ANKARA
HACI BAYRAM VELİ UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ULEAD

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

ELT-ICRAL 2025

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"

26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University
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MOMENTUM GLOBAL

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

FULLTEXT BOOK

Editors
Prof. Dr. Dinçay KÖKSAL
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aydan IRGATOĞLU
Assist. Prof. Dr. Sedat BECEREN

9th International Conference on Research in Applied Linguistics

14th International ELT Research Conference

(ELT-ICRAL 2025)

Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education

FULLTEXT BOOK

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September 2025

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Uluslararası Eğitim Araştırmacıları Derneği (ULEAD) bünyesinde Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli Üniversitesi'nde düzenlenen ULEAD 2025 (ELT-ICRAL 2025) kongresinde Türkiye dışından 25 farklı ülkeden katılımcı olmuştur. (İran, Katar, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, Romanya, Kanada, Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti, Kazakistan, Azerbaycan, Hindistan, Kırgızistan, Nijerya, Malezya, Suriye, Cezayir, Etiyopya, Hollanda, Özbekistan, Çin, Tunus, Nepal, Pakistan, Ukrayna, Vietnam, Endonezya, Rusya Federasyonu). Kongrede en az iki hakem tarafından değerlendirilen 168 tebliğ sunulmuştur. Kongredeki tebliğlerin %57,14'ü Türkiye dışından 25 farklı ülkeden katılan katılımcılar tarafından sunulmuştur.

The ULEAD 2025 (ELT-ICRAL 2025) conference, organized by the International Association of Education Researchers (ULEAD) at Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, was attended by participants from 25 different countries outside Turkey. (Iran, Qatar, United States, Romania, Canada, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, India, Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria, Malaysia, Syria, Algeria, Ethiopia, Netherlands, Uzbekistan, China, Tunisia, Nepal, Pakistan, Ukraine, Vietnam, Indonesia, Russian Federation). A total of 168 papers, evaluated by at least two referees, were presented at the conference. 57.14 % of the papers presented at the conference were submitted by participants from 25 different countries outside Turkey.

Bu kitabın basım, yayın, satış hakları Uluslararası Eğitim Araştırmacıları Derneği'ne aittir. Anılan kuruluşun izni alınmadan kitabın tümü ya da bölümleri mekanik, elektronik, fotokopi, manyetik ya da başka yöntemlerle çoğaltılamaz, basılamaz, dağıtılamaz.

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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
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John SILVER

John Silver is a Regional English Language Officer with the U.S. Department of State, currently serving at the U.S. Mission to Türkiye. John has also served in Dakar, Washington DC, Kyiv, and Astana. Prior to working with the State Department, John was a Senior English Language Fellow in Ukraine, India, Afghanistan, and Russia, and a Soros Senior Teaching Fellow in Azerbaijan and Mongolia. John also served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Kazakhstan from 1994-1996. John holds a bachelor's degree in literature from San Diego State University and is a graduate of the School for International Training's Master of Arts in Teaching Program. A focus of John's work in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Türkiye has been the development of English for Media Literacy programs for teachers, students, and university curricula.

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Prof Dr. Ali Derakhshan

Ali Derakhshan is Professor of Applied Linguistics at the English Language and Literature Department, Golestan University, Gorgan, Iran. He has been a member of the Iranian Elites Foundation since 2015. He has also been selected as a distinguished researcher by the Teaching English Language and Literature Society of Iran in 2021. He received a distinguished researcher award in Humanities and Social Sciences from the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology in 2024. He is currently a Yunshan Chair Professor at the School of English Education, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies (GDUFS), Guangzhou, China. As authenticated by the Essential Science Indicators (ESI) Database, Clarivate Analytics shows his name among the world's top 1% of scientists in 2024. His name appeared in Stanford University's list of the world's top 2% of the most influential scientists in 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025. He has published in accredited international journals, including Computers and Education, Review of Educational Research, Computers in Human Behavior, Language Learning & Technology, Education and Information Technologies, Applied Linguistics, Language Teaching Research, System, Assessing Writing, Applied Linguistics Review, Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching, Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural

Development, ELT Journal, English for Specific Purposes, Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, International Journal of Applied Linguistics, Thinking Skills and Creativity, Current Psychology, Asia Pacific Education Researcher, European Journal of Education, Educational Studies, Pragmatics and Society, Journal of Psycholinguistic Research, Porta Linguarum, Learning and Motivation, etc. His recent monograph, Loving pedagogy in second and foreign language education: Underlying components, measurement, and ecological systems, was published by Springer in 2025. His monograph, the "5Cs" positive teacher interpersonal behaviors: Implications for learner empowerment and learning in an L2 context, was published by Springer in 2022. His co-authored book Instructed second language pragmatics for the speech acts of request, apology, and refusal: A meta-analysis was published by Springer in 2023. His research interests are educational psychology, technology in language education, teacher education, learner individual differences, and cross-cultural interpersonal factors in language education.

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Prof. Dr. Kadriye Dilek Bacanak

She completed her undergraduate and graduate studies in the Department of English Language and Literature at Selçuk University. After working for a while as a lecturer in the same department, she earned her Ph.D. in English Language Education in the Department of Foreign Languages at Gazi University, Faculty of Education. She received the title of Associate Professor in the same field in 2015 and became a Full Professor in 2020. Since 2010, she has been working as a faculty member at Gazi University. She has served as a project manager and academic advisor in institutions such as the Ministry of National Education, the European Union, and TÜBİTAK. She has published national and international articles, book chapters, and conference papers in her fields of interest, which include English culture and literature, linguistics, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, vocabulary instruction in foreign language education, and the use of technology in foreign language teaching.

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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

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Amir Esmkhani

B.A. in English literature in 2000, Tehran, Iran
M.A. in TEFL in 2008, Tehran, Iran
Post-graduate degree in Information Communication Technology in 2012, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia
Founded IZ language school in Iran in 2002
Joined British Council Teacher Training in 2006
Taught English at Monash University English Language Centre, Melbourne, Australia, 2012-2016
Originated the online seminar series titled "Disseminating Knowledge Beyond Borders" which hosted great scholars such as Professors Noam Chomsky, Stephen Krashen, Dianne Larsen Freeman, and John O'Toole, in 2020.
Joined the National Geographic Learning Turkey team in 2020 as an Academic Advisor and Educational Consultant.
His areas of expertise are teacher training, educational psychology, as well as drama pedagogy.

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Shannon Roach

Shannon Roach is an experienced global educator and teacher trainer. Beyond the classroom, she engages in mentoring and training instructors and pre-service teachers, supports study abroad programs, and collaborates in the development of content, curriculum, and courses that support instructors and English learners across disciplines.

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Ashanti Matthew Lee

Ashanti is an English Language Fellow at Çağ University in Mersin, Türkiye. He holds a master's degree in Education with a specialization in Curriculum Development and Design and is TEFL/TESOL certified. Ashanti began his career as a substitute teacher in Massachusetts before transitioning to a tutoring role in New York. He then moved to South Korea to be a high school English teacher, which he continued to do before transitioning to a role as an Associate Professor at Hoseo University.

ULEAD (ELT – ICRAL 2025) CONGRESS PROGRAM

Registration
Friday, 26 September / 08:30 - 09:00 Facilitated Q & As Event Venue: **Blue Hall**

Welcoming Speech
Friday, 26 September / 09:00 - 09:10 Business Meeting Event Venue: **Blue Hall**

Prof. Dr. Dinçay KÖKSAL

President and Chair of ULEAD 2025 Conference

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/5182329974?pwd=mEDHUEgTRMcAZ9daA9dSmBdvQaN6AU.1&omn=9514568

Password: 123456

Welcoming Speech
Friday, 26 September / 09:10 - 09:20 Business Meeting Event Venue: **Blue Hall**

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aydan IRGATOĞLU

Director of School of Foreign Languages, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University

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Opening Speech
Friday, 26 September / 09:20 - 09:30 Business Meeting Event Venue: **Blue Hall**

Prof. Dr. Kürşat GÖKTÜRK

Vice Rector of Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University

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Friday, 26 September / 09:30 - 10:00 Invitation Only Event Venue: **Blue Hall**

Keynote Speaker

Friday, 26 September / 10:00 - 11:00 Keynote Event Venue: **Blue Hall**

John SILVER

Regional English Language Office

RELO Presentation

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Coffee Break

Friday, 26 September / 11:00 - 11:15 Coffee Break Event Venue: **Blue Hall**

Keynote Speaker

Friday, 26 September / 11:15 - 12:00 Keynote Event Venue: **Blue Hall**

Prof. Dr. Ali Derakhshan

Golestan University, Gorgan, Iran

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Lunch

Friday, 26 September / 12:00 - 13:00 Lunch Break

Keynote Speaker

Friday, 26 September / 13:00 - 13:45 Keynote Event Venue: **Blue Hall**

Prof. Dr. Kadriye Dilek BACANAK

Gazi University

Zoom Link:

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Coffee Break
Friday, 26 September / 13:45 - 14:00 Coffee Break

Keynote Speaker
Friday, 26 September / 14:00 - 14:45 Keynote Event Venue: Blue Hall

Amir Esmkhani

National Geographic Learning Turkey

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/5182329974?pwd=mEDHUEgTRMcAZ9daA9dSmBdvQaN6AU.1&omn=9514568

Password: 123456

Coffee Break
Friday, 26 September / 14:45 - 15:00 Coffee Break

Keynote Speaker
Friday, 26 September / 15:00 - 15:45 Keynote

Ashanti Matthew Lee , RELO

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/5182329974?pwd=mEDHUEgTRMcAZ9daA9dSmBdvQaN6AU.1&omn=9514568

Password: 123456

Day 1 Session 1 -Online Classroom 1
Friday, 26 September / 15:45 - 17:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: Hall 6 Moderator: Seda YAPAR

- **Reclaiming Rigor in Applied Linguistics Research**

  Kyle Lachini (QA)

- **Empowering ELT Pedagogy through Photovoice: Exploring Students' Personal Transformation and Critical Reflection in English Language Teaching Class**

  Wiwiek Afifah (ID)

- **Gamification in Language Education: Engaging Learners Through Play**

  Cosmina Ecaterina Nicolae (RO)

- **Innovative Pedagogies Beyond Achievement: A Systematic Review of Post-Method Approaches in English Language Institutes**
  Zahra Kouhestanian (TR), Öznur Semiz

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/94234554012?pwd=M9wt2NZcBBaK3MhwOLq1MQhKxtRIQp.1

Password: 995612

Day 1 Session 1 -Online Classroom 2

Friday, 26 September / 15:45 - 17:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 7** Moderator: **Okan ÖZLER**

- **Integrating Authentic Materials in Language Education: Bridging Classroom Learning and Real-World Contexts**

  Melat Menen Wubete (ET)

- **The Impact of Intercultural Competence on Language Learning: Preparing Global Citizens**

  Halimeh Aida (ET)

- **Integrating Social Media in Language Education: Fostering Communication and Collaboration**

  Finbar Manriquez (NL)

- **The Role of Language Assessment in Promoting Learner Autonomy and Self-Directed Learning**
  Jamal Junah (IN)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/5999521277?pwd=WlZkZzRnSDdrZXhma2lRUnZTMStOUT09&omn=919785715

Password: Not required

Day 1 Session 1 -Online Classroom 3

Friday, 26 September / 15:45 - 17:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 8** Moderator: **Fatma Sezgin**

- **Translanguaging: A New Paradigm for Multilingual Language Education**

  Amara Kayla Majumdar (NL)

- **Mindfulness in Language Learning: Enhancing Focus and Retention**

  Salman Kanoa (NG)

- **Redefining Language Education: Integrating Cultural Narratives in Curriculum Design**

  Jane Norman (NG)

- **Exploring the Role of Emotional Intelligence in Language Learning Success**
  Anitya Bhavana (IN)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/99764015764?pwd=aRYyzVwOIhmhOxvT6qJyglXcCWEtkq.1

Password: 588797

Day 1 Session 1 -Online Classroom 4

Friday, 26 September / 15:45 - 17:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 9** Moderator: **Sedat Beceren**

- **Evaluating Curricular Reform in English Preparatory Programs: Instructors' Views on the Move to a Modular System**

  Sedat Beceren (TR)

- **Erken Çocuklukta Sosyal Duygusal Öğrenme Becerilerinin Desteklenmesinde Dijital Hikâye Anlatımının Rolü**
  Burcu Beceren, Ceren Baydemir, **Seda Sarıtaş (TR)**

Zoom Link: https://us04web.zoom.us/j/76479633074?pwd=B1MFKE8DdgLXb2Agiwhbpdg5Xw6FlP.1

Password: 9UmASF

Day 1 Session 1 -Online Classroom 5

Friday, 26 September / 15:45 - 17:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 5** Moderator: **S. Burcu ÖZYURT**

- **EFL Students' Views Regarding the Use of Metacognitive Reading Strategies**

  Ferzan Atay, **Fatih Pehlivan (TR)**

- **Evaluating Pre-Service English Teachers' Error Analysis: Competences and Perceptions**

  Şeyda Selen Çimen (TR), Orçin Karadağ, Şevki Kömür

- **Comparative Analysis of ICT and Artificial Intelligence Elements in the Turkish Century Maarif Model English Curriculum with International Standards**
  Orçin Karadağ (TR)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/99110821413?pwd=z8auPGnN55f0Uoz12te3YdjEVdI3Zl.1

Password: 552957

Day 1 Session 1 -Onsite Z-01

Friday, 26 September / 15:45 - 17:00 Oral Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 1 Z-01** Moderator: **Yeliz BAŞAR**

- **Translanguaging and Code-Switching in Bilingual Education: A Literature Review of Research on CLIL Classroom Practices**

  Elçin Durmuş (TR)

- **Emotional Expression In CLIL Classrooms: An Analysis of the Role of Anxiety and Language Proficiency in Young Learners**

  Sema Nur Bozok (TR)

- **School Experience: The First Step in the Professional Teacher Identity Development of Pre-Service Teachers**

Gülsev Pakkan (TR)

- **Integrating Artificial Intelligence and Drama in ELT: Pathways to Sustainable Teacher Education**
  Manolya Sağlam (TR)

Day 1 Session 1 -Onsite Z-02

Friday, 26 September / 15:45 - 17:00 Oral Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 2 Z-02** Moderator: **Aydan IRGATOĞLU**

- **Fueling the Flame: How Resilience and Perseverance Drive EFL Teachers' Work Engagement**

  Aydan Irgatoğlu (TR)

- **Reformulating EMI: Toward Language-Aware Pedagogies in Turkish Higher Education**

  Mehmet Şengül (TR)

- **English Language Teaching and Global Awareness: Rethinking Pedagogy through the Lens of Sustainable Development**

  Bengu Aksu Ataç (TR)

- **Using Online Games and ChatGPT to Enhance EFL Vocabulary Learning**
  Aydan Irgatoğlu (TR)

Day 1 Session 1 -Onsite Z-03

Friday, 26 September / 15:45 - 17:00 Oral Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 3 Z-03** Moderator: **Cihan Yazgı**

- **A Scale Development Study for Measuring the Difficulties Encountered in Learning Arabic**

  Emrullah Dalmış (TR)

- **J.D. Salinger's craftsmanship and the closing paragraph of "A Perfect Day for Bananafish"**

  Cihan Yazgı (TR)

- **Analysing Philip K. Dick's "Survey Team" in the Context of Contemporary Environmental and Societal Challenges**

  Cihan Yazgı (TR)

- **Dil Öğretiminde Kültürlerarası İletişim Yetkinliği Intercultural Communication Competence in Language Teaching**

  Mahmoud Mansour (SY)

- **Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli İlkokul 2-4. Sınıflar Arapça Dersi Öğretim Programının Çocuklara Yabancı Dil Öğretimi Bağlamında Değerlendirilmesi**
  Gürkan Dağbaşı (TR), Murat Özcan

Gala Dinner

Friday, 26 September / 18:00 - 19:00 Networking Event

Venue: to be announced

Day 2 Session 1 -Online -Classroom 1

Saturday, 27 September / 09:30 - 10:30 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: Hall 6 Moderator: Yeliz BAŞAR

- **Addressing Linguicism in the Classroom: International Higher Education Perspectives for Applied Linguistics and Language Teacher Education**

  Marnie Jo Petray (US), Gail Clements

- **NON-VERBAL LANGUAGE İN PRAGMATİCS AND İN TEACHİNG FOREİGN LANGUAGE CONVERSATİON**

  Irina-Ana Drobot (RO)

- **The Role of Emotional Self-Regulation in Predicting Technology Addiction and High-Risk Behaviors among University Students**

  Merdad Amiri (IR)

- **Improving ELT Students' Academic Writing through AI-Driven Collocation Support**
  Cüneyt Demir (TR)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/91703799734?pwd=SAbmyI6plcu6bfLra4vInfeb9lxiap.1

Password: 983663

Day 2 Session 1 -Online -Classroom 2

Saturday, 27 September / 09:30 - 10:30 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: Hall 7 Moderator: Hasret Derya ERTEN

- **THE REPRESENTATION OF TOPONYMS IN THE EPIC OF "MANAS" IN KYRGYZ AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES**

  Гулкумар Сарыбекова (KG)

- **Functional semantic characteristics of synecdoche in Uzbek and English languages**

  Shakarjon Зарипова (UZ)

- **Mapping Quality of Research in Different Methodological Orientations: The Case of Mixed-methods Research**
  Mohammad Amini Farsani (IR)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/94951338480?pwd=u1DAXEaLpawaB9QFxXQhrAX5Bs2VN9.1

Password: 830140

Day 2 Session 1 -Online -Classroom 3

Saturday, 27 September / 09:30 - 10:30 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: Hall 8 Moderator: Yakup UZUN

- **Embracing Multimodal Learning: The Future of Language Education**

Adesina Emem (NG)

- **Transforming Language Education for the Digital Age with AI**

Jhanvi Panvar (IN)

- **Collaborative Language Learning: Building Communities Through Peer Interaction**

Titela Cazacu (RO)

- **The Impact of Project-Based Learning on Language Proficiency and Critical Thinking**
Jamila Berknesh Zane (ET)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/99394597394?pwd=pQgOe3zTHPhQz5WXbwvufnJkuIXxcf.1

Password: 584574

Day 2 Session 1 -Online -Classroom 4
Saturday, 27 September / 09:30 - 10:30 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 9** Moderator: **Nurdan YURDUSEV**

- **Differences In The Use Of Authorial Stance In Academic Writing Between Native And Non-native English Speakers**

  Asya Tilbe Gündüz (TR), Eda Duruk, Ömer Gökhan Ulum

- **Brain-Inspired AI Feedback: Adapting to Learners' Emotions**

  Melanie Rastgari (CA)

- **Demystifying the role of Grit in feedback seeking behavior**

  Jalal Azari (IR)

- **Temporal Mastery: Teaching English Time Expressions to Foreign Language Learners in Higher Education**
  Surayyo Marimbaeva (UZ)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/98592645626?pwd=UojlwKWFNkF2DUMH4M4x9a213a28j4.1

Password: 584574

Day 2 Session 1 -Online -Classroom 5
Saturday, 27 September / 09:30 - 10:30 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 5** Moderator: **Merve DEVECİ DEMİR**

- **Adaptive Feedback AI for Enhancing Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills in ELT**

  Olena Soloviova (CN)

- **The Impact of AI-Based ESL Instruction on the Development of Cognitive and Emotional Intelligence in Children: A Cross-Cultural Study of Iranian and Canadian Learners**

  Nika Saheb Alfosool (CA)

- **The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Education: Benefits for Educators and Students**

  Morteza Khodaei (IR)

- **Bridging the Gap: How AI-Driven Writing Feedback Supports Language Learners Within Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development**
  Maryam Karimi (IR)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/95615023425?pwd=uz17aDcKXyVnXO2tjURZwbaWnpoPbx.1

Password: 869120

Day 2 Session 1 -Onsite Z-01

Saturday, 27 September / 09:30 - 10:30 Oral Abstract Session Event Venue: Hall 1 Z-01 Moderator: Büşra ÇANDIRLI SAZAK

- **Gendered Voices in the Classroom: Integrating Discourse Analysis into Language Education Materials**

  Güven Mengü, **Elif Yaren Çoban (TR)**

- **Metaphors as Cultural and Cognitive Tools: Integrating Conceptual Metaphors into English as a Foreign Language Classrooms**

  Güven Mengü, **Sena Izlem Tuna (TR)**

- **Exploring the Role of 'Okay' in EFL Classroom Interaction: A Conversation Analytic Study**

  Sude Kıtlık (TR), Cihat Atar

- **Yabancı Dil Eğitiminde Yapay Zeka: Fırsatlar, Zorluklar ve Eğitimsel Yaklaşımlar Artificial Intelligence in Foreign Language Education: Opportunities, Challenges, and Educational Approaches**
  Mohamad Mansour (SY)

Day 2 Session 1 -Onsite Z-02

Saturday, 27 September / 09:30 - 10:30 Oral Abstract Session Event Venue: Hall 2 Z-02 Moderator: Elif Meltem BİRSÖZ ÖZKÖSE

- **The Impact of Drama Activities on Transactional Language Retention**

  Fatma Zehra Şahin (TR), Cemal Çakır

- **Interpretation of Metaphorical Space Expressions by Turkish EFL Learners**

  Damla Akduman (TR), Selma Elyıldırım

- **BOOSTING 21ST CENTURY SKILLS: A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR IN-SERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS**

  Şeyda Savran Çelik, Dinçay Köksal

- **Views of Prospective ELT Teachers about Artificial Intelligence**
  Arif Sarıçoban (TR)

Day 2 Session 1 -Onsite Z-03

Saturday, 27 September / 09:30 - 10:30 Oral Abstract Session Event Venue: Hall 3 Z-03 Moderator: **F. Yasemin B. ÖZKAN**

- **Overcoming Demotivation: Writing Strategies Used by Turkish EFL Learners**

  Kaveh Jalilzadeh (TR)

- **EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices in Using Generative AI for Listening Material Development**
  Ümmügül Mutlu Köroğlu (TR)

Day 2 Session 1 -Onsite Z-04

Saturday, 27 September / 09:30 - 10:30 Oral Abstract Session Event Venue: Hall 4-Z 04 Moderator: **Zafer SARI**

- **Exploring the Impact of Growth Mindset on Foreign Language Enjoyment, Anxiety, and L2 Grit for EFL High School Learners**

  Gökçe Nur Türkmen (TR), Bora Demir

- **AI-Enhanced Digital Book for Literary Instruction**

  Gökçen Bahadır (TR), Fidel Çakmak

- **An exploration of AI ethical reflection of EFL pre-service teachers: From awareness to action**
  Gökçen Bahadır (TR), Fidel Çakmak

Coffee Break

Saturday, 27 September / 10:30 - 10:45 Coffee Break

Day 2 Session 2 -Online -Classroom 1

Saturday, 27 September / 10:45 - 12:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: Hall 6 Moderator: **Okan ÖZLER**

- **Bridging Language Education and Cultural Identity with Culturally Responsive Teaching**

  Mahendra Sonewane (IN)

- **The Influence of Digital Storytelling on Language Learning Engagement and Creativity**

  Jeroen Van Den Berg (NL)

- **Exploring the Intersection of Language and Identity in Multilingual Classrooms**

  Ethan Luam (ET)

- **Exploring the Mediating Role of Growth Mindset Between AI Self-Efficacy and AI Adaptation Willingness in Pre-Service Language Teachers**
  Bora Demir, **Sarp Nail Kaya (TR)**

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/5999521277?pwd=WlZkZzRnSDdrZXhma2lRUnZTMStOUT09&omn=919785715

Password: Not required

Day 2 Session 2 -Online -Classroom 2

Saturday, 27 September / 10:45 - 12:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: Hall 7 Moderator: Büşra ÇANDIRLI SAZAK

- **Pragmatic Analysis of Listening Texts on the Basis of Speech Acts**

  Emine Özlem Özpolat (TR), Nalan Kızıltan

- **An Analysis of ChatGPT's Impact on Academic Writing Skills Among English Foreign Language (EFL) Learners**

  Burcu Aydın (TR)

- **Teaching African American Slave History through Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale and The Testaments**

  Hale Zargarzadeh, **Ayda Khodabakhshi (IR)**, Alireza Khalili Najafabad

- **"Using Storytelling to Foster Communication Skills in English Learners**

  Nargiza Murzahmedova (KG)

- **The impact of Using Artificial Intelligence on Enhancing EFL Language Fluency and self-regulation for the Intermediate Students**
  Bahar Pourkave (IR)

Zoom Link:

https://zoom.us/j/97074493897?pwd=sAqTrH70fQvggPG5chy6FqgaVai6AP.1

Password: P1fahC

Day 2 Session 2 -Online -Classroom 3

Saturday, 27 September / 10:45 - 12:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: Hall 8 Moderator: Elif Melterm BİRSÖZ ÖZKÖSE

- **Hybridity, Third Space, Mimicry, Unhomeliness, Postcolonial theory**

  Sara Dehghanfar (IR)

- **Character Education Values in Roy's The God of Small Things**

  Sotoudeh Mijani (IR), Hale Zargarzadeh

- **Teaching Empathy Through Multicultural Literature in English Education**

  Sarvinoz Umarova (UZ)

- **Girit, AI and feedback**

Neda Etemadi (IR)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/92635299004?pwd=sRklNAD28qoMk52kCSJIDCWbTmJA8U.1

Password: 697706

Day 2 Session 2 -Online -Classroom 4

Saturday, 27 September / 10:45 - 12:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: Hall 9 Moderator: F. Yasemin B. ÖZKAN

- **Translanguaging Pedagogy as a Pathway to Academic Writing Development**

  Eda Akdeniz (TR), Nurdan Gürbüz

- **Critical reading strategies used by university students in their English reading comprehension**

  Hang Trinh, **Thuy Nguyen (VN)**

- **Teacher Immunity and Professional Identity in a Changing Educational Contex: Perspectives from ELT teachers**

  Güneş Saygı (TR)

- **A Comparative Study of Iranian EFL Learners' Misbehavior in Online Classrooms Across Educational Levels**
  Zahra Hashempour (IR), Azizeh Chalak, Hossein Heidari Tabrizi

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/92409153597?pwd=Dh7eilqKMV3FImRayuJVfx54W7Y73k.1

Password: 803408

Day 2 Session 2 -Online -Classroom 5

Saturday, 27 September / 10:45 - 12:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: Hall 5 Moderator: Gizem KAPTAN

- **The Interrelationship between Foreign Language Enjoyment and Self-Efficacy: A Comparative Study of 2nd- and 4th-Year ELT Students**

  Samet Taşçı (TR)

- **Artificial Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, Human-Centered Pedagogy, Personalization**

  Dr. Santosh Kumar Behera,, **Azra Tajhizi (IR)**

- **From Grammar Check to Cultural Check: AI's Role in Contextualized Language Learning**

  Shailija Vasudeva, **Azra Tajhizi (IR)**

- **The Role of AI in innovative second language acquisition**

  Zenab Shabbir (PK)

- **EFL learners' perceptions and frequency of using ChatGPT for L2 writing as predictors of writing achievement**

  Zeynep Daşer (TR), Canan Karaduman

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/93103497143?pwd=rqaUMimnFkEfQlTR0nn1ZeH4gPHZLA.1

Password: Not required

Day 2 Session 2 -Onsite Z-01

 Saturday, 27 September / 10:45 - 12:00 Oral Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 1 Z-01** Moderator: **Merve DEVECİ DEMİR**

- **The Study of Otherness in Kazuo Ishiguro's Never Let Me Go and Saadi Shirazi's Selected Poems**

  Asghar Heidari (TR)

- **The Role of Theoretical Studies in the Cognitive and Linguistic Development of Advanced Language Learners**

  Asghar Heidari (TR)

- **Research as a Proxy Agent for Professional Development, Wellbeing and Collective Agency**

  Fatma Tanrıverdi-Köksal, Hale Işık Güler

- **A Systematic Literature Review on Digital Game-Based Vocabulary Learning (DGBVL) in EFL Contexts**
  Duygu Şahin Arslan (TR)

Day 2 Session 2 -Onsite Z-02

 Saturday, 27 September / 10:45 - 12:00 Oral Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 2 Z-02** Moderator: **S. Burcu ÖZYURT**

- **ESP TEACHER EDUCATION: WHY, WHAT AND HOW**

  Mustafa Kemal Şen (TR), Dinçay Köksal

- **Benefits of COIL for Pre-Service EFL Teachers**

  Öznur Alver (TR), Nurdan Gürbüz, Tarkan Gurbuz

- **Measuring the Impact of Artificial Intelligence Literacy Training in ELT: A Mixed-Methods Study with Pre-Service Teachers in Turkey**

  Beyzanur Altun (TR)

- **Measuring the Impact of AI Literacy Training in ELT: A Mixed-Methods Study with Pre-Service Teachers in Turkey**

  Beyzanur Altun (TR), Elham Zarfsaz

- **The impact of artificial intelligence on problem-solving, planning, and continuous learning in ELT**

Arif Sarıçoban (TR)

Day 2 Session 2 -Onsite Z-03

Saturday, 27 September / 10:45 - 12:00 Oral Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 3 Z-03** Moderator: **Seda YAPAR**

- **Improving Preservice Teachers' Task Instructions in Practicum: An Action Research Study**

  Ihsan Ünaldı, Mehmet Bardakçı

- **A Study on Pragmatic Awareness of Sarcasm and Its Pedagogical Implications for Preservice ELT Teachers**

  Ayşe Bethan Güven (TR), Meral Ceylan

- **The Importance of Culture in the Use of Fixed Expressions**
  Selma Elyıldırım (TR), Damla Akduman

Day 2 Session 2 -Onsite Z-04

Saturday, 27 September / 10:45 - 12:00 Oral Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 4-Z 04** Moderator: **Yakup UZUN**

- **PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHER AGENCY, EMPATHIC CONCERN AND PERSPECTIVE-TAKING SKILLS: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL PLANS AND THE CONFOUNDING ROLE OF EMOTIONS**

  Zeynep Övdür Uğurlu (TR), Altay Eren

- **Uncovering Pre-service EFL Teachers' Emotions Through Poetry Writing**

  Tuba Karagöz Dilek (TR), Cem Balçıkanlı

- **The Impact of Using Memes in University Prep Classes on Learners' Willingness to Communicate**

  Ali Ihsan Karagenç (TR), Nazli Gündüz

- **Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching: A Meta-Synthesis of Research Trends**
  Sabriye Şener, **Ayten Çokçalışkan (TR)**

Poster Sessions

Saturday, 27 September / 10:45 - 12:00 Poster Session Moderator: **Fatma SEZGİN**

- **Discussion-oriented flipped classroom in increasing linguistics students' motivation in learning English**

  Svitlana Fedorenko (UA)

- **Developing moral competence of future specialists in the military sphere in the ESP course**

  Dmytro Bernadin (UA)

- **Problem of educating a polycultural personality**
  Olha Ameridze, **Svitlana Rubtsova (UA)**

For onsite presentations: Foyer

For online presentations: Derslik 5

Zoom link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/96041564180?pwd=3jp9gsc8U9o40UYosB7aHin3Sqb7c9.1

Password: 753589

LUNCH
Saturday, 27 September / 12:00 - 13:00 Lunch Break

Day 2 Session 3 -Online -Classroom 1

Saturday, 27 September / 13:00 - 14:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 6** Moderator: **S. Burcu ÖZYURT**

- **Instructing Adolescent Female Students in EFL Classes through Alice Walker's The Color Purple**

  Fariba Nickfard (IR), Hale Zargarzadeh

- **University Staff's English Language Challenges, Coping Strategies, and Needs in Communicating with International Students**

  Majid Chodan (IR), Hamid Allami

- **Integrating Artificial Intelligence into Scenario-Based Learning for Problem-Solving: Insights from ESP Practitioners in Algerian Higher Education**

  Imane Tiaiba, **Ouafa Ouarniki (DZ)**

- **Types of Mediation Activity in ESP Teaching**
  Oleksandra Bondarenko (UA)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/96805465806?pwd=bKEozKHIY0QOD9FFJjEh8EA6qVKH2e.1

Password:607282

Day 2 Session 3 -Online -Classroom 2

Saturday, 27 September / 13:00 - 14:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 7** Moderator: **Seda YAPAR**

- **UNDERSTANDING THE REALITIES OF ESP TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF CONSTRAINTS AND COPING STRATEGIES**

  Kadir Lüta (TR), Bora Demir

- **Writing Language for Specific Purposes with Artificial Intelligence Assistants: Prompts for Developing Virtual Reality**

  Negin Foroughi, **Saeed Khazaie (IR)**

- **From Belief to Practice: A Study of Iranian TEFL Teachers' Instructional Decision-Making**

  Manzar Shabanpour (IR), Atefeh Nasrollahi

- **Internet platforms used in onlaine language teaching**
  Bakyt Aitbayeva (KZ)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/99634619462?pwd=N82nbQKQRo7EtQvFe3thBUftwjo2rk.1

Password: 100914

Day 2 Session 3 -Online -Classroom 3

Saturday, 27 September / 13:00 - 14:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 8** Moderator: **Yakup UZUN**

- **A Gender-Based Analysis of Observance and Non-Observance of Gricean Maxims among Teachers in an Educational Setting**

  Sevda Durmaz (TR), Elham Zarfsaz

- **The Influence of eTwinning Projects on the Development of Specific Skills in Middle School Students**

  Burnete Eleonora (RO)

- **THE EFFECT OF COMIC STRIPS ON TURKISH EFL LEARNERS' MOTIVATION AND READING COMPREHENSION**

  Fatemeh Hassanirokh (IR)

- **Do Learning Styles Predict Language Test Success? Evidence from EFL Learners**
  Elham Zarfsaz (TR), Zafer Susoy

Zomm Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/97968105143?pwd=kEHLpQtrM1HQdbbxjSqmdVVxStQg7O.1

Password: 896096

Day 2 Session 3 -Online -Classroom 4

Saturday, 27 September / 13:00 - 14:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 9** Moderator: **Yeliz BAŞAR**

- **Freshman College Students' Preferences and Perceptions of Screencast Feedback and Text Feedback Modes in Slw Course**

  Ferzan Atay, **Ömer Faruk Dilaver (TR)**

- **The impact of a Gamified EFL learning platform on Iranian primary school students' speaking development.**

  Sheida Abhari (IR)

- **Assessment and Educational Materials: Is There Any Relationship?**

  Dınesh Kumar Thapa (NP)

- **The Effect of Lexical Features on Iranian EFL Learners' IELTS Essay Writing**
  Rajab Esfandiari (IR), Nazila Esmaeily

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/98715547749?pwd=7KDJodMLBUA1gn3JqVaMl0aCkjSCac.1

Password: 243663

Day 2 Session 3 -Online -Classroom 5
Saturday, 27 September / 13:00 - 14:00 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 5** Moderator: **Yeşim PİRPİR**

- **AI and feedback seeking behavior**

  Mojgan Rashtchi (IR), Fatemeh Alizadeh

- **Rethinking AI for Inclusion in Multilingual Classrooms**

  Maryam Mohseni (IR)

- **Emotionally Intelligent AI: Revolutionizing Personalized Learning**

  Nurlana Imanva (AZ), Noushin Rahimian Khormazard

- **Challenges of Writing Assessment and Feedback Provision via AI among Turkish EFL Teachers**
  Behzad Nezakatgoo (IR), Alirezanavid Moghdam

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/98241178698?pwd=PzC0DU4YXJtxEmUfqTjpL0Ubb7PzFW.1

Password: 737312

Coffee Break
Saturday, 27 September / 14:00 - 14:15 Coffee Break

Day 2 Session 4 -Online -Classroom 1
Saturday, 27 September / 14:15 - 15:15 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 6** Moderator: **Zafer SARI**

- **The Global Evaluation of English: Historical, Economic, and Cultural Perspective**

  Ananda Majumdar (CA)

- **Does Explicit/Implicit Instruction Raise Indirectness of EFL Students? Focus on the Employment of Request Mitigators**

  Sadegh Sadeghidizaj (IR)

- **Enhancing EFL Pronunciation Accuracy: The Role of Teacher Guidance and Online Dictionary Tools**

  Alieh Nasrollahi Mouziraji (IR), Atefeh Nasrollahi

- **Exploring Self-Regulated Learning Strategies of Turkish University EFL Learners**
  Irem Nur Bıyık (TR), Burçak Yılmaz Yakışık

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/95737493632?pwd=l9NGE1ZIF1aDgGNbJsbThwTmVItV5o.1

Password: 858369

Day 2 Session 4 -Online -Classroom 2

 Saturday, 27 September / 14:15 - 15:15 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 7** Moderator: **Nurdan YURDUSEV**

- **speaking anxiety and performance of the learners in peer conversation and chatgpt as an interlocutor**

  Kadriye Dilek Bacanak (TR), Sara Ghanbarzadeh

- **Becoming an Entrepreneur: The Journey of an EFL Teacher**

  Ayşegül Toka (TR), Elif Bozyiğit

- **A Comparative Study of Undergraduate English Teacher Education Programs in the United States and Turkey**

  Mehmet Tunaz (TR)

- **Çocuklukta Dijital Ortamların Dil Edinimi Üzerindeki Rolü. The Role of Digital Environments in Language Acquisition During Childhood.**
  Ahmad Alruhban (SY)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/91713499199?pwd=TlQRGdTDVWDEj1mITxzYbdtVCPXaIE.1

Password: 497364

Day 2 Session 4 -Online -Classroom 3

 Saturday, 27 September / 14:15 - 15:15 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 8** Moderator: **Merve DEVECİ DEMİR**

- **Investigating Translanguaing as a Teaching and Learning Practice in a Multilingual Context at Tertiary Level**

  Burcu Bür Yiğit (TR), Ahmet Aycan

- **Challenges of Learning Reading Comprehension during Online Classes among Intermediate Students of Hormozgan Province**

  Shahrzad Arabmokhtari (IR), Reza Kafipour, Atefeh Mohseni

- **On the Feasibility of a Context-based Approach to Language Assessment: A Model abbreviated in SPEAKING**

  Gholam-Reza Abbasian (IR)

- **Teacher Experience and Student Discipline in EFL: A Study on Beliefs About Speaking Self-Assessment**
  Nasibeh Bagherpour (IR)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/97784707129?pwd=aNe4BqXUuQ7fvAnVI5OjqieAvbxWF4.1

Password: 817729

Day 2 Session 4 -Online -Classroom 4

Saturday, 27 September / 14:15 - 15:15 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 9** Moderator: **Hasret Derya ERTEN**

- **Electronic Portfolios: A Review and Evaluation of an Alternative Method of Assessment**

  Maryam Molhseni (IR)

- **Educational Materials and Assessment: How Do EL Teachers View The Relationship?**

  Dinesh Kumar Thapa (NP)

- **The Impacts of the Last Language Assessment Regulations on English Language Teachers' Assessment Practices**

  Dilara Kebelek (TR), Handan Çelik

- **Contextual Validity of Lexicogrammar Items in a National High-Stakes EFL Exam: Evidence from the Turkish YDS**
  Lale Gökçe Genç (TR), Emre Uygun

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/97783728301?pwd=xXpaSOKkA4JcFciLFNJCdhmFa6bIa9.1

Password: 447938

Day 2 Session 4 -Online -Classroom 5

Saturday, 27 September / 14:15 - 15:15 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 5** Moderator: **Gizem KAPTAN**

- **Savoring strategies and Role of AI in feedback forward**

  Adel Dastgoshadeh (IR)

- **Navigating the Algorithmic Age: Culture, Feedback Literacy, and the Integration of AI**

  Alireza Asltaleb Maghferat (IR), Amirreza Akhlaghi Ilkhchi

- **From Blackboards to Bots: EFL Teachers in the Age of AI**

  Sibel Ersel (KK)

- **Voices as Codes: Unlocking New Dimensions in AI-Mediated Teaching**
  Inamul Azad (IN)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/97495683322?pwd=L2rALcHzPAWYF0sjXyix4hsbkSIOyC.1

Password: Not required

Coffee Break
 Saturday, 27 September / 15:15 - 15:30 Coffee Break

Day 2 Session 5 -Online -Classroom 1
 Saturday, 27 September / 15:30 - 16:30 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 6** Moderator: **Hatice DELİBAŞ**

- **Justice-Oriented Assessment: The Role of Asset-Based Approaches in L2 Testing and Assessment**

  Rajab Esfandiari (IR)

- **The Power of Peer Feedback: Enhancing Language Skills Through Collaborative Assessment**

  Shaan Ramezanpour (IN)

- **How to Teach Technical Writers and Translatores**

  Nataliia Glinka, **Iryna Voloshchuk (UA)**

- **Translation as Mediation Tasks in EFL Classrooms: A CEFR-Oriented Case Study in West Africa**
  Hatice Delibaş (TR)

Zoom Link: https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/92313207606?pwd=jG51Fo2JYnXCiTsOQEQRd3TKS4IiC3.1

Password: Not required

Day 2 Session 5 -Online -Classroom 2
 Saturday, 27 September / 15:30 - 16:30 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 7** Moderator: **Büşra ÇANDIRLI SAZAK**

- **The Mystery of the Encounter between Grace and Human Freedom in the Vision of Saint John Cassian**

  Edvica Popa (RO)

- **Language and intercultural communication**

Sawsen Ben Zeyed (TN)

- **The Acceleration of Neologism: A Study of New Word Formation in the Digital Age and Its Sociocultural Implications**

Irina Permyakova (RU)

- **UNDERSTANDING CULTURE SHOCK THROUGH THE LENS OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: A CRITICAL REVIEW**
  Hande Kavsara (TR), Nurcihan Yürük

Zoom Link:

https://zoom.us/j/97465722492?pwd=GaaEXzKQvfrphdU2aK3nbJIrUso6gr.1

Password: KJ6AD4

Day 2 Session 5 -Online -Classroom 3

Saturday, 27 September / 15:30 - 16:30 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 8** Moderator: **Elif Melterm BİRSÖZ ÖZKÖSE**

- **The Role of gratitude Emojis in Cross-cultural online communication**

  Rokhatoy Abidova (UZ)

- **INTEGRATION OF DIGITAL APPLICATIONS IN HIGH SCHOOL PHYSICS CLASSES**

  Burnete Eleonora (RO)

- **Developing a Model of Teacher Agency for Iranian EFL Teachers**

  Mehrdad Amiri (IR)

- **The Efficacy of Affective Scaffolding on EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension and Anxiety**
  Aylar Ghazyani (IR), Atefeh Nasrollahi

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/94998709529?pwd=dufzl5aM57OyPX4oF23pCwbTl6Q9mD.1

Password: 930994

Day 2 Session 5 -Online -Classroom 4

Saturday, 27 September / 15:30 - 16:30 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 9** Moderator: **F. Yasemin B. ÖZKAN**

- **Collaborative Writing for Chinese-Speaking Students in an American Pre-University Program**

  Christine Jalleh (MY)

- **What's really going on in Iranian High School English Classes? En Epistemological Ethnography**

  Marzieh Bagherkazemi (IR), Nasibeh Bagherpour

- **FAIRY-TALE DISCOURSE IN THE PROCESS OF TEACHING RUSSIAN LANGUAGE**

Maiya Myrzabekova (KZ), Mariya Sunar

- **Emotionally Intelligent AI: Crafting Feedback that Understands Students' Feelings**
  Nurlana Imanva (AZ), Fabian Chavez, Epole Sandrine, Gordon Phillips

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/94487355597?pwd=vdyZUAID9jSuGnb1rsD4EBLdh0b0IG.1

Password: 339934

Day 2 Session 5 -Online -Classroom 5

Saturday, 27 September / 15:30 - 16:30 Online Abstract Session Event Venue: **Hall 5** Moderator: **Yeşim PİRPİR**

- **English for Specific Purposes in the Azerbaijani Context: Needs Analysis and Discourse Approaches for Emerging Professional Majors**

  Sevinj Zeynalova (AZ), Arzu Mursalova

- **The Future of Smart Teaching Beyond Boundaries**

  Meryem Akçayoğlu, **Azra Tajhizi (IR)**

- **A Qualitative Meta-Synthesis of Critical Thinking in AI-Assisted Academic Writing**

  Eyüp Dilber (TR), Mohammadreza Valizadeh

- **The intersection of technology and well-being**
  Alaviyya Nuri (AZ)

Zoom Link:

https://hbv-edu-tr.zoom.us/j/98669906635?pwd=gp94ANXTTSbxxRfUz4ODE79iy7VWs3.1

Password: 535219

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ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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Opening Speech of the Congress

Prof. Dr. Dinçay Köksal, the President of ULEAD

Distinguished guests, esteemed colleagues, and dear participants,

It is with great pleasure and pride that I welcome you to the 14th International ELT Research Conference, continuing a tradition of scholarly excellence that began in **1999**, and the 9th International Conference on Research in Applied Linguistics. This year, our theme is "**Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education.**" This hybrid event, jointly hosted by Hacı Bayram Veli University School of Foreign Languages, in cooperation with ULEAD and Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University.

It is with sincere gratitude that I thank you for joining us today and for generously sharing your expertise, insights, and scholarly work.

For 28 years, the ELT Research Conference has served as a vital platform for educators, researchers, and practitioners to exchange ideas, present findings, and inspire innovation in English Language Teaching. This conference was guided by the enduring vision of Prof. Dr. Cem Alptekin, whose contributions to applied linguistics and language education continue to shape our academic community. He personally encouraged us to organise the first ELT Research Conference in Çanakkale in 1999.

Before we begin, I would like to take a moment to offer our deepest respect and remembrance to the esteemed scholars who are no longer with us, yet whose contributions continue to shape our field and our lives.

We honour the memory of **Prof. Dr. Özcan Başkan, Prof. Dr. Cem Alptekin, Prof. Dr. İsmail Hakkı Erten, Prof. Dr. İskender Sarıgöz**, and Prof. **Dr. Gül Durmuş Köseoğlu**, along with all the distinguished academics who have dedicated their lives to advancing language education and research. Their wisdom, mentorship, and scholarly legacy have left an indelible mark on our community.

It is thanks to their pioneering work and enduring influence that we can gather here today, united in purpose and inspired to carry their vision forward. We remember them with heartfelt gratitude and reverence.

In recent years, we have had the privilege of organizing this event, alongside the Conference on Research in Applied Linguistics, further enriching its interdisciplinary scope.

In the field of language education, we need innovative approaches more than ever, -ranging from teacher training and curriculum development to the integration of technology and artificial intelligence. Every study and scientific inquiry in these areas holds great value.

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Today and tomorrow, we will have the privilege of engaging with scholars from various regions of our country and around the world. I firmly believe that their work in English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics will offer us fresh perspectives on current issues and shed light on practical applications in the field.

Realizing meaningful progress in our field requires that we empower teacher-researchers - encouraging their active participation in research processes and supporting their contributions with confidence and purpose.

Considering that the world has become a digital village, we must explore ways to eliminate the barriers that hinder the acquisition and effective use of digital skills in educational processes.

We are delighted to welcome a line-up of **renowned keynote speakers**, including **John Silver**, **Prof. Dr. Ali Derakhshan**, **Prof. Dr. Kadriye Dilek Bacanak**, **Amir Esmkhani**, **Shannon Roach**, and **Ashanti Matthew Lee**, who will share insights from their scholarly work and help us explore the future of language education.

Throughout the congress, we invite you to engage actively in sessions, workshops, and poster presentations. This is a unique opportunity to reflect on current challenges, share groundbreaking research, and collaborate on shaping the future of our field.

We also encourage scholars from around the world to submit proposals for oral presentations, workshops, or poster sessions on the listed themes or other relevant topics in ELT and Applied Linguistics.

Finally, we extend our heartfelt thanks to the Rector of Hacı Bayram Veli University, Prof. Dr. Mehmet Naci BOSTANCI, for opening the doors of the university to this event, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aydan IRGATOĞLU, Co-president of the Conference, Assist. Prof. Dr. Sedat BECEREN, the head of the conference organizing committee, members of the organizing committee, scientific board members, all contributors, reviewers, and organizers, whose dedication has made this event possible. Your commitment keeps this tradition alive and thriving.

Welcome once again. We wish you a productive, inspiring, and memorable congress.

Thank you for your contribution and participation.

26 September 2025, Ankara, Türkiye
Prof. Dr. Dinçay Köksal
The President of ULEAD

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FULLTEXTS

GENDERED VOICES IN THE CLASSROOM: INTEGRATING DISCOURSE ANALYSIS INTO LANGUAGE EDUCATION MATERIALS

SINIFTA CİNSİYETSEL SESLER: SÖYLEM ANALİZİNİN DİL EĞİTİMİ MATERYALLERİNE ENTEGRE EDİLMESİ

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Abstract

This paper examines how gendered discourse patterns can be used to arrive at the design of inclusive materials on foreign language teaching of English. Based on a comparative discourse analysis of unscripted interviews conducted by Lady Gaga and Mark Zuckerberg, it reviews a number of linguistic phenomena (hedges, tag questions, choice of vocabulary, turn-taking). The analysis confirms the sociolinguistic theories by Lakoff, Tannen, Holmes, and Coates that female speakers are generally expressive, relational, and emotionally attentive, and men tend to be assertive, information-oriented, and unemotional. The findings inform a gender-sensitive model for language education, emphasizing the need to move beyond normative communicative frameworks often reinforced in traditional coursebooks. Incorporating real-life examples of feminine and masculine speech, didactic resources can capture the use of language in the real world and question the ideology of gender duality or prescriptivism. The model also contributes to individual awareness on some aspects as it provokes learners to be critical of why the language is used to shape the power relationships and gendered identities. The discourse-informed content and activities applied by the teachers in the classroom allow the learners not only to acquire linguistic competence but also to become socio-pragmatically and interculturally sensitive. The paper demands a pedagogical change to materials that positively value linguistic diversity and identify the language as a means of identity negotiation. In this way, it would bring language learning into a greater perspective of inclusivity and social awareness.

Keywords: Gender-sensitive pedagogy, Discourse analysis, Foreign language teaching, Inclusive language materials, Material development in ELT

Özet

Bu makale, cinsiyete dayalı söylem kalıplarının, kapsayıcı İngilizce yabancı dil öğretimi materyallerinin tasarımına ulaşmak için nasıl kullanılabileceğini incelemektedir. Lady Gaga ve Mark Zuckerberg tarafından gerçekleştirilen senaryosuz görüşmelerin karşılaştırmalı söylem analizine dayanan çalışma, bir dizi dilbilimsel olguyu (geçişler, etiket soruları, kelime seçimi, sıra alış) incelemektedir. Analiz, Lakoff, Tannen, Holmes ve Coates'un kadın konuşmacıların genellikle ifadeci, ilişkisel ve duygusal olarak dikkatli, erkeklerin ise iddialı, bilgi odaklı ve duygusuz olma eğiliminde oldukları yönündeki sosyolinguistik teorilerini doğrulamaktadır. Bulgular, geleneksel ders kitaplarında sıklıkla vurgulanan normatif iletişim

çerçevelerinin ötesine geçme ihtiyacını vurgulayarak, dil eğitimi için cinsiyete duyarlı bir model oluşturulmasına yardımcı olmaktadır. Dişil ve eril konuşmanın gerçek yaşam örneklerini içeren didaktik kaynaklar, gerçek dünyadaki dil kullanımını yakalayabilir ve cinsiyet ikiliği veya kuralcılık ideolojisini sorgulayabilir. Model, öğrencileri dilin güç ilişkilerini ve cinsiyete dayalı kimlikleri şekillendirmek için neden kullanıldığı konusunda eleştirel olmaya teşvik ederek bazı konularda bireysel farkındalığa da katkıda bulunur. Öğretmenlerin sınıfta uyguladığı söylem odaklı içerik ve etkinlikler, öğrencilerin yalnızca dilsel yeterlilik kazanmalarını değil, aynı zamanda sosyo-pragmatik ve kültürlerarası açıdan duyarlı olmalarını da sağlar. Bu makale, dilsel çeşitliliğe olumlu değer veren ve dili kimlik müzakeresi aracı olarak tanımlayan materyallerde pedagojik bir değişiklik talep etmektedir. Bu şekilde, dil öğrenimine kapsayıcılık ve sosyal farkındalık açısından daha geniş bir perspektif kazandırılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Cinsiyete duyarlı pedagoji, Söylem analizi, Yabancı dil öğretimi, Kapsayıcı dil materyalleri, İngilizce öğretiminde materyal geliştirme

INTRODUCTION

The connection between language and gender and education is an old topic of research interest especially in the disciplines of sociolinguistics and applied linguistics. Whether men and women talk differently is not the main issue, but how their differences are created, experienced, or challenged influences our conceptions of who we are, how we exercise power, and how we interact with one another. The work of Robin Lakoff in Language and Woman place (1975) predetermined several decades of study, which was later supplemented by Deborah Tanner discussing conversational styles, Janet Holmes theorizing about politeness, and Jennifer Coates exploring gendered discourse. All these works prevent how gendered communication can shape broader cultural expectations and social norms.

Although sociolinguistics has long been concerned with these issues, language education usually lags behind in applying such understanding to classroom work. Teaching a foreign language, especially English as a Foreign Language (EFL), is biased toward the use of coursebooks and teaching resources that continue to propagate everyday communicative practices and tend to promote speech models considered neutral or standardized. Such materials do not often explain the peculiarities of gendered discourse and often reproduce inequalities because they do not take linguistic diversity into account.

The paper fills this gap by relying on comparative discourse analysis of Lady Gaga and Mark Zuckerberg unscripted interviews. Discussing their unique linguistic repertoires, the expressive style of Gaga and the information-driven, assertive, one of Zuckerberg, we may show how discourse analysis can be used with significant benefits in language teaching. These findings are then put into context of the greater activity of constructing inclusive and gender-sensitive pedagogical models of English language teaching (ELT). Not only does such an approach increase the linguistic competence of the learners but it also develops the socio-pragmatic awareness and intercultural sensitivity of the learners.

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This research is grounded on the previous sociolinguistic theories about language and gender. Lakoff (1975) claimed that female language was hedged, tagged, polite and hyperbolic, and all these she tried to interpret as the status of women as subordinate. Despite the criticism of essentialism, the framework proposed by Lakoff has been instrumental in opening the debate on the use of gendered language. In her differentiation between rapport talk (women-related) and report talk (men-related), Tannen (1990) once more highlighted that communication styles are not better or worse but simply serve different purposes in interaction. Holmes (1995) furthered this realization by demonstrating that the application of politeness strategies by women cannot be regarded as sign of weakness but must be seen as relationship building tools that bring about social cohesion. Coates (2004) also made contributions by mapping the particular stylistic tendencies in women's and men's speech, including cooperative and competitive conversational styles.

Sunderland (2006) in the classroom scenario pointed out the gender ideologies that language education resources support by doing something as basic as choosing texts and assigning roles and conversational structures to follow. Of interest is not just the language taught but also the way identities are exhibited. According to Paulo Freire, critical pedagogy demands that education be a challenge to oppressive structures rather than perpetuate them. It is a pedagogical and even a social requirement to integrate gender-aware discourse analysis into ELT materials.

In continuation of these arguments, this paper examines how gendered discourse patterns in natural speech can be used to shape more accommodating English language teaching (ELT) texts. In particular, it questions how the linguistic and pragmatic inclinations evident in the spontaneous interviews with Lady Gaga and Mark Zuckerberg can be used to build gender-sensitive pedagogical models. The hypothesis is that present ELT textbooks are prone to either omitting gendered discourse characteristics or defusing them, preferring standardized dialogues which are unable to reflect the multiplicity of real-life communication. Moreover, by incorporating real gendered talk by such personalities into classroom resources, students can be empowered to develop stronger socio-pragmatic awareness, intercultural competence, and reflection on the role of language in creating and communicating identity, power, and social relations.

METHOD

Research Model

The research is a qualitative comparative study using a discourse analysis design to examine the relationship between gender and language in a real conversation. The goal is to examine how patterns of gendered discourse are reflected in real-life speech and how these findings may be applied to pedagogical practice in English Language Teaching (ELT). With an emphasis on unscripted interviews based on naturally occurring language, the study will help ensure that the information reflects real linguistic behavior rather than memorized or scripted speech.

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Study Material/Population and Sample

Two authentic interviews were selected as data sources; Lady Gaga's interview with Stephen Fry (*Financial Times*, 2011) and Mark Zuckerberg's interview with Laurie Segall (*Sonix transcript*, 2018). These interviews have been selected because of a number of reasons. To begin with, both respondents are internationally known personalities whose publicly expressed gender and professional identity, Gaga as a feminist artist and Zuckerberg as a male technology magnate, are different. Second, the two interviews are conversational and unscripted, providing abundant information about the spontaneous use of language, aspects of interaction, and discourse control. Lastly, the difference in the work and personal situation that they both face is a valuable base to investigate the stylistic difference that has been influenced by gender and social roles.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data were collected by retrieving complete transcripts of the two interviews and the verifications were made with the same recordings in audio or video so that the genuineness is maintained. Upon collection, the speech was transcribed and divided into analyzable units which included: speakers' turns, clauses and discourse markers to enable micro-level analysis of the speech.

The study was qualitative descriptive discourse analysis. Line by line, each transcript was analyzed to identify incidences of gendered linguistic characteristics (hedges, tag questions, or turn-taking breaks). The instances were then categorized based on their frequency, functionality, and communicative impact. A comparative discourse between Lady Gaga and Mark Zuckerberg discourse was conducted to identify trends that indicate gendered styles of interaction.

The results were explained using sociolinguistic perspective, which focused not only on the linguistic forms but also on the pragmatic consequences of those forms, how the gender, identity, and power relations are created in the discourse. The findings were also put in its context to language pedagogy as the objective of connecting gendered discourse patterns to ELT classroom practices.

The variables of discourse that were studied were based on four significant discourse variables that are traditionally attributed to gendered communication. The first variable is the choice of vocabulary. Lexically, there are specific significant differences between men and women in American English, especially in the choice of words. More expressive adjectives are used by women in order to show approval or admiration, including delightful, lovely, or fascinating and they also tend to qualify their words in a more specific and current color name, including beige, fuchsia, or mauve. Men will, however, tend to use more neutral descriptors like fine, good or great and will likely stress them with adverbs like damned (a fine damned show). They have a less elaborate color vocabulary than women. Nevertheless, these gender-based disparities in the language use have been slowly fading away, since such words that were commonly used by young women such as sweet and awesome are commonly used by both men and women.

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Another variable in speech is the use of tag questions. Tag questions are phrases added to statements to seek agreement or confirmation, an example could be "That was silly, wasn't it?" Tag questions are mostly used in order to avoid sounding too assertive during a conversation. They are also used to soften comments or criticisms. The sentences "Answer the phone, would you?" or "You're drinking too much, don't you think?" could be examples of it. Another function could be to engage listener with the conversation, such as "It's a beautiful day, isn't it?" Younger women these days tend to use tag questions less frequently than older women.

The third variable in speech is the use of hedges. Women can prevent the opinion of sounding assertive so that they use hedge words or phrases. Such common hedges are: maybe, rather, perhaps, I guess, sort of, I am wondering, etc. Hedges blunt the force of a statement or suggestion. Hedges may be used together with tag questions (You are quite tired, are you?). Hedging examples may include; "I have been wondering a little whether I should go or not, Well, I guess I might have guessed it could work out, and maybe we could think of adding some seasoning. The speech pattern indicates a less assertive or more hesitant communication pattern.

And the last variable is turn taking patterns. Turn-taking is the process of sharing the conversation, the speakers control the process of speaking and not speaking. Women also tend to employ more supportive and cooperative approaches and alternate smoothly and cooperatively and use listening cues, mm-hmm or yeah to demonstrate interest. They are also likely to escape interruptions by taking more time before talking. On the other hand, men tend to have a higher propensity to interrupt the other person especially when the discussion is between genders and tend to vie with each other on who gets the speaking turn as a way of having control or showing status. During this kind of interaction, men often take charge of the discussion whereas women might tolerate this in order to ensure harmony in the society. These conversational patterns however are not universal and can be very different in accordance to the context, culture, age and individual personality.

Data Collection Tool

The main instrument of data collection will be discourse analysis that will be used on the real spoken information in terms of interview transcripts and video interviews that are publicly available. The source of these materials was good and verifiable media (Financial Times and Sonix/CNN Business). The instrument is qualitative coding of linguistic elements like hedges, tag questions, turn taking patterns and vocabulary selection which are systematically determined, classified and deciphered in a gender and sociolinguistic situational set up. It is also accompanied by manual transcription checking to guarantee linguistic accuracy and contextual integrity.

Validity and Reliability

The study applies authentic and naturally occurring language data to ensure validity and reduce researcher bias, as well as increasing ecological validity. The theoretical framework is based on the proven theories of gender and discourse (Lakoff, 1975; Tannen, 1990; Holmes, 1995; Coates, 2004), which ensures the conceptual

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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consistency and validity of the construct. Triangulation Triangulation is ensured through a blend of textual analysis and theoretical interpretation and a comparison of various linguistic variables (e.g., hedges, tag questions, turn-taking).

The reliability is achieved through a systematic and replicable analytical procedure. All discourse features are determined with the help of the set linguistic criteria that make the classification uniform. Besides, publicly available interviews provide other researchers with an opportunity to confirm and repeat the analysis on the same data sources, which increases inter-rater and procedural reliability.

FINDINGS

Analysis to Pedagogy: Implications to the Teaching of Languages

The shift in discourse analysis to pedagogy demands a reconsideration of the way language educational resources model the communication. ELT coursebooks traditionally are inclined to show dialogues of an idealistic nature that appear to be polite, efficient and predictable in the interaction between speakers. This sanitized language usually obliterates the complexity of real life contact, such as gendered difference, power relations, and culture.

Educators can do it by using real-life examples, Lady Gaga and Mark Zuckerberg in their lessons. In this way, they will be able to emphasize the diversity of discourse and demonstrate students that communication styles are not universal, but depend on the identity of a speaker, their gender, and social context. Critical reflection should also be encouraged by teachers who should prompt learners to study such aspects as hedges, tag questions, or authoritative tones of various speakers and improve their socio-pragmatic awareness. Moreover, they will be able to foster inclusivity by questioning prescriptive ideas about what constitutes correct communication and legitimizing diverse forms of authentic discourse. In the end, intercultural competence should be designed, which will prepare learners to communicate in various cultural settings in which gender conventions and language use may vary.

Gendered Communication in Gaga and Zuckerberg Discourse

Most of the patterns of sociolinguistics established by Lakoff, Tannen, Holmes, and Coates are proved by the comparative analysis. In terms of vocabulary choice, the speech of Zuckerberg is more inclined on formal and technical and task-oriented words (data integrity, platform policy, forensic audit). This word choice forms power and depersonalization that is consistent with stereotypically masculine communication patterns. Gaga, on the contrary, has used metaphor, imagery and emotional words (mask of identity, reborn over and over), with the focus on individuality, relationality and affect.

Secondly, Zuckerberg mostly does not use tag questions and is rather authoritative and monologic. However, Gaga often uses tag questions (That's quite anti-feminism, isn't it?), which opens up to participation and meaning co-construction, which is a cooperative style.

9

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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In terms of hedges, the fact that Zuckerberg does not use hedges much builds upon his self-assured assertive image (We will make sure, We are going to investigate). When hedges are used, these are intentional (I believe we have got that wrong), without compromising authority, but softening accountability. In contrast, Gaga, through regular uses of hedges (I think, perhaps, I suppose), always opens up and makes it inclusive, which is consistent with the relational communication strategies.

And finally, when looked at the turn taking patterns, Zuckerberg's behavior can be described as a series of monologues without interruptions, which is an indicator of control and power. Gaga also overlaps speech and takes turns together, frequently required to co-build meaning with the interviewer, creating intimacy and mutual presence.

The combination of these results supports the long-standing sociolinguistic expectations: women speakers tend to use expressive, relational strategies, while male speakers tend to use assertive, information-focused strategies. Nevertheless, the important thing is not to fundamentalize these differences but to understand them as cultural practices of gender that reflect broader social expectations.

Gender and Coursebooks A Critical Review

Many research works (Sunderland, 2006; Gray, 2010) have criticized ELT materials on the grounds that they promote conventional gender values. In coursebooks, women are mostly represented at home whereas the men are at work or on adventurous roles. These binaries are frequently reproduced in dialogue samples, with women asking questions and seeking clarification, and men giving orders and explanations. However, such representations, even when they are subtle, support the stereotypes.

In addition, the textbook standardized conversations often exaggerate or remove the properties such as hedges, interruption or overlapping conversation thus giving a contrived form of communication. This denies learners an opportunity to learn the real-life application of language, and implicitly, it teaches that some styles (which are commonly associated with masculine values of assertiveness) are better.

The knowledge of Gaga and the conversation made by Zuckerberg can be used to reconsider this story. Textbooks can standardize linguistic diversity by incorporating transcripts or modified dialogues, which are representative of gendered communication patterns. As an example, one lesson might be the comparison of expressive metaphor use by Gaga and the formal, technical register by Zuckerberg and make learners compare differences not as a weakness but as stylistic decisions.

DISCUSSION

The discourse analysis into the field of language education reveals the pedagogical importance of introducing learners into the context of communicative diversity in real life. In this way, it will lead to the development of critical literacy, where learners will not only gain the forms of language but also ask question in the way language shapes identities and power relations. The Gaga-Zuckerberg analogy is an impressive case

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

study plus it has even bigger implications: working with the concept of language as a site of identity negotiation, ELT can shift away of the functionalist models to critical pedagogy.

Additionally, Gender sensitive pedagogy is consistent with the learning objectives of inclusivity and diversity in the world educational agenda. In multicultural classrooms, where learners are allowed to bring their culturally entrenched gender norms, the discussion of discourse styles may help improve the understanding. This strategy is also compatible with the general project of intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 1997), which stresses the reflection on self and other.

Notably, this model is not prescriptive teaching in terms of masculine and feminine styles. It instead promotes the ability to recognize, analyze and critically evaluate discourse strategies to make informed decisions in their own communication. In this respect, the classroom is turned into a micro world where the practice of linguistic agency and opposition to prescriptive ideologies can be exercised.

CONCLUSION

The comparative discourse analysis of Lady Gaga and Mark Zuckerberg does not merely give an account of the personal communicative styles, it gives an insight into the cultural and gendered aspects of language use. The expressive, relational speech of Gaga and the assertive, information-focused speech of Zuckerberg have more general tendencies, which sociolinguistic studies are aware of, but they are also reminiscent of the performative and situational character of gendered communicative acts.

These insights as an educator of language are valuable because they highlight the importance of stopping the unrealistic and sterilized views of communication in textbooks. By combining real-life instances of gendered discourse, ELT resources may contribute not only to linguistic competence but also to socio-pragmatic and intercultural awareness. Students are therefore enabled to think critically about the way language creates power, identity and relations.

Finally, gender-sensitive pedagogical model is consistent with the overall mission of education as the driver of inclusiveness and social consciousness. This mission puts language as a means of communication and negotiating identity to the forefront. ELT can also help to create a more inclusive future in the development of more than just able speakers, but also, sensitive, culturally aware communicators.

SUGGESTIONS

According to the results, this paper suggests a gender-sensitive model for the development of English Language Teaching (ELT) materials. The model focuses on passages that contain harmonies and original texts or transcripts, as well as unscripted speech samples, including interviews, podcasts, and debates, that demonstrate a variety of discourse styles. It consists of critical discourse activities as well, which prompt students to read transcripts and identify aspects such as hedges, tag questions and turn taking patterns, and discuss how these linguistic strategies

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

reveal aspects of identity and power relationships. It is also proposed to conduct role-reversal exercises, in which students practice dialogues with reversed gender roles, such as female characters speaking in assertive, authoritative tones and male characters using hedges or emotional intonation, to break gender norms. The discussions on raising awareness are also suggested to make learners to reflect on the role of gender norms in language use in their cultures and thus exhibit intercultural sensitivity. Lastly, the model encourages inclusive representation whereby coursebook dialogue and visuals reflect men and women as communicating in different capacities and styles and not confined to binary gender norms but incorporating non-binary views.

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METAPHORS AS CULTURAL AND COGNITIVE TOOLS: INTEGRATING CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS INTO ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS

KÜLTÜREL VE BİLİŞSEL ARAÇLAR OLARAK METAFORLAR: KAVRAMSAL METAFORLARIN YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE SINIFLARINA ENTEGRE EDİLMESİ

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Abstract

Metaphor is crucial to human thinking and communication because it shapes how people understand abstract experiences and reflect cultural values. The paper examines the importance of conceptual metaphors as tools for cognitive and cultural understanding and argues for their systematic inclusion in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching. It is grounded in the Conceptual Metaphor Theory *(Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, pp. 3-6; 17-25)* and the Neo-Whorfian approach to linguistic relativity *(Gomila, 2014, pp. 142-146; Boroditsky, 2001, pp. 1-22; Levinson, 2003, pp. 9-10; 100-120)*, demonstrated through the analysis of metaphorical expressions in English, that both reflect cultural perspectives and pose comprehension challenges for learners. The review of empirical studies indicates that explicit metaphor instruction enhances vocabulary acquisition (*Boers, 2000, pp. 553-571; Littlemore & Low, 2006, pp. 150-160*), understanding of figurative language, and intercultural communication skills (*Gutiérrez Pérez, 2016, pp. 221-247; Tsitoura, 2022, pp. 112-118; Abdulaal et al., 2023, pp. 51-61*). The paper also proposes pedagogical strategies, such as comparative analysis of metaphors and multimodal tasks within cultural contexts, to foster metaphor awareness in EFL curricula. Teachers can facilitate more authentic and culturally aware communication by training students to interpret beyond literal meanings. Ultimately, this work underscores the

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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diagnostic, cognitive, and pedagogical value of metaphors in language learning and advocates for their increased integration in EFL classrooms.

Keywords: EFL Teaching ; Metaphor ; Neo-Whorfian Approach ; Conceptual Metaphor Theory ; Intercultural Communication

Özet

Metafor, insanların soyut deneyimleri nasıl anladıklarını ve kültürel değerleri nasıl yansıttıklarını şekillendirdiği için insan düşüncesi ve iletişimi için hayati önem taşır. Bu makale, kavramsal metaforların bilişsel ve kültürel anlayış araçları olarak önemini incelemekte ve bunların Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce (EFL) öğretimine sistematik olarak dahil edilmesi gerektiğini savunmaktadır. Kavramsal Metafor Teorisi'ne *(Lakoff ve Johnson, 1980, s. 3-6; 17-25)* ve dilsel göreliliğe ilişkin Neo-Whorfçu yaklaşıma *(Gomila, 2014, s. 142-146; Boroditsky, 2001, s. 1-22; Levinson, 2003, s. 9-10; 100-120)* dayanmaktadır ve bu yaklaşım, hem kültürel bakış açılarını yansıtan hem de öğrenciler için anlama zorlukları yaratan İngilizcedeki metaforik ifadelerin analiziyle kanıtlanmıştır. Deneysel çalışmaların incelenmesi, açık metafor eğitiminin kelime dağarcığı edinimini *(Boers, 2000, s. 553-571; Littlemore ve Low, 2006, s. 150-160)*, mecazi dil anlayışını ve kültürlerarası iletişim becerilerini *(Gutiérrez Pérez, 2016, s. 221-247; Tsitoura, 2022, s. 112-118; Abdulaal vd., 2023, s. 51-61)* geliştirdiğini göstermektedir. Makale ayrıca, EFL müfredatında metafor farkındalığını geliştirmek için kültürel bağlamlarda metaforların ve çok modlu görevlerin karşılaştırmalı analizi gibi pedagojik stratejiler önermektedir. Öğretmenler, öğrencilere gerçek anlamların ötesinde yorumlama eğitimi vererek daha özgün ve kültürel olarak bilinçli iletişimi kolaylaştırabilirler. Sonuç olarak bu çalışma, metaforların dil öğrenimindeki tanısal, bilişsel ve pedagojik değerini vurgulamakta ve bunların EFL sınıflarına daha fazla entegre edilmesi gerektiğini savunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: EFL Öğretimi; Metafor; Neo-Whorfian Yaklaşımı; Kavramsal Metafor Teorisi; Kültürlerarası İletişim

INTRODUCTION

Language is more than just a neutral means of communication. It serves as a cognitive and cultural code through which individuals organize reality, categorize experiences, and pass on values. This paper examines from a Neo-Whorfian perspective *(Gomila, 2014, pp. 142-146; Boroditsky, 2001, pp. 1-22),* how teaching metaphors influences students' conceptualization and thinking processes. Among its many features, the metaphor holds a particularly interesting place. Contrary to what Lakoff and Johnson *(1980, pp. 3-6)* claimed in their groundbreaking book, "Metaphors

15

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

We Live By", metaphors are not merely decorative devices found in poetry, but are essential processes of thought. When speakers say they understand an idea, justify a stance, or run out of time, they are all using metaphors to project more abstract concepts (such as ideas, arguments, or time) onto more concrete, embodied experiences (like physical grasping, warfare, or motion). These vivid metaphors are deeply embedded in daily discourse and can influence reasoning and shape perception in ways that often go unnoticed by native speakers.

For language learners, the salience of metaphors is very high, and in most cases, they are perplexing. Boers *(2000, pp. 553-571)* demonstrated English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students often complain about their inability to grasp idiomatic and figurative phrases, which are not at all clear when interpreted at face value. But also, there is the opportunity for metaphors. Explicitly revealing the underlying mappings will allow teachers to make learners realize that figurative language is not an accident but a systematic and meaningful one. In this way, learners can learn the vocabulary more efficiently, work with real texts, and take the intercultural communication to a new level.

The paper argues that conceptual metaphors are not only desirable but also obligatory in EFL classrooms. To prove this point, it relies on two theoretical approaches: the Conceptual Metaphor Theory *(Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 17-25)*, which describes the cognitive nature of metaphor, and the Neo-Whorfian approach *(Levinson, 2003, pp. 100-120)*, which emphasizes the influence of linguistic patterns on habitual thought. Empirical studies have revealed that metaphor awareness training yields quantifiable results in language learning. *(Littlemore & Low, 2006, pp. 150-160 ; Tsitoura, 2022, pp. 112-118 ; Gutiérrez Pérez, 2016, pp. 221-247)*

Lastly, the paper suggests viable methods for incorporating metaphor into classroom practice, while addressing potential problems and constraints. The paper suggests that EFL learners who receive metaphor awareness instruction will perform better on vocabulary retention and idiom comprehension tasks than those in a control group, and metaphor instruction enhances learners' intercultural communicative competence. *(Abdulaal et al., 2023, pp. 51-61)*.

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual Metaphor Theory

In the work of Lakoff and Johnson *(1980, pp. 3-6)*, it is shown that human beings explain abstract worlds in more concrete terms; the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) was developed. These mappings are not isolated but recurrent, consistent, and based on embodied experience *(Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, pp. 3-6; 17-25)*. The English language has some of the most widespread metaphors, including Argument is War (speakers attack weak points, defend claims, and win or lose debates). This metaphor brings disagreement into view as adversarial, which shapes the way people

16

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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communicate: "Time is money." People spend time, waste time, and save time. This metaphor illustrates the commodification of time in a capitalist economy. This metaphor linearizes life into stages. "Ideas are food." Learners digest information, chew over ideas, or swallow arguments. This metaphor compares the process of understanding with the bodily processes.

The cognitive economy of human thought arises from these metaphors: we take what we know (movement, money, food, war) to comprehend what is abstract or complex (time, life, ideas, arguments). Cultural orientations are also evident in them. For example, a war metaphor is seen to represent a cultural focus on competition and confrontation, and the argument is that in other societies, the argument can be formulated more collaboratively.

CMT thus offers a platform for explaining the prevalence of metaphors, their cross-cultural variations, and their difficulty for language learners.

The Neo-Whorfian Perspective

The Neo-Whorfian view of linguistic relativity is the second theoretical strand related to this study. The idea that language shapes thought was put forward by Sapir *(1929, pp. 207-214)* and Whorf *(1956, pp. 207-220)* early in the 20th century. Their powerful form, linguistic determinism, argued that speakers could only think what their language permitted. This opinion was condemned and, to a great extent, was disregarded. But a weaker form, linguistic relativity, has been rejuvenated with the help of empirical studies.

The conceptualization of time was found to differ between English and Mandarin speakers, as shown by Boroditsky *(2001, pp. 1-22),* who aligns with the metaphorical language. English speakers tend to talk about time in a horizontal way (an upcoming weekend), while Mandarin speakers use vertical metaphors (an up month for the previous month and a down month for the next month). Levinson *(2003, pp. 9-10; 100-120)* showed that languages that use absolute systems of space (north/south/east/west) condition speakers to navigate space differently than those that use relative systems (left/right). These results indicate that language has subtle effects on attention, categorization, and cognition, which are measurable.

This process depends on metaphors. Since they encode habitual processes of thinking of abstract areas, they inform the conceptualizations of speakers in ways that might intuitively seem natural but, in fact, are culturally and linguistically predetermined. The Neo-Whorfian viewpoint of teaching EFL metaphors is not limited to teaching idioms but rather involves introducing new cognitive constructs to learners.

Literature Review

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ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

Studies conducted over the last twenty years have proven that metaphor instruction is helpful in second language learning. Controlled experiments by Boers *(2000, pp. 553-571)* demonstrated that teaching vocabulary using conceptual metaphors enhanced the retention of polysemous words by the learners. Those learner groups that were taught simultaneously the expressions "grasp an idea" and "grasp an object" better maintained the figurative meaning of those expressions than did those that were taught individually.

