one cover them as certificates and actually intend to ask for an adequate score from these tests. The only exceptional advertisement here provides a clear framework and requires at least 102 points from TOEFL-IBT and 7.5 from IELTS. Briefly, private sector attaches considerable importance to the possession of specific certificates that certify the qualification of the candidates for the applied position.

**Research Question 7.** What is the tendency about the place of employment in the job advertisements about English language teachers?

To answer the 7<sup>th</sup> research question, the contents of the covered advertisements were examined in terms of the place of employment and the findings are tabulated below.

**Table 7. Details about the Place of Employment in the Advertisements**

	City	Private Language Course	Private Nursery School	Private School (Primary- Elementary- High School)	Other
1	İstanbul	13	8	46	4
2	Ankara	8	5	21	1
3	Bursa	1	4	5	-
4	Adana	2	1	6	-
5	Gaziantep	-	1	4	-
6	İzmir	3	-	2	-
7	Kocaeli	-	2	3	-
8	Manisa	2	-	2	-
9	Afyon	-	1	1	-
10	Antalya	-	-	2	-
	...	...	...	...	...
	Turkey – wide Total	37	24	105	7



Table 7 clearly shows that the vast majority of the advertisements (105) seek candidates for private schools including primary, elementary, and high levels. Since most of these advertisements do not clearly state at which level the candidates will teach, they are given under the same category, *private school*. This category is followed by private language courses (37), private nursery schools (24), and others (7) consecutively. The *other* category covers advertisements of various companies to hire English language teachers for their employees. For instance, one company seeks an English language teacher to teach English to the crew in an oil exploration vessel. That is, as expected, English language teachers are expected to teach English in the context of the private sector, be it at a private language course, a private elementary school or a company. This finding is quite important in that it shows the places where the demands of the private sector for English language teachers emerge.

**Research Question 8.** What is the tendency about working hours in the job advertisements about English language teachers?

To answer the 8<sup>th</sup> research question, the contents of the covered advertisements were examined in terms of working hours. According to the figures in Table 4 above it is evident that the vast majority of the advertisements (153) expect candidates to work on a full-time basis while only 20 of them ask for a part-time work. This shows that the private sector generally expects a full-time dedicated working style from the candidates.

**Research Question 9.** What kind of special features are expected from the candidates in the job advertisements about English language teachers?

To answer the 9<sup>th</sup> research question, the contents of the covered advertisements were examined in terms of special requirements. The findings are categorized under the *other* code and presented in Table 8 below.

**Table 8. Details about the Special Requirements in the Advertisements**

No	Special Requirement	Frequency
1	preferably being proficient in training TOEFL and IELTS groups	6
2	preferably pursuing/holding a Master's degree	5
3	preferably possessing an overseas experience	5
4	preferably having a good command of academic English	2
5	preferably possessing a language teaching style with a special emphasis on values education	1
Total		19

Table 8 clearly shows that 6 advertisements asked for preferably being proficient in training TOEFL and IELTS groups. These are all among the advertisements offered by private language courses; thus, such a special expectation from the candidates is not something surprising. Besides, 5 advertisements from private schools asked for preferably pursuing/holding a Master's degree, which suggests an expectation about the tendency for professional development. Likewise, 5 advertisements asked for preferably possessing an overseas experience, which is also quite important in terms of professional development. In addition, 2 advertisements from private language courses asked for preferably having a good command of academic English, which is also not surprising considering academic English classes. Lastly, one private nursery school asked for preferably possessing a language teaching style with a special emphasis on values education. This little finding is of key importance since values education is a growing topic in all educational realms in Turkey including ELT. The MoNE (2018) specified ten key values (friendship, justice, honesty, self-control, patience, respect, love, responsibility, patriotism and altruism) in the revised curricula at both primary-elementary and secondary level and these values are expected to be integrated into textbooks and teaching processes inductively. Therefore, it can be assumed that this aspect in education will gain more popularity in the future and the 'values education' detail in the analysed advertisement may give a clue about a possible future projection that ELT in the private sector will also attribute importance to the integration of values into the teaching and learning processes especially at early levels. In brief, each of the special requirements found in the job advertisements points to a specific priority set by the employer and they are all of key importance in view of the employability of the candidates.



## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The high importance attached to ELT in Turkey is part of a trend that reigns all over the world. The lingua franca status of English has rendered it a prestigious language to learn in almost every country, and Turkey is no exception (Dogancay-Aktuna, 1998). Accordingly, ELT practices in both public education system and private sector possess vital importance in terms of the English proficiency of Turkish people. In the current qualitative study, we have focused on the neglected role of the private sector in terms of the employment of English language teachers. To find out the details about this specific aspect, the keyword ‘İngilizce öğretmeni’ (English language teacher) was scanned in detail on *kariyer.net*, a popular job advertisement website. The search produced 173 relevant advertisements that were then put into content analysis in terms of variables including city distribution, experience preferences, nationality preferences, graduated programme preferences, certificate preferences, place of employment, working hours, and special features. As for the findings, İstanbul, as expected, turns out to be the city with the highest number of job advertisements for English language teachers. As for the experience and nationality variables, the vast majority of the advertisements ask for Non-NESTs with at least 1-5 year(s) of experience. Moreover, it appears that the private sector adopts a similar policy with the MoNE about the graduated programmes based on the finding that most of the advertisements target the graduates of both ELT and English-related non-ELT programmes. This similarity is also supported with the finding that the analysed advertisements mostly ask for a pedagogical formation certificate, just like what the MoNE does. Related to the place of employment variable, the majority of the advertisements appear to be from private schools and most of the employers ask the candidates to work on a full-time basis. Finally, the content analysis conducted about the special requirements covered in the advertisements reveals expectations including preferably being proficient in training TOEFL and IELTS groups, preferably pursuing/holding a Master’s degree, and preferably possessing an overseas experience.

The findings yielded by this study are limited to a specific search on *kariyer.net* at a specific date. Therefore, they cannot represent all the tendencies of the whole private sector about the employment of English language teachers. Nevertheless, they may provide remarkable clues about the issue especially considering the lack of relevant studies in the literature. Accordingly, this study is intended to orient the ELT researchers to start other studies handling this important private sector issue and also contribute to the prospective English language teachers who seek job opportunities in the private sector. As an intact aspect of study in the ELT literature, the role the private sector may be investigated by further studies from various aspects like comparing the working conditions of English language teachers working in the private and public sectors or examining the motivations of English language teachers (not) to prefer working in the private sector.

## REFERENCES

- Atmaca, Ç. (2017). A burning issue among English teachers: Reflections of in-service teachers on job satisfaction and burnout. *ELT Research Journal*, 6(1), 89-115.
- Aydin, S. (2013). Teachers' perceptions about the use of computers in EFL teaching and learning: the case of Turkey. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 26(3), 214-233.
- Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative research journal*, 9(2), 27-40.
- CoHE (2018). *2018-2019 Yükseköğretim istatistikleri*, at <https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr>, Access Date: 08.07.2019
- Demirel, E. E., & Cephe, P. T. (2015). Looking into burnout levels among English language instructors. *Dil ve Dilbilimi Çalışmaları Dergisi*, 11(1), 1-14.





- Demirpolat, B. C. (2015). *Türkiye'nin yabancı dil öğretimiyle imtihanı: Sorunlar ve çözüm önerileri*. SETA.
- Dogancay-Aktuna, S. (1998). The spread of English in Turkey and its current sociolinguistic profile. *Journal of multilingual and multicultural development*, 19(1), 24-39.
- Erten, I. H. (2014). Understanding the reasons behind choosing to teach English as a foreign language. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language)*, 8(1), 30-44.
- Kılıçkaya, F. (2015). Computer-based grammar instruction in an EFL context: Improving the effectiveness of teaching adverbial clauses. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 28(4), 325-340.
- Kırkgöz, Y. (2007). English language teaching in Turkey: Policy changes and their implementations. *RELC journal*, 38(2), 216-228.
- Mede, E. (2009). An analysis of relations among personal variables perceived self-efficacy and social support on burnout among Turkish EFL teachers. *İnönü Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 10(2), 39-52.
- Medgyes, P. (1992). Native or non-native: who's worth more?. *ELT journal*, 46(4), 340-349.
- MoNE (2017). Teacher strategy document (2017-2023). Ankara. [http://oygm.meb.gov.tr/meb\\_iys\\_dosyalar/2017\\_06/09140719\\_Strateji\\_Belgesi\\_Resmi\\_Gazete\\_sonras\\_Y\\_ilan.pdf](http://oygm.meb.gov.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/2017_06/09140719_Strateji_Belgesi_Resmi_Gazete_sonras_Y_ilan.pdf) Access Date: 10.07.2019
- MoNE (2018). *Mart 2018 sözleşmeli öğretmenliğe başvuru ve atama duyurusu*, at [http://personel.meb.gov.tr/meb\\_iys\\_dosyalar/2018\\_02/19171735\\_SOZLESMELI\\_OGRETMENLIK\\_DUYURU\\_2018\\_MART.pdf](http://personel.meb.gov.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/2018_02/19171735_SOZLESMELI_OGRETMENLIK_DUYURU_2018_MART.pdf) Access Date: 10.07.2019
- MoNE (2018). *İngilizce dersi öğretim programı (İlkokul ve Ortaokul 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 ve 8. Sınıflar)*. Ankara: Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı.
- MoNE (2019). *Mart 2019 sözleşmeli öğretmenliğe başvuru ve atama duyurusu*, <http://personel.meb.gov.tr/www/2019-mart-sozlesmeli-ogretmen-atama-duyurusu-cercevesinde-basvuranlarin-tercih-ve-atama-islemine-iliskin-takvim/icerik/948>, Access Date: 10.09.2018
- OSYM (2018). *Yükseköğretim programları ve kontenjanları kılavuzu*, at <https://www.osym.gov.tr/TR,15240/2018-yuksekogretim-programlari-ve-kontenjanlari-kilavuzu.html> Access Date: 13.06.2019
- OSYM (2018). *2018 KPSS lisans ve ÖABT sınav sonuçlarına ilişkin sayısal bilgiler*, at <https://www.osym.gov.tr/TR,15285/2018-kpss-lisans-ve-oabt-sinav-sonuclarina-iliskin-sayisal-bilgiler.html> Access Date: 07.07.2019
- Seferoglu, G. (2004). A study of alternative English teacher certification practices in Turkey. *Journal of education for teaching*, 30(2), 151-159.
- Selvi, A. F. (2014). Myths and misconceptions about non-native English speakers in the TESOL (NNEST) movement. *TESOL Journal*, 5(3), 573-611.
- Topkaya, E. Z., & Uztosun, M. S. (2012). Choosing teaching as a career: Motivations of pre-service English teachers in Turkey. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 3(1), 126-134.
- Yaman, İ. (2018). Türkiye'de İngilizce öğrenmek: Zorluklar ve fırsatlar. *RumeliDE dil ve edebiyat araştırmaları dergisi*, 11, 161-175.



