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Causes and Problems of Horizontal Transfer between Music Programs

Didem Döğçer Gündüz*

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Abstract

This study aimed to reveal the reasons for horizontal transfer in music departments and the problems experienced in this process. Case study design, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in this research. The study group consisted of 25 students who came to Dicle University State Conservatory with a horizontal transfer. The research data were obtained from face-to-face interviews conducted with a semi-structured interview form. The findings obtained in this study showed that the reasons for the students to transfer were mainly due to being with their families, being from Diyarbakır, living more comfortably financially, getting a better education and being close to their hometowns. It was observed that the most common problems experienced by students were related to courses and course exemptions. In addition, it was also revealed that they encountered many problems, such as bad attitudes from academic staff, ignorance and indifference to the office of student affairs, and housing. Students made some suggestions regarding the transfer process and its implementation, stating that the transfer process should be reorganised and problems should be eliminated.

Keywords: Undergraduate education, horizontal transfer, music programmes, student problems.

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Introduction

Universities (higher education) are autonomous institutions consisting of faculties, institutes, colleges, and similar units and departments where education and training are carried out at the highest level, research is conducted, and knowledge is produced. UNESCO defines universities as institutions that include all disciplines, combine research and education, contribute to national and international development, support the social and intellectual development of society, and provide vocational education (UNESCO, 1991). According to Jasper (1959), universities are a community of academicians and students engaged in the search for truth.

While the functioning of higher education in Türkiye was initially carried out in different institutions, with the Higher Education Law No. 2547 enacted in 1981, all higher education institutions were gathered under the umbrella of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE), academies were transformed into universities, educational institutes into education faculties, and conservatories and vocational colleges were affiliated to universities. Thus, the Council of Higher Education, which is an institution with autonomy and public legal personality within the framework of the provisions of the aforementioned law and the duties and powers given to it by Articles 130 and 131 of the Constitution, has become the only institution responsible for all higher education (CoHE History).

Within the rules determined by the CoHE and according to the criteria determined by the university senates, it is possible to transfer within universities or between other universities. In Türkiye, these transitions are carried out in two ways: vertical and horizontal. Vertical transfer is to transfer from two-year associate degree programmes to a four-year undergraduate programme with or without an exam. Horizontal transfer, on the other hand, can be made in four ways: between programmes within the institution, between institutions, with central placement points (The Measuring, Selection and Placement Center scores), special cases (e.g., public service obligations, violence incidents, and abroad), Turkish armed forces and police academy students. Horizontal transfer regulation was made with the Regulation on Transfer, Double Major, Minor and Inter-Institutional Credit Transfer between Associate and Undergraduate Programs in Higher Education Institutions numbered 27561 published in 2010 (YÖK, 2010). This regulation draws attention to two types of horizontal transfer: inter-institutional and intra-institutional. Intra-institutional horizontal transfer is the transfer of a student to another diploma program of the same level within the higher education institution he/she is registered in during the 3rd and 5th semesters. Inter-institutional horizontal transfer refers to the transfer from one university or college to a department or program in another university.

The type of horizontal transfer considered in the research is between institutions. However, these transitions can be made within the framework of some rules. The first year and the last year of undergraduate programmes are not eligible for transfer and

horizontal transfer applications can only be made within the announced deadlines. Horizontal transfers are made between diploma programmes with the same names of higher education institutions or between diploma programmes that are determined by the relevant administrative boards to have at least eighty percent of the same content and within the quota. Horizontal transfers can be made with GPA or central placement score. In transfers made with GPA, the GPA of the completed semesters must be at least 60 out of 100 (CoHE, 2010). Horizontal transfers made with central scores allow students to change universities or departments by taking into account the score values of the year they took the university exam. In order to transfer to a university as a special student, it is mandatory to notify the university where they are registered.