On this observation, Littlemore and Low *(2006, pp. 150-160)* proposed that metaphoric competence and the capacity to interpret, produce, and reflect on metaphor are to be taken as central elements of communicative competence. They observed that learners who learn metaphors speak more fluently, learn more subtly, and participate more in genuine discourse.

This evidence base has been increased in recent research. According to Tsitoura *(2022, pp. 112-118),* students of junior high schools in Greece who were taught the use of metaphors with metaphorical expressions performed significantly better when asked to recognize and evaluate figurative expressions in comparison to control groups. Abdulaal et al. *(2023, pp. 51-61)* conducted a multimodal study and instructed Saudi EFL students to describe their language learning experiences using drawings and stories. The findings showed that there were very rich metaphorical models, like learning English being a mountain, and that motivating students to externalize metaphors enhanced reflections and motivation. On the same note, Gutiérrez Pérez *(2016, pp. 221-247)* revealed that the conceptual metaphor training in higher education in Europe did not merely enhance understanding of English texts but also intercultural sensitivity because students were able to compare metaphorical patterns in the different languages.

Collectively, these studies show that metaphor awareness can be taught, that it enhances language performance, and that it leads to intercultural competence. They also establish that learners with the ability to see through metaphors learn language more at both cognitive and cultural levels.

Metaphors, Culture, and Intercultural Communication

Cultural orientations are revealed in metaphors. The English language tends to imagine time as a limited resource (time is money), which represents the spirit of efficiency and productivity. They theorize argument as war (protect your point, attack an idea) in terms of the traditions of adversary debate. They theorize love as a journey (we have come a long way, we are at a crossroad), and this is the individualist conceptualization of relationships.

These domains are arranged differently in other languages. As an example, within certain Indigenous languages, time is outlined in connection with natural cycles and not as money. Politeness metaphors in Japanese are focused on social stratification

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

and harmony in relations instead of conflict. The expression of emotions in Turkish is often made with body imagery or graphic scenes of narration, and the tone is different when compared to the English representation of the internal strain (boiling with anger).

Such differences demonstrate the significance of teaching metaphors in intercultural communication. The cases of misunderstanding do not only occur due to literal mistranslations but also to unidentified metaphorical structures. When learners learn to see metaphors as cultural artifacts, they develop skills to see through the assumptions veiled in contexts, negotiate meaning making, and respect diversity in thinking styles. According to Gomila *(2014, pp. 142-146),* Neo-Whorfian results affirm that exposure to other metaphorical systems can reorganize cognitive practices, which is attained not only in the classroom but also at an intercultural competence level in general.

Pedagogical Implications

The metaphor needs to be incorporated into the EFL classes through planned pedagogy. Three of these are the results of research and practice, for example, explicit instruction in metaphorical mappings. An example of conceptual metaphors that can be introduced by teachers includes ideas as food by providing instances (food for thought, digest information), visualizing the source and target domains, and assisting learners to see the systematic relationships. This assists the students in perceiving figurative expressions as meaningful systems as opposed to single idioms. Comparative analysis across languages. It is possible to ask learners to identify equivalents in their native language and to compare them with

English metaphors. As an illustration, they can have an analogy of war in the English language by using a dialogue metaphor in their own language. Through such comparisons, the awareness of cultural values is increased, and there is also the thought that makes one reflect upon the influence of language on thought and Multimodal tasks. Students can make drawings, role plays, or even narratives that represent metaphors of abstract concepts like learning, success, or fear. Abdulaal et al. *(2023, pp. 51-61)* demonstrated that these types of tasks help learners to showcase their conceptualizations and engage. Multimodal activities allow a better understanding by making the metaphors visible and embodied.

These strategies may be incorporated into the reading, writing, listening, and speaking activities. As an illustration, during reading lessons, students can underline metaphors in the readings and talk about their connotations. They can use writing to work on generating metaphors on abstract issues. During speech, they can play real-life situations that involve the use of figurative language. They can deconstruct how political speeches are framed or how advertisements use metaphors in the process of listening.

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ELT-ICRAL 2025

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"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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congress.ulead.org.tr

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

METHOD

The research relies on the qualitative literature review methodology. It is based on existing studies rather than fieldwork or the gathering of new information, so it investigates the purpose of conceptual metaphors as cognitive and cultural devices in the classroom of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The main idea of this approach is to synthesize and interpret past research to understand how metaphor awareness can be used to improve language learning, cultural awareness, and communication skills.

The study is mainly based on two theoretical paradigms, the Conceptual Metaphor Theory developed by Lakoff and Johnson *(1980 pp. 3-6; 17-25)* and the Neo-Whorfian approach towards linguistic relativity *(*Gomila, 2014, pp. 142-146; Levinson, 2003, pp. 100-120; Boroditsky, 2001, pp. 1-22*).* These guidelines were applied in the selection, analysis, and interpretation of sources. The analyzed literature comprises both theoretical and empirical research conducted between 1980 and 2024 on the teaching of metaphors, vocabulary learning, figurative language, and intercultural competence. The analysis relies on key works by Boers *(2000, pp. 553-571*), Littlemore and Low *(2006, pp. 150-160),* Gutiérrez Perez *(2016, pp. 221-247),* and Tsitoura *(2022, pp. 112-118*) because they provide strong evidence for the benefits of teaching metaphors in enhancing learners' understanding and communicative skills.

Thematic analysis was used in the study to analyze the literature that was gathered. The results of both studies were compared and categorized into similar themes, like vocabulary retention, figurative comprehension, and intercultural communication. Another part of the analysis involved the correlation of these results with the cognitive and cultural dimensions of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and the Neo-Whorfian approach.

Taking a literature-guided approach allows the research to incorporate ideas from other educational and cultural contexts. It assists in identifying the regularity of metaphor-teaching and comprehension patterns and in describing areas that still require further research, teacher training, and curriculum development. On the whole, this approach offers a theory-based, multifaceted view of how awareness of metaphor can facilitate both language and cultural competence in EFL learning.

Lastly, as this study is based solely on previously published works, the data to be analyzed are in the form of literature. The integration and understanding of these scholarly compositions served as the primary analytical procedure, enabling the research to analyze and generate novel insights without necessarily collecting empirical data.

Data Collection and Analysis

The current study is founded on the qualitative synthesis of the academic literature, as opposed to the empirical data obtained among the participants. The sample of

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and conference publications between 1980 and 2024 devoted to the conceptual metaphor theory, linguistic relativity, and metaphor teaching in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms is considered the data. The seminal works of Lakoff and Johnson *(1980 pp. 3-6; 17-25),* Boers *(2000, pp. 553-571),* Littlemore and Low *(2006, pp. 150-160),* Gutiérrez Perez *(2016, pp. 221-247),* Tsitoura *(2022, pp. 112-118),* and Abdulaal et al. *(2023, pp. 51-61)* are the main sources that comprise the theoretical and empirical foundation of the study.

The academic databases used in the systematic selection included JSTOR, Google Scholar, and ResearchGate, using key terms like "conceptual metaphor," "figurative competence," "EFL metaphor instruction," and "linguistic relativity." Only articles that had definite pedagogical or cognitive significance to metaphor instruction were selected. The information was organized thematically after the literature compilation into three broad areas, namely: (1) vocabulary retention and figurative comprehension, (2) cognitive and cultural conceptualization, and (3) intercultural communicative competence.

The thematic content analysis method was used in the analysis. Both studies were discussed in order to determine the common themes, findings, and theoretical orientations. The findings were then discussed based on the two informative frameworks in this paper, the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and the Neo-Whorfian strategy. Comparative study interpretation presented the possibility to find convergent patterns, research discrepancies, and pedagogical implications, which shaped an integrated view of the roles of conceptual metaphors as cognitive and cultural resources in EFL learning.

Validity and Reliability

In qualitative literature-based research, validity is determined by the credibility, coherence, and consistency of the interpretation process rather than numerical measurements (*Gutiérrez Pérez, 2016, pp. 221-247*). To ensure conceptual validity, the data were elicited from a wide range of authoritative sources in linguistics, cognitive science, and language pedagogy. The triangulated nature of the studies (both theoretical and empirical) provided the findings with a solid foundation, as they were based on multiple data strands *(Boers, 2000, pp. 553-571; Littlemore & Low, 2006, pp. 150-160).*

Results were interpreted through the theoretical framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) *(Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 3-6; 17-25)* and the Neo-Whorfian perspective (*Levinson, 2003, pp. 100-120; Boroditsky, 2001, pp. 1-22; Gomila, 2014, pp. 142-146*) to provide theoretical alignment and consistency in the interpretation. Moreover, validity was enhanced by transparent reporting of the methodology: the selection criteria, time period, and thematic categories were clear and justified. This openness makes the conclusions reflect the original representations of the studies rather than the researcher's subjective bias.

Research reliability was achieved through the replicability and consistency of the analytical process. Selecting literature systematically and coding it by themes will

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

ensure that a different researcher with similar criteria and frameworks would likely reach the same interpretations (*Tsitoura, 2022, pp. 112-118*). The applicability of the results is also associated with the use of thoroughly documented academic sources with referencing.

In keeping with analytical reliability, interpretation of data associated with metaphor followed the definitions and conceptualizations of the significant theories to the letter. References as well as paraphrases were matched with the original text to avoid distortion (*Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 3-6; Levinson, 2003, pp. 9-10*). Additionally, by adapting the analytical procedure to the established qualitative research criteria (thematic analysis and source triangulation), the research study is both methodologically rigorous and reliable even though quantitative data are not used.

FINDINGS

The results of this study were derived from a thematic synthesis of earlier empirical and theoretical studies on conceptual metaphors in EFL instruction. It has found three key patterns, namely cognitive gain in vocabulary and figurative understanding, cultural and conceptual awareness, and acquisition of intercultural communicative competence.

Cognitive and Linguistic Learning

In the literature, a clear presentation and explanation of conceptual metaphor skills always positively influenced the learning of figurative language and vocabulary memory. Boers *(2000, pp. 553-571)* found that learners who received instruction on metaphorical mappings recalled literal and figurative meanings better than those who received traditional instruction. On the same note, Littlemore and Low *(2006, pp. 150-160)* highlighted that metaphor awareness facilitates fluency and natural communication by helping learners think outside the box. These results imply that the use of metaphors triggers a higher level of mental processing and enables students to relate emerging ideas to real-world experiences to enhance their long-term memory and lexical plasticity.

Cultural Conceptualization and Awareness

Another general pattern observed in the literature is that metaphors are gateways to cultural consciousness. The study by Gutiérrez Perez *(2016, pp. 221-247)* established that conceptual metaphors do embed cultural worldviews. Time is Money in English, but cyclical or relational time in non-Western languages. The study of these figurative systems helped learners to understand the way language is used to express social values and ideologies. In this way, metaphor pedagogy enhances language proficiency besides creating an ability to reflect on the relation between linguistic form, thought, and culture.

Intercultural Communicative Competence

Lastly, works by Tsitoura *(2022, pp. 112-118)* and Abdulaal et al. *(2023, pp. 51-61)* mention the importance of metaphor instruction in the development of intercultural

ANKARA
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MOMENTUM GLOBAL
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

communicative competence. Students who have completed multimodal metaphor activities, including drawing or telling stories or comparing metaphors between languages, demonstrated more motivation and empathy, as well as cultural sensitivity. They were able to determine and decode metaphorical expressions in real life situations so as to be able to negotiate cultural complexities more efficiently.

All these findings taken together show that the use of conceptual metaphors in EFL classrooms has a positive effect on both language and intercultural domains. Not only do learners learn vocabulary more efficiently, but they also gain a better insight into how language is used to encode cultural thought. Hence, teaching metaphor can be used as a part of a more holistic and humanistic model of language teaching that involves cognition, culture, and communication.

Challenges and Limitations

Although it is a good idea, metaphor instruction poses challenges. Teachers might not be ready to explain conceptual metaphors, particularly when they have not studied cognitive linguistics. The lack of time in busy timetables might be an obstacle to figurative work. Students may be opposed to metaphorical analysis at first and tend to use literal analysis. Besides, it must be culturally sensitive: certain metaphors can have some connotations that are unknown, puzzling, or inappropriate in one or another situation.

There is another challenge of assessment. Metaphor competence can hardly be tested, unlike grammar or vocabulary. The development of valid instruments for measuring metaphor comprehension and production is still in process. These challenges notwithstanding, the emerging body of evidence indicates that the advantages of teaching metaphor are more than the challenges, as long as teachers get training and empowerment.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

The conceptual metaphor study analysis and the studies reviewed in this paper show the intricate relationship between cognition, culture, and pedagogy. What comes into focus is the fact that metaphors are not mere figures of speech but strong intermediaries between thought and discourse. Their incorporation in EFL teaching has theoretical and practical importance, but their contribution in the classroom setting has been undervalued in many cases.

Conceptually, the discoveries confirm the arguments held by Lakoff and Johnson *(1980, pp. 3-6; 17-25)* that metaphors play a central role in human thinking. Simultaneously, the evidence is also in line with the Neo-Whorfian approach, which highlights the importance of language structures in thinking in such subtle, usually invisible ways *(Boroditsky, 2001, pp. 1-22; Levinson, 2003, pp. 9-10)*. Combining these frameworks, the teaching of metaphors not only boosts language competence but also makes students aware of how cultural worldviews are entrenched in the linguistic systems. Students who learn through metaphor not only acquire communicative

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

competence but also intercultural competence since they acquire the ability to identify and negotiate differences in worldview.

It is also indicated by the reviewed empirical studies that metaphor awareness training has tangible educational benefits. Boers *(2000, pp. 553-571)* has shown some significant improvements in vocabulary retention, and Littlemore and Low *(2006, pp. 150-160)* associated metaphoric competence with more fluent and natural communication. Even more recent studies *(Tsitoura, 2022, pp. 112–118; Abdulaal et al., 2023, pp. 51-61)* also show that explicit teaching of metaphors strengthens the interpretative ability and motivation of learners, especially with multimodal tasks. These results can be attributed to the emerging trend in applied linguistics according to which figurative competence is no longer peripheral but central in second language *acquisition (Gutiérrez Pérez, 2016, pp. 221-247).*

Meanwhile, these are just some of the problems to consider. First, although metaphors are culturally based, they may also be created by individuals and vary. This means that teachers have to balance the use of systematic metaphorical patterns, which should encourage learners to interpret and even create new metaphors. Second, metaphors may be the locations of cultural negotiation. By comparing English and L1 metaphors, learners engage in intercultural reflection, which can bust stereotypes and expand mindsets *(Levinson, 2003, pp. 100-120)*. This implies that metaphor pedagogy can aid not only language learning but also critical cultural awareness.

Lastly, the identified issues, such as the preparedness of teachers, curriculum limitations, and assessment complications, reveal the necessity of institutional support. Basic ideas of cognitive linguistics need to be presented in teacher education programs so that teachers are equipped to teach the metaphor systematically. Curriculum designers ought to create space not only for grammar and vocabulary but also for figurative language. The assessment, though challenging, needs to be developed to incorporate metaphor awareness exercises that reflect the capacity of learners to comprehend and apply figurative language in the right context (*Littlemore & Low, 2006, pp. 150-160; Tsitoura, 2022, pp. 112-118*).

Collectively, these arguments demonstrate that the inclusion of metaphor in the EFL instruction is not an incidental change but a paradigm shift. It involves an understanding that one does not simply teach language but learns how to look at the world and how to organize it. Such a realization brings new avenues to more meaningful, authentic, and culturally sensitive language acquisition.

Conclusion

Language, thought, and culture involve metaphors. From the perspective of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, they are conceptual mechanisms that enable us to organize the abstract in terms of the concrete (*Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 3-6; 17-*

24

ANKARA
HACI BAYRAM VELİ UNIVERSITY
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ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

25). To the Neo-Whorfian view, they are cultural patterns that define habitual thought (*Gomila, 2014, pp. 142-146; Levinson, 2003, pp. 9-10; Boroditsky, 2001, pp. 1-22*). For EFL learners, mastering metaphors is a key to attaining true communicative competence. Unconsciously, learners can also receive words but not meanings; they can receive grammar and not receive the worldview coded in the language.

The fact shows that explicit teaching of metaphors improves vocabulary learning, figurative understanding, and intercultural competence (*Boers, 2000, pp. 553-571; Gutiérrez Pérez, 2016, pp. 221-247; Tsitoura, 2022, pp. 112-118*). Metaphorical systems can be seen and become a part of the classroom through strategies like explicit mapping, comparative analysis, and multimodal tasks (*Abdulaal et al., 2023, pp. 51-61*). Although specific issues still exist in teacher training, curriculum design, and assessment, the metaphorical introduction to EFL teaching opens the way for deep improvements.

And finally, to teach a language is to teach not words and rules, but a perspective of the world. That world is reflected through metaphors. When used in EFL classes, conceptual metaphors will not only prepare the learners to communicate more efficiently but also think more globally, see more profoundly, and be more sensitive across cultures.

Suggestions

Based on the results and the discourse of this paper, it is possible to offer some pedagogical and research based recommendations regarding the incorporation of conceptual metaphors in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms.

Integrating Metaphor Awareness in the Curriculum Design

Metaphor awareness should be a significant component of learning language that curriculum developers and material designers should take into consideration. Authentic texts, multimodal activities, and comparisons between the target language and learners' native languages can be systematically used to introduce metaphor across the four reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities. Instead of perceiving metaphors as an isolated idiomatic expression, coursebooks must emphasize their conceptual backgrounds and cultural implications (*Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 3-6; Gutiérrez Pérez, 2016, pp. 221-247*).

Professional Development and Training of Teachers

To have a successful application, the teachers need to be taught about the concepts of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and cognitive linguistics. Many teachers may be unprepared to discuss metaphorical reasoning or cultural mapping without official advice. Metaphor pedagogy and its practical strategies of classroom implementation should thus be the focus of workshops, seminars, and teacher education modules. The development of metaphor competence among the learners is a product of teacher awareness (*Littlemore & Low, 2006, pp. 150-160*).

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

Multimodal Learning Approaches and Experiential Learning Approaches

Metaphor guidance should be backed by creative and experiential studies. Externalizing their conceptualizations can be achieved through drawing, narration, dramatization, and metaphor display. Such multimodal strategies can support learners in grasping abstract concepts embodied and increase their engagement and memory, as Abdulaal et al. *(2023, pp. 51-61)* demonstrate.

Culturally Responsible Instruction

Teachers are advised to be culturally sensitive, as metaphors strongly reflect cultural views of the world. A metaphorical systems comparison between languages promotes intercultural awareness among language learners, preventing ethnocentric interpretation, critical thinking about cultural presumptions, and intercultural understanding (*Levinson, 2003, pp. 100-120; Boroditsky, 2001, pp. 1-22*). This aligns with the objectives of communicative and intercultural competence in contemporary EFL teaching.

Future Research Suggestions

The empirical evidence on the intervention should be extended in future research through classroom-based experiments and longitudinal studies to gauge the long-term implications of metaphor instruction on performance in language-related and intercultural domains. Further, the creation of valid tools to measure awareness and production of metaphors is also a significant field of study. The combination of cognitive linguistics knowledge and technology-based learning space (digital storytelling, AI-assisted metaphor recognition) may also provide a new educational practice.

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FUELING THE FLAME: HOW RESILIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE DRIVE EFL INSTRUCTORS' WORK ENGAGEMENT

ALEVİ CANLI TUTMAK: DİRENÇ VE AZİM İNGİLİZCEYİ YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRETEN ÖĞRETİM GÖREVLİLERİNİN İŞE ADANMIŞLIĞINI NASIL GÜÇLENDİRİR

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Abstract

Work engagement among instructors leads to positive outcomes for their well-being at work. Given the significant influence of instructors' job involvement in academic domains, attention has been made to the determinants of this notion. This research examines the determinants of job engagement among English as a foreign language (EFL) instructors, using a model that considers perseverance and resilience. The survey included 213 EFL instructors from several state colleges. Participants were asked to complete three enquiries: resilience, persistence, and job satisfaction. The data was validated using the Modified Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Model and structural equation modelling (SEM). The study found a strong link between engagement at work, resilience, and perseverance, with resilience being the most effective predictor of instructor job engagement. Resilience and perseverance predict around 78% and 71% of job engagement improvements, respectively. The study's findings include suggestions for the advancement of Positive Psychology and associated topics in studies and classroom instruction to assist instructors and students in improving their job engagement by focussing on resilience and persistence of effort.

Keywords: EFL instructors, perseverance, resilience, job involvement

Özet

Öğretim görevlileri arasında işte adanmışlık, onların iş yaşamındaki iyi oluşlarına yönelik olumlu sonuçlara yol açmaktadır. Öğretim görevlilerinin akademik alanlardaki işe katılımlarının önemli etkisi göz önüne alındığında, bu olgunun belirleyicilerine yönelik ilgi giderek artmıştır. Bu araştırma, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten (EFL) öğretim görevlileri arasında işe adanmışlığın belirleyicilerini azim ve direnç değişkenlerini içeren bir model aracılığıyla incelemektedir. Çalışmanın örneklemini çeşitli devlet yüksekokullarından 213 İngilizce öğretim görevlisi oluşturmuştur. Katılımcılardan direnç, azim ve iş doyumunu içeren üç ölçekten oluşan bir anketi doldurmaları istenmiştir. Veriler, Düzeltilmiş Doğrulayıcı Faktör Analizi (CFA) modeli ve yapısal eşitlik modellemesi (SEM) kullanılarak

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

doğrulanmıştır. Araştırma, işte adanmışlık ile direnç ve azim arasında güçlü bir ilişki olduğunu göstermiş ve öğretim görevlilerinin işe adanmışlığını en güçlü yordayan değişkenin direnç olduğu belirlenmiştir. Direnç ve azim sırasıyla işe adanmışlıktaki değişimin yaklaşık yüzde yetmiş sekizini ve yüzde yetmiş birini yordamaktadır. Çalışmanın bulguları, Pozitif Psikolojinin ve ilgili konuların hem araştırmalarda hem de sınıf içi uygulamalarda geliştirilmesine yönelik öneriler sunmakta ve öğretim görevlilerinin ve öğrencilerin işe adanmışlıklarını artırmalarına destek olmak amacıyla dirence ve çaba azmine odaklanmanın önemini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İngilizce öğretim görevlileri, azim, direnç, işe adanmışlık.

INTRODUCTION

The well-being and sustained professional effectiveness of instructors have become central concerns in contemporary educational research. Among the many constructs that have been linked to instructors' professional functioning, work engagement has emerged as one of the most influential indicators of emotional, cognitive, and motivational investment in teaching. Work engagement has been described as a positive and fulfilling state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption, and it captures the extent to which instructors feel energized, involved, and fully concentrated in their professional roles (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). As international expectations for educational quality rise, and as instructors face increasingly complex pedagogical environments, researchers have placed greater emphasis on understanding the psychological factors that support or impede instructors' work engagement. The role of engagement is particularly pronounced within English as a foreign language instruction, where educators regularly encounter linguistic challenges, multicultural interactions, classroom uncertainty, and heavy emotional labor.

In recent years, the field of Positive Psychology has provided a powerful lens through which instructor engagement can be examined. Unlike traditional approaches that focus primarily on stress, burnout, and professional attrition, Positive Psychology emphasizes strengths, resilience, adaptability, and thriving in educational contexts. Researchers have argued that instructors are more likely to maintain high levels of engagement when they possess personal resources that allow them to cope effectively with demands and cultivate meaning in their work (MacIntyre, Gregersen, and Mercer, 2019). This perspective has motivated a shift from deficit-oriented models toward frameworks that highlight psychological strengths such as resilience, perseverance, optimism, and emotional regulation.

Among these strengths, resilience has gained particular attention. İnstructor resilience has been conceptualized as the capacity to adapt successfully and maintain motivational stability when confronted with adversity, change, or emotionally challenging teaching environments. Gu and Day (2013) note that resilience is not merely an innate trait but a dynamic process shaped by personal, relational, and contextual influences. İnstructors who demonstrate resilience are better equipped to navigate institutional constraints, shifting educational expectations, emotionally

29

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

demanding interactions, and periods of professional uncertainty. Similarly, research indicates that resilient instructors tend to experience greater emotional balance, maintain professional commitment for longer periods, and cope more effectively with workplace stressors (Beltman, Mansfield, and Price, 2011; Mansfield et al., 2012).

Perseverance is another psychological quality that has received growing interest. Rooted in motivational and personality psychology, perseverance has been defined as sustained effort toward long-term goals, even when progress is slow and challenges arise (Duckworth et al., 2007). Although perseverance is often associated with the broader construct of grit, recent research suggests that perseverance alone is a stronger predictor of academic and professional performance than the passion component of grit (Credé, 2018). Within educational environments, perseverance reflects instructors' continuous investment in their work, their willingness to overcome difficulties, and their commitment to student learning. İnstructors who exhibit perseverance tend to maintain stability of effort across instructional cycles, despite fluctuations in workload, emotional demands, or classroom outcomes.

While there is substantial evidence linking both resilience and perseverance to positive instructor outcomes, empirical studies that examine their combined predictive power on work engagement among EFL instructors remain limited. The existing literature tends to explore these constructs separately or in relation to burnout, job satisfaction, or emotional exhaustion. Relatively few studies consider how resilience and perseverance interact to shape engagement, especially within language teaching contexts where professional demands are unique. EFL instruction often requires instructors to manage communication barriers, respond to learner anxiety, support intercultural competence, and maintain creativity in lesson planning. These conditions may increase the significance of personal psychological strengths that sustain motivation and engagement.

The present study aims to contribute to this gap by examining the predictive roles of resilience and perseverance in determining the work engagement of EFL instructors working in state colleges. Through the use of validated psychological measures, Modified Confirmatory Factor Analysis, and Structural Equation Modeling, this research evaluates the extent to which these strengths shape instructors' engagement. The findings are intended to deepen theoretical understanding of instructor well-being and provide practical implications for instructor development programs. By identifying the strengths that most effectively support engagement, institutions can design more targeted interventions to promote instructor motivation and professional sustainability. The study also aligns with broader trends in Positive Psychology and language instructor psychology, which advocate for a holistic understanding of instructor well-being as an essential component of educational success (Wang, Derakhshan, and Zhang, 2021).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Work Engagement and İnstructor Well-Being

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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
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Work engagement has become a foundational concept in organizational and educational psychology. It represents a motivational and emotional state that reflects enthusiasm, involvement, and sustained cognitive focus in job activities (Bakker and Albrecht, 2018). Research has shown that engaged instructors demonstrate higher levels of commitment, creativity, and instructional quality. They are more likely to develop positive relationships with learners, apply innovative teaching methods, and maintain emotional stability during complex instructional situations. Studies also indicate that work engagement is related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and reduced intention to leave the profession (Hakanen, Bakker, and Schaufeli, 2006). Within EFL teaching, engagement is particularly salient because language instruction requires ongoing communication, empathy, adaptive decision-making, and responsiveness to students' linguistic and emotional needs.

The relationship between instructor engagement and student outcomes has been supported in numerous studies. Engaged instructors tend to foster supportive classroom environments that encourage learner autonomy and participation. They also demonstrate higher levels of self-regulation, instructional clarity, and professional enthusiasm, all of which contribute positively to students' language development. The literature emphasizes that work engagement not only benefits instructors but also serves as a catalyst for improved academic achievement and emotional stability among learners.

Instructor Resilience as a Psychological Resource

İnstructor resilience has been described as a protective factor that helps educators maintain their commitment and performance despite adverse conditions. Gu and Day (2013) emphasize that resilience is influenced by both individual strengths and external support systems, including institutional culture, collegial relationships, and professional development opportunities. Resilient instructors often display a capacity for emotional regulation, adaptability, and constructive problem-solving. They are able to manage classroom uncertainties, maintain professional values, and continue supporting students even when faced with substantial pressures.

Beltman, Mansfield, and Price (2011) highlight that instructor resilience develops across the career span and is reinforced through reflective practices, supportive relationships, and experiences that enhance self-efficacy. Research consistently shows that resilience is associated with lower levels of burnout, diminished emotional exhaustion, and higher levels of job satisfaction. Mansfield et al. (2012) further argue that resilience not only helps instructors survive difficult circumstances but also enables them to thrive and grow professionally. This capacity to thrive is particularly important in EFL settings where instructors encounter fluctuating class performance, cultural differences, language-related anxieties, and demands for continuous innovation in teaching strategies.

Recent advances in language instructor psychology have expanded the understanding of resilience in multilingual instructional contexts. Studies suggest that resilience supports instructors' emotional stability in the face of student anxiety,

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
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language barriers, and performance pressure. It also contributes to the maintenance of instructional enthusiasm and creativity. These findings indicate that resilience is a crucial psychological strength that may significantly influence instructors' work engagement. İnstructors who are able to adapt positively may sustain higher levels of motivation and dedication, enhancing their ability to remain fully engaged in their work.

Perseverance as a Predictor of Professional Functioning

Perseverance reflects consistent effort and determination to achieve long-term goals, even when progress becomes challenging. Duckworth and colleagues (2007) introduced perseverance as a core element of grit and demonstrated its relevance to various domains, including academic achievement and professional performance. Subsequent research has refined the concept, showing that perseverance independently predicts success and sustained commitment more effectively than passion-related constructs (Credé, 2018).

In teaching, perseverance manifests as continuous investment in lesson planning, instructional preparation, and pedagogical improvement, despite fluctuations in motivation or contextual difficulties. İnstructors who persevere tend to maintain their commitment to student development, seek solutions during instructional challenges, and demonstrate long-term dedication to professional growth. Perseverance also contributes to self-efficacy, as repeated efforts to overcome obstacles strengthen instructors' belief in their own capabilities.

Within EFL contexts, perseverance gains particular importance due to the complexity of language instruction. İnstructors must support learners with diverse linguistic backgrounds and varying proficiency levels, respond to cultural and communicative barriers, and maintain patience during students' gradual language development. Perseverant instructors are more likely to persist in addressing these challenges and sustain engagement in their instructional tasks.

Theoretical Links between Resilience, Perseverance, and Engagement

Positive Psychology frameworks provide a theoretical basis for understanding how resilience and perseverance influence work engagement. Seligman (2011) argues that well-being arises from the cultivation of strengths such as optimism, motivation, and adaptability. These strengths help individuals maintain positive emotions and increase their capacity to engage deeply in meaningful tasks. Bakker and Demerouti (2017) further explain that personal resources such as resilience and perseverance contribute to work engagement by enhancing individuals' ability to manage job demands and maintain motivation.

Research in language instructor psychology supports this theoretical connection. Xie and Derakhshan (2023) found that emotional resilience significantly improves instructor engagement in language classrooms. Wang, Derakhshan, and Zhang (2021) note that instructor strengths, including persistence and adaptability, contribute to professional thriving in linguistically and culturally dynamic

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
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environments. These studies suggest that resilience and perseverance may play complementary roles in predicting work engagement, with resilience helping instructors adapt to challenges and perseverance sustaining their long-term efforts.

Despite these theoretical insights, empirical research examining the combined effects of resilience and perseverance on work engagement among EFL instructors remains limited. Most studies focus on single constructs or broader psychological frameworks. As a result, there is a need for research that integrates these strengths and assesses their predictive power in language education settings. The present study addresses this gap by evaluating the extent to which resilience and perseverance explain variations in work engagement among EFL instructors in state colleges.

METHOD

The current study employed a quantitative research design to examine how resilience and perseverance predict EFL instructors' work engagement. Quantitative methodology was selected because the research sought to identify structural relations among latent psychological constructs through statistical modeling. This approach enabled the systematic evaluation of how individual differences in resilience and perseverance contribute to variations in instructors' engagement, while also providing reliable measurements of the constructs under investigation. Structural equation modeling was particularly suitable for this purpose because it allows the simultaneous examination of measurement quality and causal pathways among theoretical variables.

Participants

The participants were 213 English as a Foreign Language instructors working at state colleges across multiple regions. Their participation was voluntary and anonymous. The instructors represented a wide range of professional backgrounds, including varying years of teaching experience, diverse educational qualifications, and different institutional roles. This diversity increased the representativeness of the sample and enhanced the generalizability of the findings to other EFL teaching contexts. The instructors were proficient English users and had substantial experience teaching language skills at the tertiary level. All participants provided informed consent before completing the surveys. Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the relevant institutional review board, and the researchers adhered to established ethical standards throughout the data collection and analysis processes.

Instruments

Three validated self-report questionnaires were used to measure the main constructs examined in the study. Work engagement was assessed using the Engaged İnstructors Scale developed by Klassen et al. (2013), which evaluates vigor, dedication, and absorption. Participants responded to items using a Likert-type scale, with higher scores indicating greater levels of engagement. The scale has been widely used in international contexts and has demonstrated high reliability in language education studies.

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ULEAD 2025
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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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Resilience was measured using the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale created by Connor and Davidson (2003). This instrument captures individuals' ability to adapt positively to stressful experiences and recover from adversity. The scale includes items that assess emotional regulation, adaptability, and coping strength. Its psychometric robustness has been confirmed in numerous studies involving instructors and other professionals.

Perseverance was assessed using the perseverance-of-effort subscale of the Grit Scale developed by Duckworth et al. (2007). This measure reflects a sustained commitment to long-term goals and the tendency to continue working hard despite difficulties or setbacks. Perseverance has been shown to predict academic and professional outcomes across educational settings. All scales used in the current study demonstrated strong internal reliability based on Cronbach's alpha values calculated during analysis.

Procedure

The survey instruments were administered online through a secure digital platform to facilitate participation across multiple locations. İnstructors received an invitation containing a brief explanation of the study's purpose, estimated completion time, and assurances of confidentiality. Participants were informed that their involvement was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time without negative consequences. Once they agreed to participate, they completed the questionnaires in approximately fifteen minutes. The research team monitored data collection to ensure completeness and accuracy. Only fully completed surveys were included in the final analysis to maintain data integrity.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences and AMOS to perform structural equation modeling. Preliminary screening was performed to assess normality, identify missing values, and detect outliers. Normality assumptions were met, and no extreme outliers were found. Confirmatory Factor Analysis was then conducted to validate the measurement model. Model fit was evaluated using commonly accepted indices, including the comparative fit index, normed fit index, goodness-of-fit index, and the root mean square error of approximation. Acceptable values for these indices indicated that the measurement model fit the data well.

Composite reliability and average variance extracted were calculated to assess internal consistency and convergent validity. Discriminant validity was examined by comparing the square root of the average variance extracted for each construct with its correlations with other constructs. After confirming the reliability and validity of the measures, the structural model was tested to examine the predictive relationships among resilience, perseverance, and work engagement. Path coefficients and significance values were used to evaluate the strength and direction of the hypothesized relationships. The variance explained by the model was also calculated to assess its overall effectiveness.

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
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"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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FINDINGS

Measurement Model

The results of the Modified Confirmatory Factor Analysis indicated that the measurement model achieved an acceptable fit to the observed data. Fit indices met recommended thresholds, with the comparative fit index and normed fit index both exceeding recommended criteria. The goodness-of-fit index was also within an acceptable range, indicating that the proposed factor structure adequately represented the underlying constructs. The root mean square error of approximation fell within the acceptable range for social science research. These indices confirmed that the measurement model provided a strong foundation for evaluating the structural relationships among resilience, perseverance, and engagement.

Table 1 presents reliability and validity indicators. All factor loadings exceeded. 60. Composite reliabilities ranged from. 85 to. 92, confirming strong internal consistency. AVE values surpassed. 50, indicating adequate convergent validity.

Table 1. CFA Results for Measurement Model

Construct	Item Loadings (.60+)	CR	AVE
Resilience	.62-.88	.91	.67
Perseverance	.64-.89	.90	.65
Work Engagement	.70-.91	.92	.71

Model fit: x^2/df = 2.14; CFI = .96; TLI = .95; RMSEA = .056.

Reliability analysis showed that all scales demonstrated high internal consistency. Composite reliability values exceeded the recommended threshold for research involving latent constructs. The average variance extracted values also exceeded acceptable minimums, indicating that each construct captured a substantial portion of the variance in its items. Discriminant validity was established because the square roots of the average variance extracted for each construct were greater than their intercorrelations. These results indicated that the constructs were distinct from one another and measured unique aspects of instructors' psychological functioning.

Structural Model

The structural analysis demonstrated that resilience exerted a substantial positive effect on work engagement. The standardized path coefficient indicated a strong relationship, and resilience accounted for seventy-eight percent of the variance in engagement. Perseverance also had a significant positive effect, explaining seventy-one percent of the variance. The overall model was well fitted and confirmed that both psychological strengths meaningfully contribute to EFL instructors' engagement.

SEM results revealed:

Resilience → Work Engagement: β = .88, R^2 = .78

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

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14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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Perseverance → Work Engagement: $\beta = .84$, $R^2 = .71$

Table 2. SEM Path Coefficients

Path	Estimate (β)	p-value
Resilience → Work Engagement	.88	< .001
Perseverance → Work Engagement	.84	< .001

The structural equation model revealed significant paths from resilience to work engagement. The standardized coefficient indicated a strong positive relationship, showing that instructors with higher levels of resilience exhibited significantly higher levels of engagement in their professional roles. Resilience accounted for approximately seventy-eight percent of the variance in engagement, demonstrating its powerful predictive value. İnstructors who reported stronger resilience tended to feel more energized, dedicated, and absorbed in their instructional duties. This finding reinforces the notion that resilience supports instructors' capacity to maintain positive psychological states despite professional challenges.

The second predictor, perseverance, also showed a significant positive effect on work engagement. The standardized path coefficient indicated that perseverance explained approximately seventy-one percent of the variance in engagement. İnstructors who demonstrated higher levels of perseverance reported stronger tendencies to maintain focus, invest sustained effort, and persist through instructional difficulties. This pattern indicates that perseverance supports long-term engagement by fostering stable commitment to teaching and sustained energy investment in pedagogical activities.

The combined effects of resilience and perseverance explained a substantial proportion of variability in work engagement. Both constructs contributed significantly to instructors' willingness to invest effort and derive meaning from their professional activities. The findings indicate that resilience provides a foundation for emotional stability and adaptive functioning, whereas perseverance supports continuous effort and goal-focused motivation. The strong predictive power of both constructs highlights their central role in sustaining instructors' engagement across diverse instructional contexts.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study provides important insights into how psychological strengths support EFL instructors' engagement in their work. The findings confirm that resilience plays the most powerful role in predicting work engagement. Resilient instructors are able to maintain emotional balance during stressful situations, adapt to new instructional demands, and respond constructively to challenges. The strong association between resilience and engagement supports theoretical perspectives that suggest emotional

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

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regulation contributes to sustained professional investment. The broaden and build theory proposed by Fredrickson (2001) provides a useful explanation for this pattern. Positive emotional states help individuals broaden their cognitive and behavioral repertoires, which in turn facilitates the development of lasting psychological resources. İnstructors who possess strong resilience appear to build emotional and cognitive strengths that foster their engagement over time.

Perseverance also demonstrated a significant and substantial contribution to work engagement. İnstructors who show perseverance tend to maintain their commitment to professional goals despite difficulties. This finding aligns with previous research demonstrating that perseverance supports academic and professional outcomes by enabling individuals to maintain consistent effort over long periods. Perseverance strengthens instructors' motivation and encourages them to continue refining their instructional practices, even when progress seems slow or obstacles appear overwhelming. Within EFL contexts, where instructional challenges are common, perseverance plays an essential role in supporting long-term engagement.

The strong predictive power of these constructs underscores the importance of personal strengths in shaping instructors' professional well-being. While institutional policies, professional development programs, and workplace resources are important, this study highlights the role of individual psychological capacities in determining how instructors engage with their work. İnstructors who possess strong resilience and perseverance may be better prepared to navigate the emotional and cognitive demands of teaching and maintain their motivation over time.

These findings also carry implications for instructor education. Programs that promote reflective practice, stress management, and emotional regulation may help pre-service and in-service instructors develop greater resilience. Similarly, encouraging long-term goal setting, effortful practice, and sustained commitment may help instructors cultivate perseverance. Professional development workshops, mentoring programs, and collaborative learning communities can provide support systems that nurture these strengths.

Institutional leaders should also consider how school environments affect resilience and perseverance. Supportive working conditions, consistent feedback, and constructive leadership can enhance instructors' sense of stability and belonging, which may help them sustain their engagement. Furthermore, institutions can offer counseling services, wellness programs, and peer support networks to help instructors build the psychological resources needed for long-term professional success.

Future research may explore how resilience and perseverance interact with other psychological variables such as emotional intelligence, autonomy, or professional identity. Qualitative studies could provide deeper insights into how instructors describe and develop these strengths in their everyday practice. Longitudinal designs would allow researchers to examine how resilience and perseverance evolve over time and how they influence engagement across different career stages.

The present study examined the role of resilience and perseverance in predicting EFL instructors' work engagement and found that both constructs are significant predictors. Resilience emerged as the strongest determinant, suggesting that instructors who are capable of adapting to challenges and managing stress are more likely to exhibit high levels of engagement. Perseverance also contributed significantly, indicating that sustained effort and continued commitment to long-term goals enhance instructors' investment in their professional responsibilities.

These findings emphasize the importance of integrating psychological-strength development into instructor education and professional development programs. By cultivating resilience and perseverance, institutions can support instructors in maintaining their motivation, emotional well-being, and instructional effectiveness. Strengthening these psychological resources may also reduce burnout, enhance job satisfaction, and contribute to positive educational environments.

The study contributes to the growing literature on instructor well-being and underscores the relevance of Positive Psychology in language education research. As teaching becomes increasingly complex, understanding the psychological factors that support instructor engagement remains essential. Further research in this area can deepen our understanding of how personal strengths interact with contextual variables to influence instructors' professional experiences. Ultimately, fostering resilience and perseverance can help educators maintain the passion and commitment needed to support students' linguistic and personal development.

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EXPLORING THE ROLE OF 'OKAY' IN EFL CLASSROOM INTERACTION: A CONVERSATION ANALYTIC STUDY

YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETİLEN SINIF ETKİLEŞİMİNDE "OKAY" İŞARETİNİN ROLÜNÜN İNCELENMESİ: BİR KONUŞMA ÇÖZÜMLEMESİ ÇALIŞMASI

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Abstract

The field of Conversation Analysis for Second Language Acquisition (CA-for-SLA) helps us to understand the classroom interaction patterns, strategies, and the roles of the participants during the conversation. Hence, CA-for-SLA offers a comprehensive perspective in revealing how second language acquisition and use occur, along with how teachers' classroom interactional competence shapes the learners' participation. The role of the 'Okay' as a part of the interactional competence of English language teachers has not been investigated in detail. Accordingly, this study aims to explore the interactional organization of 'Okay' as a part of English language teachers' classroom interactional competence within the SETT framework. The data for this qualitative study consists of five hours and forty minutes of classroom audio recordings of four different teachers at a higher education institution in Türkiye. The data are analyzed using conversation analysis by specifically focusing on the Sequence Organization of Schegloff (2007) and the SETT framework as a part of classroom interactional competence (Walsh, 2006; 2011). The findings suggest that in an educational setting, 'Okay' has multifunctions rather than accepting or closing the previous turns. In contrast, it shapes the classroom interaction, and it is an indicator of the English language teachers' classroom interactional competence. As a result, the findings provide implications for English language teacher education and training in Türkiye.

Keywords: Classroom Interactional Competence, Conversation Analysis, Okay, English Language Teaching.

Özet

İkinci dil ediniminde konuşma çözümlemesi (KÇ-İDE), sınıf içi etkileşim kalıplarını, stratejilerini ve katılımcıların konuşma sırasındaki rollerini anlamamıza yardımcı olur. Dolayısıyla, KÇ-İDE, ikinci dil edinimi ile dilin kullanımının nasıl gerçekleştiğini ve öğretmenlerin sınıf içi etkileşimsel yetilerinin öğrencilerin katılımını nasıl şekillendirdiğini ortaya koymada kapsamlı bir bakış açısı sunar. İngilizce öğretmenlerinin etkileşimsel yetilerinin bir parçası olarak 'Okay' işaretinin rolü ayrıntılı olarak araştırılmamıştır. Bu doğrultuda, bu çalışma İngilizce öğretmenlerinin sınıf içi etkileşimsel yetilerini şekillendiren 'Okay" işaretinin etkileşimsel organizasyonunu SETT çerçevesi içinde incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu nitel araştırmanın verileri, Türkiye'deki bir yükseköğretim kurumunda görev yapan dört farklı öğretim görevlisinin beş saat kırk dakikalık sınıf içi ses kayıtlarından oluşmaktadır. Veriler, özellikle Schegloff'un (2007) dizi düzeni ve sınıf içi etkileşimsel yetinin bir parçası olan SETT çerçevesine odaklanılarak konuşma çözümlemesi yöntemi kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir (Walsh, 2006; 2011). Bulgular, daha önceki çalışmalarda belirtilen 'Okay' işaretinin kendinden önceki söz sırasını kabul etmek veya dizi kapatmak yerine çok işlevli olduğunu; sınıf içi etkileşimi şekillendirdiğini ve İngilizce dil öğretmenlerinin sınıf içi etkileşimsel yetilerinin bir göstergesi olduğunu göstermektedir. Sonuç olarak, bulgular Türkiye'de İngilizce öğretmeni eğitimi ve öğretimi için çıkarımlar sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: sınıf içi etkileşimsel yeti, Konuşma Çözümlemesi, Tamam, İngilizce Dil Öğretimi.

INTRODUCTION

Conversation analysis (henceforth CA) is concerned with the scientific study of conversation, one of the most ordinary elements of daily life. Although people talking to each other has been a well-known phenomenon for a long time, as ten Have (2007) states, it only became a serious and systematic subject of scientific research in the 1960s as a branch of the ethnomethodology approach developed by sociologist Harold Garfinkel. Ethnomethodology argues that social order is not a structure that exists "outside" and independent of individuals; rather, it is constantly reproduced through people's ordinary interactions and practical actions in everyday life. Liddicoat (2022) illustrates that "for ethnomethodologists the social order is not a pre-existing framework, but rather it is constructed in the minds of social actors as they engage with society" (p.3). Therefore, until the late 20th century, studies on conversation were generally normative in nature, focusing on how people should speak. However, with the introduction of voice recording devices, researchers are able to examine actual conversations in detail and have revealed that everyday conversations are not as disorderly as previously thought; rather have a certain order and structure within themselves. In contrast, Noam Chomsky's approach to linguistics is that everyday conversation is too disordered to be studied, as genuine linguistic order exists only in the tacit knowledge of syntactic structures (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998, p.22). Sacks's approach, however, offers a counterpoint to Chomsky's view, demonstrating that even everyday conversations have a systematic and orderly structure. Accordingly, Goodwin and Heritage (1990) describe the CA as follows: "seeks to

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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describe the underlying social organization conceived as an institutionalized substratum of interactive rules, procedures, and conventions through which orderly and intelligible social interaction is made possible" (p.283).

Over time, as CA developed into a discipline devoted to unearthing the systematic organization of talk-in-interaction, its scope gradually expanded beyond ordinary conversation to a variety of institutional settings. In this regard, as Markee and Kunitz (2015) clearly explain, "Institutional forms of talk involve various systematic modifications to the default practices of ordinary conversation, which allow institutional actors to achieve the goals of the institutions that they talk into being" (p.426). Once CA's capacity to examine institutional interactions was discovered, it offered the opportunity to analyze learning activities in second language acquisition in depth and in their natural setting. Thus, the Conversation Analysis for Second Language Acquisition (henceforth CA-for-SLA) approach emerged in the mid-1990s. With the emergence of the field of CA-for-SLA, the SLA process can be revealed by monitoring the language learning process using CA, analyzing students' interactional behaviors, linguistic errors, corrections, and communication dynamics in context through real-time interactions (Markee, 2008). In this vein, Vygotskian sociocultural theories posit that language learning occurs through interactions within a social context. It offers a much more dynamic and multi-layered perspective on contexts, rather than viewing the L2 classroom as a single context, so that teachers and students share ownership of the classroom discourse they create through goal-oriented classroom activities (Walsh, 2003, p.124). To put it simply, "CA-for-SLA describes the resources that L2 speakers, jointly with their interlocutors, draw upon to keep the interaction going" (Kasper & Wagner, 2011, p.129). Huth (2011) argues that classroom interaction emerges as a resource for students and teachers to manage different but often simultaneous social and communicative goals, which they address sequentially, moment by moment, as necessary. As conversations emerge within a logical framework and in an orderly manner, the order is shaped by the participants' mutual reactions to one another and gains meaning within a context. With the use of CA in SLA, as Seedhouse (2004b) highlights that sequence organization is the mechanism by which interactants are able to make their utterances comprehensible and by which cointeractants are able to interpret them and the language learning processes and the effects of pedagogical practices are investigated in depth. Put simply, CA-for-SLA offers a comprehensive perspective in revealing not only the grammar and vocabulary learning development of students in the process of learning a second language but also the factors that affect "intelligibility" in conversation.

One of the important points highlighted by Seedhouse (2004b) is that the omnipresent unique feature of the L2 classroom is the reflexive relationship between pedagogy and interaction. In this regard, when conversation analysis is considered in a classroom context, interactional competence addresses a dynamic context shaped by teacher-student and student-student interactions. Barraja-Rohan (2011) emphasizes that interactional competence is the identity in which participants co-construct a particular identity or identities and therefore it is context-dependent. This

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
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highlights the significance of the construct of classroom interactional competence (CIC), which 'focuses on the ways in which teachers' and learners' interactional decisions and subsequent actions enhance learning and learning opportunities' (Walsh, 2012, p.5). Classroom interactional competence encompasses interactional skills and comprehensively addresses how teachers manage classroom discourse in line with pedagogical goals. The concrete indicators of classroom interactional competence developed by Walsh (2006; 2011; 2012) are summarized by Sert (2015) as follows: (a) maximizing interactional space; (b) shaping learner contributions (seeking clarification, scaffolding, modelling, or repairing learner input); (c) effective use of eliciting; (d) instructional idiolect (i.e. a teacher's speech habits); and (e) interactional awareness (p.84). In addition, Walsh (2012) acknowledges the necessity of creating space for learners and emphasizes the importance of adapting pedagogical and interactive patterns to micro-context goals.

It suggests that to better understand the pedagogical goals and interactional competence of English Teachers, the SETT framework is a useful tool as a part of classroom interactional competence. In this respect, as Sert (2010) has expressed, the adaptation of a CA-based SETT framework could reveal the interactional features of various classroom contexts in Türkiye and provide a strong foundation for teacher education in the country. The SETT framework, designed by Walsh (2006), assists teachers by both describing classroom interactions in lessons and providing an understanding of interactional processes. In particular, Hamdan and Elandeef (2021) interpret the SETT as an idea of classroom interactional competence, which envisions educators using interaction to provide students with adequate educational opportunities. The SETT Framework relates pedagogic purpose to language use, enabling teachers to identify recurrent segmental patterns or structures (Ghafarpour, 2017, p.212). It can be argued that Walsh's SETT framework is used to help teachers analyze and improve their classroom interaction, mainly focusing on how they use language during lessons. A similar perspective is expressed by Hariri et al. (2022), who argued that SETT allows the teacher/observer to understand what is happening in the class and, most importantly, why it is happening. This model provides an opportunity to critically evaluate classroom interaction and teacher talk. The SETT Framework categorizes classroom interaction into four main modes: Managerial Mode, Material Mode, Skills and Systems Mode, and Classroom Context Mode. Each mode includes specific pedagogical and interactional goals (see appendix 1).

In managerial mode, Huan and Wang (2011) emphasize that the main focus is on setting up an activity. We can see the managerial mode at the beginning and the transmission points of the activities. Walsh (2011) points out that there are frequent repetitions, directives, and instructions in managerial mode. The managerial mode can be realized by one extended teacher turn; mostly it happens to transmit information related to the management of learning, to introduce or conclude an activity, and to move to and from alternative forms of learning such as group work, peer or individual activities. With the help of the managerial mode, the classroom order is maintained, and smooth translation is ensured, too. The other mode is Material Mode. Walsh (2003) emphasizes that in materials mode, learning outcomes

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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are derived from materials-focused language practice: typically, the IRF sequence dominates, making extensive use of display questions, form-focused feedback and repair (p.130). Teachers provide explanations, elicit learner responses related to the materials, extend learner contribution, and check comprehension to ensure effective use of the materials for pedagogical purposes. In this mode, the teacher controls the activity and accepts or rejects student answers. On the whole, in the scope of classroom interaction, the teacher directs student participation by putting the material at the centre. "The third classroom mode is the skills and systems mode, which focuses on contexts that enable learners to produce correct forms, manipulate target language use and display correct answers centred on a specific skill, vocabulary or language item" (Aşık & Kuru Gönen, 2016, p.166). In other words, in skills and system mode, the pedagogic goals are based on language practice with a particular language system, such as grammar and vocabulary or language skills. As stated by Ghafarpour (2017) teaching objectives may also relate to the development of specific learner strategies. It enables students to produce correct language use. The last mode is the classroom context mode. According to Walsh (2006b), this mode encourages students to express themselves. In this mode, the teacher asks more open-ended questions, expects students to explain their ideas, and aims to use language to create interaction. Namely, communicative activities are provided in this mode, such as discussions, debates, or group activities. Teachers encourage a spontaneous communication environment. As Sert and Seedhouse (2011) emphasize, "The interactional features of this mode are extended learner turns, short teacher turns, minimal repair, content feedback, referential questions, scaffolding, and clarification requests" (p.8). In addition, Alsaadi and Atar's (2019) view, participants are likely to initiate discussion without being nominated by the teacher due to referential questions and wait-time. Contrary to the skills and system mode, classroom context mode focuses on fluency while activating the mental schemata within the context. This framework serves as a key reference for understanding and analyzing classroom interaction, offering valuable insights into how teacher talk aligns with pedagogical objectives.

Walsh (2012) states that minimal response tokens such as 'Mm hm', 'Okay', and 'right' are also further evidence of the convergence of pedagogic goals and language use as part of classroom interactional competence. Moreover, Girgin and Brandt (2020) found that the very minor aspects of teacher talk, such as the use of minimal response tokens, create space for learning by effectively eliciting students' responses by maximizing the interactional space, thus providing evidence that such minimal responses can also be a part of classroom interactional competence. However, to our knowledge, there is no study investigating the role of 'okay' as a part of classroom interactional competence in the Turkish context.

Previous studies focus on 'okay' usage in non-institutional settings, and the function that is opening or closing to conversation, working as a sequence-closing thirds or shifting the topic (Beach 1993; Schegloff 2007; Stivers 2012; Beach 2013). In this regard, Garcia (2017) points out, the use of 'okay' should be investigated comprehensively by researchers, especially in the EFL context, to understand the

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ELT-ICRAL 2025

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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diverse use of 'okay' in a classroom setting. When Atar et al. (2022) analyze the role of 'okay', where it works as an expansion move by using a type-specific question, they found that 'okay' repairs a previous turn rather than closing or shifting the topic in an educational setting. Furthermore, Girgin and Brandt (2020) note that most studies investigating the use of minimal response tokens in L2 classroom interaction have been conducted from a Discourse Analysis perspective. In this regard, the review of the literature shows that Castro (2009) investigates the occurrences and frequencies of discourse markers in the Spanish EFL classroom setting. Then, she categorized the functions of Discourse markers into functional and interpersonal aspects. Lee (2017) classified the multifunctional use of the Discourse Marker 'okay' used by Korean EFL teachers into three functions: "The Cognative Function; Getting Attention"; "The Expressive Function; Signaling Approval and Acceptance as a Feedback Device"; "The Metadiscursive Function; Working as a Transition Activator". Additionally, Garcia (2017) demonstrated that although "Okay" is a single word used in the ESL setting, it also functions as a pragmatic tool that carries complex sociolinguistic and pedagogical meanings, shaping classroom interaction. Moreover, Akbaş and Bal-Gezegin (2022) analyse the 'okay' as a Discourse Marker that is used by teachers at an EMI class in Turkiye and they found the five particular functions of okay as follow: "okay as a word-search filler", "okay as an indicator of an upcoming significant point", "okay as granting access to an unknown word/concept", "okay as an indicator of producing visual text", "okay as an indicator of opening/pre-closing a teacher-inform exchange". In addition to discourse studies, Shi (2015) conducted research from a Conversation Analysis/Corpus Linguistics (CA/CL) perspective. Regarding this aspect, it is characterized by the five patterns of embodied backchannel 'okay', and it is implied that embodied backchannel 'okay' has profound implications on classroom interactional competence. On the other hand, from a CA perspective, Garre-León's (2024) study investigates the 'okay' as a post-expansion token during the L2-NS dyad. It is shown that while native speakers generally use post-expansion to accept the second part of the conversation, L2 learners mostly use these expressions to close the second part and move on to a new topic.

When we take into consideration the review, researchers have combined the Conversation Analysis with other methodological approaches, such as corpus linguistics or discourse analysis to examine interactional elements of language classrooms. However, these studies sometimes overlook the detailed sequential analysis inherent in CA. Furthermore, studies examining the context-specific characteristics of minimal response tokens that require micro-analysis, and especially those focusing on the interactional features and pedagogical purposes of minimal responses such as "okay" within the CA framework, are limited. Therefore, research conducted so far does not investigate how the 'okay' shapes classroom interaction, and whether it is convergent with pedagogical and interactional goals in the Turkish context. Hence, this study aims to reveal:

1) The sequential organization of "okay" used by EFL teachers in their classroom interactions,

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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2) The actions achieved by "okay" within the scope of Classroom Interactional Competence by focusing on SETT modes, specifically Managerial Mode, the Material Mode, Skills and System Mode and the Classroom Context Mode.

METHOD

Research Model

This study employs CA, which utilizes a qualitative research design. CA is a methodological approach rooted in ethnomethodology, and it focuses not on the language itself, but on how participants organize social actions and create social interaction in order by using language during interaction. In other words, it investigates interaction from an emic perspective rather than an etic perspective. As Seedhouse (2005) states, while the emic perspective attempts to understand the world of meaning that participants reveal through their behavior during interaction from the inside, the etic perspective is the approach that examines this interaction objectively from the outside. Moreover, in CA, "the approach to the data does not rely on extra-interactional phenomena like generalized rules for producing an utterance; rather, it involves examining each utterance within the sequence of utterances, focusing on its meaningful connections to the preceding and following turns" (Gardner, 2004, p. 268). Hence, a CA-informed approach has been adopted in this study.

Study Material/Population and Sample

The study material consisted of audio-recordings that were turned into transcripts of teachers' classroom conversations in English classes via CA transcription conventions. These transcripts were analyzed to examine the interactional and pedagogical features that reveal teachers' classroom interactional competence. The research was conducted in the School of Foreign Languages of a foundation university in Istanbul. Four English teachers working in the university's preparatory program participated in the study. All teachers were 25 years old and above and had various teaching experiences. The students were adults over the age of 18 and were new to the university and receiving English preparatory education at B1 level.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data for this study were collected using audio recordings of B1-level General English lessons. Two audio recording devices were used in each classroom to capture the interactional practices of teachers. The necessary ethical approvals were obtained prior to data collection. A Consent Form was obtained from each participant before audio recordings were made. Recordings were used solely for research purposes and were anonymized to protect the participants' privacy.

Seedhouse (2004a) highlights, the fundamental principles of the conversation-analytic approach include the detailed examination of naturally occurring data through a highly detailed CA transcription system, the in-depth analysis of interactive elements, and the adoption of a bottom-up approach based entirely on the data,

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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without prior theoretical assumptions or assumed to be relevant in any contextual detail (p.15). These principles have also been taken into account in the data collection and data analysis stages of this study. To this end, the audio recordings allowed for detailed examination of teachers' interactions with students and whether interactional features and pedagogical goals are convergent.

The data analysis process was conducted in accordance with the principles of CA. "The Jeffersonian transcription system is well-suited to detailed analysis of talk and it has proved to be both a robust and useful tool for understanding the ways in which language is used in social interaction" (Liddicoat, 2022, p.32). Firstly, transcription is prepared according to the Jeffersonian transcription convention (see Appendix 2). In this convention, both verbal and non-verbal elements of speech are shown, including pauses, stress, and intonation. Then, the sequence organization of Schegloff (2007) was analysed in the extracts containing "okay" to examine the interactional patterns. Finally, using Walsh's (2006; 2011) SETT framework, pedagogical aims, interactional features, and teachers' classroom interaction competencies were systematically and thoroughly analyzed within the scope of four different modes of the SETT Framework.

Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of the data collected within the scope of CA have been seriously considered. The data for the study consist of audio recordings taken from university-level English preparatory courses of four English teachers. The recordings were made in a natural classroom setting, and the researcher did not intervene in the lessons. The researcher left the classroom during the lesson. Thus, classroom interactions between teachers and students were recorded as they occurred, and this positively affects the reliability and validity of the study.

As mentioned in the research model part, CA adopts an emic perspective (insider) to analyze the transcripts. Thus, the content validity of the data is preserved. To ensure internal validity, authors refrain from making claims beyond audio recordings and their documentation. Atar and Seedhouse (2018) claim that ensuring the validity of research requires accurate inferences to be drawn from the data and that interpretations must be made carefully. In this regard, the authors presented the findings in the ULEAD Congress 2025 (ELT-ICRAL 2025). This helped authors to take rich recommendations and confirmations on the findings from other researchers. On the other hand, external validity refers to the generalizability of findings. While there is ongoing debate regarding the generalizability of CA-based research findings, this issue has been clarified. According to Seedhouse (2004a), CA studies analyze the micro-level interaction of institutional interaction (e.g., classroom interaction) while simultaneously producing generalizable results about the overall functioning of the institution; therefore, the interrelationship between pedagogical interaction and classroom interaction can be considered a universal feature of foreign language classrooms. In other words, while conversational rules and turn-taking mechanisms may exhibit some formal differences in different contexts (e.g., classroom, institutional, or daily interactions), the basic organizational principles operate

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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

ELT-ICRAL 2025

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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similarly. It demonstrates that CA can produce a certain degree of generalizability. This study examines interactions in second language (L2) classrooms and suggests that these interactions occur within a specific order. Therefore, the findings are considered generalizable to similar teaching contexts. Additionally, Verbeke (2024) describes ecological validity as the extent to which research findings accurately represent or can be generalized to real-world situations (p.69). Since this study is based on the naturally occurring real classroom audio recordings, the ecological validity has already been verified.

CA-based studies examine a limited amount of data in detail, given the nature of CA. As Seedhouse (2005) mentions, some scholars consider this a limitation in terms of reliability, as it can be difficult to make strong generalizations from small datasets. However, CA is an empirical, evidence-based approach that draws inferences only from directly observable phenomena in the data as it adopts an emic perspective. Therefore, CA findings are generated entirely from the evidence in the real data, not from assumptions. Peräkylä (2004) states that reliability in CA study can be achieved not only with good theory but also with the selection of what is recorded, the technical quality of recordings and the adequacy of transcripts. To enhance reliability in the study, two audio recorders were used during data collection. These devices were placed at different points in the classroom, ensuring clear recording of conversations from all participants. The recorders were installed before the lessons began, and the researcher was not present in the classroom throughout the lesson to reduce the observer paradox. This practice allowed participants to maintain their natural behavior. CA is considered a strong and independent methodology for analyzing interaction within its natural context.

FINDINGS

In this chapter, the findings are analyzed in the sequential position of the "okay" within the four modes of the Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT) Framework. Then, the achieved actions with "okay" are examined in terms of classroom interactional competence. Thus, the findings reveal how teachers' classroom interactional competence manifests itself under each mode and how actions are achieved to create meaning in the classroom.

Managerial Mode

Before the following extract, taken from the second hour of the lesson, the teacher stated that they had already completed the vocabulary exercises in the first hour of the lesson and that in this lesson, they would be doing a listening activity on Part 8C in the course book. However, since the projector was not turned on in the classroom, students were asked for help. Once the projector is fixed, the teacher begins by displaying questions about the first section's topic. The teacher moved on to a detailed explanation of the new activity after a student's short answer, so extract 1 is an example of managerial mode.

Extract 1 (00:03:46_BH2_Complete the chart)

1	T:	Yeah (3.0) how <u>to</u> describe a problem (.) and made recommenda<u>tions</u>
2		(4.0)
3	T:	how many conversations do we have here
4		(4.7)
5	S:	three
6	T:	three conversations exactly we have three conversations
7		that you're gonna listen to: an<u>d</u>
8		(2.45)
9		some people describe (.) problems right in each conversation
10		so let's check what are the problems (.) in each conversation an<u>d</u>
→11		focus on the: table here the chart and okay complete the phrases
12		<u>that</u> they men↓tion so we're gonna hear a problem or problems
13		right maybe more we don't know (.) an<u>d</u> <u>re(.)com(.)men(.)da(.)tions</u>
14		recom<u>mend</u> (.) suggestions right how do they say
15		how do >they offer what do they say okay< to <u>solve</u> them
16		or: (.) then we have solving the problem the <u>solutions:</u>
17		↑right (.) now let's (.) he:ar and see I want you to (.)
18		be focused on the phrases fi:rst then (.) complete the chart
19		while listening to it (.)then we will move to grammar part
20		you know that this part is easy we are not gonna focus on that part
21		you know like we're gonna have the speaking (.) ↑then
22		we will complete those parts let's see the problems
		((The listening track is played))

In the first line, the teacher begins the lesson by telling the title of the new unit, part 8C (How to describe a problem and make recommendations) and she waits 4.0 seconds. After this silence, the teacher asks a new display question (line 3). The question is "how many conversations do we have here" and this information has already been included in the textbook instruction of the new exercise (see appendix 3). The teacher waits for the answer for 4.7 seconds and then a volunteer student takes the turn to give the answer (line 5). In line 6, the teacher restates the student's

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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

ELT-ICRAL 2025

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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elliptical response ("three") through lexical expansion. While the student's response remained numerical level, the teacher expressed the same information as a full nominal construction. In other words, she completes the answer grammatically by stating, "We have three conversations," and then repeats this statement once more. From sequence organization perspective, in line 3, the question asked by the teacher constitutes the FPP; the student responds by self-selecting without being selected by the teacher, and this response constitutes the SPP (line 5). Even though the student's response is acceptable but short, the teacher repeats and expands the student's turn in the post-expansion part (line 6). Following the post-expansion, in line 7 the teacher begins to give instructions for the listening activity. During the instructions, she explains that the students need to recognize the issues to be addressed in each conversation and provides step-by-step instructions for examining the tables and expressions. In line 10, students are asked to identify problems in each conversation and explain they need to examine the table. Then, in line 11, the teacher uses "okay" as a sequence transition marker before giving the command (complete the sentences). After the sequence transition marker the stages of the activity and the sections that the students should focus on are explained in detail from line 12 to 22. Finally, after line 22, the listening passage is played, and students who follow the instructions begin to experience the material.

From a pedagogical perspective, the teacher begins the lesson by asking questions about the material to attract the students' attention. For this reason, the teacher first presents the title of the new activity to the students. After reading the title, there is a 4.0 seconds wait-time because the title "how to describe a problem and make recommendations" is a question. This silence can be expressed as interactional gaps that allow students to prepare responses. However, when there is no response from the students, the question, "how many conversations do we have here" reflects the teacher's strategy of re-focusing the students' attention and involving them in the interaction by changing the question format with the easy one because the answer of this question is written in the instructions part of the coursebook, compared to the first question. This form demonstrates that the teacher uses language strategically to support her pedagogical goals in terms of classroom interactional competence. Hence, in line with Walsh's (2013) argument, the teacher extends the wait-time to promote learner involvement in line 4. After the student's short answer, in line 6, the teacher shapes learner contributions through reiterating and extending the student's answer. The managerial mode provides the cognitive and social organization necessary for productive classroom interaction. Therefore, in line 7 and following, the teacher's gradual explanation of task instructions helps students understand which information to focus on during the listening activity (e.g., problems, suggestions and solutions). In this way, the teacher both organizes opportunities for participation and supports students' meaning-making processes while structuring the learning environment. According to the SETT framework, the teacher's pedagogical goal is to give instructions to introduce a new activity and to direct students to the listening activity throughout lines 9 and 22. "Okay" directs the students to focus on the table and after the use of "Okay" the teacher gives a command. Thanks to "Okay", she

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

organizes the flow of conversation and progresses the instruction by dividing it into sections before finishing it and serves to refocus the student's attention. Walsh (2011) argues that when "Okay" and similar signals are not used, the boundaries of parts of conversation become blurred and students may have difficulty understanding what to do. Therefore, it is a classroom interactional competence indicator that demonstrates that the interaction is guided by a pedagogical purpose. This use is important because it allows the teacher to segment instruction in a way that aligns with students' cognitive processing capacities and paves the way for the joint construction of meaning.

Materials Mode

The extract below is taken from the beginning of a main course offered in a preparatory school. Before the extract, the class reviews the grammar rule "passive voice" that they have learned in the previous day's lesson. Then, the teacher states that they will play a game called "alibi" in this lesson. Since they have played it before, they discuss the previous scenario to refresh their memories. Since the "alibi" is grounded in a communicative role-play game, this extract exemplifies the materials mode.

Extract 2 (00:03:24_IH1_how many suspects)

1	T:	yes how many sus<u>pe:cts:</u> did we have	
2	S1:	five	
3	T:	yeah we- we had 5 suspects	
4	T:	who is the real guilty	**FPP**
5	S1:	er… ezgi	**SPP**
→6	T:	ezgi okay but you couldn't find it yes	**Post-expansion**
7		so now let me give you the scenario I'm writing here and	
8		then I will choose 5 sus<u>pects</u> (.) okay we will go	
9		outside I will tell you the roles and then again we will	
10		have two judges and the rest of the class will be (.)	
11		juries okay do you remember(.) we're good so here is the	
12		scenario (4.0) <at a:: (.) birthday (3.0) party (3.0) two	
13		guests (6.0) and the (.)birthday (5.0) girl that sick it>	
14		because of what any prediction	
15	S1:	birthday	

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

As seen in extract 1, the suspects and the real guilty from the previous game are repeated (see lines 1 to 3). In these lines, the Initiation-Response-Feedback pattern is predominant. In line 4, the teacher initiates the conversation by asking about the person who was guilty in the previous game. In line 5, the student (S1) gives the response by saying the name of the real guilty (Ezgi). Then, in line 6, the teacher repeats the answer and continues to speak by saying '*okay*'. In this regard, before line 7, according to the SETT Framework, the materials mode is dominant as the teacher asks the display questions (see lines 1-4) in relation to the material that they used in the previous lesson, so the IRF pattern appears. In other words, since this extract is an example of the unequal power speech exchange systems in which the teacher controls the turns by asking display questions and eliciting student contribution; first the teacher begins (lines 1- 4), then the student responds (lines 2-5), and finally the teacher gives feedback (lines 3-6). From the sequence organization aspect, the first pair part (FPP) is a question asked by the teacher that requires the student to give the correct answer (line 4). The second pair part (SPP) is the student's response (line 5). As the student's response is correct, but not sufficient, the teacher accepts and extends the answer via '*okay*' in the post-expansion part (line 6). In lines 7-14, the teacher switches modes from material to managerial because the new activity is introduced.

From pedagogical perspective, the teacher used the display questions to check students' knowledge and elicit the responses. Within SETT Framework, as seen in the extract 1 "*Okay*" appears in materials mode in line 6, and we can see the teacher echo by repeating the name of the real quilty before '*okay*'. Then, the teacher extended the learner's contribution after 'okay' rather than simply accepting it. Since '*okay*' appears in the post-expansion part, it can be generally thought that its function is to close the conversation or current topic because the student has already given the display answer, even if it is short. However, the teacher uses '*okay*' to elaborate on the student's contribution, which is a learning opportunity. In other words, "*okay, but*" offers face-saving feedback that accepts the student's response without rejection, while the conjunction "but" immediately following it initiates a pedagogical redirection by signaling that the response is incomplete or inadequate. This strategy, unlike negative feedback based on direct correction, invites the student to reconsider their response by maintaining their participation without pushing them out of the interaction. This structure reveals the teacher's skills in making immediate interactional decisions, pedagogically repairing, and maintaining the flow of conversation by supporting student contributions. Therefore, in order to increase the learning space and exposure to the target language, the teacher extended the student's responses after the use of 'okay' rather than simply accepting the answer. Inasmuch as shaping student contributions is a feature of classroom interactional competence (Atar et al., 2022; Can Daşkın, 2015), 'okay' manifests itself as part of classroom interactional competence. Hence, we can say that 'okay' has a dual character in line 6, because it both accepts the previous turn in the post-expansion part and then shapes the learner's contribution by extending the learner's turn.

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MOMENTUM GLOBAL
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

ELT-ICRAL 2025

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

Skills and System Mode

The extract 3 is taken from skills and system mode. The exercise in the following extract exemplifies listening for specific information which is one of the core subskill of listening skill. The teacher briefed the students on this exercise beforehand. Students are expected to identify the problem and solution elements in three different short conversations they have listened to. These activities aim to develop students' ability to focus on details and selectively identify target information.

Extract 3 (00:08:08 EH2_Ink cartridges)

		((The listening track 3 is played))	
1		(5.92)	
→2	T:	okay what about this time what's the problem	**FPP**
3		(9.20)	
4	S:	°hi-° his (.) printer	**SPP**
5	T:	his printer is the problem(.)your problem it is not	**Post-expansion**
6		working right (.) there is a sound but (.) nothing happens	
7		so what is the poli- err solution	
8		(4.0)	
9		so it is a simple solution	
10		(5.70)	
11		go use the other one right (.) if ↑one is not working	
12		you can use the other one	
13		(3.40) so she sai:d	
14		(5.40)	
15		>you can use:< (.)the other one	

First,the listening track is listened to by students. After the teacher waits 5.92 seconds in the first line, he responds with an "okay" in line 2. Following the "okay" response, the teacher asks questions to check comprehension (what about this time what's the problem). This part consists of the FPP that initiates the conversation. In line 3, the teacher waits for 9.20 seconds for a response from students. After the silence, a volunteer student (S) takes the next turn as a Second Pair Part (line 4). Initially, S speaks quietly and interrupts the word (°hi-°). However, S continues his turn, starting self-initiate self-repair by saying the missing word "his" and another short silence follows. After this silence, S completes his turn by adding the word

54

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

"printer".In the post-expansion (line 5) the teacher takes the turn and in lines 5 and 6 he expands the student's utterance. Meanwhile, the teacher's turn consists of short sentences to explain the situation with the printer (lines 5-6). He first uses structures that define the problem in his statement, and then produces a structure that shows an expectation of approval directed at the other participant with the expression "right". After this expression, a short pause is seen ("(.)"). Following the short silence, nobody gives a reaction and he elaborates his turn by saying " there is a sound but" and again he waits shortly. With the utterance "nothing happens", the teacher continues his turn on the same issue. While in lines 5 and 6 the teacher elaborates the problem, in line 7 he asks the solution to the students. The teacher waits for 4.0 seconds but students do not respond, so he continues his turn with "so it is a simple solution". Again, after this statement the teacher waits for 5.70 seconds and expects contributions from the students. When there is no response from the students after this silence, the teacher gives the answer from lines 11 to 15.

Extract 3 is an example of skills and system mode within the SETT framework. After the listening track ended, the teacher waited for 5.92 seconds before taking his turn. This extended wait-time gave students the opportunity to prepare for the question they would answer based on what they heard. The wait-time also provided students with the opportunity to ask questions about any parts they didn't understand. Moreover, wait-time enables turn-taking to be slowed down, helping to make learners feel more comfortable (Walsh, 2012, p.8). However, as seen in line 2, following silence, the teacher takes a turn with "okay" and gives students the opportunity to participate in classroom activities by asking a comprehension question as a sub-skill of listening skills. It demonstrates the teacher's ability to manage turns as part of classroom interactional competence. Since students are listening to the passage for specific information, they are expected to produce accurate answers. On the other hand, the teacher creates an interactional space for students through "Okay" and the display questions as students need space for learning and opportunity to practice so that they can produce output based on their input. Additionally, Lee (2017) argues for a cognitive function of the "okay" because it involves the teacher's effort to keep students focused on what they are saying (p.50). Thus, by using the attention getting "okay" at the beginning of a sentence, teachers initiate a new turn of classroom discourse. Following the teacher's turn, an extended wait-time is observed, giving students time to prepare and formulate their answers. This allows a volunteer student to take the floor, albeit hesitantly. The student pauses briefly, but the teacher waits for the student to answer without intervening. When the student gives his answer, the teacher expands and shapes the student's answer between line 5 and 15.

Classroom Context Mode

The extract 4 is taken from classroom context mode that focuses on fluency and meaning. Before the following extract, the focus is on the textbook and the teacher calls on a volunteer student to read a short text about computer stress syndrome (see appendix 4). Hence, firstly the material mode is dominant. However, as seen in the

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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extract below, the teacher switches from the material mode (line 1-3) to classroom context mode (4-16).