Yaman, İ. (2019). 'Türkiye'de İngilizce öğretmeni olmak' üzerine bazı değerlendirmeler ve öneriler. *Akdeniz Eğitim Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 13(28), 157-172. doi: 10.29329/mjer.2019.202.9

Yayli, D. (2009). Reflective practices of preservice teachers in a listening skill course in an ELT department. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 1(1), 1820-1824.

Yeşilbursa, A. (2010). Language teaching beliefs, problems and solutions: Reflecting and growing together. In *Proceedings of the 10<sup>th</sup> METU ELT Convention*, Ankara: METU. <http://www.dbe.metu.edu/convention/proceedingsweb/Beliefs.pdf>





## English Language Needs of Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School Students

Büşra İlgör<sup>1</sup>, Samsun University, ilgorbusra@gmail.com

**Recommended citation:** İlgör, B (2019). English Language Needs of Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School Students. *Journal of Language Research (JLR)*, 3(1), 14-25.

**Abstract:** Studies on English for Specific Purposes (ESP) have demonstrated that learners have different needs towards learning a language in terms of their professional fields. Needs analysis is a necessary procedure in order to fulfil these needs. The studies of needs analysis and ESP have been usually conducted to determine the language needs of university students. However, little attention has been given to the language needs of high school students. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine the English language needs of Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School students. Thus, 5 English teachers and 189 students were considered as data sources. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used for triangulation. First, students completed the questionnaires to state their language needs. Since the data was not normally distributed, nonparametric tests were employed. Then, 5 teachers and 30 students were interviewed. Content analysis applied to qualitative data. The results showed that students need to learn English especially for speaking to the authorities in foreign companies. Also, there were significant differences both gender and the departments of the students in terms of language needs. They claimed that in all four skills, writing was the least necessary and speaking was the most necessary for their future workplace. Finally, they stated that they need a vocational English course to improve their vocational English knowledge. This study could be a step in the direction of Vocational High School students becoming qualified workers in their future career.

**Keywords:** *Language needs, needs analysis, English for General Purposes (EGP), curriculum development, English for Specific Purposes (ESP)*

### INTRODUCTION

Along with the ongoing developments in trade, economy, and technology the need for language has begun to take a different path through time. Language is no longer just for academic purposes, but also for professional purposes such as using it in a specific workplace. In order for language to be used effectively for professional purposes, it is necessary to identify language needs first. These professional purposes and needs are the major subjects of ESP. It deals with specific course contents, materials and curriculum in a specific area taking into account learners' language needs (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Robinson (1991) underlined the basic notions of ESP as the professional needs and the purposes of the learners. That is why English for General Purposes which is called EGP differs from ESP in terms of curriculum being implemented, syllabus, course materials and course requirements. Therefore, ESP courses center upon particular skills, vocabulary, grammar, and genres in a particular domain. Learners whose language needs based on particular field choose the language including specific words and structures related to their field (Mackay & Mountford, 1978; Northcott & Brown, 2006). According to Chan (2001), specific vocabulary terminology related with the specific department should be taught in order to reach practical results. In that way, ESP gives learners opportunities to expertise in a specific area.

Recently, the topic of needs analysis and ESP has become an important research area in language education across different disciplines in the tertiary setting such as in the domain of medicine, law, and engineering. What has been done in recent years is conducting research about university students' language needs; however, language needs of high school students are rarely

<sup>1</sup> ORCID: 0000-0002-5648-4441

Submitted: 26.05.2019

Accepted: 06.11.2019



studied. The purpose of this study is to determine the English language needs of Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School students in Erzurum by applying both qualitative and quantitative methods. This study could be a step in the direction of vocational high school students becoming qualified workers in their future career by taking into consideration their language needs.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The needs and demands of people towards learning a language have changed over time along with the ongoing developments in trade, economy, politics and technology. This language has become English due to having a quality of being a lingua franca. These days, one does not have a chance to even travel faraway places without knowing and using English (Northrup, 2013). It is an international language for communication all over the world. For this reason, people have different demands and needs for learning English. Some of them want to learn it for their academic purposes such as conducting a research while others want to learn it for their own specific purposes such as using it in their workplace. According to Belcher (2009), these kinds of classifications in English have given rise to emerging subcategories such as English for Academic Purposes (EAP), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English for Medical Purposes (EMP), English for General Purposes (EGP), English for Business Purposes (EBP), and English for Legal Purposes (ELP).

ESP is discussed through the literature review. Within this scope, firstly definitions and characteristics of ESP, then differences between ESP and EGP are given based on the opinions of previous researchers. Next, definitions of needs and needs analysis are discussed. Related studies with ESP are included in the literature review. Lastly, curriculum development approach in ESP is introduced as a theory of this study.

### **English for Specific Purposes (ESP)**

Various definitions of ESP exist in the related literature. Widdowson (1983) defined it as “ESP is simply a matter of describing a particular area of language and then using this description as a course specification to impart to learners the necessary restricted competence to cope with this particular area.” (p. 10). The particular area determines the learners’ needs and demands. Therefore, ESP courses have specific course acquisitions tailored to the particular needs of the learners. The basic questions in the field of ESP are that “why learners need to learn English, what kinds of genres they need to deal with, and which language skills learners need to improve” (Dudley-Evans, 2001, p. 131). The focus is on the learner himself in these questions. Learners should be aware of their needs and purposes related to their learning process and take responsibility. They should have a sense of language learning autonomy related to a specific area. Chan (2001) found out that students and their teachers were conscious and autonomous about their language needs for their future career.

In short, ESP is an approach to language learning and teaching based on particular needs, particular demands, particular situations, particular vocabulary and genres, particular activities, particular methodology, particular curriculum, and particular characteristics. Therefore, ESP is very different from EGP. In order to understand the differences between them, their definitions first should be made clear enough. EGP draws attention to learning English by integrating basic language skills and components into general language activities and situations (Long, 2005) whereas ESP is “An approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner’s reason for learning” (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 19). The basic differences between EGP and ESP are due to sharing different curriculum, different course materials and different syllabus. As it can be understood from definitions, needs and demands of learners are very different from each other. EGP draws attention to learning English by integrating basic language skills and components into general language activities and tasks. These language skills, components, activities and tasks play equally important roles in determining language needs. It does not concentrate on specific needs or demands of learners. On the contrary, ESP has particular needs within themselves. Learners have expectations towards language for meeting their specific needs related to a specific area. For example, engineering students want to learn English related to their future workplace, specific vocabularies,



forms and registers. ESP learners learn English in the classroom but apply it in their future workplace whereas EGP learners learn English in the classroom but apply it in their real life (McDonough, 1984). ESP focuses on specific functions, forms, genres, language components and language skills related to specific field therefore learners' language needs should be identified first. In order to meet these needs, needs analysis is highly important procedure. The first step in ESP is conducting needs analysis for determining the needs and purposes.

### Needs Analysis

The key definition in ESP and needs analysis is need. There are dozens of definitions of need in the relevant literature. Berwick (1989) described need as "a gap or measurable discrepancy between a current state of affairs and a desired future state" (p.52). For example, an engineer should be able to design and use specific machines and devices according to operating manuals on them. That is why he should know English related to his field because operating manuals generally are written in English. According to Witkin and Altschuld (1995, p.9), need was "the gap or discrepancy between a present state (what is) and a desired end state, future state, or condition (what should be)". This definition indicates that a need belongs to neither present situation nor future situation but it has a place somewhere between them.

According to needs analysis definition of Nunan (1999), it is "rather than fitting students to courses, courses should be designed to fit students" (p.148). Learners' need should be the immediate focus while designing course and materials instead of the course itself. Brown describes needs analysis as "the gathering of information to find out how much the students already know and what they still need to learn" (1995: p.35). Needs analysis is like identifying a gap between learners' current level and desired level and gathering necessary data in order to fill this gap. It is the process of gathering data in order to identify the language needs of learners. Therefore, needs analysis (NA) plays highly crucial role in ESP.

There has been a plethora of research about needs analysis in the field of ESP from different point of views in the tertiary setting (Balint, 2004; Chan, 2001; Karimkhanlouei, 2012; Lee, 2016; Mihaleche, 2015; Peters & Fernández, 2013). In the lights of ESP and needs analysis studies, some skills can be at forefront according the views of both learners and teachers. According to university students' views who were the subjects of these studies, speaking and listening have been seen as the most important two skills that need to be developed for their future job (Güleç, 2013; Chan, 2001; Huang, 2014). Karimkhanlouei (2012) also found the same results in medicine context. On the contrary, Alagözlü (1994) stated that reading skill was seen as the most needed skill for their future career by the medical students. Learners of Science and Technology University ranked listening and writing skills as the most needed skills in their department for their future workplace (Lee, 2016). Besides, Yılmaz (2003) conducted her research at an Anatolian Hotel Management and Tourism Vocational High School in order to evaluate the ESP programme in general. The study revealed that listening and speaking skills were perceived as the most important skills for their future career whereas reading and writing skills were considered as the least important skills according to students' perceptions. She also found out that specific structures and vocabularies should be taught vocational high school students in order to be good at particular area. Peters and Fernández (2013) surveyed the students who were attending architecture department in Spain by giving assignments of dictionary tests. The results of this study demonstrated that students could recognise the vocabulary that they need for their future job. As a suggestion of this study, multiple dictionaries could be used in ESP courses for more effective learning of vocabulary. Different study done by Bölükbaş (2016) revealed that young Syrian refugees needed to learn Turkish for attending a university in Turkey. Another study conducted in Bosnia-Herzegovina by Çalışkan and Çangal (2013) stated that learners who were learning Turkish as a foreign language wanted to learn Turkish in order for trade, education, job opportunities, individual interests and needs.

## Curriculum and Material Development in ESP

While investigating the language needs of learners, McDonough (1984) pointed out that determining the language needs of the learners provides a great opportunity for the development and progress of the course in terms of ESP. Mihalache (2015) conducted a study with 124 students from an Agriculture faculty to find out an answer to the question whether ESP courses and materials were sufficient in engineering programmes or not. According to the results of the study, courses and materials were not sufficient and enough for students to master their professional knowledge in their own departments. So, new curriculum and materials for ESP courses should be designed. Because activities, tasks, registers, vocabularies and structures are different in ESP, methodology and syllabus change according to these criteria. ESP syllabus should include just specific functions or skills related to specific field. In the Iranian context, high school English textbook were evaluated based on the learners' needs and perceptions (Rasihidi & Kehtarfard, 2014). However, the results showed that the needs of the learners were not satisfied at all. Boroujeni and Ketabi (2012) demonstrated in their study that learners' language needs could be a guide for creating and shaping course materials and curriculum in Genetics. Learners' needs and purposes should match each other in the direction of the program being implemented. In order for developing curriculum in the field of medicine, Taşçı (2007) investigated medicine learners' and teachers' perspectives of language needs for medical purposes. Kocer (2013) studied with the learners who were learning Turkish as a foreign language and stated that their curriculum should be designed by taking into consideration their Turkish language needs. In short, curriculum, course content, and course materials should be planned according to learners' needs and interests (Ballint, 2004).