Since the 2000s, state universities have been established in every province. This situation has led to the economic, industrial and cultural development of cities where provincial universities are located, but it has also brought with it problems such as low quality in education and training, inadequate technical equipment and hardware, unemployment and underemployment, lack of planning and commercialization. (Çınar, 2016; Doğan & Oktay, 2020). Due to all these problems, the demand for students to transfer from the universities where they are studying to universities in cities with better conditions and higher levels of development and welfare has started to increase. Provinces and universities with low competitiveness in terms of geography, climate, development and services offered to students have started to lose students (Çınar, 2016). Most studies also point out that the direction of educational mobility is from east to west and therefore from underdeveloped countries to developed countries (Akkaya, 2020). It can be said that the effective factors in students' horizontal transfer are generally socio-cultural and economic reasons.

When studies on transfers between universities in Türkiye are examined, we come across a few studies. Yaralı Akkaya (2020) examined the horizontal transfers carried out at Van Yüzüncü Yıl University, and mentioned many reasons such as socio-cultural, political and economic, and stated that family ties and responsibilities were the source of these findings. Çınar (2016) stated that the most common reasons for horizontal transfer were negative academics, the influence of the city, the teaching process, and academic-student relations, while the university had the least effect. In the study conducted by Doğan & Oktay (2020), the advertisements published by foundation universities during horizontal transfer periods to increase the number of students were examined. Kumral & Şahin (2017) determined the reasons why students participating in the Farabi exchange program benefited from the program and the problems experienced during this process, and evaluated the purpose and functioning of the program in line with their suggestions for the program.

It is seen that the studies conducted at universities abroad are mostly encountered under the name of student mobility. Student mobility is analysed in two different ways: domestic and international student mobility. The terms horizontal and vertical mobility are used for international transfers. The term 'vertical mobility' is used to describe students from

developing countries going to academically advanced higher education institutions in more developed countries. 'Horizontal mobility' has been defined as student mobility between countries and higher education institutions with more or less the same level of quality of economic progress (Rivza & Teichler, 2007). When the studies on student mobility abroad are examined, there are many studies that focus on international mobility and migration from east to west (Staniscia, 2012; Singh & Doherty, 2008; Pinpa, 2005; Waters, 2007) and that investigate the reasons for preferring education abroad (Beine et al., 2014; Cao et al., 2015), the effect of social networks on educational mobility (Brooks & Waters, 2010), gender and migration history in educational mobility (Schneebaum et al., 2015), and the reasons for the transition of students who migrate to more developed regions within the same country (Ciriaci, 2013; Wells et al., 2018) and temporary student mobility with programmes, such as Erasmus (Jovanovska et al., 2018; Pineda et al., 2008; Sal-İlhan & Külekçi, 2022).

Music programmes in Türkiye and horizontal transfer

Music education programmes at the higher education level in Türkiye appear under three different names: music education faculties, fine arts faculties and state conservatories. The aim of the music education faculties is to train teachers. Faculties of fine arts are programmes that aim to train designers and artists, which include many branches of art, such as painting, music, photography, ceramics, sculpture and architecture. Conservatories, on the other hand, are programmes that include fields, such as dance, drama and performing arts, where a more comprehensive and detailed music education is given compared to all other music programmes and aim to train artists. In addition, state conservatories in Türkiye are divided into two different programmes in which western music and Turkish music education are given. As all these programmes have different aims, there are also many differences in their curricula.

Music education programmes are located in the department of fine arts education of education faculties in universities. In 1982, with the transfer of higher education institutions to universities, music education was also transferred to faculties of education (Yayla, 2004). In 1998, music education was merged with painting and business education under the name of 'fine arts education' department and transformed into a department (Kalyoncu, 2005). Music education programmes, which were partially autonomous in the past, have been renewed after 1998 and set to a certain standard and have a common curriculum throughout the country.