Extract 4 (00:07:51_EH1_ stress syndrome)

1	T:	many technological works is ↑great when feels
2		it is it is nightma:re (.) so (3.0)according to
3		all <u>these</u> informations in the text
4		do you think (.) you suffer from
5		computer stress syndrome(5.0)
6	S1:	crash
7	T:	cra:sh
8	S1:	yes
→9	T:	okay
10		(6.5)
11		what do you think do you think you
12		suffer from (.) computer stress syndrome
13	S2:	yeah I
14	T:	really wow
15	S2:	if I if I problem with computer or internet connection
16		I just take () and go (.)
17	T:	okay very direct so you don't stress at all
18	S2:	uh-huh
19	T:	that's perfect (.) because I on the contrary I am very stressful when
20		I er.. have problems with the computers
21	S2:	because you need teacher

In lines 1 to 3 the teacher refers directly to the text and (according to all <u>these</u> informations in the text), which places the interaction in Material Mode since the language practice is provided around a piece of material and the IRF pattern is dominant. However, in line 4, the teacher asks referential questions expecting students to share their personal experiences about computer stress syndrome. Therefore, the mode is shifted from material mode to classroom context mode. In line 6, S1 gives an answer but it is too short but the teacher takes the turn in line 7 by repeating the previous turn, namely, teacher echo. In line 8, student (S1) approves by saying 'yes'. However, the teacher does not expect a one-word answer as in the material mode but actually the teacher wants the students to share their personal

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

experiences because a referential question is asked. In line 9, the teacher first accepts the student's turn via 'okay', appears as a sequence closing thirds but after a silence (6.5), the teacher repeats the referential question in line 11. Here, we see that the teacher is actually initiating a repair by asking a type-specific question since the student has not actually given a correct answer in line 6. In the next turn, the next speaker self-select is seen but the student just shows the agreement "Yeah I". In line 14, the teacher expresses surprise and then S2 elaborates his answer (see lines 15-16). In line 17, the teacher accepts the previous turn and he gives content feedback (...very direct...) and then S2 accepts it. In lines 19 and 20, the teacher shares his thoughts with students. In line 21, S2 contributes to the teacher's turn.

This extract is an example of classroom discourse in which the teacher invites students to engage in dialogic interaction by relating the concept in the text (computer stress syndrome) to personal experiences. The goal at this stage is not to convey information but to create an interactive learning environment that encourages student participation in the conversation and keeps the intersubjectivity. The teacher promotes the learners' turns by asking genuine questions that the teacher does not know the answer to as the students need interactional space. S1 gives a short and incomplete answer in line 6. However, it is not appropriate for the pedagogic focus, thus , as a part of classroom interactional competence, the teacher tries to maximize interactional space with "acknowledgment followed by type-specific questions" (ATSQs) via 'Okay' (Atar et al., 2021, p.113) in lines between 9 and 12. In other words, the teacher first acknowledges the S1's turn via 'Okay' and then initiates a repair by asking the question again as the S1's answer is not fully satisfactory. While the teacher's use of "okay" in line 9 may superficially appear as an expression of approval, it has pedagogical and interactional roles. Okay accepts the student response without evaluation, is not close to the sequence, but rather acknowledges the response, maintains the conversational flow, and then projects a new phase of interaction. From the classroom interactional competence aspect, this use demonstrates the teacher's ability to shape student contribution, carry on the interaction, and make immediate interactional decisions. Therefore, "okay" is not merely a linguistic element but rather an interactional tool that enables the pedagogical structuring of classroom discourse. As seen in line 13, another student participates in the interaction, expressing his agreement. However, after the teacher shows his interest, S2 is encouraged and S2 elaborates his answer. If the teacher had accepted the answer directly and moved on to another topic, the students would not have had the space to express themselves. Additionally, in classroom context mode, as the pedagogic aim is to develop oral fluency and meaning-making, the teacher should lead students to engage in interaction. Hence, the teacher uses ATSQ via 'okay' to shape the classroom interaction.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study shows how "okay" is sequentially organized in teacher-student interaction in the EFL classroom setting and shows the role of "okay" in different modes. A review

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

of the literature suggests that "okay" has three main functions: opening, closing, and changing the topic (Beach 1993; Schegloff 2007; ten Have 2007; Stivers 2012; Beach 2013). However, these findings have not been examined within the micro-context or in terms of its pedagogical function. Therefore, this study focuses on English language teachers' use of "okay" within the institutional context in terms of sequential organization within the SETT framework. The findings demonstrate that "okay" is used not only as a unit of confirmation or feedback but also as a versatile interactional tool serving instructional purposes. Additionally, in a recent study Liddicoat (2022) asserts that "Okay commonly works to propose closure for a sequence which has received a preferred SPP" (p.180). However, when evaluated within the framework of conversation analysis, "okay" appears in different sequential positions (e.g., post-expansion or first pair part), determining the direction of the interaction and it is closely related to the teacher's pedagogical goals. Accordingly, teachers use minor aspects of language, particularly the "Okay"," as important tools for directing interaction in classroom conversation

Sequential Position of "Okay" in EFL Classroom Setting

The nature of the managerial mode involves extended teacher turns. In the managerial mode, "okay" manages the transition between activities. Therefore, after an activity is explained, a transition is signaled with the phrase "okay" before giving instructions to students. This maintains control over the interactional sequence. In this respect, it emerges as a sequence transition marker that contributes to maintaining interactional continuity. However, in Nowotny's (2004) study, it is called a tag-positioned comprehension check. The common point between Nowotny's discourse study and our conversation analysis study is the use of the expression "okay" to monitor the listeners' comprehension. In the Material Mode, "Okay" appears in the post-expansion with the role of accepting the student's turn and initiating repair. Instead, in the Material Mode, the function of "okay" shifts to a pedagogical focus. By saying "okay," the teacher initially acknowledges the student's turn, but uses this acceptance as the beginning of a repair sequence, opening up space for reinforcement of knowledge. It is significant because it demonstrates how "okay" can be a tool for indirect correction in a classroom setting. A study conducted by Ebshiana (2020) in the EFL environment in England, showed that teachers used a repair that developed after acknowledge as follows: "The teacher initiates" Okay "affirming the student's response, however, this" Okay "combined with" but "and immediately the teacher initiates repair" (p.32). In the Skill and System Mode, "Okay" is observed to serve as an opening function in the first pair part (FPP) position, meaning it is used to initiate a new turn. In this respect, the teacher asks a question related to the listening passage, initiating a new sequence by using "Okay" instead of opening with a direct question after a silence. In a discourse study conducted by Shi (2015) identified the function of "okay" as a topic opening and noted that it is a signal indicating turn allocation. The findings of this study and our study are similar in a way that both studies demonstrate turn allocation creates space for students and, by showing the transition point students' attention is captured, which is pedagogically important. Additionally, in the Classroom Context Mode, "Okay" is seen at the first

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

time as the interaction ends and the turn is completed. However, after "Okay," a repair is initiated by asking a type-specific question following the silence. In this respect, it has been seen to be used as ATSQ, and as noted by Atar et al. (2022); it repairs a previous turn rather than closing it (p.1113). Furthermore, according to Garcia's (2017) findings, in a Filipino context, "okay" is used in an English class to acknowledge a response, regardless of whether it is correct or incorrect. In Extract 4, the student again did not provide the desired answer, yet the teacher acknowledged it. However, after acknowledging it, the teacher paraphrased the question and waited for the students to respond. Remarkably, when looking at the general role and sequence of "Okay", as also revealed in the study by Fuseini (2024), they all have in common that it "helps ensure students focus and remain engaged" (p.113).

Achieved Actions by "Okay" as part of Classroom Interaction Competence

Findings demonstrate how "Okay" is a critical tool for teachers in facilitating interactional organization in the EFL classroom setting. Rather than a linguistic choice, the use of "okay" can be seen as a reflection of the teacher's strategy for structuring interaction based on the current pedagogical purpose of the lesson. In general, the results of this study parallel Walsh's (2012) classroom interactional competence features, which suggest that minimal response tokens (okay) are features of classroom interactional competence. Lee (2017) found that "okay" helps teachers ensure students' attention and lead students to participate in class activities. As we mentioned earlier, similar to Lee's (2017) findings, pedagogically "okay" creates space for students to increase their participation in the lesson and have more space for learning.

In managerial mode, since teacher turns are long, the teacher uses "okay" to attract students' attention and facilitate transitions between sentences. The important thing here is to prepare the students for the activity without confusing their minds or distracting them from the subject during the teacher's extended turns. According to Puspasari's (2019) study collected data from four different teachers' classes shows that in managerial mode, one teacher used "okay" when setting the rules, while the other teacher used "okay" to switch the mode. In this respect, extract 1 is similar to Puspasari's findings because of the emergence of "okay" after the set of rules. Azizi and Halimi (2024) also found that "okay" is used by teachers as a transition marker in this mode. In the material mode, as noted by Huan and Wang (2011), students are expected to provide correct answers because language practice is conducted around specific material and display questions are directed. However, in Extract 2, the teacher provides feedback even though the student has answered. The teacher did not simply accept the student's response and moved on; the teacher extended the student's responses after using 'okay', so classroom interactional competence manifested itself. Additionally, within the scope of the precept mentioned by Çopur and Atar (2022), with the "okay + but" pattern, the teacher took the student's answer and connected it to their past experience, and they constructed intersubjectivity. In skills and system mode, after the listening passage is completed, a period of extended wait-time is provided to allow students time to prepare for the activity and ask

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

questions. However, as the silence continues, the teacher takes the turn by saying "okay." As Lv (2024) discusses, in this mode, the teacher is responsible for the turns, and control is maintained with the "okay". The question that follows "okay" maximizes the interactional space as part of classroom interactional competence. Finally, within the classroom context mode, "okay" initially stands out as a turn that accepts the student's answer and completes the turn, but the teacher has provided an extended wait time. This creates space for students to correct their own errors. As in Alsaadi and Atar's (2019) study, students in this study also miss the learning opportunities even when wait-time is given. However, the teacher encouraged student participation and provided a new opportunity for interaction by asking the question in a different way.

As a result, teachers show the characteristics of classroom interactional competence such as shaping the student contributions, maximize interactional space, lead students to engage in interaction, maintain intersubjectivity (Walsh 2012; 2014; Can Daşkın 2015). The findings of this study illustrate that teachers' use of *"okay"* is an indicator of Classroom Interactional Competence. This suggests that in general teacher education programs should highlight the strategic use of minimal response markers (e.g., 'okay') as a way to facilitate interaction and create a more supportive classroom interaction. Even if many studies focus on the Classroom Interaction of the EFL lecturers via Conversation Analysis (Atar, 2020; Ekinci, 2020; Korkut, 2015; Sert, 2010), still we need more study to explore the minimal response tokens in different contexts as also stated by Girgin and Brandt (2020). Finally, as a limitation of this study, a multimodal study on "okay" is recommended in future studies.

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Appendix 1- SETT Framework (Walsh, 2006a, p.66)

Mode	Pedagogic goals	Interactional features
Managerial	To transmit information To organize the physical learning environment To refer learners to materials To introduce or conclude an activity To change from one mode of learning to another	A single, extended teacher turn which uses explanations and/or instructions The use of transitional markers The use of confirmation checks An absence of learner contributions
Materials	To provide language practice around a piece of material To elicit responses in relation to the material To check and display answers To clarify when necessary To evaluate contributions	Predominance of IRF pattern Extensive use of display questions Form-focused feedback Corrective repair The use of scaffolding
Skills and systems	To enable learners to produce correct forms To enable learners to manipulate the target language To provide corrective feedback To provide learners with practice in sub-skills To display correct answers	The use of direct repair The use of scaffolding Extended teacher turns Display questions Teacher echo Clarification requests Form-focused feedback
Classroom context	To enable learners to express themselves clearly To establish a context To promote oral fluency	Extended learner turns. Short teacher turns Minimal repair Content feedback Referential questions Scaffolding Clarification requests

Appendix 2- Jefferson Transcription Convention (University Transcriptions, 2022)

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Symbol	Definition and use	Key(s)
[yeah] [okay]	Overlapping talk	
=	End of one TCU and beginning of next begin with no gap/pause in between (sometimes a slight overlap if there is speaker change). Can also be used when TCU continues on new line in transcript	
(.)	Brief interval, usually between 0.08 and 0.2 seconds	
(1.4)	Time (in absolute seconds) between end of a word and beginning of next. Alternative method: "none-one-thousand-two-one-thousand…": 0.2, 0.5, 0.7, 1.0 seconds, etc.	
Word Wo:rd	Underlining indicates emphasis Placement indicates which syllable(s) are emphasised Placement within word may also indicate timing/direction of pitch movement (later underlining may indicate location of pitch movement)	
wo::rd	Colon indicates prolonged vowel or consonant One or two colons common, three or more colons only in extreme cases.	
↑word ↓word	Marked shift in pitch, up (↑) or down (↓). Double arrows can be used with extreme pitch shifts.	↑ Wingdings 3 (104) ↓ Wingdings 3 (105) ↑ ALT+24 ↓ ALT+25
., _¿?	Markers of final pitch direction at TCU boundary: Final falling intonation (.) Slight rising intonation (,) Level/flat intonation (_) Medium (falling-)rising intonation (¿) (a dip and a rise) Sharp rising intonation (?)	¿ ALT+168
WORD	Upper case indicates syllables or words louder than surrounding speech by the same speaker	
°word°	Degree sign indicate syllables or words distinctly quieter than surrounding speech by the same speaker	° ALT+248
<word	Pre-positioned left carat indicates a hurried start of a word, typically at TCU beginning	
word-	A dash indicates a cut-off. In phonetic terms this is typically a glottal stop	
>word<	Right/left carats indicate increased speaking rate (speeding up)	
<word>	Left/right carats indicate decreased speaking rate (slowing down)	
.hhh	Inbreath. Three letters indicate 'normal' duration. Longer or shorter inbreaths indicated with fewer or more letters.	
hhh	Outbreath. Three letters indicate 'normal' duration. Longer or shorter inbreaths indicated with fewer or more letters.	
whhord	Can also indicate aspiration/breathiness if within a word (not laughter)	
w(h)ord	Indicates abrupt spurts of breathiness, as in laughing while talking	
£word£	Pound sign indicates smiley voice, or suppressed laughter	
#word#	Hash sign indicates creaky voice	
~word~	Tilde sign indicates shaky voice (as in crying)	
(word)	Parentheses indicate uncertain word; no plausible candidate if empty	
(( ))	Double parentheses contain analyst comments or descriptions	

Appendix 3- Textbook Instruction

How to …
describe a problem and make recommendations

3 A 🔊 **8.06** | Listen to three conversations in which someone describes a problem. What is the problem and solution in each one?

B Complete the phrases in the table with the words in the box.

| broken   need   keeps   problem   time   tried   working   works |

describing a problem	There's a ¹_____ with … The … isn't working. I can't … It won't … It ²_____ (crashing). When/Every ³_____ I … , it … I think it's ⁴_____ .
making a recommendation	Have you ⁵_____ + -ing … ? Try + -ing … Have you checked … ? Maybe you ⁶_____ to … It sometimes ⁷_____ if you …
solving the problem	Yes, I'll try that. Yes, that works. Yes, it's ⁸_____ now.

C 🔊 **8.07** | Listen and check.

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Appendix 4- Reading Text

technical problems

1 A Look at the photo. How is the person feeling? What do you think has happened?

B Read the text. Do you think you suffer from Computer Stress Syndrome? How do you feel when you have problems with technology?

Do you suffer from Computer Stress Syndrome?

It could be the one thing that stresses us out more than anything else in our work life – technical problems. Your phone **isn't working** and you can't download any apps. You finish writing an essay or a report and then realise you've just deleted the files by mistake, and lost everything. Or maybe the photocopier is **out of order** just when you need to copy an important document. Your computer keeps **crashing** in the middle of a meeting or you can't open a **file** or **attachment** on your laptop. Perhaps you've forgotten your **password**, or you have a slow internet **connection**. On top of all this, you find the printer is **broken**. You call the technical department but after waiting for twenty minutes to speak to a real person, you **get cut off**. All these technical problems contribute to 'Computer Stress Syndrome', something many of us suffer from. When the technology works, it's great. When it fails, it's a nightmare.

INTERPRETATION OF METAPHORICAL SPACE EXPRESSIONS BY TURKISH EFL LEARNERS

İNGİLİZCEYİ YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRENEN TÜRK ÖĞRENCİLERİN MECAZÎ UZAMSAL İFADELERİ YORUMLAMA BECERİSİ

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Abstract

This study investigates how intermediate-level Turkish EFL learners comprehend metaphorical space expressions in English and whether they can distinguish these from literal spatial expressions and non-metaphorical distractors. Drawing on the theoretical foundations of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Embodied Cognition, the research explores learners' ability to interpret figurative uses of spatial language that is a key component of cognitive and communicative competence in a second language.

Twenty Turkish undergraduate students participated in a sentence-based translation task containing thirty English sentences evenly divided among metaphorical, literal, and distractor types. Learner responses were coded as correct or incorrect based on whether they preserved the intended meaning of each expression. Both descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis were used to identify patterns of misunderstanding and conceptual gaps.

The results revealed that learners performed highly on literal and distractor items, but showed slightly lower success with metaphorical expressions, particularly those that were idiomatic or emotionally loaded. The most frequent error type was literal translation of metaphorical meaning, followed by vague or flattened interpretations. However, certain metaphors with strong visual or cultural parallels in Turkish were understood correctly by most learners.

These findings suggest that spatial metaphors are neither unfamiliar nor fully mastered by learners at this level. The study highlights the role of conceptual transfer, vocabulary depth, and metaphor awareness in figurative language comprehension and argues for the inclusion of metaphor in language instruction as a core component rather than an advanced topic.

Özet

Bu çalışma, orta düzey İngilizce öğrenen Türk öğrencilerin İngilizcedeki mecazî uzamsal ifadeleri anlama düzeylerini ve bu ifadeleri sözel anlamlı uzamsal ifadelerden ve mecaz içermeyen dikkat dağıtıcı ögelerden ayırt edebilme becerilerini incelemektedir. Kavramsal Metafor Kuramı ve Somutlaştırılmış Biliş yaklaşımlarına dayanan araştırma, ikinci dilde bilişsel ve iletişimsel yetkinliğin temel bileşenlerinden biri olan uzamsal dilin mecazî kullanımlarının nasıl kavrandığını ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır.

Araştırmanın katılımcılarını, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen yirmi Türk üniversite öğrencisi oluşturmuştur. Katılımcılar, her biri on cümleden oluşan otuz İngilizce ifadeyi içeren bir çeviri görevini tamamlamışlardır. Bu ifadeler mecazî, gerçek anlam ve dikkat dağıtıcı olmak üzere üç kategoriye eşit biçimde dağıtılmıştır. Öğrenci yanıtları, ifadelerin hedeflenen anlamını koruyup korumadıkları temelinde doğru veya yanlış olarak kodlanmıştır. Betimsel istatistikler ve nitel analizler, yanlış anlamaların örüntülerini ve kavramsal eksiklikleri belirlemek amacıyla birlikte kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular, öğrencilerin sözel ve dikkat dağıtıcı ifadelerde yüksek başarı gösterdiklerini, ancak özellikle deyimsel ya da duygusal yönü güçlü mecazî ifadelerde başarı oranlarının nispeten daha düşük olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. En sık karşılaşılan hata türü, mecazî anlamların gerçek anlam olarak çevrilmesi olurken, bunu yüzeysel veya belirsiz yorumlar izlemiştir. Bununla birlikte, Türkçede güçlü görsel ya da kültürel karşılıkları bulunan bazı mecazların büyük ölçüde doğru biçimde yorumlandığı gözlenmiştir.

Bu bulgular, uzamsal mecazların bu düzeydeki öğrenciler için tamamen yabancı olmadığını, ancak tam anlamıyla da edinilmediğini göstermektedir. Çalışma, mecazın anlaşılmasında kavramsal aktarım, sözcük bilgisi derinliği ve mecaz farkındalığının belirleyici rol oynadığını vurgulamakta; mecaz öğretiminin dil öğretimi programlarında ileri bir konu olarak değil, temel bir bileşen olarak ele alınması gerektiğini önermektedir.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the role of conceptual metaphors in second language (L2) acquisition has gained attention within Cognitive Linguistics, which emphasizes meaning construction, embodiment, and conceptual organization rather than grammar and literal vocabulary (Evans, 2019). Metaphors are viewed not as stylistic devices but as core cognitive tools shaping how abstract concepts are understood, a view rooted in Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory of systematic domain mappings.

In L2 contexts, these mappings have been studied for their potential to enhance vocabulary learning by raising awareness of metaphorical patterns (Boers, 2000; Littlemore, 2009). While metaphor-based instruction has been shown to improve comprehension and retention (Howe, 2024; Zarei, Darakeh, & Daneshkhah, 2016), challenges remain, including L1 interference (Kazazi, 2019) and limits related to vocabulary depth (Wolter, 2006; Hessel & Murphy, 2019).

Spatial metaphors stand out because of their embodiment, universality, and pedagogical relevance. They draw on basic human experiences of direction, containment, distance, and movement to express abstract or emotional concepts (Evans, 2019; Tyler & Evans, 2003; Johnson, 1987; Gibbs, 2005). For native speakers, such metaphors are often processed automatically, but L2 learners may struggle when figurative usage diverges across languages, creating conceptual rather than lexical challenges (Charteris-Black, 2002; Chen & Lai, 2013).

Despite their importance, metaphorical space expressions remain underrepresented in language curricula, which emphasize literal vocabulary and idioms rather than conceptual structures (Drożdż & Taraszka-Drożdż, 2020). This study addresses that gap by investigating how Turkish EFL learners interpret metaphorical space expressions and distinguish them from literal and non-metaphorical uses. Using a translation-based task, it identifies problematic expressions, analyzes error patterns, and examines variation in metaphorical competence, offering insights into figurative meaning in L2 learning and implications for curriculum design.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is grounded in Cognitive Linguistics, drawing on Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), Image Schemas, and Embodied Cognition. CMT (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) holds that metaphors are central to thought, allowing abstract ideas to be understood through mappings from concrete experience (e.g., LIFE IS A JOURNEY: "She's on the right path", "He's at a crossroads"). Spatial metaphors are especially important, rooted in bodily experience such as moving forward, stepping back, or being inside/outside spaces. Expressions like TIME IS MOTION ("Time is flying"), STATE IS LOCATION ("She's in trouble"), and CHANGE IS MOVEMENT ("She moved on") (Evans, 2019; Johnson, 1987; Tyler & Evans, 2003) reflect image schemas abstracted from physical experience.

70

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Image schemas are recurring embodied patterns that structure thought (Evans & Green, 2006). Relevant examples include PATH ("moving forward"), CONTAINER ("trapped in thoughts"), and UP–DOWN ("feeling low") (Evans & Green, 2006; Gibbs, 2005). Learners unfamiliar with these may misinterpret metaphors despite knowing the vocabulary. Embodied Cognition further stresses that meaning is grounded in sensory experience (Gibbs, 2005). Understanding "He's falling apart," for example, involves simulating the sensation of falling. For L2 learners, comprehension depends on whether such embodied mappings exist in their L1; overlaps aid understanding, while mismatches cause literal interpretations.

CMT also shows that learners import conceptual patterns from their L1, which can either facilitate or interfere with L2 metaphor comprehension (Boers, 2000; Charteris-Black, 2002). Finally, intercultural research highlights that metaphor is not purely cognitive but culturally mediated. Even shared schemas like PATH or CONTAINER can carry different meanings across cultures, as Schröder et al. (2022) note, framing metaphor as a cultural lens through which reality is understood and expressed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The ability to understand metaphorical expressions in a second language (L2) is often seen as a sign of advanced proficiency. Figurative language pushes learners beyond literal meanings, requiring them to activate conceptual mappings that are culturally and linguistically specific. Thus, metaphor comprehension depends not only on lexical and grammatical knowledge but also on deeper semantic and cognitive awareness (Littlemore, 2009). Research shows that L2 learners face difficulties when interpreting metaphors, especially idiomatic, emotionally nuanced, or culturally embedded ones (Boers, 2000; Yasuda, 2010). Many rely on literal translation strategies and may not notice when an expression is metaphorical, leading to misinterpretation or meaning loss (Charteris-Black, 2002; Chen & Lai, 2013). Metaphor comprehension also reflects differences in processing depth. Learners with limited vocabulary or shallow semantic networks may recognize individual words but fail to integrate them metaphorically (Wolter, 2006). As Hessel and Murphy (2019) point out, vocabulary depth predicts metaphor understanding more effectively than vocabulary size alone.

Among metaphor types, spatial metaphors are especially relevant for L2 research because they are frequent and grounded in human experience. Expressions like "moving forward," "stuck in a situation," "out of ideas," or "headed in the wrong direction" map space onto abstract domains such as emotion, mental states, time, or success, drawing on image schemas like PATH, CONTAINER, and UP–DOWN (Evans, 2019; Johnson, 1987). Because of their embodied basis, they are often seen as more universally accessible. Many cultures, including Turkish, rely on similar spatial logic (Boers & Demecheleer, 1998). For instance, Turkish speakers use "çıkmak" (to exit) in contexts like "içinden çıkamamak" (not being able to get out of something). Such overlaps may support learners' interpretation of metaphorical expressions. However, surface similarity is not sufficient. Learners must detect metaphorical intent and

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apply the correct mapping; when this fails due to limited exposure, low metaphor awareness, or reliance on literal reading, errors still occur (Littlemore et al., 2011).

The main sources of metaphor misinterpretation fall into three areas: conceptual mismatch between L1 and L2 metaphors, limited metaphor awareness or strategy use, and context-free instruction or lack of figurative focus. Charteris-Black (2002) showed that even with lexical equivalents, learners often failed to apply the correct framework. Similarly, Chen and Lai (2013) noted that literal translation did not always reflect linguistic weakness but a lack of awareness of deeper mappings. This is especially clear in spatial metaphors involving emotion or idioms. For example, "He fell for her" may be read as physical falling if the emotional mapping is missed. In our context, learners easily understood transparent expressions like "came out of her emotional shell" but struggled with idiomatic ones, showing that figurative transparency is key to comprehension success.

One of the most important developments in recent L2 metaphor research is the recognition that explicit instruction can improve comprehension and retention. Boers (2000) argued that when learners are made aware of metaphorical structures, they are more likely to retain figurative vocabulary and avoid literal interpretations. Yasuda (2010) confirmed this by showing that metaphor-based phrasal verb instruction significantly improved Japanese EFL learners' performance. Studies on embodied learning also suggest that engaging learners physically through gesture, enactment, or visuals helps solidify metaphorical meaning. Lindstromberg and Boers (2008) found that learners who acted out expressions like "push back" or "step up" retained them better than those who only read them. Likewise, Saaty (2022) showed that Saudi learners benefited from enacting metaphorical meanings, confirming the value of kinesthetic reinforcement. Despite these findings, metaphor instruction is still rare in mainstream education. Most curricula focus on grammar, reading, or everyday vocabulary, leaving metaphor as "extra" or advanced content. Yet, as studies show, metaphors are fundamental to real-world communication, and neglecting them creates a gap in learners' pragmatic and cognitive development.

Littlemore and Low (2006) define metaphoric competence as the ability to understand and use metaphors in a second language, viewing it as central to communicative competence. Their framework includes awareness, interpretation, production, and stylistic sensitivity, which links to this study's focus on recognizing spatial metaphors versus literal uses. They also outline three stages of comprehension; literal decoding, surface awareness, and deep mapping. Most learners here seem to remain between the first two, decoding words without fully activating abstract frames.

Howe (2024) examined whether metaphors help or hinder L2 vocabulary acquisition, finding that they can be a double-edged sword: they aid memory when mappings are recognized but cause confusion when clashing with literal meaning. This was evident in the current study, where expressions like "came out of her shell" were understood easily, while others like "fell for her" triggered literal readings. Howe argues that explicit teaching of metaphorical structure can strengthen lexical depth, especially in

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emotional language, idioms, and abstract verbs, supporting the view that metaphor should be central rather than supplementary in vocabulary instruction

Drożdż and Taraszka-Drożdż (2020) show that applying Cognitive Linguistics in language teaching can enhance learners' semantic awareness and metaphor sensitivity. Image schema-based instruction helps with polysemy, metaphorical usage, and figurative collocations. They also highlight how network-based models of meaning, such as Langacker's, reveal links between literal and metaphorical senses. For instance, "move" connects to "move on", "move forward", and "be moved", which seem separate but share metaphorical ties. Teaching that reflects this network structure has been shown to improve metaphor retention and flexible use.

The importance of input processing in metaphor comprehension is also emphasized in *The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Input Processing* (Wong & Barcroft, 2024). The authors explain that learners often filter out metaphorical meaning during real-time comprehension if their attention is overloaded or if cues to metaphor are too subtle. They propose that structured input activities can help redirect learners' attention toward metaphorical forms. In relation to the present study, this suggests that learners' success in recognizing spatial metaphors may depend not only on their knowledge or L1 background, but also on how the input is presented and practiced in instructional settings. Explicitly designed metaphor-focused input may help learners notice conceptual mappings more efficiently.

While many studies have addressed general metaphor comprehension or idiom learning in L2, few have focused specifically on metaphorical space expressions. Yet these expressions are frequent, essential, and often misunderstood due to their surface similarity with literal motion. Additionally, there is a need for more contextual, meaning-based research designs. Much existing research relies on multiple-choice tasks or definition matching, which do not reflect how learners engage with metaphor in real language use. In contrast, translation tasks, like the one used in this study, allow for more nuanced observation of learners' actual conceptual processing. Furthermore, Turkish EFL learners remain underrepresented in metaphor studies. Given the conceptual and linguistic overlap between Turkish and English in spatial metaphor domains, this group provides a unique opportunity to investigate how L1–L2 mappings can support or hinder metaphor comprehension. This study contributes to filling these gaps by exploring how Turkish learners interpret metaphorical space expressions, which metaphor types cause more errors, what patterns emerge in misinterpretation, and how these insights could inform metaphor instruction in L2 classrooms.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

Questions

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1- Do intermediate-level Turkish EFL learners accurately distinguish metaphorical uses of spatial expressions from literal ones in English sentences?
2- What types of misinterpretations do learners make when translating metaphorical space expressions?

Hypothesis

1- Intermediate Turkish EFL learners struggle to identify metaphorical spatial expressions due to limited metaphor awareness and negative L1 transfer.
2- Learners often misinterpret metaphorical space expressions by giving literal translations, especially in idiomatic and emotional contexts.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

This study used a quantitative descriptive design to examine how intermediate-level Turkish learners interpret metaphorical, literal, and neutral spatial expressions, following Creswell's (2021) one-group format. Participants were 20 native Turkish speakers with 5+ years of English study and estimated B1–B2 proficiency; their background information was considered relevant (Mackey & Gass, 2021).

A 30-item translation task was developed, including ten metaphorical, ten literal, and ten neutral sentences. Items were context-free, semantically complete, and appropriate for intermediate learners. The task was administered in class, and students translated sentences into Turkish without knowing their categories to ensure natural processing. Responses were coded as correct or incorrect depending on whether the spatial meaning was preserved, with minor variations accepted. Coding was done manually using set criteria.

Data were analyzed descriptively by counting correct and incorrect responses and grouping them by sentence type. Metaphorical items received closer analysis to identify patterns of misunderstanding, in line with Creswell's (2021) emphasis on pattern-based exploration in descriptive designs.

FINDINGS

This study investigated how intermediate-level Turkish EFL learners interpret metaphorical space expressions in English, and how successfully they distinguish them from literal spatial expressions and non-metaphorical distractors. Data were collected through a sentence-based translation task administered to 20 participants. Each student translated 30 English sentences into Turkish, including 10 metaphorical space expressions, 10 literal space expressions, and 10 distractors. Their translations were evaluated based on whether they reflected the intended meaning of each sentence.

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Overall Performance by Sentence Type

A general review of the translation data revealed noticeable variation in learner performance across the three sentence categories. Literal space expressions were interpreted most accurately, with 98% of responses correctly capturing the intended meaning. Distractor sentences showed similarly high performance, with a 100% success rate, suggesting that learners were able to recognize non-metaphorical and neutral expressions without confusion. However, metaphorical space expressions posed a greater challenge. On average, 88.5% of these sentences were translated correctly, with the remaining 11.5% either misunderstood or rendered too literally. While the overall success rate is still relatively high, this difference reveals that figurative uses of space demand more abstract reasoning and are more susceptible to misinterpretation.
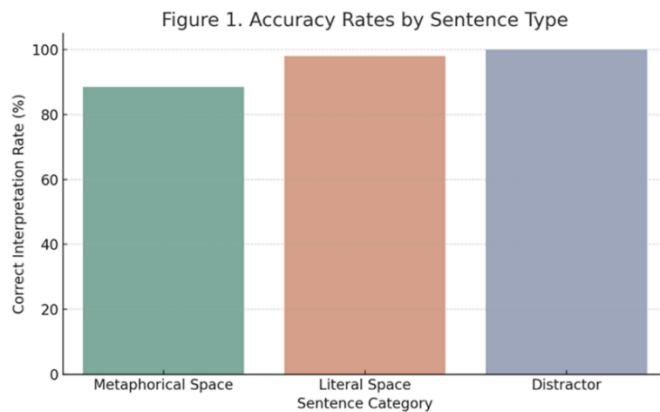

Figure 1. Accuracy Rates by Sentence Type

Most Problematic Metaphorical Expressions

A closer analysis of individual metaphorical sentences showed that not all expressions were equally difficult. Some metaphors, especially those involving idiomatic or emotional content, were more likely to be misinterpreted. The sentence "He fell for her the moment she smiled at him" was the most misunderstood item, with 13 out of 20 learners (65%) failing to grasp the metaphorical use of "fell." Many translated it in a literal, physical sense, overlooking its emotional and idiomatic meaning.

Other expressions that created confusion included "trapped in his thoughts" (25% incorrect) and "lost in a sea of confusing instructions" (15% incorrect). In contrast, items such as "came out of her emotional shell" and "getting out of her comfort zone" had high comprehension rates, with only 1 student misunderstanding each. These

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findings suggest that metaphors grounded in clear spatial imagery were more accessible to learners.
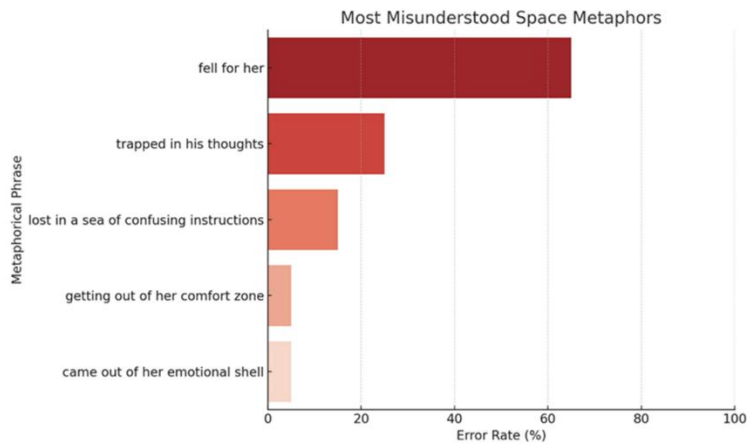

Figure 2. Most Misunderstood Metaphorical Space Expressions

Patterns of Misinterpretation

To better understand the nature of the errors, incorrect responses were examined and categorized. As shown in Figure 3, the most frequent type of misinterpretation involved literal translation of metaphorical expressions. In these cases, learners retained the spatial structure but missed the abstract or emotional dimension. For example, "trapped in his thoughts" was sometimes translated as if the subject were physically locked in a room, rather than mentally overwhelmed.

Another recurring issue was semantic flattening, where learners produced vague or overly generalized translations that missed the metaphorical mapping. In a few cases, learners left the sentence blank or gave a neutral sentence that ignored spatial structure altogether.

These observations indicate that misinterpretation is not random but patterned. Metaphors that are less transparent, especially those tied to emotional or idiomatic usage, tend to cause more confusion. Learners appear to rely heavily on surface lexical cues and may lack the metaphorical awareness needed to recognize spatial metaphors as conceptual rather than literal.

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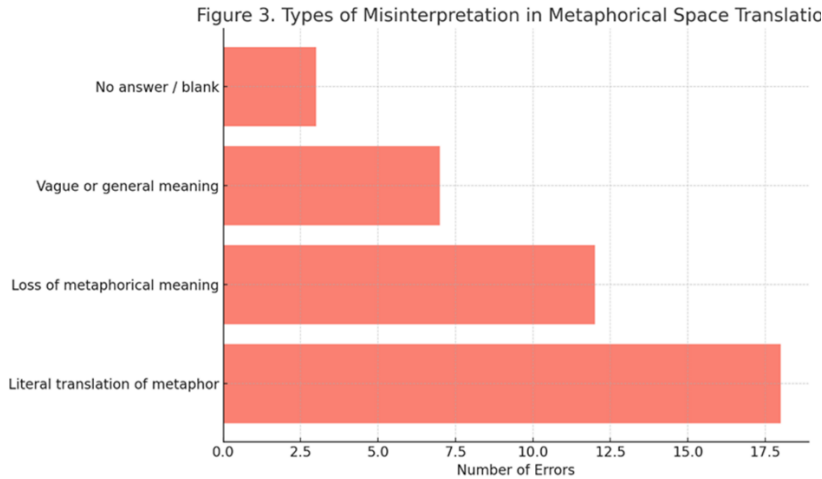congress.ulead.org.tr

Figure 3. Types of Misinterpretation in Metaphorical Space Translation

Figure 3. Types of Misinterpretation in Metaphorical Space Translation

Individual Differences and Learner Sensitivity

Although group-level trends were clear, individual variation also emerged. A few learners demonstrated consistently accurate comprehension across all metaphorical items, indicating higher metaphor sensitivity (See Figure 4.). These students often used near equivalent Turkish idioms or rephrased the metaphor in a way that preserved its figurative meaning. In contrast, learners with multiple errors tended to default to literal translation, suggesting a more word-for-word strategy and less engagement with abstract meaning.
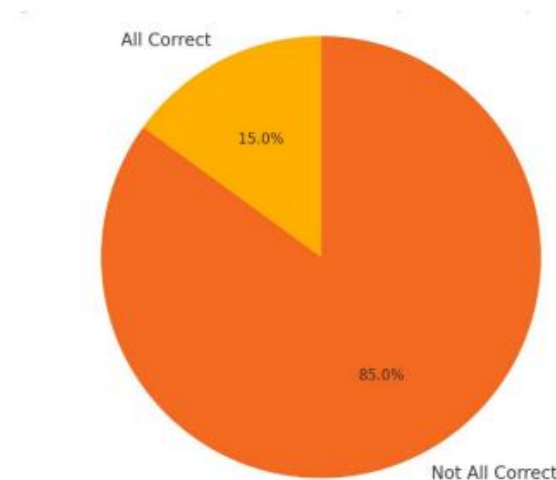

Figure 4. Percentage of Students Who Got All Metaphorical Expressions Correct

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Taken together, these findings show that while Turkish EFL learners are generally capable of distinguishing literal and metaphorical uses of space, certain expressions; particularly those that are idiomatic or emotionally complex, remain difficult. The data suggest that improved metaphor awareness and targeted instruction on spatial metaphors may help learners navigate these challenges more effectively.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide meaningful insights into how Turkish EFL learners comprehend metaphorical space expressions and the factors that influence their interpretation. Although the overall performance on metaphorical sentences was not low, especially when compared to literal and distractor items, the results reveal both strengths and limitations in learners' ability to process figurative spatial meaning.

One of the most notable outcomes is the relatively high success rate on metaphorical expressions. This suggests that learners are not completely unfamiliar with metaphorical structures and may already have some internalized strategies to deal with abstract spatial meaning. A possible explanation for this success could be the cultural and cognitive overlap between English and Turkish spatial metaphors. Many expressions involving movement, direction, or containment have equivalent or closely related counterparts in Turkish, which may have made some metaphors more accessible and less ambiguous for learners. For example, expressions like "get out of your comfort zone" or "come out of your shell" evoke similar imagery in Turkish idiomatic usage, reducing the cognitive load required for metaphor transfer.

However, the study also revealed a consistent pattern of difficulty with certain expressions especially those that are more idiomatic or emotionally loaded. The high error rate on the sentence "He fell for her" illustrates how emotional metaphors that use verbs associated with physical motion can easily lead to literal interpretations. In such cases, learners tend to rely on the surface meaning of the lexical item, rather than identifying the abstract mapping.

This suggests that even when metaphorical structures are not unfamiliar, metaphor comprehension is not automatic and depends on both language awareness and semantic flexibility.

What emerges from this is a key pedagogical implication: metaphor processing is not solely the result of teacher instruction or textbook coverage. While classroom input certainly matters, learners also draw heavily on their own linguistic repertoire, prior exposure to authentic language, and general language proficiency.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

Despite its valuable insights, this study is not without limitations. First, the number of participants was relatively small, and all were from similar academic and linguistic backgrounds. A larger and more diverse sample might reveal greater variability in

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ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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metaphor comprehension strategies. Second, the study relied on written translation tasks, which measure interpretation in a static, isolated form. Metaphor processing in spoken conversation or during real-time reading may differ significantly. Third, the analysis was limited to correct/incorrect coding, and although qualitative observations were added, a more nuanced scoring or reflection-based task could have provided deeper insight into learner reasoning.

Future research could expand on this work in several ways. One direction would be to compare Turkish learners with learners from other L1 backgrounds to explore how metaphor interpretation varies cross-linguistically. Another possibility is to investigate metaphor instruction as a classroom intervention tracking whether guided metaphor-focused teaching improves learners' comprehension and retention over time. Additionally, studies could explore how metaphor sensitivity correlates with overall language proficiency, reading comprehension, or writing performance, helping to place metaphor more centrally in L2 learning models.

CONCLUSION

This study explored how intermediate-level Turkish EFL learners comprehend metaphorical space expressions in English and distinguish them from literal and distractor sentences. The findings provide insights into learners' conceptual and linguistic processing of metaphor with implications for research and pedagogy.

Results show that although learners performed well overall, metaphorical space expressions were more challenging than literal or distractor items. Metaphorical meaning, especially through motion or spatial terms, required deeper interpretation not always activated. Idiomatic or emotional expressions often led to literal translations or partial understanding; for instance, "He fell for her" caused confusion, with learners focusing on the physical sense of "fall."

Still, many learners showed metaphor sensitivity, capturing metaphorical intent and providing natural Turkish equivalents. Conceptual overlap between L1 and L2, such as containment or motion schemas, aided comprehension. Learners with stronger vocabulary depth and awareness engaged more successfully with abstract aspects of spatial metaphors.

The study supports Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Embodied Cognition, showing that learners interpret language through cognitive mappings grounded in physical experience. Success depended on recognizing figurative use and accessing the correct schema. Metaphor emerges as a cognitive skill developing with exposure, instruction, and reflection.

Pedagogically, the study highlights a gap in English teaching, where metaphors are rarely treated explicitly. Intermediate textbooks emphasize literal language and grammar, leaving metaphor to inference. The study argues metaphors should be central to meaning-making. Spatial expressions can be integrated into vocabulary, reading, and translation tasks. Teachers can raise awareness of image schemas like

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PATH and CONTAINER and guide learners in source-target mappings. Comparing English and Turkish spatial metaphors may reinforce confidence and promote transfer.

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APPENDICES

Metaphoric al Space Expression Comprehension Scale

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ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

Dear student,

The following task is part of an academic study about English language comprehension. You will read 30 English sentences and provide their Turkish translations. There are no right or wrong answers. Just write the Turkish equivalent in a way that makes sense to you.

Your responses will be used anonymously and only for academic purposes. Please do not use any external tools or help.

Thank you for your time.

- Read each English sentence carefully. In the space below each sentence, write a natural Turkish translation. Try to reflect what you understand from the sentence.

1- She is slowly getting out of her comfort zone because she wants to try something new.

_____

2- The doctor explained the situation calmly and offered several options.

_____

3- He has been climbing toward the top of the mountain since sunrise.

_____

4- She focused on her work despite the noise around her.

_____

5- The students found themselves lost in a sea of confusing instructions, unsure of where to begin.

_____

6- I didn't recognize her at first because she had changed her hairstyle.

_____

7- Without her guide, she was left behind because the hiking group moved up the hill.

_____

8- He fell for her the moment she smiled at him.

_____

9- He feels trapped in his thoughts, and that stops him from doing anything.

_____

10- We waited quietly while the teacher handed out the papers.

_____

11- The car was heading toward the city center when the rain started.

_____

12- Although the instructions were simple, many students made the same mistake.

_____

13- Without real support from her team, she feels completely left behind in terms of progress and success.

_____

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14- The children were get lost in the field and couldn't find their way back.

_____

15- He studied all night because he wanted to do well on the exam.

_____

16- She answered the question with confidence and gave a clear explanation.

_____

17- Even though she was surrounded by trees, she couldn't get out of the narrow path.

_____

18- She climbed down the ladder carefully and reached the ground without help.

_____

19- He smiled politely, but his eyes showed no interest in the conversation.

_____

20- After months of silence, she finally came out of her emotional shell and started speaking.

_____

21- The team is heading toward a difficult task, but everyone is staying positive.

_____

22- Even though he was surrounded by people, he couldn't get out of the deep loneliness he had been feeling.

_____

23- They discussed the topic in depth, sharing different opinions respectfully.

_____

24- As the train moved beyond the last station, the passengers began to relax.

_____

25- He kept his emotions inside, but now they're starting to come to the surface.

_____

26- Their relationship grew stronger as they spent more time together.

_____

27- As the debate continued, the discussion gradually moved beyond the original topic and became more personal.

_____

28- He was trapped in the elevator for more than an hour before the rescue team arrived.

_____

29- As we continue walking without a map, we might slowly drift away from the right path.

_____

30- We need to stay on the hiking path, if we want to reach the top before sunset.

_____

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LINGUICISM IN THE CLASSROOM: EQUITY, PEDAGOGICAL PRAXIS, AND INSTITUTIONAL POLICY IN MULTILINGUAL HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

Linguicism—language-based discrimination—remains a persistent and often unacknowledged form of inequity in educational systems worldwide. Rooted in linguistic hierarchies and power structures, linguicism affects students' academic experiences, instructors' professional trajectories, and institutional practices that privilege certain languages or dialects over others. Drawing on Skutnabb-Kangas's (1988) foundational definition of linguicism, this article synthesizes international and U.S.-based evidence of linguistic bias and explores pedagogical strategies for advancing linguistic equity. We situate our discussion within a growing body of scholarship and forthcoming volumes that bridge theoretical and applied linguistics, including *Linguistic Discrimination in U.S. Higher Education* (2nd ed., Routledge) and *Linguistic Foundations for Second Language Teaching and Learning* (Cambridge University Press). We propose three interrelated frameworks—Translanguaging, Critical Language Awareness (CLA), and Reflective Teaching Practices—as essential components of Anti-Linguicism Pedagogy. These frameworks provide educators with tools to affirm multilingual learners' identities, promote linguistic inclusivity, and inform equity-minded teacher education and policy reform. By analyzing how institutional structures perpetuate language-based inequities, this article calls for global collaboration in dismantling linguicism and fostering linguistically just educational practices.

Keywords: linguistic discrimination, translanguaging, critical language awareness, teacher education, language policy

INTRODUCTION

Language is not only a communicative tool but also a powerful social and political marker. Within educational institutions, language functions as both a gateway and a gatekeeper — granting access to some, while excluding others. The term *linguicism* encapsulates the mechanisms by which language-based hierarchies are maintained and reproduced. Skutnabb-Kangas (1988) defines linguicism as the "ideologies,

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structures and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate, regulate and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources… between groups defined on the basis of language" (p. 13). This inequality shapes the experiences of students, educators, and administrators across educational systems, from classroom assessments to hiring and promotion practices.

What is the specific connection between linguicism and educational institutions? Linguicism as systemic bias overtly or covertly privileges a dominant language such as Standard American English (SAE) in the U.S. or Received Pronunciation (RP) in the UK within the academy, while stigmatizing or discounting other minoritized languages, dialects, or accents. Students' home languages or varieties are often viewed as inadequate for educational contexts and communication, serving as a proxy for other forms of discrimination and marking their users as intellectually or motivationally "deficient" as well. Users of minoritized codes may be coerced or forced into assimilation of adopting the standard language, resulting in the loss of home culture identity and erasure of the inherent value that their various linguistic codes provide in an otherwise multilingual setting. The structural inequity that linguicism in education brings about is evident in policies and practices that favor and offer advantages to dominant language speakers, who often come from backgrounds of privilege to begin with, reifying a tiered educational system. In such instances, resources may be unequally distributed across educational systems, resulting in some schools lacking high-quality instruction, learning materials that represent all students, technology that supports learners of the dominant language, and adequate support for students who need assistance the most for achieving academic success. The playing field is not level for all students.

Thus, linguistic discrimination and the structural inequities present in educational systems are profoundly interconnected, with deeply embedded implications for how these issues impact teacher professional development, as well as curriculum design and assessment. A self-perpetuating problem is created when standard language ideology (SLI) permeates educational systems, often stemming from a monolingual mindset that assumes all learners should speak the same dominant language and disenfranchises or punishes those who do not. This "standard" mindset promotes one dominant language. It devalues all others, an "exclusionary" stance that prevents non-dominant language speakers from accessing support to aid their acquisition of the dominant language. Often, this mindset is compounded with biases regarding race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, age, ability differences, or country of origin, to create multi-level and overlapping prejudices that make education even more challenging. In this way, linguistic discrimination ideologically justifies structural inequities, while structural inequities provide the institutional scaffolding by which linguicism is institutionally enacted and normalized.

As scholars studying linguistic discrimination, we have documented the pervasive influence of linguicism across educational institutional contexts. Our collaborative work began through the Linguistics in Higher Education Committee of the Linguistic

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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
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Society of America, resulting in co-edited volumes that explore the intersection of linguistic equity, pedagogy, and policy. *Linguistic Discrimination in U.S. Higher Education* (2nd ed.) extends our 2021 Routledge text to include new case studies and systemic analyses. Further, *Linguistic Discrimination in International Higher Education* (forthcoming 2026, Routledge) broadens the scope of inquiry to universities in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, revealing how issues such as English-medium instruction (EMI), ability status, and academic immigration are factors in language-based discrimination. Meanwhile, our edited volume *Linguistic Foundations for Second Language Teaching and Learning: Bridging the Disciplinary Divide* (Cambridge University Press, January 2026) examines how theoretical and applied linguistics can converge to improve second language (L2) teacher education. These collaborations frame the central concern of this article: how can linguicism be recognized, challenged, and ultimately reduced through pedagogical and institutional practices?

LINGUICISM AND STRUCTURAL INEQUITY IN EDUCATION

Linguicism often operates invisibly, encoded in institutional policies and cultural norms that privilege certain linguistic codes. In U.S. higher education, these hierarchies manifest in student grading, faculty evaluation, and administrative decision-making. Clements and Petray (2021) chronicled instances of discrimination affecting students and faculty who use non-prestige varieties of English, signed languages, or dialects associated with marginalized communities. For example, speakers of African American English or Indigenous languages frequently encounter academic penalties tied to perceptions of "incorrect" grammar or formality, even when their language use reflects rich linguistic systems.

These inequities are not confined to the United States. Globally, EMI policies have proliferated, often replicating hierarchies that value particular English varieties, typically British or American, over others. Dong and Han (2025) illustrate how multilingual students in EMI programs often experience feelings of exclusion and isolation, struggling to negotiate belonging within institutions that privilege standard forms. Similarly, Wei and García (2022) argue that translanguaging can serve as a decolonizing practice, enabling learners to reclaim linguistic agency within such systems.

Institutional linguicism extends beyond classrooms into hiring and promotion. King (1998) documents state-level mandates requiring English proficiency tests for international teaching assistants, policies that often mask xenophobic assumptions. While accountability and communication standards are important, inconsistent implementation and lack of support exacerbate inequities. Samson and Collins (2012) note that educational policies must provide not only assessment but also sustained training and support to promote equitable participation among multilingual educators.

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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON LINGUICISM

Linguicism is a global phenomenon intertwined with histories of colonization, migration, and language policy. The United Nations (2020) reported 281 million international migrants worldwide, a figure that continues to rise. Migration intensifies linguistic diversity in education, prompting institutions to reconsider language policy and teacher training.

Finland offers a compelling case study. Though often cited as having one of the world's strongest education systems, Finland's growing immigrant population has exposed gaps in linguistic equity. The government has implemented preparatory language programs to integrate immigrant students into mainstream education. However, Taylor et al. (2023) found that despite these initiatives, the achievement gap between native Finns and immigrant students remains one of the widest in the European Union. Finnish universities often use both Finnish and English as languages of instruction, a practice that simultaneously expands access and reinforces linguistic hierarchies. Immigrant students face discrimination, language acquisition challenges, and social segregation.

The issue extends beyond Europe. In the United States, recent political developments, such as Executive Order 14224 declaring English the official national language, pose new challenges and erode support for the successful acquisition of English that multilingual learners of English need to integrate and become active tax-paying citizens. EO14224 threatens funding for programs supporting students with limited English proficiency (LEP), effectively dismantling decades of progress toward inclusive education and broader means of cultural integration. If enacted, such measures would jeopardize ESL teacher preparation, reduce services for multilingual learners, and exacerbate inequities.

Budiman and Ruiz (2021) correctly remind us that the U.S. population is increasingly multilingual and ethnically diverse. Yet, public discourse and educational policy frequently lag behind this demographic reality. Stakeholders, policymakers, and educators must, therefore, reconsider what linguistic inclusion means in an era of heightened diversity and mobility amidst waning financial and structural support.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: ANTI-LINGUICISM PEDAGOGY

Addressing linguicism requires a multidimensional approach that encompasses pedagogy, policy, and institutional reflection. We propose three pedagogical frameworks as integral to what we call *Anti-Linguicism Pedagogy*: Translanguaging, Critical Language Awareness (CLA), and Reflective Instructional Practice. As shown next, together, these frameworks affirm multilingual identities, interrogate language ideologies, and promote ongoing professional development among educators.

Translanguaging as Equity Praxis

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Translanguaging, initially coined by Welsh educator Cen Williams, describes how bilingual individuals fluidly draw from their entire linguistic repertoires for meaning-making. García and Wei (2014) expanded the concept to broader multilingual contexts, emphasizing its potential to challenge standard language ideologies. Translanguaging recognizes all linguistic codes as valid and interdependent, positioning multilingualism as an asset rather than a deficit. In classroom practice, translanguaging allows learners to access knowledge through multiple linguistic pathways, deepening comprehension and engagement. Zhang-Wu and Tian (2023) show that integrating translanguaging into teacher education fosters critical reflection among preservice teachers, though it also introduces challenges related to assessment and institutional resistance. By legitimizing students' full linguistic repertoires, translanguaging disrupts hierarchies that privilege monolingual norms.

Critical Language Awareness

Critical Language Awareness (CLA) positions language as a site of power negotiation, recognizing that language is both a system of oppression and a means of resistance. This awareness is something that both teachers should cultivate as part of their own professional development, and students should be trained in through classroom activities and assignments. CLA encourages learners to analyze how linguistic choices construct and reflect social identities, ideologies, and hierarchies. Thompson's (2019) work in English language learner (ELL) education demonstrates that critical awareness can transform how students understand the sociopolitical dimensions of language use. When students critically engage with the ways language operates in real-world contexts, they gain agency to challenge dominant discourses and enact social change. Agency through language is key to fighting linguicism. While ELLs benefit through activated discourse and finding their voices as agents of change, CLA also benefits educators by prompting reflection on how their own language ideologies shape pedagogical decisions. Integrating CLA into teacher education equips instructors to recognize linguistic bias in curriculum design, assessment, and institutional policy. The instructional side of CLA is a requisite counterpart to learners, who themselves enact their agency. Without compatible curricula and educational support for anti-linguicism, CLA pedagogy cannot exist.

Reflective Instructional Practice

Reflective instructional practice provides a cyclic pedagogical mechanism through which translanguaging and CLA can be continuously enacted. This professional development process may involve reflection at different points of inquiry, for example, self-analysis, peer analysis, and feedback, in- or after-the-moment in instructional contexts, and outside physical or digital professional contexts such as workshops or conferences. The process begins with teachers collecting data on their own methods and those of their peers, including lesson plans, student feedback, course surveys, and self-recorded or peer-observed teaching performances. Instructors critically analyze the data to understand the effectiveness of their pedagogy and instructional content by concentrating on successes, failures, and root causes to identify what worked well, what did not, and why. Teachers make improvement plans based on

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these analyses, developing action plans for updates, adjustments, and changes to practice. These endeavors are established with a purposeful, open mindset to encourage new ideas and innovation to be considered. So, the cycle of observe, analyze, and revise teaching practice in light of student outcomes and institutional contexts becomes a natural part of ongoing professional development. In an anti-linguicism platform, loops in student learning that privileges translanguaging and CLA. As an iterative process, reflective practice fosters ethical care, inclusivity, and continuous professional growth, transforming classrooms into sites of inquiry. This aligns with anti-linguicism goals by ensuring that pedagogy evolves in response to student diversity while still respecting and sustaining home cultures and languages.

LINGUICISM, POLICY, AND POWER

Language policy reform has long occupied a contested space between the ideals of linguistic equity and the realities of political and economic control. As scholars such as Phillipson (originally in 1992, reprinted 2024) and Tollefson (2002) have argued, language policies are rarely neutral instruments; rather, they are mechanisms through which states and institutions reproduce existing hierarchies of power. Policies governing language use, whether in education, governance, or media, often reflect dominant ideological agendas more than pedagogical or communicative needs. Historical examples underscore this dynamic. Turkey's early twentieth-century language purification campaigns sought to eliminate Ottoman and Persian linguistic influences in favor of a standardized Turkish that symbolized a new national identity. Similarly, the Hebrew language revival in Israel, while culturally unifying, also served to privilege certain linguistic and ethnic groups over others, shaping patterns of inclusion and exclusion in the emerging nation-state. In multilingual contexts such as India, language policy has attempted to balance national cohesion with regional diversity. Yet despite constitutional recognition of multiple languages, English and Hindi continue to occupy privileged positions in education, administration, and socioeconomic mobility, thereby reproducing colonial and postcolonial inequalities.

Educational institutions often mirror these broader sociopolitical tensions. Language proficiency requirements for teachers and students, though ostensibly objective measures of communicative competence, can operate as gatekeeping tools when implemented without attention to linguistic equity. As King (1998) notes, policies that rely on assessment without corresponding support structures risk pathologizing linguistic difference rather than fostering inclusion. The consequences for this pathology is evident in the types of bias and discriminatory damage caused by this ideological power move. Effective policy design, therefore, must integrate equitable assessment practices with robust pedagogical support, treating linguistic diversity as an epistemic asset rather than a deficit.

Ultimately, the relationship between linguicism, policy, and power highlights the importance of critical language awareness in both policymaking and pedagogy. A reform-oriented approach should not only acknowledge the sociopolitical dimensions of language but also actively dismantle structures that privilege dominant linguistic forms. In this sense, language policy becomes not merely a technical or educational

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

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"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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concern, but a moral and political act—one that determines whose voices are legitimized and whose are silenced.

DISCUSSION: TOWARD EQUITY-MINDED TEACHER EDUCATION

Teacher education sits at the heart of the battle against linguicism and for an equity-minded approach to anti-linguicism pedagogy. Preparing teachers who understand linguistic diversity as a strength rather than a barrier is essential for equitable education. Sands, Petray, Clements, and Santelmann (2026) addresses precisely these needs by bridging the gap between applied and theoretical linguistics. Authors in this co-edited collection investigate the status of linguistics in second language (L2) learning and teaching and present arguments for various subdisciplines or approaches, including functional-typological linguistics, systemic functional linguistics, structuralism, phonetics/phonology, morphosyntax, discourse studies and pragmatics, conversation analysis, sociolinguistics, corpus linguistics, and second language acquisition (SLA) as key teacher education content. The relevance of these arguments to diverse educational contexts such as K-12 classrooms, higher education, community education, and specific target language acquisition is made clear. This work advocates a robust association between linguistics and L2 studies and appeals to language teachers, in particular, as agents of change and stakeholders in program and curricular development to make their praxis linguistically-grounded.

Building on a linguistics foundation, teacher professional development and preparation programs must explicitly integrate Anti-Linguicism Pedagogy. This endeavor includes embedding translanguaging strategies into methods courses, incorporating CLA into curriculum design, and cultivating reflective practice as a professional norm. Wei and García (2022) frame translanguaging as a decolonizing project; in this sense, teacher education becomes a site for dismantling colonial linguistic hierarchies.

Reflective teaching also contributes to institutional change by documenting how policies affect classroom realities. When teachers engage in evidence-based reflection, they generate insights that can inform department-level and institutional reforms. These feedback loops are crucial for aligning educational practice with equity-oriented policy.

CONCLUSION: GLOBAL COLLABORATION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Petray and Clements (forthcoming, 2027) brings together perspectives from three global regions, illustrating the universal relevance of linguicism and the local variations it assumes. With two dozen chapters by 35 international scholars, the collection highlights the shared challenges faced by multilingual students and faculty across contexts, from African universities grappling with postcolonial English dominance to East Asian institutions balancing national and global linguistic expectations. However, despite progress, significant research gaps remain. Future

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work must include underrepresented regions such as Latin America, Oceania, and Africa. Comparative studies that trace how policy and pedagogy interact across different linguistic ecologies will be essential for developing globally aligned solutions.

Linguicism is not a peripheral issue but a fundamental barrier to educational equity. It permeates classroom interactions, institutional policies, and broader sociopolitical structures. Yet, it is also a site of possibility. Through Translanguaging, Critical Language Awareness, and Reflective Practice, educators can cultivate anti-linguicism pedagogies that validate multilingual identities and transform educational spaces. Teacher education and institutional reform must move in tandem. Embedding anti-linguicism principles across curricula will help prepare educators to meet the needs of increasingly diverse classrooms and serve to uplift the talented multilingual students who are left behind in traditional power structures. As our collaborative projects demonstrate, confronting linguicism requires interdisciplinary dialogue, international collaboration, and a commitment to linguistic justice. By centering language as both a right and a resource, we can begin to dismantle inequities and reimagine education as truly inclusive for all learners.

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TEMPORAL MASTERY: TEACHING ENGLISH TIME EXPRESSIONS TO FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

Students learning a foreign language in English-medium higher education frequently encounter intricate temporal systems, including tenses, aspects, and time adverbials, which can vary greatly from those in their native languages. This study uses a mixed-methods approach across various universities to identify the common challenges learners face in expressing and understanding English temporality, as well as to assess specific instructional interventions aimed at addressing these issues. Quantitative diagnostic tests show common L1 transfer errors and gaps in understanding aspectual contrast. Meanwhile, qualitative data gathered from classroom observations and teacher interviews point to difficulties in metalinguistic awareness and applying knowledge in context. Using scaffolded tasks such as timeline mapping, enhanced input, and narrative sequencing shows clear improvements in students' understanding of time and their overall fluency. The study suggests an integrated syllabus framework and a professional development model designed to enhance temporal instruction in English-medium curricula, based on the findings presented.

Keywords: Temporality, tense, aspect, temporal adverbials, second language acquisition

INTRODUCTION

The acquisition of English temporal expression systems represents one of the most formidable challenges confronting learners in English-medium instruction contexts within higher education, particularly when their native linguistic systems organize temporality through fundamentally different mechanisms. The English tense-aspect system, with its complex morphological inflections and nuanced aspectual distinctions, imposes considerable cognitive demands upon foreign language learners whose first language operates through alternate grammatical architectures (Bardovi-Harlig & Comajoan-Colomé, 2020). Research consistently shows that even learners who have reached advanced proficiency levels continue to exhibit systematic errors in temporal morphology, with certain patterns persisting despite years of formal language study. These difficulties assume heightened significance within English-medium instruction contexts, where academic discourse requires precise temporal reference for constructing complex arguments, reporting research findings across multiple time frames, and articulating hypothetical propositions, yet where explicit grammatical instruction frequently receives insufficient attention relative to content transmission (Macaro et al., 2018).

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The Aspect Hypothesis has emerged as the predominant explanatory framework within temporal acquisition research, having accumulated substantial empirical validation across diverse linguistic contexts. Originally formulated by Andersen (1991) and subsequently elaborated through systematic research, this hypothesis posits that second language learners manifest prototypical associations between lexical aspect—the inherent temporal characteristics of verbal predicates—and grammatical aspect markers. Learners demonstrate a preferential tendency to deploy perfective or past tense morphology with telic predicates (achievements and accomplishments) while associating imperfective or progressive marking with atelic predicates (activities and states). Recent theoretical refinements suggest that lexical aspect exerts its most pronounced influence not exclusively at initial acquisition stages but rather at intermediate and advanced proficiency levels, with prototypical associations demonstrating remarkable persistence even among learners who have achieved high levels of overall linguistic competence.

Nevertheless, aspectual constraints alone prove insufficient to account for the full spectrum of acquisition patterns, as cross-linguistic transfer effects constitute an equally potent determinant of learner difficulties, particularly when substantial typological distance obtains between the first and second language temporal systems. Research demonstrates compellingly that learners whose native languages manifest morphologically rich inflectional systems exhibit significantly enhanced attentional capacity toward verbal inflections relative to learners whose first languages demonstrate morphologically impoverished systems, with these learned attention effects generating differential degrees of sensitivity to tense-aspect morphology (Ellis & Sagarra, 2011).

For speakers of Uzbek, an agglutinative Turkic language characterized by present-future temporal merger, grammaticalized evidentiality marking, and exclusively suffix-based temporal morphology, the transition to English's fusional-analytic morphological system presents formidable cognitive challenges that manifest in predictable error patterns. Empirical investigations examining Turkish learners—whose native language shares substantial structural affinities with Uzbek—have documented systematic error patterns encompassing present progressive overextension to stative predicates, present perfect confusion with definite past time adverbials, deployment of simple present forms for future temporal reference, and auxiliary verb omission across interrogative and negative constructions (Kırkgöz, 2010). These findings suggest highly predictable transfer patterns for Uzbek-speaking learners, notwithstanding the regrettable paucity of direct empirical research specifically examining Uzbek-English temporal acquisition.

Metalinguistic awareness—the cognitive capacity to engage in conscious reflection upon language as an analytical object rather than merely deploying it instrumentally—has emerged as a significant facilitative factor in temporal morphology acquisition. Recent neurocognitive investigations have demonstrated that metalinguistic awareness functions as a mediating variable that modulates the

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effects of general cognitive abilities upon grammar learning outcomes (Tagarelli et al., 2023). For adult university learners situated within English-medium instruction contexts, where academic discourse imposes requirements for precise temporal reference across syntactically complex structures, the systematic development of metalinguistic awareness through carefully scaffolded instructional sequences represents a particularly promising pedagogical avenue.

The pedagogical response to temporal acquisition challenges has encompassed diverse instructional approaches with varying degrees of empirical validation. Processing Instruction, grounded in VanPatten's Input Processing Model, has demonstrated consistent empirical superiority relative to traditional instruction for acquiring morphological features. This approach employs systematically structured input activities specifically designed to direct learner attention toward form-meaning connections during comprehension processes. Timeline mapping utilizes visual scaffolding to represent temporal relationships through spatial metaphors, providing learners with concrete external representations of abstract temporal concepts. Enhanced input techniques, encompassing textual enhancement, input flooding, and structured input activities, have yielded mixed outcomes, with effectiveness contingent upon multiple factors including target structure complexity and learner proficiency level. Narrative-based pedagogical tasks, which capitalize upon storytelling discourse to elicit temporal-causal language, have demonstrated considerable promise for promoting accurate deployment of past tense morphology, perfect aspectual forms, and temporal conjunctions (Petersen et al., 2020).

English-medium instruction programs have proliferated globally across tertiary education contexts, yet systematic reviews reveal that the field remains in an "adolescent stage" of scholarly development, with minimal research employing objective measures to assess language learning impact. Within EMI contexts, students consistently report language proficiency as constituting the principal barrier to effective content learning, with particular difficulties in listening comprehension during lectures. Instructors express substantial concerns regarding their own linguistic competence and report lacking systematic training in language-aware pedagogical approaches. For Central Asian educational contexts specifically, research documents highly complex multilingual ecologies, significant teacher preparation inadequacies, and substantial resource constraints particularly affecting second-tier universities (Bezborodova, 2022; Linn et al., 2020).

The present investigation addresses critical gaps within temporal acquisition research by examining Uzbek learners—a substantially under-researched Turkic language population—situated within English-medium instruction contexts. Through deployment of a principled mixed-methods design, this investigation synthesizes quantitative diagnostic assessment with qualitative classroom observation and teacher interviews, thereby capturing both measurable learning outcomes and nuanced pedagogical processes. Three research questions guide this investigation:

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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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1. What systematic error patterns characterize Uzbek learners' production of English temporal expressions, and to what extent do such patterns reflect L1 transfer phenomena, aspectual constraints, metalinguistic awareness deficits, and difficulties contextualizing knowledge in spontaneous production?

2. To what degree do timeline mapping interventions, enhanced input techniques, and narrative sequencing tasks improve temporal expression accuracy among Uzbek-speaking learners enrolled in English-medium instruction programs?

3. How do instructors and learners perceive the effectiveness of these pedagogical interventions in developing metalinguistic awareness and facilitating robust form-meaning connections?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This investigation employed a concurrent mixed-methods design wherein quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously with equivalent priority, followed by integrated analysis. The quantitative strand employed a quasi-experimental pre-test/post-test design enabling measurement of intervention effectiveness, while the qualitative strand utilized systematic classroom observation protocols and semi-structured teacher interviews designed to capture pedagogical processes and participant perspectives. Integration occurred at multiple methodological junctures: hybrid research questions requiring both quantitative measurement and qualitative explanation, concurrent data collection enabling cross-method validation, and synthesized interpretation generating comprehensive insights regarding both intervention mechanisms and learning outcomes.

Research Context and Participants

This investigation was conducted within English-medium instruction programs at Urgench State University, a regional institution in Uzbekistan representative of second-tier universities throughout Central Asia. The participant sample comprised 42 students enrolled in English-medium degree programs requiring sustained academic discourse competence. All participants were native Uzbek speakers with minimal exposure to other Turkic languages, possessing extensive prior English instruction. Their proficiency level was determined to align with CEFR B2 specifications through institutional placement testing. Participants were enrolled across three intact classes within the Faculty of Foreign Languages, pursuing diverse concentrations including theoretical linguistics, pedagogical studies, and translation studies.

Six experienced English language instructors participated in semi-structured interviews. All held master's degrees in TESOL or applied linguistics and had received

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

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RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
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"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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training in communicative language teaching methodologies, though notably none possessed specialized training in explicit teaching of temporal morphology or systematic language-aware pedagogy specifically designed for English-medium instruction contexts. Ethical approval was secured from the university research ethics committee, with all participants providing informed written consent.

Instruments

Diagnostic Tests. Two parallel diagnostic tests were systematically developed to assess both temporal expression accuracy and contextually appropriate usage. Each test contained items distributed across four section types: multiple-choice items targeting recognition of correct tense-aspect forms, error correction tasks requiring identification and correction of temporal morphology errors, contextualized gap-fill exercises providing paragraph-level discourse context, and guided production tasks eliciting spontaneous temporal expression production through narrative prompts. Test construction rigorously followed established frameworks for construct validity, with items systematically distributed across temporal expression categories including simple tenses, progressive aspects, perfect aspects, temporal adverbials, and complex temporal structures. Pilot testing yielded strong reliability coefficients, and content validity was established through expert review by applied linguistics specialists.

Observation Protocol. Systematic classroom observations employed a modified version of the Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT) observation scheme, adapted to capture phenomena relevant to temporal expression instruction. The protocol documented instructional activity types, learner engagement indicators, instructor scaffolding strategies, and error patterns alongside instructor feedback. Twenty-four instructional sessions were observed across the three classes, distributed across the eight-week intervention period. Inter-rater reliability was established through independent observation of a substantial portion of sessions, achieving substantial agreement regarding coding of instructional activities and error types.

Teacher Interview Protocol. Semi-structured interviews employed a combination of predetermined questions ensuring comparable data collection alongside emergent probes enabling pursuit of particularly salient themes. The protocol addressed instructor perceptions regarding learner difficulties with temporal expressions, prior pedagogical approaches, experiential accounts of implementing the study interventions, observations regarding metalinguistic awareness development, and contextual challenges associated with English-medium instruction settings. Interviews extended approximately one hour, were audio-recorded with explicit permission, and were subsequently transcribed verbatim.

Intervention Procedures

Following diagnostic pre-testing, participants received eight weeks of systematically structured targeted instruction incorporating three evidence-based pedagogical

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
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interventions. Rather than delivering these as isolated grammar lessons, they were integrated within regular coursework addressing diverse content domains, ensuring ecological validity and authentic communicative contexts. The intervention sequence was deliberately designed to manifest progressive elaboration, with structural complexity systematically increasing across the instructional period.

Timeline Mapping (Weeks 1-3 with continuing integration). Visual timeline scaffolding was introduced as a foundational pedagogical tool, employing horizontal spatial representations with conventional symbolic notation: "NOW" (Uzbek: "Hozir") marked centrally as the temporal reference point, past events positioned leftward, future events rightward, discrete dots representing punctual events, and shaded linear segments indicating durative events. Following sociocultural learning theory, timelines functioned as mediating artifacts enabling learners to investigate tense usage through both intuitive holistic understanding and conscious metalinguistic knowledge. Initial sessions addressed simple tense systems, subsequently incorporating progressive aspectual distinctions, followed by systematic introduction of perfect aspectual forms. Students constructed timelines through both individual analytical work and collaborative small-group activities, systematically mapping temporal relationships within authentic texts. Instructors explicitly modeled timeline construction through think-aloud protocols, rendering implicit analytical procedures explicit and accessible.

Enhanced Input Techniques (Weeks 3-5). Three distinct enhanced input strategies were implemented following empirically validated procedures. First, textual enhancement employed compound strategies—simultaneous deployment of typographical bolding, color-coding, and selective underlining—to direct attention toward target temporal morphology. Second, input flooding systematically increased target form frequency throughout reading texts employed for content instruction. Third, structured input activities grounded in Processing Instruction were designed to address specific documented processing difficulties. For instance, activities designed to combat learners' tendency to over-rely upon temporal adverbs systematically required learners to determine temporal reference exclusively from verbal morphology. Referential activities with determinate truth values systematically preceded affective activities involving subjective opinion expression, deliberately delaying production demands until comprehension processing had been established.

Narrative Sequencing Tasks (Weeks 6-8). Narrative-based instruction systematically exploited storytelling discourse's inherent propensity to elicit temporal-causal linguistic structures. Following Structured Narrative Retell Instruction pedagogy, instructors provided explicit metalinguistic instruction regarding story grammar components as organizing frameworks enabling systematic temporal sequencing. Initial activities concentrated upon narrative comprehension and temporal sequencing: learners systematically reordered scrambled story events, engaging in explicit metalinguistic discussions regarding temporal relationships. Subsequent emphasis shifted to scaffolded guided retelling: following video narrative

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
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"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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viewing, students retold narratives utilizing provided visual prompts alongside temporal connective frames (*"Avval..., Keyin..., Undan keyin..., Nihoyat..."*—"First..., Then..., After that..., Finally..."). Final activities involved progressively independent original narrative generation, with structured peer feedback targeting temporal coherence and accurate morphological marking.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from diagnostic tests were analyzed through paired-samples t-tests enabling statistical inference regarding intervention effects, with effect size calculations establishing practical significance. Systematic error analysis categorized observed mistakes according to established typological frameworks: tense selection errors, aspectual errors, morphological inflection errors, auxiliary verb errors, and temporal adverbial misuse.

Qualitative data analysis systematically followed Braun and Clarke's well-established six-phase thematic analysis framework. This involved comprehensive familiarization through repeated iterative reading, systematic initial coding using both deductive codes derived from theoretical frameworks and inductive codes emerging from data patterns, theme generation through iterative clustering, rigorous theme review and refinement, systematic theme definition and naming, and comprehensive report production incorporating illustrative data extracts. Two researchers independently coded a substantial portion of the dataset, achieving strong inter-coder agreement, with remaining discrepancies resolved through discussion.

Integration of quantitative and qualitative data streams occurred through multiple methodological strategies. Joint displays were constructed to visually juxtapose test performance data with qualitatively identified themes. Data transformation procedures converted qualitative error descriptions into quantitative frequency distributions. Meta-inference development synthesized insights across both data streams, generating holistic conclusions regarding intervention mechanisms and learning outcomes that transcended conclusions achievable through either approach independently.

RESULTS

Quantitative Findings: Diagnostic Test Performance and Error Patterns

Descriptive analyses revealed substantial improvements in overall temporal expression accuracy from pre-test to post-test administration. Statistical testing confirmed this improvement as highly significant with a large effect size, indicating robust practical intervention effectiveness. When examining performance across distinct test subsections, differential gain patterns emerged. Perfect aspectual forms demonstrated the most substantial improvement, followed by progressive aspects and simple tense systems. Temporal adverbials manifested more modest though still significant gains, while complex temporal structures exhibited smaller

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ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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improvements, suggesting these structures require extended instructional periods for substantial mastery.

Analysis of weekly assessment performance across the intervention period revealed highly significant improvement trajectories, with statistically significant gains emerging after the third week, accelerating substantially during weeks five and six, and continuing through final assessments. This progressive improvement pattern suggests cumulative effects arising from layered intervention implementation, wherein timeline mapping established foundational metalinguistic awareness, enhanced input techniques consolidated form-meaning associations, and narrative sequencing tasks promoted automatization and fluent production.