## METHODOLOGY

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect the data from the participants of the study. By applying quantitative method, students were asked to complete the questionnaires to state their language needs. SPSS 23 was used to analyze the questionnaires. After all the questionnaires were filled, 5 English teachers and 30 students were interviewed to get the right picture and to make an in-depth analysis about the language needs. In order to analyse the qualitative data content analysis which was defined as "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" was applied (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p.1278). Designed as a mixed-method research the study gathered both qualitative and quantitative data to find answers to the following research questions;

### Research Questions

1. What are the language needs of Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School students?
2. To what extent do English language needs show differences in terms of their departments, genders, ages, and grades?
3. Which English language skill or skills do they want to improve for their future workplace?
4. Are English language courses satisfactory enough for Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School students to use the language in their future workplace effectively?

### The Participants

The study comprised 189 students (158 males and 31 females) who are attending Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School in Palandöken, Erzurum and 5 English teachers working in that school in 2016-2017 academic years. Their ages ranged from 15 to 18. The participants of the study consisted of four groups: 10th grade students, 11th grade students, 12th grade students, and 5 English teachers. In total, the number of 10th grade students was 66, the number of 11th grade students was 64 and the number of 12th grade students was 59. All of the students chose their department while they were in 10th grade. There are totally nine departments in that high school. These are; Information



technologies department, Biomedical technologies department, Electrical and electronics technologies department, Map technologies department, Construction technologies department, Machine technologies department, Furniture and indoor design technologies department, and Motor vehicles technologies department. Their departments, numbers of the students, and percentages were presented in table 1.

**Table 1. Departments of the students**

Department	N	Percent
Information technologies department	31	16,4
Biomedical technologies department	27	14,3
Electrical and electronics technologies department	25	13,2
Map technologies department	22	11,6
Construction technologies department	15	7,9
Machine technologies department	18	9,5
Metal technologies department	17	9,0
Furniture and indoor design technologies department	16	8,5
Motor vehicles technologies department	18	9,5
Total	189	100,0

N: Number of the students

Five English teachers were female whose ages ranged from 23 to 29. They were included in the study in order to express their opinions about determining the language needs of their students. Purposive sampling was applied in this study to select participants. It is a nonrandom sampling technique where participants are chosen according to a certain purpose (Dörnyei, Z., 2007). Inclusive students were excluded from the study for reaching more reliable and valid data. The participants were informed that making contributions to this study would be helpful for their own English language education for their specific purposes and for future conditions of the other students. Lastly, they were told that their answers to items on the questionnaire would be confidential and would be used purely for scientific purposes at the end of the study.

### The Instruments

While conducting needs analysis, the basic research instruments for collecting data can be questionnaires, discussions, interviews, observations and assessments (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 2001). Therefore, questionnaires and interviews were applied to the students in the study to gather the data. The questionnaire was adapted from an unpublished thesis written by Ermiş (2008). She formed it by searching the related literature and creating an item pool. Before piloting, there were 52 items in her questionnaire. The reliability was .79 in the pilot study. In order to increase reliability 7 items were taken out the questionnaire and the reliability became .81 in her main application.

Along with her questionnaire, students' views about their language needs were included to the item pool for this study and the most frequent and important ones were added to the questionnaire. Afterwards, it was sent to 7 experts to analyze for its content validity. According to their views, cultural awareness and language learning problems parts were excluded from the questionnaire because of being irrelevant items for the study. For the construct validity, the means of each item were calculated as shown in table 2. The last version of the questionnaire including two sections consisted of 22 items. In the first section, demographic information questions were answered by the students. In the second section, Likert-scale items were placed for determining their thoughts and opinions related to their English needs. Items were ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) according to their agreement. Cronbach's Alpha value of the questionnaire was calculated as .89. after the main study. The original questionnaire was prepared in English. It was translated into Turkish because students' English levels were not good enough to understand the items clearly (see appendices 1 and

2). The translation was checked by 6 English teachers. Also, English teachers did not want to be interviewed in English.

### **The Procedures**

The pilot study was done with 42 students from 10th, 11th, and 12th grade who are attending Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School in Palandöken, Erzurum on November, 8 in the afternoon. 12 of them were female and 30 of them were male students. Cronbach's Alpha value of the questionnaire was calculated as .84. There was no addition or subtraction of items in the questionnaire. Afterwards, it was distributed to all the students except from students who participated in the pilot study and they completed it for the main study. All the participants including participated in the pilot study were requested to fill the questionnaire during their English lessons. 15 minutes were given to the students to complete the questionnaires. The researcher was ready in the class to avoid any misunderstanding caused by students. In the part of qualitative data procedure, all the interviews were audio recorded and some notes were taken during the interview. 5 teachers were interviewed in the library one by one and 5 questions about learners' language needs were asked (Appendix 3). 30 participants were interviewed in the library one by one and 5 questions about language needs were asked (Appendix 4). Purposefully, 10 participants were chosen from 10th grade students (6 males and 4 females), 10 participants were chosen from 11th grade students (7 males and 3 female) and 10 participants were chosen from 12th grade students (2 males and 2 females).

### **The Data Analysis**

Quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were employed in this study for triangulation. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences SPSS, 22 was used to analyze the items in the questionnaire. Because the data was not normally distributed, nonparametric tests were applied in order to analyze the data. Kruskal-Wallis test for making multiple comparisons and Mann-Whitney U test for making dual comparisons were used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics was made on the quantitative data by taking into consideration mean scores, frequencies, standard deviations, and percentages. To be able to analyze the qualitative data interviews were conducted after gathering quantitative data. Content analysis were applied and excel spreadsheet was used to code the data.

### **Contextualization**

Vocational High School first grade students have 5 hours of English language classes in a week. The second, the third and the fourth grade students have 4 hours of English language classes in a week. However, vocational English lesson is not given to this high school. The students take only general English course during their high school education. Therefore, they do not have neither a specific curriculum for English language teaching for their occupational needs nor teachers of specific English. The same curriculum with other high schools which is determined by Ministry of National Education is used in that school. Since lots of students are employed as workers in different workplaces after graduating from Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School, they need to have a good knowledge of English in order that they can be qualified employee. For instance, they need to be able to read and understand the operating manuals on the specific devices and materials. Furthermore, they need to be able to communicate with English speaking co-partners since these devices and materials are made in abroad. Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School students are thought to have a specific purpose to use English language in a specific field.

### **FINDINGS**

The results of this study have been given under two sections. Quantitative results collected from the students via a questionnaire have been mentioned in the first section and qualitative results collected from both students and the teachers via interviews have been mentioned in the second section.





## Quantitative Results

### *The language needs of the students*

To answer the first research question (What are the language needs of Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School students?) descriptive statistics were used. The overall mean of the questionnaire was computed as  $M= 3,61$ . Table 2 gives the frequencies and the means for each item. In order to make interpretations more comprehensible, 5 Likert items were changed into 3 groups as Strongly disagree + Disagree, Undecided, and Agree + Strongly agree.

**Table 2. The Language Needs of Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School Students (Percentages)**

Items	SD+D	U	A+SA	Mean
1. I need to learn English to communicate with tourists.	11,1	37,6	51,4	3,44
2. I need to learn English because it is a compulsory subject.	16,4	17,5	66,1	3,81
3. I need to learn English to be able to follow series and TV programmes in English.	46	18	36	2,99
4. I need to learn English to be able to follow newspapers and magazines in English.	57,6	24,3	18	<b>2,48</b>
5. I need to learn English to be able to read and understand sources in English related to my field.	18	24,9	57,1	3,48
6. I need to learn English to have a chance to work abroad.	9,5	23,8	66,7	3,71
7. I need to learn English for professional development.	1,6	16,9	81,5	4,16
8. I need to learn English to have a good occupation.	4,8	11,1	84,1	<b>4,24</b>
9. I need to learn English to travel abroad.	8,4	7,4	84,2	3,94
10. I need to learn English to use my listening skills in my job.	13,2	31,2	55,6	3,52
11. I need to learn English to use my speaking skills in my job.	17,4	12,2	70,4	3,89
12. I need to learn English to use my reading skills in my job.	29,6	42,9	27,5	2,84
13. I need to learn English to use my writing skills in my job.	50,8	30,7	18,5	<b>2,51</b>
14. I need to learn English to speak to the authorities in foreign companies.	2,6	11,6	85,7	<b>4,33</b>
15. I need to learn English words related to my field so that I can talk to the authorities in foreign companies.	7,4	2,6	90	4,20
16. I need to learn English structures related to my field so that I can talk to the authorities in foreign companies.	12,1	46,0	41,8	3,37
17. I need to learn English to pronounce the words correctly while speaking to the authorities in foreign companies.	4,8	27,5	66,7	3,79
18. I need to learn English to do translation related to my field.	12,1	30,7	57,2	3,45
19. I need a vocational English course to improve my vocational English knowledge.	7,4	21,7	70,9	4,01
20. I need to learn daily English language to improve my vocational English knowledge.	41,8	30,7	27,6	<b>2,76</b>
21. I need to learn vocational English language to improve my vocational English knowledge.	8,9	3,2	87,9	4,17
22. I need to learn English to understand the operating manuals on the devices related to my field.	6,9	3,2	90	<b>4,26</b>

According to the results, 12 items (2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21 and 22) had higher means than the overall mean of the questionnaire. Accordingly, the highest item's mean was computed as 4,33 which was students needed to learn English to speak to the authorities in foreign companies. Most of the students (85,7 %) wanted to communicate with the authorities in foreign companies. Students (90,0%) claimed that they needed to learn English to understand the operating manuals on the devices related to their field. The third most agreed item was that students needed to learn English so that they could find a good occupation and its mean was computed as 4.24. On the other hand, the lowest item's mean was 2,48 which was they needed to learn English to be able to follow newspaper and magazines in English. In other words, they felt that they did not have a need to learn English to follow newspaper and magazines in English. 50,8% of the participants stated that they did not feel a

need to learn English to use their writing skills in their job. As a last, 41,8% of the participants indicated that they did not have a need to learn daily English language to improve their vocational English knowledge.

### *The relationship between gender, age, grade, department and students' language needs*

To be able to find an answer to the second research question (Do language needs show differences in terms of their departments, genders, ages, and grades?), Kruskal-Wallis test for comparing departments, grade and age and Mann-Whitney U test for comparing gender were used to analyze the data. The aim was to find out any possible age, gender, grade or department effect on the language needs of the students. There was no significant difference between age and grade and language needs but significant differences were found between departments and gender and language needs.

**Table 3. Students' English language needs regarding their gender**

What is your gender?	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	p.
<b>English needs of students</b>	Male	133	84,69	.000
	Female	56	119,48	
<b>Total</b>	189			

According to the table 3, there was meaningful difference between gender and their language needs ( $p < 0,05$ ). Female students felt need more for learning English than the males.