Conservatories are defined by CoHE as "higher education institutions that train artists in music and performing arts" (CoHE, 2006: 16). 'Western music state conservatories, 'which can start to provide music education from primary school age, are programmes that provide classical western music education and generally train their own undergraduate students. Turkish music state conservatories, on the other hand, are institutions where Turkish music and traditional Turkish instruments are taught and music education can be provided from primary school (Official Gazette of the Republic

of Türkiye, 2015). According to the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), a conservatory is a college that trains artists in music and performing arts, where primary and secondary education institutions can also be opened as preparatory units (MoNE, 2013). Conservatories in Türkiye are structured as departments, arts and main art branches. In these programmes, courses are carried out with a very intense and strict discipline.

Faculties of fine arts, on the other hand, are institutions that provide education in art branches, such as painting, music, sculpture, and cinema, at the undergraduate level. The music programmes in the faculties of fine arts in Türkiye are generally called music departments or music sciences. They are departments where both Turkish music and classical western music can be taught. Music Departments in Faculties of Fine Arts in Türkiye were first established in 1975 at Ege University to carry out scientific research in the field of music. However, over time, the faculties of fine arts have turned towards the student output targets aimed by conservatories by opening programme types related to the field of performance, and have deviated from their founding purpose in 1975 and turned into programmes with similar purposes to conservatories (Yener & Apaydınlı, 2016).

The structure of music education in the faculties of fine arts and state conservatories of Turkish music in Türkiye is quite complex. In Turkish music state conservatories, there are generally departments, such as Turkish folk dances, voice training, instrument education, Turkish music (Turkish Folk Music, Turkish Art Music) (e.g., Diyarbakır Dicle University State Conservatory of Turkish Folk Dances, Voice Training and Turkish Music departments; Istanbul Technical University Turkish Music State Conservatory of Turkish Music Voice Training, Musicology, Instrument Education, Turkish Folk Dances departments). In Faculties of Fine Arts, there are departments, such as 'Music, Music and Performing Arts, Music Sciences, Turkish Music Basic Sciences' (e.g., Ankara Gazi University Turkish Music State Conservatory Turkish Music Department; Ardahan University Faculty of Fine Arts Turkish Music and Turkish Folk Dances Department). As can be seen, in both programmes, music fields can be divided into different departments or main art branches. Due to these diversities, there may be differences in the courses and their contents both according to the universities and the type of music education given in these programmes.

Despite all these differences in the programmes in music education in Türkiye, horizontal transfer can be made if the necessary conditions are fulfilled. However, the idea that the differences in the purpose and curriculum programmes may cause many problems, especially in the horizontal transfers between the faculties of fine arts and state conservatories where Turkish music education is given, constitutes the problem of this research.

In Türkiye, as in other departments, horizontal transfers between music programmes are made within a certain quota, based on the grade point averages in the universities

and the courses being carried out in the departments. In the literature, to our knowledge, there is no domestic study on horizontal transfers between music programmes. When the studies conducted abroad are examined, it is seen that these studies mostly investigate the cultural and musical learning experiences of music students in international educational mobility (Bartleet et al., 2020; Lim, 2020).

The studies in the literature reveal that many reasons, such as family, city, university, academician or the desire to get a better education affect horizontal transfers. Recently, with the increase of newly opened universities and music programmes in Türkiye, students want to change universities for many reasons and, as a result, they have to face many problems, especially curriculum problems. In this direction, this study aims to examine the horizontal transfers between music programmes and to find out from which universities and programmes the transfers are made, why students transfer and what kind of problems they face during the horizontal transfer process.