Assessment of differential intervention effectiveness yielded systematically varying effect sizes. Timeline mapping assessment procedures produced the largest observed effect size, indicating exceptionally robust impact. Enhanced input activities yielded moderate-to-large effect sizes, demonstrating substantial effectiveness. Narrative sequencing tasks demonstrated moderate effect sizes, suggesting meaningful pedagogical value while indicating somewhat reduced impact upon accuracy measures relative to the more explicitly focused interventions. These patterns align with accumulated meta-analytic evidence supporting explicit visual scaffolding approaches and Processing Instruction methodologies.

Systematic error analysis revealed patterns demonstrating remarkable consistency with theoretical predictions derived from contrastive analysis of Uzbek-English temporal systems alongside aspectual constraint predictions. Pre-test error distributions were categorized across five types, with tense selection errors constituting the largest proportion, followed by aspectual errors, morphological inflection errors, auxiliary verb errors, and temporal adverbial misuse. The most prevalent tense selection error subtypes involved several theoretically predictable patterns: present progressive deployment with stative verbal predicates (*"I am knowing the answer"*); present perfect co-occurrence with definite past time adverbials (*"She has graduated last year"*); simple present deployment for future temporal reference (*"I come tomorrow"*); and simple past substitution for present perfect in result-state contexts (*"I lost my keys"* when keys remain presently missing). These systematic patterns demonstrate striking correspondence with documented Turkish learner errors, providing empirical validation for predicted Uzbek-English transfer patterns.

Aspectual errors manifested several primary subtypes reflecting both L1 transfer influences and universal aspectual constraints: progressive overextension to stative predicates, simple past deployment in contexts pragmatically requiring present perfect marking, present perfect usage where simple past represented the appropriate form, and confusion among distinct perfect form types. Morphological inflection errors concentrated in three principal categories: third-person singular present tense marker omission, irregular past tense form production errors, and past participle form confusion. Auxiliary verb errors encompassed auxiliary omission in

101

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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interrogative and negative constructions, auxiliary insertion in inappropriate contexts, and incorrect auxiliary selection.

Post-test error distribution analyses revealed systematically significant alterations, with the most substantial reductions concentrated in tense selection and aspectual error categories—precisely those grammatical domains targeted most directly through timeline mapping and enhanced input interventions. However, persistent errors in complex temporal structures indicated that the eight-week intervention duration, while demonstrably effective for foundational competencies, proved insufficient for achieving complete mastery across the full complexity spectrum.

Qualitative Findings: Classroom Observations and Teacher Interviews

Systematic thematic analysis conducted upon observation field notes and teacher interview transcripts generated four primary themes: (1) L1 transfer manifestations and metalinguistic awareness development, (2) timeline mapping functioning as conceptual scaffolding, (3) enhanced input techniques' attention-directing functions and cognitive trade-offs, and (4) narrative sequencing tasks' contextualization benefits alongside persistent automatization challenges.

Theme 1: L1 Transfer Manifestations and Metalinguistic Awareness Development. Systematic classroom observations documented numerous instances wherein learners' Uzbek L1 demonstrably influenced temporal expression production through mechanisms consistent with contrastive linguistic analysis predictions. One particularly representative episode occurred during timeline-focused activities when students were asked to position "I see my friend yesterday" upon a visual timeline. Many students initially positioned the event correctly within the past temporal zone yet failed to recognize the morphological error in the verb form. Teacher Aziza articulated this phenomenon insightfully:

"They understand past versus present conceptually—the timeline shows they know when it happened. But Uzbek doesn't change verb forms the same way. They add suffixes systematically, one meaning per suffix. English *saw* looks completely different from *see*, so they don't automatically connect them as the same verb with time changed."

This observation illuminates the substantial cognitive challenge confronting speakers of agglutinative languages when acquiring fusional morphological systems. The subsequent metalinguistic discussion proved remarkably illuminating regarding awareness development. When the instructor provided explicit comparison contrasting Uzbek's systematic *-di* suffix with English's irregular suppletive past forms, students demonstrated markedly increased analytical awareness. One student's spontaneous exclamation captured this insight: "Oh, in Uzbek we add *-di*, but English changes the whole word!" This metalinguistic reflection exemplifies how explicit cross-linguistic comparison facilitates conscious reflection upon linguistic structures.

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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Progressive aspect overextension to stative predicates emerged with remarkable frequency. Observations documented numerous instances wherein learners deployed present progressive morphology with inherently stative predicates: *"I am understanding," "She is knowing," "They are believing."* Teacher interview data systematically attributed this pattern to Uzbek's substantially broader progressive aspect usage. Teacher Javlon articulated this contrast:

"In Uzbek we can say the equivalent of 'I am knowing' without any problem—it's grammatical. The focal aspect markers are used widely in our language. Students transfer this pattern directly. When I explicitly taught that English divides verbs into stative versus dynamic, and that statives generally reject progressive, they started self-monitoring."

By the intervention's midpoint, spontaneous self-correction of progressive overextension errors increased markedly, with observations documenting instances wherein students initiated self-correction: *"I am knowing—wait, no—I know the answer."* This behavioral pattern signals developing metalinguistic awareness, wherein learners progressively engage conscious attention toward form-meaning relationships.

Present perfect morphology proved the most persistently challenging temporal form throughout the complete intervention period. Teacher Malika captured this difficulty:

"Even after timeline work clearly showing present perfect connects past action to present moment, students kept using simple past when present perfect was needed, or mixing present perfect with definite time words like *yesterday*. Uzbek has the indefinite past *-gan* which seems similar, but it works differently—it's about unspecified time, not present relevance. This conceptual difference is subtle."

Observations documented numerous present perfect errors during initial weeks, subsequently declining during later weeks, suggesting that repeated explicit instruction combined with visual scaffolding gradually clarified this complex form-meaning correspondence. However, error persistence even following intensive instruction aligns with cross-linguistic research establishing present perfect as the most challenging English tense-aspect form for learners across diverse backgrounds.

Theme 2: Timeline Mapping as Conceptual Scaffolding. Teacher interview data revealed unanimous endorsement of timeline mapping as the most pedagogically valuable intervention component. Teacher Dilshod articulated:

"Timelines made abstract time concrete. Before, I would say 'present perfect is for actions that started in the past but continue to now' and see confused faces. With the timeline, I could show exactly what I meant—draw the starting point in the past, the continuation line extending to NOW. Visual learners especially benefited."

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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Observations documented consistently elevated learner engagement during timeline-focused activities. Students engaged actively in metalinguistic discussions regarding temporal relationships while constructing timelines, deploying explicitly metalinguistic terminology: "This should go before that one," "Does this line show duration or just a moment?" Such discourse patterns indicate that timeline representations functioned as mediating artifacts, systematically scaffolding learners' conceptual development through provision of external symbolic support.

One particularly effective timeline application involved perfect aspectual instruction. Teacher Aziza demonstrated past perfect relationships through constructing a visual representation depicting two discrete past events positioned leftward of the NOW marker, with one positioned further leftward than the other, connected through a directional arrow symbolizing temporal precedence: "By the time I arrived, the train had left." Students subsequently constructed analogous timelines for additional sentence exemplars, explicitly marking which among multiple past events occurred temporally prior. This activity systematically addressed the relative time complexity characterizing past perfect morphology. Post-activity assessment revealed that substantially more students correctly produced past perfect sentences following timeline instruction compared to pre-intervention baseline.

However, observations simultaneously revealed inherent limitations. Syntactically complex sentences incorporating multiple embedded temporal clauses proved exceedingly challenging to represent through visual timelines, with students expressing explicit frustration: "Too many lines, too complicated." Instructors acknowledged during interviews that timeline representations function optimally for relatively simpler temporal structures, whereas advanced constructions necessitate supplementary metalinguistic explanation transcending visual scaffolding alone.

Theme 3: Enhanced Input's Attention-Directing Function. Enhanced input techniques yielded systematically mixed observational outcomes suggesting both pedagogical benefits and potential cognitive costs. Textual enhancement procedures successfully directed conscious attention toward target morphological forms: observations recorded students pausing noticeably when encountering enhanced elements, physically pointing toward highlighted forms, and spontaneously initiating clarifying questions: "Why is this word in bold?" Such noticing behaviors align with research findings that visual enhancement techniques facilitate conscious noticing, which constitutes a necessary though insufficient precondition for morphological acquisition.

However, observations simultaneously documented potential cognitive trade-offs. During one reading comprehension task employing compound textual enhancement strategies, students' comprehension check performance declined measurably relative to performance on unenhanced texts. Teacher Malika's commentary captured this phenomenon: "Students spent so much time analyzing the highlighted forms that they struggled to understand the passage's main ideas." This attention trade-off pattern echoes empirical findings that typographically enhanced forms can

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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systematically redirect finite cognitive resources away from content-focused comprehension toward form-focused analysis.

Input flooding procedures proved substantially less perceptually salient to learners. When explicitly queried regarding whether they consciously noticed increased frequency of target forms within instructional texts, relatively few students reported conscious awareness of frequency manipulation. Teacher Javlon reflected: "Input flooding works implicitly—students are exposed repeatedly, processing forms multiple times without conscious awareness. It's less dramatic than timelines or highlighting, but it may contribute to gradual acquisition through frequency effects."

Structured input activities generated particularly rich metalinguistic discussions characterized by active learner hypothesis-testing. One representative activity presented sentence sets wherein temporal adverbials were deliberately omitted, requiring learners to derive temporal interpretations exclusively from morphological marking: "*She studies / studied / has studied medicine*" without temporal support, accompanied by probing questions: "Did she finish? Is she still studying?" Students engaged actively in interpretive debates: "Has studied means maybe she finished, maybe not—it depends on context," "Studied means it's finished and disconnected from now." Such discussions explicitly addressed form-meaning correspondences, with instructors functioning as discussion facilitators rather than authoritative knowledge transmitters.

Theme 4: Narrative Tasks' Contextualization Benefits. Narrative sequencing tasks systematically elicited complex temporal linguistic structures within authentically meaningful communicative contexts. Observations documented that story retelling discourse inherently necessitated deployment of past tense morphology, temporal adverbials, and perfect aspectual marking to establish temporal-causal relationships. Teacher Dilshod articulated this contextualization:

"When students tell stories, they need to say what happened first, what happened next, what had already happened before something else. This creates genuine communicative pressure to use temporal expressions accurately. It's not a grammar drill—it's using grammar to accomplish a real communicative goal."

Story retelling activities incorporating visual prompt support provided particularly useful scaffolding. Pictographic event sequences depicting principal narrative events supported students' temporal sequencing organization, thereby reducing cognitive demands associated with content generation and enabling enhanced attention allocation toward linguistic form accuracy. Explicit instruction regarding story grammar components provided students with an organizing metalinguistic framework supporting systematic temporal organization. Teacher Aziza noted that students' original narrative productions demonstrated markedly enhanced temporal coherence relative to baseline samples, characterized particularly by appropriate deployment of temporal connectives.

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ELT-ICRAL 2025

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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However, narrative production contexts simultaneously revealed persistent morphological accuracy deficits under spontaneous production demands. Observations documented numerous instances wherein students demonstrated appropriate tense selection at a conceptual level yet simultaneously produced morphologically inaccurate forms: *"Yesterday I go," "She have finished," "They was working."* Teacher Malika captured this accuracy-fluency tension:

"Narratives show students understand when to use which tense—they're making the right temporal choices. But producing the correct form under real-time pressure is harder. They need more automatization practice, more time for these forms to become fluent rather than requiring conscious attention."

This finding systematically highlights the theoretically significant distinction between explicit declarative knowledge—conscious metalinguistic understanding of grammatical rules—and implicit procedural knowledge characterized by automatic, fluent morphological production. Narrative production tasks revealed that the intervention period proved sufficient for establishing robust explicit metalinguistic knowledge yet insufficient for achieving complete proceduralization supporting fluent automatic production.

Integrated Findings: Meta-Inferences

Systematic triangulation of quantitative test performance data and qualitative findings generated three principal meta-inferences. First, the statistically significant quantitative improvements in temporal expression accuracy appear directly attributable to systematically enhanced metalinguistic awareness development, as evidenced qualitatively through classroom discourse patterns manifesting explicit reflection upon form-meaning relationships, spontaneous self-correction behaviors, and increasingly sophisticated metalinguistic discussions. The implemented interventions functioned primarily through rendering implicit temporal contrasts explicitly conscious, systematically providing learners with conceptual organizing frameworks and analytical tools supporting conscious metalinguistic reflection.

Second, L1 transfer effects operated systematically at multiple levels spanning both surface morphological production and deeper conceptual organization. Quantitatively, error pattern distributions closely corresponded to theoretical predictions derived from Uzbek-Turkic contrastive analysis. Qualitatively, detailed teacher accounts of specific transfer manifestations alongside documented effectiveness of explicit contrastive explanation confirmed that L1 influence represents learners' rational systematic attempts to map L2 morphological forms onto preexisting L1 conceptual structures. Pedagogically addressing cross-linguistic transfer through explicit contrastive comparison proved substantially more effective than implicit exposure approaches.

Third, differential intervention effectiveness patterns reflected systematically varying capacities for addressing distinct dimensions of acquisition challenges. Timeline

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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mapping's substantial effect size derived from its provision of explicit conceptual scaffolding rendering abstract temporal relationships cognitively accessible through concrete spatial metaphorical representation. Enhanced input techniques' moderate effect sizes reflected their systematic attention-directing functions, facilitating conscious noticing alongside initial form-meaning association development yet requiring supplementary explicit explanation for optimal effectiveness. Narrative sequencing tasks' moderate effect sizes arose primarily from contextualization benefits, generating authentic communicative pressure motivating accurate temporal expression deployment, though this approach proved comparatively less effective for automatizing morphological production accuracy under spontaneous demands. These differential patterns collectively suggest an optimal pedagogical sequencing strategy: initial explicit conceptual scaffolding through timeline mapping, subsequent enhanced input consolidating form-meaning associations, and culminating narrative tasks promoting contextualized production—precisely the progressive sequence implemented throughout this investigation.

DISCUSSION

The empirical findings contribute substantively to multiple intersecting domains: temporal expression acquisition theory, cross-linguistic transfer phenomena, metalinguistic awareness development, and English-medium instruction pedagogy. Theoretically, results provide robust support for core propositions articulated within the Aspect Hypothesis while simultaneously demonstrating substantial L1 transfer effects that systematically modulate aspectual constraint predictions. The documented persistence of prototypical aspectual associations—progressive marking preferentially deployed with activity predicates, past tense morphology concentrated with achievement predicates—even among advanced learners following intensive instruction aligns substantially with characterizations of the Aspect Hypothesis as arguably the most empirically robust finding within temporal acquisition research. However, the specific error configurations observed—progressive overextension to stative predicates, present perfect confusion with definite past reference, simple present deployment for future reference—reflect distinctly Turkic transfer phenomena rather than universal aspectual constraints alone.

Methodologically, this investigation advances mixed-methods research practice through achieving principled systematic integration throughout all research phases. The development of hybrid research questions necessitating both quantitative measurement and qualitative explanation, the systematic employment of joint analytical displays integrating test patterns with qualitatively identified themes, and the generation of synthesized meta-inferences transcending insights available through either tradition independently exemplify innovative mixed-methods research characterized by genuine epistemic pluralism. This integrative approach proved essential for capturing simultaneously both measurable learning outcomes and nuanced pedagogical processes—analytical dimensions that neither quantitative nor qualitative approaches could adequately address in isolation.

107

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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Pedagogically, findings provide robust support for explicit systematically scaffolded instruction targeting complex morphological systems when substantial L1-L2 typological distance obtains. The documented superiority of timeline mapping relative to enhanced input techniques and narrative sequencing tasks aligns with accumulated meta-analytic evidence favoring explicit instruction for complex grammatical features alongside visual scaffolding's well-documented effectiveness. However, the complementary benefits arising from systematically combining multiple approaches—conceptual scaffolding, attention-directing input manipulation, and contextualized communicative production—suggest that polarized theoretical debates regarding explicit versus implicit instructional primacy potentially misconstrue optimal pedagogical synthesis. Research demonstrates that explicit instruction enhances formal accuracy in controlled contexts, whereas implicit practice promotes pragmatically appropriate selection in authentic communicative contexts. This pattern indicates optimal pedagogy employs both approaches sequentially: initial explicit presentation supporting metalinguistic knowledge development followed by subsequent implicit practice designed to promote proceduralization and automatization.

The critical facilitative role of metalinguistic awareness development merits particular emphasis given its documented pedagogical implications. Qualitative findings revealed compellingly that pedagogical interventions functioned primarily through systematically moving learners from implicit L1-influenced grammatical intuitions toward explicit analytical reflection upon temporal form-meaning correspondences. Students' progressively sophisticated metalinguistic discourse patterns—explicitly discussing temporal relationships, spontaneously questioning tense selection decisions, initiating self-correction based upon articulated explicit rules—exemplifies how metalinguistic awareness demonstrates susceptibility to deliberate pedagogical cultivation and systematically facilitates grammatical learning outcomes. For English-medium instruction contexts specifically—wherein content-focused instruction typically neglects systematic linguistic scaffolding—this finding carries substantial pedagogical implications. EMI students require not merely general communicative proficiency but rather specific academic language competencies, encompassing precise temporal reference for constructing complex multi-clausal arguments, reporting research findings, and engaging critically with disciplinary texts. The demonstration that focused systematically scaffolded instruction can achieve significant temporal expression mastery enhancement within merely eight instructional weeks suggests compellingly that brief intensive interventions strategically integrated within content courses could meaningfully support EMI students' linguistic development without necessitating wholesale curriculum restructuring.

However, documented error persistence in complex temporal structures alongside the observed distinction between explicit declarative knowledge and implicit procedural knowledge underscore acquisition's inherently gradual incremental developmental nature. Even with substantial effect sizes, participating students demonstrably did

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not achieve native-like mastery across the complete temporal system. Past perfect constructions, future perfect forms, and syntactically complex temporal clauses involving multiple embedded reference points remained persistently challenging, aligning with accumulated research documenting that advanced grammatical features necessitate extended acquisition periods. The qualitative finding that students could conceptually select appropriate tense forms yet simultaneously struggled with accurate morphological production under spontaneous pressure highlights the theoretically significant explicit-implicit knowledge distinction: while explicit instruction rapidly constructs declarative metalinguistic knowledge, proceduralization into fluent automatic production demands extensive distributed practice. This pattern suggests that pedagogical interventions resembling those implemented here should be conceptualized as initiating developmental acquisition processes rather than completing them, necessitating ongoing systematic recycling and distributed practice for achieving complete automatization.

Implications for English-Medium Instruction

The study's EMI context adds critical pedagogical specificity to findings, generating concrete implications for curriculum design and teacher professional development. Teacher interview data revealed that temporal expression instruction had previously received minimal systematic attention, remaining either subsumed within general communicative approaches or implicitly assumed to develop spontaneously through mere content exposure. This approach, documented as characteristic of numerous EMI programs globally, systematically leaves students struggling with the precise linguistic demands imposed by academic discourse. Teachers' strong endorsement of explicit systematically scaffolded instruction alongside their documented observations of enhanced student metalinguistic awareness suggest that even content-specialist instructors lacking specialized linguistic training can effectively implement focused language-aware instruction when provided with appropriate pedagogical frameworks and supporting rationales grounded in second language acquisition theory.

However, the documented absence of specialized EMI pedagogy training among participating instructors highlights a critical institutional gap. Virtually no pre-service teacher education programs or systematic in-service professional development initiatives exist addressing language-aware content teaching pedagogy. The demonstration that relatively brief focused interventions yield substantial measurable learning gains underscores the considerable potential value of systematic EMI instructor professional development programs emphasizing language-aware pedagogical approaches, explicit scaffolding techniques for grammatical features, and contrastive linguistic knowledge enabling anticipatory identification of predictable L1 transfer effects.

An integrated syllabus framework for temporal expression instruction within English-medium curricula should incorporate several essential design principles. First, temporal instruction must be explicitly integrated throughout content courses rather

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

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RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
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than relegated to isolated remedial grammar sessions, with competencies systematically aligned with disciplinary discourse requirements. Second, instruction should progress systematically from high-frequency prototypical temporal uses toward marked context-dependent functions, beginning with simple tenses and basic aspectual distinctions before progressively incorporating complex forms. Third, the syllabus must systematically incorporate the three validated intervention types sequentially: initial explicit conceptual scaffolding through timeline mapping, intermediate enhanced input supporting form-meaning association consolidation, and culminating production tasks promoting automatic deployment. Fourth, explicit contrastive linguistic explanation should be strategically deployed, particularly for structures where substantial L1-L2 typological distance predicts systematic transfer errors.

A comprehensive professional development model requires dual-focus addressing both instructors' own metalinguistic knowledge and their pedagogical repertoires. Many language instructors may themselves possess incomplete explicit metalinguistic knowledge regarding aspectual semantics, temporal adverbial co-occurrence restrictions, or systematic differences between simple and perfect forms. Professional development should therefore commence with consciousness-raising activities enhancing instructors' own metalinguistic awareness, including contrastive linguistic analysis comparing temporal systems, explicit instruction in formal linguistic analysis, and opportunities to analyze authentic learner error patterns. Subsequently, programs should provide guided practice in implementing the three validated interventions: constructing and deploying timeline representations, designing effective enhanced input materials, and structuring narrative or discipline-specific tasks eliciting target temporal structures. Critically, professional development must extend beyond decontextualized workshops to encompass sustained classroom-based mentoring, collaborative lesson planning, and systematic reflective practice.

For Central Asian higher education contexts specifically, empirical findings offer evidence directly addressing documented concerns regarding student English proficiency adequacy, instructor pedagogical preparedness, and institutional resource constraints. The substantial learning gains achieved through relatively simple low-technology interventions—timeline representations constructed on paper and whiteboards, enhanced texts utilizing basic typographical highlighting, structured input activities requiring no specialized technological infrastructure—demonstrate compellingly that effective instruction need not depend upon sophisticated educational technology or extensive material resources. This pragmatic consideration assumes substantial importance for second-tier universities operating within resource-constrained contexts.

LIMITATIONS

Several methodological and contextual limitations necessarily temper claims regarding generalizability. First, the quasi-experimental design lacking random

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
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assignment precludes definitive causal inferences, though the substantial observed effect sizes, convergent qualitative evidence, and robust alignment with prior controlled research collectively support strong provisional claims. Second, the eight-week intervention duration, while sufficient for demonstrating significant learning gains, proved insufficient for achieving complete automatization, as qualitative findings revealed. Longitudinal research tracking developmental trajectories across complete academic years would better capture acquisition's extended temporal dynamics. Third, the participant sample comprised exclusively students enrolled within a language-focused faculty, potentially possessing enhanced metalinguistic awareness relative to general EMI populations pursuing content-focused disciplines. Systematic replication with student populations representing diverse disciplinary backgrounds would strengthen generalizability claims. Fourth, post-test measurement occurred immediately following intervention completion, precluding assessment of long-term retention. Delayed post-testing would establish whether documented learning gains persist. Fifth, the investigation examined productive accuracy exclusively through diagnostic testing and structured classroom tasks, not assessing spontaneous production within authentic academic communication contexts. Systematic corpus-based analysis of students' extended academic writing collected both pre-intervention and post-intervention would usefully complement diagnostic test findings. Sixth, while teacher interviews systematically captured instructor perspectives, the investigation did not systematically gather student perspectives through structured interviews, representing a missed methodological opportunity for capturing learner voices regarding subjective intervention experiences and pedagogical preferences.

CONCLUSION

This mixed-methods investigation has demonstrated that explicit systematically scaffolded instruction combining timeline mapping, enhanced input techniques, and narrative sequencing tasks significantly improves Uzbek-speaking learners' temporal expression accuracy and metalinguistic awareness within a focused eight-week intervention period. Substantial effect sizes indicate robust practical significance, with timeline mapping yielding the strongest documented effects. Systematic error patterns reflected predictable L1 transfer arising from Uzbek's agglutinative temporal morphology—particularly progressive overextension, present perfect confusion, and auxiliary verb deployment errors—thereby validating contrastive analysis predictions while underscoring the pedagogical necessity of L1-informed instruction for typologically distant language pairs. Qualitative findings revealed that pedagogical interventions functioned primarily through enhancing metalinguistic awareness, systematically transforming implicit L1-influenced grammatical intuitions into explicit analytical reflection upon temporal form-meaning correspondences.

For English-medium instruction programs situated within Central Asian higher education contexts, empirical findings demonstrate that focused linguistic scaffolding need not require extensive technological resources yet can substantially enhance

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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students' academic language competencies essential for disciplinary discourse participation. Instructors, even lacking specialized EMI pedagogical training, can effectively implement evidence-based interventions when provided with clear theoretical frameworks, practical implementation guidance, and supporting rationales grounded in established second language acquisition principles. The current widespread absence of systematic EMI pedagogy preparation programs represents a critical institutional gap requiring urgent attention, particularly given EMI's continued global expansion.

The proposed integrated syllabus framework provides concrete structural guidance for temporal expression instruction within English-medium curricula, emphasizing systematic integration throughout content courses, progressive sequencing from prototypical to marked uses, strategic deployment of validated intervention types, and explicit contrastive linguistic explanation where substantial typological distance predicts systematic transfer. The professional development model addresses both instructors' own metalinguistic knowledge development and their pedagogical capacity enhancement through consciousness-raising activities, explicit linguistic analysis training, guided implementation practice, and sustained classroom-based mentoring support.

Future research should pursue multiple complementary directions. Longitudinal research tracking temporal expression development across multiple academic years would illuminate developmental sequences and identify critical acquisition junctures. Investigating spontaneous production within authentic academic communication contexts through systematic corpus-based analysis would complement diagnostic test findings. Replicating findings with diverse disciplinary populations beyond language-focused faculties would strengthen generalizability claims while potentially revealing discipline-specific temporal expression requirements. Assessing long-term retention through delayed post-testing would establish whether documented learning gains persist. Investigating comparative effectiveness of alternative intervention sequences would refine pedagogical recommendations. The substantially under-researched Central Asian region warrants sustained scholarly attention, with particular need for constructing comprehensive learner corpora enabling systematic error analysis, conducting multi-site collaborative investigations, and examining language policy implementation effectiveness. Cross-linguistic comparative research examining Uzbek, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Tajik learners would illuminate which difficulties reflect shared Turkic language features versus language-specific idiosyncrasies requiring targeted pedagogical intervention.

Theoretically, future investigations should systematically explore complex interactions between the Aspect Hypothesis's universal constraints and language-specific L1 transfer effects through carefully designed experimental studies. Examining the explicit-implicit knowledge interface longitudinally would help determine optimal proceduralization timelines and identify pedagogical approaches most effectively supporting declarative-to-procedural knowledge transformation.

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
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14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
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Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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Such theoretically motivated research would simultaneously advance fundamental scholarly understanding of temporal acquisition phenomena while generating actionable pedagogical insights benefiting the millions of students worldwide pursuing English-medium tertiary education in contexts where linguistic preparedness remains insufficient and institutional support inadequate.

This investigation's principled mixed-methods approach—achieving systematic integration throughout all research phases—provides a valuable methodological exemplar for future applied linguistics research. The discipline benefits maximally when quantitative measurement of learning outcomes systematically combines with qualitative investigation of pedagogical processes, thereby generating synthesized insights that neither methodological tradition could produce independently. As applied linguistics continues maturing as a scholarly discipline, such methodological sophistication—transcending eclectic data collection to achieve principled epistemic pluralism—becomes increasingly essential for adequately addressing the complex multifaceted phenomena fundamentally characterizing human language learning and pedagogical practice.

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J.D. SALINGER'S CRAFTSMANSHIP AND THE CLOSING PARAGRAPH OF "A PERFECT DAY FOR BANANAFISH"

J.D. SALINGER'IN USTALIĞI VE "MUZBALIĞI İÇİN HARİKA BİR GÜN" ÖYKÜSÜNÜN KAPANIŞ PARAGRAFI

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Abstract

This paper aims to demonstrate that J.D. Salinger's 1948 short story "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" resembles to an iceberg in the way it operates—which is different from the way Hemingway's short fiction operates on his principle of the iceberg. The reader of "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" does not realise its depth of meaning until they reach the clinical closing paragraph of the story where the protagonist Seymour Glass retrieves his pistol, performs a sequence of mechanical gestures, and fires a bullet through his right temple. The final paragraph suddenly turns a small piece of ice floating on water into a startlingly vast body of ice, to follow up on the initial analogy. This paper will perform a close reading on the closing paragraph to show how it functions as a retroactive engine to compel the reader to reread the entire narrative and, through its stylistic restraint, to confer a quasi-sacral reverence upon Seymour and everything he does. The close-reading of the paragraph will attend to its sensory indexes, syntactic parataxis, and procedural diction reveals. The paper will conclude by showing how Salinger engineers an aesthetic of enforced reverence.

Keywords: J.D. Salinger, A Perfect Day for Bananafish, close reading, narrative

Özet

Bu makale, J.D. Salinger'ın 1948 tarihli kısa öyküsü "Muz Balığı İçin Mükemmel Bir Gün"ün, Hemingway'in buzdağı ilkesinden farklı biçimde de olsa, bir buzdağına benzediğini göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. "Muz Balığı İçin Mükemmel Bir Gün"ün okuyucusu, başkahraman Seymour Glass'ın tabancasını çıkarıp bir dizi mekanik hareket gerçekleştirdikten sonra sağ şakağına bir kurşun sıktığı soğuk kapanış paragrafına ulaşana kadar anlamının derinliğini fark etmez. Son paragraf, su üzerinde yüzen küçük bir buz parçasını aniden şaşırtıcı derecede büyük bir buz kütlesine dönüştürüverir. Bu makale, kapanış paragrafı üzerinde yakın okuma yaparak, okuyucuyu tüm anlatıyı yeniden okumaya sevk eden ve üslubuyla Seymour'a ve yaptığı her şeye yarı-kutsal bir saygı duymaya zorlayan bir itici güç olarak nasıl işlev gördüğünü gösterecektir. Paragrafın yakın okunması, duyu indekslerine, sözdizimsel parataksise ve üsluba ilişkin ifadelere dikkat çekecektir.

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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

ELT-ICRAL 2025

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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Makale, Salinger'ın nasıl zorunlu bir saygı estetiği yarattığını göstererek sona erecektir.

Anahtar kelimeler: J.D. Salinger, Muz Balığı İçin Mükemmel Bir Gün, yakın okuma, anlatı

INTRODUCTION

It will not be wrong to say that J.D. Salinger's 1948 short story, "A Perfect Day for Bananafish," is its surprise ending. It is one of the most painful and abrupt and, at the same time, one of the most memorable conclusions of twentieth-century American fiction. After a seemingly odd day at the beach, Seymour Glass returns to his hotel room, where his wife Muriel lies asleep after spending her day in the room with women's magazines, nail polish and telephone chit-chat. From the opening paragraph onwards, the narrative is in the form of a detached account of this day and the reader does not see the couple together, their days are narrated separately in succession. The last paragraph of the story, however, changes this. Seymour comes back into the room and the characters are together in front of the reader's eyes for the first time. Here is how the last paragraph goes:

> He glanced at the girl lying asleep on one of the twin beds. Then he went over to one of the pieces of luggage, opened it, and from under a pile of shorts and undershirts he took out an Ortgies calibre 7.65 automatic. He released the magazine, looked at it, then reinserted it. He cocked the piece. Then he went over and sat down on the unoccupied twin bed, looked at the girl, aimed the pistol, and fired a bullet through *his right temple*. (p. 18; *italics* added)

The closing paragraph does more than simply end the story; it causes it to explode and twists it to a great extent as the reader is now compelled to do an immediate second reading for total re-evaluation of everything else in the story. Hence is the main argument of this paper that the closing paragraph of "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" functions as a retroactive engine, a narrative device that forces a complete re-reading and re-interpretation of the text. Salinger's story operates like an iceberg, though in a manner fundamentally different from Ernest Hemingway's principle of omission. By carefully deploying a stylistic restraint — specifically, a combination of procedural diction, syntactic parataxis, and pointed sensory indexing —, Salinger displaces all moral and psychological commentary that the closing paragraph requires onto the reader. Also, as it will be argued, this forced interpretive labour generates an aesthetic of enforced reverence for Seymour Glass, in such a way to transform him from a troubled and eccentric veteran into a quasi-sacral figure.

DISCUSSION

The force of the ending of "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" can best be understood by contrasting its narrative strategy with that of Ernest Hemingway, whose iceberg theory is the defining modernist literary minimalism. Such a comparison will reveal that while both authors rely on omission, the function of that omission differs radically and leads to distinct modes of reader engagement.

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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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Hemingway articulates his iceberg theory in a much-quoted passage of his *Death in the Afternoon*. He posits that the power of a story derives from the vast, unseen knowledge of the author when he writes that "[t]he dignity of movement of an ice-berg is due to only one-eighth of it being above water" (2012 [1932], ch. 16). For Hemingway, the writer's deep understanding of the characters and their history, even if unstated, provides the narrative with a certain weight and solemnity. In this case, the idea is that the reader does not need to be told everything explicitly; if the writer is writing "truly enough," the reader will have a feeling of the omitted parts "as strongly as though the writer had stated them" (*Ibid.*). Apparently, this technique is predicated on a sustained subtext, and it exists as a submerged constant or an omnipresent pressure that the reader gradually absorbs through the story's minimalist surface. In other words, the meaning is always there, lurking beneath the surface, waiting to be inferred through a process of implication over explanation.

Salinger's "A Perfect Day for Bananafish," however, works this principle differently. For most of its duration, the story's surface is deceptively placid. The narrative is divided into two, as mentioned above, where the first half details Muriel's experience and the second portrays Seymour's disconcerting interactions with a young child, Sybil Carpenter. Neither section, on a first reading, suggests the immense tragic weight that the story carries. There are hints of Seymour's instability — references to his time in an army hospital, his "funny business with the trees," and his pale, antisocial demeanour —, but these are explained away through Muriel's dismissive perspective (p. 8).

Hence, when the story ends as quoted above, Salinger's closing paragraph does not simply reveal what was always submerged; it creates the submerged mass retroactively. Seymour's suicide is a narrative cataclysm that shatters the deceptively placid surface of the story. It reframes the entire preceding text, forcing the reader to understand that what appeared to be a slice-of-life story with satirical undertones was, in fact, the tip of a vast, previously invisible iceberg. The story is not about what is consistently omitted, but about how a single, brutal, and conclusive fact re-defines everything that was stated. The depth of meaning does not gradually emerge; it erupts.

Out of this eruption, Seymour emerges as a saintly figure. The aesthetic of enforced reverence that Salinger cultivates for Seymour is not achieved through overt thematic statements but through the mechanics of his prose in the closing paragraph.

The closing paragraph is made up of a sequence of simple, transitive verbs like *glanced, went, opened, took out, released, looked, reinserted, cocked, went, sat down, looked, aimed, fired* and describes the action as a sober but mechanical process. The narrator deliberately omits adverbs that would have provided emotional or psychological context as in saying Seymour retrieves the gun *sadly, angrily,* or *desperately*. This sort of a procedural diction strips the act of all sentimentality and denies the reader access to Seymour's inner world.

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MOMENTUM GLOBAL
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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This stylistic choice is meant to ensure a glorification of Seymour's act of suicide. While suicide is often framed as a loss of control and meaning, suggested in Muriel's mother's fear that Seymour "may completely lose control of himself" (p. 9), the style of the closing paragraph portrays it as an act of absolute, sober self-possession. In this final scene, Seymour is methodical, precise, and deliberate. This paradox recasts the act of self-annihilation as an exercise of supreme will. He is not a victim of anything who succumbs to a loss of meaning and gives life up, but he is a heroic figure who does what he has to do without fearing for his life; his is a final, solemn rite. This depiction of control is the foundational element in building the quasi-sacral reverence the story demands for Seymour.

The paragraph's syntactical features further contribute to this reading. Salinger employs the technique of syntactic parataxis, which is the placement of statements side-by-side without coordinating or subordinating them among themselves. Sentences in the closing paragraph, as can be seen above, are short, declarative, and linked only by temporal sequence. Parataxis contrasts with another technique, hypotaxis, which establishes logical, causal, or temporal relationships among statements. While a hypotactic rendering might have introduced a motive or explanation for Seymour's act – e.g. *When he smelled the odour of her nail-lacquer remover and calfskin luggage, Seymour took out the pistol in order to shoot himself* –, Salinger's paratactic syntax explicitly refuses such a reading. This deliberate grammatical choice creates a vacuum of causality and morality. The text itself offers no judgment and no reason for Seymour's action. This vacuum forces the reader to supply the missing logic and motive. The reader must bridge the paratactic gaps with their own interpretation, thus performing the interpretive labour of assigning meaning to the inexplicable. The style forces the reader to answer the question that the prose refuses even to ask. This, inevitably, turns the reader against Muriel since she is the only possible culprit in the narrative. The retroactive engine of the closing paragraph compels the reader to re-engage with the text, and ends up transforming what initially appeared to be mundane or quirky details about Muriel into signifiers of an impending tragedy. This forced second reading reconfigures the story's primary elements, sanctifying Seymour's actions and condemning Muriel and her material world.

The story opens with Muriel meticulously lacquering her nails while her mother's urgent call rings unanswered, and her dialogue is coloured with references to consumer goods and fashion. However, her choices and actions in this opening scene are justifiable by the fact that this is a young woman who is on vacation after virtuously waiting for her husband through the war years. As she says, "[she] just *got* [t]here […]. This is the first vacation [she's] had in years" (p. 10). Hence, it might only be expected of her to try and enjoy and treat herself, do things for fun, and take care of her own needs. Yet, coming back to this scene after the blow of the closing paragraph, the reader is basically strong-armed into seeing Muriel, and undeservedly as Carey Wallace hints at in her article (2003, p. 246), as monster and belonging to a world of materialism, superficiality, and spiritual emptiness from which Seymour seeks to escape. All of a sudden, Muriel is defined by a self-absorbed and materialistic

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

worldview. She is preoccupied with her appearance and enjoyment and nothing else. She is forced into becoming a symbol of the social impermeability that has suffocated Seymour. She is now accused of an inability to comprehend Seymour's spiritual and intellectual needs, epitomized by her reaction to the book of Rilke poems he sent her from Germany, even though "[i]t was in German!" (p. 9). Her world is now seen to be a spiritual vacuum. She is not simply an unsympathetic wife who wants to enjoy herself once after years of trouble and self-restriction; in the retroactive reading, she becomes the embodiment of the spiritually dead, post-war American society that offers no refuge for a man like Seymour. It is because the reader is forced to find some meaning in Seymour's final act, it is now read as a gesture of spiritual transcendence that is inescapably grounded in this materialist and superficial society he loathes.

In a similar manner, Seymour's fable of the bananafish gets to be interpreted as Seymour's tragic story. The 'banana hole' becomes the gluttonous materialism of the society around him. Seymour's interaction with Sybil, on the other hand, becomes the only instance of seemingly genuine connection in the story. It stands in stark contrast to the failed communication that defines Seymour's relationship with Muriel, and the fact that the reader is never allowed to see them together is what makes such a reading possible in the first place.

CONCLUSION

"A Perfect Day for Bananafish" stands as J.D. Salinger's masterclass in narrative manipulation. He uses a shocking conclusion not to resolve his story but to activate it. The closing paragraph, functioning as a retroactive engine, forces the reader to discard their initial interpretation and begin the interpretive process anew. As was discussed above, this effect is achieved through a rigorous application of stylistic restraint, use of procedural diction and syntactic parataxis, which, altogether, creates a moral and emotional void of explicit meaning that the reader is compelled to fill. This forced interpretive act, then, guides the reader to blame Muriel while elevating Sybil and Seymour. The ultimate effect is the creation of an aesthetic of enforced reverence. The text's structure and style manipulate the reader into participating in the canonisation of Seymour Glass. The reader is left with little choice but to see Seymour's suicide not as the pathetic collapse of a disturbed man, but as the final, logical, and almost holy act of a seer who could no longer endure a spiritually vacant world. In the end, the power of Salinger's story lies less in the tragedy of a man and more in the power of literary technique to transform an audience by turning the passive reader into an active, and perhaps unwilling, acolyte.

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ANALYSING PHILIP K. DICK'S "SURVEY TEAM" IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIETAL CHALLENGES

PHILIP K. DICK'İN "SURVEY TEAM" ADLI ÖYKÜSÜNÜN GÜNCEL ÇEVRE VE TOPLUM SORUNLARI BAĞLAMINDA BİR ANALİZİ

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Abstract

One of his less anthologised stories, Philip K. Dick's "Survey Team" (1954) presents itself, at first glance, as a run-of-the-mill mid-century Cold War survival fantasy. Yet, its capacity to resonate with the twenty-first century setting and the contemporary the issues that are troubling our contemporary society seems to be beyond doubt. The story is set in a by-now very familiar dystopian future where Earth has become uninhabitable due to nuclear devastation. With the conviction that there is nothing left to be done on Earth or no way to salvage the 'home' planet, humans are prompted to seek refuge somewhere else in the galaxy. After preliminary robotic expeditions to some of the solar planets, they decide to settle on Mars since it is the sole planet with traces of life. However, a closer examination of Mars after the actual landing by humans, the tragic truth is revealed; a truth that carries the story beyond survival fantasy into a critique of anthropocentrism. The denouement of the narrative addresses some of the critical themes that are increasingly relevant in today's discourse on climate change, post and transhumanism, extractivism, and techno-solutionism. Its narrative of ecological collapse resonates with the discourse on Anthropocene, and its potential critique of the notion of techno-solutionism is especially relevant to the discourse on Posthumanism—particularly to transhumanism.

Keywords: Anthropocene, climate change, techno-solutionism, ecological destruction

Özet

Philip K. Dick'in derlemelerde daha az yer bulan hikâyelerinden "Survey Team" (1954), ilk bakışta sıradan bir soğuk-savaş-dönemi hayatta kalma fantezisi gibi

görünüyor. Ancak, yirmi birinci yüzyıl bağlamıyla ve günümüz toplunu rahatsız eden çağdaş sorunlarla çok yakından temas ettiği kesinlikle şüphe götürmüyor. Hikâye, artık çok tanıdık bir kurgu haline gelmiş olan, Dünya'nın nükleer yıkım nedeniyle yaşanılmaz hale geldiği distopik bir gelecekte geçiyor. Dünya'da yapılacak hiçbir şey kalmadığına ve 'ev' gezegeni kurtarmanın artık bir yolu olmadığına inanan insanlar, galaksinin başka bir yerinde sığınak aramaya girişiyorlar. Güneş sistemi içindeki bazı gezegenlere robotlar tarafından yapılan ön incelemelerden sonra, yaşam izlerine sahip tek gezegen olduğu görülen Mars'a yerleşmeye karar veriyorlar. Ancak, insanların Mars'a inip gezegeni daha yakından incelenmesi ile trajik bir gerçek ortaya çıkıyor ve bu gerçek, hikâyeyi hayatta kalma fantezisinin ötesine taşıyarak insanmerkezciliğe yönelik bir eleştiri haline getiriyor. Anlatının bitişi, günümüzün iklim değişikliği, post/transhümanizm, hafriyatçılık ve teknoloji-merkeziyetçilik tartışmalarında giderek daha fazla yer bulan kimi kritik temaları öne çıkarıyor. Hikâyenin ekolojik çöküş anlatısı Antroposen ekseninde gerçekleşen tartışmalarla örtüşürken teknoloji-merkeziyetçiliğe yönelttiği eleştirisi ise özellikle Posthümanizm ve transhümanizm tartışmaları açısından önem arz etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Antroposen, iklim krizi, teknoloji-merkeziyetçilik, ekolojik çöküş

INTRODUCTION

At first glance, Philip K. Dick's 1954 short story "Survey Team" presents itself as a quintessential mid-twentieth-century science fiction narrative with its familiar Cold War anxiety of total annihilation and complementary faith in technology to provide humans with an escape plan. The story opens upon a dystopian future where home Earth has been rendered uninhabitable by a protracted, (likely) nuclear war. The altered landscape of human life on Earth is now one of lead-shielded bunkers below the Earth's surface, where humans are forced to live without ever seeing the sun, and above the surface, it is a disfigured planet of bombs, blast rifles, and constant, ominous flares of an unnamed "Enemy." A soldier in the opening paragraphs of the story, points into the blackness stretching endlessly in front of them and remarks to another soldier named Halloway that "The mountains are over there. See them? The Rockies, and this is Colorado" (p. 367). Halloway belongs to an older generation who have been fighting this war for a very long time and had the privilege of seeing the world before it. Upon this, Halloway reminisces as follows:

> Colorado. . . The old name awakened vague emotion in Halloway. […] Far off, against the horizon, he could see the Enemy's green and yellow signal flares. […] He caught the dead burned smell of the surface of Earth as it was now, thirty years after the war began. It was a lot different from the way he remembered it when he was a kid in California. He could remember the valley country, grape orchards and walnuts and lemons. Smudge pots under the orange trees. Green mountains and sky the color of a woman's eyes. And the fresh smell of the soil . . . That was all gone now. Nothing remained but gray ash pulverized with the white stones of buildings. […] filled now with slag,

121

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dried rivers of rust that had once been buildings. Rubble strewn everywhere, aimlessly . . . (*Ibid.*)

These opening exchanges already points to a deeper layer of meaning that goes beyond the simple anxiety of survival. Halloway's remarks emphasises the loss of something, home, that does not only provide mere sustenance but a sense of being and belonging. It is the most apparent when Halloway describes the colour of the sky in terms of a woman's eyes. Home is something beyond shelter, it is what it means to be human, to relate to other humans, to feel, and to be.

Not soon after this opening, the narrative further emphasises this point by once again bringing up the problem of humanness. The reader learns that the latest data from the research on human communities in the subterranean tunnels shows the "tension index" to be rising to a level of threatening the possibility of communal existence. The narrator concludes that "[m]en weren't made to live in metal tunnels, living on tank-grown food, working and sleeping and dying without seeing the sun" (p. 369). This new landscape threatens their humanness now. They are forced to mutate and evolve into non-humans, which means that the issue at stake is not the survival of individual human beings but the human as a species. In this respect, the narrator continues to add that this was already being observed in the children who have "never been up to the surface. Wan-faced pseudo mutants with eyes like blind fish. A generation born in the subterranean world. The tension index was up because men were seeing their children alter and meld in with a world of tunnels and slimy darkness and dripping luminous rocks" (*Ibid.*). "Survey Team" should be understood in this respect and a reading of this text solely as a survival fantasy overlooks the unsettling contemporary resonances of these concerns.

This paper hence argues that Philip K. Dick's "Survey Team" transcends its historical context to function as a powerful and prescient allegory for the Anthropocene. It dramatizes a destructive cycle fuelled by an anthropocentric (and colonial) extractivist mindset, a misplaced faith in techno-solutionism, thereby condemning its characters—and the species they represent—to repeat a history of planetary destruction. This reveals that the story's true horror, unlike most Cold War narratives, is not the atomic blast but the insidious, self-perpetuating anthropocenric logic of consumption and escape that the blast neither initiates nor concludes.

DISCUSSION

Planetary Scars in the Anthropocene

Decades before the term Anthropocene gained academic and popular currency, Philip K. Dick's narrative intuitively grasps its core tenets. The concept is derived from the Greek *Anthropos* (human) and *cene* (epoch) and signifies that humanity has become a geophysical force on par with larger forces that has longed shaped Earth like volcanoes or meteor strikes (Rafferty, 2025, par. 1). It is a proposed geological epoch which is defined by the moment human activity increases and intensifies to the tragic

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
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"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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extent of becoming a dominant, planet-altering force, that, while leaving a permanent and distinct signature in the geological strata, also pushes the Earth's fundamental biophysical systems to the brinks of destruction (Brauch, 2019, pp. 1-2). Dick's "Survey Team" offers a dramatic literary instantiation of this concept by presenting not one, but two planetary wastelands, each bearing the unmistakable scars of anthropocentric abuse and destruction.

The depiction of Earth in the narrative, as mentioned above, is a dramatic illustration of the latent destructive force of the Anthropocene. The protagonist, Halloway, remembers a vibrant, pre-war California and a time when they "grew [their] food right in the ground, on the surface. In the soil. Not in underground tanks" (p. 368). Halloway's idyllic memory of a nurturing planet home serves as a stark counterpoint to its post-war reality at the present of the narrative. The present Anthropocenic landscape becomes a sensory testament to a world remade by human action. Dick's subtle and careful mention of the fact that humans have crossed the threshold of no-return when another character named Young says "[e]ven if we could work an arrangement with the Enemy there'll be particles in suspension for another fifty years" (p. 369) asserts solidifies this transformation not as a temporary disaster, but as a long-term, systemic change to the planet's condition and the result of a new and hostile geological state.

As mentioned above, the narrative does not only feature Earth as being subject to anthropocentric abuse. It reveals that Mars was subjected to a similar treatment. Upon arriving at Mars, the survey team discovers not a pristine refuge but a chilling echo of the world they left behind. They find the Red Planet to be "[n]othing but [in] ruins," and "one vast scrap-heap" (p. 371). This is not a naturally barren world; it is a planet that has been systematically dismantled and consumed, "used up" by its former inhabitants as another member of the survey team remarks: "They've *used* Mars up. Used up everything. Nothing left. Nothing at all" (*Ibid.*, *italics* original). The landscape is pocked with "big pits. Mining pits" and the rusted remains of "twisted installations, towers and pipes and machinery" (p. 372). This crucial parallel universalises the phenomenon of anthropocentric planetary destruction. It is not a singular human failure on Earth, but a recurring pattern. The crew initially approaches Mars with hope, but their language quickly becomes forensic and judgmental as they survey the wreckage. They label it a "graveyard" and a "junkyard," and Young bitterly remarks of the long-dead Martians, "they got what they deserved" (*Ibid.*).

This scene presents itself as a crime scene at first, where the survey team becomes investigators assessing the crime and passing moral judgment on the presumed culprits. The story's central revelation at the end, however, that the Martians' escape destination was a virgin Earth six hundred thousand years ago forces a horrifying re-evaluation of the judgment. The linear narrative of humanity seeking refuge from its own folly collapses into a circular history of inherited destruction. The survey team members are now no longer investigators but direct descendants of the original perpetrators. This reframes the Anthropocene not as a neutral scientific descriptor

123

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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for a new epoch, but as an anthropocentric human folly and humanity's signature move of a repeating planetary homicide. The story thus posits that the Anthropocene is not a singular event in human history but a behavioural pattern—a pattern of inhabitation that treats planets as disposable resources to be consumed and discarded. Eventually, this elevates the narrative from a simple illustration of Cold War era survival anxieties into a meditation on the destructive potential inherent in a certain model of civilization.

Extractivism and the Endless Frontier

The relentless drive of the human community in Dick's "Survey Team," their desperate search for a new home-planet, rests upon extractivism. Extractivism describes not only an act of resource extraction but a comprehensive development model deeply rooted in Western industrial and colonial history (Klein, 2014, pp. 169-170 & *passim*). It organises entire societies around the logic of depleting one territory to fuel expansion in another. It results in the exploitation of certain territories by imperial power centres, in the creation of social inequality, and in the ultimate commodification of nature. It is by now a historical fact that this model is inherently unsustainable as it leads to the devastation of its very conditions of existence as it is perpetually dependent on finding the next frontier (*Ibid.*).

"Survey Team" presents a tragic allegory of this destructive process by dramatizing the entire lifecycle of an extractivist civilization as a closed-loop. The narrative unfolds in three distinct phases that mirror the historical patterns of colonial expansion and resource plunder. Firstly, it is revealed at the end of the story that Mars was in fact home to the ancestors of the human species of Earth. As was quoted above, the Martians "*used* Mars up" in an extractivist mindset. This was not a society that lived in balance with its home environment; it was one that strip-mined its own home planet to the point of total collapse. Having thus exhausted their home territory, the Martians enacted the next stage of the extractivist imperative: they migrated to a new frontier, and their escape world was a beautiful, virgin Earth, untouched and hence ripe for exploitation. It is hard not to find similarities between the Martian logic and European and later American expansionist agendas that always sought a so-called 'New World,' a territory perceived as empty and available for appropriation (Joy, 2013, p. 83 & *passim*). Secondly, the descendants of the Martian colonists, now known as humans, repeat the exact same pattern of behaviour on their new home planet. Their extractivist agenda culminates in a war over resource control and lead them to engage in a war so destructive that they "[wreck] Earth in thirty years," creating an environment as toxic and uninhabitable as the one their ancestors fled (p. 371). The logic of "accumulation by dispossession," a key feature of extractivism, is hence played out for a second time on a planetary scale.[6] In the third and final phase, the humans—or the descendants of the Martians—are forced to face the consequences of their past crimes when they find Mars to be as uninhabitable as Earth. Yet, this third phase does not conclude with reflection or repentance, but it ends with the survey team actively planning to find another, a *third* world to colonise:

124

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
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'We'll keep on until we find it. [...] A virgin world. A world that's unspoiled.'

'Unspoiled,' Young echoed [Halloway]. 'Nobody there ahead of us.'

'We'll be the first,' Judde muttered avidly.

'It's wrong!' Mason shouted. 'Two are enough! Let's not destroy a third world!' Nobody listened to him. Judde and Young and Halloway gazed up, faces eager, hands clenching and unclenching. As if they were already there. As if they were already holding onto the new world, clutching it with all their strength. Tearing it apart, atom by atom. . .

(p. 377)

Philip K. Dick indicates that the cycle of anthropocentric destruction will continue, it is poised to begin anew, as long as anthropocentrism and extractivism are the guiding models for societies. In this sense, the story's central twist—the revelation that "We're Martians"—serves to shift focus from defining such folly as species related, as in defining it as human nature, and defines it as a self-replicating behavioural pattern: an industrial/colonial extractivism that consumes host planets and moves on. The problem is not a mistake made by one species on one planet, but an inherent, inherited trait. When Halloway laments saying "[we]'ve destroyed two worlds... Not one," the "we" he invokes is now trans-planetary and trans-historical. The story's critique is therefore not aimed at a problem only transhumanism may address—a problem with the human nature that has to be overcome by meliorist and eugenicist enhancements—but a problem posthumanism should address—a mode of being, a way of life that is fundamentally inconsiderate, opportunistic and parasitic.

Techno-solutionism and the Posthuman Condition

Faced with the catastrophic consequences of their own actions, the crew of the survey team demonstrates an unquestioning faith in a purely technological solution: finding and replicating the Martian "outer space drive" (p. 377). Their mindset is a prime example of techno-solutionism. This is an ideology which assumes that complex social, political, and behavioural problems can be resolved with technical fixes (Morozov, 2013, p. 6). Techno-solutionism fundamentally oversimplifies multifaceted issues by ignoring their root causes in favour of quick fixes that often address only the symptoms (Sætra, 2023, p. 268). Critically, techno-solutionism shifts responsibility away from the need for systemic change—such as altering consumption patterns or reforming political structures—and places it squarely on the shoulders of technological innovation. It hence positions people as passive consumers of solutions rather than as active citizens engaged in reform.

The robotic technology that humans rely on and the Martian outer space drive that they find on Mars function as the story's central techno-fixes. From the onset of the story, the reader is made privy to humans' reliance on technology when one of the soldiers mentions that the vehicle they are waiting for is "mechanically controlled all the way, piloted by robot" (p. 367). Later, the reader learns that the Martians relied

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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on a similar automation. The survey team finds out that what made the Martians' escape possible were automated technology like the "automatic sighting station" (p. 375) or the supply ships which "continued to take off, loaded by machines and dispatched by machines, after all the Martians were gone" (*Ibid.*).

The story concludes with the survey team's further reliance on such technology. Upon learning of the Martian migration, the crew's immediate and only response is to find a better machine. Young's excitement is noticeable when he says "[t]hey found a place to go... And they developed some kind of outer-space drive to get them there" (p. 377). This moment is devoid of any discussion about changing the way they think of themselves and their survival or fundamentally altering their relationship with nature. When the problem is narrowly defined as 'being stuck' in a single place, hence the solution becomes a faster ship to somewhere else. This mindset illustrates the techno-solutionist tendency to reframe systemic failures as mere engineering challenges, thereby avoiding any difficult self-examination.

Such reliance on technology also directly addresses transhumanist and posthumanist discussions that will find academic interest decades after the publication of Dick's story. The humans' desire to escape the limitations of a dying planet via advanced technology is a quintessential transhumanist impulse in that it dreams of using science and technology for a planned evolution to transgress the human limitations and enhance the human condition (Ferrando, 2013, p. 27). However, it must be noted that the narrative simultaneously presents a darker and more critical vision of transhumanist evolution. A new generation of children, described as "wan-faced pseudo mutants with eyes like blind fish" (p. 369), become a chilling depiction of humanity adapting to a self-made toxic environment. They are *trans*human, but not in the aspirational, technologically enhanced way often imagined in transhumanist fantasy. They are a product of devolution, a grim consequence of the man-made techno-solutions to fundamental and systemic problems that should have been addressed more critically. In this, Dick's story points towards the necessity of finding a solution that is not transgressive in the transhumanist sense but transcendental in a posthumanist sense. Embracing posthumanism would have alerted humans to the dangers of anthropocentrism and would have guided them towards a more inclusive, sensitive and ethically aware mode of organising their life and their relationships not only with fellow human beings but also with their home planet.

Ultimately, the story reveals that techno-solutionism is not only a flawed response to the consequences of an anthropocentric and extractivist social organisation, but it is the very tool that guarantees its continuation. The two ideologies form a self-perpetuating, destructive loop: An extractivist society, by its very nature, will eventually exhaust its environment while a techno-solutionist mindset, when faced with such crisis, will seek a technological means of *escape* from its consequences rather than confront its faulty logic and question and reform the underlying system. As Mason says, it is "[a] closed circle […] [They]'re back where [they] started. Back to reap the crop [their] ancestors sowed" (p. 376).

ULEAD 2025
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ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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CONCLUSION

This paper sought to demonstrate that Philip K. Dick's "Survey Team" is far more than a Cold War era survival fantasy. It is a chillingly relevant allegory for the ecological and societal crises of the twenty-first century. The story's narrative of planetary ruin serves as a dramatic illustration of the Anthropocene. The devastation is driven by an industrial/colonial extractivist logic that views nature as a disposable commodity in an endless quest for new frontiers, and this destructive cycle is perpetuated by a naive and dangerous faith in techno-solutionism—the belief that any systemic failure can be overcome with a better machine. All is captured by Halloway's haunting metaphor. Gazing out at the barren plains of Mars, he remarks that it reminds him of "[a] picnic site. [...] Broken bottles and tin cans and wadded up plates. After the picnickers have left" (p. 376). The tragic twist to this is that "[o]nly, the picnickers are back. They're back—and they have to live in the mess they made" (*Ibid.*). This metaphor perfectly encapsulates the closed circle, which will not be broken even with this realisation since the crew already begins planning their next excursion at the end. In "Survey Team," the ultimate warning is not about nuclear bombs or faster-than-light spaceships, but about the inability to learn from history, even when that history is written in the ashes of two separate worlds.

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LANGUAGE TEACHER IMMUNITY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: INSIGHTS FROM ENGLISH TEACHERS

İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENİ BAĞIŞIKLIĞI VE MESLEKİ GELİŞİM: İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN GÖRÜŞLERİ

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Abstract

This study investigates the factors that contribute to language teachers developing either productive or maladaptive immunity throughout their careers. Using qualitative data collected from English language teachers, the study examines their professional experiences, perceptions of self, teaching practices, motivation, and career satisfaction. The findings reveal that teachers' professional development is shaped by both internal factors, such as resilience, and reflective practices, and external factors, including administrative support, parental involvement, and access to professional training. Productive teacher immunity emerged as a key factor in enabling teachers to adapt to challenges, integrate technology, apply innovative teaching methods, and maintain motivation and professional commitment. Conversely, maladaptive immunity was associated with burnout, low motivation, and limited professional growth. The study highlights the importance of pre-service and in-service teacher education programs in fostering teacher resilience, motivation, and effective teaching strategies. Implications suggest that teachers, teacher educators, and policymakers should focus on creating supportive, reflective, and adaptive professional environments to enhance teachers' long-term effectiveness. Limitations of the study include the small sample size, reliance on self-reported data, and context-specific findings, which may limit generalizability. Future research could adopt longitudinal designs, larger and more diverse samples, and examine teacher immunity across various educational contexts.

Keywords: English teacher immunity, professional development, motivation, English language teaching, teacher resilience

Özet

Bu çalışma, dil öğretmenlerinin kariyerleri boyunca üretken veya uyumsuz bağışıklık geliştirmelerine katkıda bulunan faktörleri incelemektedir. Türkiye'deki İngilizce öğretmenlerinden toplanan nitel veriler kullanılarak, öğretmenlerin mesleki deneyimleri, benlik algıları, öğretim uygulamaları, motivasyonları ve meslek tatminleri incelenmiştir. Bulgular, öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişiminin; dayanıklılık ve yansıtıcı uygulamalar gibi içsel faktörler ile yönetsel destek, veli katılımı ve mesleki eğitim olanakları gibi dışsal faktörler tarafından şekillendirildiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Üretken öğretmen bağışıklığı, öğretmenlerin zorluklara uyum sağlamasını, teknolojiyi entegre etmesini, yenilikçi öğretim yöntemlerini uygulamasını ve motivasyon ile mesleki bağlılıklarını sürdürmesini sağlayan önemli

bir faktör olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Buna karşılık, uyumsuz bağışıklık tükenmişlik, düşük motivasyon ve sınırlı mesleki gelişim ile ilişkilidir. Çalışma, öğretmen adayları ve hizmet içi öğretmen eğitim programlarının öğretmen dayanıklılığı, motivasyonu ve etkili öğretim stratejilerini geliştirmede önemini vurgulamaktadır. Çıkarımlar, öğretmenlerin, öğretmen eğitimcilerinin ve politika yapıcıların, öğretmenlerin uzun vadeli etkinliğini artırmak için destekleyici, yansıtıcı ve uyumlu mesleki ortamlar oluşturması gerektiğini göstermektedir. Çalışmanın sınırlılıkları arasında küçük örneklem boyutu, öz-bildirim verilerine dayanması ve bağlama özgü bulgular yer almakta olup, genelleştirilebilirliği sınırlayabilir. Gelecek araştırmalarda, daha uzun süreli araştırma tasarımları kullanabilir, daha büyük ve çeşitli örneklemlerle çalışabilir ve farklı eğitim bağlamlarında öğretmen bağışıklığını inceleyebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İngilizce öğretmeni bağışıklığı, mesleki gelişim, motivasyon, İngilizce öğretimi, öğretmen dayanıklılığı

INTRODUCTION

Effective English language teaching is closely linked to language teachers' professional development. Research shows that teachers' motivation is closely related to job satisfaction, commitment, enthusiasm, as well as the challenges, burnout, and setbacks they face throughout their careers (Bandura, 1994; Sancar et al. 2021; Wang et al., 2017). Personal factors, school structure, and culture expectation and responsibilities can further hinder teachers' professional success (Kanpol, 2007; Zukas, 2011). Research over the past three decades indicates that teachers face numerous challenges and complex situations early in their careers while navigating stressful and demanding environments which influences their feelings, motivation, and actions (Brouwers, & Tomic, 2000; Fink, 2010 ; Sadeghi & Richards, 2021). These challenges may related with lack of professional knowledge, motivational issues, management problems, or aspects of school culture and structure (Andrews et all., 2007 ; Quinn & Andrews, 2004). Although student profiles have evolved, many teachers have not adapted their professional practices, competences and pedagogies insufficient to meet students' needs (Bezzina, 2006). On the other hand, many studies demonstrated that certain beneficial activities and methods that improve teacher motivation and self-confidence that contribute to successful outcomes with students (McLaughlin, 2015; Bergman & Morphew, 2015). A relatively new concept, Language Teacher Immunity (LTI), has emerged as a significant dimension of teacher motivation and identity. LTI plays a crucial role for sifting positive changes in teachers' professional practices, bridging individual concerns with broader contextual considerations. This positive adaptive mechanism can be particularly helpful for enthusiastic and committed teachers, as it promotes effective outcomes in classrooms (Hiver & Dörnyei, 2015; Namaziandost & Heydarnejad, 2023; Sun et al., 2025). Language teachers also face challenging work environments, including large class sizes, pressure from authorities and parents, and diverse learner needs and innovative ideas are discouraged (Kelchtermans, 2011; Olsen & Sexton, 2009). Over time, these difficulties can lead teachers to develop either productive or maladaptive immunity. Maladaptive immunity is associated with emotional well-being, burnout, low motivation, and resilience, stressfull teacing environments all of which hinder

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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professional development (Sheikhi & Alavinia 2024; Johnson et al, 2014). In contrast, productive immunity is a key factor in promoting effective teaching practices and professional growth (Namaziandost et al., 2024; Hiver & Dörnyei, 2015 ; Moon, 2013 ; Namaziandost & Heydarnejad 2023). In these conditions, this study aims to explore the factors that contribute to language teachers developing either productive or maladaptive immunity over the years. To achieve this aim, qualitative data were collected from language teachers to examine their experiences throughout their careers and to identify strategies that foster productive immunity over time. In line with these objectives, the study seeks to answer the following research question:

To what extent does language teacher immunity influence professional development within a changing educational context?

METHOD

The study was conducted in a secondary school which host immigrants with different backgrounds primarily from Syria which makes teaching profession even more challenging. Under these circumstances, the correlation between teacher immunity, productive or maladaptive immunity can be analysed more accurately and in much detail. For this quantitative study, six secondary high school teachers were identified by the researcher by convenience sampling method. Their experiences were ranging from fifteen to 29 years. The sample varied in years of teaching experience, ranging from 16 to 37 years. The participants could be grouped into mid-career teachers (n = 3), with 16 to 20 years of experience, and later-career teachers (n = 3), with 17 to 37 years of experience. This distribution indicates that all participants had extensive professional experience, allowing for rich insights into their long-term perspectives on teaching and professional development. The reason why convenience sampling method was applied was that the researcher wanted to access participants within ease of reach without much effort and expenditure. After the participant teachers were selected, necessary permissions were taken from principals of these schools to interview the teachers. The participants were visited at their schools by the researcher. A brief introduction to the study was given to all participants and provided answers to their queries. They were told that they were free to withdraw if they did not want to participate. The participants agreed to take part voluntarily. With the questions, the researcher aimed to inquiry teachers' personal and professional backgrounds. It also aimed to determine their international experience, former and ongoing professional development activities, their ideal-self, ought-self and feared self, their immunity over the years whether productive or maladaptive, their career plans, their jobs' positive qualities and advantages, their conceptive on fossilization on their career and their motivation level and the reasons for the change of motivations.

Data Collection and Analysis

The participant teacher's weekly schedules were reviewed and most convenient times for the interviews were determined accordingly. Prior to the interviews, all participants were informed that their identities and details such as school name

131

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
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would remain confidential. The researcher proposed to record participant's voices during the interviews; however, all participants declined. All the interviews were conducted in in school meeting room individually with the researcher and each interview lasted approximately one and half an hours. The interviews process completed over four days in total, during which the researcher visited the school four times. Since the participants refused audio recording, their responses were transcribed by the researcher during the interviews.

To ensure the fluency and accuracy of the transcriptions, all texts were later proofread by a colleague of the researcher. The texts were then coded, and a content analysis was carried out. The researcher and her colleague met a few times to discuss the initial codes, revising them as necessary by adding new ones or removing some existing ones.

The data collected from all interview questions presented systematically. Items containing quantitative information were presented in tables, and questions concerning participants' professional development, immunity, and professional perceptions were coded.

Data Collection Tool

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews designed to explore teachers' professional development, self-perception, motivation, and immunity. The interview questions focused on several key areas such as changes in the profession over time, teachers' views of their ideal, ought, and feared selves, the development of teacher immunity as either productive or maladaptive, thoughts on career change, perceived advantages and disadvantages of teaching. Additional questions were included to explore teachers' motivation levels change, in which situations it decreases, and what factors could increase it. The semi-structured format allowed participants to express their experiences freely while keeping the focus on the main research themes.

FINDINGS

In this section, the findings of the study are presented. First, background information about the participants, including their international experience, teaching experience, and professional training, is provided based on data obtained from the semi structured interview questions. Next, the seven interview questions, along with the corresponding themes and codes, are presented and supported by direct quotations from the participants. A summary of these findings is provided in Tables.

Professional Background and Training

All participants held a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Language Teaching. Participant one reported participating in Erasmus+ and Comenius projects, as well as in-service training abroad. Participants two and four each traveled abroad once as participant of an Erasmus+ project, while Participant six went abroad once for holiday. The other participants did not have any international experience. Throughout their teaching careers, participants attended various national and international professional development seminars. The data indicated that most

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

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participants actively sought opportunities to enhance their professional knowledge and teaching skills, with some engaging in international programs and others participating in nationally organized training. Four participants attended two training programs, while two participants attended three. Participant one emphasized that she benefited greatly from the training sessions she attended in the United Kingdom. In contrast, Participant two reported that the seminars she attended were not particularly useful, as the content was limited and she did not gain much. Participant six, on the other hand, noted that the seminars she participated in were generally engaging and informative.

Changes in the Profession over the Years

The first interview question aimed to explore how language teachers perceive changes in their profession over time. Participants highlighted improvements in classroom management, adaptation to student needs, teaching strategies, and challenges related to the educational system. Table one summarizes these themes along with corresponding codes and illustrative quotations.

Table 1.

Participants' Perceptions of Changes in the Profession

Theme	Code	Participant Quote
Improvement in classroom management and teaching skills	Experience-based development	P1: *"As I gained experience, my classroom management improved. With the development of technology, I had the opportunity to learn different techniques and methods."*
Shift from strict/idealist to student-centred approach	Empathy and acceptance	P2: *"At the beginning years of my profession, I was more idealists, strict and I tried to change my students, but now I accept them with their positive and negative sides... Positive attitude towards learning language is important, not forcing them."*
Adapting teaching strategies to student needs	Personalization & reflective practice	P3: *"I synthesize my knowledge according to the needs of today and convey it to my students. I have become integrated with my profession, and this positive development has been reflected in my success."*
Professional development through practice and training	Continuous learning	P4: *"Since I developed my teaching skills through practice, experience, and training I have attended, it has made a positive contribution to my teaching career. I continue with the patience to become a more original, more confident, and more effective teacher."*

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
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Theme	Code	Participant Quote
Promoting student interaction and engagement	Interactive teaching	P5: *"In the early years of my career, I used to lecture constantly… Now, I give students more opportunities to speak. I encourage them to talk and communicate with each other."*
Systemic and contextual challenges	Education system limitations	P6: *"The education system has changed a lot… The system is student-centred, but it is a question whether right or wrong. In Turkey, students cannot speak English; they can write and read English."*

Overall, the data indicate that teachers gradually become more reflective, adaptive, and student-oriented, developing strategies to manage classrooms effectively while responding to students' needs.

Ideal-Self, Ought-Self, and Feared-Self

The second interview question investigated how teachers perceive their ideal-self, ought-self, and feared-self in their professional lives. Eight categories emerged from the analysis, as summarized in Table two.

Table 2.

Participants' Perceptions of Ideal-Self, Ought-Self, and Feared-Self

Theme	Code	Participant Quote
Striving for Professional competence	Ideal-self: Professional growth	P1: *"I would like to be a successful teacher. In particular, I want to reduce any shortcomings I may have in speaking a foreign language."*
Desire for effective teaching and student success	Student achievement	P2: *"As an English teacher, I want to teach them to speak English fluently… I try to conduct the lessons in ways that help them understand better. When students like their teacher, we can also observe a positive change in their attitudes toward the lesson."*
Use of technology and adaptive teaching	Teaching innovation	P3: *"By means of technology, I try to present activities that capture their interest. I try to deliver the lesson to my students as effectively as possible within the existing conditions."*
Challenges due to systemic and	Reduced effectiveness	P4: *"Due to administrative pressure, we have gradually had to set aside our idealism and unfortunately continue teaching while losing"*

134

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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Theme	Code	Participant Quote
administrative factors		*more of our effectiveness and competence with each new academic year."*
High expectations for students	Raising high-quality learners	P5: *"My goal is to raise high-quality students and help them love English. I want them, as future engineers and doctors, to have a strong command of English."*
Fear of lack of recognition and support	Unappreciated effort	P5: *"I'm afraid that my efforts and the knowledge I provide will not be appreciated or rewarded… I want all students who receive English education to be able to speak English fluently."*
Commitment to professional ethics	Integrity and responsibility	P6: *"My ideal is to work as a teacher until I am retired honestly… Teachers have huge responsibilities such as they are mothers, they are teachers, they are counseling services, and they are guards at school."*

The findings reveal that teachers' perceptions of their ideal and feared selves shape their professional motivations and approaches to teaching, highlighting the interplay between personal aspirations and systemic challenges.

Development of Teacher Immunity

The third interview question explored whether and how teachers have developed teacher immunity over the years. Four main themes were identified, as summarized in Table three.

Table 3.

Participants' Development of Teacher Immunity

Theme	Code	Participant Quote
Coping with classroom challenges	Problem-solving strategies	P1: *"In my early years, I faced difficult situations as a novice teacher. Later, I found solutions to these problems… I developed techniques to re-engage students who lost interest during the lesson and learned ways to have better control over the classroom."*
Continuous professional learning	Knowledge-based immunity	P2: *"Of course I developed teacher immunity over the years. I read many books about adolescence and when I have a problem with a student I try to solve it according to the information I learned from their*

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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Theme	Code	Participant Quote
		books. In addition, I am still learning new techniques about teaching foreign language."
Professional maturity and adaptation	Experience-driven growth	P3: "Over the years, by addressing different classes and student groups, I have gained professional maturity... I have observed that teaching in line with students' needs and the requirements of modern times has become increasingly effective."
Resilience and creativity	Positive coping and motivation	P4: "I have never given up and have continued in this career with determination. By standing firm and working together with my colleagues, we have tried to change and transform things as much as possible... yet the mobbing practices in the system have discouraged many colleagues." P5: "The challenges I faced made me more creative. I approached difficulties with a positive attitude... I started to approach situations more psychologically, and what I enjoy most is encouraging and motivating my students."

The findings suggest that teacher immunity develops through experience, reflection, and resilience, enabling teachers to cope with professional challenges, adapt their teaching strategies, and maintain motivation despite systemic pressures.

Career Choice and Professional Commitment

The fourth interview question explored whether teachers would consider changing their profession and if they would choose this job again. Participants' responses reveal mixed perspectives on career satisfaction and professional commitment, summarized in table four.

Table 4.

Participants' Career Choice and Commitment

Theme	Code	Participant Quote
Teaching profession	Commitment to teaching	P2: "No, I don't want to change my job. Teaching new things to a child is very important for me, so I definitely consider this job again."
Desire for better conditions	Career shift intention	P3: "Yes, I would like to make a change. I would prefer to teach in Anatolian high schools or university preparatory classes... I believe these

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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Theme	Code	Participant Quote
		settings would provide me with greater professional satisfaction."
Love for teaching despite challenges	Passion and resilience	P1: *"At first, I was thinking about changing my profession, but now that thought has faded."* P4: *"Although I love my profession, I sometimes think about pursuing different careers due to negative circumstances. However, since I truly love my job, I choose to continue."*
Retirement or special personal circumstances	External constraints	P6: *"No, I would not change because after three–five years I am going to be retired... I would not consider this job because of my special conditions."*

Advantages and Challenges of the Teaching Profession

The fifth interview question focused on the advantages and positive qualities of the teaching profession, as well as its challenges. Key themes are summarized in Table five.

Table 5.

Advantages and Challenges in the Teaching Profession

Theme	Code	Participant Quote
Personal impact on students	Rewarding aspects	P2: *"Spending time with a child is very enjoyable... If you give them a good shape, they become good people in the future."* P4: *"The most beautiful aspect of my profession is the children who depend on you completely... contributing to their development is the most rewarding thing."*
Work-life balance	Flexible working hours	P3: *"Working hours are suitable for maintaining family life... summer vacation positively affects our family life."*
Professional disadvantages and systemic limitations	Challenges	P1: *"Teachers in Türkiye face many professional disadvantages... parents are not sufficiently aware of their role in education, which makes teachers more exhausted."* P5: *"There aren't many advantages — you're always the one working, always the one talking."*

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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Theme	Code	Participant Quote
		P6: *"The community of teachers is simple-minded… lack of respect among colleagues and procedural issues."*

Fossilization in the Teaching Career

The sixth interview question investigated teachers' perceptions of fossilization, referring to stagnation in professional development. Five categories were identified and summarized in Table six.

Table 6.

Teachers' Views on Fossilization

Theme	Code	Participant Quote
Need for continuous professional development	Adaptation and updating	P1: *"Teachers' failure to develop new methods and techniques causes them to fall behind the times."* P2: *"If you don't develop yourself you won't be a successful teacher… you and your students get bored."*
Resistance to innovation	Lack of openness	P3: *"Some teachers are not open to professional development, do not renew themselves academically, and refuse to use technology… they do not address students' problems efficiently."*
Systemic and material limitations	Resource constraints	P5: *"We try to improve ourselves on our own, but the state should provide opportunities for training abroad… otherwise textbooks make us outdated."*
Gap with international standards	Comparison with other systems	P4: *"We need to raise our standards to the level of European systems… many shortcomings in implementation have caused us to fall behind."*
Age-related stagnation	Teacher aging	P6: *"Teachers around the age of 60–65 are not used to new technology and methods."*

Teacher Motivation

The seventh interview question focused on factors affecting teachers' motivation. Seven categories were identified and summarized in Table seven.

Table 7.