**Table 4. Students' English language needs regarding their departments**

What is your department?	N	Mean Rank	p.	
<b>English needs of students</b>	Information technologies dept.	31	113,44	.000
	Biomedical technologies dept.	27	108,41	
	Electrical and electronics technologies dept.	25	129,12	
	Map technologies dept.	22	112,32	
	Construction technologies dept.	15	53,37	
	Machine technologies dept.	18	70,94	
	Metal technologies dept.	17	59,59	
	Furniture and indoor design technologies dept.	16	83,13	
	Motor vehicles technologies dept.	18	77,33	
<b>Total</b>	189			

Thirteen items (1,4,5,6,7,9,11,14,15,16,19,21, and 22) which proved that there were statistically significant differences between departments in terms of language needs. According to the all mean ranks, it can be said that electrical and electronics technologies department students, information technologies department students and biomedical technologies department students thought that they needed a vocational English course to improve their vocational English knowledge for their future career compared to other departments. The least mean ranks belonged to metal technologies department, construction technologies department, and metal technologies department in terms of language needs.

### *The language skills perceptions of the students*

Descriptive statistics were used in order to answer the third question (Which English language skill or skills do they want to improve for their future workplace?). As it can be seen from the table 5,



they claimed that they felt a need to improve their speaking and listening skills rather than reading and writing skills for their future career. As a result of the quantitative data analysis, the questionnaire revealed that Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School students had different kinds of needs to learn vocational English for their future job during their high school education. A great majority of the students were aware of that they needed English for their future workplace.

**Table 5. The Language Skills Perceptions of the Students**

	I need to learn English to use my listening skills in my job.	I need to learn English to use my speaking skills in my job.	I need to learn English to use my reading skills in my job.	I need to learn English to use my writing skills in my job.
Mean	3,5291	3,8995	2,8413	2,5132
Std. Deviation	,90827	1,24005	1,06000	1,02422
N	189	189	189	189

### Qualitative Results

After all the questionnaires were completed by the students, 5 English teachers and 30 students were interviewed to get the right picture and to make an in-depth analysis about the language needs. The data was analyzed and coded in order to find an answer the fourth question (Are English language courses satisfactory enough for Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School students to use the language in their future workplace effectively?).

3 of 30 students who were interviewed mentioned that they were satisfied with their current English level. F(12) stated that [I am pleased with my current English level]. However M(7) said, [I don't even think that I have an English level also courses are so boring] or M(26) said that [I do not have an English level so I don't think that I can use my English in my future job]. Half of the students stated that teachers do not smile in the lessons so they get bored easily. Most of the students thought that their teachers do not give enough effort because of burnout syndrome. Also, 24 students claimed that teachers are always giving information about grammar rules therefore they do not have a chance to use the language. Interestingly, they were aware of the difference between use of the language and usage of the language. That is why a great majority of the students did not have any expectations to use English for their job because of current situation and their teachers' attitudes and methods which they used. 27 students revealed that they needed a vocational English course and specific materials and course books to improve their vocational English knowledge. They perceived vocational English course as a must for mastering their area.

According to their perceptions, they wanted learn vocational English to earn more money (n=23), to work abroad (n=9), and to find a job easily (n=12). Although, M(7), M(15), and F(22) indicated that [I won't get any benefit from Vocational English, so I don't want to do this job]. On the other hand, teachers' interviews revealed that they were not satisfied with students' level and students themselves. Except from T4, the others were so pessimistic. The reason behind it could be that other teacher (T1, T2, T3, and T5) were substitute teachers who did not graduate from ELT department but international relations department. They do not have pedagogical knowledge enough to practice this sacred profession. Teachers also were not pleased students' current English levels. Moreover, they thought that they had negative attitudes towards English lesson. Four English teachers stated that they can't use English for future workplace because they don't have background knowledge about it. On the other hand, 2 English teachers wanted to be put the Vocational English course into the curriculum.

## DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to investigate the language needs of Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School students in Erzurum. The results showed that students need to learn English especially for speaking to the authorities in foreign companies. They stated that they wanted to learn English in order to have a good occupation. Moreover, they claimed that in all four skills, speaking skill was regarded as the most necessary skill for their future workplace and listening skill was perceived as the most second necessary skill. However, reading skill was rated as the third and writing skill was seen as the least necessary skill. Kaur and Khan (2010), Güleç (2013), Chan (2001), Karimkhanlouei (2012), and Huang (2014) found similar results about language skills in terms of learners' language needs. They stated in their studies that speaking was the most necessary skill whereas writing was the least necessary skill for learners' future workplace according to their perceptions. On the other hand, another study revealed that reading skill was seen as the most needed skill for learners' future career by the medical students (Alagözlü, 1994). Besides, Learners of Science and Technology University perceived listening and writing skills as the most needed skills in their department (Lee, 2016).

Specific technical vocabulary needs to be given to the learners for using it in their workplace (Northcott & Brown, 2006). The current study explained that they needed to learn English to understand the operating manuals on the devices related to their field. The third most agreed item in the questionnaire was that students needed to learn English words related to their field so that they can talk to the authorities in foreign companies and its mean was computed as ( $M = 4,20$ ). In other words, they had a desire to use technical terminology related to their fields while communicating with the co-partners or authorities in foreign companies. Yılmaz (2003) also found out that specific structures and vocabularies should be given to vocational high school students in order to be good at particular area.

Also, there were significant differences on the departments of the students in terms of language needs. There was no significant difference between gender, age and grade and language needs but significant differences were found only between departments and language needs. According to the statistical results, it can be seen that electrical and electronics technologies dept. students, information technologies department students and biomedical technologies department students' perceptions on language needs for their future career were more positive when compared to other departments. On the other hand, the least mean ranks belonged to metal technologies department, construction technologies department, and motor technologies department in terms of language needs. In these departments most of the students thought that they would not need English in the future for their job.

The fourth question's purpose was to find out English language courses were satisfactory enough for Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School students to use the language in their future workplace effectively or not. Interviews were used a data collection method from students and teachers. The interviews revealed that both students and teachers were not satisfied with the courses and their current English levels. Mihalache (2015) revealed that courses and materials did not meet learners' need to master their professional knowledge in their own departments. Similarly, this study shared the same destiny. 3 of 30 students who were interviewed mentioned that they were satisfied with their current English level. However S(7) said, [I don't even think that I have an English level also courses are so boring] or S(26) said that [I do not have an English level so I don't think that I can use my English in my future job]. Half of the students stated that teachers do not smile in the lessons so they get bored easily. 24 students claimed that teachers are always giving information about grammar rules therefore they do not have a chance to use the language. Interestingly, they were aware of the difference between use of the language and usage of the language. That is why a great majority of the students did not have any expectations to use English for their job because of current situation and their teachers' attitudes and methods which they used. 27 students revealed that they needed a vocational English course and specific materials and course books to improve their vocational English knowledge. They perceived vocational English course as a must for mastering their area. Learners'



language needs could be a guide for creating and shaping course materials and curriculum (Ballint, 2004).

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In this research, language needs of Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School students in Erzurum were investigated. The findings of the study revealed that students were aware that they needed English for their future job but these needs might vary. Their departments played a highly crucial role in terms of these differences. Information technologies department students and biomedical technologies department students' perceptions on language needs for their future career were more positive compared to motor technologies department and furniture technologies. Another important result was that speaking and listening were considered as the most necessary two skills for their future job while reading and writing were perceived as the least necessary two skills. Students wanted to practice the language not just learn or memorise it. According to their perceptions, they needed to have vocational English course for speaking to the authorities in foreign companies and to have a good occupation in future. However, both students and teachers were so pessimistic that they did not believe in themselves according the results of qualitative data. Both sides were not satisfied with the current English level of students.

Investigating Vocational High School students' language needs is a topic worth studying as this could be reflected in their future career. These students will be the people who will form the working part of our country. As with most studies, the present research has some limitations. When interpreting the results, it should be kept in mind that the data was collected from only one high school, thus the generalizability of the findings is limited to this context. Further studies are needed to delve more into for determining the language needs of high school students. To do so, other Vocational High School students' language needs can be compared for generalizing the results to a wider population. Findings of this study revealed several pedagogical implications for curriculum developers and teachers. Very first step is that vocational English course should be implemented to the curriculum. Student can improve their vocational knowledge including specific vocational terminology and structures by the help of this course.

## REFERENCES

- Alagözülü, N. K. (1994). *English language needs assessment of the students of the medical faculty of Cumhuriyet University* (Doctoral dissertation, Bilkent University).
- Balint, M. (2004). Assessing students' perceived language needs in a needs analysis. In *9th conference of pan-pacific association of applied linguistics, Tokyo*. Retrieved from <http://www.paaljapan.org/resources/proceedings/PAAL9/pdf/BalintMartin.pdf>.
- Belcher, D. (2009). What ESP is and can be: An introduction . In D. Belcher (ed.), *English for Specific Purposes in Theory and Practice 1 – 20*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Boroujeni, F. A., & Ketabi, S. (2012). Exploring the Language Learning Needs across Different Levels: A Case for the Iranian Undergraduate and Postgraduate Genetics Students. *English Language Teaching*, 5(7), 164-174.
- Bölükbaş, F. (2016). Suriyeli Mültecilerin Dil İhtiyaçlarının Analizi: İstanbul Örneği. *Journal of International Social Research*, 9(46).
- Chan, V. (2001, July). Determining students' language needs in a tertiary setting. In *English Teaching Forum* (Vol. 39, No. 3, pp. 16-27).
- Çalışkan, N., & Çangal, Ö. (2013). Yabancılarla Türkçe Öğretiminde Dil İhtiyaç Analizi: Bosna-Hersek Örneği. *Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*.
- Dornyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics*.
- Ermiş, A. (2008). An English Language Needs Assessment of the Preparatory Class Students of the Faculty of Divinity and the Department of the Teacher Training for the Culture of Religion and Ethics for Primary School at Ondokuz Mayıs University. *Unpublished Master's Thesis, Samsun: Ondokuz Mayıs University*.