Method

Research Model

In this research, which was conducted to determine the reasons for the transfer and the problems experienced by the students of the music department who transferred horizontally, the Illustrative case study design, one of the qualitative research methods, was used (Brown, 2008). Case study is a method in which a single situation or event is examined longitudinally in depth, data is collected systematically and what happens in the real environment is examined. With the results obtained, it reveals why the event occurred in that way and what should be focused on in further studies (Davey, 1991). In an illustrative case study, it is aimed to describe a situation descriptively by examining one or more examples of a situation. It is used when the data obtained by examining situations about which there is very little information is interpreted and unknown information is presented to the readers. In an explanatory case study, the purpose of the research is to answer the questions of “why” and “how” (Leymun et al., 2017). In this direction, the horizontal transfer situations of music department students were investigated, the universities they transferred to, the reasons for horizontal transfer, and the problems they encountered during and after the horizontal transfer process were determined, and student opinions were included so that the process could be carried out more healthily. The data were collected using the interview technique. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview form prepared by the researcher.

Participants

The study group of this research was 25 students who came to Dicle University State Conservatory by horizontal transfer and who continued their education in the 2022-2023 academic year. The criterion sampling method, one of the purposive sampling methods, was used to determine the study group. In the criterion sampling method, the

sample group is determined by using a predetermined list of criteria or criteria predetermined by the researcher (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006). In this direction, the participants were students who came to Dicle University State Conservatory with horizontal transfer in the 2022-2023 academic year. The reason for choosing this university for the study is that Diyarbakır is one of the cities with the highest level of development in the Eastern/Southeastern Anatolia region. In addition, the fact that the state conservatory in this university is one of the oldest and most established departments in the region and that the researcher witnessed a high number of students transferring to this department where he worked was effective in determining the sample. Demographic information of the study group is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1.

Personal information of the students

Groups		N	%
Gender	Female	15	60,0
	Male	10	40,0
Age	20-24	17	68,0
	25-29	5	20,0
	30-34	2	8,0
	36	1	4,0
University	Şırnak University	5	20,0
	Kars Kafkas University	5	20,0
	Ardahan University	5	20,0
	Van Yüzüncü Yıl University	4	16,0
	Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa University	2	8,0
	Batman University	1	4,0
	Konya Selçuk University	1	4,0
	Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University	1	4,0
	Elazığ Fırat University	1	4,0
Faculty/Higher Education	State Conservatory	13	52,0
	Faculty of Fine Arts	12	48,0
Total		25	100

As seen in Table 1, 15 (60.0%) of the students were female, and 10 (40.0%) were male. The ages of the students were between 20 and 36 years old. Five (20,0%) of the students were from Şırnak University; five (20.0%) were from Kars Kafkas University; five (20.0%) were from Ardahan University, four (16.0%) from Van Yüzüncü Yıl University; two (8.0%) from Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa University; and the remaining students came to Dicle University by transferring from Batman University, Konya Selçuk University, Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University and Elazığ Fırat University. Thirteen (52,0%) of

the students transferred to Dicle University State Conservatory from the state conservatory and 12 (48,0%) from the Faculty of Fine Arts.

Data collection

To conduct this study, ethical approval was first obtained from the Dicle University Social and Human Sciences Research and Ethics Committee (E-14679147-663.05-91570). After the approval of the ethics committee, the data were collected using face-to-face interviews with music department students who transferred from other universities to the Dicle University State Conservatory. The interviews were conducted at the end of the spring term of the 2022-2023 academic year. Interviews were conducted using a smartphone and audio recorded. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview form prepared by the researcher. In order to prepare the interview form, the relevant literature was first reviewed. Then, a draft form was created for the interview form to be used in the research. Keeping the number of basic interview questions quite limited and deriving follow-up and probe questions from them is the basic feature of a semi-structured interview (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The form created by the researcher in order to achieve the aims of the study includes main questions (for example, what are your reasons for horizontal transfer?) and probe questions regarding the details of the main questions (for example, what were your expectations?). The draft form was presented to three educators who are experts in the field, and necessary corrections were made in line with their opinions and suggestions. After the interview questions were prepared, a pilot study was conducted with two participants who were not included in this study. After the interview, the questions that were not understood or received similar answers were rearranged.