Theme	Code	Participant Quote
Lack of teaching materials	Resource constraints	P1: *"The lack of adequate teaching materials lowers my motivation... Some schools have photocopying facilities, others do not."*
Student effort and respect	Student-related motivation	P2: *"If my students work hard, do their homework regularly, and respect me, my motivation will be higher."*
Respect and recognition	Professional esteem	P4: *"The most important element is respect. Restoring our respect increases our motivation."* P6: *"Lack of appreciation, gossip, and favouritism lower my motivation; verbal appreciation and recognition increase it."*
Administrative issues	Institutional impact	P5: *"Favouritism by the administration and being misunderstood lower my motivation."*

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reveal that language teacher immunity plays a significant role in shaping professional development, motivation, and career satisfaction. Teachers' experiences over the years indicate that challenges such as large class sizes, curriculum constraints, parental expectations, and administrative pressures can impact both their psychological well-being and teaching practices. While some teachers developed productive immunity, enabling them to adapt, innovate, and maintain motivation, others displayed signs of maladaptive immunity, such as burnout, low motivation, and reduced resilience.

The results highlight that teacher self-efficacy, reflective practices, and adaptive strategies are closely linked to immunity development. Teachers who actively sought professional development opportunities, engaged with technology, and applied varied teaching techniques reported higher levels of confidence, classroom effectiveness, and student engagement. Conversely, teachers with limited access to resources or who faced systemic constraints struggled to maintain professional growth and motivation. These findings align with previous research emphasizing the importance of self-efficacy, continuous learning, and adaptive coping strategies in sustaining teacher effectiveness (Bandura, 1994; Hiver & Dörnyei, 2015; Wang et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the study demonstrates that professional identity, perceived recognition, and career satisfaction are intertwined with teachers' immunity. Those who maintained positive professional identities and were able to reconcile their ideal, ought, and feared selves reported stronger commitment and engagement, while those facing systemic and contextual challenges experienced professional dissatisfaction.

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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

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"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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This study concludes that language teacher immunity is a crucial factor influencing professional development and teaching effectiveness. Productive immunity allows teachers to adapt to changing educational contexts, remain motivated, and employ innovative teaching strategies, whereas maladaptive immunity may hinder professional growth and contribute to burnout. Professional development, both pre-service and in-service, plays a central role in fostering productive immunity and sustaining teachers' motivation and commitment.

The study has some limitations, including a small sample size, reliance on self-reported data, context-specific findings limited to English teachers in Turkey, and a cross-sectional design that captures experiences at a single point in time rather than over time.

Implications for practice include encouraging teachers to develop reflective and adaptive strategies, designing in-service training programs that provide practical classroom management and teaching techniques, and preparing pre-service teachers for real classroom challenges while introducing the concept of teacher immunity

Future research could examine teacher immunity across diverse educational contexts, conduct longitudinal studies to determine its development over time, use larger samples to allow generalization, and explore the role of school leadership and policies in supporting teacher resilience and professional growth.

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THE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENJOYMENT AND SELF-EFFICACY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF 2ND- AND 4TH-YEAR ELT STUDENTS

SAMET TAŞÇI

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Abstract

The present study investigates the interrelationship between Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) and foreign language self-efficacy among undergraduate students enrolled in an English Language Teaching (ELT) program. The purpose of the study is twofold: first, to examine the extent to which enjoyment and self-efficacy are related in the context of foreign language learning; and second, to compare the levels of these constructs between second-year and fourth-year students. Understanding these dynamics is important for identifying factors that foster positive emotions and strong competence beliefs in prospective English teachers. The participants consisted of 69 ELT undergraduates at a public university in Türkiye, including 36 second-year and 33 fourth-year students. Data were collected using two standardized self-report instruments. The Foreign Language Self-Efficacy Scale (FLSES) includes nine items measuring learners' perceived ability across the four language skills, while the Short Form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (S-FLES) comprises nine items divided into three sub-dimensions: teacher appreciation, personal enjoyment, and social enjoyment. Both instruments employ a five-point Likert response format. Descriptive statistics were calculated to provide an overview of the participants' responses. Correlation analyses were conducted to investigate the link between enjoyment and self-efficacy, independent-samples t-tests were used to compare second- and fourth-year students, and regression analyses were employed to explore the predictive role of enjoyment on self-efficacy. The findings revealed a moderate, positive correlation between FLE and self-efficacy, indicating that students who enjoy language learning tend to hold stronger beliefs about their own capabilities. Furthermore, fourth-year students reported higher levels of both enjoyment and self-efficacy compared to their second-year peers, though the differences were modest in size. Regression results confirmed that enjoyment was a significant predictor of self-efficacy across the sample. In conclusion, the study underscores the close link between enjoyment and efficacy beliefs in language learning and emphasizes the importance of fostering positive emotions and competence beliefs in ELT programs, particularly during the early years of study.

Keywords: Foreign language enjoyment, self-efficacy, ELT students, teacher education.

Özet

Bu çalışma, İngilizce Öğretmenliği programına kayıtlı lisans öğrencileri arasında yabancı dil öğrenme keyfi (Foreign Language Enjoyment) ile öz-yeterlik arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Çalışmanın amacı iki yönlüdür: Birincisi, yabancı dil öğrenme

bağlamında keyif ve öz-yeterlik arasındaki ilişkinin düzeyini belirlemek; ikincisi ise bu değişkenlerin düzeylerini ikinci ve dördüncü sınıf öğrencileri arasında karşılaştırmaktır. Bu dinamiklerin anlaşılması, geleceğin İngilizce öğretmenlerinde olumlu duyguların ve güçlü yeterlik inançlarının gelişmesini destekleyen etmenleri belirlemek açısından önem taşımaktadır. Katılımcılar, Türkiye'deki bir devlet üniversitesinin İngilizce Öğretmenliği programında öğrenim gören 69 lisans öğrencisinden oluşmaktadır; bunların 36'sı ikinci sınıf, 33'ü ise dördüncü sınıf öğrencisidir. Veriler, iki standart öz-bildirim ölçeği aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Yabancı Dil Öz-Yeterlik Ölçeği (Foreign Language Self-Efficacy Scale, FLSES), öğrencilerin dört temel dil becerisine ilişkin algılanan yeterliklerini ölçen dokuz maddeden; Yabancı Dil Öğrenme Keyfi Ölçeği Kısa Formu (Short Form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale, S-FLES) ise öğretmene yönelik takdir, kişisel keyif ve sosyal keyif olmak üzere üç alt boyuta ayrılmış dokuz maddeden oluşmaktadır. Her iki ölçek de beşli Likert tipi derecelendirme kullanmaktadır. Katılımcıların yanıtlarını özetlemek için betimsel istatistikler hesaplanmış, keyif ve öz-yeterlik arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemek için korelasyon analizleri yapılmış, ikinci ve dördüncü sınıf öğrencileri karşılaştırmak amacıyla bağımsız örneklemler t-testi uygulanmış ve öz-yeterlik üzerindeki yordayıcı etkileri belirlemek için regresyon analizlerinden yararlanılmıştır. Bulgular, keyif ve öz-yeterlik arasında orta düzeyde ve pozitif bir ilişki olduğunu göstermiştir. Buna göre, yabancı dil öğreniminden daha fazla keyif alan öğrenciler, kendi yeterliklerine ilişkin daha güçlü inançlara sahiptir. Ayrıca, dördüncü sınıf öğrencilerinin hem keyif hem de öz-yeterlik düzeyleri ikinci sınıf öğrencilerinden daha yüksek bulunmuştur; ancak bu farklar sınırlı düzeydedir. Regresyon sonuçları, keyfin öz-yeterliğin anlamlı bir yordayıcısı olduğunu doğrulamıştır. Sonuç olarak, çalışma yabancı dil öğreniminde keyif ile yeterlik inançları arasındaki yakın ilişkiyi vurgulamakta ve özellikle öğretmen eğitiminin ilk yıllarında, ELT programlarında olumlu duyguların ve yeterlik inançlarının geliştirilmesinin önemini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yabancı dil öğrenme keyfi, öz-yeterlik, İngilizce öğretmenliği öğrencileri, öğretmen eğitimi

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the emergence of Positive Psychology (PP) has redefined research in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), moving from a deficit-focused view—dominated by constructs like anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986)—toward the exploration of positive emotions and learner strengths (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Oxford, 2016b). PP emphasizes human flourishing (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) and underscores the role of emotions, motivation, and self-related constructs in language learning success. Within this framework, the EMPATHICS model (Oxford, 2016a) integrates affective, motivational, and self-related factors such as self-efficacy, showing how these dimensions interact to sustain engagement and resilience.

Among the affective variables inspired by PP, Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) has gained substantial attention as a core determinant of learners' emotional engagement and persistence. FLE reflects learners' positive experiences derived from supportive teacher behavior, personal progress, and a collaborative classroom atmosphere (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Botes et al., 2021). Empirical findings indicate that FLE enhances motivation, willingness to communicate, and academic performance

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(Dewaele et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2024). For instance, Li (2025) showed that teacher enthusiasm increases students' enjoyment, while Guo and Qiu (2022) demonstrated that teacher immediacy—through both verbal and nonverbal communication—boosts confidence and satisfaction. Similarly, peer collaboration and social belonging strengthen the social dimension of enjoyment, resulting in higher participation and performance (Al-Dosari et al., 2022).

In parallel, self-efficacy, derived from Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory, represents learners' beliefs in their capabilities to accomplish language-related tasks. Research consistently shows that high self-efficacy predicts greater effort, persistence, and strategic behavior (Kim & Cha, 2017; Zheng et al., 2017). Within teacher education, strong self-efficacy is essential for academic success and professional readiness (Genç et al., 2016; Şener & Erol, 2017). Importantly, recent studies highlight the interplay between enjoyment and self-efficacy: Yang and Lian (2023) found that self-efficacy and positive affect jointly influence learners' willingness to communicate and pragmatic performance.

The Control-Value Theory (Pekrun, 2006) provides a theoretical lens to interpret this interplay, suggesting that learners' emotions are shaped by perceived control and task value. Positive emotions such as enjoyment can enhance cognitive engagement and foster self-efficacy, forming reciprocal feedback loops of persistence and achievement (Zou et al., 2025). Studies confirm that students who enjoy language learning report greater engagement and attain higher proficiency (Oyama, 2022; Zhao & Wang, 2025). Conversely, learners with higher self-efficacy derive more satisfaction from challenging tasks, amplifying enjoyment.

Despite this emerging body of research, the mutual relationship between FLE and self-efficacy remains underexplored, particularly within EFL teacher education programs in non-Anglophone contexts like Türkiye. Moreover, developmental comparisons across academic years are rare. As students advance through their programs, they may gain more linguistic competence, classroom exposure, and teaching experience, potentially enhancing both enjoyment and efficacy (Ishida et al., 2024; Wu, 2024). Examining differences between second- and fourth-year ELT students therefore provides insight into how these constructs evolve across the teacher-training trajectory.

In light of these gaps, this study aims to (1) explore the relationship between foreign language enjoyment and self-efficacy among Turkish ELT undergraduates and (2) compare these variables across academic levels. By addressing these aims, the study contributes to the growing body of Positive Psychology-informed SLA research, offering implications for teacher educators seeking to design affectively supportive and confidence-building learning environments.

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METHOD

Research Model

This study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional correlational design to examine the relationship between Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) and Foreign Language Self-Efficacy (FLSE) among undergraduate students in an English Language Teaching (ELT) program in Türkiye. The model also tested whether FLE predicts FLSE and whether these constructs differ across academic years. The design was informed by Positive Psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) and Control-Value Theory (Pekrun, 2006), both emphasizing how affective and cognitive appraisals jointly shape learner engagement.

Study Material/Population and Sample

The participants consisted of 69 undergraduate students enrolled in the English Language Teaching (ELT) program at a public university in Türkiye. Among them, 36 were second-year and 33 were fourth-year students. All participants were native speakers of Turkish who were studying English as a foreign language. Data were collected from intact classes during regular course hours with prior permission from instructors. Participation was voluntary, and written informed consent was obtained from all students. The inclusion of both second- and fourth-year students enabled the examination of developmental differences in foreign language enjoyment and self-efficacy across two stages of teacher education.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected during regular class sessions using paper-based questionnaires, which took approximately 15 minutes to complete. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Data were screened for missing values, normality, and homogeneity; assumptions for parametric tests were met. Analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS (Version 23) and included descriptive statistics to summarize mean levels of FLE and FLSE, Pearson correlation analysis to assess associations between constructs, Independent-samples t-tests to compare second- and fourth-year groups, and simple and multiple regression analyses to test predictive effects of FLE and its subdimensions on self-efficacy. All analyses adopted a significance threshold of $p < .05$ (two-tailed).

Data Collection Tool

Two established instruments were used. Developed by Botes et al. (2021),Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (Short Form; S-FLES) consists of nine items across three dimensions: Teacher Appreciation, Personal Enjoyment, and Social Enjoyment. Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree), with higher scores reflecting greater enjoyment.

Adapted from Piniel and Csizér (2013), Foreign Language Self-Efficacy Scale (FLSES) contains nine items measuring learners' perceived competence across speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Items were also rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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Both instruments have been validated in EFL contexts and show solid psychometric properties (Botes et al., 2021; Piniel & Csizér, 2013).

Validity and Reliability

Internal consistency coefficients indicated high reliability across instruments. In the current study, Cronbach's alpha values were: overall S-FLES = .85 (Teacher Appreciation = .81; Personal Enjoyment = .78; Social Enjoyment = .77) and FLSES = .83. These values are consistent with prior research (Botes et al., 2021; Piniel & Csizér, 2013). Construct validity was supported by the theoretical alignment between affective (enjoyment) and cognitive (self-efficacy) components within the Positive Psychology and Control-Value frameworks (Zou et al., 2025).

FINDINGS

The findings indicated a positive and mutually reinforcing relationship between foreign language enjoyment and self-efficacy. Participants who experienced greater enjoyment in language learning also reported stronger beliefs in their ability to use and teach the language effectively. Enjoyment and self-efficacy thus appeared to reinforce each other, suggesting that students who feel emotionally engaged in their learning process tend to develop higher confidence in their skills.

A comparison between the two academic year groups showed that fourth-year students demonstrated slightly higher levels of both enjoyment and self-efficacy than second-year students. This pattern indicates that increased experience, linguistic competence, and exposure to teaching practice contribute to greater confidence and emotional satisfaction in learning. The difference, while not substantial, points to a gradual strengthening of affective and cognitive resources as students advance in their programs.

Regression analyses further supported the predictive role of enjoyment in shaping self-efficacy beliefs. Students who found their language learning experiences enjoyable were more likely to perceive themselves as capable and effective learners. Among the components of enjoyment, teacher appreciation and personal enjoyment emerged as particularly influential in fostering learners' self-confidence, while social enjoyment played a less prominent role.

Taken together, the findings underscore the close interconnection between positive emotional experiences and learners' belief in their abilities. Enjoyment not only enhances engagement and motivation but also serves as a foundation for the development of self-assurance and resilience in foreign language learning.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Grounded in Positive Psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) and Control-Value Theory (Pekrun, 2006), the findings highlight the vital role of enjoyment as an emotional force enhancing learners' self-efficacy, motivation, and engagement. The significant correlation between the two constructs indicates that when students enjoy

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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the learning process, they are more likely to believe in their ability to perform successfully, reinforcing persistence and task commitment.

Teacher-related enjoyment was found to be the strongest predictor of self-efficacy, showing that teacher enthusiasm, immediacy, and supportive feedback are key affective drivers of learner confidence (Li, 2025; Guo & Qiu, 2022). Personal enjoyment also predicted self-efficacy, suggesting that feelings of satisfaction and progress strengthen learners' belief in their abilities. These findings align with earlier studies demonstrating that emotionally engaging instruction boosts both enjoyment and sustained effort in language learning (Dewaele et al., 2018; Botes et al., 2021).

Fourth-year students reported higher levels of both enjoyment and self-efficacy than second-year students, indicating developmental growth over the course of their education. Increased linguistic competence, exposure to teaching practice, and accumulated success experiences likely contribute to this progression (Wu, 2024; Ishida et al., 2024). The stronger predictive effect of enjoyment on self-efficacy among senior students further suggests that as learners mature, enjoyment becomes more closely tied to their confidence and professional self-concept.

Pedagogically, these results emphasize the importance of fostering emotionally supportive classrooms in teacher education. Instructors should model enthusiasm, encourage positive interaction, and provide meaningful success experiences that build both enjoyment and confidence. Reflective activities that help students recognize their growth may further consolidate these positive effects.

Although limited by its cross-sectional design and single institutional context, the study contributes to understanding the affective foundations of language teacher development. Future research should use longitudinal or intervention-based designs to explore how enjoyment and self-efficacy evolve and interact with related constructs such as grit and willingness to communicate.

In conclusion, enjoyment and self-efficacy are mutually reinforcing components of successful language learning and teaching. As learners advance in their programs, positive classroom experiences increasingly transform into confidence and sustained engagement, underscoring the need to integrate emotional well-being into EFL teacher education.

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EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES IN USING GENERATIVE AI FOR LISTENING MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT

İNGILIZCEYI YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖGRETEN ÖGRETMENLERIN DİNLEME MATERYALİ GELİŞTİRMEDE ÜRETKEN YAPAY ZEKA KULLANIMINA YÖNELİK ALGILARI VE UYGULAMALARI

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Abstract

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) has a crucial role in reshaping English language teaching, offering teachers opportunities to design engaging and learner-centered instructional materials. Despite the growing interest in teachers' and learners' perceptions towards AI tools, the practical use of such tools in developing instructional materials remains underexplored. This study aimed to explore how English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors use and perceive the use of AI tools to develop listening materials. Data were gathered from four teachers through individual think aloud sessions and individual semi-structured interviews. Artefacts including AI-generated listening materials and instructors' written interactions with AI tools were also used for triangulation. The data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The results showed that instructors used multiple AI tools for planning, scriptwriting, audio generating, and tasks designing. The teachers also acknowledged that generative AI provided them a valuable support by reducing time to develop materials or adapt them. However, these tools also had several limitations since using them requires pedagogical competence and AI-literacy skills. The results of this study have pedagogical implications for EFL instructors as well as for teacher educators by highlighting the importance of developing critical awareness of how and when to use AI tools in the development of language learning materials.

Keywords: Generative AI, instructional material design, listening material development

INTRODUCTION

ChatGPT, a popular GenAI tool, was introduced publicly by OpenAI in 2022, it quickly attracted widespread attention across various sectors. Powered by deep learning algorithms, ChatGPT became a valuable assistant for tasks such as writing emails, editing images, generating personalized suggestions, translating texts, and performing many other complex activities. Similarly, in the field of education, particularly in language teaching, the adoption of ChatGPT has grown rapidly thanks to its ability to produce human-like conversations and replicate the structures in language. Students, as main users, prefer these tools due to their potential to transform language education by enhancing learning experiences and supporting

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their personalized learning (see. Balcı, 2024). As the second main users, teachers have used GenAI tools for a wide range of tasks such as transcribing, planning, content design, plagiarism detection, etc. Unsurprisingly, these tools have attracted considerable attention of scholars who have increasingly investigated their pedagogical implications on language teaching. These scholars revealed valuable insights on using GenAI tools in general teaching applications such as planning lessons (Nugroho et al., 2024), assessing language development (Meyasa, Artini & Marsakawati, 2024), giving feedback on students' assignments (Asadi, Ebadi & Mohammadi, 2025; Han & Li, 2024), material development (Koraishi, 2023; Zerey, 2025), and supporting professional development (Arefian, Çomoğlu & Dikilitaş, 2024). The recent publications primarily focused on the use of single AI-tool. However, listening material development necessitates the integration of multiple AI tools that can handle multimodal input, audio processing, and task design. As one of the basic language skills, listening requires careful pedagogical planning and technological support. However, little is known about how EFL teachers' uses of AI tools to create instructional listening materials and their perceptions on the utility of these tools.

By drawing on insights obtained from EFL instructors' real-time experiences as well as their previously designed materials, the study provides an in-depth examination of teachers' material design processes and their pedagogical decision-making, an aspect that has not been explored in prior research. To guide the analysis, this study adopts the SAM (Successive Approximation Model) as an analytic framework, as proposed by Sites & Green (2014). This is a model particularly provides a structured, step-by-step approach to analyzing instructional design processes, enabling a systematic exploration of both teachers' use of specific tools and their perceptions in using them.

EFL instructional listening materials

Instructional materials are tools designed to help teachers convey intended knowledge, skills, or attitudes to learners within an educational setting (Nwachukwu, 2006). Similar to other domains in education, instructional materials are essential in language learning, as they help learners comprehend the related language structures. They help learners practice different skills, and stay engaged while they provide teachers a guidance. However, existing instructional materials have been identified as a factor that makes listening one of the most difficult skills to teach and learn (Mutlu Köroğlu, 2022). To begin with textbooks. While widely used, they often lack authenticity; as Spelleri (2002) points out, the language they present diverges significantly from real-life usage, limiting their effectiveness in preparing learners for authentic communication. Beyond authenticity, textbooks are also not adaptable. Tasks are frequently too rigid to accommodate diverse learner needs, leaving lower-proficiency students at a disadvantage (Unver, 2017) and they lack of engaging activities, (Mutlu-Köroğlu, 2022). Such challenges may lead teachers frequently feel compelled to design supplementary resources and to invest additional effort in making materials more motivating. Considering this, some scholars often regard

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using authentic materials as a solution, but some others stated that authentic materials bring their own challenges. For instance, the input can be excessively complex for learners' proficiency levels (Gilmore, 2007) and may create various pedagogical difficulties (Alarmi, 2025).

These persistent challenges underscore the increasing need for innovative and more flexible ways to develop listening material, which increased the interest in using AI-based tools to create instructional materials. These tools offer teachers unprecedented opportunities to create listening materials that are both authentic and adaptable to diverse learner needs in a short time. As Boeru (2024) suggested that AI-based tools empower teachers to exercise greater pedagogical control over content and adapt already existing instructional materials to students' proficiency levels, interests, and sensitivities. These tools might enable teachers recreate audios by simplifying scripts and shortening sentences for lower-proficiency students, thereby scaffolding listening tasks more effectively. A further advantage of these tools is that they allow teachers to create their own instructional materials (Bonner, Lege, and Frazier, 2023; Crompton & Burke, 2024). For example, Text-to-speech as an AI tool can convert authentic online texts into well-structured listening audios. ChatGPT and Gemini can generate a variety of listening tasks that support differentiated learning, enhancing both engagement and comprehension. All these shows that integrating AI tools in material development can significantly help teachers not only for supplementing traditional listening materials but also designing new effective instructional materials.

Empirical studies on the use of Generative AI tools in developing instructional materials

Despite the growing interest in AI-based tools in the field of language teaching, research on EFL teachers' use of these tools for developing listening and other instructional materials remains limited. The small body of research on the lecturers' use of AI tools for developing language learning materials highlights a variety of pedagogical applications. For instance, Xin (2024) found that Chinese EFL teachers used ChatPDF as a valuable platform for modifying texts and generating reading tasks. Similarly, Octavio, Argüello, and Pujolà (2024), in a single-case study in Spain, reported that ChatGPT was considered effective for designing writing tasks across different ages and proficiency levels, providing significant support in lesson planning, activity generation, classroom implementation, and assessment. In higher education contexts, Nugroho et al. (2024) showed that 15 university instructors in Indonesia used Chatbot to design lesson plans, prepare teaching activities and materials, create assessments, translate texts, paraphrase sentences, enhance vocabulary, and improve grammar and syntax. Likewise, in the Turkish university context, Zerey (2025) found that ELT lecturers incorporated ChatGPT into material development to generate tasks, support brainstorming, and enhance task variety. Even though these studies demonstrate that teachers use individual AI-based tools in various aspects of instructional design, there might remain a lack of evidence on how EFL instructors employ AI tools specifically for developing listening materials.

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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Unlike other skills, listening requires learners to process fleeting input in real time, rapidly decode sounds and structures, and construct meaning without opportunities to pause or review. Consequently, listening materials must be carefully sequenced, scaffolded, and grounded in authentic input therefore their designs are both complex and pedagogically distinctive. Given this complexity, the development of listening materials often requires the integration of multiple AI tools. Exploring this process through real-time methods such as think-aloud sessions may offer a significant and novel approach, providing deeper insights into teachers' decision-making, tool selection, and pedagogical reasoning during AI-assisted material development.

Alongside these, teachers in previous studies consistently expressed ambivalent perceptions of AI-based tools. On the one hand, they recognized their potential to streamline lesson planning, diversify tasks, and provide creative input for material design. On the other hand, they raised concerns about the reliability of AI-generated outputs, with risks of misleading or inaccurate content (Koraishi, 2023; Octavio, Argüello, M. & Pujolà., 2024; Xin, 2024). Ethical issues such as fairness and authenticity also emerged as important considerations (Nugroho et al., 2024). Similarly, Zerey (2025) emphasized that while lecturers valued AI tools for generating and diversifying tasks, they stressed the importance of critical evaluation and adaptation to ensure alignment with pedagogical goals. As Xin (2024) mentioned that as AI-generated outcomes may not adequately address domain-specific tasks that require pedagogical knowledge and context-specific expertise. Although these studies have provided valuable insights into the use of generative AI tools for material development, notable empirical gaps remain. In particular, most research has focused on materials designed for writing, reading, or general English courses, with limited attention given to listening instruction. Moreover, given that teachers' use of AI tools is shaped by their professional expertise and their ability to evaluate, adapt, and contextualize AI-generated content within specific teaching contexts, there is a need for a more comprehensive understanding of these processes. To address this empirical research gap, the present study aims to investigate the real-time experiences of four EFL instructors in implementing various GenAI tools for listening material development. The research questions were as follows:

Q1: How do EFL teachers use AI tools when developing listening materials?

a) What types of AI tools do EFL teachers use for listening material development?

b) For what purpose do EFL teachers use AI tools when developing listening materials?

Q2. How do EFL teachers perceive the utility of AI tools to develop listening instructional materials?

Analytic Framework

To investigate teachers' use of AI tools to develop listening materials, this study followed the SAM model as an analytic framework. It is an instructional design methodology used for developing educational materials. In the past SAM model was

155

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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proved to be a useful framework to investigate the process of designing e-learning contents (Jung et al., 2019) and instructional material design for school children (Abengoza, et al., 2025). We believe that this model could provide a systematic understanding of teachers' use of GenAI tools, especially how such tools were integrated in different phases of listening material development. This model includes three phases: preparation, iterative design, and iterative development. In preparation phase, teachers or materials creators gather background information related to students' needs, available materials, and students' previous academic performances. This process is called 'savy start' that enables the creators to generate initial ideas (Sites & Green, 2014). Secondly, iterative design phase consists of three steps namely design, prototyping, and review rotate iteratively. In iterative phase, the main aim is to design materials that fit the learners' needs and interests. Prototypical materials make the conceptual ideas visible (Abengoza, et al., 2025) and iterative nature of this phase enables material creators to develop several prototypes depending on feedbacks coming from others. Finally, in the iterative development phase, the effectiveness of the materials was analyzed. This phase includes three recurring stages: development, implementation, and evaluation. After the prototypical materials are presented and tested, an alpha version is released. In the next cycle of evaluation and development, a beta version is created. Then beta version is refined into a gold version in the subsequent iteration.
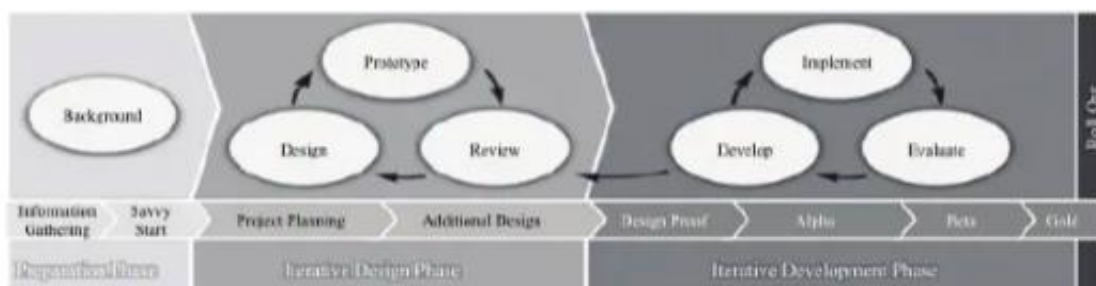
Process of SAM. Reprinted from *Title of Book or Article*, by Sites & Green, 2014, Publisher. Copyright 2014 by ASTD Press.

METHOD

Research Model

This study adopts a qualitative case study design to examine how EFL teachers perceive and use AI tools while developing their listening materials. As Creswell and Poth (2016) suggest, cases enable researchers to obtain a broader understanding.

Population and Sample

Following Eisenhardt's (1989) guidance, four EFL teachers were recruited in this study to balance the study's robustness while avoiding an overwhelming volume of data. Participants were purposefully chosen to ensure a representative and varied sample (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015), considering differences in listening teaching experience and AI tool familiarity. Initially, the researcher approached 45 EFL

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

teachers, all employed at a state university distinguished by its integration of in-house materials in teaching. While most of teachers were using a kind of AI tool for creating materials, only four of them deliberately used multiple AI tools to develop listening materials. Among them, there were 3 females and 1 male, which is similar to the gender distribution of EFL teachers in Turkey. All of them held Master degree and had at least five years of experience. They were teaching English language courses as well as English for academic and specific purposes.

Table 2

Partcipants' Profiles

	Gender	Qualification	Teaching experience	AI tool experience
T1	Female	MA	5 years	3 years
T2	Female	MA	8 years	1 year
T3	Female	MA	10 years	2 years
T4	Male	MA	15 years	3 years

Data Collection and Analysis

To answer the research questions, multiple data collection tools were utilized. Thinking aloud sessions and semi-structured interviews were conducted to ensure the flexibility in the interview process (Dörnyei, 2007). Additionally, artefacts including teacher-made listening materials were collected for triangulation. Table 2 illustrates an overview of the data collection and analysis procedure.

Table 2

Data Collection and Analysis Process

Research question	Data collection	Data analysis
Phase 1 Teachers' uses of AI tools	Think aloud and follow up questioning sessions with unstructured questions	Thematic analysis (SAM model framework)
Phase 2 Teachers' perceptions towards AI tools and triangulation	Semi-structured interviews and examining previous materials	Thematic analysis (SWOT framework)
Phase 3 Member check list	member checklist	

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

The data were obtained in three phases. In the first phase, the think-aloud sessions were employed. Teachers verbalized their reasoning in real time while completing the task assigned by the researcher. This technique is considered valuable as it provides a reliable source of data (Ericsson & Simon, 1980), particularly for investigating different individuals in performing the same task (Olson et al., 1984). In line with Ericsson and Simon's recommendations, retrospective questioning was also conducted as a complementary strategy. This approach is widely recognized for verifying researchers' interpretations of think-aloud verbalizations (Qi, 1998). The think aloud procedure was carried in several steps. First, participants were briefly informed about the purpose of the study and instructed how to verbalize their thought. To make them comfortable in the process, a piloting was provided before the main task. During the main task, participants were requested to design listening tasks and audios for A2 proficiency level using AI tools they normally use. Each audio was approximately six minutes long and was accompanied by a set of activities, including a pre-listening, a while-listening, and a post-listening task. During this process, participants were articulating their actions and record their computer screen while researcher remained silent. Finally, one day later, retrospective questioning was employed as a follow-up strategy. Each questioning session lasted one hour. In the second phase of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted for two purposes. First to investigate the participants perceptions on the utility of these materials and secondly to collect multiple sources of data to enhance the validity of the results through triangulation (Patton, 2002). To do so, participants were asked to bring their previously developed teaching materials to the interviews. Each interview was conducted in Turkish with average length of 60 minutes. Interviews enabled the researcher to gather more in-depth insights (Adams, 2015) into teachers' background, their experiences with AI tools, and their perceptions of utilizing AI tools for material development. In the third phase, the aim was to employ a member checklist to ensure the credibility of the findings (Elo et al., 2014). To review and verify the accuracy of the findings, a meeting was arranged with each participant after the researcher completed the preliminary anlysis and interpretations.

Before data analysis, obtained data from follow-up questioning sessions and interviews were transcribed verbatim. To answer the first research question, the think-aloud activities were analyzed with all details including non-verbal observations such as tone of voice, gestures, etc. Screen recordings were synchronized with transcripts to examine the actions correspond to teachers' thoughts. Then, all transcripts were imported into MAXQDA, and participants' excerpts, researcher's observational notes, and reflections from artefacts were combined to form a comprehensive dataset. The researcher closely read the data, highlighted relevant sections, and wrote memos to capture emerging ideas. Data from one participant were initially subjected to open coding to generate an initial set of codes. These codes were compared in terms of similarities, differences, and relevance to the SAM model (Allen & Sites, 2012) to form broader categories and themes. Regarding the second research question, data obtained from the interviews were analyzed in the same way. But, this time, codes were compared in terms of

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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similarities, differences, and relevance to the SWOT framework (the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats).

Validity and Reliability

In this study, several strategies were employed to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings. After obtaining ethical approval, the interview questions were developed based on existing literature and relevant theoretical frameworks. These questions were reviewed by a PhD-level expert for content validity and piloted with two teachers outside the study group. To enhance credibility, multiple data sources were collected for triangulation. Synchronizing screen recordings with verbatim transcripts increased the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations during the think-aloud sessions. The researcher's observational notes and follow-up interviews further triangulated the data, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences. Additionally, the researcher iteratively read the transcripts and wrote analytic memos to ensure that emerging patterns genuinely reflected participants' thoughts and practices. Comparative coding across participants and aligning the themes with established analytical frameworks further strengthened the credibility of the analysis.

To ensure the reliability of the coding process, a second PhD holder expert independently coded the same transcript after the researcher completed the initial coding process. The two sets of codes were compared, and through discussion, a consensus was reached. This coding template was then applied to the remaining datasets. To ensure coding reliability, both the researcher and the expert independently coded the rest of the data, and the resulting codes yielded a kappa value above 0.80, indicating high inter-coder reliability (Fleiss, Levin, & Paik, 2003).

FINDINGS

Q1: EFL teachers' use AI tools in listening materials development

a. Type of GenAI tools used for developing listening materials

The think-aloud sessions revealed that four teachers utilized a range of GenAI tools while designing instructional materials. Screen recordings indicated that, as text-based GenAI tools, T1 and T4 primarily relied on ChatGPT, whereas T2 and T3 preferred Gemini. These platforms are widely recognized for their capabilities in generating text, summarizing existing content, and providing multilingual translations. The recordings further showed the use of Audio-based GenAI tools, which convert written text into natural-sounding speech. In this category, T1, T3, and T4 made use of ElevenLabs, while T2 turned to TTS sound maker. Additionally, one teacher was observed utilizing AI-powered speech enhancement tools, specifically Adobe Podcast. Such tools allow users to enable users to adjust the speed of the audio and eliminate background noise.

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

b. Purpose of using AI tools in listening material development (SAM)

Preparation phase

Generated Initial Ideas

As all teachers reported, their initial practice with AI tools was to decide whether to adapt an existing task or design a new one. This decision was guided by their students' needs and interests as well as the requirements of the prescribed listening skill focus.

> 'I sometimes used Gemini to verify whether my ideas aligned with the curriculum outcomes. It provided me with detailed feedback on both the title and the potential content of the materials.' (T3)

Then, all teachers reported using AI tools when planning and elaborating preliminary ideas on possible content for listening task.

> 'Before developing a new audio lesson, I first used ChatGPT to generate a range of ideas on the topic. When I wanted something engaging for my students, I entered a prompt related to music and explored the suggestions. After reviewing the list of topics provided, I chose the one I found most suitable.' (T1)

Different from generating totally new materials, GenAI was also used to remove background noise in an authentic material. The teacher generally found Adope Podcast tool helpful in this regard, as T1 shared:

> 'Creating a dialogue from scratch using AI programs is difficult—or perhaps I simply don't know how to do it. This time, I used the program to modify an existing dialogue I found online, which had background noise like traffic sounds. Instead of spending time preparing scripts, I relied on this tool to enhance the quality of audio. As you hear now, the final recording has excellent sound quality. In this way, I can produce materials that my students can benefit from listening to authentic, real-person conversations.'

Iterative Design Phase

Iterative design phase includes the development of all kinds of listening materials like audio, pre-listening, while listening, and post-listening tasks.

Generated Listening Scripts

The first practice of all teachers in this phase was generating listening scripts with or without depending on already existing materials. T1 and T3 preferred AI-generated scripts entirely. These participants' first major practice in thinking aloud session was using AI tools to generate listening scripts. They showed a strong preference of using only AI-generated texts based on the content topics in curriculum. To achieve better results, they carefully crafted a sequence of prompts and repeatedly refined them. With an iterative process of adjusting and rewriting prompts allowed them to guide

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

the AI more effectively, ensuring that the generated texts became more relevant, accurate, and aligned with their intended goals and students' needs.

> 'The audio materials in the textbooks were really monotonous and disengaging for the students. However, I preferred to retain the original titles to ensure consistency with the curriculum. I generally designed a prompt and used AI tools to generate more enjoyable and contextually relevant scripts tailored to learners at the intermediate proficiency level.' (T1)

> 'As teachers, we have a certain degree of freedom to design our own materials. However, at the same time, we must adhere to the prescribed curriculum. Since all students are required to take the same exam at the end of the semester, it is more practical to keep the content of my materials aligned with the textbook.' (T3)

But, T2 and T4 preferred to adapt scripts from already published materials. As both explained in the interviews, this decision was mainly driven by frustration after several unsuccessful attempts to generate suitable content with AI tools. They mentioned that such tools often failed to produce appropriate outputs unless guided with precise prompts and supported with clear examples. This awareness seems to push them toward alternative strategies. Elaborating later, they began incorporating texts from textbooks (T2) and online resources into their prompts, using these materials as a foundation for the AI to build upon.

> 'I recall attempting to create a listening script solely with ChatGPT. The initial output was rather coarse and difficult for learners to understand. I then made several attempts to adjust it to the appropriate proficiency level, but in doing so, the text became overly dull and lost the intended learning outcomes. To avoid repeated unsuccessful trials, I decided to use the scripts from the textbooks and wrote prompts to the AI tools for simplifying them.' (T2)

Generating Ideas and Creating Tasks

The second practice of teachers was using GenAI to seek ideas for various listening tasks. For example, some teachers reported to prepare pre-listening activities, such as warm-up questions, short discussions, vocabulary previews. According to T1, these pre-listening activities are highly important to activate students' background knowledge and a good starting point to prepare students for listening practices. AI tools are helpful in creating interesting activities for these specific purposes. As she further explained, ChatGPT functioned as 'a time-saving tool to diversify instructional repertoire of teachers and generate multiple alternatives for engaging warm-up questions and discussions' that are often beyond what she has already knew or imagined.

Similarly, all teachers shared their experiences of using ChatGPT to generate while-listening activities such as comprehension questions, graphic organizers, and gap-fill exercises. Screen recordings from the think-aloud sessions revealed that all teachers used AI tools to create these tasks by the help of their own pre-prepared scripts. As T1 reported:

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

> 'I used ChatGPT frequently to prepare a gap fill activity. I just copy and past the script into it, then write a prompt to generate an exercise, and even I can obtain an answer key within a few second.' (T1)

However, T1 and T2 used the tools mainly as a source of ideas and then they designed the graphic organizers themselves. This suggests that some teachers tended to use GenAI tools as supportive resources rather than ready-to-use solutions, particularly for while-listening activities like graphic organizers and comprehension questions.

> 'When I copy the script into ChatGPT to create a graphic organizer, it often over-paraphrases the sentences. Therefore, instead of using what the tool produces directly, I preferr to use it as a source of ideas for activities such as graphic organizers. This helps me design and prepare the activities myself.' (T4)

> 'Generally, I prefer to use Gemini to prepare comprehension questions. Since it produces redundant and over-paraphrased questions, many times I use some of questions as references or a guide and directly use just a few of them.'

Converting Scripts into Realistic Speech

The third practice evidenced in screen recordings was using AI tools to convert scripts into realistic speech that could be used directly as listening audio in class. For this purpose, teachers employed text-to-speech tools such as ElevenLabs and TTS-Maker. They uploaded scripts into the tools and were able to generate and download audio within seconds. It seems from the follow up interviews that all teachers used these two tools for the same purpose. However, their preferences are not fix and they demonstrate their personal judgement and agency in this process.

> 'I mainly use TTS-Maker because it offers a variety of natural-sounding voices with different accents. Its pause and slow-down options allow me to adjust the speech—for example, to slow it down for easier student comprehension. But just for short scripts. For longer ones, I prefer ElevenLabs, which provides not highly realistic voices but can generate longer audio segments efficiently.' (T1)

> 'For me, accuracy in pronunciation is very important. In both programs, not every voice sounds completely natural, so I have a few favorite voices that I prefer to use.'

> 'My preference can change depending on the purpose of the activity I design. If I want to create an audio explaining scientific facts, I prefer using a male voice from ElevenLabs with a serious tone. But if my goal is to design a more engaging or entertaining material, I prefer a female voice from TTS-Maker, which offers voices with different emotional expressions.'

Iterative Development Phase

Adjusting Listening Materials

This phase includes three iterative development and evaluation steps: alpha, beta, and gold version of the prototype. Screen recordings showed that during development

162

proofreading. They copied their prepared tasks into the tool and entered multiple prompts, primarily to check grammar and correct errors. Example prompts included:

'Can you check this text for fluency and correctness? Fix mistakes.' (T1)

'Proofread this text, focusing only on subject–verb agreement and tense consistency.' (T2)

'Check the flow of the text.' (T4)

Almost all of those teachers used AI tools in adjusting task difficulty after receiving feedbacks from their piloting. As they explained that they mainly used ChatGPT and Gemini to simplify the grammar (T2), vocabulary (T4) or task instruction (T1) of the materials. As they explained, such revisions were typically made to accommodate students with relatively low levels of English proficiency

'Once I realize this, I usually revise the tasks myself, focusing on modifying the vocabulary or grammar to make them more appropriate for students with lower proficiency level.' (T2) (T4)

'Before using the materials class-wide, I check their qualities with a number of students. Then, I adjust the problematic parts. Generally, the students in A1 level have difficulty in grammar at the beginning of the term. So, I simplify the instructions of the tasks.'(T1)

Screen recordings also showed that T1 utilized AI tools to revise and make some extensions to the instructional audios and listening tasks. As T1 explained in thinking aloud sessions, she needed major revisions due to having excessive lengths of an audio. To address this, she shortened the script and then used the AI tool ElevenLabs to re-record the audio. To her '*this process not only made the listening material more manageable in length but also ensured that the audio remained clear and engaging.*'

'To my colleagues, the problem here was the length of the audio. Generally, we expected to listen six minutes talk in a lesson. But yeah, I accept that it was a little long. Yeah, I will do what they suggested.'

Q2: EFL teachers' perceptions in using AI tools for listening materials development

a. Strengths (Things AI-generated tools are good at.) (internal)

Time saving

All teachers agreed on the benefits of AI tools in reducing their preparation time. Two teachers specifically mentioned how easily they could create and modify listening materials using these tools. They reported that AI tools assist teachers in modifying texts and generating various listening activities promptly. One teacher stated, '*with ChatGPT, I can create a listening script in just a few minutes. Then, I paste the script into Text-to-Speech tools like TTS-Maker to create a realistic speech.*' Another added,

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

'when I want to simplify the grammar or vocabulary in an audio, I used ChatGPT and then ElevenLabs. They are very fast way to do it.'

Offers variability

Another strength of AI tools noted by teachers was their ability to provide customizable content. With these tools, teachers can tailor materials to match their students' interests and needs. At the university level, students come from diverse backgrounds and have varying learning requirements. Therefore, textbooks and course materials should be adapted to reflect this diversity, and teachers can use AI tools to modify texts accordingly. One teacher shared:

> 'I used ChatGPT and TTS-Maker to create two similar texts—one for the exam and one for classroom use. I think these tools are beneficial for creating a variety of materials tailored to different learning contexts.' (T1)

T2 also added:

> 'I like these tools since they offer various English accents. I used the TTS-Maker to create exactly the same text and generate speech in both American and British accents, just to show my students the variability of accents.'

b. Weaknesses (Internal factors that limits success)

Provides inaccurate content

Despite their advantages, there could be several weaknesses related to the AI tools. To them, these tools have inability to provide accurate and directly usable content. T1 and T2, for instance, reported to design listening materials on their own due to encountering various limitations of ChatGPT and Gemini. As T2 explained:

> 'Instead of using what the tool produced directly, I preferred to adapt the activities that these tools offer me. Generally, AI-generated exercises were not related to the script I provided, they were made-up by ChatGPT.' (T1)

> 'Generally, these tools produce redundant and over-paraphrased questions that are not suitable for my students' proficiency level. Actually, I could not use the activities that they offer me directly in class and required some adjustment.' (T2)

Another challenge of using these tools was related to AI-generated audio. In cases where scripts included many proper names or numbers, the AI failed to produce natural-sounding speech. T3 explained:

> 'This happened several times. When a script contained many proper names in a specific language or included a lot of numbers, AI tools failed to produce natural-sounding tones or voices.'

c. Opportunities (External factors that you can take advantage of)

Supports teachers' professional development

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

AI-based tools might also provide several opportunities to the instructors, one of which is expressed as supporting their professional development. Engaging with these tools could help teachers enhance their digital literacy skills and encourages them to use technological innovations more frequently. Their reflections illustrate how continuous interaction with evolving AI platforms encourages teachers to remain up to date with technological changes and how this interaction foster their ongoing professional learning. As T1 explained:

> 'I think using such tools improved my AI literacy skills in a short period of time. They are all quite user-friendly... ElevenLabs has modified its functions over time, which required me to update myself as well.'

Enables multimodal lesson material designs

T2 also added that AI tools stimulate her creativity, allowing her to experiment with novel instructional ideas and integrate diverse resources into her materials. As she explained, these tools enable her to create multimodal materials, which are more engaging, and student-centered.

> 'I also realized that, compared to previous years when I relied on traditional materials, we now use more adaptive exercises aligned with students' proficiency levels. For instance, I sometimes use AI tools to generate A1 and A2 versions of the same text. More importantly, these tools enable me to create visuals, short lectures, dialogues, and exercises all aligned with the same topic, which makes the lesson more cohesive and comprehensive.'

d. Threats (External factors that could cause problems or risks)

Requires high AI-literacy skills and constant upskilling

Developing listening materials with AI tools requires using multiple applications, such as text generators and text-to-speech converters. Effectively integrating these tools could demand a high level of AI literacy, as teachers must understand how to operate each tool, guide its output, and adjust errors to produce accurate and pedagogically appropriate materials. Thus, technical competence is essential for successful implementation. As T3 highlighted:

> 'I used the tools that I am familiar with. Otherwise, using another tool means spending a lot of time learning how to use it. For example, I had difficulty using the TTS Sound Maker tool, so I preferred ElevenLabs instead. It has more user-friendly menus.'

In addition to technical competence, teachers also expressed concerns about the rapid pace of change in AI technologies. As T2 explained, tools '*become outdated quickly, requiring constant adaptation and relearning*'.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study investigated teachers' uses and perceptions of employing AI tools to develop listening materials. The participants in this current study reported using multiple tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini, ElevenLabs, TTS-Maker, and Adobe

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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Podcast. The findings have indicated that AI tools can save teachers' time and enhance the quality and relevance of teaching materials. However, they have potential drawbacks, particularly in generating listening materials. Therefore, successful integration of these tools requires professional judgment that closely linked with teachers' professional expertise and AI literacy skills. Secondly, adopting the SAM model, this study identified teachers' main practices of utilizing AI tools in listening material design. These practices followed the stages suggested by the SAM model, highlighting the effectiveness of this model in investigation material design in various contexts.

In consideration of teachers' use of AI-generated tools, previous studies have reported that single AI tools such as ChatPDF (Xin, 2024), ChatGPT (Octavio, Argüello, & Pujolà, 2024), and Chatbot (Nugroho et al., 2024) facilitate this process by providing accessible platforms for text modification and task generation. Consistent with Zerey's (2025) argument that generative AI can function as a creative tool to reduce teachers' workload, the present study found that integrating multiple AI tools made material development significantly more time-efficient. Although some teachers highlighted some weaknesses of these tools, nearly all instructors perceived them as highly time-saving, particularly when materials needed to be prepared quickly. This variation in perception may be related to teachers' personality traits such as openness to innovation, which could influence the successful integration of AI tools into lesson planning and material design. As Alagöz-Hamzaj (2025) notes, teachers who score higher on traits such as agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience tend to show greater acceptance of generative AI. It shows that AI integration initiatives may need to consider these individual differences.

The findings of this study also suggested that using AI tools could have considerable potential in material development. Consistent with previous research (Octavio et al., 2024; Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019), AI tools can support educators in tailoring materials to meet the diverse needs of learners. Participants in the current study reported that they were able to design listening materials aligned with students' varying proficiency levels, a feature particularly valuable in mixed-ability or mixed-level classrooms. Beyond proficiency adaptation, several instructors emphasized that AI tools offer access to a wide range of accents and dialects. This capacity not only broadens students' exposure to Global English but also allows teachers to select materials strategically based on learners' specific goals, for example, choosing British or American accents for students planning to work or study in the UK or the USA. Highly aligned with this study results, Tasdelen and Bodemer (2025) have showed that AI tools enable teachers to develop materials with a great variability, which better aligns educational content with students' interests. Taken together all these findings, it appears that using these tools not only saves teachers' time but also enhances the quality and relevance of the teaching materials.

Beyond benefits of using AI tools, the study also indicated that using AI tools to generate listening materials could have certain drawbacks. Some participants reported the inability of AI tools to generate accurate and reliable linguistic content

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
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similar to what previous research found out (Koraishi, 2023; Xin, 2024). Consistently, participants in the present study reported that AI-generated scripts, tasks, and audio files often failed to reflect the instructors' intended aims. Therefore, it could be the combination of professional judgment, task design skills, and a deep understanding of learners' needs which makes AI tools effective in teaching, particularly given the variation in AI literacy between novice and experienced teachers (Drajati et al., 2025). Closely related to this, the rapid pace of updates in AI tools presents an additional challenge for instructors, underscoring the need for continuous professional development to keep pace with technological changes and maintain effective material design practices. Since AI is a fast-growing field of innovation, teachers need to continuously follow the latest developments. As one of the teachers pointed out, tools such as text-to-speech are constantly being improved. This necessitates that teachers remain up to date with the latest versions of AI tools to maintain optimal functionality and material quality. This might underscore the critical importance of continuous professional development and sustained training opportunities in AI integration.

The results indicated that simply having AI tools might not enough; successful integration of AI tools into requires professional judgment. Different from existing body of research, by examining how four teachers applied these tools throughout each step of the SAM model, this study revealed key insights into their decision-making processes in creating listening materials. These practices followed the stages suggested by the model. As the foundation of the material development process, EFL instructors first practice was to establish clear instructional objectives and select AI tools that best align with these goals. For instance, ChatGPT was selected to generate or refine listening tasks, while ElevenLabs was used to transform scripts into realistic speech. This alignment ensures that technology use remains purposeful and outcome-oriented (Su & Yang, 2023). Another important practice was exercising their professional judgment while designing content. Using AI tools is an iterative process of experimentation, reflection, and refinement, where outcomes might depend heavily on teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (Xin, 2024) and AI literacy skills (Drajati et al., 2025). As prior research showed that instructors need to refine AI-generated content through multiple prompts to enhance its relevance and coherence with learning goals (Andrews, 2007; Zerey, 2025), where EFL instructors need to integrate their AI literacy with pedagogical expertise to make informed, context-sensitive decisions in material design. Most teachers in this study reported using ChatGPT and Gemini to adjust task difficulty by simplifying language and content to better support lower-proficiency learners while others utilized ElevenLabs to shorten or revise lengthy audio materials. Notably, there was substantial evidence that all participating teachers engaged with multiple AI tools simultaneously, which might be an indication of a flexible and adaptive approach to material development. Their last practice was engaging in continuous revision and adaptation after piloting these materials to ensure the balance content quality with practical classroom constraints. Generative AI tools can offer valuable suggestions and design, but material development is an iterative process (Xu & Li, 2025), requiring piloting AI-created materials in real classroom context. In this process, depending on feedbacks, teachers can use AI tools

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

to revise and enhance the listening materials. Such practices reflect the role of instructors' knowledge of pedagogy, context and their advanced AI literacy skills in adapting and optimize materials for their real classroom practices.

SUGGESTIONS

Although this study contributes to the literature on EFL teachers' material development, it has certain limitations. The sample consisted of only four EFL teachers working in the same context, which may be acceptable in case study research but poses a risk for broader generalizability (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Nevertheless, for the purposes of this study, this sample size was sufficient to provide in-depth insights into how EFL instructors experienced with AI tools integrate these tools into the material design process. However, these results might not reflect the broader population of EFL instructors, particularly those working in different educational settings or with varying levels of familiarity with AI tools. In addition, the findings may not provide enough information on how AI tools can be effectively integrated into the design of other types of instructional materials. For a more comprehensive understanding, there is also a need for larger-scale studies involving participants from diverse educational contexts. These studies could explore the use of generative AI tools in designing various instructional materials in different educational contexts. Particularly, the use of AI tools in ESP material design will be a promising area of investigation. Furthermore, it would be valuable to evaluate the effectiveness of AI-generated listening materials on students' engagement, motivation, and anxiety.

To conclude with practical recommendations, given the potential of AI tools in material development, it is advisable to provide comprehensive in-service training on the effective use of generative AI for instructional material design. In doing so, in-service training should equip teachers with both AI literacy and pedagogical expertise, as effective use of generative AI requires professional judgment, pedagogical knowledge, and contextual understanding. These trainings can enhance instructors' AI literacy confidence and creativity to explore the tools full capabilities, which in turn improves the quality of language education. Considering the results indicating teachers' strong acceptance of AI tools alongside the identified drawbacks in generating listening materials, professional development should focus on equipping teachers to use AI effectively. It may be beneficial to offer reflective practice sessions in which teachers can experiment with AI tools, evaluate the outcomes, and refine instructional materials with guidance from an expert in the field. The approaches such as gradual exposure to AI tools, demonstrating the practical benefits of using them, and collaborating with more experienced colleagues may be helpful particularly for teachers who are not initially open to new experiences.

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Appendix A. Interview Questions

Background (Temel bilgiler)
1. Could you share some basic information about yourself, such as your teaching experience, education, and professional background?
Kendinizle ilgili bazı temel bilgileri paylaşabilir misiniz? Örneğin, öğretmenlik deneyiminiz, eğitim durumunuz ve mesleki geçmişiniz gibi.
2. Could you describe the courses you currently teach, including class size, student proficiency levels, and the materials you use?
Şu anda verdiğiniz dersleri, sınıf mevcudu, öğrencilerin yeterlilik düzeyleri ve kullandığınız materyaller dahil olmak üzere açıklayabilir misiniz?
3. What are the main principles or strategies that guide your teaching?
Öğretmenlik anlayışınızı ya da uygulamalarınızı yönlendiren temel ilke veya stratejiler nelerdir?
Experiences with AI tools (Yapay zeka araçları ile ilgili deneyimleri)
4. Can you give examples of digital or AI tools that assist you in your teaching practice?
Öğretim pratiğinizde size yardımcı olan dijital veya yapay zekâ araçlarına örnek verebilir misiniz?
5. Which AI tools assist you in listening material development? For what purpose do you use them mainly?
Dinleme materyali geliştirmede size yardımcı olan yapay zekâ araçları hangileridir? Bu araçları en çok hangi amaçlarla kullanıyorsunuz?
5. What are your main sources of information or inspiration for applying generative AI tools in language teaching?
Dil öğretiminde üretken yapay zekâ araçlarını uygularken başvurduğunuz veya ilham aldığınız başlıca bilgi kaynakları nelerdir?
Perceptions of Utilizing AI Tools For Material Development (Dinleme materyallerini geliştirmek için Yapay zeka kullanımı hakkındaki algıları)
6. Are there any institutional regulations or policies in using generative AI tools in material design, or, is it your decision to use them?
Materyal tasarımında üretken yapay zekâ araçlarını kullanmaya ilişkin herhangi bir kurumsal düzenleme veya politika var mı, yoksa bu araçları kullanma kararı size mi ait?
7. What factors encourage or discourage you from using generative AI tools in material development?
Materyal geliştirmede üretken yapay zekâ araçlarını kullanmanızı teşvik eden veya sizi kullanımınızı kısıtlayan veya azaltan faktörler nelerdir?
8. What benefits do generative AI tools provide in the process of listening material development? Could you explain them one by one with all details?
Üretken yapay zekâ araçları, dinleme materyali geliştirme sürecinin hangi faydaları sağlar? Tek tek bunları detaylı bir şekilde açıklayabilir misiniz?
9. What challenges do generative AI tools provide in different stages of listening material development? Do you use any strategy to cope with these challenges?

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"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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Üretken yapay zekâ araçları, dinleme materyali geliştirme sürecinin farklı aşamalarında hangi zorlukları ortaya çıkarır? Bu zorluklarla başa çıkmak için herhangi bir strateji kullanıyor musunuz?

10. What do you think about AI generated tools? Is there any weaknesses or strenghts?

Üretken yapay zeka araçları hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz sizce bazı zayıf ya da güçlü yönleri var mı?

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF UNDERGRADUATE ENGLISH TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN THE UNITED STATES AND TURKEY

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Abstract

This study provides a comparative analysis of undergraduate English language teacher education programs in the United States and Turkey, focusing on program structure, curriculum content, field experience, and quality assurance mechanisms. A qualitative comparative case study design was employed to systematically examine policy documents, curriculum frameworks, accreditation standards, and related academic literature. Data were collected through document analysis and analyzed using thematic analysis to identify similarities and differences between the two systems. The findings indicate that while both countries share the goal of preparing qualified and effective English language teachers, their approaches differ considerably. U.S. programs are characterized by flexibility in curriculum design, with institutions having autonomy to include elective and interdisciplinary courses. They also emphasize continuous, extended practicum experiences throughout the program and maintain rigorous external accreditation processes through independent agencies such as CAEP, TESOL, and ACTFL. In contrast, Turkish programs follow a highly centralized and standardized curriculum determined by YÖK and MEB, offer limited practicum experiences typically confined to the final year, and rely primarily on internal quality assurance mechanisms with limited external oversight. These differences reflect broader educational governance structures and policy priorities. The study concludes that Turkish ELT programs could be strengthened by integrating reflective teaching practices, extending the duration of field experiences, establishing independent external accreditation systems, and providing continuous professional development for in-service teachers. Drawing on insights from U.S. practices can support the modernization and international alignment of Turkish teacher education, ultimately preparing future teachers to meet the complex demands of globalized English language teaching.

Keywords: English teacher education, curriculum, practicum, accreditation, Turkey-USA comparison

Özet

Bu çalışma, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ve Türkiye'deki lisans düzeyindeki İngilizce öğretmeni yetiştirme programlarını; program yapısı, müfredat içeriği, uygulama deneyimi ve kalite güvence mekanizmaları açısından karşılaştırmalı olarak incelemektedir. Politik belgeler, müfredat çerçeveleri, akreditasyon standartları ve

ilgili akademik literatür sistematik olarak incelenerek nitel karşılaştırmalı durum çalışması deseni kullanılmıştır. Veriler doküman analizi yoluyla toplanmış ve iki sistem arasındaki benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları belirlemek amacıyla tematik analiz yöntemiyle değerlendirilmiştir. Bulgular, her iki ülkenin de nitelikli ve etkili İngilizce öğretmenleri yetiştirme hedefini paylaştığını, ancak bu hedefe ulaşma yaklaşımlarının önemli ölçüde farklılık gösterdiğini ortaya koymaktadır. ABD'deki programlar, müfredat tasarımında esneklik ile karakterize edilmekte olup kurumlar seçmeli ve disiplinler arası dersleri müfredata dahil etme konusunda özerkliğe sahiptir. Ayrıca program boyunca kesintisiz ve uzun süreli uygulama deneyimlerine vurgu yapılmakta ve CAEP, TESOL ve ACTFL gibi bağımsız kuruluşlar aracılığıyla yürütülen titiz dış akreditasyon süreçleri bulunmaktadır. Buna karşılık Türkiye'deki programlar, YÖK ve MEB tarafından belirlenen son derece merkezi ve standartlaştırılmış bir müfredata sahiptir; uygulama deneyimleri genellikle son sınıfla sınırlıdır ve çoğunlukla dış denetimin sınırlı olduğu iç kalite güvence mekanizmalarına dayanmaktadır. Bu farklılıklar, daha geniş eğitim yönetişimi yapıları ve politika önceliklerini yansıtmaktadır. Çalışma, Türkiye'deki ELT programlarının yansıtıcı öğretim uygulamalarının entegrasyonu, uygulama süresinin uzatılması, bağımsız dış akreditasyon sistemlerinin kurulması ve hizmet içi öğretmenler için sürekli mesleki gelişim olanaklarının sağlanması yoluyla güçlendirilebileceğini göstermektedir. ABD uygulamalarından elde edilen çıkarımlardan yararlanılması, Türkiye'deki öğretmen yetiştirme sisteminin modernizasyonunu ve uluslararası uyumlaştırılmasını destekleyerek, geleceğin öğretmenlerinin küreselleşen İngilizce öğretimi bağlamının karmaşık gereksinimlerini karşılamaya daha iyi hazırlanmalarını sağlayabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İngilizce öğretmeni yetiştirme; müfredat; öğretmenlik uygulaması; akreditasyon; Türkiye–ABD karşılaştırması

INTRODUCTION

English has emerged as the global lingua franca, serving as a critical tool for international communication, academic collaboration, and participation in the global economy (Crystal, 2013). Consequently, the preparation of qualified English language teachers has become a strategic priority for many nations seeking to improve language education quality and meet international standards. Teacher education programs are central to this effort, as they equip future educators with the linguistic proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, and practical skills necessary for effective teaching in diverse educational settings (Darling-Hammond, 2017).

In the United States, professional standards for English language teaching have been established and refined over decades. The TESOL International Association, founded in 1966, plays a pivotal role in defining standards for the preparation of PreK–12 English language teachers, providing performance-based guidelines that inform teacher education and accreditation (TESOL, 2018). Similarly, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), established in 1967, has developed proficiency guidelines that shape curriculum design and assessment practices (ACTFL, 2012). Accreditation is further overseen by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), which ensures that programs meet rigorous national

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standards for teacher preparation (CAEP, 2023). These organizations collectively emphasize student-centered pedagogy, continuous professional development, and standards-based instruction.

In Turkey, English teacher education is primarily regulated by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) and the Ministry of National Education (MEB) (Kırkgöz, 2009). Turkish teacher education policies are guided by national legislation such as Basic Law No. 1739, which outlines the general competencies required of teachers, including pedagogical formation, subject matter expertise, and ongoing professional growth (MEB, 2017). Over time, foreign language education in Turkey has undergone significant reforms, particularly since the 1980s, reflecting efforts to modernize the education system and align it with global trends (Öztürk & Aydın, 2019).

Despite sharing the common goal of preparing effective English language teachers, the U.S. and Turkey differ substantially in terms of program structures, curriculum content, practicum experiences, and quality assurance mechanisms. These variations are shaped by differences in educational policy, institutional frameworks, and socio-cultural contexts (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Kırkgöz, 2009).

This study aims to conduct a systematic comparison of undergraduate English teacher education programs in the United States and Turkey. Specifically, it addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the similarities and differences between U.S. and Turkish English teacher education programs regarding structure, content, and implementation?

2. How can insights from U.S. practices inform the enhancement of English Language Teaching (ELT) programs in Turkey?

By providing a cross-cultural comparative analysis, this research seeks to contribute to the field of teacher education and offer evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, curriculum designers, and teacher educators striving to align national programs with international standards and better prepare future teachers for the challenges of globalized language education.

METHOD

Research Model

This study employed a qualitative comparative case study design to systematically examine and contrast English language teacher education programs in the United States and Turkey. Comparative case study approaches are well-suited for analyzing educational programs across different cultural and institutional contexts because they allow for the identification of both shared characteristics and context-specific variations (Yin, 2018). The research focused on undergraduate English teacher education programs, as these constitute the foundational stage of professional preparation for prospective teachers. By analyzing policies, curricular frameworks,

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

and practicum structures, the study aimed to generate insights that can inform educational reforms and policy decisions (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Data Collection

The data were collected through document analysis, a method commonly used in comparative education research to systematically review and interpret existing documents such as curriculum guides, policy statements, and accreditation standards (Bowen, 2009). This method was selected because it provides access to authoritative and publicly available sources while enabling historical and contextual interpretation.

For the United States, the following primary data sources were analyzed:

•   TESOL Standards for P–12 Teacher Preparation Programs (TESOL, 2018)

•   ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (ACTFL, 2012)

•   Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) Standards (CAEP, 2023)

•   Undergraduate curriculum structures of three accredited U.S. teacher preparation programs, selected from institutions ranked among the top 50 by U.S. News & World Report in education programs.

For Turkey, the data sources included:

•   National legislation such as the Basic Law of National Education (Law No. 1739) and related teacher education policies (MEB, 2017).

•   English Language Teaching (ELT) undergraduate curricula from three leading public universities.

•   Academic studies and reports on Turkish teacher education systems (Kırkgöz, 2009; Öztürk & Aydın, 2019; Tunaz & Sarıçoban, 2023).

The inclusion of multiple universities from both countries aimed to ensure representativeness and capture institutional variations within each context. Publicly available documents were downloaded between August and September 2025, ensuring the most recent data were used.

Data Analysis

A thematic analysis approach was applied to the data following the guidelines of Braun and Clarke (2006). This method allows for the systematic identification, organization, and interpretation of patterns, or themes, within qualitative datasets. The analysis began with an extended familiarization phase, during which all documents were read multiple times to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the content. Subsequently, segments of text relevant to the research questions were highlighted and labeled with initial codes, such as "program length," "practicum structure," and "accreditation standards." These codes were then examined for similarities and relationships, leading to the development of broader themes,

177

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

including program structure, curriculum content, field experience, and quality assurance mechanisms. A comparative analysis was finally conducted to explore similarities, differences, and points of convergence or divergence between the United States and Turkish datasets.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

The trustworthiness of the study was established through several methodological strategies. Credibility was enhanced by triangulating multiple data sources, including policy documents, university curricula, and accreditation standards from both countries, following the recommendations of Lincoln and Guba (1985). Dependability was ensured through the maintenance of a clear audit trail that documented all decisions related to data selection, coding, and analysis procedures. Confirmability was supported through peer debriefing with two experts in comparative education, which helped minimize researcher bias and ensure the robustness of interpretations. Transferability was addressed by providing detailed descriptions of the educational contexts in both the United States and Turkey, enabling readers to evaluate the applicability of findings to other settings. As the study relied exclusively on publicly available documents and involved no human participants, formal institutional review board (IRB) approval was not required. Nevertheless, all sources were cited accurately, and copyright as well as intellectual property guidelines were rigorously followed in accordance with the ethical standards outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2020).

FINDINGS

The analysis revealed several key differences and similarities between the English teacher education programs in the United States and Turkey. These findings are organized into four main thematic areas: program structure, curriculum content, field experience, and quality assurance mechanisms. Each theme reflects how policies, historical developments, and educational priorities shape teacher preparation in both contexts.

Program Structure

Both the U.S. and Turkey offer four-year undergraduate programs to prepare English language teachers. However, substantial differences exist in the flexibility and autonomy of program design. In the United States, teacher education programs have considerable institutional freedom to design curricula, allowing universities to include elective courses and interdisciplinary content that align with regional needs and educational innovations (CAEP, 2023). This flexible model enables programs to adapt to evolving trends in English language teaching and address the diverse requirements of local school districts. In contrast, Turkey's programs are highly centralized under the control of the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), which mandates a standardized national curriculum for all English Language Teaching (ELT) departments (Kırkgöz, 2009; MEB, 2017). This approach ensures consistency across institutions but limits universities' ability to innovate or tailor programs to specific contexts. The centralized model also means that changes to curricula require

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

top-down policy reforms, which can delay responsiveness to emerging global pedagogical trends.

Curriculum Content

U.S. programs demonstrate a balanced integration of theory and practice, combining coursework in linguistics, second language acquisition, instructional technology, and culturally responsive pedagogy (TESOL, 2018; Darling-Hammond, 2017). Reflective practice is embedded throughout the curriculum, encouraging teacher candidates to critically analyze their instructional approaches and adapt strategies to meet diverse learner needs. Furthermore, general education courses outside of teacher preparation are typically included, providing future teachers with a broader liberal arts foundation that strengthens critical thinking and interdisciplinary competence. Turkish programs, while similar in including foundational courses such as linguistics and teaching methodology, place heavier emphasis on theoretical knowledge. Several studies have highlighted that Turkish ELT curricula often lack sufficient opportunities for reflective teaching and technology integration, resulting in a gap between teacher preparation and contemporary classroom demands (Öztürk & Aydın, 2019; Seferoğlu, 2006). Additionally, U.S. programs tend to integrate courses that promote culturally responsive teaching and inclusive practices, a component that remains underdeveloped in many Turkish programs.

Field Experience

Field experience is one of the most striking differences between the two contexts. In the U.S., teacher preparation is characterized by extensive and ongoing practicum experiences. Pre-service teachers engage in supervised teaching placements throughout their studies, culminating in a year-long capstone practicum. These experiences are guided by clear performance-based standards and provide opportunities for continuous mentorship, reflection, and feedback (CAEP, 2023; TESOL, 2018). In Turkey, field experience is primarily limited to the final year of the program and often consists of a single semester-long practicum (Seferoğlu, 2006; MEB, 2017). While this model exposes teacher candidates to classroom environments, the short duration limits their opportunities to develop practical skills and confidence before entering the workforce. Recent discussions in the literature have emphasized the need to extend practicum periods and enhance mentorship structures to better bridge the gap between theory and practice (Tunaz & Sarıçoban, 2023).

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

In the U.S., multiple independent organizations ensure rigorous quality assurance in teacher education. CAEP, TESOL International Association, and ACTFL establish comprehensive standards for program evaluation, accreditation, and continuous improvement (ACTFL, 2012; CAEP, 2023). These bodies emphasize accountability, measurable outcomes, and the preparation of teachers who meet national and international benchmarks. External reviews and performance assessments are integral to maintaining high standards. In Turkey, oversight is primarily managed by YÖK and the Ministry of National Education. While recent reforms have introduced updated teacher competency frameworks and national quality criteria, accreditation

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

processes remain less standardized and lack the external independence found in the U.S. system (MEB, 2017). This difference has implications for the consistency and adaptability of English teacher education across Turkish institutions. The summary of the comparison between two settings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Comparative summary

Theme	United States	Turkey
Program Structure	Four-year degree with flexible, institution-driven curriculum; elective and interdisciplinary courses (CAEP, 2023)	Four-year degree with nationally standardized, centrally regulated curriculum (Kırkgöz, 2009; MEB, 2017; Tunaz & Sarıçoban, 2023)
Curriculum Content	Balanced theory and practice; reflective teaching, technology, culturally responsive pedagogy (TESOL, 2018)	Theory-focused with limited reflective practice and technology integration (Öztürk & Aydın, 2019)
Field Experience	Ongoing supervised practicum throughout program; year-long final placement (CAEP, 2023; TESOL, 2018)	Single semester practicum in final year; limited practical exposure (MEB, 2017; Tunaz & Sarıçoban, 2023)
Quality Assurance	External, multi-agency accreditation with rigorous evaluation and accountability (ACTFL, 2012; CAEP, 2023)	Internal oversight by YÖK and MEB; limited independent accreditation (MEB, 2017)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates that while both nations aim to prepare highly qualified English language teachers, their approaches diverge in terms of program flexibility, curriculum design, field experiences, and quality assurance mechanisms. These differences can be traced back to variations in educational governance and reform trajectories.

First, the program structure in the U.S. reflects a decentralized model in which universities exercise considerable autonomy over curriculum design. This flexibility supports innovation, regional adaptation, and responsiveness to emerging pedagogical trends (CAEP, 2023). Conversely, Turkey's system is centrally managed by YÖK, which mandates a standardized curriculum across all institutions (Kırkgöz, 2009; MEB, 2017). While this standardization ensures consistency and equal access to educational content nationwide, it limits institutions' ability to tailor programs to

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

local or international developments. This finding aligns with previous research emphasizing that centralized systems often face challenges in responding quickly to global trends in language education (Tunaz & Sarıçoban, 2023).

Second, the analysis of curriculum content revealed that U.S. programs maintain a balanced integration of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, incorporating courses on reflective teaching, instructional technology, and culturally responsive pedagogy (TESOL, 2018; Darling-Hammond, 2017). By contrast, Turkish curricula are more theory-oriented, with fewer opportunities for teacher candidates to engage in reflective practices or acquire competencies in technology-enhanced and inclusive teaching (Öztürk & Aydın, 2019; Seferoğlu, 2006). This imbalance reflects a gap between teacher preparation and the rapidly evolving demands of 21st-century classrooms, particularly with regard to technology integration and differentiated instruction.

The theme of field experience emerged as a key differentiator. In the U.S., extensive and continuous practicum experiences, including year-long final placements, enable teacher candidates to develop confidence and refine their pedagogical skills through sustained mentorship and feedback (CAEP, 2023; TESOL, 2018). In Turkey, however, field experience remains confined to a single semester in the final year, limiting exposure to diverse teaching contexts and creating challenges in bridging theory and practice (MEB, 2017; Tunaz & Sarıçoban, 2023). This structural difference contributes to discrepancies in teacher readiness and professional identity formation between the two countries.

Finally, quality assurance mechanisms differ significantly. The U.S. relies on multiple independent accrediting bodies, such as CAEP, TESOL, and ACTFL, which enforce rigorous external evaluations and promote continuous improvement (ACTFL, 2012; CAEP, 2023). Turkey's quality assurance framework, while improving through recent reforms, remains largely internal and dependent on national agencies, limiting transparency and comparability across institutions (MEB, 2017). This suggests a need for greater external review processes to enhance accountability and international alignment.

Implications for Policy and Practice

The findings of this study reveal several important implications for policymakers, curriculum designers, and teacher educators in Turkey. To improve the effectiveness and international alignment of English Language Teaching (ELT) programs, a series of targeted reforms should be considered.

There is a clear need for curricular innovation. Turkish ELT programs would benefit from integrating reflective teaching methodologies and digital pedagogy into the core curriculum. By placing greater emphasis on reflection and technology-enhanced teaching, teacher candidates can be better prepared to meet the demands of modern classrooms. Additionally, expanding course offerings to include inclusive and culturally responsive practices would help future teachers develop the skills necessary to effectively address the needs of diverse learner populations.

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MOMENTUM GLOBAL
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

ELT-ICRAL 2025

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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Another crucial area for reform involves field experiences. The current practicum model, which is limited to a single semester, does not provide sufficient opportunities for teacher candidates to apply theoretical knowledge in authentic teaching contexts. Extending the duration of practicum experiences and embedding them throughout the program would help bridge the gap between theory and practice. Establishing strong collaborative partnerships between universities and schools would also provide pre-service teachers with sustained mentorship and more meaningful professional development experiences.

Revisions to accreditation processes are also essential. Establishing independent external accreditation bodies, similar to organizations such as CAEP and TESOL in the United States, could significantly enhance program quality and international credibility. These bodies would ensure that teacher education programs meet transparent and rigorous evaluation standards, promoting consistency across institutions while encouraging innovation and continuous improvement.

Finally, professional development must be viewed as an ongoing process rather than a one-time requirement. Creating structured and continuous professional development pathways for in-service teachers would allow them to adapt to evolving educational challenges, integrate new teaching methodologies, and remain responsive to the needs of their students. By focusing on sustained learning opportunities, the Turkish education system can foster a culture of lifelong growth and ensure that teachers remain well-equipped to provide high-quality instruction.

Conclusion

This comparative study provides a comprehensive overview of how the United States and Turkey prepare English language teachers at the undergraduate level. While both nations share the goal of cultivating effective educators, they diverge in program design, implementation, and evaluation. U.S. programs are characterized by flexibility, extended practicum experiences, and robust external quality assurance, whereas Turkish programs emphasize standardization, theoretical instruction, and centralized oversight. By drawing lessons from U.S. practices, Turkish policymakers and educators can implement targeted reforms to modernize teacher preparation and align it with global standards. These reforms, particularly in the areas of reflective practice, technology integration, and practicum design, are essential for ensuring that future English teachers are well-equipped to meet the demands of 21st-century classrooms.

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THE IMPACTS OF THE LAST LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

SON ÖLÇME DEĞERLENDİRME YÖNETMELİĞİNİN İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN ÖLÇME UYGULAMALARI ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ

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Abstract

Language assessment is one of the key areas of teacher competences, and needs to take place consistently and thoroughly in language classrooms. Despite its various benefits such as insights into students' progress, language development, and instructional planning and practices, comprehensive language assessment persists as an important weakness in many language classrooms. Teachers, often, majorly administer 'grammar' tests of gap filling, matching, and multiple choice to ascertain whether specific grammar structures have been learnt besides limited assessment of reading and vocabulary knowledge. However, the regulations introduced by the Ministry of National Education on September 9, 2023 require language teachers to administer listening and speaking tests separately while they can assess grammar, vocabulary, reading, and writing through pen and paper tests. The teachers also need to use rubrics, checklists, and scales besides games for young learners' assessment. At this point, the preparedness of English teachers for this change and their ability to integrate the regulations into their assessment practices matters, although the literature reports inadequate preparedness due to training, time, and experience constraints. Hence, through open-ended surveys we elicited secondary school English language teachers' (*N*= 12) responses regarding if the new regulations impacted their language assessment practices. The results reveal various responses ranging from confirmation of a change to no change at all. The ones agreeing with the positive impacts of the regulations report that they can better and in a more detailed fashion assess the learning outcomes, and students attribute greater

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS

26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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significance to listening and speaking activities. However, some reported that the regulations have not caused any changes as they already assess four skills. Besides, the majority said they do not administer game-based assessment. The results highlight some challenges such as excessive paperwork and workload despite lack of compatibility for every grade and inadequate time encountered during the implementation of new changes.