- Güleç, H. (2013). Identifying English Language Needs of The Turkish National Police Academy Students: A Needs-Based Syllabus Suggestion for Law Enforcement English Course. *Unpublished Masters' Thesis, Anadolu University Graduate School of Educational Sciences, Eskişehir.*
- Huang, C. (2014). A needs analysis for Chinese language teaching at a university in the United States. *Language Learning in Higher Education, 4(2)*, 395-422.
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (2004). *English for specific purposes: A learning centered Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Karimkhanlouei, G. (2012). What do Medical Students Need to Learn in Their English Classes?. *Journal of Language Teaching & Research, 3(3)*.
- Kaur, S., & Khan, A. B. M. A. (2010). Language needs analysis of art and design students: Considerations for ESP course design. *ESP World, 9(2)*, 28.
- Kocer, O. (2013). The first step in curriculum development: Needs and situation analysis in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. *Eğitim ve Bilim-Education and Science, 38(169)*, 159-174.
- Lee, C. L. (2016). Principles and Practices of ESP Course Design—A Case Study of a University of Science and Technology. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research, 15(2)*.
- Long, M. (2005). *Second language needs analysis*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press
- Mackay, R., & Mountford, A. J. (1978). The teaching of English for special purposes: Theory and practice. *English for specific purposes, 2-20*.
- McDonough, J. (1984). *ESP in perspective: A practical guide*. London: Collins ELT.
- Mihaleche, R. (2015). Motivation vs. Need of ESP of Engineering Students. *Journal of International Social Research, 8(36)*.
- Northcott, J., & Brown, G. (2006). Legal translator training: Partnership between teachers of English for legal purposes and legal specialists. *English for Specific Purposes, 25(3)*, 358-375.
- Northrup, D. (2013). *How English Became the Global Language*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Paltridge, B., & Starfield, S. (Eds.). (2012). *The handbook of English for specific purposes* (Vol. 120). John Wiley & Sons.
- Peters, P., & Fernández, T. (2013). The lexical needs of ESP students in a professional field. *English for specific purposes, 32(4)*, 236-247.
- Rashidi, N., & Kehtarfard, R. (2014). A needs analysis approach to the evaluation of Iranian third-grade high school English textbook. *SAGE Open, 4(3)*, 2158244014551709.
- Robinson, P. (1991). *ESP today: A practitioner's guide*. Prentice Hall. UK: Prentice Hall International (UK) Ltd.
- Rogers, C. R. (1969). *Freedom to learn: A view of what education might become*. Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill.
- Taşçı, Ç. (2007). *An analysis of medical students' English language needs* (Doctoral dissertation, Bilkent University).
- Widdowson, H. G. (1983). *Learning purpose and language use*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Yılmaz, S. (2003). English Language Needs Assesment of The Students at İçel Anatolian Hotel Management and Tourism Vocational High School. *Unpublished Masters' Thesis, Dicle University Graduate School of Social Sciences, Diyarbakır.*



## A Comparative Study on Polar Questions in Turkish and English: Realizing the Dichotomy While Teaching

Ahmet Can Uyar<sup>1</sup>, Ondokuz Mayıs University, MA student, ahmetcanuyar97@gmail.com

**Recommended citation:** Uyar, A. C. (2019). A Comparative Study on Polar Questions in Turkish and English: Realizing the Dichotomy While Teaching. *Journal of Language Research (JLR)*, 3(1), 26-37.

**Abstract:** One of the common instruments in daily communication, questions are categorized into three major groups in most of the languages: polar questions, *wh-* questions, and alternative questions. When it is considered that the main purpose of teaching and learning a language is to communicate, it is expected for language learners to acquire good skills in exchanging information by asking and answering questions. In this context, polar questions should be paid close attention, as several studies revealed that the most frequently used question type in English spoken language is polar questions. However, it is argued that different answering systems for polar questions across languages cause language learners to have difficulties in learning how to answer polar questions appropriately, specifically, negative polar questions. Turkish and English languages employ different answering systems. Accordingly, Turkish learners of English must be aware of the differences and raise awareness on the issue to become proficient in the target language. Therefore, this study aims to explore the nature of the national coursebooks of English used in Turkey in terms of the activities they include related to polar questions. Contents of the coursebooks designed for the grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 were descriptively analyzed. As a result, it was found that the coursebooks do not sufficiently practice negative polar questions for learners to raise awareness. Based on the results, certain suggestions were proposed to enhance the quality of the coursebooks on the current topic.

**Keywords:** *polar questions, negative polar questions, teaching polar questions*

### Türkçe ve İngilizce'deki Kutuplu Sorular Üzerine Karşılaştırmalı Bir Çalışma: Öğretim Sürecinde Farklılıkları Kavrama

**Öz:** Günlük iletişim sürecinin temel öğelerinden olan sorular çoğu dilde başlıca üç gruba ayrılmıştır: kutuplu sorular, soru kelimesi soruları, ve seçenekli sorular. Dil öğrenmenin ve öğretmenin ana amacının iletişim kurmak olduğu dikkate alındığında, dil öğrencilerinden soru sorarak ve cevaplayarak bilgi alışverişi yapma becerilerini iyi bir şekilde edinmeleri beklenmektedir. Bu çerçevede, çeşitli çalışmalar İngilizce konuşma dilinde en çok kullanılan soru türünün kutuplu sorular olduğunu ortaya çıkardığından, bu tür sorular üzerine yoğunlaşılması önem arz etmektedir. Alanyazındaki çalışmalar göstermektedir ki farklı diller kutuplu soruları cevaplamak için farklı sistemler kullanırlar ve bu farklılıklar dil öğrencilerinin zorluklar yaşamalarına sebep olmaktadır. Özellikle olumsuz kutuplu sorular zorluğun ana sebebi olarak görülmektedir. Türkçe ve İngilizce farklı yanıtlama sistemleri kullanmaktadır. Bu nedenle, İngilizce öğrenen Türk öğrenciler dilde yetkin olabilmek için bu farklılıkların bilincinde olmalı ve bu konudaki farkındalıklarını artırmalıdır. Bu doğrultuda, bu çalışma İngilizce öğretmeyi amaçlayan Türk milli ders kitaplarını barındırdıkları kutuplu soru etkinlikleri açısından çözümlenmeyi amaçlamaktadır. 5, 6, 7, ve 8'inci sınıf öğrencileri için tasarlanan ders kitapları betimsel içerik analizi yöntemi ile incelenmiştir. İnceleme sonucunda ders kitaplarının İngilizce ve Türkçe arasındaki kutuplu soru yanıtlama sistemleri açısından farklılıkları yeterince işlemediği, dolayısıyla öğrencilerin bu konu hakkında farkındalık oluşturmalarını sağlayamayacağı sonucuna varılmıştır. Bu sonuçtan hareketle, ders kitaplarının bu konudaki etkililiğini artırabilecek çeşitli önermeler sunulmuştur.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** *kutuplu sorular, olumsuz kutuplu sorular, kutuplu soruların öğretimi*

<sup>1</sup> ORCID: 0000-0003-2438-9877

Submitted: 27.11.2019

Accepted: 30.12.2019



## INTRODUCTION

Asking and answering questions are two of the basic practices of daily communication. Language learners, as well as learners of English, are expected to maintain these practices successfully for a healthy communication process in the target language. During conversations, people produce different types of questions and there has been wide interest in describing and categorizing these question types in the field. Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, and Svartvik (1985) divided question types in English into three major classes as follows: polar questions, *wh*- questions, and alternative questions. These questions are used to clarify the truth value of a proposition (polar questions), to provide the asker with the missing information (*wh*- questions), and to choose among the introduced alternatives (alternative questions) (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999). There seems a consensus reached in terms of the classification of the question types in English, as most studies recognize the listed three major categories.

Classification of the question types in Turkish language has been paid less attention than English language. As Özgen (2010a) pointed out, Turkish question sentences have not been studied extensively and described thoroughly yet. One of the researchers in the field, Uzun (2006) classified Turkish question types into three major groups as polar questions, *wh*- questions, and intonation questions, and he listed many subtitles for each group. Kornfilt (1997) also stated three major groups, however, she listed them as polar questions, question word questions, and echo questions, with many subtitles for each. In a later study, Özgen (2010b) presented a list including polar questions, alternative questions, *wh*- questions, intonation questions, and echo questions. In the light of the given samples, it can be said that the classification of Turkish question types has not been as well-documented as English language and scholars are challenged to reach a consensus on the issue. However, it is evident that each list includes the form of polar questions, as a common question type in both Turkish and English.

Several studies have been conducted specifically related to the mentioned question types and significant results were documented in favor of the polar questions in English. For instance, Freed (1994) investigated the types of questions occurred in a number of conversations and classified each of them to quantify their frequency levels. According to the data, the most frequently occurring question type was polar questions, at the rate of 41% of the total questions. Similarly, Stivers (2010), who investigated the natural American English conversations, found out that the majority of all questions asked consisted of polar questions. In contrast with English, there are not any studies conducted in the field presenting the frequency levels of question types used in Turkish contexts. Nevertheless, it is of great importance for English language learners, as well as Turkish learners of English, to acquire good skills in terms of asking and answering questions, especially polar questions as the data revealed. At this point, it is reported in the literature that there are several typological differences in terms of answering polar questions in different languages. More specifically, negative forms of polar questions are likely to be the source of debate, as they pose cross-linguistic variations in the ways of expressing confirmation and disconfirmation as an answer (Holmberg, 2016).

Turkish and English are two languages differentiating from each other by the answering systems they employ. When this case is considered from the perspective of teaching English, there may occur some problematic situations for Turkish learners of English language. The different answering systems employed by Turkish and English are believed to cause Turkish learners of English to answer negative polar questions in an incorrect way, as a result of first language interference (Turgut, 2013). As Ellis (1994, p. 351) drew from Selinker (1972), “some, but not certainly all, items, rules, and subsystems of a learner’s interlanguage may be transferred from the first language”. In this context, it is of great importance to teach Turkish learners of English how to answer negative polar questions in English and make them realize the differences between the systems of Turkish and English to avoid negative transfer from Turkish to English. Therefore, this qualitative study aims to analyze the contents of the coursebooks of English published by Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in Turkey and explore the following questions:





1. What are the frequency levels of the activities involving polar and negative polar questions included in the Turkish national coursebooks of English?
2. Do the activities included provide sufficient practice of negative polar questions to raise learners' awareness on the answering system of English and attempt to prevent negative first language transfer?

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Insight into Polar Questions

Polar questions, also known as yes/no questions, are one of the major groups of question types. They typically require verification or disaffirmation as an answer, as in the English example '*Have you read Sons and Lovers?*' which expects an answer like '*Yes, I have*' or '*No, I haven't*', which confirms or disconfirms the proposed question. As an additional example in Turkish, the question '*Bu filmi izledin mi?*' [*Have you seen this movie?*] which expects an answer like '*Evet, izledim*' [*Yes, I have*] or '*Hayır, izlemedim*' [*No, I haven't*] can be presented.

The nature of polar questions has been paid considerable attention and studies revealed important findings in cross-linguistic sense. As the literature presents, it is argued that there are variables in answering polar questions in different languages. This variety led the emergence of two different typological answering systems in the literature. These two types of systems are *polarity-based* and *truth-based* systems (Kim, 2017). Actually, the system that a language employs manifests and distinguishes itself from the other system mostly in the sense of negative polar questions, as the studies in the literature highly focused on negative polar questions while discussing the mentioned answering systems.

In polarity-based systems, *yes-no* answer particles agree or disagree with the negative or positive polarity of the question (Gruet-Skrabalova, 2016). In polarity-based systems, the negative answer particle *no* is typically followed by a negative sentence, and the positive particle *yes* by a positive sentence in polarity-based systems (González-Fuente, Tubau, Espinal, & Prieto, 2015), e.g., '*yes, they do*' or '*no, they don't*'. Finnish, Swedish, French, and English are the typical examples of the languages employing the polarity-based system (Jones, 1999; cited in Holmberg, 2013). Jones (1999, p. 9) stated the following example to demonstrate the way that English employs the polarity-based system, and highlighted that the other combinations are not typically found in English:

(1) *Aren't you staying?*

- No [, I'm not]

- Yes [, I am]

On the other hand, languages employing the truth-based system respond to the negative polar questions with *yes* to confirm its truth value, or *no* to disconfirm it (i.e., the particle agrees or disagrees with the overall content of the proposed question) (González-Fuente et al., 2015). Based on the detailed study of the answering systems across languages by Pope (1972), Gruet-Skrabalova (2016, p. 127) stated that truth-based systems involve polar answers to approve or disapprove the truth value of the overall content of the question, and presented the following example from Japanese:

(2) *Kimi tsukareteinai?* [*Aren't you tired?*]

- Hai (tsukareteinai) [Yes] [(I am not)]

- Iie (tsukareteiru desu) [No] [(I am)]



For the clarification of the logic of this system, also noted in González-Fuente et al. (2015) with a different example, the example (2) can be interpreted as ‘yes, you are right, I am not tired’ or ‘no, you are not right, I am tired’. By this way, the speaker agrees or disagrees with the content of the proposed question, regardless of any need of sensitivity for the polarity of the question.