Data analysis

A content analysis method was used to analyse the data obtained. The process of content analysis is to bring together similar data within the framework of certain concepts and themes and to interpret them by organizing them in a way that the reader can understand (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006). Firstly, the voice recordings obtained from the interviews were transferred to the computer environment in written form. After determining the departments that the students came from and transferred to, the themes of the research were created. Three main themes were determined: the reason for horizontal transfer, the problems experienced, and suggestions for the functioning of the horizontal transfer process. The determined themes were coded and sub-themes were created. The theme of the reasons for horizontal transfer consists of 6 sub-themes as financial, family, university, city, vocational and health. The problems experienced were grouped under the sub-themes of courses, academic accommodation and university. The suggestions for the solution of the problems experienced by the students during the interviews were presented directly. The participants were numbered as S1, S2, S3... For the reliability of the analysis, the support of another expert was sought. Finally, the questions constituting each theme of this research were presented and direct

quotations were sometimes used to support the data in the tables and to increase reliability.

Findings

The findings obtained in this section were analysed under four categories: departments in which horizontal transfers were made, reasons for transferring, problems experienced, opinions and suggestions (Table 2).

Table 2.

Departments in which horizontal transfers were made

Department of origin	Transferred Department	Students	f
Music Department	Turkish music	S4,S9	2
Turkish music	Turkish music	S1,S12,S14,S17,S20,S22,S23,S25	8
Turkish folk dances	Turkish folk dances	S2,S3,S10,S11,S21,S24	6
Music Department	Voice training	S5,S6,S7,S8,S18,S19	6
Turkish music	Voice training	S13	1
Traditional Turkish Music (Turkish Folk Music)	Turkish music	S16	1
Traditional Turkish Music (Turkish Art Music)	Voice training	S15	1

Eight of the students transferred from the Turkish music department to the Turkish music department and six of them transferred from the Turkish folk dances department to the Turkish folk dances department. In other words, 14 of the students transferred to programmes with the same name. Since the music programmes that the other students came from had different names, their transfers were accepted considering the compatibility of the course contents. Of these students, six students transferred from the music department to the voice training department, two students from the music department to the Turkish music department, one student from Turkish music to the voice training department, one student from the Traditional Turkish Music (folk music) department to the Turkish music department and one student from the Traditional Turkish Music (Art music) department to the voice training department. All of the students transferred after the first year.

Reasons for horizontal transfer

The findings showed that the first theme of this research was the reasons students for horizontal transfer. It was seen that the reasons for students to horizontal transfer were grouped under six sub-themes: financial, family, university, city effect, vocational and health.

One of the most important reasons for students to horizontal transfer was family situations. Students stated that they transferred to be with their families, to support them financially and morally, and to ensure family integrity.

I am the only male in the family. I came to help my family and be with them (S4).

I am from Diyarbakır and my family lives here. I came because I wanted to live with them (S12).

I am married. My wife and child live here. Travelling to another city to study was very difficult. For this reason, I transferred (S9).

Another important reason for students to horizontal transfer was the university effect. The expectation of getting a better education and better academic staff led students to transfer to this university.

I graduated from Fine Arts High School. I did not think that I could get enough education in Şırnak. I decided to transfer because I realised that I was musically atrophied (S5).

Actually, my family lives in Şırnak and I am graduate of Şırnak Fine Arts High School. However, there were a limited number of academics at the university there. The fact that this university is better in terms of education and the academic staff led me to transfer (S7).

I came to this university to get a better education and to improve myself more (S19).

In the university sub-theme, most students stated that they transferred with the expectation of self-improvement. However, in the face of these expectations, some students stated that they were disappointed and could not find what they expected.

I came to this university with great expectations both in terms of education and the city it is located in, but the university I came from was more active. There were concerts every week. Our lecturers used to participate in events and interviews. I was disappointed here in that sense (S1).

When I came here, I realised that I had not received an education throughout my university life. My department is voice training, but I was disappointed with voice training. We could not have lessons and voice training lessons are held collectively here (S5).