Keywords: English language teaching, game-based assessment, language assessment, language teachers

Özet

Dil değerlendirmesi, öğretmen yeterliliklerinin temel alanlarından biridir ve dil sınıflarında tutarlı ve kapsamlı bir şekilde gerçekleştirilmesi gerekmektedir. Öğrencilerin ilerlemesi, dil gelişimi, öğretim planlaması ve uygulamaları hakkında bilgi sağlaması gibi çeşitli faydalarına rağmen, kapsamlı dil değerlendirmesi birçok dil sınıfında önemli bir zayıflık olarak varlığını sürdürmektedir. Öğretmenler, okuma ve kelime bilgisinin sınırlı değerlendirilmesinin yanı sıra, belirli dil bilgisi yapılarının öğrenilip öğrenilmediğini tespit etmek için çoğunlukla boşluk doldurma, eşleştirme ve çoktan seçmeli 'dil bilgisi' testleri uygularlar. Ancak, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından 9 Eylül 2023'te yürürlüğe giren düzenlemeler, dil öğretmenlerinin dinleme ve konuşma testlerini ayrı uygulamasını gerektirirken, öğretmenler dil bilgisi, kelime bilgisi, okuma ve yazma becerilerini kalem ve kağıt sınavlarıyla değerlendirebilirler. Öğretmenlerin ayrıca, küçük öğrencilerin değerlendirilmesi için oyunların yanı sıra değerlendirme ölçütleri, kontrol listeleri ve ölçekler kullanmaları gerekmektedir. Bu noktada, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin bu değişime hazırbulunuşlukları ve düzenlemeleri değerlendirme uygulamalarına entegre etme becerileri önemlidir; ancak ilgili alanyazın, eğitim, zaman ve deneyim kısıtlamaları nedeniyle yetersiz hazırlığı bildirmektedir. Bu nedenle, açık uçlu anketler aracılığıyla, ortaokul İngilizce öğretmenlerinin (N = 12) yeni düzenlemelerin dil değerlendirme uygulamalarını etkileyip etkilemediğine ilişkin yanıtlarını aldık. Sonuçlar, bir değişikliğin onaylanmasından hiç değişiklik yapılmamasına kadar çeşitli yanıtları ortaya koydu. Düzenlemelerin olumlu etkilerine katılanlar, öğrenme çıktılarını daha iyi ve daha ayrıntılı bir şekilde değerlendirebildiklerini bildirirken, öğrenciler dinleme ve konuşma etkinliklerine daha fazla önem atfediyor. Ancak bazıları, düzenlemelerin halihazırda dört beceriyi değerlendirdiği için herhangi bir değişikliğe yol açmadığını bildirdi. Ayrıca, çoğunluk oyun tabanlı değerlendirme uygulamadıklarını belirtti. Sonuçlar, her sınıf için uyumsuzluk ve yetersiz zamana rağmen aşırı evrak işi ve iş yükü gibi yeni değişikliklerin uygulanması sırasında karşılaşılan bazı zorlukları vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İngilizce dil öğretimi, dil değerlendirmesi, dil öğretmenleri, oyun tabanlı değerlendirme

INTRODUCTION

Teachers' knowledge and competency base includes various areas ranging from the arrangement of teaching and learning environments to gaining professional development. Assessing and monitoring language growth is another competency domain. According to Coombe et al. (2007, p.xiii) "assessment includes a broad range of activities and tasks that teachers use to evaluate student progress and growth on a daily basis." Also, accompanied by value judgment, assessment is a comprehensive decision-making process that takes place at every stage of the learning process.

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL
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9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
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There are various reasons requiring assessment to take place at different points in teaching and learning. The first is to check students' current knowledge before the learning process. The second is used to monitor students' development and progress throughout the process, make improvements, and provide feedback. The third is to determine whether the course objectives have been achieved at the end of the process (Çelik & Coombee, 2021).

Various item types can be used for assessment. Conventional assessment frequently employs such items as multiple choice, short answer, and true-false questions. However, such items, if not developed by trained test developers, only assess students' cognitive skills to some extent. This has led to the emergence of alternative assessment methods (Fadilah et al., 2023). Alternative assessment is important and necessary for assessing what students can do using the language, rather than simply their knowledge of it. Therefore, alternative assessment options such as portfolios, writing diaries, drama, role-play, and checklists can be used (Çelik & Coombee, 2021).

Everything in the teaching process takes place in line with predetermined goals and outcomes. Each prepared instructional material, content, and resource are organized to achieve these goals. At this point, many factors, besides the curriculum goals, students' readiness, needs, learning styles, and individual differences, influence the instructional process. However, a successful teaching and learning process goes far beyond simply achieving the set goal at the end of the process. Successful and effective teaching requires planning and implementing instruction in line with established objectives, and monitoring and improvement throughout the process. Therefore, quality-assessment is necessary to understand whether and to what extent students have achieved these objectives (Şahinkarakaş, 2012).

Teachers' knowledge and competences of assessment are key for valid and reliable assessment (Hidri, 2021). Language teachers' ability to gather, interpret, analyze, and make necessary changes to student learning is called assessment literacy (Inbar-Lourie, 2008). The higher a teacher's assessment literacy, the more likely they are to improve and develop the learning process.

For this reason, the Ministry of National Education in Türkiye pays special attention to comprehensive and appropriate assessment at all levels and grades. For standardization, the ministry announced a regulatory document in September 2023.

Assessment in Language Education

Learning is a continuous and lifelong process; however, the quality of classroom learning is largely affected by teachers' quality in different competency domains. Their knowledge and assessment literacy has a particular impact on the quality and extent of student learning. Therefore, monitoring and evaluating student learning has a key role (Eren Yavuz, 2025).

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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Language learning goes far beyond simply learning the rules of a language. When teaching a language, it's crucial to consider not only students' cognitive knowledge of that language but also how they can use it in daily life. In other words, when assessing language learning, it's crucial to assess what students can do using the language in daily life. At this point, alternative assessment methods should be preferred over traditional assessment methods. One of the most important reasons for this is that traditional assessment provides a one-time assessment, while alternative assessment methods provide ongoing assessment throughout the process. Furthermore, unlike traditional assessment methods, alternative assessment is a classroom-based assessment. It provides feedback to both students and teachers, making it more authentic and contextualized (Bailey, 1998, as cited in Coombee et al., 2012, p. 149). Alternative assessment is invaluable for a more effective language learning and assessment process. Furthermore, in the language teaching and assessment process, the four basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) must be addressed, developed, and assessed together, because language is a whole. At this point, teachers need to have knowledge of how to teach and assess different language skills (Öz & Atay, 2017).

2023 Assessment Regulations

When we look at foreign language education in Türkiye, we see that up until September 9, 2023 there were no specific regulations for language assessment. However, this situation changed with the new regulation published in the Official Gazette by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE hereafter) on September 9, 2023. According to the new regulation, exams administered in language classes (Turkish and English) in schools must be written and practical to measure the four basic language skills (Official Gazette, 2023).

Above all, it is important to clearly understand how teachers are expected to conduct assessments after this change. According to the regulation (MoNE, 2023, p. 2-3), the following points are emphasized:

- The timing of all assessment practices are now predetermined. For instance, 1st exams are conducted between the last and first weeks of October-November.

- Exams (to be conducted by schools) have to consist of open-ended and short-answer questions. No closed-ended items such as multiple choice, true-falses and matchings are allowed.

- Working with teachers at schools, the Language Assessment and Evaluation Centers in each town prepare topic-question distribution tables which are published by MoNE to guide language assessment practices at schools.

- Teachers are expected to assess the four language skills and utilize alternative and self-assessment methods.

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

- Formal assessment is not allowed at primary school level.

  o Formative assessment should be used.

  o Observation of student participation in individual and group work is crucial.

  o Game-based assessment should be used.

  o Task-based assessment should be used.

- Process-oriented & formative assessment should be adopted, and student progress should be closely monitored.

- For the development of higher-order skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, interpreting, assessment is performed through scenarios (scenario-based assessment).

It is clearly seen in the regulations that the new assessment method attaches great importance to students receiving feedback throughout the process, using their language skills more actively, and being closely monitored throughout the process. The impact of this assessment regulation, which has been in effect for approximately three years, on teachers is a significant issue.

When the studies conducted on this subject were examined, the results revealed some ideas about the latest regulation. Teachers' comparison of students' grades before and after the new regulations revealed an increase in their achievement despite inadequate performance in listening exams (see Kasımoğlu & Karakuş, 2025). Disallowance of multiple choice, True/False, or matching items reduced the guess factor (see Kasımoğlu & Karakuş, 2025). Majority of teachers believe that the new assessment system provides students with opportunities to develop various language skills and increases their interest (Çelik & Sur, 2025).

Çelik and Sur (2025) examined the opinions and evaluations of 24 teachers regarding the newly introduced assessment and evaluation regulations for Turkish and English courses. The study found that the vast majority of teachers believe the new assessment system provides students with opportunities to develop various language skills and increases their interest. Some even stated that this change should have been implemented a long time ago. However, it was revealed that the majority of teachers do not consider themselves competent to conduct assessment and evaluation under the new system and require more in-service training. Only nine teachers claimed to be competent in the assessment process. Furthermore, the study findings indicate that such assessments, especially in large classes, are more time-consuming, and teachers are requesting new lesson hours and curriculum changes.

Teachers' evaluation processes should be aligned with the methods and procedures they use in teaching. If the new evaluation system proposes to measure the four basic

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

skills separately and evaluate students throughout the process, teachers' in- and out-of-class instructional activities should also align with this. At this point, the methods and techniques teachers use in the classroom, how they realize the curricular goals, and how they evaluate teaching outcomes are important.

A review of the relevant literature reveals that studies conducted after the new foreign language education assessment system introduced by MoNE in 2023 include topics such as the general opinions of Turkish and English teachers and the advantages and disadvantages of its implementation. At this point, it is necessary to examine the teaching and assessment system teachers used before the current regulation and the methodological and technical changes that occurred in the teaching and assessment processes after the regulation. This study is essentially a needs assessment and aims to reveal whether teachers have adapted to the new assessment process and what they need to do so. The purpose of this study was to reveal the differences in teachers' teaching and evaluation processes before and after the change.

METHOD

Research Methodology

This is a qualitative study to reveal how the teaching and assessment processes of 12 (female=7, male=5) secondary school English teachers were affected after the last assessment regulation. A qualitative method was most appropriate for understanding participants' perspectives and experiences.

To find answers to the aforementioned research purpose, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What teaching methods, approaches, and techniques are commonly employed by English language teachers (herafter ELT) teachers?

2. What methods, techniques, and tools are most commonly used for formative assessment by ELT teachers?

3. Are ELT teachers prepared for the MoNE's 2023 regulations for language assessment?

     3a. Do they report any changes in their language assessment practices after the regulations?

Study Material/Population and Sample

An open-ended survey was conducted to allow participants to share their experiences before and after the assessment regulation in detail. Participants were informed about the study and provided their consent through an online form. Participants were teachers working in public schools in the northeast of Türkiye. They ranged in age from 26 to 46, and their years of experience ranged from three to 16 years. It was important for participants to have teaching experience prior to the last reform, so teachers with at least three years of experience were included in the study. All participants were teachers working in secondary schools. Nine of the participants

189

ANKARA
HACI BAYRAM VELİ UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ULEAD

macmillan education

REGIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE OFFICE

MOMENTUM GLOBAL

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS

26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025

ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

reported having a degree in English language teaching, two in English Language and Literature, and one in Linguistics. All participants reported having taken a testing and assessment course in foreign language teaching during their undergraduate education.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected through an open-ended Google survey (Fraser, 2024) consisting of 7 questions about participants' teaching and assessment processes before and after the regulation. Data collected during the study was used solely for the purpose of the study, and participants' personal information was kept confidential. Besides, in qualitative research, content analysis is crucial for deeply examining the data. In content analysis, codes are words or phrases that describe the essence of the data obtained. Codes reflect the content of the data, and in thematic analysis, similar codes are combined into themes (Saldana, 2013). Thus, the essence of the data obtained is presented in a clear and understandable way. Therefore, in this study, participants' opinions and experiences regarding the last assessment regulation were analyzed using content analysis. Data were presented with codes, sub codes and direct quotes.

Data Collection Tool

For data collection, we developed an open-ended survey. The form consisted of two sections: in the demographic info section, issues regarding their age, years of experience, and whether they had taken assessment courses were asked. In the language assessment practices section, the teachers were asked about their teaching and assessment experiences, for instance the teaching and assessment methods and techniques they have employed before and after the last assessment regulation, their formative assessment practices, how they assess young learners, whether they use game-based assessment and their perceptions regarding their preparedness to satisfy the language assessment regulations.

Validity and Reliability

The open-ended survey form was prepared by taking expert opinion and then a pilot study was conducted with 5 teachers. After the pilot study, the questions were improved and presented again for expert opinion. Finally, the survey form was shared with the participants, based on voluntariness, via Google Survey.

FINDINGS

R.Q.1. What teaching methods, approaches, and techniques are commonly employed by ELT teachers?

According to the last assessment regulation, teachers are expected to conduct a process-oriented assessment and provide regular feedback. It also emphasizes the need to assess students' four language skills through alternative assessments and self-assessments. Given that teaching methods must be compatible with assessment methods for effective and accurate assessments, it is important to first understand the methods and techniques teachers use in their classes and the factors they

ANKARA
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SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES
ULEAD

macmillan education
REGIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE OFFICE
MOMENTUM GLOBAL
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

consider when selecting them. Therefore, teachers were first asked what methods, techniques, and approaches they use in their classes. (Table 1).

Table 1.

Methods, techniques, and approaches used by English teachers in the classroom.

Techniques	Approaches and Principles:	Factors influencing method selection:
- Presentation and guided discovery *(n=2)* - Question-Answer *(n=2)* - Demonstration *(n=1)* - Role play *(n=1)* - Drama *(n=1)* - Gamification *(n=1)* - Group Work *(n=1)* - Matching *(n=1)*	- Grammar Translation Method (GTM) *(n=2)* - Direct Method *(n=2)* - Communicative Language Teaching *(n=2)* - Task Based Learning (TBL) *(n=1)* - Project Based Learning *(n=1)* - Audiolingual Method *(n=2)* - Eclectic Method *(n=2)*	- Class size *(n=2)* - Grade level *(n=4)* - Course topic *(n=3)* - Annual plan & Curriculum *(n=1)* - Students' learning styles & age, readiness *(n= 3)* - Materials *(n=1)*

As seen in Table 1, the participants stated that they mostly used presentation and guided-discovery, question and answer techniques in their classes. The most frequently used teaching approaches included GTM, Direct Method, CLT, Audiolingual, and Eclectic Method. When participants were asked about the factors influencing their choice of teaching methods and techniques, they most frequently cited grade level, course topic, students' learning styles, age, and readiness.

Additionally, the participants were asked which activities they used most during the course and which language skills they focused on most during the course (Table 2).

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

Table 2.

Activities used by teachers mostly in classroom and language skills they focus on mostly.

Activities:	*Language Skills*
• Interactive books • Pre-made / Handmade materials • Photocopies • Role-play • Story reading / completion • Traditional / web-based games • Journal writing • Simple phonics exercises	• Listening *(n=8)* • Speaking *(n=8)* • Vocabulary *(n=3)* • Grammar *(n=1)* • Reading *(n=8)* • Writing *(n=5)*

As seen, the activities participants used during class ranged from using interactive books to photocopying, from role-playing and drama to simple phonic exercises. Participants emphasized that they focused most on listening, speaking, and reading skills in their classes. Vocabulary and grammar were the language skills that received less emphasis compared to other skills. Participants also noted that they focused on writing skills at the end of units and as homework assignments due to limited time.

R.Q.2. What methods, techniques, and tools are most commonly used for formative assessment by ELT teachers?

Additionally, participants were asked which methods and techniques they used for formative assessment. They responded with "Asking questions" (*n=11*), "Observations" (*n=4*), "Pair/group work" (*n=1*), "Presentation, Drama and Role Play" (*n=1*), and "Test and Worksheets" (*n=6*). Participants also stated that they were able to observe students' learning progress during homework checks and in-class activities (*n=2*). Some of the participants' answers were as follows;

"I ask questions. I give vocabulary and assessment exams at the end of each unit." (P3)

"We use rubrics to conduct listening and speaking exams. We also conduct mini presentations and role plays. From time to time, we offer reading comprehension tests or worksheets. We can measure knowledge levels and speaking skills through question-and-answer sessions." (P7)

ANKARA
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SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES
ULEAD

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

Additionally, all participants said they gave feedback to students on homework checks and in-class activities.

"I check homework before each lesson and I always use feedback, corrections and reinforcements in the lesson." (P6)

"I always check homework. I always do it myself at the beginning of the lesson. We always answer the homework together in class so they can see their shortcomings. I explain the missing parts again." (P7)

"I give both written and verbal feedback after each assignment. I also have them repeat the missing or incorrect parts correctly in class." (P9)

R.Q.3. Are ELT teachers prepared for the MoNE's 2023 regulations for language assessment?

At this point, an important issue was how ready and competent teachers felt for the last assessment regulation. The participants were asked how competent they considered themselves in the assessment. Some participants expressed that they felt partially competent (competent in theory, not in practice) (*n=4*). Only a few expressed that they felt competent in this regard (*n=3*). Most participants (*n=5*) stated that they considered themselves incompetent in assessment.

"Yes, I never had any difficulties when I started working because we had not only theoretical but also practical experience." (P9)

"I don't think so because I wasn't taught anything other than the basics." (P12)

> I think so, partially. I learned a bit about the concepts, but I don't think they were very helpful in the process because we should have practiced more. Even if I understood the theory, there were parts I didn't understand in practice. Because of my experience, I don't consider myself very competent, but since I work in the public school, I think it works more systematically because we prepare scales based on a specific scenario. What I don't consider competent is that in practice, I still get confused about what to prepare and how, because so many things really influence this process. Therefore, I would have liked to have taught a course on what these effects might be. (P11)

R.Q.3a. Do they report any changes in their language assessment practices after the regulations?

The data showed that the participants had different opinions about the changes in the methods and techniques and their ideas in practice after the last assessment regulations. Only three participants stated that they had experienced no change.

Other participants stated that they made changes to their in-class teaching and assessment processes. Some participants expressed satisfaction with these changes, while others expressed dissatisfaction. For example;

> Class sizes and our current class hours don't allow us to comfortably and efficiently conduct our practice exams. I'm aware that many of my friends,

ANKARA
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SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ULEAD

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REGIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE OFFICE

MOMENTUM GLOBAL

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

ELT-ICRAL 2025

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

including me, are struggling to complete the units and objectives. Class hours should either be increased or the objectives should be systematically reduced. (P1)

"With the new system, we can more clearly perceive the extent of learning, but our class hours are insufficient for practice exams." (P2)

"We conduct a more detailed assessment with this assessment system." (P10)

Some participants noted that they had more opportunities for in-class practice related to learning outcomes and the opportunity to assess learning outcomes and language skills separately and in more detail. For example,

"This change has led me to assess speaking skills separately and in more detail." (P7)

However, they also emphasized that this led to problems such as workload, excessive paperwork, incomplete curriculum, insufficient class time, and difficulties implementing in crowded classrooms. Moreover, almost all participants stated that they prepared rubrics for speaking and listening skills and used answer keys for writing and reading. Only one participant stated that due to time constraints, he used only the answer key and rating scale, not the rubric or checklist.

Moreover, participants were asked whether they used game-based assessment in their classes. Only two participants stated that they already used game-based assessment and that this method reduced students' anxiety and stress and increased their motivation. Other participants stated that they did not use game-based assessment and also expressed a lack of knowledge about it. One of the participants expressed her opinion on this issue as follows;

" I think the information about the new regulation was insufficient. As a practitioner, I don't think I have enough knowledge about how this practice should be implemented." (P1)

Similarly, another participant emphasized that she did not have enough knowledge about how to include games in the assessment process;

"I can say I have no knowledge at all. We've always used games, adapting them to our lessons, but I have no knowledge of how to use them for assessment or how to grade students." (P2)

As one of the very novel regulations is game-based assessment especially in secondary and primary school with young learners, we asked the teachers whether they employed GBA and if yes what conventional and digital technologies they use to do so. Their answers revealed that they only sometimes used Kahoot!, Wordwall, Socrative tools, and drama for formative assessment in their classes.

Finally, the participants have some recommendations for their colleagues and future teachers based on their own experiences after the last assessment regulations;

- Assessment should be a tool in the teaching process and support the learning process.

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SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES
ULEAD

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REGIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE OFFICE
MOMENTUM
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

ELT-ICRAL 2025

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

- Assessment tools should be meticulously prepared, and teachers should be provided with the necessary infrastructure and time support.

- Pre-service English teachers should learn and practice more process-oriented assessment methods.

- Student progress should be monitored throughout the process, and appropriate measures and improvements should be implemented.

- Students' enthusiasm and motivation for the assessment process should be increased through activities such as pre-practice and sample topics.

- The weekly English class hours should be increased, ensuring that the curriculum focuses on everyday English use rather than exam-focused.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The data indicate that the last assessment regulation requires the assessment of four language skills. While this change is viewed positively by some teachers, implementation deficiencies are evident. Similar to the results of other studies in the literature (Kasımoğlu & Karakuş, 2025; Sevim & Yılmaz, 2024), this study reveals that teachers most frequently emphasize factors such as workload, time loss, and incomplete curriculum coverage. At this point, the extent to which teachers are competent and assessment-literate is crucial. (Kasımoğlu & Karakuş, 2025; Çerçi 2018) Furthermore, as emphasized in Sevim and Yılmaz's (2024) study, this study also demonstrates that teachers are not sufficiently prepared and knowledgeable about this change, which complicates teachers' work and impacts the effectiveness of the assessment process. Therefore, before such regulations are introduced, teachers should better be trained through in-service training programs.

Skill-focused instruction and assessments are crucial for developing students' higher-order thinking skills (Çintaş Yıldız, 2015). The regulations aim teachers to perform such assessment through scenario-based assessment which is known to promote students' higher order thinking and problem solving skills. While this is the ultimate goal of the new assessment system, its current success in practice is debatable. Failure to conduct effective assessments can lead to student failure and inaccurate assessment results. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to be more aware, knowledgeable, and skilled in this area. Besides, majority of the teachers report to be challenged by writing scenarios for assessment purposes, and the sample scenarios provided by the Ministry in the topic-question distribution documents are known to be insufficiently good examples.

Furthermore, the study results reveal that the vast majority of teachers do not consider themselves sufficiently competent in assessment due to reasons such as a lack of theoretical knowledge, practical experience, and professional experience. Therefore, in addition to in-service training and practical experience, teachers should be provided with the necessary theoretical knowledge and practice opportunities to acquire the assessment skills required by the new regulation before their service. In

195

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

addition to the lack of appropriate materials highlighted in the literature, it has also been demonstrated that teachers lack sufficient knowledge about game-based assessment. Providing teachers with game-based assessment tools would make their job easier.

Suggestions

Teachers' preparedness to adapt to the changes matter. The majority feel incompetent in language assessment and don't use game-based assessment. Almost all regarded "Question and Answers" as a formative assessment practice. This shows teacher-centered practices are still dominant. Without training them, new regulations are a risk of achievement. Pre-service teachers training the alignment in teacher education curricula should be taken into consideration. Necessary arrangements should be made in in-service teacher training before the change and in the first years of the changes, and teachers should be given both theoretical knowledge and the opportunity to practice. Closer cooperation with the Language Assessment and Evaluation Centers in towns is of great help. English class hours should be increased to make adequate room for effective assessment and better achievement of learning goals. Finally, teachers can use tools like "Breakoutedu," "Flippity," "Baamboozle games," and "LearningApps.org" for alternative assessment in their lessons. Breakoutedu is a paid tool that requires students to complete tasks to unlock. Flippity is completely free and offers students a chance to practice and perform alternative assessments with its different game themes. While Baamboozle games are partially paid, they can be used in teaching and assessment with their unlimited ready-made materials and diverse game options. LearningApps.org provides material support for all subjects.

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE IN THE USE OF FIXED EXPRESSIONS

KALIPLAŞMIŞ İFADELERİN KULLANIMINDA KÜLTÜRÜN ÖNEMİ

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Abstract

The role of culture in comprehending and producing language, particularly fixed expressions such as chunks, fixed phrases, idioms is quite crucial and foundational. Language which has a complex structure is a part of culture from which it emerges. In constructing and conveying messages to the parties communicated, in addition to grammar, lexical items play an important role. These items contain chunks which are pre-fabricated word combinations and idioms whose meanings are not easily deducible from the literal meaning of their components. They all carry not only cultural meanings but also pragmatic functions. However, they usually do not have direct equivalents across languages and hence effective translation of such expressions requires cultural competence beside linguistic proficiency in the language.

Fixed expressions are shaped in accordance with the sociocultural norms of a community and reflect values, behavioral expectations, and communication styles. For instance, an expression of sympathy or appreciation in one culture may involve different degrees of sincerity or formality. Therefore, relying on the literal translation of these phrases can give way to misunderstandings, even offence. Likewise, idioms being connected with a community's traditions and history can cause problems when the translator do not take culture into account in their use. Therefore, being aware of the cultural embedding of such expressions is essential to have a proper communication.

In view of these explanations this study focussed on the use of cultural expressions in translating sentences. Data used in the study came from sentences translated by fifty learners majoring in English and translation engines. The learners taking part in the study were given a cloze test assessing their proficiency level and 14 sentences to be translated from Turkish into English. These sentences were also translated into English by using Deepl Translate, ChatGPT and Google Translate. The results of the study indicated that learners whose level of language proficieny was intermediate had difficulty in translating cultural expressions. They mostly translated the sentences through paraphrasing them. They also made attempts either to translate the expressions literally rather than idiomatically or to omit the target expressions in their translations. The results obtained from machine translation were not very promising, too.

This paper discusses the main findings of the study in detail and considers the pedagogical implications in terms of learners and teachers.

Keywords: Fixed expressions, idioms, machine translation, translation strategies, culture

Özet

Kültürün, dili, özellikle de birlikte kullanılan sözcükler, kalıplaşmış söz öbekleri ve deyimler gibi kalıp ifadeleri anlamada ve üretmede oynadığı rol oldukça önemli ve temeldir. Karmaşık bir yapıya sahip olan dil, ortaya çıktığı kültürün bir parçasıdır. İletişim kurulan taraflara mesajları oluşturma ve aktarma sürecinde, dilbilgisine ek olarak sözcüksel unsurlar da önemli bir rol oynar. Bu unsurlar, önceden oluşturulmuş sözcük birleşimlerinden oluşan kalıpları ve anlamları bileşenlerinin sözcük anlamlarından kolayca çıkarılamayan deyimleri içerir. Bu ifadeler yalnızca kültürel anlamlar değil, aynı zamanda edimbilimsel işlevler de taşır. Ancak, genellikle diller arasında doğrudan karşılıkları bulunmadığından, bu tür ifadelerin etkili bir şekilde çevrilmesi dil yeterliliğinin yanı sıra kültürel yeterlilik de gerektirir.

Kalıplaşmış ifadeler, bir topluluğun sosyokültürel normlarına uygun biçimde şekillenir ve o toplumun değerlerini, davranış beklentilerini ve iletişim tarzlarını yansıtır. Örneğin, bir kültürde sempati veya takdir ifade eden bir söz, başka bir kültürde farklı bir samimiyet veya resmiyet düzeyi içerebilir. Bu nedenle, bu tür ifadelerin kelime kelime çevrilmesine güvenmek yanlış anlamalara, hatta kırıcı durumlara yol açabilir. Benzer şekilde, bir topluluğun gelenekleri ve tarihiyle bağlantılı olan deyimler, çevirmenin kültürel bağlamı dikkate almaması durumunda sorun yaratabilir. Dolayısıyla, bu tür ifadelerin kültürel içkinliğinin farkında olmak, doğru bir iletişim için son derece önemlidir.

Bu açıklamalardan hareketle, bu çalışma cümlelerin çevirisinde kültürel ifadelerin kullanımına odaklanmıştır. Çalışmada kullanılan veriler, İngilizce bölümü öğrencisi elli öğrencinin ve çeviri motorlarının yaptığı çevirilerden elde edilmiştir. Çalışmaya katılan öğrencilere, dil yeterlilik düzeylerini ölçmek amacıyla bir boşluk doldurma testi ve Türkçeden İngilizceye çevirmeleri için 14 cümle verilmiştir. Aynı cümleler ayrıca Deepl Translate, ChatGPT ve Google Translate kullanılarak İngilizceye çevrilmiştir. Çalışmanın sonuçları, dil yeterlilik düzeyi orta seviyede olan öğrencilerin kültürel ifadeleri çevirmede zorlandıklarını göstermiştir. Öğrenciler çoğunlukla bu ifadeleri yeniden ifade ederek çevirmiş, bazen deyimleri sözcüğü sözcüğüne çevirmeye ya da hedef ifadeleri çeviriden tamamen çıkarmaya yönelmişlerdir. Makine çevirilerinden elde edilen sonuçlar da pek umut verici değildir.

Bu makale, çalışmanın temel bulgularını ayrıntılı olarak tartışmakta ve öğrenciler ile öğretmenler açısından pedagojik çıkarımları ele almaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kalıplaşmış ifadeler, deyimler, makine çevirisi, çeviri stratejileri, kültür

INTRODUCTION: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Translation which is a complex act involves more than transferring meaning from one language to another. Since messages are produced in a specific language, it should consider the way this language codes the messages in its culture and going beyond linguistic conversion, it has to pass the same sense to the reader or the hearer while

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translating it. In this process culture plays the key role as it influences the meaning creation, interpretation and translation across languages. Being aware of this influence numerous scholars have focussed on culture in translation studies and looked at the place of culture in translation practices and outcomes beside challenges.

In the early studies on translation, linguistic aspects took an important place. However, some theorists realized that having linguistic conversion was not enough as cultural differences were causing difficulty for the interpretation of the messages. In view of this realization Jakobson (1959) divided translation into three categories as *interlingual*, *intralingual* and *intersemiotic*. He explained that interlingual translation is concerned with translation between languages, intralingual translation is the process of rewording of messsages within the same language and intersemiotic translation is related to the translation from one medium to another. He pointed out that interlingual and intralingual translation are problematic because of "untranslatability" linked with cultural specificity.

Eugene Nida (1964) gave weight to translation equivalence by making a distinction between formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. The former focussed on word-for-word translation whereas the latter aimed to have sense-for-sense translation. Nida himself stated the importance of cultural differences and the necessity of taking the differences into account. He approached translation from a linguistic perspective. He emphasised that translation should meet the demands of functional equivalence which is related to audience response. Recognizing the culture as a barrier for message conveyance he put forward dynamic equivalence highlighting the prominence of cultural meaning in addition to lexical meaning in translation to have the same effect on the audience.

In the 1980s and 1990s a new turn was taken in translation studies. Instead of having purely linguistic translation, culture was put into center of translation. Scholars such as Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere (1990) argued that translation is something like cultural rewriting in which cultural norms, power relations and ideology play the key role. Bassnett (1991) described translation as the product associated with the cultural system and this attitude changed the positions of translators from ones transferring words to negotiating both cultural values and meanings. Thus translation was comprehended as intercultural communication beside language conversion.

Lefevere (1992) explicated the concept of "rewriting" and remarked that translations are under the effect of ideology and patronage systems. This explanation implied that culture is an active force in the choice of strategies employed in translation. Therefore, the position of translators was to act as cultural agents in the mediation between source and target cultures. They make changes on texts through adaptation and modifications to make them fit the target culture.

The cultural turn gave way to the involvement of an interdisciplinary approach to translation, relying on anthropology, sociology, cultural studies and postcolonial

201

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theory to strengthen the position of translation as a cultural activity. As a result of this development the cultural equivalence issue became one of the major concerns. Scholars started to debate how cultural elements, such as traditions, social norms, language items like fixed expressions, metaphors and idioms, should be translated. These expressions frequently have no direct equivalents and hence create difficulty to translators. A group of scholars supported the idea of domestication, that is making the text familiar through adaptation to the target culture and another group suggested foreignization, keeping the strangeness of the source culture as it is.

Lawrence Venuti (1995), one of the key figures of translation studies, took side next to the foreignization and said that it is a strategy in which the source culture's difference, in other words 'otherness' is respected. For him domestication erases cultural differences which should remain. On the other hand, Mona Baker (1992) approached the issue from the perspective of adaptation by using practical strategies, such as cultural substitution, omission and explanation. She carried out some corpus-based research to show how translators manage to give cultural items to facilitate comprehension, taking the balance between fidelity and functionality into account.

Postcolonial translation theory, in view of historical and political contexts of cultural domination in the period of colonialism, criticizes the impact of power relations on the translations of texts and emphasised the necessity of showing respect to cultural identity. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1993) introduces the term "subaltern" which concentrates on the representation of voices of marginalized cultures. She draws attention to the ethical aspects connected with cultural appropriation and silencing through translation. Homi Bhabha (1994) puts forth the hybridity theory making reference to the in-between spaces formed through cultural encounters in translation, that is the development of new cultural identities owing to the interaction of source and target cultures.

Later theoretical explanations have noted the significance of pragmatics and discourse analysis in the use of cultural references. Juliane House (1997) develops a model to assess translation quality with regard to cultural factors. In this model the aim is to understand if the target texts matches with the communicative purposes of the source text. Katan (2004) argues the competence of translators as regards their familiarity with cross-cultural differences. That is to say, translators' intercultural competence concerning cultural values, codes, worldviews is questioned. In a recent study Ning's (2023) main concern is the cultural turn changing the practice of translation. He argues that culture has a central position in translation and comparative literature.

In the latest research about translation culture has increased its ground as cross-cultural communication has become more frequent as a result of globalization and digital communication in the world. Multicultural societies emerge and they give way to the expansion of the scope of cultural translation. Ethical issues such as cultural appropriation and identity have been extensively studied. The progress in the field of posthumanism and feminist translation theories changes the power dynamics and

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parallel to these, new approaches appear. Technological advances made in machine translation and artificial intelligence reshape the way translation is made and transform the sensitivity to cultural references.

In addition to theoretical studies, there are empirical studies dealing with culture in translation. Diaz Cintas and Remael (2008) dealt with cultural references in subtitles and dubbing. They showed that they create challenges but these challenges can be solved through creative solutions enabling the maintenance of cultural meaning. Indicating the importance of cultural literacy, Pym (2010) and Schäffner (1998) handled the way cultural norms give shape terminology and communicative practices. Nagodawithana (2020) examined the culture from translators' point of view in an empirical study. Data used in the study came from six translators to find out how they cope with the difficulties relating culture-specific elements. The findings showed that translators use adaptation and explanation as techniques to overcome the problems and make the text understandable for the target audience. Ahmad Al-Hassan (2014) looked at the translation of culture-specific items such as food terms and local expressions. Translators needed to make decisions for the items that should be retained or omitted according to the target audience. Shojaei (2012) investigated the strategies and difficulties translators come across with in the translation of idioms and fixed expressions. He identified some factors, such as socio-linguistic elements, linguistic and stylistic considerations, meta-lingual and cultural aspects, that should be taken into account.

TRANSLATION OF IDIOMS AND FIXED EXPRESSIONS

Translating texts create challenges to translators but these challenges are doubled when the texts are loaded with culture-specific lexical items such as fixed phrases, colloquial expresssions and idioms because these linguistic items are directly associated with the cultural context of the source language and mostly carry meanings going beyond the literal meanings of their components. Newmark (1988) draws attention to these elements and writes that idioms are the most difficult expressions to translate owing to their figurative aspects and culture specificity.

Fixed expressions are phrases which are commonly used in the form of formulaic speech and stock phrases and have an invariant form in terms of syntax, word order and modification. Although there are semantically transparent expressions, they are usually semi-transparent or opaque items. Colloquial expressions are culture-specific everyday language and involve informal register. They are mostly idiomatic or near-idiomatic and possess social and pragmatic nuances. As to idioms, they form a subtype of fixed expressions and their meanings are not deducible from the literal meanings of the words coming together to produce it (Baker 1992; Carter, 1998; Fernando, 1996; Ghazala, 2003).

Idioms and colloquial expressions are shaped by cultural knowledge, socio-historical background and also customs that may be different from or do not exist in the target culture. For example, the English idiom "spill the beans" means "to let secret information become known"

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(https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/spill-the-beans); however, when a literal translation is produced from the individual words forming the expressions, the intended meaning may disappear or confuse the audience. Whenever sentences constructed in the source language contain opaque idioms or fixed expressions, translators must recognise that literal meanings fail. Being able to distinguish literal versus non-literal usages, however, requires cultural competence as well as awareness of context (Alwan, Alaghbary & Shamsan, 2025).

Nida (1964) offers "dynamic equivalence" for such cases to convey the same messages by focussing on the sense rather than the literal translation of expressions. Similarly Baker (1992, pp. 65-71) argues that translating idiomatic expressions creates difficulties and she summarizes these difficulties as follows: lack of equivalent for an idiom or fixed expression, having a similar expression but using it in different contexts, using an idiom in both the literal and idiomatic senses at the same time, having difference with regard to the contexts in which idioms can be used and their frequency of use in the source and target languages. Subsequent to the identifications of the difficulties, she suggest four strategies to overcome these difficulties in her book, as well. These strategies are producing an idiom with similar meaning and form, producing an idiom with a similar meaning but in a different form, paraphrasing the idiom and finally omitting the idiom.

Recent research on translating idioms focusses on the place of technology, particularly machine translation. Developed softwares based upon artificial intelligence and corpora provide support to the identification of idiomatic expressions and suggest certain translation equivalents which are appropriate with regard to the context in which the expressions are used. Nevertheless, human judgment protects its place and position for specific interpretation necessary for the use of certain idioms (Bitterlin & Kuhn, 2020).

METHODOLOGY

In the light of these explanations this study addressed the issue of how colloquial cultural expressions are translated from native language to the target language. Data used in the study were gathered from two tasks given to the participants involving fifty learners majoring in English as well as translation engines. The learners taking part in the study, first, were given a cloze test assessing their proficiency level and 14 sentences to be translated from Turkish into English. The cloze test was taken from the intermediate level book Practice and Progress written by L. G. Alexander (1970). To prevent the possibility of being familiar with the source text an old but essential reading book was selected. In the test a short reading passage telling a funny short story was given. The first sentence was kept without omitting any word but after the second sentence every seventh word was removed from the text. Some blanks required a grammatical word the others lexical items. Altogether there were 32 blanks in the test.

The sentences used in the study included seven colloquial fixed expressions from Turkish. They were illa (ne olursa olsun, hangi şartta olursa olsun, kesinlikle,

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
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whatever happens, absolutely, definitely)---, hele bir --- (özellikle, hiç değilse, her şeyden önce, hiç olmazsa let something happen, particularly), varsın (istersen (isterse) konuşulan iş üzerinde bir kimseyi serbest bırakmayı anlatan söz, whatever you want) ---, ama olsun (olur böyle şeyler, but anyway, but it's okay, that's alright), hani (sitem anlatan bir söz, "bari" anlamında kullanılan bir söz, üstelik, kaldı ki, at least) ---, öyle olsun (peki, pekala, have it your way), var ya (durum, şart bildirmek için kullanılan sözcük, you know what) ---. For each expression two short translation sentences were constructed to be sure that learners show consistency in the way they translate the target colloquial expressions. They were embedded into sentence context with their figurative meanings.

The sentences given to the learners were also translated into English by using Deepl Translate, Magic School and ChatGPT to find out how machine translation relying on the samples on the internet could cope with these cultural expressions when Turkish learners of English attempt to translate such sentences by using these Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After collecting the data the cloze test results and sentences translated were analysed. In the analysis of the cloze test each correct answer was given 1 point while incorrect ones were given no points. The sentences which were translated through other translation strategies such as paraphrasing, omission, literal translation, etc. were coded according to the strategy itself. The results for each individual and each sentence were tabulated to calculate the distributions of percentages for correct and incorrect sentences beside the acceptable but non-target translations produced with various translation strategies. These results are presented below with their discussion in the following part.

The results obtained from the cloze test revealed that the proficiency level of the learners taking part in the study was intermediate since the mean score for the cloze test was 25,46. Considering the mean score, participants were divided into two proficiency levels as high proficiency and low proficiency learners. The mean score calculated for high proficieny level was 27,82 whereas the mean score for low proficiency level went down to 22,19. The gap between these proficieny levels was more than 5,5 points.

The overall results calculated for the sentence translation task revealed that nearly a third of the sentences were correctly translated. Incorrect answers had a lower percentage with 9. As to other translation strategies learners made use of, paraphrase of the sentences was 24 percent and omission of the target expressions was 29 percent.

These results showed that as Baker (1992, p. 65) noted, learners, instead of translating the sentences with the idiomatic colloquial expressions, attempted to paraphrase them. In other words, they focussed on the sense to translate the sentences as in the following examples: 'It does not matter if I do not have money, it is enough if I am healthy' for 'Sağlıklı olayım da varsın param olmasın', 'The friend of

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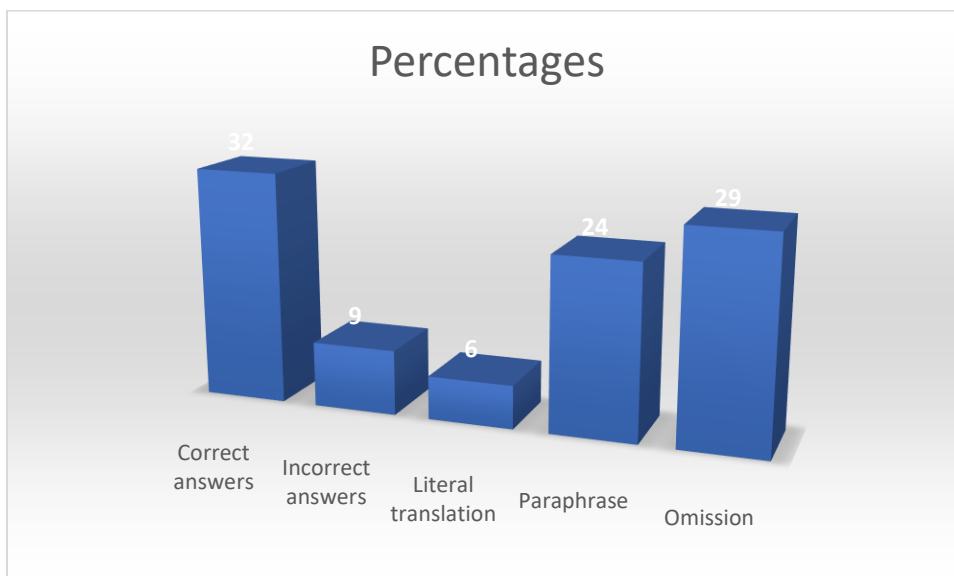congress.ulead.org.tr

mine that we talked at the shopping mall recently will come' for 'Geçenlerde alışveriş merkezinde konuşmuştuk ya hani, işte o arkadaşım gelecek', 'If you want to see the film for sure, go with your friends' for 'İlla görmek istiyorsan filmi sen arkadaşlarınla birlikte git'. Sometimes they both omitted the fixed expression and paraphrased the sentence: 'I have never seen someone such hardworking' for 'Var ya ben bu kadar çalışkan birini daha önce görmedim', 'I want to be healthy, it is not important whether I have money or not' for "Sağlıklı olayım da varsın param olmasın'.

Omission was quite high, too. While translating the sentences, participants omitted the colloquial expressions and translated sentences without them. In some sentences they ignored or completely skipped the colloquial expressions, for example 'var ya' in the sentence 'Var ya o kadar yoğunum ki yemek yemeğe vaktim yok' was excluded from the sentence and translated as 'I am so busy that I have no time to eat'. Likewise, the word 'hele' or 'illa' was omitted in the translation: 'When the term starts, we solve this problem then' for 'Hele bir dönem başlasın da bu sorunu o zaman çözeriz', 'He said he would take me home' for 'İlla seni evine götüreceğim dedi'.

Few learners relied on the literal meanings of the expressions rather than idiomatic ones as the percentage score for this strategy was 6. In the translation of 'öyle olsun' they preferred 'so be it', for example.

Table 1. The overall results of the sentence translation task

	Correct answers	Incorrect answers	Literal translation	Paraphrase	Omission
Raw scores	226	62	40	171	201
Percentages	32	9	6	24	29

Percentages

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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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As shown in Table 2, there were differences between high proficiency and low proficiency level learners in the distribution of the answers given by them. Comparing with low level learners, high proficiency learners had more correct answers (34 percent vs. 29.5 percent), fewer incorrect answers (7 percent vs. 12 percent). High proficiency learners used paraphrase and omission at the same level (26 percent for each) but low level learners omitted 32 percent of the target expressions and paraphrased 22 percent of the sentences to convey the message. According to these results, the strategies used to translate sentences showed parallelism with the proficiency levels of learners.

Table 2. The distributions of the results according to the proficiency levels

	N	Correct answers		Incorrect answers		Literal translation		Paraphrase		Omission	
High Proficiency	29	139	34	26	7	26	7	105	26	106	26
Low Proficiency	21	87	29.5	36	12	14	4.5	66	22	95	32
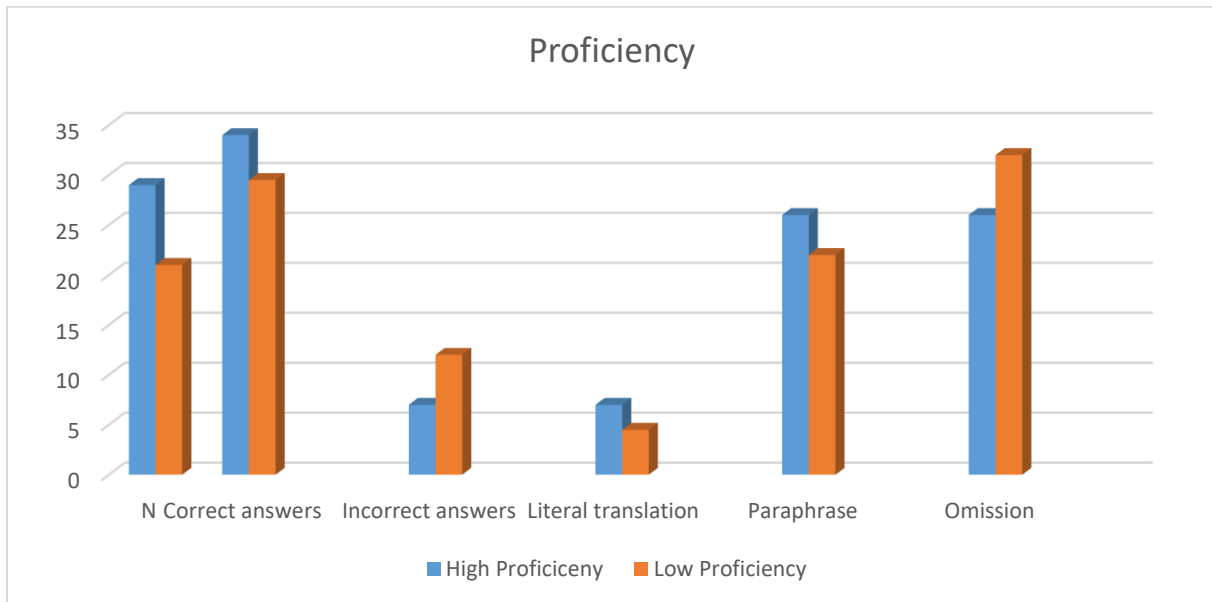
The item based analysis carried on the translation sentences implied that correct answers given to some sentences were quite high compared with the other pair of the colloquial expression. For example, more than half of the participants translated the sentence "İlla görmek istiyorsan filmi sen arkadaşlarınla birlikte git." (If you

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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absolutely/definitely want to see it, go with your friends.) but nearly a third of the participants translated the sentence "İlla seni evine götüreceğim dedi." (He insisted, "I will take you home no matter what."). This difference might be attributed to the meaning the expression 'illa' expresses and its different interpretations.

Likewise more than two third of the participants provided the correct answer for the sentence "Beni tanımasa hani kazara yaptı diyeceğim." (If he didn't know me, at least I'd say he did it by accident.) but the correct answers for the other sentence "Geçenlerde alışveriş merkezinde konuşmuştuk ya hani, işte o arkadaşım gelecek." (We talked at the mall the other day, right/remember? Well, that friend of mine is coming.) went down to two fifth. Another sentence pair is the one including the expression 'ama olsun.' In the sentence "Bana taşınırken hiç yardım etmedi ama olsun." (He didn't help me at all when I was moving, but it's okay.) 68 percent of participants added the expression 'but it's okay'. However, 'Bahçe küçükmüş ama olsun bir şeyler ekilebilir.' (The garden has been small, but it's okay, something can still be planted.) was translated by 26 percent of participants by adding 'but it's okay.'

	Correct answers		Incorrect answers		Literal translation		Paraphrase		Omission	
S1 (illa)	18	36	13	26	1	2	13	26	5	10
S2 (hele)	8	16	3	6	1	2	11	22	27	54
S3 (varsın)	5	10	7	14	1	2	19	38	18	36
S4 (olsun)	34	68	3	6	1	2	10	20	2	4
S5 (hani)	20	40	12	24	1	2	5	10	12	24
S6 (olsun)	13	26	4	8	3	6	17	34	13	26
S7 (öyle olsun)	12	24	3	6	15	30	19	38	1	2
S8 (illa)	32	64	2	4	1	2	13	26	2	4
S9 (hani)	42	84	5	10	0	0	2	4	1	2
S10 (var ya)	7	14	1	2	2	4	3	6	37	74
S11 (hele)	11	22	2	4	0	0	7	14	30	60
S12 (öyle olsun)	5	10	1	2	12	24	25	50	7	14
S13 (var ya)	9	18	1	2	2	4	8	16	30	60
S14 (varsın)	10	20	5	10	0	0	19	38	16	32

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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After collecting data from participants the sentences rendered them were translated from Turkish into English by using artificial intelligence tools. Three machine translation websites Deepl Translate, Magic School and ChatGPT were used for this purpose. The results obtained from Magic School and ChatGPT were close to each other. Deepl Translate produced mostly the literal translation even if the colloquial expression referred to the idiomatic meaning. For example for the expression 'öyle olsun' it provided 'so be it' as the translation eqivalent as some participants did in the translation task. For the word 'hani' he had the word 'right'. The expression 'var ya' was omitted since it could not find a translation equivalent.

In Magic School and ChatGPT better translation equivalents were presented. 'Öyle olsun' was translated as 'let it be that way' in Magic School and 'fine, have it your way' in ChatGPT. However, in the sentence 'Neler olduğunu tam olarak bilmiyorsun demek, öyle olsun.' 'öyle olsun' was translated with 'fine, suit yourself' by ChatGPT. This implied that depending on the interpretation of the expression in sentence context, the program makes different choices. 'Var ya' was given by using the expression 'you know' and 'you know what' in Magic School and in ChatGPT, respectively. 'Sağlıklı olayım da varsın param olmasın' was translated as 'I'd rather be healthy than have money' as if there was a comparison by Deepl translate but 'As long as I'm healthy, it's fine if I don't have money' was the version produced by Magic School and 'As long as I'm healthy, it's okay if I don't have money' was by ChatGPT. They treated the source expression in a similar form with 'ama olsun'. There was also consistency for the use of 'varsın' in the target platforms since the same expressions 'it's fine' and 'it's okay' were repeated for the other sentence involving 'Varsın sevdiğim kız güzel olmasın, zeki olsun yeter'.

Deepl Translate
He said he would definitely take me home.
Let's see what happens when winter comes.
I'd rather be healthy than have money.
He didn't help me move, but that's okay.
We talked at the mall the other day, right? Well, that friend of mine is coming.
The garden has gotten smaller, but it's okay—we can still plant something.
You don't want my advice, so be it.
If you really want to see the film, go with your friends.
If he doesn't know me, I'll just say he did it by accident.
I'm so busy I don't even have time to eat.
Once the semester starts, we'll figure it out then.
You don't know exactly what's going on, so be it.
I've never seen someone as hardworking as you before.
Let the girl I love not be beautiful, as long as she's smart.

Magic School

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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"He said, 'I will definitely take you home.'"
Let winter come first, and then we will see what will happen.
As long as I'm healthy, it's fine if I don't have money.
He didn't help me at all while moving, but that's okay.
We talked the other day at the shopping mall, remember? Well, that friend of mine is coming.
The garden has been small, but that's okay; something can still be planted.
So you don't want to ask me for advice, let it be that way.
If you really want to see the film, go with your friends.
If he didn't know me, I would say he did it by accident.
You know, I'm so busy that I don't even have time to eat.
Let a semester start, and then we will solve this problem.
So you really don't know exactly what's going on, let it be that way.
You know, I've never seen someone as hardworking as this.
It's fine if the girl I love isn't beautiful; being smart is enough."

ChatGPT

He insisted, "I will take you home no matter what."
Let winter come first, then we'll see what happens.
As long as I'm healthy, it's okay if I don't have money.
He didn't help me at all when I was moving, but it's okay.
Remember we talked at the mall the other day? That friend of mine is coming.
The garden is smaller, but it's okay—something can still be planted.
So you don't want my advice—fine, have it your way.
If you absolutely want to see it, go with your friends.
If he didn't know me, I'd say he did it by accident.
You know what, I'm so busy I don't even have time to eat.
Let the new semester start first, then we'll solve this problem.
So you don't fully know what's going on—fine, suit yourself.
You know what, I've never seen someone this hardworking before.
It's okay if the girl I love isn't beautiful—as long as she's smart, that's enough.

CONCLUSION

In this study colloquial expressions used to give specific messsages with emphasis were investigated. The results obtained from intermediate level learners revealed that learners had great difficulties with regard to target expressions. Only a third of sentences were translated correctly, the others were whether paraphrased or omitted while translating sentences. In view of these findings it is understood that learners of English who have the option of becoming translators or interpretators after their graduation need to know cultural expressions' translation. Therefore, learners should be instructed about such expressions and endowed with the strategies they can employ to cope with them.

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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In this study the use of AI was also assessed to find out to what extent they were succesful in generating the correct translation equivalents. However, it was found that the AI translation of the sentences which contained specific cultural expressions also included some problems. Cultural expressions were omitted or paraphrased by automatic translation programmes as well. This implied relying completely on AI programmes can be misleading in translation. The conclusion drawn is that editting is necessary for the translations made by these programmes.

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APPENDICES

1. İlla seni evine götüreceğim dedi.
2. Hele bir kış gelsin de o zaman ne olacak görürüz.
3. Sağlıklı olayım da varsın param olmasın.
4. Bana taşınırken hiç yardım etmedi ama olsun.
5. Geçenlerde alışveriş merkezinde konuşmuştuk ya hani, işte o arkadaşım gelecek.
6. Bahçe küçükmüş ama olsun bir şeyler ekilebilir.
7. Benden tavsiye istemiyorsun demek, öyle olsun.
8. İlla görmek istiyorsan filmi sen arkadaşlarınla birlikte git.
9. Beni tanımasa hani kazara yaptı diyeceğim.
10. Var ya o kadar yoğunum ki yemek yemeğe vaktim yok.
11. Hele bir dönem başlasın da bu sorunu o zaman çözeriz.
12. Neler olduğunu tam olarak bilmiyorsun demek, öyle olsun.
13. Var ya ben bu kadar çalışkan birini daha önce görmedim.
14. Varsın sevdiğim kız güzel olmasın, zeki olsun yeter.

UNDERSTANDING CULTURE SHOCK THROUGH THE LENS OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: A CRITICAL REVIEW

KÜLTÜR ŞOKUNU KÜLTÜRLERARASI İLETİŞİM MERCEĞİNDEN ANLAMAK: ELEŞTİREL BİR İNCELEME

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Abstract

Culture shock is a psychological response that arises when individuals encounter unfamiliar cultural environments. While it may initially evoke curiosity, it often leads to challenges and adaptation processes over time. In an increasingly globalized academic environment, international students frequently encounter culture shock, which can significantly influence their adaptation, psychological well-being, and academic integration. For this reason, intercultural communication serves as a key mechanism through which individuals from different cultural backgrounds can interact and adapt. Effective intercultural communication is crucial for international students to successfully negotiate the challenges of a new academic and cultural setting. This study critically reviews the relationship between culture shock and intercultural communication in the context of globalization and the increasing mobility of international students. A literature review was conducted in Google Scholar and Web of Science. Ten peer-reviewed studies published between 2015 and 2025 were systematically reviewed. The reviewed studies indicated that language barriers, differing social norms, and identity-related stress were the most common factors linking culture shock to communication challenges. The findings highlight the need for structured intercultural communication training and supportive policies to minimize culture shock and facilitate adaptation. The review concludes that strengthening intercultural competence and institutional support is essential to reduce culture shock and promote inclusive environments in multicultural societies.

Keywords: Culture shock, intercultural communication, cross-cultural adaptation, globalization.

Özet

Kültür şoku, bireylerin alışık olmadıkları kültürel ortamlara maruz kaldıklarında ortaya çıkan psikolojik bir tepkidir. Başlangıçta merak uyandırsa da zamanla genellikle zorluklara ve uyum süreçlerine yol açar. Giderek küreselleşen bir akademik ortamda, uluslararası öğrenciler sıklıkla kültür şokuyla karşılaşırlar, bu da uyumlarını, psikolojik iyi oluşlarını ve akademik entegrasyonlarını önemli ölçüde etkileyebilir. Bu nedenle, kültürlerarası iletişim farklı kültürel geçmişlere sahip bireylerin etkileşim kurabileceği ve uyum sağlayabileceği kilit bir mekanizma olarak hizmet vermektedir. Etkili kültürlerarası iletişim, uluslararası öğrencilerin yeni bir akademik ve kültürel ortamın zorluklarını başarıyla aşması için çok önemlidir. Bu çalışma, küreselleşme ve uluslararası öğrencilerin artan hareketliliği bağlamında kültür şoku ile kültürlerarası iletişim arasındaki ilişkiyi eleştirel bir şekilde incelemektedir. Google Scholar ve Web of Science'ta bir literatür taraması yapıldı. 2015 ile 2025 yılları arasında yayınlanan on hakemli çalışma sistematik olarak incelendi. İncelenen çalışmalar, dil engellerinin, farklı sosyal normların ve kimlikle ilgili stresin, kültür şokunu iletişim zorluklarına bağlayan en yaygın faktörler olduğunu göstermiştir. Bulgular, kültür şokunu en aza indirmek ve uyumu kolaylaştırmak için yapılandırılmış kültürlerarası iletişim eğitimi ve destekleyici politikaların gerekliliğini vurgulamaktadır. İnceleme, kültür şokunu azaltmak ve çokkültürlü toplumlarda kapsayıcı ortamları teşvik etmek için kültürlerarası yeterliliğin ve kurumsal desteğin güçlendirilmesinin önemli olduğu sonucuna varmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kültür şoku, kültürlerarası iletişim, kültürlerarası uyum, küreselleşme.

INTRODUCTION

With the rising of globalization all around the world, international students frequently experience culture shock, which is the feeling of anxiety when someone encounters a new culture. Intercultural communication plays a key role in managing culture shock. It refers to the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people from different cultures. Successful intercultural communication aids individuals in building relationships, avoiding misunderstandings, and adapting more easily to new environments. Understanding the dynamics of intercultural communication is crucial for international students to develop effective strategies of adaptation. Previous studies have examined the stages, symptoms, and strategies of the phenomenon to overcome the effects through intercultural communicative

214

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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competence. Moreover, they have stressed the significance of understanding and embracing the cultural diversity and developing empathy to make adjusting to the host culture easier. Even the foreign students has the ability of learning how to adjust to the new setting actively, researchers might need to figure out what causes excessive amount of culture shock among those students (Wu & Lıu, 2022). With the summary of the main findings and perspectives, the review has synthesized the existing literature on culture shock and intercultural communication. The study aims to review the relationship between culture shock and intercultural communication in the context of increasing mobility of international students.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Culture Shock

The worry and distress people feel when two sets of facts and conceptualizations converge is known as culture shock (Irwin, 2007). One way to describe the experience of a new culture is as an unpleasant or undesired shock or surprise that occurs when one's expectations do not match reality (Naeem et al., 2015). Change is more closely linked to culture shock and the adaptation process than it is to the novelty of a particular circumstance or setting. Almost everyone encounters this phenomenon when they move from one cultural setting to another (Jurásek & Wawrosz, 2023).

1.2. Effects of Culture Shock

The emotional burden of homesickness can obscure the benefits of the cultural experience, making students feel even more isolated and alienated. In addition, students who experience emotional difficulties may find it more difficult to handle complex communication, which could impede their intercultural competency. (Jambo, 2024). In alignment with this, interacting with individuals from different cultures can give rise to various cognitive and affective responses, a feeling of detachment, and a sense of disapproval that can trigger discomfort and frustration (Aldossari, 2025).

1.3. Stages of Culture Shock

Culture shock unfolds in four stages—optimistic, cultural, recovery, and adjustment—reflecting a gradual emotional and behavioral adaptation to a new cultural environment. Students initially experience isolation and anxiety as they recognize differences between their home and host cultures. Over time, they begin to accept these differences, develop tolerance, and engage positively with the local community. Ultimately, they achieve cultural adjustment, demonstrating independence, effective communication, and satisfaction with their new environment (Dasih et al., 2024).

1.4. Managing Culture Shock of International

Students

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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The main obstacles that international students face when adjusting to a new culture are generally the same; if those important issues cannot be handled, it may lead to hindering students' overall adjustment and well-being (Wu & Liu, 2022). International students studying abroad may have a more profound awareness of the target culture and the language used by native speakers the more intercultural communication experiences they have. Additionally, they should learn how to overcome these challenges through intercultural communication, which may also help them develop specific competencies to address global issues in 21st-century society. (Tsai, 2025).

METHOD

Research Model

The study presents a systematic review of 10 selected studies on culture shock among international students and the intercultural communication strategies. A more thorough and organized method of evaluating research in a particular field is the systematic review (Hanley & Cutts, 2013). One of the advantages of conducting a systematic review is that it grants a comprehensive expanded view (Tondeur et al., 2017). For this reason, Google Scholar and Web of Science were used for the research. A detailed review of ten peer-reviewed studies published between 2015 and 2025 was conducted.

Data Collection and Analysis

The previously mentioned databases were scanned, and research studies were selected. A set of inclusion and exclusion criteria were used to choose the the most relevant studies for the present study. The inclusion criteria listed below were identified:

- Studies that were published between the years 2015-2025. The first aim of the review was to examine the studies published in the last 10 years.
- Studies that were carried out with international students, focus on culture shock, intercultural communication, and adaptation processes in the various contexts.

In order to narrow down the selection, the exclusion criteria were also determined:

- Studies focusing on tourists, migrants, or expatriates not engaged in formal education were excluded.
- Non-English studies or those without accessible full texts were excluded.

The studies were examined, and their results were analyzed to produce a systematic review.

Table 1

Description of 10 Selected Studies

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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
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Article	Purpose of the study	Context	Sample	Main findings
Aldossari (2025)	To investigate how international students experience intercultural and cultural inclusion.	Saudi Arabia	12 international students	Ethnicity, economic status, and academic performance complicate inclusion.
Almukdad & Karadag (2024)	To examine whether interactions among self-efficacy, life satisfaction, and sociocultural adaptation negatively affect culture shock.	Türkiye	323 international students	Christian students experience stronger effects than Muslim students.
Belford (2017)	To find out how the students dealt with interaction with others, friendship growth and culture shock.	Australia	8 international students	Cultural similarities facilitate the understanding.
Dasih et al. (2024)	To investigate how intercultural communication affects the	Indonesia	Hindu students	Effective intercultural communication can reduce culture shock.

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS

26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025

ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS

14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"

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	process of adaption.			
Jambo (2024)	To explore how foreign students cope with culture shock.	Cameroon	31 foreign students	Intercultural communication skills and social support ease adaptation.
Mustafa (2021)	To compile research on culture shock and provide institutions and students with coping mechanisms.	Global	International students	Recommendations for institutions to support cultural adjustment.
Nadeem & Zabrodska (2023)	To propose and test CMIC model linking ICE, ICC, ICA, and ICN as developmental phases.	China	171 international students	Students progressed from competence to adjustment and adaptation.
Presbitero (2016)	To test CQ as a moderator of culture shock and reverse culture shock in adaptation.	Australia	Study 1: 189; Study 2: 123 international students	Cultural intelligence (CQ) improves psychological and sociocultural adaptation.

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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Tsai (2025)	To investigate the extent and manner in which these students experience culture shock.	Taiwan	12 international students	Culture shock arises as a learning outcome of intercultural communication within the host culture.
Wu & Liu (2022)	To review trends and challenges in international students' cultural adaptation	China	International students	Most research on culture shock and adaptation relies on Western theories.

FINDINGS

The systematic review compiles results from the aforementioned studies on culture shock and intercultural adaptation among international students in various cultural situations. Most of the studies indicated that culture shock is a main challenge for international students due to feelings of uneasiness, social alienation, and difficulty in managing unfamiliar cultural norms. The studies discussed that students experienced culture shock due to differences in communication styles, language barriers, and societal expectations (Aldossari, 2025; Almukdad & Karadag, 2024; Jambo, 2024). Another study revealed that culture shock might be as a learning outcome for intercultural growth (Tsai, 2025).

Sociocultural and Psychological Factors Affecting Adaptation

It should be also noted that researchers identified key psychological and sociocultural variables that influence students' ability to adapt. Self-efficacy and life satisfaction were negatively correlated with culture shock (Almukdad & Karadag, 2024). Cultural intelligence (CQ) can alleviate the effects of both culture shock and reverse culture shock and enhance psychological and sociocultural adaptation (Presbitero, 2016).

Barriers to Inclusion

The review of studies indicated that students avoided interaction due to language anxiety and accent diversity (Aldossari, 2025). It is also crucial to note that religious and cultural distance can complicate adaptation, especially for minority groups (Almukdad & Karadag, 2024).

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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The Role Of Intercultural Communication

Nearly half of the studies have shown that intercultural communication (IC) helps international students to facilitate adaptation and reduce culture shock. Early-semester students frequently experience culture shock; however, it can be lessened with continued contact and communication that promote eventual assimilation (Dasih et al., 2024). Studies also emphasized that IC competence fosters friendship development and social integration (Jambo, 2024; Presbitero, 2016).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The analysis of studies examining the relationship between intercultural communication and culture shock, particularly in the context of increasing international student mobility from 2015 to 2025, is discussed. With regard to all of the analyzed studies, culture shock is a natural occurrence in multicultural settings that poses a variety of difficulties in the social, academic, and psychological domains. It is noted that cultural similarities facilitate understanding (Belford, 2017). To parallel this, another study has shown that Hindu students face culture shock despite shared human experiences (Dasih et al., 2024). On the contrary, cultural disparities frequently lead to discomfort in personal interactions between students (Aldossari, 2025). It might be concluded that cultural proximity might not always reduce stress. Reviewed studies revealed that social ties, institutional support, and inclusive practices significantly affect students' sense of belonging and intercultural engagement (Jambo, 2024; Presbitero, 2016). On the other hand, integration was challenged by barriers like inadequate proficiency in languages, a variety of accents, and a lack of intercultural understanding (Aldossari, 2025). As final remarks, although the existing literature provides an in-depth understanding of minimizing culture shock among international students with the help of intercultural competence, further research is still required because various areas and facets of the problem have not been covered.

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EVALUTION OF THE TÜRKİYE CENTURY MAARİF MODEL PRIMARY SCHOOL 2ND-4TH GRADE ARABİC COURSE CURRİCULUM IN THE CONTEXT OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES TO CHILDREN

TÜRKİYE YÜZYILI MAARİF MODELİ 2-4. SINIFLAR ARAPÇA DERSİ ÖĞRETİM PROGRAMININ ÇOCUKLARA YABANCI DİL ÖĞRETİMİ BAĞLAMINDA DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ

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Abstract

In our country, significant changes have been taking place in curricula over the last two years. The new teaching model, known as the Turkish Century Maarif Model, has led to radical changes in both the content and methodology of all courses from primary school to high school. Arabic language teaching programs are also experiencing this transformation. Behavioral, humanistic, cognitive, and constructivist approaches are synthesized in the Maarif Model through a communicative approach. Curriculums aimed at equipping students with the Arabic language skills necessary to use Arabic effectively, competently, and successfully are divided into three groups: grades 2-4, 5-8, and 9-10. Arabic, taught as a compulsory and sometimes elective foreign language across a wide range of subjects from elementary school to high school, is also taught as an elective foreign language in grades 2-4. This study aims to examine the Arabic curriculum for grades 2-4, developed within the framework of the Turkey Century Maarif Model, within the context of the principles of teaching foreign languages to children. The curriculum for grades 2-4 will be obtained through a qualitative research method that examines a phenomenon in detail, under subheadings such as grade-based units, subject-matter skills, learning outcomes, process components, trends, and cross-program components.

Keywords : Maarif model, Arabic, 2nd-4th grades

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

Özet

Ülkemizde son iki yılda öğretim programları adına büyük değişiklikler gerçekleşmektedir. Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli olarak adlandırılan yeni öğretim modeli ilkokuldan liseye tüm derslerin hem içeriğinde hem de metodolojisinde köklü değişimler yaşanmasına sebep olmuştur. Arapça öğretim programları da bu değişimi yaşamaktadır. Davranışçı, hümanistik, bilişsel ve yapılandırmacı yaklaşımlar iletişimsel yöntemle Maarif Modelinde sentezlenmektedir. Öğrencilerin Arapçayı etkili, yetkin ve başarılı bir şekilde kullanmalarını sağlamak için gereken Arapça dil becerilerinin kazandırılmasını amaçlayan öğretim programları kendi içinde 2-4, 5-8 ve 9-10. sınıflar olarak üç gruba ayrılmaktadır. İlkokuldan liseye kadar çok geniş bir yelpazede bazen zorunlu bazen de seçmeli yabancı dil olarak okutulan Arapça 2-4. sınıflarda seçmeli yabancı dil olarak öğretilmektedir. Bu çalışma Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli kapsamında hazırlanan Arapça 2-4. sınıflar öğretim programını çocuklara yabancı dil öğretimi ilkeleri bağlamında incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmada 2-4. sınıflar programı sınıf bazında üniteler, alan becerileri, öğrenme çıktıları, süreç bileşenleri, eğilimler, programlar arası bileşenler gibi alt başlıklar halinde bir olayı tüm ayrıntılarıyla ele alan nitel araştırma yöntemiyle elde edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler : Maarif modeli, Arapça, 2-4. sınıf

GİRİŞ

Araplarla olan yüzlerce yıllık ilişkilerimizden dolayı başlarda dini temelli olan etkileşim sonucu Arapça uzun yıllardır eğitim sistemimizde kendine yer edinmiştir. İlk olarak 1924 yılında açılıp 1931 yılında kapatılan, 1951 yılında tekrar açılan İmam-Hatip okullarında, İslam Enstitülerinde yer alan Arapça; günümüzde İmam Hatip Liseleri ve Ortaokullarında temel ders, diğer ilkokul, ortaokul, liselerde seçmeli yabancı dil dersi olarak okutulmaktadır. Arap dünyasının elde ettiği ekonomik ve stratejik öneme paralel olarak Arapça da büyük önem kazanmıştır (Yıldız, Çilek, 2020: 159).

2010 yılında Bakanlar Kurulu kararınca Arapçanın ilkokul kademesinde seçmeli yabancı dil dersi olarak seçilebilmesinin önü açılmıştır. İlerleyen yıllarda ise bu derse ait öğretim programı hazırlansa da Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli kapsamında 2-4. sınıflar Arapça Öğretim Programı 2025 yılında uygulamaya koyulmuştur.

Çocuklara Yabancı Dil Öğretiminde Temel İlkeler

Yabancı dil öğretimi zor ve karmaşık bir süreçtir. Yabancı dil öğretiminde dikkat edilmesi gereken, genel kabul görmüş bazı temel ilkeler vardır. Demirel (2004:27-28) temel ilkeleri şöyle sıralamıştır: Öğretime dinleme ve konuşma becerilerini geliştirme ile başlanmalı, öğrencilerin temel cümle kalıplarını öğrenmesinin ve ezberlemesinin sağlanması, öğrencilerin yeni dil kazanma alışkanlıkları sağlamasına yardımcı olunması, öğrencilerin dilin seslerini en iyi şekilde çıkarmalarının öğretilmesi, amaç dil ile ana dil arasında sorun olan ses ve yapıların öğretilmesi, öğretim materyallerinin kolaydan zora doğru sıralanıp sunulması, yeni cümle kalıplarını bilinen sözcüklerle öğretilmesi, öğrencilere öğrendiklerini kullanma olanağının tanınması, başlangıç düzeyinde öğrenci hatalarının anında düzeltilmesi, bir seferde bir tek sorunla

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

uğraşılması, amaç dilin o dili ana dili olarak konuşan kişilerin konuştuğu gibi öğretilmesi, sınıf içi bireysel farklılıkların dikkate alınması, bütün bilinenlerin öğretilmeye çalışılmaması, öğrencilere sorumluluk verilmesi; öğrencilerin bireysel çalışmalara yönlendirilmesi, dersi planlarken çeşitlilik getirmeye çalışılması.

Bu temel ilkelerin yanına günümüz gerçeklerinden hareketle, web 2.0 araçları gibi teknolojik gelişmelerden faydalanmak, öğrencilerin kalıcı öğrenmelerine katkı sağlayacak teknolojik olanakları da kullanmak eklenebilir.

Kara da çocukların bir yabancı dili öğrenme şeklinin çocukların gelişim evreleriyle doğrudan bağlantılı olduğuna vurgu yapmaktadır. Ayrıca, küçük yaştaki öğrencilere eğitim veren öğretmenler, onların özelliklerini göz önünde bulundurmalarını onların gelişim dönemlerine uygun öğretim tekniklerini kullanmalarını ve çocukların öğrenme özelliklerine uygun etkinlikler hazırlamalarını önermektedir (Kara, 2023: 118).

YÖNTEM

Bu araştırmada nitel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Bu yöntemde ele alınan bir olay ya da olgu tüm ayrıntılarıyla ele alınır. Araştırmada gözlem, doküman analizi gibi veri toplama yöntemleri kullanılır (Baltacı, 2018:240).

Verilerin Toplanması

Bu araştırmadaki veriler doküman analiziyle elde edilmiştir. Doküman analizinde temel unsur araştırma yapılacak konuya dair gerekli olan basılı materyallerin veya elektronik ortamdaki bilgilerin tümünün detaylı bir şekilde araştırılıp incelenmesidir (Kıral, 2020:179).

Verilerin Analizi

Millî Eğitim Bakanlığınca hazırlanan Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli İlkokul Arapça Dersi Öğretim Programı (2-4. sınıflar) öğretim programı betimsel analiz tekniğiyle incelenmiştir.

BULGULAR

Türkiye'de din öğretiminin temel araçlarından biri Arapçadır çünkü Arapça İslamiyet'in dilidir. İslamiyet'i ana kaynaklarından okuyup daha iyi anlayabilmek adına Arapça, Türk Milli Eğitim sistemi içinde yer almaktadır. Zaman zaman Arapçanın bir din dili mi yoksa yabancı dil mi olduğuna dair farklı görüşler ortaya çıksa da gerçek şudur ki neredeyse yüz yıldır ülkemizdeki okullarda çeşitli seviyelerde Arapça öğretilmektir (Dağbaşı, 2024: 160). Türkiye'de Arapça öğretiminin ayrıntılı tarihiyle ilgili Özcan'ın (2023: 9-36) çalışmasına bakılabilir.

Arapça Dersi Öğretim Programının (2-4. Sınıflar) Genel Değerlendirmesi

İlkokul Arapça Dersi (2-4. Sınıflar) Öğretim Programı'nın geliştirilmesinde Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli Yabancı Dil Alan Becerileri esas alınmaktadır. Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli Öğretim Programları Ortak Metni'nde bulunan Yabancı Dil Alan Becerileri, modelde yer alan bütün beceri alanlarının, sosyal-duygusal öğrenme

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

becerilerinin, eğilimlerin, değerlerin ve okuryazarlık becerilerinin temel bileşeni olarak kabul edilmektedir. Modelde yer alan bütün beceri alanları, sosyal-duygusal öğrenme becerileri, eğilimler, değerler ve okuryazarlık becerileri yabancı dil alan becerilerinin işletilmesi sürecinde bütüncül ve aktif bir şekilde yer bulmaktadır. Yabancı dil alan becerileri, iki ana temel ve bu temellerin tamamlayıcısı olan beceriler üzerinde şekillenmektedir. Bu beceriler; "alımlama (dinleme/izleme-anlamlandırma, okuma-anlamlandırma)", "üretme" (konuşma-anlatma, yazma-anlatma)" ve diğer tüm becerilerle eş güdümlü kullanılan "yabancı dil destekleyici (dil bilgisi seçme-kullanma, sözcük seçme-kullanma, sesletim seçme-kullanma) beceriler" olarak konumlandırılmaktadır. Öğretim programının bu doğrultuda bireylere kazandırmayı hedeflediği dil yetkinliği A1.2. olarak kabul edilmektedir.