When these systems and examples are examined, it is noticeable that Turkish can utilize both of these systems. Many answering patterns are possible in Turkish. Consider the following example:

(3) *Oğullar ve Sevgililer’i okumadın mı? [Haven’t you read Sons and Lovers?]*

- Evet, okumadım. [Yes, I haven’t.]
- Hayır, okudum. [No, I have.]
- Hayır, okumadım. [No, I haven’t.]
- Evet, okudum. [Yes, I have.]

Any Turkish speaker would agree that the listed four options in the example (3) are acceptable in Turkish. While the first two answers represent a well-established truth-based system property, the last two represent a pure polarity-based system. This case has been reported in the literature. Holmberg (2014) suggests that there are languages utilizing both of these systems, carrying the characteristics of a mixed system. For instance, Kashmiri is a language which employs a mixed system, as the answer for a negative polar question can be constructed with *na* [no] or *a:* [yes] for the same meaning, carrying the characteristics of both the polarity-based and the truth-based system (Holmberg, 2014). The example presented by Wali and Koul (1997, p. 36) demonstrates the mixed system employed in Kashmiri:

(4) *(k’a:) ts parakh na: yi kita:b? [Won’t you read this book?]*

- a:, b par (yi kita:b). [Yes, I’ll read this book]
- na, b par n (yi kita:b). [No, I won’t read this book]
- a:, b par n. [Yes, I won’t read]
- na, b par. [No, I’ll read]

The similarity is noticeable between the Turkish example (3) and Kashmiri example (4), which was reported to use a mixed system. In the light of this argumentation, it can be argued that Turkish is one of the languages which employ a mixed system, involving both the polarity-based and the truth-based system features. However, it is clear that further studies are needed in the field in terms of the answering system of Turkish.

This brief literature review on polar questions attempted to create a background for the concerns of the current study. Although little or no research concerned to investigate the answering system of Turkish language, it is evident that there are differences between English and Turkish. As it constitutes the base of this study, disclosing the use of different systems by Turkish and English is an adequate step in the borders of the current study.

### Studies on Teaching Polar Questions

Studies on teaching polar questions cover a quite limited area in the literature. Although there are publications focusing on teaching questions, most of them take phonological characteristics of polar questions as a basis, rather than the typological differences across languages in terms of the answering systems. For instance, Thompson (1995) dwelt upon teaching questions in terms of the phonological characteristics of asking questions. She criticized the way of teaching intonation on questions based on rules, such as the rule of asking polar questions with a rising intonation, stating that these grammatical approaches to teaching intonation are obviously misleading. Ji, Wang, and Li (2009) analyzed the intonation patterns on polar questions uttered by a group of Chinese students of English to compare them with the native American speakers, and several differences were revealed.



Timpe-Laughlin, Lee, Evanini, Bruno, and Blood (2017) investigated a sample of German students of English as a foreign language (EFL) to observe the formation of the polar questions used by them. Their study focused on the production of polar questions by young learners through a game, rather than practicing answering. Similarly, Al-Hassaani (2016) conducted a study on a group of Saudi EFL learners to explore the problems in the formation of English questions, without any emphasis on the answering patterns. Williams (1990) also compared the polar question formations produced by the native English speakers and the speakers of Singapore English, findings suggested that the productions of the Singaporean speakers were in line with the native productions in terms of syntax and basic linguistic units.

Descriptive approaches were also taken towards the current topic. Ngadi (2018) attempted to discover the question and answer dialogues involved in an EFL classroom in Indonesia, and discussed the errors made by both teachers and students. The errors made were found to be omission, misinformation, and misordering. However, the study lacked practical suggestions for enhancing the situation and educational purposes, thus, featured only descriptive aspects. Likewise, in Indonesia, Dirgeyasa (2017) aimed to find out the answers given by the students to polar questions and classified them. The dominantly used answer type was found to include polar particles followed by additional information.

Literature presents several studies focusing on different points in the sense of teaching polar questions. However, as far as this paper is concerned, no steps have been taken to focus on the typological aspects of polar questions across languages in relation to teaching contexts. Therefore, this study is anticipated to smooth the path to more studies on cross-linguistic aspects of polar questions and teaching contexts.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

Based on a qualitative data gathering approach, descriptive content analysis method has been employed for the study. Descriptive content analysis method is utilized to analyze and present the frequency levels of certain language elements in coursebooks (Seliger & Shohamy, 1990). Studies utilizing descriptive content analysis method attempt to present a general perspective of a particular topic by frequency or percentage values without the inference of details (Dinçer, 2018).

### Data Collection

Four English coursebooks published by MoNE for the state schools in Turkey were selected to be analyzed for the research questions of the study. The selected coursebooks are designed for secondary school education in Turkey, namely, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. The reason for the selection of the mentioned sample group is in line with the objectives of English instruction stated in the curricula published by MoNE. Specifically, the objective of English instruction in the secondary school is to make learners reach the proficiency level of A1 at the end of the 6th grade, and A2 at the end of the 8th grade (MEB, 2018). This level of proficiency is referred to as *basic user*, and it includes the skills of asking and answering questions about certain topics, as well as exchanging information (Council of Europe, 2001). In the light of the relation between the focus of this study and mentioned areas, the following coursebooks were selected to be the sample group of the current study: (1) *İngilizce 5* by Mehmet Yalçın, Günhan Genç, Nihat Özgür Orhon, Hayriye Şahin. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2019; (2) *İngilizce 6* by Fatma Demircan, Gonca Akıskalı, Aysel Berket, Ferdi Günay. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2019; (3) *İngilizce 7* by Aydan Aykanat Erdem, Turgut Balcı, Kader Duran Özdi. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2019; (4) *Mastermind İngilizce 8* by Binnur İltar, İlknur İzgi, Esra Çavuşer Özdemir, Ayşegül Türkeri Yeter, Zeliha Tuğba Çavuşer Yünlü. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2019.



## Procedure

The study aimed to investigate the nature of the contents of the selected coursebooks to reveal whether or not they attempt to teach learners the answering system of English language and raise awareness to prevent first language interference on the current issue. To this end, the activities in each coursebook were examined meticulously one by one. Firstly, each activity in the coursebooks was investigated to determine if it involved any types of practices or presentations of asking and answering questions in a general sense, including *wh*- questions, polar questions, and alternative questions, and the ones which did were marked and counted in number. This provided data about the rate of polar questions compared to the other type of questions included in the book, in line with the first question of the study. Secondly, the activities involving polar questions were distinguished from the others and quantified. Finally, the distinguished activities were analyzed in further detail to specify the negative forms included. It was aimed to realize the quality of the negative polar questions included, the actual concern of the study. All the quantitative data dealing with the numbers of the counted activities are presented in a table for a better perspective. By the help of the obtained data and further examinations of the selected activities, certain comments are put forward and the questions of the study are answered.

## FINDINGS

The first question of the study investigated the rates of the activities involving polar and negative polar questions included in the coursebooks. To this end, all the activities in each coursebook involving any type of questions were determined and the frequency levels of each type of questions were disclosed. Table 1 presents the frequency levels and percentage values of all the activities involving questions, activities involving polar questions, and activities involving negative polar questions.


**Table 1. Frequencies and approximate percentage values of the activities**

	Activities involving questions		polar questions		(-) polar questions	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
<b>İngilizce 5</b>	83	100%	53	63%	0	0%
<b>İngilizce 6</b>	60	100%	23	38%	0	0%
<b>İngilizce 7</b>	115	100%	32	27%	1	0,8%
<b>İngilizce 8</b>	98	100%	42	42%	1	0,9%

According to the table, coursebooks represent variations in the frequencies of the activities involving both questions and polar questions. Coursebook *İngilizce 5* presents a total of 83 activities involving any type of questions. Polar questions cover an area in these activities at the rate of 63%, with the frequency level of 53. This data aver that more than half of the activities embrace polar questions either by practicing or presenting the forms of this type of questions. Inclusion of negative forms of polar questions has been neglected, as the table suggests a rate of 0% for the negative polar questions. One way in which the coursebook *İngilizce 6* is similar to the coursebook *İngilizce 5* is the rate of the inclusion of negative polar questions. *İngilizce 6* subsumes a total of 60 activities involving questions. These activities contain 23 activities dealing with polar questions, which is equal to the percentage value of 38%. This score indicates an area less than half of the question activities in total, and is lower than the score represented by *İngilizce 5*. However, none of them deals with negative polar questions out of these 23 activities. On the other hand, *İngilizce 7* attempts to promote polar questions at the rate of 27%, a score lower than both *İngilizce 5* and *İngilizce 6*. *İngilizce 7* contains one activity including the negative form of a polar question, at the rate of 0,8%. Lastly, *Mastermind İngilizce 8* embodies polar questions within its content at the rate of 42% of all the activities, nearly half of the activities dealing with questions. Out of the 42 activities dealing with polar questions, one of them included a negative form of a polar question, which is equal to 0,9%.



The second question of the study investigated the efficacy of the activities involving polar questions in terms of teaching how to answer negative polar questions in English. As the data revealed, coursebooks contain activities focusing on polar questions at certain levels. However, the distribution of negative polar questions is extremely limited. Only two coursebooks, *İngilizce 7* and *Mastermind İngilizce 8*, include two activities presenting the negative forms of polar questions. Surprisingly enough to observe this poor level of focus on negative polar questions, the efficacy of the activities in *İngilizce 7* and *Mastermind İngilizce 8* is fairly open to discussion. The activity presenting the negative form of a polar question in *Mastermind İngilizce 8* is presented in Figure 1.

 **Activity 1**  
Study the sentences in the boxes. Work in pairs. Add one more example in each box.

Expressing Responsibilities	Expressing Obligation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● I'm responsible for cooking dinner.</li> <li>● S/he is in charge of taking out the garbage.</li> <li>● Don't you think it is necessary to tidy up your room?</li> <li>● It's time to do the laundry.</li> <li>● .....</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Do you have to help your parents in housework? - Well, I must help my parents to set the table.</li> <li>● - I must help my brother to do his homework.</li> <li>● We must respect the elder people/ each other.</li> <li>● My brother has to respect my rights.</li> <li>● .....</li> </ul>

Figure 1. A sample from *Mastermind İngilizce 8*, p. 98

As it can be seen in Figure 1, this activity can hardly be considered to highlight the nature of negative polar questions in English because it excludes the aspect of answering patterns. The form is only given in a tip box and it remained as it is without any practice or further presentation of the possible answers. The case is the same for the other activity in *İngilizce 7* which is presented in Figure 2.

**1**  Look at the picture below. This is a tiny part of our universe. It's our galaxy, "Milky Way". Where is our Solar System?





Can't you find? Now put your pen's tip on the picture. Yes, our Solar System is smaller than that. Let's look closer to our Solar System.



Figure 2. A sample from *İngilizce 7*, p. 120

Interestingly, there are not any other activities in any of the coursebooks presenting or practicing the negative forms of polar questions. Based on these results, it can be said that the activities involved in the coursebooks are not adequate to provide learners with the knowledge about the answering system of English language. Accordingly, it is difficult for learners to raise awareness on the issue based on the limited resources in the examined coursebooks, thus, first language interference seems in its high possibility to occur in learners' interlanguages.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The objective of the current study was to draw attention to a point which has been relatively neglected in the literature. Documentation of the different answering systems in terms of answering polar



questions, truth-based and polarity-based systems, in the literature formed the basis of the present study. Studies presented that the polarity-based system is common in Western languages, while the truth-based system seems to invade the languages spoken in the Eastern areas of the world. This case was taken into account from the perspective of language teaching. In link with the different answering features of languages and the concept of first language interference, learners were hypothesized to face problems while answering polar questions and transfer the characteristics of their first languages to the target language negatively. After all, this difference across languages is a well-known problem for oriental learners of European languages (Holmberg, 2016). For the context of the present study, Turkish learners of English were kept on the horizon. After describing the characteristics of the answering system of Turkish language and the distinction between Turkish and English, the importance of teaching how to answer negative polar questions was emphasized. Next, several coursebooks published by MoNE in Turkey were descriptively analyzed to investigate the activities displaying polar questions. Quantities of the frequency levels were presented and expressed as percentages. As a result, it was found that the coursebooks include activities with polar questions at certain levels. However, little or arguably no emphasis was put on negative polar questions. Only the coursebooks *İngilizce 7* and *Mastermind İngilizce 8* embrace two activities presenting the negative forms of polar questions, however, it is disputable to what extent they can be regarded as proper samples.

The present study suggests that considerable attention should be paid on the discussed issue. Polar questions account for a major part of daily spoken English and it is of great importance for learners of English to master in answering this type of questions. Because, the distinction between languages generally leads speakers from different linguistic backgrounds to misunderstandings and embarrassments during conversations (Holmberg, 2016). However, as the data revealed, national English coursebooks in Turkey overlooked this issue. More practices of negative polar questions with answers should be included in the coursebooks. As a matter of fact, it is noticeable in the coursebooks that some activities could easily be adapted to display the aspects of the answering system of English. For instance, consider the activity presented in Figure 3.



Figure 3. A sample from *İngilizce 6*, p. 106

This example activity from *İngilizce 6* in Figure 3 can go under a little change and get adapted to reflect an answer to a negative question. For example, the questions that the speaker asks in the activity could be converted to 'Can't you build a house?' and 'Aren't you a tailor?', or similar questions with negation could be added such as 'Can't you cook?' with the corresponding answer 'No, I can't'. In an adapted version, the activity would look like as presented in Figure 4.





Figure 4. An adapted suggestion of the activity in İngilizce 6, p. 106

By this way, learners can realize the identical answers with the same meaning to differently structured polar questions, as it is argued that English neutral and negative polar questions are answered in an identical way. Another example is presented in Figure 5.

**Talking about Experiences**

- Have you ever been to ...?
  - Yes, I have.
  - No, I have not.
  - I have been to Side before.
  - I have never been to Mardin.
- .....

Figure 5. A sample from Mastermind İngilizce 8, p. 86

The example from *Mastermind İngilizce 8* in Figure 5 can be adapted as well. This presentation in this example perfectly indicates that the positive answer particle is typically followed by a positive sentence and negative answer particle by a negative one in English. In addition to the given expressions, the negative form of the proposed question in the activity can be placed next to it with the same answer particles to take the attention of the learners as presented in Figure 6.

**Talking about Experiences**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Have you ever been to ...?           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yes, I have.</li> <li>- No, I have not.</li> <li>- I have been to Side before.</li> <li>- I have never been to Mardin.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● .....</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Haven't you ever been to ...?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yes, I have.</li> <li>- No, I have not.</li> </ul>
---	---

Figure 6. An adapted suggestion of the activity in Mastermind İngilizce 8, p. 86

These examples can be extended by many samples. These two adapted suggestions are adequate to demonstrate the way that activities could perfectly involve negative polar questions.

It is inevitable for learners of English to involve in conversations in which they would ask and answer negative polar questions. In this context, they should be aware of the differences from their native language Turkish to prevent misunderstandings in English conversations. Otherwise, for instance, the



question 'Haven't you ever been to England?' in a regular English conversation might be answered as 'Yes, I haven't' by a Turkish learner of English, which would generate an embarrassing situation for the speaker. Although special focus has been neglected in the national English coursebooks used in Turkey, some open-ended activities could be directed by the teachers to serve this purpose. For instance, the following activity in Figure 7 expects learners to create interrogative expressions according to the given expressions. While practicing this activity, teachers could encourage learners to create negative polar questions and explain the way that negative polar questions are answered in English.

**b) Complete the dialogues with suitable questions.**

1 **Where are you from?** I'm from Poland. Julia

2 ----- Yes, I do. Chess is my favorite. Akira

3 ----- No, I can't. Akira

4 ----- Yes, I love it. Julia

Figure 7. A sample from İngilizce 5, p. 52

As an example, the second gap in the activity in Figure 7 would be typically filled in as 'Do you love chess?' by the learners. However, teachers could promote the negative forms of the expressions and help learners to fill in the gap with 'Don't you love chess?', indicating that the answer expression would remain the same. The same procedure could be applied to the other gaps and other activities as well. There are many activities in the coursebooks that can be adapted or directed for the current purpose. In this frame, teachers are important figures to take responsibility until the English coursebooks are designed more sensitively on this issue.

As a concluding remark, it should be noted that coursebooks seem to put great emphasis on the practices of *wh*- questions rather than polar questions. The importance of *wh*- questions in languages is indisputable. However, studies show that polar questions are frequently used in English, thus, they deserve as much attention as *wh*- questions in English teaching materials. It is beneficial for learners if teachers keep these mentioned areas in mind while teaching English or designing English teaching materials.

## REFERENCES

- Al-Hassaani, A. M. A. (2016). A Case Study of Question Formations of the Saudi EFL Learners at Bisha University. *English Language Teaching*, 9(5), 54-64. doi:10.5539/elt.v9n5p54
- Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S., & Finegan, E. (1999). *Longman grammar of spoken and written English*. Harlow, England: Longman.





- Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge, UK: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge.
- Demircan, F., Akıskalı G., Berket, A., & Günay, F. (2019). *İngilizce 6 Ders Kitabı*. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları.
- Dinçer, S. (2018). Content Analysis in Scientific Research: Meta-Analysis, Meta-Synthesis, and Descriptive Content Analysis. *Bartın University Journal of Faculty of Education*, 7(1), 176-190. doi: 10.14686/buefad.363159
- Dirgeyasa, I. W. (2017). Model Answers for Yes/No Questions from EFL Students in Public Senior High Schools. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 4(2), 235-246.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Erdem, A. A., Balcı, T., & Özdi, K. D. (2019). *İngilizce 7 Ders Kitabı*. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları.
- Freed, A. F. (1994). The form and function of questions in informal dyadic conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 21, 621-644.
- González-Fuente, S., Tubau, S., Espinal, M. T., & Prieto, P. (2015). Is there a universal answering strategy for rejecting negative propositions? Typological evidence on the use of prosody and gesture. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00899
- Gruet-Skrabalova, H. (2016). Yes or no, or how to answer a negative question. *Linguistica*, 56(1), 127-142.
- Holmberg, A. (2013). The syntax of answers to polar questions in English and Swedish. *Lingua*, 128, 31-50. doi:10.1016/j.lingua.2012.10.018
- Holmberg, A. (2014). Answering Yes/No-Questions in English and Other Languages. *The EFL Journal*, 5(2), 23-42.
- Holmberg, A. (2016). *The Syntax of Yes and No*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- İlter, B., İzgi, İ., Özdemir, E. Ç., Yeter, A. T., & Çavuşer Yünlü, Z. T. (2019). *Mastermind İngilizce 8 Ders Kitabı*. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları.
- Ji, X., Wang, X., & Li, A. (2009). Intonation patterns of yes-no questions for Chinese EFL learners. *2009 Oriental COCODA International Conference on Speech Database and Assessments*. doi:10.1109/icsda.2009.5278369
- Jones, B. M. (1999). *The Welsh Answering System*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Kim, J. B. (2017). Modeling Answering Strategies for the Polar Questions across Languages. In *Proceedings of the 31st Pacific Asia Conference on Language, Information and Computation* (pp. 2-9).
- Kornfilt, J. (1997). *Turkish*. Blackwell: Routledge.
- MEB. (2018). İngilizce Dersi Öğretim Programı (İlkokul ve Ortaokul 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, ve 8. Sınıflar). Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı.
- Ngadi, Y. F. (2018). An Analysis of Questions and Answers in an EFL Classroom of St. Joseph Junior High School in Academic Year 2015/2016. *Academic Journal of Educational Sciences*, 1(2), 48-54.
- Özgen, M. (2010a). Türkçe soru tümcesi türleri ve yabancı dil olarak Türkçe öğretimi materyallerindeki yeri. *Dil Dergisi*, 150, 50-69. 10.1501/Dilder\_0000000138
- Özgen, M. (2010b). Türkçe soru tümcelerinin öğretimi. Unpublished Master's Thesis. İzmir: Dokuz Eylül University.
- Pope, E. N. (1972). Questions and answers in English. PhD. Diss. MIT.



- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., & Svartvik, J. (1985). *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. Longman, London.
- Seliger, H. W. & Shohamy, E. (1990). *Second Language Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Selinker, L. (1972). Interlanguage. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 10(1-4). doi:10.1515/iral.1972.10.1-4.209
- Stivers, T. (2010). An overview of the question–response system in American English conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 42(10), 2772–2781.
- Thompson, S. (1995). Teaching intonation on questions. *ELT Journal*, 49(3), 235–243. doi:10.1093/elt/49.3.235
- Timpe-Laughlin, V., Lee, J., Evanini, K., Bruno, J., & Blood, I. (2017). Can you guess who I am?: An interactive task for young learners to practice yes/no question formation in English. *Proceedings of 6th International Workshop on Child Computer Interaction*.
- Turgut, A. (2013). *A Contrastive Study on Turkish and English*. İzmir: Zeus Kitabevi Yayınları.
- Uzun, N. E. (2006). Türkçenin öğretimi için soru tümcesi türleri üzerine bir sınıflama denemesi. *Dil dergisi*, 131, 15-32. Ankara: TÖMER.
- Wali, K. & Koul, O. (1997). *Kashmiri*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Williams, J. (1990). Another Look at Yes/No Questions: Native Speakers and Non-native Speakers. *Applied Linguistics*, 11(2), 159–182. doi:10.1093/applin/11.2.159
- Yalçın, M., Genç, G., Orhon, N. Ö., & Şahin, H. (2019). *İngilizce 5 Ders Kitabı*. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları.