Öğretim programı, yabancı dil eğitimini bir bilgi aktarımı olarak kabul eden değil aktarılan bilginin kullanılmasını önceleyen bir anlayışa sahiptir. Bu anlayış doğrultusunda öğretim programının teorik çerçevesi, yeni bir dille karşılaşan bireylerin hedef dile maruz kalmasını öncelemekte ve hedef dile ait kelime dağarcığını, dil yapısı bilgisini, sesletimi ve yazmayı anlamlı tekrarlar ile pekiştirmesini beklemektedir. Takip edilen tekrar ve pekiştirme etkinlikleri; drama, canlandırma, oyun vb. etkinliklerle birleştirilerek otantik bir öğrenme süreci oluşturulmasını esas almaktadır. Bu süreçte bireylerin öğrenme sürecinde aktif rol alarak bilgiye erişme, bilgiyi işleme, bilgiyi anlamlandırma ve bilgiyi önceki bilgi ve deneyimleriyle ilişkilendirerek açıklamalarını beklemektedir. Bunun sonucunda bireylerin hedef dildeki kelime dağarcıklarını ve dil yapılarını, çeşitli anlamlı ve sosyal bağlamlarda etkin bir şekilde kullanacakları ortamların oluşturulması ve öğrenme sürecinin verimli hâle getirilmesi beklenmektedir (MEB, 2025:4).

İlkokul Arapça Dersi (2-4. Sınıflar) Öğretim Programı çerçevesinde programlar arası bileşenler, içerik çerçevesi, öğrenme kanıtları, öğrenme-öğretme uygulamaları, farklılaştırma alt başlıkları da ayrıntılı bir şekilde verilmiştir. Tüm sınıf seviyelerinde Arapça dersi haftada iki saat olmak üzere üç yılın sonunda öğrencilerin 216 ders saati Arapça işlemeleri planlanmıştır.

2. sınıflarda *Haydi tanışalım* temasında 13, *güzel sınıfım* temasında 16, *canım ailem* temasında 13, *mesleğin ne* temasında 16 olmak üzere toplam 58 öğrenme çıktısı bulunmaktadır.

3. sınıflarda *güzel evim* temasında 13, *okulumu seviyorum* temasında 16, *sayılar ve renkler* temasında 13, *afiyet olsun* temasında ise 16 olmak üzere toplam 58 öğrenme çıktısı bulunmaktadır.

4. sınıflarda *kendimi tanıyorum* temasında 15, *doğayı seviyorum* temasında 19, *mevsimler* temasında 15, *yönümü keşfediyorum* temasında ise 16 olmak üzere toplam 68 öğrenme çıktısı bulunmaktadır.

Her dört tema için de ünite bazlı şematik tablolar hazırlanmış, bu tablolarda alan becerileri, kavramsal beceriler, eğilimler, program arası bileşenler, sosyal-duygusal öğrenme becerileri, değerler, okuryazarlık becerileri, disiplinler arası ilişkiler, beceriler arası ilişkiler, öğrenme çıktıları ve süreç bileşenleri, içerik çerçevesi,

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

öğrenme kanıtları, öğrenme-öğretme yaşantıları, farklılaştırma, öğretmen yansıtmalarının neler olduğu özetlenmiştir.

İlkokul Arapça Dersi (2-4. Sınıflar) Öğretim Programına göre hazırlanacak ders kitaplarının ise 13-15 forma sayısına sahip, 195x275mm ebatında olması kararlaştırılmıştır.

TARTIŞMA VE SONUÇ

Program içerisinde dört temel dil becerisine yönelik alıştırma ve etkinlikler dengeli bir şekilde harmanlanmıştır. Temalar öğrencilerin yakın çevresinden uzak çevresine gidecek şekilde planlanmıştır. Her temada ortalama 10 kelime, 3-5 günlük konuşma ifadesi yer almaktadır. Arapçanın alfabe farklılığından dolayı özellikle 2. sınıf ve 3. sınıfın ilk döneminde okuma-yazma öğretimi öne çıksa da yazma örtük bir şekilde verilmektedir. Üç sınıf seviyesinde de gramer öğretimi bulunmamakta ancak günlük hayatta çok sık kullanılan otur, yaz, gel, git, yerim, içerim, severim vb. yaklaşık yirmi fiil kademeli olarak program içine yedirilmiş durumdadır. Öğretim programı öğrencileri aktif kılacak etkinliklerle hazırlanmıştır. Öğretilecek yapı ve kelimeler dinleme, okuma gibi etkinliklerle sarmal bir şekilde bol tekrara dayanacak şekilde planlanmıştır. Öğretim programında bütüncül bir yaklaşım olduğu açıktır.

Öğrenme çıktılarının kazandırılmasında oyun önemli bir konuma sahiptir. Programda, kitap hazırlayacaklara oyunun önemine dikkat çekilmektedir. Bu bağlamda web 2.0 araçlarının derslerde kullanılması da tavsiye edilmektedir.

Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli ile birlikte eğitim sistemine giren yeni anlayış ve yaklaşım Arapça dersinde de benimsendiğinden öğretim programında öğretmen yönergeleri gayet açıktır.

Bütün bu bilgilerden hareketle, ilkokul 2-4. sınıflarda Arapça öğretmek amacıyla hazırlanan İlkokul Arapça Dersi (2-4. Sınıflar) Öğretim Programı'nın çocuklara yabancı dil öğretiminin temel ilkelerine uygun olarak hazırlandığını söylemek mümkündür.

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USING ONLINE GAMES AND CHATGPT TO ENHANCE EFL VOCABULARY LEARNING

ÇEVRIM İÇI OYUNLAR VE CHATGPT KULLANARAK EFL KELIME ÖĞRENIMINI GELIŞTIRME

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Abstract

This study explored how combining online games with AIGames could support English as a foreign language (EFL) learners studying at the preparatory school of a state university. Two groups of students participated: the experimental group used AIGames, while the control group learned vocabulary through traditional methods. A pre-posttest and a questionnaire were used to measure vocabulary gains and students' attitudes. Results showed that the AIGames group outperformed the control group in all six vocabulary spects, with the greatest improvement in denotation and spelling, and the least in pronunciation. Students also reported generally positive attitudes toward the new approach, though their perceptions did not directly correlate with vocabulary achievement. These findings suggest that integrating AI with digital games can be a motivating and effective strategy for vocabulary learning in EFL classrooms, offering teachers practical ways to combine technology and play for improved outcomes.

Keywords: game-based learning, ChatGPT, vocabulary acquisition

Özet

Bu çalışma, çevrim içi oyunların AIOyunlar (AIGames) ile birleştirilmesinin bir devlet üniversitesinin hazırlık okulunda öğrenim gören İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak (EFL) öğrenen öğrencileri nasıl destekleyebileceğini incelemiştir. Araştırmaya iki öğrenci grubu katılmıştır. Deney grubundaki öğrenciler AIOyunlar tekniğini kullanırken, kontrol grubundakiler kelime öğrenimini geleneksel yöntemlerle gerçekleştirmiştir. Kelime kazanımlarını ve öğrencilerin tutumlarını ölçmek için ön test, son test ve bir anket uygulanmıştır. Sonuçlar, AIOyunlar grubunun kelime bilgisinin altı boyutunun tamamında kontrol grubundan daha iyi performans gösterdiğini ortaya koymuştur. En yüksek gelişme düzeyi anlam (denotation) ve yazım alanlarında gözlenmiş, en düşük gelişme ise telaffuzda gerçekleşmiştir. Öğrenciler, yeni yaklaşıma yönelik genel olarak olumlu tutumlar bildirmiş olsa da, bu algılar doğrudan kelime başarımı ile ilişkilendirilmemiştir. Bu bulgular, yapay zekanın dijital oyunlarla birleştirilmesinin EFL sınıflarında kelime öğrenimi için motive edici ve etkili bir strateji olduğunu göstermekte ve öğretmenlere teknolojiyi oyunla birleştirerek öğrenme sonuçlarını geliştirmeye yönelik uygulanabilir yollar sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: oyun temelli öğrenme, ChatGPT, kelime edinimi

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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of digital technologies in education, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic, has accelerated the search for innovative and engaging approaches to language learning. As traditional teacher-centered methods become less effective in sustaining learners' interest, integrating technology-supported practices has emerged as a promising alternative. Among these practices, digital games have received increasing attention for their potential to enhance learner motivation, engagement, and meaningful language use. Research has consistently shown that game-based learning can support vocabulary growth, strengthen communicative competence, and increase learners' willingness to participate in classroom tasks (Al-Sharafat & AbuSeileek, 2012; Ashraf et al., 2014; Carrillo et al., 2019; Derakhshan et al., 2024; Smirani & Yamani, 2024). Studies also indicate that games promote creativity, problem-solving, and active involvement as learners encounter new vocabulary in contextually rich, interactive scenarios (Bi & Song, 2011; Vnucko & Klimova, 2023; Pitarch, 2018).

Vocabulary plays a central role in second language development, serving as the foundation upon which learners construct meaning and express ideas. As Harmer (2001) emphasizes, vocabulary forms the core of communication, while syntactic structures merely shape it. Similarly, Lessard-Clouston (2013) argues that vocabulary knowledge is essential not only for comprehension but also for clear self-expression. Given its importance, researchers have long advocated for the use of games to support vocabulary instruction, noting their ability to foster retention, deepen understanding, and promote long-term engagement (Mohamed, 2017; Vnucko & Klimova, 2023). Game-based learning environments also tend to provide immediate feedback, repetition, and contextualized exposure, which are well-established principles in vocabulary acquisition.

Beyond general digital games, recent developments in artificial intelligence (AI) have opened new opportunities for language learning. ChatGPT and similar AI systems can generate personalized explanations, create practice tasks, correct errors, and simulate authentic communication. Scholars highlight the potential of AI-generated text and interactive dialogue to support language development and facilitate learner autonomy (Baskara, 2023; Kostka & Toncelli, 2023). Integrating AI with digital games may therefore offer a unique blend of interaction, challenge, and personalization, creating conditions that support deeper vocabulary learning. This combined approach, referred to as AIGames, has the potential to make vocabulary learning more dynamic, individualized, and motivating.

Although research has explored digital games and AI separately, little is known about how these tools may work together to support vocabulary acquisition, especially in contexts where such technologies are not yet widely adopted. Classroom observations and previous studies suggest that many teachers continue to rely on traditional vocabulary teaching strategies such as drills, memorization, and dictionary-based tasks, despite evidence that both games (Mohamed, 2017) and AI applications (Nazari

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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et al., 2021) can significantly enhance learning outcomes. Furthermore, existing studies examining VR, AR, and specialized game-based environments highlight the importance of interaction, adaptive feedback, and immersive contexts for vocabulary retention (Chang & Hwang, 2019; Guan et al., 2024; Sun et al., 2024; Teo et al., 2022).

Given this background, integrating AI-driven support within digital games may offer a promising instructional approach, particularly in EFL settings where learners require both repeated exposure and meaningful interaction to develop vocabulary effectively. However, empirical research on such integrated approaches remains limited. The present study addresses this gap by examining the impact of combining online games with ChatGPT-based assistance to enhance vocabulary learning among EFL students at the preparatory school of a state university. The study also explores learners' attitudes toward this approach and investigates whether vocabulary achievement is related to their perceptions.

Accordingly, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of using the AIGames technique on EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition?
2. What are learners' attitudes toward integrating AIGames into vocabulary learning?
3. Is there a relationship between learners' vocabulary achievement and their attitudes toward the AIGames technique?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Digital Game-Based Learning in EFL Contexts

Digital game-based learning (GBL) has gained considerable attention in recent years as an effective approach for enhancing language learning, particularly vocabulary development. A substantial body of research demonstrates that games can increase learner engagement, motivation, and willingness to participate in classroom tasks (Al-Sharafat & AbuSeileek, 2012; Ashraf et al., 2014; Carrillo et al., 2019). When learners interact with game-based environments, they encounter vocabulary within meaningful and context-rich scenarios, which helps them construct linguistic knowledge more naturally compared to conventional memorization techniques (Bi & Song, 2011; Vnucko & Klimova, 2023). Studies have further shown that digital games provide opportunities for repetition, feedback, and problem-solving, all of which contribute to deeper vocabulary retention (Ebrahimzadeh & Alavi, 2017; Teng, 2022; Teo et al., 2022).

GBL has also been identified as a means of enhancing multiple language skills simultaneously. Vnucko and Klimova (2023) reported that integrating digital games improved learners' vocabulary breadth and depth while supporting reading and listening skills. Similarly, Pitarch (2018) and Wichadee and Pattanapichet (2018) found that game-based language tasks helped learners practice grammatical structures and communicative functions in addition to new lexical items. These

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

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findings suggest that GBL is not only effective for vocabulary acquisition but also contributes to broader linguistic competence.

Motivation plays an important role in the success of game-based environments. As many studies have shown, game elements such as challenge, reward, narrative, and immersion significantly enhance students' interest and persistence in learning tasks (Derakhshan et al., 2024; Smirani & Yamani, 2024). Learners who feel emotionally engaged and cognitively stimulated are more likely to internalize vocabulary encountered within games, reinforcing both short-term recall and long-term retention (Tobias et al., 2014). Taken together, these findings indicate that GBL creates learning conditions that support both the cognitive and affective dimensions of vocabulary acquisition.

Specialized Game-Based Learning and Emerging Technologies

Beyond general-purpose language games, recent studies have explored how advanced technologies such as mobile virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) can enhance vocabulary learning in more specialized contexts. Derakhshan et al. (2024) reported that VR-based instruction helped learners of English for Medical and Academic Purposes (EMAP) engage with domain-specific vocabulary in immersive 3D simulations. Although VR was less effective for abstract lexical items, the study highlighted its potential for concrete, content-specific vocabulary learning. Similarly, Teo et al. (2022) found that AR-assisted flipped classrooms supported English for Medical Purposes learners through increased interaction, peer collaboration, and teacher immediacy, ultimately improving vocabulary acquisition in medical contexts.

Broader research also highlights the effectiveness of digital games and gamified approaches across different educational domains. Chen et al. (2022), for example, reviewed three decades of GBL studies in science and mathematics and identified strong positive effects on student participation, problem-solving skills, and conceptual understanding. These skills are crucial for vocabulary learning, where active engagement and cognitive processing are essential. Further evidence from preschool and K–12 settings confirms that early exposure to game-based learning improves vocabulary, comprehension, and retention across age groups (Behnamnia et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2024). In addition, Dahalan et al. (2024) demonstrated that gamification in vocational education supports skill development, suggesting that similar structures may also be effective for language instruction.

Although the integration of VR, AR, and digital simulations has shown promise, the findings indicate that game-based learning tends to be most effective when learning goals are specific, activities are well-structured, and opportunities for interaction are incorporated (Guan et al., 2024; Hussein et al., 2022). These insights highlight the need for approaches that blend technological innovation with pedagogically grounded design, particularly in vocabulary learning.

The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Language Learning

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
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Artificial intelligence (AI) has increasingly been incorporated into language education, offering new possibilities for personalized instruction, error correction, and interactive text generation. Among various AI tools, ChatGPT has gained significant attention for its ability to generate human-like responses, explain linguistic concepts, and support learners' productive skills. Baskara (2023) notes that ChatGPT can produce contextually rich texts that can be used for modeling, practice, and feedback. Likewise, Kostka and Toncelli (2023) highlight the tool's capacity to provide tailored explanations, facilitate conversation practice, and assist learners in refining their language use.

AI-driven feedback is particularly beneficial for vocabulary learning, as it can offer immediate clarification of meaning, usage, collocations, and example sentences. Studies have shown that interactive AI tools help learners notice gaps in their lexical knowledge and receive support based on individual needs (Nazari et al., 2021). Moreover, AI applications can supplement teacher instruction by generating customized exercises and adaptive tasks, potentially making vocabulary learning more efficient.

Despite these advantages, the combination of AI with game-based learning remains underexplored. While both digital games and AI applications have been shown to independently support vocabulary development, there is limited empirical evidence on how they might work together to enhance lexical acquisition. Integrating AI into digital gaming platforms may create a more dynamic, interactive, and personalized experience, allowing learners to receive tailored support while engaging with game content. This combined approach, referred to as AIGames, may therefore address important gaps in vocabulary learning, especially in contexts where traditional teaching methods dominate classroom practice.

Although the positive effects of games and AI on vocabulary acquisition have been well-documented, research examining their integration is scarce. Observations from local educational settings suggest that vocabulary instruction continues to rely heavily on drilling, memorization, and teacher-led explanation, with limited use of games or AI. At the same time, existing studies in the region have not investigated how combining these two tools might enhance learners' vocabulary development. Building on the insights of prior research and addressing this gap, the present study explores the impact of the AIGames technique on EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition and examines their perceptions of this innovative approach.

METHOD

Research Design

The present study adopted a quasi-experimental mixed-methods design in order to investigate the effects of integrating online games with an AI-enhanced support system, referred to in this study as AIGames, on the vocabulary acquisition of English as a foreign language learners enrolled in the preparatory school of a state university.

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
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The design also allowed the researchers to explore the learners' attitudes toward the integrated approach and to examine whether these attitudes were related to vocabulary learning outcomes. The use of a mixed-methods design was considered appropriate because the research aimed to measure both the quantitative impact of the intervention on vocabulary development and the qualitative dimensions of learners' perceptions.

The quasi-experimental design was preferred due to institutional constraints that prevented the random assignment of learners to treatment conditions. The preparatory school organizes its curriculum through intact classroom groups, making it impractical to create new groups for research purposes. Despite this limitation, the design enabled a meaningful comparison between the experimental and control groups while preserving ecological validity. The study therefore involved two pre-existing classes, one designated as the experimental group receiving instruction through the AIGames technique and the other as the control group receiving traditional vocabulary instruction.

Participants

Participants were drawn from the preparatory program of a state university, where English is taught intensively to support students' academic readiness. A total of two intact classes took part in the study. After confirming voluntary participation and the availability of complete data, ninety-two students were retained for analysis, with forty-six students assigned to each group. The students ranged from eighteen to twenty years of age and represented diverse educational and linguistic backgrounds. Placement tests administered during the university's orientation period confirmed that all participants possessed an A2 level of proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference. This ensured that both groups started with comparable levels of vocabulary knowledge and general English competence.

All participants had been studying English for a minimum of six years prior to entering university. Although their previous exposure to digital tools varied, none had prior experience with AIGames or similar AI-based language learning systems. Ethical approval was obtained from the institutional review board of the university, and consent was secured from all participants. Students were informed that participation was voluntary and that the study would not affect their academic grades. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the research process.

Instructional Materials and Tools

The instructional materials included vocabulary items selected from the preparatory school curriculum, a suite of online games chosen for their pedagogical relevance, and the AI-based support provided through ChatGPT. The vocabulary list consisted of eighty lexical items drawn from thematic units such as education, environment, daily activities, and technology. These words were categorized into six aspects of vocabulary knowledge, including denotation, connotation, spelling, pronunciation, collocation, and part of speech, which allowed for a comprehensive assessment of vocabulary development.

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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The digital games were selected based on established principles of game-based vocabulary learning. Each game incorporated repetition, interaction, and immediate feedback, which are important features for vocabulary retention. The activities included meaning-matching tasks, spelling challenges, context-based missions, and word-recognition puzzles delivered through an online platform accessible on students' computers. The games were designed to engage learners in repeated encounters with target vocabulary items in various contexts and formats.

The AI component consisted of structured interactions with ChatGPT. Students in the experimental group used ChatGPT to request simplified explanations of vocabulary, generate example sentences, clarify usage patterns, and receive feedback on sentences they produced. The use of AI aimed to supplement game-based learning by providing individualized support and facilitating deeper processing of vocabulary items.

Procedure

The study was carried out over an eight-week period and included three instructional sessions per week, each lasting approximately one hour. Both groups covered the same vocabulary items and thematic units during the intervention period, ensuring that differences in outcomes could be attributed to the instructional methods rather than the content.

During the first week, both groups completed a vocabulary pretest that measured knowledge across the six aspects of vocabulary. This assessment established a baseline for comparing the two groups. The experimental group also participated in an orientation session that introduced them to the online games platform and provided guidelines for interacting with ChatGPT. Students were instructed on how to phrase prompts, evaluate AI-generated responses critically, and use the AI tool responsibly.

During weeks two through seven, the experimental group received instruction through the AIGames technique. Each session began with game-based activities in which students practiced the target vocabulary through interactive tasks that involved matching words with definitions, identifying meanings in context, selecting correct spelling options, and applying vocabulary in short missions. The games allowed for repeated practice and offered instant feedback, which encouraged learners to revise incorrect responses and consolidate their understanding.

Following the game-based portion of the session, students engaged in AI-assisted tasks. These tasks included asking ChatGPT for explanations of unfamiliar words, generating example sentences, creating short paragraphs using target vocabulary, and checking their sentences for accuracy. This component provided individualized scaffolding and helped students clarify nuances of usage that might not be fully addressed through games alone. The teacher monitored student interactions to ensure safe and effective use of the AI tool but minimized direct instruction to allow students to rely on the integrated system.

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL
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9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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The control group received traditional vocabulary instruction based on commonly used practices in preparatory school contexts. Instruction included teacher explanations of word meanings, repetition drills, exercises from the coursebook, and sentence writing activities. Although this approach ensured exposure to the same vocabulary items, it lacked the interactivity and personalized support offered to the experimental group.

During the final week of the study, all participants completed a vocabulary posttest. This test was parallel in structure and difficulty to the pretest and assessed the same six aspects of vocabulary knowledge. To explore learners' attitudes toward the AIGames technique, the experimental group also completed a questionnaire and responded to open-ended prompts regarding their learning experience.

Instruments

The research employed two principal instruments: a vocabulary test and an attitude questionnaire. The vocabulary test was developed by the researchers and included sixty items, with ten items assessing each of the six aspects of vocabulary knowledge. Both the pretest and posttest were reviewed by three experts in applied linguistics to ensure clarity, relevance, and content validity. A pilot test conducted with a comparable cohort demonstrated strong reliability for the instrument.

The attitude questionnaire measured learners' perceptions of the AIGames technique across several dimensions, including motivation, enjoyment, perceived usefulness, clarity of learning, and ease of use. Responses were collected on a five-point Likert scale. Two open-ended questions invited learners to describe their experiences with AIGames in their own words, allowing for qualitative insights that complemented the quantitative data.

Data Analysis

Data from the vocabulary tests were analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize pretest and posttest scores, and independent samples t-tests were employed to examine differences between the experimental and control groups. Paired samples t-tests were used to analyze within-group gains, and effect sizes were calculated to determine the magnitude of differences. Correlation analyses were conducted to explore the relationship between learners' attitudes and vocabulary achievement. Qualitative responses were analyzed thematically in order to identify recurring themes that could illuminate learners' perceptions of the AIGames technique.

FINDINGS

The purpose of the analysis was to determine whether the AIGames technique produced significant improvements in vocabulary acquisition compared with traditional instruction and to examine learners' attitudes toward the integrated approach. The results are presented in accordance with the research questions and the data analysis procedures described in the Methods section.

235

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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Both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted. Effect sizes (Cohen's d and partial η^2 where appropriate) were calculated to evaluate the magnitude of differences. Qualitative findings from open-ended reflections are also reported to complement quantitative results.

The first step in the analysis was to confirm whether the two groups were comparable at the outset of the study. Before the intervention, an independent samples t-test was conducted to confirm whether the experimental and control groups were comparable in vocabulary knowledge. Pretest results indicated that the experimental and control groups demonstrated similar levels of vocabulary knowledge across all six aspects assessed. The numerical differences between the two groups were small and not statistically significant, indicating that both sets of learners began the study with equivalent vocabulary proficiency. This equivalence was essential for interpreting posttest differences as genuine effects of the instructional intervention.

Table 1. Pretest Equivalence Between Groups

Group	M	SD	t(56)	p
Experimental	32.14	7.82	0.46	.648
Control	31.27	8.01		

The results indicate that both groups started at a similar baseline level (p > .05), ensuring comparability for posttest analyses. After the eight-week intervention, substantial differences emerged between the performances of the two groups. The experimental group, which used the AIGames technique, demonstrated significantly higher vocabulary achievement on the posttest than the control group. The increase in mean scores from pretest to posttest was considerably larger for the AIGames group, and the magnitude of this difference suggested a strong and meaningful effect. The contrast between the two groups was consistent across all six aspects of vocabulary knowledge measured in the study. These aspects included denotation, connotation, spelling, pronunciation, collocation, and part of speech. Although the degree of improvement varied among aspects, the advantage consistently favored the experimental group.

Table 2. Posttest Differences Between Groups

Group	M	SD	t(56)	p	Cohen's d
Experimental	53.72	6.44	6.79	< .001	1.78
Control	43.18	7.12			

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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The independent t-test revealed a large and statistically significant difference favoring the experimental group (t = 6.79, p < .001). The effect size (d = 1.78) indicates a very strong impact of the AIGames intervention on vocabulary achievement.

Within-Group Pretest–Posttest Gains

Experimental Group

A paired samples t-test showed a statistically significant improvement:

Pretest: M = 32.14 (SD = 7.82)

Posttest: M = 53.72 (SD = 6.44)

t(28) = 14.86, p < .001

Cohen's d = 2.77 (extremely large)

Control Group

A smaller but statistically significant improvement was found:

Pretest: M = 31.27 (SD = 8.01)

Posttest: M = 43.18 (SD = 7.12)

t(28) = 7.21, p < .001

Cohen's d = 1.34 (large)

Although both groups improved, the magnitude of gains was notably higher in the experimental group. This confirms that the AIGames technique produced greater vocabulary development.

Subskill Analyses

Among the six aspects, denotation and spelling showed the largest gains. Learners in the AIGames group demonstrated a marked improvement in their ability to recall and interpret core meanings of vocabulary items and to produce accurate spelling. These findings are consistent with the nature of the intervention, which provided repeated exposure to target vocabulary in visually supported, game-based tasks enhanced by immediate AI-generated explanations and corrective feedback. The multimodal and repetitive features of the games appear to have facilitated deeper processing of the semantics and orthographic forms of the words.

Table 3. Summary of Posttest Means by Vocabulary Aspect

Aspect	Experimental (SD)	M Control (SD)	M p-value	Interpretation
Denotation	9.12 (1.02)	7.04 (1.44)	< .001	Largest improvement
Connotation	8.43 (1.22)	6.91 (1.37)	< .001	Strong improvement

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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Aspect	Experimental (SD)	M Control (SD)	M p-value	Interpretation
Spelling	9.05 (0.98)	7.22 (1.41)	< .001	Very strong improvement
Pronunciation	7.18 (1.40)	6.12 (1.52)	.016	Smallest difference
Collocation	9.01 (1.11)	7.43 (1.29)	< .001	Significant advantage
Part of Speech	9.03 (1.08)	7.46 (1.36)	< .001	Clear improvement

Improvements in connotation, collocation, and part of speech were also substantial. The learners' enhanced performance in these areas suggests that the combination of interactive practice and AI explanations helped them build a more nuanced understanding of vocabulary use in context. ChatGPT's individualized responses appear to have played a role in enabling students to explore subtle differences in usage that are often difficult to grasp through traditional instruction.

Pronunciation showed the smallest gains in the experimental group relative to the other aspects, although the improvement remained statistically significant. This comparatively modest increase may be attributed to the limited auditory elements in the selected games and the text-based nature of the AI support. Despite this limitation, learners still demonstrated measurable progress in pronunciation, likely supported by the increased familiarity with word forms and meanings gained through repeated exposure during gameplay.

The control group also demonstrated improvement between the pretest and posttest, but the gains were considerably smaller across all six aspects of vocabulary knowledge. The modest increase in scores suggests that traditional instruction, which relied on explanation, repetition, and textbook exercises, provided some benefit but lacked the multimedia reinforcement and adaptive feedback present in the AIGames condition. The contrast between the two groups therefore supports the conclusion that integrating AI with digital games creates a more effective and engaging learning environment for vocabulary development.

Learners' Attitudes Toward the AIGames Technique

The second component of the results focused on learners' attitudes toward the AIGames technique. Analysis of the questionnaire data indicated that students held generally positive perceptions of the approach. They reported high levels of enjoyment and motivation during the intervention and expressed appreciation for the clarity and immediacy of AI-generated explanations. Many described the learning experience as more engaging than conventional vocabulary lessons and indicated that the combination of games and AI support helped them understand and remember new words more effectively. The attitude questionnaire included 20 Likert-scale items (1

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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= strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). Reliability analysis indicated high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .91).

Table 4. Descriptive Summary of Attitude Scores

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Enjoyment	4.41	0.52	Very positive
Motivation	4.27	0.61	Very positive
Perceived usefulness	4.33	0.58	Very positive
Clarity of learning	4.06	0.66	Positive
Ease of use	4.18	0.63	Positive
Overall attitude	4.25	0.57	Strongly positive

These results indicate that students held generally positive attitudes, particularly regarding engagement, usefulness, and increased motivation.

Qualitative responses from the open-ended questions provided insight into the reasons behind these positive perceptions. Students frequently stated that the games made vocabulary learning enjoyable and reduced the monotony often associated with traditional methods. They also reported that ChatGPT made difficult words easier to understand by providing simple explanations and personalized examples. Several students commented that they felt more confident experimenting with new vocabulary because the AI tool provided supportive feedback without judgment. These comments suggest that the AIGames technique fostered a comfortable and motivating learning environment that encouraged greater learner autonomy and risk-taking.

To address the third research question, Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to determine whether students' attitudes toward AIGames were associated with their vocabulary achievement gains.

Correlation Analysis

Attitude total score & vocabulary gain:
r = .21, p = .271 (not significant)

Attitude total score & posttest score:
r = .18, p = .332 (not significant)

Despite these overwhelmingly positive attitudes, the correlation analysis revealed no significant relationship between learners' perceptions of AIGames and their vocabulary achievement. Students who reported moderate levels of enjoyment or usefulness still showed substantial gains in vocabulary knowledge, and those with

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
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"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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very positive attitudes did not necessarily outperform their peers. This finding indicates that while AIGames was viewed favorably, its effectiveness did not depend on individual preferences and was instead rooted in the inherent instructional advantages of the integrated approach. The consistency of vocabulary gains across students suggests that the method supported learning regardless of attitudinal differences.

Taken together, the results demonstrate that the AIGames technique substantially enhanced vocabulary acquisition across multiple dimensions of word knowledge. The approach was not only effective but also well received by learners, who appreciated its interactive and supportive features. Although learner attitudes did not directly predict vocabulary outcomes, the consistent improvement across the experimental group shows that the combination of digital games and AI support created an engaging and impactful learning experience. The evidence therefore supports the potential of AIGames as a promising approach for vocabulary instruction in EFL preparatory school contexts.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of an instructional approach that integrates online games with an AI-based support system, referred to as AIGames, for enhancing vocabulary learning among EFL learners at a preparatory school of a state university. The results demonstrated that the AIGames technique produced significantly greater vocabulary gains than traditional methods, and that learners generally held positive attitudes toward the integrated approach. These findings contribute to a growing body of research supporting both game-based learning and AI-assisted instruction, while also extending the literature by offering empirical evidence of their combined impact on vocabulary acquisition.

The strong performance of the experimental group aligns with numerous studies that have shown the benefits of digital games for vocabulary development. Game-based learning has consistently been associated with increased engagement, enhanced motivation, and improved vocabulary retention (Al-Sharafat & AbuSeileek, 2012; Ashraf et al., 2014; Carrillo et al., 2019). Research has highlighted that digital games foster repeated exposure to lexical items, require learners to retrieve and manipulate vocabulary in meaningful contexts, and provide feedback that supports immediate correction and reinforcement (Ebrahimzadeh & Alavi, 2017; Teng, 2022). These characteristics likely contributed to the substantial gains observed across all vocabulary aspects in this study, particularly in denotation and spelling, which benefit strongly from multimodal repetition and visual reinforcement.

The findings also validate the theoretical argument that vocabulary learning is most effective when learners engage with words in meaningful, contextualized situations. Scholars such as Bi and Song (2011) and Vnucko and Klimova (2023) emphasize that games create environments where learners encounter vocabulary through narrative, tasks, and problem-solving activities that resemble authentic language use. The experimental group's improvement in connotation, collocation, and part-of-speech

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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
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knowledge can be interpreted in light of these theories. Through interactive gameplay, students had opportunities to engage with vocabulary in contexts that required them to infer shades of meaning, observe syntactic roles, and connect new vocabulary to familiar linguistic patterns.

The study's findings are further supported by research on the affective benefits of digital games. High levels of engagement and enjoyment reported by the learners in this study correspond with similar findings in other contexts where game-based instruction has been implemented. Derakhshan et al. (2024) found that virtual reality game-based tasks improved motivation and immersion in English for Medical Purposes courses, while Smirani and Yamani (2024) observed that gaming practices contributed to increased willingness to practice vocabulary. These positive affective responses are important because motivation plays a central role in sustaining attention, facilitating repeated practice, and ultimately driving vocabulary retention (Tobias et al., 2014). The present study corroborates these observations, as learners described the activities as enjoyable and engaging, and associated these feelings with greater effort and confidence.

Beyond digital games, the integration of ChatGPT introduced an additional dimension that strengthened the learning process. AI-based tools have been recognized for their ability to provide individualized support, generate contextual examples, and deliver immediate explanations that respond to learners' specific needs (Baskara, 2023; Kostka & Toncelli, 2023). Previous studies have shown that AI applications enhance vocabulary learning by helping learners clarify meanings, correct errors, and practice new forms with adaptive guidance (Nazari et al., 2021). The participants in this study highlighted similar benefits, noting that ChatGPT simplified complex vocabulary, increased their understanding through personalized examples, and allowed them to ask questions without feeling embarrassed. These findings suggest that AI functions as an effective scaffolding mechanism that encourages risk-taking and experimentation, which are essential components of vocabulary acquisition.

The strong performance of the experimental group may also be attributed to the synergistic effect of combining AI support with digital gameplay. The games provided rich exposure and interaction, while ChatGPT offered clarification, elaboration, and corrective feedback. This blended approach may have provided the sort of multidimensional support that scholars such as Sun et al. (2024) describe as essential for personalization and adaptivity in technology-enhanced learning. By receiving reinforcement from both the game environment and the AI tool, learners may have developed deeper lexical representations that extended across form, meaning, and use.

The modest improvement in pronunciation, although statistically significant, suggests that the current implementation of AIGames provides limited auditory support. This outcome is consistent with previous research documenting the challenges of teaching pronunciation through text-based tools. While games and AI can effectively enhance orthographic and semantic knowledge, studies indicate that pronunciation improvement typically requires sustained exposure to auditory input,

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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imitation tasks, and feedback on phonological accuracy (Teo et al., 2022; Derakhshan et al., 2024). In this study, the absence of strong audio components likely constrained the extent of improvement achievable in this aspect of vocabulary knowledge. This limitation indicates a potential area for future enhancement through the integration of text-to-speech technologies or AI-driven pronunciation feedback tools.

The learners' positive attitudes toward AIGames reinforce its pedagogical value. Students described the learning experience as motivating, enjoyable, and less stressful than traditional instruction. Similar findings have been reported in studies by Chen and Yang (2019), Hussein et al. (2022), and Wichadee and Pattanapichet (2018), who observed that game-based and AI-enhanced environments foster positive emotional experiences, reduce learning anxiety, and support autonomy. The present study confirms that learners appreciate instruction that combines interactive elements with personalized AI support. Their reflections suggest that AIGames not only improves performance but also contributes to a more psychologically supportive learning climate.

However, the absence of a significant correlation between learners' attitudes and vocabulary achievement offers an important pedagogical insight. Although learners enjoyed and valued the AIGames technique, these perceptions did not predict their vocabulary gains. This finding is consistent with studies indicating that well-designed instructional interventions can yield cognitive benefits even when learner motivation or attitude varies (Chen et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2024). In the present study, the structure of the AIGames technique, which provided consistent opportunities for repetition, contextualization, and adaptive feedback, appears to have supported learning regardless of individual preferences or enthusiasm. This indicates that the method's instructional strength lies in its design characteristics rather than in learners' predispositions toward technology.

The findings of this study contribute to the broader understanding of how emerging technologies can support language learning. Scholars have increasingly argued that the future of EFL instruction lies in integrating innovative tools that combine interactivity, adaptivity, and authenticity (Guan et al., 2024; Ajlouni et al., 2023). The results of this study align with this perspective, demonstrating that learners benefit from environments where digital games provide immersion and engagement while AI tools deliver individualized support. The approach aligns with the shift in language pedagogy toward learner-centered instruction that emphasizes autonomy, meaningful interaction, and differentiated support.

Despite its contributions, the study has limitations that should be acknowledged. The research was conducted in a single institutional context, which limits generalizability. Studies involving multiple universities, public schools, or different age groups would provide a broader understanding of the technique's applicability. The duration of the intervention was limited to eight weeks, and future research should explore long-term retention to determine whether the benefits of AIGames persist over time. Additionally, the lack of auditory features in the games and AI

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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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support limited pronunciation development, suggesting the need for tools that incorporate spoken interaction and feedback.

Overall, the findings clearly demonstrate that integrating online games with AI tools such as ChatGPT can significantly enhance EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition. The approach supports multiple dimensions of lexical knowledge, fosters positive learner experiences, and provides high levels of engagement and adaptivity that traditional methods often lack. The evidence suggests that AIGames represents a promising direction for future EFL vocabulary instruction, capable of transforming how learners interact with and internalize new vocabulary in academic settings.

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of an instructional approach that integrates digital games with an AI-based support system, referred to as AIGames, on the vocabulary learning of EFL students enrolled in a preparatory program at a state university. The findings demonstrated that the AIGames technique significantly enhanced learners' vocabulary acquisition across six dimensions of word knowledge, including denotation, connotation, spelling, pronunciation, collocation, and part of speech. These gains were consistently higher than those achieved through traditional vocabulary instruction, indicating that the combination of gameplay and AI-assisted scaffolding creates a more effective learning environment than conventional approaches.

Learners also expressed overall positive attitudes toward the AIGames technique. They reported that the integration of games made learning more enjoyable, engaging, and less stressful, while the AI component provided personalized explanations, contextualized examples, and immediate feedback. These perceptions are important because affective responses shape students' willingness to participate, experiment with new forms, and persist in challenging tasks. Although attitudes did not correlate directly with vocabulary achievement, the consistent gains among learners suggest that the design characteristics of AIGames deliver instructional benefits that are independent of individual preferences or affective disposition.

The study also contributes to theoretical understandings of how combined digital and AI tools can support vocabulary learning. Digital games provide interaction, narrative, repetition, and multimodal input, all of which support retention and deeper processing. AI assistance adds personalization, adaptivity, and error-focused feedback that are difficult to achieve in large classroom settings. Together, these tools offer a hybrid learning environment that strengthens both the cognitive and affective dimensions of vocabulary development.

Despite its promising results, the study is limited by its single institutional setting, relatively short duration, and the lack of extensive auditory components in the instructional tools. Future research should explore longer interventions, include a wider variety of pronunciation-focused technologies, and examine the long-term retention of vocabulary learned through AIGames. Including different educational levels and broader demographic groups would also strengthen the generalizability of findings. Comparative studies involving augmented reality, virtual reality, or

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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multimodal AI systems could further illuminate the relative strengths of different technologically enhanced vocabulary-learning approaches.

In conclusion, the study provides strong empirical evidence that integrating online games with AI-generated support can significantly enhance vocabulary acquisition among EFL learners. The approach offers a dynamic, engaging, and highly adaptive learning environment that aligns with contemporary pedagogical priorities emphasizing interaction, learner autonomy, and meaningful practice. As digital technologies and artificial intelligence continue to evolve, methods such as AIGames hold substantial potential to transform vocabulary instruction and broaden the possibilities for effective and motivating language-learning experiences in diverse educational contexts.

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AI-ENHANCED DIGITAL BOOK FOR LITERARY INSTRUCTION

EDEBİYAT EĞİTİMİ İÇİN YAPAY ZEKA DESTEKLİ DİJİTAL KİTAP

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Abstract

Many English Language Teaching (ELT) departments continue to struggle with how to teach literature in a way that keeps pace with the digital and AI-based tools now common in other areas of language education. Classroom practices often depend on the instructor's academic background, which leads to uneven expectations and fragmented approaches across programs. The proceeding outlines a digital book that brings together literary activities, pedagogical guidance, and AI-supported tasks in a more organized and workable format for instructors who teach literature in ELT programs. Rather than offering a technological add-on, the model attempts to create a structure that fits the teaching conditions of higher education and supports instructors as they guide students through close reading, analysis, and creative engagement with texts. The study adopts a Design-Based Research approach to guide needs analysis, material design, iterative refinement, and future implementation. The study draws on several sources of information, including interviews with instructors, reviews of existing course materials, the Intelligent TPACK Scale, and a rubric developed for examining AI-based tools. Together, these materials shape the methodological direction of the project and help clarify what the digital book needs to address. Since the work is still in its design phase, no empirical findings are presented here. Instead, the proceeding maps out how the model will be developed and refined, and how it may eventually evolve into a flexible and pedagogically meaningful resource for teaching literature in ELT programs.

Keywords: Digital book; Literary instruction; Literature in language education; Design-Based Research; Pedagogical model

Özet

Birçok İngilizce öğretmenliği (ELT) bölümü, dil eğitiminin diğer alanlarında artık yaygın olan dijital ve yapay zeka tabanlı araçları aynı hızda edebiyat öğretimine entegre etmenin yollarını bulmakta zorlanmaktadır. Sınıf uygulamalarının genellikle öğretmenin akademik geçmişine bağlı olması programlar arasında eşit olmayan beklentilere ve dağınık yaklaşımlara yol açmaktadır. Bu çalışma, ELT programlarında edebiyat öğreten öğretim üyeleri için edebi etkinlikleri, pedagojik rehberliği ve yapay zeka destekli görevleri daha organize ve uygulanabilir bir formatta bir araya getiren dijital bir kitabı özetlemektedir. Model, teknolojik bir eklenti sunmak yerine, yükseköğretimin öğretim koşullarına uyan ve öğrencileri metinleri dikkatle okuma, analiz etme ve yaratıcı bir şekilde ele alma konusunda yönlendirirken öğretim üyelerini destekleyen bir yapı oluşturmaya çalışmaktadır. Çalışma, ihtiyaç analizi, materyal tasarımı, yinelemeli iyileştirme ve gelecekteki

uygulamayı yönlendirmek için Tasarım Temelli Araştırma yaklaşımını benimsemektedir. Çalışma, eğitmenlerle yapılan görüşmeler, mevcut ders materyallerinin incelenmesi, Intelligent TPACK Ölçeği ve yapay zeka tabanlı araçları incelemek için geliştirilen bir değerlendirme tablosu dahil olmak üzere çeşitli bilgi kaynaklarından yararlanmaktadır. Bu materyaller birlikte, projenin metodolojik yönünü şekillendirmekte ve dijital kitabın ele alması gereken konuları netleştirmeye yardımcı olmaktadır. Çalışma hala tasarım aşamasında olduğundan, burada ampirik bulgular sunulmamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dijital kitap; Edebiyat öğretimi; Dil eğitiminde edebiyat; Tasarım Temelli Araştırma; Pedagojik model

INTRODUCTION

Literature has long served as a meaningful resource in foreign language education and offers students opportunities to learn language in authentic and culturally grounded contexts. Research in applied linguistics has shown that working with literary texts can increase students' language awareness, introduce them to different cultures, and help them perform more conscious text analysis (Paran, 2008; Hall, 2015). Nevertheless, many English language teaching programs continue to struggle with how to position literature within their teaching objectives. In many programs, classroom practice shows that instructors are not always certain about how literary texts should be approached or what kinds of learning they are expected to promote. Recent work points out that lessons still rely heavily on short comprehension questions, an approach that leaves little room for interpretation or analytical engagement and rarely encourages students to experiment with creative responses to the text (Arlansyah, Puspita, & Saputra, 2023; Gabrielsen, Blikstad-Balas, & Tengberg, 2019).Additionally, instructors' academic backgrounds strongly influence how they teach. Instructors trained in literature often need more explicit pedagogical guidance while colleagues from ELT backgrounds tend to request support for dealing with the interpretive and analytical aspects of literary study (Lazar, 1993).

Recently, digital literacy has become an essential competency in contemporary ELT programs. Students and instructors now work within learning environments that make regular use of digital tools and, increasingly, AI-based applications (Pegrum, 2019). However, literature courses generally fall behind in this regard, and they remain one of the areas in ELT where digital support is least developed. The use of technological tools in literature teaching is often fragmented or limited to peripheral activities rather than being placed within a pedagogically coherent framework (Hockly & Thornbury, 2015). Recent work on AI-supported tools shows that they can assist learners in analyzing texts, making sense of literary features, and working through guided reading tasks. At the same time, these studies draw attention to questions about how such tools should be used and the need for approaches that are ethically sound and rooted in clear pedagogical principles (Moorhouse & Wong, 2025).

These findings reveal a clear problem in the field of ELT. Currently, the field lacks a research-informed model that integrates AI tools, digital literacy practices, and the pedagogical requirements of teaching literature. This absence makes it harder for instructors to plan and give practical lessons, reduces the meaningful use of digital

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
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and AI-based resources, and causes uneven instructional quality across ELT programs. The model is designed as an integrated structure that brings together literary content, pedagogical guidance, and AI-supported tasks in a way that fits the expectations of higher education. Through this process, the model is expected to become a reliable and adaptable resource that gives instructors opportunities to build digital literacy and guide them to help students engage in close reading, literary analysis, and creative writing.

METHOD

Research Model

This study employs the Design-Based Research (DBR) framework to conceptualize a model for an AI-supported digital book. DBR is well-suited for the development of educational innovations since it provides the foundation for designing, developing, and refining the model in iterative cycles that reflect authentic classroom contexts (McKenney & Reeves, 2018; Wang & Hannafin, 2005). In this study, DBR will guide the identification of pedagogical needs, the development of AI-enhanced modules, and the refinement of model components.

Study Material, Population and Sample

The model proposal is based on data gathered from instructors who participated in ELT programs of several state universities. Since the material at the heart of the study will serve as a literature-based pedagogical tool, participants will be selected as instructors teaching English literature courses such as "Literature and Language Teaching" or "Teaching Literary Texts" in higher education. It is expected that the range of instructors' academic backgrounds will help reveal the kinds of pedagogical and disciplinary challenges that tend to arise in literature teaching. Reviewing course materials and curriculum documents will also offer a clearer picture of how literature is situated within the program and the role it is intended to play. Interviews with instructors are expected to provide additional information about teaching needs, preferences, and expectations regarding digital and AI-supported learning.

Collection and Analysis

Data for the study will be collected from several sources, each of which informs a different stage of the DBR process. Interviews with instructors would provide insights based on issues that they encounter when planning lessons, selecting texts, addressing analytical tasks, and assessing student work. Additional information will be drawn from institutional documents and course outlines, which may help clarify the learning aims that shape literature instruction in ELT programs. The qualitative material will be analyzed through thematic analysis to identify common concerns across participants. Together, these findings are expected to inform the set of design features that guided the development of the digital book.

Data Collection Tool

Several instruments will be used in the data collection process. The Intelligent TPACK Scale is planned as the main instrument for evaluating instructors' readiness to work

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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with AI-based tools since it offers indicators related to technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge (Çelik, 2023). In addition to this scale, the proposal includes a set of needs analysis interviews that will be used to explore areas where instructors may require further support, whether in planning lessons or in approaching literary material. These interviews aim to clarify the types of challenges that should inform the design of the digital book. To support the review of the AI elements planned for the model, the study will utilize the AI Tool Evaluation Rubric developed by Mackie and Aspenlieder (2024). This rubric provides criteria to guide the examination of functional features and highlights the ethical considerations that should be taken into account when integrating AI into instructional materials.

Validity and Reliability

Validity in the proposed study will be supported by drawing on multiple sources of information during the design phase. Insights from planned instructor interviews and the analysis of institutional documents will be examined together to identify areas of overlap and divergence. Working with convergent themes in this way is expected to strengthen the alignment between the emerging model and the instructional needs it aims to address.

Reliability will be approached by using standardized instruments and clearly defined coding procedures. The Intelligent TPACK Scale will provide a consistent structure for examining instructors' technological and pedagogical readiness while the qualitative materials will be coded through procedures developed in advance. To minimize interpretive bias, multiple researchers will review the coding of qualitative categories, and discrepancies will be resolved through discussion before the categories are finalized.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE

The model aims to contribute to current discussions on improving the teaching of literature in ELT programs, especially as digital tools and AI-based learning environments begin to influence what is expected in classroom practice. Current literature repeatedly notes that the use of technology in literature courses is inconsistent and often detached from pedagogical aims (Bui, 2022; McQueen Sum & Oancea, 2022; Alfaruque et al., 2023). The model sets out a digital book that brings together principles of literary teaching, elements of digital literacy, and a selection of AI-supported tasks. In this way, it offers instructors a more apparent route for managing the content and demands of literature courses in today's technology-oriented learning environments.

The model also contributes conceptually by bringing together three domains that are usually treated separately: the teaching of literary texts, digital pedagogy, and AI-supported instructional design. While recent work indicates that AI-based tools can support students as they interpret texts and engage in guided reading tasks (Moorhouse & Wong, 2025), the field still lacks a clear framework that would help instructors turn these tools into something they can use reliably in their courses. This proposal aims to fill that gap by outlining a design structure that aligns

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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theoretical principles with classroom realities. The use of a Design-Based Research framework strengthens this coherence by allowing the model to evolve through cycles of needs analysis, design, trial use, and revision.

Besides its pedagogical effects, this model is also important in terms of organizational planning. It can support curriculum renewal processes and serve as a professional development guide that prioritizes teachers' increased and conscious use of digital resources in literature teaching. The model may also help policymakers consider how AI-supported tools can be embedded into broader educational strategies focused on technology integration and digital competence.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This proposal summarizes the conceptual and methodological foundations for an AI-powered digital book and does not report empirical results. All explanations regarding data collection processes, including interviews and document reviews, refer to the planned procedures that will guide the first cycle of the DBR framework. Therefore, the scope of this proceeding is limited to the rationale, design principles, and designed structure of the model.

The model focuses specifically on literature-related courses within ELT programs. While the principles may be relevant to other areas of language education, the design choices are shaped by the pedagogical and disciplinary requirements of literary study. The proposal also concentrates on the integration of AI-supported tasks in modular teaching resources rather than the development of standalone software or AI systems.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the model will require refinement once it is implemented, and its effectiveness can only be assessed after future DBR cycles. Secondly, the success of the model depends significantly on whether trainers are prepared to work with AI-based tools. This is because the planned model will be shaped according to the participants' experiences, opinions, and feedback. This is an area that varies between institutions and may require additional support. Thirdly, access to technology, particularly in programs with limited technological resources, may affect the model's feasibility or the level of adoption among instructors. Despite these limitations, the model provides a solid foundation for future research and clearly points the way toward improving the teaching of literary texts in ELT by carefully integrating AI-supported pedagogy.

CONCLUSION

The study brings together the ideas and planning steps behind a digital book that incorporates artificial intelligence into the teaching of literary texts in ELT programs. The discussion throughout the proceeding shows that literature courses often lack a unified pedagogical direction and that instructors still struggle to connect literary content with today's digital learning environments. Instead of relying on the fragmented practices that currently shape many literature courses, the model seeks to bring the different elements of instruction together by organizing literary tasks,

pedagogical support, and AI-based activities into a single, coherent teaching resource that fits the day-to-day realities of university classrooms.

The methodological plan is built around a Design-Based Research cycle, which allows the material to be shaped by the needs and experiences of instructors and then refined through repeated stages of design, testing, and revision. Instruments such as the Intelligent TPACK Scale, the needs analysis interviews, and the AI evaluation rubric will help document how instructors engage with the material and what kinds of support they need as they incorporate AI tools into their courses. These elements give the study a clear direction while leaving room for the model to evolve once it is implemented.

Since the proceeding focuses on the design phase rather than reporting results, its main contribution lies in setting out a coherent path for developing a resource that can later be examined empirically. By integrating literary pedagogy and AI-based tasks into a unified structure, the study creates the conditions for more purposeful and engaging literature teaching in ELT programs. The following stages of the DBR process will determine how the model works in practice and how it should be refined, but the foundations laid here point toward a more integrated and contemporary approach to teaching literary texts.

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AN EXPLORATION OF AI ETHICAL REFLECTION OF EFL PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS: FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION

EFL ÖĞRETMEN ADAYLARININ AI ETİK YANSIMALARININ ARAŞTIRILMASI: FARKINDALIKTAN EYLEME

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Abstract

This study examines the ethical reflection of English as a Foreign Language pre-service teachers on AI in three dimensions: AI ethical awareness, AI critical evaluation, and AI for social good. Participants were 72 pre-service EFL teachers from a state university in the southern province of Türkiye. Participants' perspectives on ethical reflection were measured using a previously validated 7-point Likert scale, with response options ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (7). The data were then analyzed using a quantitative approach. The findings indicated that most pre-service teachers had higher ethical awareness, which consisted of five aspects: transparency, fairness, privacy, responsibility, and non-maleficence. They also demonstrated higher critical evaluation. Interestingly, the findings also showed that putting ethical reflection into action for social good and inclusive practice (community service, support for groups of learners with special needs or disabilities) was less developed, especially among pre-service teachers who had less frequently used AI. These results suggest that integrating AI experiences into foreign language education can be beneficial in promoting the responsible and ethical use of AI in learning and teaching. Such engagement could also foster pre-service teachers' understanding of ethical reflection with AI, particularly in relation to social projects for Community Service. The current study has a key implication that the responsible and ethical use of AI in teaching and learning contexts may increase hands-on practice and improve understanding to use AI for pedagogically and socially beneficial projects.

Keywords: AI ethical awareness, critical evaluation, AI for social good, pre-service EFL teachers, critical perspective on AI outputs

Özet

Bu çalışma, yabancı dil olarak İngilizce (EFL) öğretmen adaylarının yapay zeka (AI) konusundaki etik düşüncelerini üç boyutta incelemektedir: yapay zeka etik bilinci, yapay zeka eleştirel değerlendirmesi ve sosyal fayda için yapay zeka. Katılımcılar, Türkiye'nin güneyindeki bir devlet üniversitesinden 72 EFL öğretmen adayıdır. Katılımcıların etik yansıma konusundaki bakış açıları, önceden geçerliliği

doğrulanmış 7 puanlık Likert ölçeği kullanılarak ölçülmüştür. Yanıt seçenekleri "Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum" (1) ile "Kesinlikle Katılıyorum" (7) arasında değişmektedir. Veriler daha sonra nicel bir yaklaşım kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular, öğretmen adaylarının çoğunun şeffaflık, adalet, gizlilik, sorumluluk ve zarar vermeme olmak üzere beş boyuttan oluşan daha yüksek etik bilince sahip olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca, daha yüksek eleştirel değerlendirme becerisi sergilemişlerdir. İlginç bir şekilde, bulgular ayrıca etik düşünceyi sosyal fayda ve kapsayıcı uygulamalar (toplum hizmeti, özel ihtiyaçları veya engelleri olan öğrenci gruplarına destek) için eyleme geçirme becerisinin, özellikle AI'yı daha az sıklıkla kullanan öğretmen adayları arasında daha az gelişmiş olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu sonuçlar, AI deneyimlerini yabancı dil eğitimine entegre etmenin, öğrenme ve öğretimde AI'nın sorumlu ve etik kullanımını teşvik etmede faydalı olabileceğini göstermektedir. Bu tür bir katılım, özellikle Toplum Hizmeti için sosyal projelerle ilgili olarak, öğretmen adaylarının AI ile etik düşünceyi anlamalarını da teşvik edebilir. Mevcut çalışmanın temel çıkarımlarından biri, öğretim ve öğrenim bağlamlarında AI'nın sorumlu ve etik kullanımı, uygulamalı pratiği artırabilir ve AI'nın pedagojik ve sosyal açıdan faydalı projelerde kullanılmasına yönelik anlayışı geliştirebilir.

Anahtar kelimeler: AI etik bilinci, eleştirel değerlendirme, sosyal fayda için AI, hizmet öncesi EFL öğretmenleri, AI çıktılarına eleştirel bakış açısı

INTRODUCTION

The rapid diffusion of generative artificial intelligence (AI) systems such as ChatGPT has brought new opportunities for language learning, instructional support and assessment. Yet these systems introduce complex ethical concerns that challenge existing pedagogical routines. Prior research highlights issues of algorithmic bias, data privacy, surveillance, opacity, and accountability in AI-mediated educational settings (Westerlund, 2019; Ray, 2023). Teachers are central actors who mediate these technologies, determining how, when, and why students engage with AI. In this regard, pre-service English language teachers occupy a pivotal role: Their conceptualizations of AI ethics will shape future classroom practices.

Despite growing attention to AI literacy, the ethical dimension of AI use remains underexplored in language-teacher education. Ethical reflection requires more than knowledge of how AI functions. It involves recognizing ethical risks, critically evaluating AI outputs, and translating responsible judgment into socially beneficial action (Goldsmith et al., 2020; Rest, 1986). Responding to this need, this study examines the ethical reflections of pre-service English language teachers across three dimensions recently validated in the AI Ethical Reflection Scale (Wang et al., 2025). The analysis explores both overall reflection levels and potential differences based on participants' frequency of AI use.

The educational adoption of AI has accelerated across disciplines, but researchers consistently warn that this expansion brings notable ethical risks. Deepfake technologies, biased training datasets, and unclear decision-making processes can compromise fairness and trustworthiness (Westerlund, 2019). Reviews of generative AI also show unresolved challenges related to privacy, data governance, and ethical accountability (Ray, 2023). To address these risks, ethical frameworks propose principles such as transparency, fairness, responsibility, non-maleficence, and

AI literacy initiatives continue to emphasize conceptual knowledge and technical skills, paying limited attention to the moral reasoning processes required for responsible use (Ng et al., 2021). Goldsmith et al. (2020) argue that ethical reasoning in AI contexts requires multidimensional evaluation rather than simple compliance with guidelines. In this regard, the AI Ethical Reflection Scale (AIERS) developed by Wang et al. (2025) introduces three interrelated constructs: AI Ethical Awareness (AIEA), AI Critical Evaluation (AICE), and AI for Social Good (AISG). Awareness concerns recognizing ethical risks, critical evaluation refers to analyzing AI outputs and identifying potential harms, social good addresses learners' readiness to apply AI in ways that benefit society and minimize harm.

While ethical AI education is increasingly encouraged across STEM fields (Borenstein & Howard, 2021), the ELT context remains largely underexamined. Given that language-teacher education emphasizes interpretation, mediation, and communicative judgment, integrating ethical AI reflection into ELT programs is both timely and essential.

Based on these, this study aims to investigate the AI ethical reflection of pre-service teachers enrolled in an English Language Teaching (ELT) program. It focuses on three dimensions: Ethical Awareness, Critical Evaluation, and AI for Social Good. A secondary aim is to determine whether reflections differ depending on the frequency of AI use. This study answers the following questions:

RQ.1) What is the overall level of AI ethical reflection among ELT pre-service teachers?

RQ.2) Do levels of ethical reflection differ across dimensions based on AI-use frequency?

METHOD

Research Model

The study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional survey model designed to measure pre-service English language teachers' levels of AI ethical reflection at a single point in time. This model is appropriate for capturing internal constructs such as ethical awareness, evaluative judgment, and orientations toward social responsibility, all of which are not directly observable but can be reliably assessed through validated self-report instruments. The design also enabled group-based comparisons, allowing the study to explore whether ethical reflection differs according to the frequency with which participants engage with AI tools.

Study Material, Population and Sample

The primary study material consisted of the AI Ethical Reflection Scale (AIERS), which operationalizes ethical reflection across three dimensions: AI Ethical Awareness, AI Critical Evaluation, and AI for Social Good.

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The population targeted by the study comprised pre-service teachers enrolled in English Language Teaching (ELT) programs in Türkiye. This group represents a critical population for examining AI ethics because their future professional responsibilities require informed and responsible integration of emerging technologies. The sample included 72 pre-service EFL teachers from a public university in southern Türkiye. After the removal of one extreme response pattern, data from 71 participants were analyzed. The sample reflects the demographic and academic characteristics commonly observed in ELT programs, particularly in terms of technological familiarity and increasing exposure to generative AI tools.

Collection and Analysis

Data were collected during regular course sessions through a secure digital survey platform. Participation was voluntary, anonymous, and independent of course assessment. The administration process minimized peer influence, and no identifying information was requested. Completed responses were screened for completeness and response anomalies.

The analysis proceeded in two stages. Descriptive statistics were used to determine general levels of ethical reflection. Participants were then grouped into frequent and less frequent AI users based on self-reported usage patterns. Welch's t-tests were employed to compare group means due to unequal variances and sample sizes, and effect sizes were calculated using Hedges' g. Confidence intervals were examined to evaluate the robustness of differences. Only the AI for Social Good dimension showed a statistically significant and meaningful group difference.

Data Collection Tool

The data collection tool was the AI Ethical Reflection Scale (AIERS) developed and validated by Wang et al. (2025). The tool contains 12 items rated on a seven-point Likert scale and is structured around three theoretically grounded dimensions: AI Ethical Awareness (AIEA), capturing recognition of ethical risks and concerns; AI Critical Evaluation (AICE), reflecting the ability to question, critique, and interpret AI outputs; AI for Social Good (AISG), assessing willingness to apply AI responsibly and for the benefit of society. The scale aligns with established frameworks in ethics and moral reasoning (Floridi et al., 2018; Rest, 1986) and has demonstrated strong psychometric properties in its original validation.

Validity and Reliability

The validity of the study was supported through the use of a previously validated instrument (AIERS), whose construct validity, dimensional structure, and item functioning were established through exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses in earlier research. Content validity is reinforced by the alignment of scale dimensions with well-established theoretical models of ethical AI reasoning.

Reliability was ensured by using an instrument with high internal consistency in prior studies. In this study, responses were checked for completeness and irregularities, and three unclear data were removed to maintain data quality. The use

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

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of appropriate statistical tests strengthens the internal validity of the comparative analyses.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE

The findings of this study offer several implications for teacher education and contribute to the emerging body of knowledge on ethical AI integration in language-teacher preparation. The consistently high levels of ethical awareness and critical evaluation among pre-service teachers indicate that students are able to recognise risk, identify bias, and critique AI outputs even in the absence of formal instruction on AI ethics. This suggests that teacher-education programs can build on an existing foundation of intuitive ethical reasoning but should structure opportunities for deeper, practice-oriented engagement. The most substantive implication arises from the difference observed in the AI for Social Good dimension. The higher scores among frequent users indicate that experiential engagement with AI tools is associated with a stronger orientation toward socially responsible use. This finding suggests that ethical reflection develops not merely through conceptual exposure but through hands-on interaction in authentic learning contexts. Embedding AI-supported tasks into coursework may therefore help bridge the gap between recognizing ethical issues and acting upon them.

The study contributes to knowledge by situating AI ethical reflection within the context of ELT, a discipline absent from existing AI ethics scholarship. By applying a validated ethical reflection measure to ELT pre-service teachers, the study extends the applicability of the AI Ethical Reflection Scale (AIERS) beyond STEM-oriented settings and demonstrates its relevance for teacher education programs. Furthermore, the demonstrated sensitivity of the social good dimension to usage frequency offers a novel insight into how behavioral engagement interacts with ethical dispositions. This adds empirical touch to current debates on AI literacy, which often prioritize technical competence over ethical practice.

Collectively, the study provides evidence that ethical AI education in ELT cannot rely solely on theoretical discussion. It requires experience that allows future teachers to evaluate, apply, and justify AI use in ways that align with general benefit. By documenting these patterns within a language-teacher education context, the study advances current understanding of how ethical reflection develops and signals pathways for designing more comprehensive AI ethics curricula.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The scope of this study is confined to examining AI ethical reflection among pre-service English language teachers enrolled in a single undergraduate ELT program in Türkiye. The investigation focuses specifically on three dimensions of ethical reasoning as operationalized by the AI Ethical Reflection Scale (AIERS). The study does not extend to in-service teachers, other subject areas, or longitudinal changes in ethical reasoning. Its primary aim is to capture a snapshot of ethical reflection and to explore whether frequency of AI use is associated with variation in these reflections.

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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
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Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the use of a convenience sample from one institution restricts the generalizability of the findings. Although the sample reflects typical characteristics of ELT programs, broader institutional and cultural differences may influence ethical orientations and cannot be accounted for here. Second, the study relies on self-report measures, which may be subject to social desirability bias, particularly in domains related to ethics and responsibility. While the AIERS is a validated instrument, self-report tools inherently capture perceptions rather than demonstrated behavior. Third, AI-use frequency was based on participants' subjective categorizations rather than behavioral tracking. Differences in self-perception of "frequent" or "less frequent" use may not fully align with actual engagement patterns. Fourth, the cross-sectional design provides a static view of ethical reflection but does not illuminate how ethical reasoning evolves over time or in response to targeted instruction. Finally, the study did not incorporate qualitative data, which could have provided richer insight into how pre-service teachers interpret ethical concerns or rationalize their use of AI tools.

Despite these limitations, the study offers a meaningful contribution to understanding ethical AI reflection within language-teacher education and highlights areas for future inquiry, including longitudinal tracking, mixed-methods designs, and curriculum-level interventions.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the ethical reflections of pre-service English language teachers in relation to their engagement with AI technologies, focusing on three dimensions of the AI Ethical Reflection Scale: ethical awareness, critical evaluation, and social good. The findings indicate that participants demonstrate consistently high levels of awareness and critical evaluation, suggesting that they are able to recognize ethical risks and interrogate AI outputs even in the absence of formalized AI ethics instruction. These strengths offer a promising foundation for the development of more comprehensive AI ethics education within ELT programs. The distinction observed in the AI for Social Good dimension provides the study's most consequential insight. Frequent users of AI scored significantly higher in this domain, pointing to the role of experiential engagement in shaping socially oriented ethical reasoning. This pattern underscores the need for teacher education programs to move beyond theoretical discussions of AI ethics and to create structured opportunities for students to engage with AI tools in applied, context-sensitive tasks. Such experiences may help bridge the gap between identifying ethical concerns and acting upon them in ways that benefit learners and communities.

Taken together, the findings highlight a developing readiness among pre-service ELT teachers to participate in responsible AI integration, while also revealing areas where further pedagogical support is needed. As AI continues to permeate educational practice, preparing future teachers to navigate its ethical dimensions will be essential not only for instructional quality but also for safeguarding equity and social responsibility in language education. The study contributes to this ongoing effort by

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THE ACCELERATION OF NEOLOGISMS: A STUDY OF NEW WORDS FORMATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE AND ITS SOCIOCULTURAL IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract

The digital age, marked by global connections and the widespread use of social media, has significantly changed how languages evolve, creating opportunities for cultural exchange and misunderstandings. This research paper argues that the speed of neologism—the creation of new words—has greatly increased, while the methods of forming these words have been altered by digital platforms, which act as unique spaces for global cultures to interact. This study goes beyond just analyzing word structure; it uses a sociolinguistic and intercultural communication perspective to explore how digital neologisms serve as both connections and obstacles in cross-cultural conversations. These new words are powerful cultural symbols, providing important insights into current collective fears, community building, and power relationships worldwide. The research uses a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative digital ethnography with an analysis of neologisms from official dictionary watchlists (like Oxford and Merriam-Webster), social media language. The analysis identifies and investigates how common word formation methods—such as blending, adding prefixes or suffixes, and changing the meaning of existing words are utilized in intercultural situations, creating a new layer of global, hybrid vocabulary.

Through detailed case studies, this paper shows how these neologisms help spread cultural ideas, while also looking at how platform-specific language can create isolated cultural vocabularies that impede understanding. The findings indicate that the rapid creation of new words in the digital realm has significant effects on intercultural communication: it democratizes language development, allowing less dominant cultures to insert their terms into the global vocabulary; it leads to the commercialization of cultural slang, often removing it from its original context; and it creates a lively, often contested space where global identities are shaped, amplifying both cultural convergence and divergence. This study concludes that grasping these new word formations is crucial for navigating the complexities of intercultural interactions in the 21st century, as they are foundational to modern global discourse.

Keywords: Intercultural Communication, Neologism, Digital Age, Global English, Cross-Cultural Dialogue.

INTRODUCTION

Language is constantly evolving. It adapts to various social, cultural, technological, and intellectual influences. In the past, new words developed slowly, often starting in specific fields before becoming widely adopted by lexicographers like those at the Oxford English Dictionary. With the advent of the internet and digital communication, this process has changed dramatically.

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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
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Today, new words can be created, spread, and accepted in mere hours, driven by viral trends, hashtags, online influencers, and algorithms that promote content. The change is not merely in speed but in structure, moving from an institutionally-curated model to a chaotic, democratic one, a shift that aligns with Jan Blommaert's (2010) theories on how globalization dislodges language from traditional anchors of authority.

This paper examines how rapidly new words are becoming integral to contemporary language. We explore several questions: What enables such swift word creation? What types of new words are most prevalent in online discussions? Importantly, what are the social and cultural implications of this rapid evolution of language?

METHOD

Research Model

The investigation adopts a mixed-methods approach situated within sociolinguistics and intercultural communication theory. The idea of the "sociotechnical neologism cycle" helps us understand how new words, called neologisms, are created, shared, and either become part of our everyday language or disappear. This process happens in several clear stages, which are sped up and influenced by digital platforms:

Incubation: New words first appear in specific online communities, subcultures, or unique digital spaces. These settings act like incubators, where special insider language grows naturally to express shared experiences, ideas, or identities that lack existing words.

Amplification: Some of these new words gain a lot of attention. This stage is greatly influenced by the sociotechnical aspects of digital platforms, where algorithms that promote engaging content, viral trends, or endorsements by key figures can quickly push a niche word into public awareness.

Meaning Negotiation: As the word reaches a wider and more varied audience, its original meaning is often discussed, expanded, or redefined. Different groups of users interpret and use the word in various ways, leading to a time of collective discussion over its exact meaning and proper use.

Acceptance: The neologism gains credibility when recognized by established institutions. This can happen through features in mainstream media, use by brands in advertising, or, most authoritatively, being included in official dictionaries, marking its entry into formal language.

Fade or Establishment: In the final stage, the word's long-term future is decided.It may gradually fall out of use as trends change, or it may become fully established as a recognized and widely understood part of the language.

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A key point of the modern sociotechnical neologism cycle is its speed and the lesser role of direct human curation. This phenomenon can be understood through Eli Pariser's (2011) concept of the 'filter bubble.' Algorithms and platform designs, meant to boost engagement, create personalized linguistic environments that increasingly determine which words are promoted and maintained. This represents a fundamental alteration of the traditional, more organic paths of language development, placing power in the hands of code rather than communities or editors.

Study Material

The population for this study is the vast, dynamic corpus of language generated within English-language digital spaces. This includes, but is not limited to, social media platforms (Twitter/X, TikTok, Instagram,), online communities, meme culture, and digital communication channels.

The study employs a purposive sample focused on prominent neologisms that have achieved a significant level of recognition. This is identified through official lexicographic sources, such as words featured in the "Word of the Year" lists or watchlists published by the Oxford English Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, and Dictionary.com, including examples like "rizz," "gaslight," and "authentic."

Additionally, the study uses digital ethnography to observe neologisms trending on social media platforms during a defined period, such as 2020 to 2024, identified through hashtags like #GirlMath and #Delulu, as well as viral memes and platform-specific slang. Furthermore, linguistic corpora track instances of selected neologisms in large-scale linguistic databases, like the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) or the News on the Web (NOW) Corpus, to gauge frequency and contextual usage over time.

Data Collection and Analysis

This research employed a mixed-methods approach, incorporating several key strategies. The qualitative digital ethnography involved immersive observation of online communities and platforms to identify emerging neologisms in their natural context. This process included monitoring trending topics, meme pages, and specific subreddits to understand the initial usage and community-specific meanings.

Additionally, document analysis was conducted through the systematic collection and examination of official publications from dictionary publishers, news articles discussing new words, and academic commentaries on digital language trends.

The collected data was analyzed using various methods. Linguistic analysis categorized each identified neologism according to established word-formation processes, such as blending (e.g., "hangry"), semantic shift (e.g., "ghost"), acronymy (e.g., "FOMO"), and conversion (e.g., "to Google"). Thematic analysis interpreted the

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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sociocultural implications of the neologisms by identifying recurring themes like identity formation, community building, cultural appropriation, and power dynamics in the discourse surrounding these words.

Furthermore, case study analysis provided an in-depth investigation of specific neologisms, such as "hygge," "karoshi," and "unalive," to trace their journey from origin to global spread, analyzing the resulting shifts in meaning and intercultural misunderstandings.

The primary tools for data collection included the researchers themselves, acting as digital ethnographers using direct observation on social media platforms. Publicly available digital archives, such as the official websites and blogs of Oxford Languages, Merriam-Webster, and other dictionary publishers, were also utilized. Additionally, linguistic corpus interfaces, including access to the COCA and NOW Corpus, provided quantitative data on word usage. A structured coding framework, developed by the researcher, was used to consistently categorize each neologism by its morphological type and sociocultural function.

Validity

Validity is enhanced through triangulation by using multiple data sources, such as dictionaries, social media, and corpora, to cross-verify the prevalence and usage of neologisms, thereby strengthening the findings. Detailed case studies, like the evolution of terms such as "woke" or "triggered," provide a rich, contextual understanding that supports the analysis of cultural impact.

Grounding the analysis in established sociolinguistic theories (Blommaert, 2010) and communication theories (Tufekci, 2017; Pariser, 2011) enhances the conceptual validity of the interpretations. A clear, pre-defined coding framework for word-formation types ensures that the analysis can be replicated by other researchers with consistent results. Although the digital landscape is inherently fluid, focusing on neologisms documented by authoritative sources, such as dictionaries, provides a stable and verifiable dataset for the core analysis.

FINDINGS

The analysis revealed several key findings. The sociotechnical neologism cycle operates at an unprecedented speed, with words moving from incubation to global amplification in weeks or months, not years. The English language is evolving more rapidly than ever, largely due to digital platforms like social media and messaging apps. These platforms serve as modern hotbeds for language innovation, facilitating the creation of new words and meanings at unprecedented speeds. Unlike previous eras where language changes were more gradual and top-down, contemporary neologisms often emerge organically from viral content, such as tweets, memes, and

264

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ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

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TikTok videos. Key processes driving this linguistic evolution include viral propagation, algorithmic amplification, and the formation of global niche communities. This transformation has turned the internet into a real-time laboratory for language, fundamentally reshaping how we communicate and express our identities in the 21st century.

Several factors contribute to the rapid creation of new words on digital platforms. The concept of virality enables immediate global sharing, allowing terms like "rizz" to gain widespread acceptance through algorithmic promotion and influential users. Hashtags and memes encourage playful language use, while algorithms prioritize engaging content, further stimulating linguistic creativity.Specific features of digital platforms, such as character limits and temporary posts, promote brevity and the emergence of new expressions. Additionally, the blending of languages and dialects reflects a globalized culture, as words from various linguistic backgrounds intermingle in the digital landscape, showcasing how interconnectedness is reshaping language.

In the digital age, new words can be categorized into five main types based on analysis from sources like COCA and the NOW Corpus. First, word combinations (e.g., "hangry," "bromance," "infodemic") simplify complex ideas for fast-paced online environments. Second, changes in meaning and reinterpretations (e.g., "ghost," "cancel," "woke") reflect evolving cultural values. Third, short forms and initials (e.g., "FOMO," "YOLO," "NSFL") facilitate quick communication among specific groups. Fourth, the transformation of words into verbs (e.g., "to Google," "to Zoom," "to adult")illustrates the influence of technology on language. Lastly, words driven by memes and emotions (e.g., "yeet," "oof," "vibe check") capture feelings and cultural identities, often reflecting temporary trends. The most common word-formation processes in the digital age are blending (e.g., "infodemic") and semantic shift (e.g., "cancel"), as they allow for efficient and expressive communication.

Digital neologisms act as both bridges and barriers in intercultural communication, as the rapid spread of language online can lead to misunderstandings, cultural appropriation, and loss of meaning. Neologisms, while often losing their detailed cultural context, can serve as bridges in intercultural communication by enabling the rapid spread of ideas across global audiences. This digital dissemination allows unique concepts, such as "hygge," to reach a broader audience, promoting awareness of diverse cultural practices. When used thoughtfully, these new terms can facilitate connections and foster understanding, making it essential for individuals to engage in digital literacy. This includes recognizing the cultural journey of words and appreciating their significance, which can promote a richer global dialogue.