## BOOK REVIEW

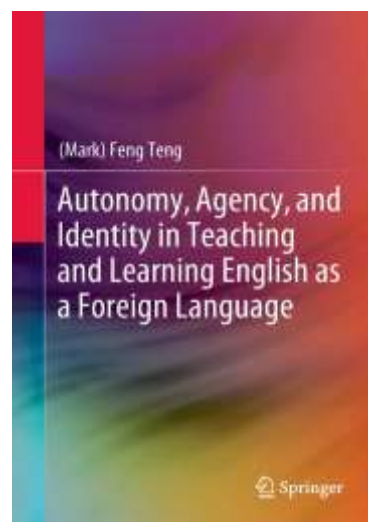
### **Autonomy, Agency, and Identity in Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language (2019)**

Author: (Mark) Feng Teng  
Publisher: Springer  
Pp. 132  
ISBN: 978-981-130727-0

Reviewed by

Hale Nur Söyler<sup>1</sup>, Ondokuz Mayıs University,  
[hnsoyler1@hotmail.com](mailto:hnsoyler1@hotmail.com)

Dr. İsmail Yaman<sup>2</sup>, Ondokuz Mayıs University,  
[ismail.yaman@omu.edu.tr](mailto:ismail.yaman@omu.edu.tr)



Autonomy has been considered as one of the key notions in foreign language learning and teaching over the past decades. In recent years, the understanding of autonomy has been expanded because of the increasing importance of identity and agency in EFL learning and teaching and the interrelation of these three concepts has been discussed. *Autonomy, Agency, and Identity in Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language* is a book that aims to provide theoretical and practical understanding of autonomy, agency and identity from different perspectives and roles in relation to teaching and learning. This book presents up-to-date information and research findings about these notions and their interrelationship. Of 132 pages, the book consists of eight chapters. The first six chapters focus on theoretical information and the interrelationship of autonomy, agency and identity. The last two chapters present two research studies related to these notions.

Chapter 1, entitled *Learner Autonomy: An Educational Goal of Teaching English as a Foreign Language* focuses on the different aspects of learner autonomy in EFL settings. First, it presents various definitions of learner autonomy to clarify it in readers' mind and then reviews learner autonomy from different perspectives such as political development, social development, sociolinguistics, cognitive psychology, meta-cognitive domain, and motivation. The chapter not only presents supports for learner autonomy but also criticisms against it that emerged among educational philosophers. The author concludes the chapter by putting emphasis on teachers' roles to promote learner autonomy.

Chapter 2, entitled *Teacher Autonomy: A Buzzword in Teaching English as a Foreign Language* aims to show the place of teacher autonomy in ELT. The author clarifies teacher autonomy by giving various definitions and explains the reasons why teacher autonomy is required to support learner autonomy. In that vein, it highlights teachers' roles in development of students' autonomous learning behaviors under six categories that have a vital role in enhancing learn autonomy. The author

<sup>1</sup> ORCID: 0000-0002-8881-1793

<sup>2</sup> ORCID: 0000-0003-1323-4909

Submitted: 27.12.2019

Accepted: 30.12.2019



mentions both the autonomy-enhancing supports that affect the development of teacher autonomy positively and the autonomy-suppressing constraints that have negative effect on the enhancement of teacher autonomy.

Chapter 3, entitled *Learner Identity in Foreign Language Education: Issues and Implications* concentrates on the meaning of the learner identity in the field of foreign language education and discusses the reciprocal nature of learner identity and language learning. In this direction, this chapter reviews not only the effects of positive and negative learner identities on their language learning success but also the factors that influence learner identity because of the complexity of identity development.

Chapter 4, entitled *Teacher Identity in Foreign Language Education: From the perspective of Teacher Autonomy, Communities of Practice, and Affordance* aims to conceptualize teacher identity and its development with regard to three notions that are teacher autonomy, communities of practice, and affordances. The chapter presents the definitions of teacher autonomy, teacher identity, communities of practice and affordances and then explains the interrelation between all four notions in detail. The author also discusses contextual factors connected to teacher identity progress that support or prevent the construction of teacher autonomy and teachers' ability to notice affordances in teaching settings.

Chapter 5, entitled *The Complexities of Learner Agency and Teacher Agency in Foreign Language Education* explores the notion of agency in terms of the roles of learners and teachers. The author firstly highlights learner agency by giving various definitions and then discusses the development of learner agency through the interaction between the individual and the contextual settings. Likewise, the author sheds light on teacher agency by means of exploring this notion and the factors that influence the formation of teachers' professional agency. This chapter develops an understanding of the concept of agency and the involved complex components that create challenges for teacher and learners to become more effective in their teaching and learning.

Chapter 6, entitled *Interrelationship of (Teacher) Autonomy, (Teacher) Agency, and (Teacher) Identity in Foreign Language Education* explains the interrelationship between autonomy, agency, and identity and discusses the reciprocal nature of teacher autonomy, teacher agency, and teacher identity and their important roles in the field of teacher education. The author argues that a complete conceptualization of their interrelationship helps teachers realize the affordances more easily to develop their autonomy by taking their identity and agency into consideration.

Chapter 7 and 8 comprises two different research studies focusing on identity from the perspective of different roles such as teachers and students. Chapter 7 presents the study, *To Be or Not to Be An 'Old English Lecturer': A Social Identity Theory Perspective* that explores the identity formation experiences of university English lectures in China. On the other hand, Chapter 8, covers the study *How EFL Students Learn English: From the Perspective of Identity Continuity and Identity Change* that examines the identity continuity and change of three Chinese college English major students in their English learning process.

The book is a great resource to explore autonomy, identity, and agency from different perspectives and roles. Theoretical information on these notions is supported with research findings and that makes the content more understandable. The relationship between these important notions and their importance in EFL settings are presented in detail to bring a new insight into learner and teacher education. All in all, it can be evaluated as a useful reference for researchers that aim to explore the nature of autonomy, identity, and agency in ELT.

## BOOK REVIEW

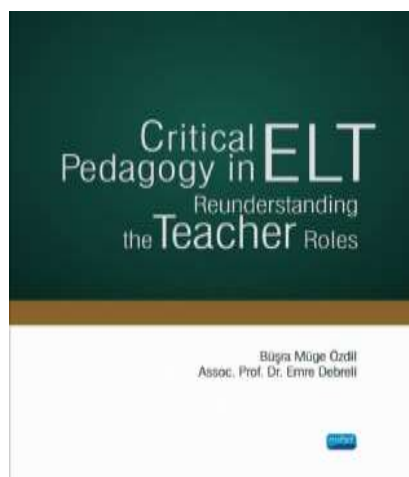
### **Critical Pedagogy in ELT: Reunderstanding the Teacher Roles (2019)**

Authors: Büşra Müge Özdil and  
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emre Debrelil  
Publisher: Nobel Academy  
Pp. 83  
ISBN: 9786050330519

Reviewed by

Özge Aygün<sup>1</sup>, Ondokuz Mayıs University,  
[ozgeayy1@gmail.com](mailto:ozgeayy1@gmail.com)

Dr. İsmail Yaman<sup>2</sup>, Ondokuz Mayıs University,  
[ismail.yaman@omu.edu.tr](mailto:ismail.yaman@omu.edu.tr)



Teacher roles in language education have been changing depending on educational philosophies, pedagogies, and reform movements. Therefore, teacher roles have turned into a popular issue in education. Today there are a number of longitudinal studies related to this issue so as to gain a deeper understanding of the teacher roles in terms of Critical Pedagogy (CP) in English language teaching (ELT). Under this framework, *Critical Pedagogy in ELT: Reunderstanding the Teacher Roles* is a newly published book which mainly focuses on the relationship between CP and teacher roles referring to Kumaravadivelu's (2003) classification. The book written by two knowledgeable authors aims to discuss CP philosophy and ELT relationships. Further, it intends to provide English language teachers, prospective teachers, and academics with a valuable resource to understand the language teaching profession from a different perspective.

The book consists of 5 chapters. Chapter 1 presents an introduction to the book. In order to make a smooth transition, the authors start with the definition and purpose of education proposed by some scholars. Then, they briefly present CP towards language teaching and its impact on the teacher roles.

Chapter 2 presents detailed definitions of CP referring to critical language awareness, critical literacy, education of equity, and praxis. CP understanding of education is compared to that of traditional system of schooling with concrete descriptions. Also, theoretical foundations of CP such as philosophical and educational relations are discussed in depth with reference to important figures such as Dewey, Vygotsky, and Frei. Then, parameters of CP in its practical sense are presented as possible guiding principles to design responsive classroom practices in accordance with learners' needs and learning atmosphere. The parameters are categorized as criticality, relevance, participation, and dialogism. After all that, following a critical look at ELT, some studies on CP and English language teaching are shared in a literature review format.

<sup>1</sup> ORCID: 0000-0003-0906-2032

<sup>2</sup> ORCID: 0000-0003-1323-4909

Submitted: 27.12.2019

Accepted: 30.12.2019

Chapter 3 is devoted to English language learning and teaching in Turkey. The status of English as a foreign language in Turkey is discussed with reference to the concentric circles introduced by Kachru (1985). The reasons of learning English in Turkey are covered and the main reasons are evaluated from an instrumental view. Then, teacher education programs in Turkey are examined from village institutions to several reform movements made in 1997, 2006, and 2018.

Chapter 4 draws attention to teacher roles from Kumaravadivelu's (2003) perspective. In his framework, teachers are assigned roles such as passive technicians, reflective practitioners, and transformative intellectuals. The expanding characteristics of these roles are discussed in depth with the help of well-organized tables. Further, the impact of CP theory on teacher roles is discussed in accordance with political, ethical, and emancipatory dimensions. Then, teacher roles are presented both in Method Era and Post-method Era through comparison. From Method Era perspective, teacher roles are examined in a way that they change depending on methods used ( e.g. 'the authority in the class' in Grammar-Translation Method). On the other side of the coin, teachers in Post-method Era can enjoy being autonomous and reflective on their teaching processes, along with being teachers as researchers. As another aspect of Post-method Era, the three parameters, particularity, possibility, and practicality, suggested by Kumaravadivelu (2001) are mentioned since they have contributed to the development of teacher roles.

In Chapter 5, the authors make a well-organized conclusion. They summarize the previous chapters and state that social, cultural, and historical realities from a CP perspective should be carefully analysed to understand the impact of them on teacher roles.

The book possesses great strengths in terms of its content selection and smooth transition between chapters. It conveys various information related to CP in ELT and teacher roles which constitute contemporary issues in the educational realm. The authors not only provide readers with rich theoretical knowledge but also specific studies related to the content, which makes reading more tangible. One possible drawback about this book may be its insufficient mention of practical sides of teacher roles. Overall, the book is a notable source for English language teachers, prospective teachers, and academics with its reader-friendly organization, alongside its highly informative content.

### References

- Kachru, B.B. (1985). Standards, codification and sociolinguistics realism: the English language in the outer circle. In R.Quirk & H.G.Widdowson (Eds.), *English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures*, 11-30. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2001). Toward a Postmethod Pedagogy. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35, 537- 557.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). *Beyond methods macrostrategies for language teaching*. New Haven: Yale University Press.