However, neologisms can also create significant barriers in intercultural communication. The phenomenon of "context collapse" can lead to

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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misunderstandings, as terms from specific cultural backgrounds become oversimplified and stripped of their deeper meanings. This results in the trivialization of significant issues, such as the misuse of "karoshi," and the creation of coded language that isolates outsiders from understanding the true implications of certain terms. Additionally, cultural appropriation diminishes the essence of indigenous words and experiences, leading to societal confusion and disrespect. In this chaotic digital landscape, misinterpretations proliferate, complicating genuine cross-cultural interactions and requiring heightened metalinguistic awareness.

The role of platform algorithms is paramount, not only in amplifying words but also in creating isolated linguistic ecosystems ("algaspeak") that can hinder cross-cultural understanding.

The rapid creation of new words on digital platforms is a significant cultural force that reshapes identity and societal navigation. This phenomenon goes beyond mere linguistic curiosity; it actively redistributes community authority and alters the experience of time and trends, creating new frontiers for engagement. New terms often serve as markers for online communities, allowing individuals to express beliefs and identities linked to specific generations or subcultures. However, the democratization of language creation also raises issues, as traditional authority figures like dictionaries are increasingly disregarded, leading to a dominance of English-speaking, youth-centric vocabularies that may overshadow other linguistic groups.

Moreover, the lifespan of new words is becoming shorter, with terms quickly rising and falling in popularity, contributing to generational gaps in vocabulary. This rapid evolution challenges educators to teach a "standard" language while recognizing the dynamic nature of digital communication. Additionally, businesses' adoption of new slang for commercial purposes often strips terms of their original meanings, raising concerns about authenticity. The fast pace of linguistic change can overwhelm learners, particularly non-native speakers, necessitating a focus on metalinguistic awareness and digital literacy in pedagogy, rather than a static vocabulary list, to address the cognitive challenges posed by this constant state of linguistic update.

DISCUSSION

This discussion interprets the findings in the context of the theoretical framework. The democratization of language creation, while empowering, leads to a chaotic linguistic marketplace where the authority of traditional institutions is diminished, and power is ceded to algorithms and influential online figures.

The phenomenon of context collapse directly aligns with Blommaert's (2010) concept of language being "disembedded" from its local context, leading to the misunderstandings detailed in the findings.

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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The research confirms Tufekci's (2017) observations about networked publics; the same infrastructure that allows for the rapid spread of a protest movement also allows a word like "rizz" to go global, but both can lack depth and stable meaning.

The educational challenge identified is not merely teaching new vocabulary but fostering   meta-linguistic awareness and digital literacy, equipping learners to navigate the fluid and often deceptive nature of online language.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the acceleration of neologism formation in the digital age is a significant sociolinguistic development. It represents a fundamental shift from a curated, slow-moving model of language evolution to a democratic, rapid, and algorithmically-driven process.

This shift has profound implications for intercultural communication, identity formation, and power dynamics. Understanding these new word formations is not a niche linguistic interest but a crucial competency for navigating 21st century global discourse.

The study underscores that to communicate effectively across cultures today, one must look beyond a word's definition and investigate its cultural journey, the power dynamics inherent in its spread, and the potential for both connection and misappropriation.

Future research could quantitatively compare the velocity of neologism adoption across different platforms.

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NON-VERBAL LANGUAGE IN PRAGMATICS AND IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGE CONVERSATION

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the way in which non-verbal language occupies an important part in daily conversation. This is why we cannot ignore it in foreign language teaching. Various activities which focus on spoken communication can help students practice using and reading non-verbal language, such as role play. Dialogues with another colleague in a foreign language can be a good exercise to include non-verbal cues together with knowledge of the foreign language grammar and vocabulary. This is where pragmatics also has an important role, that of drawing our attention to the way in which spoken language depends for understanding the message being transmitted by using our knowledge of the context for clues, as well as that of the use of non-verbal language, which is present in pragmatic competence as well. Pragmatics refers to studying how context can influence the interpretation of the meaning of a certain word or sentence in communication. Pragmatics focuses on social interactions and the way in which speakers can understand and use language in these contexts. Non-verbal language such as facial expressions, gestures, posture, eye contact, use of personal space (proxemics) and intonation, tone, pauses (paralinguistic) are significant elements in understanding any communication. In pragmatics, it helps offer us clues as to what the speaker intends to tell us based on how he or she tells us. We can have access, by examining non-verbal language, to meaning beyond words (such as sarcasm and irony), we better understand politeness, authority or emotion expressed by the interlocutor. In addition, non-verbal language offers us clues as to signaling turn-taking in conversation, and it can help us clarify or contradict the spoken words, e.g. in the case where someone says that he or she is fine, but instead accompanies this statement with a frown. Foreign language learners need to consider that another language function just like their own, with non-verbal cues being part of communication. Since they may use non-verbal language and understand it intuitively, without being aware of the process, a good exercise may be to show students a video and to ask them to comment on non-verbal cues.

Keywords: Psychology, intent, voice tone

INTRODUCTION

There are three dimensions to language: syntax, semantics, and pragmatics (Oller, 1972). We notice how language has different dimensions, and how it does not refer only to the way in which we understand the meaning of the words. Semantics is concerned with the meaning of the words. However, at the level of sematics, we only

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

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deal with the literal meaning, not with additional meanings. Pragmatics helps us decode the right meaning of the words in a particular context of communication, where their meaning can be literal or figurative, or even humorous or ironic. As an example, someone may claim that it is a very beautiful day. The meaning can be precisely this one, while function of additional clues which can make us understand the context, its meaning can be precisely the opposite. It can be a very bad day, if the weather is bad, if it is raining, or if the speaker has encountered many problems during the time. The clues regarding the actual meaning of words in context can be gathered by looking outside, by relying on background knowledge about the relationship between speaker and interlocutor, as well as by looking at the speaker's facial expressions, language of gestures, body posture, and voice tone. We can take into account the entire scene before us when we try to understand what is meant in context, and we can look for clues in each and every gesture, of the person speaking, as well as of the person the speaker addresses. Any object in the room can offer us clues about understanding what is meant in context. This is the dimension of pragmatics. Another dimension learners usually focus on when dealing with a foreign language is that of syntax. Syntax is concerned with the way we build up sentences. Both syntax and semantics can be seen as making up the basic level of a language, which learners of a foreign language need to master first of all in order to move on to the level of pragmatics, which can account for more subtle meaning in conversations.

When we speak a language, we rely on much more than our knowledge of the literal meaning of words (semantics) and the structure of sentences. These are all rules which can be broken at times function of the context, and which can suggest meanings that are completely new. Live, spoken language is much more than a system of rules and meanings of words. Word meanings and structures of sentences are only the foundation, or skeleton, while pragmatics, or use of language, shows how we can all be creators of new shades of meaning. Pragmatics shows us subtle aspects of communication, which are not immediately available to someone who has just started learning the respective foreign language. Use of language is, thus, never simple, and never completely mastered by someone for whom it is a second, third or further language.

A foreign language can only be mastered at native language level if, according to some theories, it is learned during our early childhood years. Based on the critical period hypothesis (Birdsong, ed, 1999), we are biologically determined (due to brain plasticity) to be able to learn a foreign language easily during the period fom birth to puberty and to achieve native proficiency. There is also an explanation regarding implicit vs explicit learning styles regarding second language acquisition, or the learning of a foreign language. According to DeKeyser (2003), children have an implicit learning style, meaning that, for them, learning is done in an unconscious way, through experience. Adults have an explicit a learning style, meaning that they learn based on rules, of which they are very much aware.

One important part of communication is made up by non-verbal-language (Phutela, 2015), which accompanies verbal language while we are all not aware of it. We use

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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and detect automatically non-verbal language, just as we detect automatically the pragmatic meaning of the spoken word in our native language or in the languages in which we have an almost native level proficiency. What role does non-verbal language play in speaking and learning a foreign language, and how can we include non-verbal language in teaching and practising conversations in a foreign language? How can we include, and how much do we actually rely on, non-verbal language in the foreign language classroom? How much do we rely on pragmatics when we teach communication in a foreign language, and how much is non-verbal language part of our relying on understanding a context of communication in our native language vs in a foreign language?

METHOD

Research Model

Applied linguistics is a domain which relies on linguistics theories and research in order to search for solutions to real-world issues connected with language and its use. Language acquisition is a topic of concern to applied linguistics. Language education is concerned on how languages can be taught and learned efficiently, which leads this domain to deal with topics such as curriculum design and teacher training. Applied Linguistics and Language Education (Khansir, 2013) can help each other and make language teaching more relevant in both research and practice. Researchers should identify and address the real needs of teachers and learners, and teachers should have access to current research in language learning, as well as to relevant training. Research findings from second language acquisition can help improve curriculum design and teaching methods. Some researchers can rely on their experience as teachers of foreign languages, and teachers can rely on research in order to improve their work in the classroom.

Pragmatics, which is concerned with how context influences interpretation of meaning in communication, cannot be absent from understanding how efficient learning and teaching of a foreign language can occur. Pragmatics, as it brings to light implicit meaning, is the basis for understanding how real-life communication occurs. Pragmatics relies on context (Huang, 2015; Leech & Thomas, 2002), which in turn refers to any clue that we can get to make the right interpretation, starting from: a) linguistic context, or what has been previously mentioned, b) physical context, related to the time and place, as well as circumstances of the conversation, c) social context, e.g. roles and relationships, and cultural context, i.e. shared norms. As an example, if we ask the question, 'Can you open the window?' we deal with a polite request, and not with a literal question about someone's ability. The interpretation of this sentence can rely on non-verbal language as well, especially on tone of voice (the general attitude of the speaker, and his or her emotions), intonation (the rise and fall of the speaker's voice to show that he or she is asking a question, uttering a statement, etc, and the accompanying emotions), facial expression, body posture, and other gestures which can give us a picture about the attitude of the speaker.

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ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL
2025

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14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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The connection between pragmatics and non-verbal communication has been brought to attention by researchers such as Wharton (2009), who has noticed how "the tone of voice we use, the facial expressions and bodily gestures we adopt while we are talking, often add entirely new layers of meaning to those words." If we add non-verbal communication interpretation abilities to pragmatic competence, which refers to the way we use language function of context and also interpret it, we can put up a complete picture of our understanding of live communication. An intuitive understanding of psychology is present as well, since we all rely on the understanding of our interlocutor, of his or her emotions which give us clues about the attitude when communicating something to us. Non-verbal communication, therefore, adds a psychological component to the use and understanding of language.

The foreign languages teacher him or herself, when teaching, communicates using non-verbal language, as well as intuitive psychological knowledge and skills, together with studied notions of psychology of the learners.

Do we use intuitively our grasp of non-verbal language and do we also use it to support our communication in a foreign language, just as we do in our native language? This question can be explored by looking at the cultural component of the language we learn and at present-day society.

Study Material

We can rely on the concepts and theories of pragmatics in order to understand how communication occurs and, next to this, how non-verbal elements can interfere in order to give additional clues about the message.

Speech acts, politeness strategies, implicatures are always accompanied by non-verbal clues we look for or leave instinctively and automatically for our interlocutor.

According to Austin & Searle (Bayat, 2013), in their theory of speech acts, we have the following layers to any communication: 1) the locutionary act, which is the utterance itself, 2) the illocutionary act, which refers to the intention of the speaker (under the form of a request, apology, or promise), and 3) the perlocutionary act, which refers to the effect of the communication on the person listening (such as being persuaded or frightened). The level of the illocutionary act involves non-verbal clues, such as tone of voice, voice tone, facial expressions, as well as body posture, which are expressed by the speaker and which have a psychological effect on the hearer, present under the form of the perlocutionary act.

Searle (1976) classified illocutionary acts as follows: 1) assertives (e.g. those utterances used for stating, claiming or reporting), 2) directives, used for requesting and commanding, 3) commissives, used for promising and offering, 4) expressives, used for thanking and apologizing, and 5) declarations, used for pronouncing something such as I now pronounce you married, or resigning). All of these acts are accompanied by non-verbal clues, since they reflect various emotional reactions to social actions.

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ELT-ICRAL 2025

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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Grice (Blome-Tillmann, 2013) develops the theory of conversational implicature, showing that the implied meaning appears based on our relying on context and shared understanding. In the example of the following conversation, A: "Did you enjoy the party?" B: "There was plenty of food," the implicature is that B did not enjoy the party too much, as all he or she did was to spend time around the food, and not around socializing with the others and having fun. In such a conversation, the voice tone, intonation, as well as facial expression can give additional clues.

We are expressive in an automatic way when we communicate with the others, and this is visible and detectable by the interlocutor. Pragmatic theories only present this everyday reality by relying on the way it is reflected in our use of language, in what is missing, not directly mentioned, but which is implied.

When we read a novel or short story, the narrator can fill in missing non-verbal clues by suggesting them otherwise, based on visual details or descriptions of the facial expressions and body posture of the speakers. Their attitude can be suggested by a brief mention of a sigh or facial expression or body posture. In real life conversations, however, we do not stop to explain more than is necessary for our interlocutor to understand our message. We often use implied or suggested meanings beyond words with the help of non-verbal language and shared knowledge so that the conversation is shorter and more efficient.

In real life, based on relevance theory developed by Sperber & Wilson (Blakemore, 2022), communication occurs in such a way as to lead to optimal relevance: speakers offer only the Information that is enough for the hearers to be able to understand the intended meaning by making minimal effort. As an example, in "You left the lights on," the relevance of these details depends on the context and it can be a critical statement, a reminder, or an expression of concern.

In the meantime, foreign language learners may need additional explanations with respect to certain cultural and social norms, or with respect to the particular implications and suggestions of a syntactic structure or vocabulary element.

Standardized foreign languages tests include sections based on skills such as listening comprehension, reading comprehension, grammar and vocabulary, writing, and speaking. We notice how all the dimensions of language are present, starting with syntax, semantic and ending with pragmatics. Listening, reading, and speaking are related to pragmatics. The questions in the listening and reading comprehension sections refer to what is implied and to the intention of the speaker or author. In listening comprehension exercises, we have access to voice tone and intonation, and not to other visual non-verbal communication clues. This suggests we may need additional exercises in the foreign language classroom, and conversation exercises such as pair and group work, or role play should be considered to help students be able to decode non-verbal clues.

Data Collection and Analysis

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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If we look at English as a foreign language textbooks, we notice that they can be grouped based on various dimensions of language: some focus on grammar only, others on vocabulary only, while others, if they are textbooks to prepare for a standard language test such as Cambridge or TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign language), rely on the skills of reading, listening, speaking, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. Still other textbooks rely on Units, which are organized to include all these already mentioned skills, which include knowledge of use of language which is deal with by pragmatics. Examples of such textbooks are *Cambridge English for Engineering* by Mark Ibbotson (2025), or *Take-Off. Technical English for Engineering* by David Morgan and Nicholas Regan (2008). A textbook which recognized, as we understand from the title, the role of grammar as the basis for learners to know how to use it in everyday communication contexts is *Real English Grammar Intermediate* by Hester Lott (2005). Indeed, learners expect to be able to use and understand the foreign language in real, everyday life communication, which can be made easy and possible by including knowledge of pragmatics and non-verbal language.

There are also special textbooks focusing on the speaking skill, and which contain role-play exercises, such as: *Role Plays for Today: Photocopiable Activities to Get Students Speaking — A photocopiable activity book* by Anderson (2017), which addresses teenage and adult learners, of all llevels, from beginner to advanced. This textbook offers role-play exercises based on real world contexts such as job interviews, shopping, and passport control. Another such textbook is *ESL Role Plays: 50 Engaging Role Plays for ESL and EFL Classes* by by Pitts (2015), which offers 50 role-play tasts for intermediate and advanced levels. *Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking* by Nation & Netwon (2009) offers activities focused on listening and speaking, based on role-play exercises and other communicative tasks. *Perfect Phrases for ESL: Conversation Skills (Premium Edition)* by Engelhard (2022) focuses on conversation skills, offering prompts and structures which are the basis for dialogues and scenario-based exercises.

Once students are presented with a scenario where the situation of communication is present, such as a job interview, they rely on common knowledge to know what language register to use, at least by analogy with their native language. Further on, they know what role to adopt, such as the person interviewed and the employer conducting the interview. Non-verbal language in such situations can rely on the social role of each person involved in conversation and it can be used, as well as decoded, efficiently. Students are aware, based on their background knowledge, that non-verbal language can be practiced and we can be very well-aware of it as we wish to give the best impression to the person conducting the interview. There are body language books suggesting efficient control during interviews and also presenting what various gestures and facial expressions can communicate, from insecurity to self-confidence. They may wish to transmit such attitudes to the other student playing the other role. They may also look for non-verbal clues in their role-play conversation and continue it spontaneously by entering their roles and reacting to each other's non-verbal clues.

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26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
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An extreme case of role play exercises can be teaching English (or other foreign language) with drama, where students are asked to perform in short plays. Non-verbal language is at its highest visible in such cases, and the corresponding use of language can be practised to match various facial expressions and voice tone.

All of these exercises, from listening comprehension, to role play, conversation drills, and ending up with drama can be understood as various forms of practising conversation in a foreign language, where verbal and non-verbal language are used together, in a manner mimicking real, everyday life, conversations.

Data Collection Tool

The data, consisting in the textbook types and various conversation forms of exercises and textbooks focusing on them, was collected based on the needs of the teaching practice of the author of the present paper, which can be those of any English as a foreign language, or other foreign language, teacher. The textbooks relying on English for Engineering were chosen based on the particular context of the background and needs of the students taught by the author of the present paper, namely students in engineering studying in various specializations and faculties within the Technical University of Civil Engineering Bucharest, Romania. Students at this faculty rely on an optional test at the end of their two years of study, and it consists of grammar, vocabulary, and a speaking exercise, where students have a dialogue based on pictures related to the engineering domain of their specialization. The entire optional test is related to the domain of engineering, and, thus, it becomes the common reference for situations of communication. In addition to the engineering vocabulary and universe of activities and professional life, students rely on general English and various situations of communication such as on the construction site, where communication takes place just as in everyday life, with implied meanings, polite requests, and indirect communication. In addition, non-verbal communication, with reliance of voice tone, intonation, facial expressions and body posture are also there with respect to engineering contexts. Working in an office, in a company, as a team member or leader in a project, on a construction site, in the academic medium, all of these imply the use of non-verbal language and the presence of pragmatics. The author of the present paper searches for and selects materials for use in class with relevance to the Engineering students' preoccupations and universe of activities. The data collection regarding these materials is based on the way they need to learn how to use grammatical tenses, based on their values and meanings, and if-clauses, which are mainly used for expressing hypotheses in their domains about what has or may go wrong. Tenses describe various processes in the engineering contexts, as well as various states of affairs, or settled plans regarding work on a project. Once they know clearly what their uses are, students can efficiently use tenses and if-clauses in a communicative context, where non-verbal language can contribute to the clarification of the process described.

If explained well, grammar and vocabulary can serve for communication purposes, with students detecting the subtle nuances offered by the uses of tenses in order to suggest more than we can find expressed directly. As an example, if we use present

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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continuous, this shows that an action is currently happening, giving us an entirely different picture on the situation described than if it were something happening in general.

Validity and Reliability

The feedback given by students relies, mostly, on non-verbal language, as they show based on their facial expressions and eye contact if they are interested in the selected material or not. In general, students express preference during classes for activities made in pairs or groups, which involve communicating with their colleagues. Activities such as role-play and dialogues are more appreciated as students can work together, even when presented in front of the class or just of the teacher. Speeches presented individually are less appreciated, as students can get nervous. Thus, group work related to speaking activities is more appreciated and comfortable.

Students expect to be able to use language practically and this means mostly spoken language. Thus, all the teaching and learning process should be directed at efficient, fluent speaking of the foreign language.

FINDINGS

Since non-verbal language is a popular topic nowadays, due to its presence in popular psychology books and articles, students can become quickly interested in paying attention to the clues it can offer to interpret an utterance correctly. The English language offers various shades of meaning which can be implied through the use of tenses, if-clauses and various words, such as those present in polite requests. Students are thus introduced to the layer which is not directly expressed in communication, but which can work so well in order to allow them to understand the complete picture of the situation of communication, of the intention of the speaker, and of their reactions to what they are being told.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Students of a foreign language can be made aware of the fact that language does not mean only words and sentences, and even not only grammatical structures. There is always a subtle shade of meaning, one that goes beyond the literal meaning of the words and even of the sentences and their structure. Pragmatics shows how language can be used in real communication, and it brings the connotation of words and grammatical structures to a more subtle level, having to do with a respective context and suggesting more. Non-verbal language helps complete the spoken message with clues related to the attitude of the speaker. In this way, students can be encouraged to behave non-verbally in a similar way to how they do during their conversations in their native language. With pragmatics, students can witness how meaning is interpreted depending on the context. Spoken and written words are not the only level of communication. These levels are refined by the use of non-verbal communication.

Language and psychology go hand in hand when we notice and interpret the non-verbal language of the speaker. The speaker is the one bringing life and new shades of meaning to language than the ones already present at the levels of syntax and

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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semantics. The intent of communication is just as important as what it literally expresses.

Pragmatic competence is developed for learners of a foreign language based on the teaching materials allowing them to express themselves in spoken conversation. The textbook materials can be considered a direct application of pragmatics theories and foreign language education.

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THE IMPACT OF USING MEMES IN UNIVERSITY PREP CLASSES ON LEARNERS' WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE

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Abstract

The research problem presented in this study is the perceptions of warm-up activities which are based on memes studied among the students of preparatory-class English as a Foreign Language (EFL) with reference to whether this category of warm-up activity can influence their motivation and willingness to communicate in English (WTC). Though, some students possess the necessary linguistic knowledge, the fear to speak is a frequent performance impairment, and it depends on the anxiety and low self-confidence. The study utilizes a survey, a Google Form that provides quantitative data to analyze the data using the Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) as well as qualitative information that was drawn through student reflections. The results indicate that the activities that involve memes could help create a more relaxed learning atmosphere, increase the motivation of students, and encourage them to become more willing to communicate. Also, the paper discusses motivational and affective themes that were revealed based on the reaction of students which show the significance of humor, cultural awareness and digital media in language teaching. This study provides for the future experimental research on promoting communicative competence in EFL classrooms by giving an initial picture of the expectations of students.

Key Words: Motivation, Anxiety, Willingness to Communicate, Meme-based Activities

INTRODUCTION

Developing learners' ability and confidence to communicate in a second language is one of the most challenging objectives in English language teaching. Many students possess sufficient grammatical and lexical knowledge, but they are reluctant to speak. The inconsistency between competence and performance is explained with the help of the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) construct, which was initially

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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proposed by McCroskey (1992). WTC recognizes the likelihood that an individual will start communicating when the opportunity presents itself. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environments, where opportunities for authentic contact with English are often limited to the classroom itself, WTC becomes a crucial factor in determining the communicative success of learners.

However, the factors of anxiety, low self-confidence, and fear of making mistakes affect the motivation of learners to speak. Teachers, therefore, seek creative ways to reduce these affective barriers and build classroom environments that encourage participation. In recent years, Internet memes have been introduced as innovative teaching materials that utilize humor. Initially described by Dawkins (1976) as units of cultural transmission, memes are now commonly understood as short digital texts that combine images and captions to convey humor or a cultural message. Their multimodality and entertainment value make them emotionally engaging and relatable, promoting motivation and communicative confidence. Several studies have shown that the use of humor and visual materials can have a positive impact on learners' motivation and participation (Askildson, 2005; Aloraini, 2012). More recent research has generalized this understanding to memes. For example, Kayali and Altuntas (2021) found that vocabulary revision using memes in the Turkish EFL classes created a more relaxed atmosphere and improved recall. Similarly, Pranoto and Suprayogi (2020) proved that the use of humorous 9GAG memes improved the speaking performance and communication willingness of Indonesian students. Altukruni (2022) also reviewed several studies and concluded that memes enhance attention, creativity, and interest if used properly.

Nevertheless, researchers such as Youssef (2023) and Al Rashdi (2020) have emphasized that the success of memes depends on cultural awareness and teacher guidance, as some learners may misinterpret the humor or struggle to understand the cultural references. Despite this increasing body of research, however, most studies have focused on the implementation of memes rather than the actual expectations of students. The perception of the meme-based warm-ups before teaching them in class is unclear. It is essential to understand these perceptions, as attitudes and anticipated emotions have a profound influence on future behavior. To address this gap, the current study investigates the perceptions of preparatory-class EFL students regarding meme-based warm-ups, specifically examining how they believe these activities may impact their motivation and willingness to communicate in English. A Google Form survey was distributed to the preparatory students, and the data obtained were later analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to identify descriptive trends, internal consistency, and quantitative results, supported by the students' qualitative reflections, will be discussed in the following stages of this research. By emphasizing learners' imagined experiences rather than post-intervention results, this study aims to provide an affective baseline that can be used in further experimental work.

The following questions guide the research:

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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To what extent do EFL preparatory class students feel that meme-based warm-up could help them to build up confidence and willingness to communicate in English?

What are the motivational and affective themes that reveal students' reflections on the possible use of memes in the English classes?

By exploring these questions, this research aims to understand how students envision humor, culture, and digital media as potential motivators for classroom communication.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Communication studies developed the concept of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) and later became a central topic of second language acquisition. McCroskey (1992) defined WTC as a learner's intention or tendency to initiate a conversation at the right moment when the opportunity presents itself. In EFL contexts, it has been predicted whether learners will actively use the language they have learnt. Later, MacIntyre et al. (1998) contributed to the idea by developing a model that explores the interrelationship among linguistic, affective, and situational factors. They suggested that factors such as learners' confidence, perceived competence, and the immediate classroom environment affect WTC. Motivation and affect are so intertwined with WTC. Dornyei and Ushioda (2011) proposed the L2 Motivational Self-System to explain this phenomenon. The L2 Motivational Self-System posits that students who can visualize themselves as confident language users (the Ideal L2 Self) are more likely to engage in communication. This model highlights the importance of positive emotional experiences and self-concept in maintaining motivation. Consequently, teaching strategies that decrease anxiety and increase enjoyment make a direct contribution to increased willingness to communicate. In other words, communication is not just a linguistic act, but also an emotional act, which means that teachers need to create an enjoyable and supportive environment for students and make them feel safe to speak.

Humor has a significant role in alleviating tension in the classroom and paying attention. Askildson (2005) revealed that humor helps to increase understanding and reduce affective barriers in a foreign language learning. Similarly, Farahani and Abdollahi (2018) report that using humor-based instruction in Iranian EFL classrooms enhanced the speaking performance of learners and made students more comfortable initiating conversations. These findings are consistent with Gorham's (1988) notion of teacher immediacy behaviors that strengthen teacher-student relationships and participation. Visual and multimedia tools also help contribute to learning motivation and retention. Aloraini (2012) demonstrated that multimedia-based teaching resulted in a significant improvement in student performance compared to traditional teaching. Paivio's Dual Coding Theory describes this effect in terms of a combination of verbal and visual input, which aids learners in the processing and storage of information. In the EFL classroom, visuals not only keep people engaged but also allow learners to place new vocabulary and concepts in

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CONGRESS**
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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context. These results have implications for the prospect of improved engagement and affective outcomes when combining humor and visual input, two characteristics inherent in memes.

Internet memes are multimodal, culturally rich materials that mix humor, language, and imagery. Sedliarova et al. (2020) conceptualized memes as semiotic cultural units that encourage creativity and interpretation. Because memes are an integral part of students' daily digital lives, they can bridge informal online communication and formal classroom learning. More recent research has examined memes to play various pedagogical roles. Kayali and Altuntas (2021) implemented memes in vocabulary revision and demonstrated that they enhanced memory retention while providing a fun learning atmosphere. Pranoto and Suprayogi (2020) found that speaking tasks were reported to be more enjoyable, and participation was higher in Indonesian students when they interacted with humorous memes. Similarly, Youssef (2023) examined Egyptian university classrooms to find that both teachers and students believed memes are effective in reducing anxiety and building rapport. However, some teachers reported difficulties in maintaining a professional balance. Altukruni's (2022) Systematic Literature Review of meme-based teaching, spanning from 2015 to 2021, confirmed that memes increase motivation, creativity, and attention. However, Altukruni's (2022) Systematic Literature Review of meme-based teaching, covering the period from 2015 to 2021, confirmed that memes increase motivation, creativity, and attention. However, the importance of cultural awareness and instructor mediation was stressed in the review. Al Rashdi (2020) further found that Omani students were able to identify the pragmatic meanings embedded in the English memes, which was evidence that they have the potential to develop an intercultural understanding and discourse awareness. Collectively, these studies suggest that memes are not simply entertainment - they are authentic and culturally embedded teaching materials that can elicit emotional engagement and support communicative confidence. Nevertheless, most of these studies were conducted after implementation in classroom applications. Very few have examined the perception of such activities before actually experiencing them.

The intersection of humor, motivation, and visual learning provides a solid theoretical foundation for meme-based pedagogy. However, current research is mainly guided by practical results rather than learners' perceptions. For example, it is unclear what students expect the potential effects of meme-based instruction to be, such as whether it will lessen anxiety, make the lessons more enjoyable, or encourage students to participate. The present study, therefore, examines the imagined perceptions of meme-based warm-ups in EFL classrooms from the students' perspective. The survey, distributed using Google Forms, was completed by students in the preparatory classes, and the gathered data was analyzed using the statistical program Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to identify descriptive patterns, reliability, and thematic trends. The analysis of these findings are presented in the following stages of this research. By focusing on perceptions rather than outcomes after instruction, this study offers a new perspective on the literature on

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ELT-ICRAL 2025

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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affective factors in language learning. It provides an empirical foundation for future experimental applications of meme-based teaching.

METHODOLOGY

This research is a mixed-methods study, based primarily on quantitative data. The purpose of this study is investigated how students preparing to learn English as a foreign language perceive meme-based warm-up activities and how these perceptions relate to their willingness to engage in English conversation. Instead of placing the activities in class, the study asked students to imagine how they would feel if they were to use such activities. The data were obtained from a Google Form questionnaire that contained both a scaled and an open-ended section. The scaled questions provided precise numerical data about students' attitudes, and the open-ended questions allowed students to express their personal feelings and ideas. We used the software package (SPSS) to examine all the data and to see overall patterns and how the variables were related.

There were 64 students enrolled in a preparation program for English at a state university in Turkiye. They were between 18 and 21 years old, and all were native Turkish speakers learning English as a foreign language. Most of them indicated that they were at an intermediate level (around B1-B2 on the CEFR scale). Participation was entirely voluntary. Before beginning the survey, students were informed that their answers would be anonymous and confidential, and the information would only be used for research purposes. Everyone gave electronic consent to answer the questions.

The primary tool for data collection was a Google Form survey designed by the researcher. It consisted of four sections:

Demographic information, including age, gender, and self-reported proficiency level.

Perceptions of Meme-Based Warm-Ups: Nine statements explore how students think memes might influence their motivation, enjoyment, and confidence in English. Items were rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 4 (*Strongly Agree*).

Willingness to Communicate (WTC) Scale, adapted from McCroskey (1992) and MacIntyre et al. (1998), containing 10 statements measured on a 5-point scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 5 = *Strongly Agree*).

One open-ended question, where students freely shared their thoughts on how meme-based warm-ups might affect classroom communication.

The questions were developed based on previous research that showed a connection between humor, motivation, and multimedia learning. The last survey was reviewed for clarity before being administered to students.

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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The survey was distributed during the Spring semester of 2025 via the university's communication channels. Students fill it out as often as they liked. The instructions stated that there were no right or wrong answers and that students should answer the questions honestly. Answering the survey usually took approximately 10 to 15 minutes. When students completed the answers, they were automatically saved on Google Sheets and later transferred to the software program Spearman Academic Software (SPSS) for analysis. No personal identifying information was collected, and participation was optional. After the data were collected, we analyzed those using SPSS. First, we calculated descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and the lowest and highest scores) to look for overall patterns. Next, we performed a Pearson correlation analysis to examine the relationship between the total WTC scores and students' perceptions of meme-based warm-ups. We have also checked the reliability of the scales using Cronbach's alpha. Finally, we examined the open-ended answers, coded them, and combined the comments into common themes such as enjoyment, reduced anxiety, and increased motivation. These numbers and themes are all indicated in the next section.

RESULTS

The first section of the questionnaire inquired about how the students envisioned meme-based warm-ups. Mean scores across the nine items ranged from 2.23 to 2.62 on a four-point Likert scale, indicating moderately positive but cautious attitudes. This pattern suggests that students were generally not adversed to the notion of engaging with memes in the classroom. However, they were hesitant about how appropriate or effective this kind of activity might be for formal education. The item "If meme-based activities had been part of our routine, I would have been more willing to speak English in class" had the best mean score (M = 2.62, SD = 1.13), indicating that students had the strongest association between meme-based warm-ups and willingness to communicate. Similarly, relatively high scores were given for "I would have been more confident about speaking up in English" (M = 2.55, SD = 1.17) and "Using memes would have helped me remember new English expressions more easily" (M = 2.52, SD = 1.31). Together, these results suggest that students viewed the meme activities as potential learning tools for building confidence, engagement, and retention of learned language. The lowest mean score was for the item "Meme-based warm-ups would have made the classroom atmosphere more relaxed and fun" (M = 2.23, SD = 1.34). This relatively low value and significant standard deviation indicate that. In contrast, some students clearly expected the classroom to be a fun environment, while others were unsure or skeptical about the extent to which humor is appropriate in academic lessons. Overall, the variety in responses to different items suggests a range of thinking types, as many students viewed memes as offering both fun and comfort. At the same time, a smaller number expressed reservations about their use in the classroom.

The second section measured self-reported willingness to communicate in English using a five-point scale. Mean scores for the nine WTC items ranged from 2.33 to

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ELT-ICRAL 2025

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
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3.05, with an overall average of approximately M = 2.57 (SD = 1.26). This result is indicative of moderate levels of willingness to communicate, as it shows that although they are not entirely reluctant, they are also not particularly confident when communicating in English. The highest mean was found in the item "I often stay silent because I am afraid of making mistakes" (M = 3.05, SD = 1.35), which represents a powerful psychological barrier: the fear of making an error. Similarly, the statement that includes the fact that speaking English in front of people is something that makes me nervous (M = 2.72, SD = 1.23) supports the notion that members of the discussed group experience communication anxiety. The trends noted can be explained by affective obstacles that are often determined in the research on willingness-to-communicate (WTC): the lack of self-confidence and the fear of being negatively evaluated.

On the other hand, the lowest means were revealed by the items that reflected proactive interaction and self-disclosure, i.e. I voluntarily answer the teacher questions in English (M = 2.33, SD = 1.31), I feel confident speaking with peers in English (M = 2.33, SD = 1.21), etc., which indicates that a significant part of the student population has not been firmly convinced of being a competent communicator. In short, the descriptive results confirm that EFL learners in preparatory contexts are characterized by a balance between interest in communication and anxiety and hesitation, which implies that there is considerable room for improvement at the affective level.

Correlations

		wtc_total	meme_total
wtc_total	Pearson Correlation	1	,367**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,003
	N	64	64
meme_total	Pearson Correlation	,367**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,003	
	N	64	64

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 Correlation between Meme Perception and WTC

To determine if students with more positive meme-based warm-ups were also more willing to communicate, a Pearson correlation test was conducted between the total meme perception and WTC scores. The results were a moderate positive and statistically significant correlation (r = .367, p = .003, N = 64), confirming that the two constructs are meaningfully related. This correlation suggests that students who perceived meme-based activities as pleasant, confidence-boosting, and engaging also reported a higher willingness to communicate in English. In other words, learners

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who perceived memes as decreasing their anxiety or making lessons more relatable tended to report being more willing to participate in classroom discussions. While correlation does not imply causation, the importance of this relationship indicates the emotional and motivational connection between humor, engagement, and communicative behavior.

In the last section of the survey, students were asked: "In your own words, if meme-based warm-ups were to be implemented, what do you think the impact would have been on your willingness to communicate in English?" The open-ended responses provided valuable qualitative insights into the numbers above. A thematic analysis of the written comments (n = 64) revealed three major themes: motivation and confidence, reduced anxiety, and engagement and relevance.

A large number of students expressed that memes could help make English classes more dynamic and enjoyable, which in turn would increase their willingness to participate in a class. Many said that they would "speak more confidently" or "feel braver" because memes would make lessons less severe and add some humor. Students' characterized memes as "attention-catching," "fun," and "different from boring lessons," suggesting that humor may serve as a motivational trigger for participation. Reduced Anxiety. A second and equally strong theme was the belief that memes could make the classroom a more comfortable and less stressful place. Several participants said they would feel "less afraid of making mistakes" or "more comfortable talking" if the class atmosphere was lightened with humor. These comments directly correspond with the quantitative finding that fear of mistakes was among the highest-rated WTC barriers (M = 3.05). Engagement and Relevance. Finally, some students emphasized that memes reflect real-life digital culture, and lessons are therefore "closer to our daily lives." They added that talking about memes would make English seem "more natural and modern," and a few said that memes could help them bond with their classmates because of the shared laughter. This theme emphasizes the value of memes in terms of their social and cultural importance as a medium that bridges the gap between what students learn in the classroom and how they present themselves online.

The results of this study, both quantitatively and qualitatively, converge to show a clear pattern. Students' perception of meme-based warm-ups was found to be moderately positive, their WTC levels were moderate, and a significant and positive relationship was found between the two variables. Learners generally thought that meme-based activities could make English lessons more enjoyable and help them feel less anxious when communicating in English. However, they also realized that this approach is unconventional and may not be beneficial for everyone. These results suggest that humor and visual culture, even when only imagined, play an affective role in shaping learners' readiness to communicate. Students' comments reflected the standard expectation that memes would foster a more relaxed atmosphere in the classroom, making it more relatable and motivating, an environment, according to second language motivation theory, that is conducive to a greater willingness to

286

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communicate. In short, the data depict students who are open and cautious, interested and anxious, and willing to speak when affective conditions are better. This interplay of attitudes forms the background for the pedagogical implications considered in the following section.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of meme-based warm-ups among preparatory-class EFL students and to investigate how these perceptions relate to their willingness to communicate (WTC) in English. The findings revealed a moderately positive attitude toward the potential use of memes, moderate levels of WTC, and a significant positive correlation between these two variables (r = .367, p = .003). In this section, these results are interpreted in the light of previous research and current theories of language learning motivation, affect, and digital pedagogy.

The students' moderate WTC levels in this study are not surprising in a foreign language context where authentic communicative opportunities are limited. As MacIntyre et al. (1998) argue, WTC is not a fixed trait but a situational construct shaped by confidence, anxiety, and perceived communicative competence. Many students in the present research admitted feeling anxious or hesitant to speak, even though they understood the importance of doing so. Their responses particularly the item "I often stay silent because I am afraid of making mistakes" (M = 3.05) echo the affective barriers described, who found that teacher support and classroom climate play critical roles in shaping students' moment-to-moment WTC. From a motivational perspective, these results can also be interpreted through Dornyei and Ushioda's (2011) L2 Motivational Self System. When learners can visualize themselves as confident users of English, the so-called Ideal L2 Self, they are more likely to take communicative risks. The qualitative remarks provided by the participants in this study indicate a similar process: they imagined humor and memes as approaches that make spoken communication less frightening and more genuine. Memes, therefore, act as emotional frameworks and can be used to translate linguistic competence into actual communicative performance. The hypothesis that the concepts of enjoyment and self-perception interact to strengthen motivation aligns perfectly with the theoretical model developed by Dornyei and Ushioda.

The mostly positive but conservative issues regarding the meme-based warm-ups mentioned in this paper are consistent with patterns reported in previous literature. Youssef (2023) conducted a pre-research study that found not only that students but also teachers considered memes a powerful tool to help control anxiety and build harmony. However, a part of the teachers' population was not very optimistic about the role the tool fulfills in the classroom.

The observed mixed results, ranging from 2.23 to 2.62, testify to a parallel ambivalence: respondents admit that memes could potentially help create a non-stressful learning context, but some are unsure whether they can be applied in academic contexts. The results align with the systematic review by Altukruni (2022),

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

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which included studies from 2015 to 2021, and found that memes have a positive effect on improving attention, participation, and creativity. Another point that Altukruni made pertained to the importance of cultural sensitivity and teacher guidance in making sure that humor is not distracting but constructive. This caveat seems directly relevant here. The relatively large standard deviations (SD = 1.2-1.3) in the meme-related items indicate that while some students embraced the idea enthusiastically, others were hesitant--perhaps due to uncertainty about appropriateness or possible cultural misunderstanding. On a more profound level, the conceptualization of memes as semiotic cultural objects, as suggested by Sedliarova, Solovyeva, and Nenasheva (2020), explains why students describe the use of memes as pleasurable and engaging.

Memes combine visual humour, sociocultural critique, and linguistic inventiveness, thus engaging learners cognitively, emotionally, and culturally. In this regard, the comments of the students, who mention that they feel more involved in real life or that they feel more connected with their fellow learners, support the argument of Sedliarova et al., which suggests that memes are involved in the process of constructing social meaning. They act as a mediator between the formal classroom training and online identity construction, introducing what the authors call a shared cultural grammar, providing an added value of participation (Sedliarova et al., 2020, p. 84). Lastly, the tendency to positively correlate the perception of memes with the willingness to communicate in this study (r = .367) is also consistent with the findings of Pranoto and Suprayogi's (2020) experiment, where the authors used 9GAG memes as speaking lesson materials and registered the effect of the given technique in objectively improving fluency and desire to communicate. Although the present study did not directly implement meme activities, the fact that imagined perceptions alone predicted higher WTC suggests that students are already effectively receptive to such digital materials. This anticipatory motivation could be an important starting point for future classroom interventions.

The idea that memes might help students "remember new expressions more easily" (M = 2.52) aligns closely with findings from multimedia learning research. Aloraini (2012) demonstrated that combining text and imagery increases learners' retention and attention. Memes naturally embody this principle through their dual coding, where visual and verbal channels work together to construct meaning (Paivio, 1991). In other words, the humorous image activates emotional memory, while the caption reinforces linguistic recall. The hypothesis that memes have the ability to stimulate memory is supported by established theoretical premises in the field of cognitive psychology. Along with the aspect of memory improvement, the emotional aspect of humor is also worth mentioning. Empirical research by Askildson (2005) and Farahani and Abdollahi (2018) found that humor is effective in lowering the affective filter, thereby creating a perceived sense of safety in language classroom settings. Similar perceptions were recorded among the participants in the current study, as they indicated that memes reduced their fear of error and made them feel more comfortable with verbal involvement. This has highlighted the fact that humor, rather

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than being a simple distraction, can create the psychological comfort necessary to achieve communicative success.

The second central qualitative theme, namely reduced anxiety, deserves special attention. Students also said that memes made classes more casual and less severe. This observation is consistent with the results of Youssef (2023) and Al Rashdi (2020), who outlined how humor, as expressed through memes, fosters rapport and emotional safety in cases of careful administration. In his study of the Omani people (2020), Al Rashdi found that the respondents were able to decode humor and perceived implications, but at times misunderstood culturally relevant allusions. This similar dynamic can be used to explain the apprehension of a small group of respondents to this question: they recognized that comfort and enjoyment were possible, but at the same time, they felt that memes needed contextualization to be well understood. Despite this, the fact that the results of the quantitative and qualitative findings are consonant supports the claim that humor and positive affect are indispensable elements in communicative preparedness. By predicting a reduced classroom atmosphere of lightness and friendliness, such learners in this study were imagining a situation that reduced anxiety, precisely what the affective filter hypothesis of Krashen (1982) refers to as a prerequisite to best input and output.

Altogether, the results portray a curious, yet cautious, motivated, yet nervous, and aware of the advantages and limitations of humor in learning. The statistically significant but moderate correlation of meme perceptions and WTC supports the fact that affective involvement and communicative confidence are interconnected. When learners can imagine language lessons as pleasant, pertinent, and emotionally safe, they demonstrate a willingness to communicate, even without actual instructional events. This paper, thus, contributes to the existing body of emerging literature on digital humor and language learning. It proves that the driving force of memes is not limited to deployment in the classroom but also extends to the perception and anticipation levels. The emotional preparedness of the students, as manifested in their visualized reactions, can serve as a predictor of future communicative interactions.

Finally, the current findings support the hypotheses made by Dornyei and Ushioda (2011), Sedliarova et al. (2020), and Pranoto and Suprayogi (2020) that the incorporation of humor, visual culture, and digital literacy in EFL instruction can positively affect both affective and communicative outcomes. Where care and sensitivity are mandatory, this evidence suggests that meme-based warm-ups have a real pedagogical future —not only in terms of novelty, but also in terms of substantive delivery, serving as a means of connecting language, culture, and emotion.

CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The investigation aimed to study the perceptions of EFL students enrolled in a preparatory class about meme-based warm-ups and to investigate how these

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ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025
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"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
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attitudes were associated with the desire to communicate in English (WTC). The findings indicate that the students' attitudes towards the use of memes in the classroom were relatively moderate in nature and were strongly linked to communicative confidence ($r = .367$, $p = .003$). Although the general WTC was moderate, the information voiced by the participants suggested that humor and digital culture would facilitate easier, safer, and more relatable communication, closer to the everyday life of the participants. Theoretically, the outcomes support the notion that language learning is a cerebral and emotional process. The responses given by the learners proved that affective factors like enjoyment, anxiety, and comfort have a potent effect on their willingness to talk. This aligns with the Ideal L2 Self of Dornyei and Ushioda (2011) and the dynamic model of WTC of MacIntyre et al. (1998), both of which highlight positive emotion and self-perception as crucial in the communication process. Based on this, the meme-based warm-ups can be interpreted not as empty entertainment but as emotional stimuli that help learners correlate their linguistic knowledge with real communicative action.

As a pedagogical implication, several implications emerge. First, EFL instructors could integrate meme-based warm-ups into very short, yet low-stakes tasks, at the beginning of lessons. These interventions are used to loosen the atmosphere, get people laughing, and create an environment that is not threatening and in which learners will be more inclined to be involved. The best way to use humor, as proposed by Youssef (2023) and Altukruni (2022), is when it is facilitated by the teacher, i.e., such that the material is not obscene and the humor does not interfere with the learning goals, but instead promotes them. Teachers are also advised to choose memes that students are socially aware of and, in some cases, encourage them to discuss cultural allusions in brief dialogues to improve pragmatic understanding (Al Rashdi, 2020).

Second, the results indicate that memes can serve as an interface between the digital world and students' educational experiences. Since memes are a common element in the online communication patterns of students, incorporating this practice into the classroom can make English learning more natural and personally relevant. Memes, as noted by Sedliarova et al. (2020), reflect cultural knowledge and linguistic creativity, which are key elements that contribute to engagement and intercultural awareness. Used wisely, materials based on memes encourage learners to understand, construct, and argue meaning, a process that also facilitates effective communication. Third, curriculum designers and teacher educators should take note of these findings, as they highlight the importance of incorporating affective and digital literacy aspects into English programs. Students can achieve emotional security and build confidence through exercises that utilize humor, imagery, and online media before speaking in public. Over time, the development of this form of emotional preparedness can be as important as the study of grammatical forms or words.

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS

26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025

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Lastly, future research also has its own paths of study to explore in this area. Since the current study examined perceived impressions rather than actual execution, future research could test meme-based warm-ups in authentic classroom contexts to determine their impact on motivation, performance, and longitudinal development in WTC. Mixed-method studies that involve classroom observation, interviews, and performance data may offer a more detailed view of the interaction between humor and digital culture, as well as affective variables in language learning.

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THE ROLE OF DIGITAL STORYTELLING IN SUPPORTING SOCIAL–EMOTIONAL LEARNING SKILLS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

ERKEN ÇOCUKLUKTA SOSYAL DUYGUSAL ÖGRENME BECERİLERİNİN DESTEKLENMESINDE DİJITAL HİKAYE ANLATIMININ ROLÜ

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Abstract

Early childhood is a critical developmental period during which the foundations of children's social–emotional competencies, interpersonal skills, and self-regulation abilities are established. During this stage, children acquire essential social–emotional learning (SEL) skills such as recognizing and expressing emotions, developing empathy, cooperating with peers, solving social problems, and making responsible decisions. These competencies play a pivotal role in children's long-term academic adjustment and psychosocial well-being. With the rapid integration of digital technologies into educational settings, innovative and interactive approaches for supporting SEL have gained increasing attention. Among these approaches, digital storytelling has emerged as a promising pedagogical tool due to its multimodal structure and its capacity to actively engage young children in meaningful learning experiences.

The purpose of this review study is to synthesize and evaluate current research examining the effects of digital storytelling on preschool children's social–emotional learning skills. Findings in the literature indicate that digital stories contribute significantly to children's abilities to recognize and express emotions, develop empathy, enhance social awareness, strengthen relationship skills, and improve social problem-solving competencies. In addition, digital storytelling provides children with a safe and structured learning environment that enables them to model social situations, explore different perspectives, and practice emotional regulation strategies. The literature further emphasizes that teachers' pedagogical competence in integrating digital storytelling, the developmental appropriateness of story content, and the inclusion of family participation are critical factors that enhance the effectiveness of this approach. Overall, digital storytelling is considered a powerful and sustainable instructional strategy for fostering social–emotional learning in early childhood education

Keywords: social–emotional learning, digital storytelling, preschool education, empathy, social skills

Özet

Okul öncesi dönem, çocukların sosyal-duygusal gelişimlerinin temellerinin atıldığı ve yaşam boyu sürecek kişilik, ilişki kurma ve öz düzenleme becerilerinin biçimlendiği kritik bir gelişim evresidir. Bu dönemde çocukların duygularını tanıma ve ifade etme, empati kurma, akranlarıyla iş birliği yapma, sosyal problem çözme ve sorumlu karar verme gibi sosyal-duygusal öğrenme (SDÖ) becerilerini kazanmaları, hem akademik hem de psikososyal uyum açısından belirleyici rol oynamaktadır. Son yıllarda dijital teknolojilerin eğitim ortamlarına hızla entegre edilmesiyle birlikte, SDÖ becerilerinin desteklenmesine yönelik yenilikçi ve etkileşim temelli yaklaşımlar öne çıkmıştır. Bu yaklaşımlar arasında dijital hikâye anlatımı, çoklu ortam bileşenlerini bir araya getiren yapısı ve çocukların aktif katılımını teşvik eden özellikleriyle dikkat çekmektedir.

Bu derleme çalışmasının amacı, dijital hikâye anlatımının okul öncesi dönemdeki çocukların sosyal-duygusal öğrenme becerileri üzerindeki etkilerini inceleyen güncel araştırmaları bütüncül bir bakış açısıyla değerlendirmektir. Alan yazın incelendiğinde, dijital hikâyelerin çocukların duygu tanıma ve ifade etme, empati geliştirme, sosyal farkındalık, ilişki kurma ve sosyal problem çözme becerileri üzerinde anlamlı katkılar sağladığı görülmektedir. Ayrıca dijital hikâyelerin, çocuklara güvenli ve yapılandırılmış bir öğrenme ortamı sunarak, sosyal durumları modelleme, farklı bakış açılarını keşfetme ve duygusal tepkilerini düzenleme fırsatları sunduğu vurgulanmaktadır. Bununla birlikte öğretmenlerin dijital hikâyeleri pedagojik amaçlarla bilinçli kullanmaları, içeriklerin gelişimsel özelliklere uygun biçimde tasarlanması ve aile katılımının sağlanması, bu yaklaşımın etkililiğini artıran temel unsurlar olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Sonuç olarak dijital hikâye anlatımı, okul öncesi dönemde SDÖ becerilerinin desteklenmesinde güçlü ve sürdürülebilir bir pedagojik araç olarak değerlendirilmektedir

Anahtar Kelimeler: sosyal-duygusal öğrenme, dijital hikâye anlatımı, okul öncesi eğitim, empati, sosyal beceriler

GİRİŞ

Erken çocukluk dönemi, bireyin yaşam boyu sürecek sosyal ve duygusal gelişiminin temelinin atıldığı kritik bir evre olarak kabul edilmektedir. Bu dönemde çocuklar; kendini tanıma, duyguları anlama ve ifade etme, empati kurma, problem çözme, iş birliği yapma ve sosyal kurallara uyum sağlama gibi temel sosyal-duygusal becerileri edinirler (Denham vd., 2012; Jennings ve Greenberg, 2009). Sosyal duygusal öğrenme (SDÖ), bu becerilerin gelişimini sistematik olarak destekleyen, bireylerin hem kendilerini hem de başkalarını anlayarak olumlu ilişkiler kurmalarını ve sorumlu kararlar almalarını sağlayan kapsamlı bir süreçtir (CASEL, 2025).

CASEL (2025)'in geliştirdiği etkileşimli SDÖ çerçevesine göre sosyal duygusal öğrenme; öz farkındalık, öz yönetim, sosyal farkındalık, ilişki becerileri ve sorumlu karar verme olmak üzere beş temel yeterlilikten oluşmaktadır. Öz farkındalık bireyin kendi duygularını tanıyabilmesi, kişisel ve sosyal kimliğini bütünleştirebilmesi, dürüstlük ve tutarlılık gösterebilmesi, duygular, değerler ve düşünceler arasındaki

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ilişkileri kavrayabilmesi, önyargılarını sorgulayabilmesi, öz yeterlilik duygusu geliştirebilmesi, öğrenmeye ve gelişime açık olması ve kişisel hedefler belirleyebilmesi gibi becerileri kapsamaktadır (CASEL, 2025). Öz yönetim ise duygularını kontrol edebilme, stresle baş edebilme, öz disiplin ve motivasyon gösterebilme, bireysel ve grup düzeyinde hedefler koyabilme, bu hedeflere ulaşmada kararlılık sergileme, planlama ve organizasyon becerilerini etkili biçimde kullanabilme yetkinliklerini içermektedir (CASEL, 2025). Sosyal farkındalık farklı kültür ve geçmişlere sahip bireylerin bakış açılarını anlayabilme, empati ve şefkat geliştirebilme, toplumsal davranış normlarını kavrayabilme ve toplumdaki kaynakların farkında olma gibi becerilerle ilişkilidir (CASEL, 2025). İlişki kurma boyutu etkili iletişim kurabilme, olumlu sosyal ilişkiler geliştirme, kültürel farklılıklara duyarlılık gösterme, iş birliği yapabilme, çatışmaları çözebilme, grup çalışmalarına liderlik edebilme, gerektiğinde yardım isteme ya da sunma ve başkalarının haklarını savunma becerilerini içermektedir (CASEL, 2025). Sorumlu karar verme ise meraklı ve açık fikirli olma, bireysel ve toplumsal sorunlara çözüm üretme, verileri analiz ederek mantıklı kararlar alabilme, eleştirel düşünme becerisini kullanma, davranışların sonuçlarını öngörebilme ve hem kişisel hem de toplumsal refahı gözetme gibi yeterlikleri kapsamaktadır (CASEL, 2025).

Erken çocukluk dönemindeki çocukların, sosyal duygusal öğrenme becerilerine ilişkin gelişimsel gereksinimlerini karşılamak üzere tasarlanmış kanıta dayalı ve kapsamlı bir sosyal-duygusal öğrenme müfredatı içeren birçok program bulunmaktadır. Bu programlara örnek olarak Pal'ın Arkadaşları (Al's Pals), Problem Çözebilirim (I Can Problem Solve), İkinci Adım (Second Step), İnanılmaz Yıllar (The Incredible Years), Barış Çalışmaları: küçük Çocuklar için Barış Yapma Becerileri (Peaceworks: Peacemaking Skills fort he Little Kids), Zihin Araçları (Tolls of The Mind), Güçlü Başlangıç (Strong Start A Social Emotional Learning Curriculum) ve Alternatif Düşünme Stratejileri (Promoing Alternative Thinking Strategies) verilebilir. Erken çocukluk dönemindeki çocuklara uygun olarak geliştirilen bu sosyal duygusal öğrenme programlarının amaçları, içerikleri, özellikleri, yaş grupları ve uygulama süreleri farklılık gösterse de programlarda en sık kullanılan araçlarından birinin de hikayeler olduğu görülmektedir (Jones vd., 2021). Denham vd (2012) tarafından yürütülen bir araştırma, hikaye okumanın çocukların problem çözme becerilerini güçlendirdiğini ve sosyal ilişkilerini olumlu yönde etkilediğini göstermiştir. Clark vd. (2021) çalışmasında resimli kitapların çocuklara duygusal farkındalık, empati, iş birliği ve duygusal yönetim gibi sosyal-duygusal becerileri geliştirmede etkili bir araç olduğunu vurgulamışlardır. Bir başka çalışmada Garces-Bacsal (2022), erken çocukluk eğitimcilerinin sınıflarında kullanabilecekleri resimli kitaplar arşivini ele alarak duygusal etkileşimi kolaylaştırmak ve öz farkındalık, öz yönetim, sosyal farkındalık, ilişki yönetimi ve sorumlu karar verme gibi sosyal ve duygusal öğrenme becerilerini tanıtmak için uluslararası ve çok kültürlü başlıkları içeren bir kitap listesi hazırlamıştır.

Etkileşimli Bir Öğrenme Aracı Olarak Dijital Hikâye Anlatımı

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SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES
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macmillan education
REGIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE OFFICE
MOMENTUM GLOBAL
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

ELT-ICRAL 2025

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

Dijital hikâye anlatımı, metin, anlatıcı sesi, müzik, animasyon ve görsel öğelerin bütüncül biçimde bir araya getirildiği çoklu ortam temelli hikâye sunumlarını ifade etmektedir (Robin, 2016). Bu yaklaşım, geleneksel sözlü ya da basılı hikâye anlatımından farklı olarak etkileşimli özellikler içermekte ve çocukları pasif dinleyici konumundan çıkararak öğrenme sürecinin etkin bir bileşeni hâline getirmektedir (Cherry, 2017). Dijital hikâyeler; tıklanabilir görsel unsurlar, alternatif olay akışları, karakter seçimleri ve geri bildirim temelli yapıları sayesinde çocukların bilişsel, duygusal ve sosyal katılımını eş zamanlı olarak destekleyen dinamik öğrenme ortamları sunmaktadır.

Sadik (2008) dijital hikâye anlatımını, öğrencilerin bilgiyi yapılandırmalarına ve anlamlandırmalarına olanak sağlayan yapılandırmacı öğrenme yaklaşımıyla uyumlu bir pedagojik araç olarak tanımlamakta; dijital hikâyelerin çok duyulu yapısının çocukların dikkat sürelerini uzattığını, öğrenme motivasyonlarını artırdığını ve farklı öğrenme stillerine hitap ettiğini vurgulamaktadır. Görsel-işitsel uyaranların birlikte sunulması, hikâye içeriklerinin somutlaştırılmasını sağlamakta ve özellikle okul öncesi dönemdeki çocukların karakterlerin duygularını, sosyal ipuçlarını ve neden–sonuç ilişkilerini daha kolay kavramalarına olanak tanımaktadır.

Araştırmalar, dijital hikâye anlatımının yalnızca öğrenme içeriğine yönelik ilgiyi artırmakla kalmadığını, aynı zamanda çocukların öğrenme sürecine etkin katılımını da güçlendirdiğini göstermektedir (Cherry, 2017). Etkileşimli yapılar, çocukların hikâye akışına müdahale edebilmesine, karakterlerin karşılaştığı sorunlara çözüm önerileri sunmasına ve hikâyenin yönünü belirleyebilmesine olanak tanımakta; bu durum çocukların karar verme, problem çözme ve sorumluluk alma becerilerinin gelişimine katkı sağlamaktadır. Bu yönüyle dijital hikâye anlatımı, sosyal-duygusal öğrenmenin deneyim temelli olarak yapılandırılabildiği güçlü bir öğrenme bağlamı sunmaktadır.

Dijital hikâye anlatımının bir diğer önemli boyutu, çocukların yalnızca hikâyelerin izleyicisi değil, aynı zamanda üreticisi konumuna da geçebilmeleridir. Kocaman-Karoğlu (2016), okul öncesi dönemde uygulanan dijital hikâye anlatımı çalışmalarının çocukların iletişim becerilerini, yaratıcılıklarını ve erken okuryazarlık düzeylerini desteklediğini; çocukların kendi hikâyelerini oluşturma sürecinde düşüncelerini organize etme, duygu ve fikirlerini ifade etme ve akranlarıyla iş birliği yapma fırsatı bulduklarını belirtmektedir. O'Byrne (2018) ise çocukların dijital hikâye üretim sürecinde anlatı kurma, soru sorma, geri bildirim verme ve alma gibi iletişimsel yeterliklerinin anlamlı biçimde geliştiğini vurgulamaktadır. Bu bağlamda dijital hikâye anlatımı, okul öncesi eğitim ortamlarında yalnızca teknoloji destekli bir anlatım yöntemi olarak değil; çocukların aktif katılımını merkeze alan, çok duyulu öğrenmeyi destekleyen, sosyal-duygusal yeterliklerin gelişimini kolaylaştıran bütüncül bir pedagojik araç olarak değerlendirilmektedir.

Bu bölümde sunulan kuramsal çerçeve ve alan yazındaki çalışmalar, dijital hikâye anlatımının okul öncesi dönemde sosyal-duygusal öğrenme ile ilişkili kavramsal ve uygulamaya dönük boyutlarını ortaya koymuştur. İzleyen bölümde, bu kuramsal yapı doğrultusunda yürütülen araştırmanın yöntemi sunulmaktadır.

YÖNTEM

Araştırmanın Modeli

Bu çalışma, dijital hikâye anlatımının erken çocukluk döneminde sosyal-duygusal öğrenme (SDÖ) becerilerini desteklemedeki rolünü incelemeyi amaçlayan betimleyici bir literatür taramasıdır. Araştırma sürecinde hem ulusal hem de uluslararası alanyazında yer alan çalışmalar incelenmiş, mevcut bulgular sistematik bir çerçevede derlenerek yorumlanmıştır. Literatür taramasında tezler, hakemli dergi makaleleri, raporlar ve kurumsal kaynaklardan elde edilen yayınlara yer verilmiştir. Bu yayınlar; çocukların sosyal-duygusal gelişimi, okul öncesi eğitimde teknoloji kullanımı, dijital hikâye anlatımı ve sosyal duygusal öğrenme konularını kapsamaktadır.

Çalışmalara erişim sürecinde YÖK Ulusal Tez Merkezi, Google Scholar, ResearchGate, ERIC, ScienceDirect ve akademik dergi veri tabanları gibi çeşitli dijital kaynaklardan yararlanılmıştır. Kaynak seçiminde belirli bir tarih aralığı ya da yöntemsel sınırlama uygulanmamış; dijital hikâye anlatımı ile sosyal-duygusal öğrenme arasındaki ilişkiyi inceleyen veya bu konularda çıkarım sunan tüm yayınlara ulaşılmaya çalışılmıştır. Literatür, içerik analizi yöntemiyle incelenmiş, araştırmalarda elde edilen bulgular SDÖ'nin beş temel yeterlik alanı (öz farkındalık, öz yönetim, sosyal farkındalık, ilişki becerileri ve sorumlu karar verme) çerçevesinde tematik olarak sınıflandırılmıştır.

Bu yöntemle, farklı çalışmalarda elde edilen verilerin bir araya getirilmesi ve karşılaştırmalı olarak değerlendirilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Elde edilen bulgular, dijital hikâye anlatımının erken çocukluk döneminde SDÖ becerilerini nasıl ve hangi koşullarda desteklediğini ortaya koymaya yönelik olarak yorumlanmıştır.

BULGULAR

Yapılan güncel araştırmalar, dijital hikâye anlatımının okul öncesi dönemde çocukların sosyal-duygusal öğrenme (SDÖ) becerilerine çok yönlü katkılar sunduğunu ortaya koymaktadır (Khan vd., 2025; Saliuk & Shkola, 2023). Bu yaklaşım, çocukların öz farkındalık, öz yönetim, sosyal farkındalık, ilişki becerileri ve sorumlu karar verme alanlarında gelişim göstermelerine aracılık eden bütüncül ve etkileşimli bir öğrenme yöntemi olarak değerlendirilmektedir (Candeias & Félix, 2025).

Öz Farkındalık

Öz-farkındalık, kişinin kendi duygularını, düşüncelerini ve değerlerini ve bunların davranışları üzerindeki etkilerini anlama becerisidir (CASEL, 2025). Dijital hikâye etkinlikleri, çocukları kendi içsel deneyimlerini ifade etmeye yönlendirdiğinden bu beceriyi geliştirmeye yardımcı olmaktadır. Örneğin Khan ve arkadaşları (2025) çalışmasında, öğrencilerin dijital hikâye oluşturma sürecinde karakterlerin duygularına odaklanan yansıtıcı etkinliklere katılması sonucu öz-farkındalık

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

düzeylerinde artış gözlemlenmiştir. Ayrıca Doğan Şen (2020) okul öncesi dönemdeki bir çalışmasında, dijital hikâye projelerine katılan çocukların kendilerini daha rahat ifade etmeye başladıklarını ve bu sayede kendi duygu durumlarını daha iyi tanıdıklarını rapor etmiştir. Bu sonuçlar, dijital hikâyenin çocukların kendi duygularını keşfetmelerini ve anlamlandırmalarını kolaylaştırdığını göstermektedir.

Öz Yönetim

Öz yönetim, bireyin duygularını, düşüncelerini ve davranışlarını çeşitli durumlara uygun biçimde düzenleyebilme becerisidir. Dijital hikâye anlatım süreci, çocuklara plan yapma, sabır gösterme, dikkatini sürdürme ve amaçlarına yönelik kararlılıkla ilerleme gibi davranışsal düzenleme stratejilerini deneyimleme fırsatı sunmaktadır (Gözen & Cırık, 2017). Hikâyelerin yapılandırılması, olay örgüsü içinde karakterlerin eylemlerinin kurgulanması gibi süreçler, çocuğun içsel disiplin ve hedef yönelimi geliştirmesine katkı sunmaktadır.

Gözen ve Cırık (2017), dijital hikâye temelli etkinliklerin çocukların planlı düşünme ve esneklik becerileri üzerinde olumlu etkiler yarattığını saptamıştır. Gita, Ferede ve Tondeur (2025) tarafından yürütülen kapsamlı bir literatür taraması ise dijital hikâye anlatımının öz düzenleme alanında anlamlı kazanımlar sağladığını ortaya koymuştur. Qureshi ve Iqbal (2023) ise, öğretmen adaylarında stresle başa çıkma, zaman yönetimi ve davranışsal öz düzenleme becerilerinin bu yöntem aracılığıyla geliştiğini göstermektedir.

Sosyal Farkındalık

Sosyal farkındalık, bireyin başkalarının duygularını anlama, farklı perspektiflere duyarlılık gösterme ve empatik bağ kurma yeterliğini içerir. Dijital hikâyeler, çocukların farklı karakterlerle özdeşim kurmalarına olanak tanımakta; bu süreç aracılığıyla çocuklar başkalarının duygusal durumlarına ilişkin farkındalık geliştirmektedir (Khan vd., 2025).

Maranatha ve arkadaşlarının (2024) deneysel çalışmasında dijital hikâye anlatımı uygulanan çocukların empati puanları, geleneksel hikâye anlatımına kıyasla anlamlı ölçüde daha yüksek bulunmuştur. Zarifsanaiey ve arkadaşları da (2022), dijital hikâye anlatımının öğrencilerin empati düzeylerinde ve sosyal algı becerilerinde belirgin gelişmelere yol açtığını belirtmiştir. Morrison (2024) da, dijital anlatı süreçlerinin çocukların başkalarının duygularına duyarlılık göstermelerini ve bu duyguları paylaşmalarını desteklediğini vurgulamaktadır. Chen (2024) ise, öğretmen adayları özelinde yürüttüğü çalışmada, dijital hikâye anlatımının sosyal farkındalık ve empati gelişimi üzerindeki etkilerini nitelikli biçimde belgelemiştir.

İlişki Becerileri

İlişki becerileri, çocukların başkalarıyla sağlıklı ve olumlu etkileşim kurabilmeleri, etkili iletişim kurmaları, işbirliği yapabilmeleri ve çatışmaları yapıcı yollarla çözebilmeleri ile ilgilidir. Dijital hikâye anlatımı, çocuklara ortak hikâyeler oluşturma, fikir alışverişinde bulunma ve birlikte problem çözme ortamları sunarak bu becerilerin gelişimini destekler (O'Byrne vd., 2018).

ANKARA
HACI BAYRAM VELİ UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES
ULEAD

macmillan education
REGIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE OFFICE
MOMENTUM GLOBAL
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING

ELT-ICRAL 2025

ULEAD 2025
CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

Araştırmalar, dijital hikâye anlatımının iletişim ve işbirliği becerilerini anlamlı şekilde güçlendirdiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Khan ve arkadaşları (2025), dijital hikâye anlatımı sürecine katılan çocukların kendini ifade etme ve ortak çalışma becerilerinde kayda değer gelişmeler gösterdiğini bildirmiştir. Başdaş ve Akar-Vural (2018), drama temelli dijital hikâye anlatımı programının altı yaş çocuklarının sözel açıklama, iletişim kurma ve sosyal uyum becerilerinde olumlu etkiler yarattığını saptamıştır. Morrison (2024) da, dijital hikâye anlatımının çocuklar arasında sosyal etkileşimi ve katılımı artırdığını vurgulamaktadır. Aynı zamanda, bu yöntem öğretmen adaylarının sınıf içi iletişim ve ilişki yönetimi becerilerini de güçlendiren etkili bir uygulama olarak değerlendirilmektedir (Qureshi & Iqbal, 2023).

Sorumlu Karar Verme

Sorumlu karar verme, bireyin etik değerler ışığında, olası sonuçları dikkate alarak uygun ve sorumlu seçimler yapabilme becerisini ifade etmektedir. Dijital hikâye anlatımı, çocukların karakterlerin seçimlerini tartışmalarına, alternatif senaryolar geliştirmelerine ve neden-sonuç ilişkilerini analiz etmelerine olanak tanır. Bu da onların eleştirel düşünme, problem çözme ve sağduyulu karar verme yetilerini güçlendirir (Morrison, 2024).

Zarifsanaiey ve arkadaşlarının (2022) araştırması, grup tartışmaları ile desteklenen dijital hikâye etkinliklerinin çocukların karar verme ve problem çözme becerilerinde anlamlı gelişmeler sağladığını göstermiştir. Saliuk ve Shkola (2023) ise dijital hikâye anlatımının çocukların etik değerleri içselleştirmelerine katkıda bulunarak ahlaki muhakeme becerilerini pekiştirdiğini ortaya koymuştur.

Bulguların Genel Değerlendirmesi

Ulusal ve uluslararası literatür, dijital hikâye anlatımının erken çocukluk döneminde sosyal-duygusal öğrenmenin tüm alanlarında geliştirici bir etkiye sahip olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır (Fajrie, 2025; Byrne, 2024; Karaçelik, 2022; Gözen & Cırık, 2017). Yöntemin çoklu duyuya hitap etmesi, çocukların deneyimlerini yapılandırmasına olanak sağlaması ve anlatım sürecinde aktif rol almalarını teşvik etmesi, SDÖ becerilerinin kazanımında güçlü bir etki yaratmaktadır.

Türkiye bağlamında yapılan araştırmalar, dijital hikâye anlatımının özellikle öz farkındalık, öz düzenleme ve sosyal farkındalık becerileri üzerinde anlamlı etkiler yarattığını göstermektedir. Ancak mevcut çalışmaların sınırlı sayıda olması, SDÖ'nün beş alanını bir bütün olarak ele alan kapsamlı araştırmalara duyulan ihtiyacı da ortaya koymaktadır (Ulu, 2021; Türe Köse & Bartan, 2021).

TARTIŞMA VE SONUÇ

Bookm Bu çalışmanın bulguları, dijital hikâye anlatımının erken çocukluk döneminde sosyal-duygusal öğrenme (SDÖ) becerilerinin gelişimini destekleyen etkili bir pedagojik araç olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Bulgular, dijital hikâyelerin çocukların öz farkındalık, öz yönetim, sosyal farkındalık, ilişki becerileri ve sorumlu karar verme alanlarında anlamlı kazanımlar elde etmelerine aracılık ettiğini göstermektedir (Khan vd., 2025; Candeias & Félix, 2025; Saliuk & Shkola, 2023). Bu

300

ULEAD 2025 CONGRESS
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2025
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025

ELT-ICRAL 2025

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS
14TH INTERNATIONAL ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
"Language Unbound: Shaping the Future of Language Education"
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University I School of Foreign Languages
congress.ulead.org.tr

sonuçlar, dijital hikâye anlatımının, çocukların duygusal ve sosyal yeterliklerini bütüncül bir biçimde destekleyen yapılandırmacı öğrenme yaklaşımıyla uyumlu olduğunu göstermektedir (Sadik, 2008).

Öz farkındalık boyutunda elde edilen bulgular, dijital hikâyelerin çocukların kendi duygularını tanımalarına, içsel deneyimlerini fark etmelerine ve bu deneyimleri sözel olarak ifade etmelerine yardımcı olduğunu göstermektedir (Doğan Şen, 2020; Khan vd. 2025). Özellikle dijital ortamların sunduğu çoklu duyusal deneyimlerin, çocukların dikkatini sürdürmesini ve duygusal tepkilerini anlamlandırmasını kolaylaştırdığı görülmektedir (Robin, 2016). Bu bulgu, Denham ve arkadaşlarının (2012) sosyal-duygusal öğrenmede duygu farkındalığının temel bir bileşen olduğunu vurgulayan görüşleriyle de örtüşmektedir.

Öz yönetim açısından, dijital hikâye anlatım sürecinin çocuklara plan yapma, hedef belirleme, sabır gösterme ve dikkatini sürdürme gibi öz düzenleme davranışlarını deneyimleme fırsatı sunduğu belirlenmiştir (Gözen & Cırık, 2017; Gita vd., 2025). Bu sonuç, hikâye üretim sürecinin çocukların yalnızca bilişsel değil, davranışsal ve duygusal düzenleme kapasitelerini de geliştirdiğini göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla dijital hikâyeler, çocukların öğrenme sürecinde öz denetim ve içsel motivasyon kazanmalarına katkı sağlayan bütüncül bir öğrenme ortamı yaratmaktadır.

Sosyal farkındalık alanında, dijital hikâyelerin empati gelişimini desteklediği yönündeki bulgular dikkat çekicidir (Maranatha vd., 2024; Zarifsanaiey vd., 2022; Morrison, 2024). Dijital ortamda sunulan hikâyeler, çocukların farklı karakterlerle özdeşim kurmalarına ve başkalarının duygularını anlama becerilerini geliştirmelerine olanak tanımaktadır. Bu bulgu, Clark ve arkadaşlarının (2021) resimli kitapların empati ve duygusal farkındalık gelişiminde etkili olduğuna dair sonuçlarıyla da paralellik göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla dijital hikâye anlatımı, geleneksel hikâye anlatımının pedagojik gücünü korumakla birlikte, etkileşimli öğeler aracılığıyla bu süreci daha zengin hâle getirmektedir.

İlişki becerileri açısından değerlendirildiğinde, dijital hikâye anlatımı çocukların iletişim kurma, iş birliği yapma ve sosyal etkileşim başlatma becerilerini güçlendirmektedir (O'Byrne vd., 2018; Başdaş & Akar-Vural, 2018). Özellikle ortak hikâye oluşturma süreçlerinin çocuklar arasında iş birliğini teşvik ettiği ve akran ilişkilerini olumlu yönde etkilediği gözlemlenmiştir. Bu durum, Denham ve arkadaşlarının (2012) sosyal-duygusal öğrenme becerilerinin erken dönemde akran ilişkileri aracılığıyla biçimlendiği yönündeki bulgularını desteklemektedir.

Sorumlu karar verme becerileri bağlamında ise dijital hikâyelerin çocuklara etik değerler çerçevesinde düşünme, alternatif çözümler üretme ve neden-sonuç ilişkilerini değerlendirme fırsatı sunduğu görülmektedir (Zarifsanaiey vd., 2022; Morrison, 2024; Saliuk & Shkola, 2023). Bu yönüyle dijital hikâye anlatımı, çocukların eleştirel düşünme ve ahlaki muhakeme becerilerini deneyimsel biçimde geliştiren bir öğrenme ortamı sunmaktadır.

Bununla birlikte mevcut literatür, dijital hikâye anlatımının etkililiğini artıran bazı değişkenlere de dikkat çekmektedir. Öğretmenlerin dijital araçları pedagojik

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amaçlarla bilinçli biçimde entegre etmeleri (Kocaman-Karoğlu, 2016), içeriklerin çocukların gelişimsel düzeylerine uygun olarak hazırlanması (Robin, 2016) ve aile katılımının süreçte aktif biçimde yer alması (Türe Köse & Bartan, 2021) yöntemin başarısını artıran temel etmenler arasında yer almaktadır. Türkiye bağlamında yapılan çalışmaların sınırlı sayıda olması, SDÖ'nün tüm bileşenlerini kapsayan uzunlamasına ve deneysel araştırmalara ihtiyaç olduğunu göstermektedir (Ulu, 2021).

Genel olarak bulgular, dijital hikâye anlatımının yalnızca teknolojik bir yenilik değil, erken çocukluk eğitiminde sosyal-duygusal öğrenmeyi bütüncül biçimde destekleyen sürdürülebilir bir öğretim yaklaşımı olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Bu nedenle eğitim programlarında dijital hikâye anlatımına daha sistematik biçimde yer verilmesi, öğretmen eğitimlerinin bu doğrultuda güçlendirilmesi ve kültürel bağlamın dikkate alındığı yeni modellerin geliştirilmesi önerilmektedir.

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