I came to this university to get a better education and improve myself. My field is voice training, but voice training lessons were held only once. My instrument teacher and voice training courses were not as I expected (S8).

The level was lower at the university I came from and I thought I would have difficulty when I came here, but I didn't have much difficulty. My brother also graduated from here. I expected the education would be better, but the level is not very high (S14).

I came to this university because I thought I would improve myself better. It did not satisfy my expectations (S19).

Another reason that affects students to transfer is financial conditions. Especially students whose families lived in this city stated that they transferred for a more comfortable university life financially.

I am from Diyarbakır. Conservatoire is my second university. I have completed the department of business administration before. Since I studied in the department of business administration far away from my family, I would have had a lot of financial difficulties if I did not transfer (S1).

My family lives here and our financial situation is not very good. I transferred to live and study more comfortably (S12).

The fact that the university to which the students transferred was located in a big city and that the living conditions in the city were better than in the university to which they transferred were among the reasons for transferring.

Living conditions were quite bad in the city I came from. There were big problems with accommodation and transportation (S18).

Diyarbakır is a big city. Therefore, the city is more lively and active. I did not want to spend my student life in a small city and a narrow area (S9).

Some students stated that they transferred because of some health problems they had.

I have a heart disease. The doctor I was treated by is here and staying in the dormitory at the university I came from was affecting my health badly (S2).

The city where the university I came from was very cold. I have a heart rhythm disorder and my body hypothermia drops very fast, so I could not adapt to the conditions there (S13).

Problems experienced

It was revealed that the problems experienced by horizontal transfer students were mostly related to courses and course exemptions, which was followed by the sub-themes of university, academician and accommodation in order.

The biggest problem experienced by the students regarding course exemptions was that they had to take the courses again due to the incompatibility of the course hours at the university they came from.

I have to take a few lessons from the first year. For example, the violin lesson was 4 hours at the university I came from, but since it was six hours here, I had to take the lesson again. Also, at the university I came from, the courses are in different classes than here. Most of the courses I took there are in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades here (S4).

The biggest problem I had after horizontal transfer was that although the courses were the same, I had to take four or five courses from the bottom because the course credits did not match (S19).

I retok the courses because the credits did not match. Therefore, I could not take the courses I was supposed to take in my current class and similarly, I had exemption problems in most courses (S23).

The most common problems were that students had to change instruments, they could not take the courses because the courses overlapped, and they had to take the course again because the course names were the same but the content was different. Some student opinions on this subject are as follows;

My instrument was cello, but I had to switch to guitar because there was no cello teacher here (S20).

My credits are enough, but I can't take lower courses because the courses overlap. The course programme is a big problem. There are too many empty breaks. I have six courses when I should be able to take nine courses (S13).

I was not allowed to take some courses here, even though I had successfully completed them at my previous university, because the content did not match (S12).

In addition to the problems they had with exemptions and courses, horizontal transfer students also stated that they had some problems with academicians, the university and accommodation.

I had problems at the Conservatory student affairs office. My horizontal transfer was first accepted and then they were surprised how I was accepted. Also, since I was a transfer student, the lecturers were prejudiced against me (S11).

The most important problem I had was accommodation. Since I was a horizontal transfer student, I could not apply for a dormitory at the beginning and had to wait for additional applications. I stayed as a guest at a friend's house for 10 days until the dormitory was available (S7).

Because I was a horizontal transfer student, the lecturers were prejudiced and behaved badly. When there was a problem, I was snapped at "you shouldn't have come; why did you come?". While I was already having problems adapting to the university, such behaviour of the lecturers caused my motivation to decrease (S18).

Due to all these problems, most of the students stated that they extended their studies (S1, S3, S6, S7, S9, S10, S12, S14, S15, S16, S18, S19, S23, S24). Some students stated that they even thought about returning. However, they were not accepted to return to the university they came from or they could not return because the results of the horizontal transfer were announced late and the return period ended in the meantime (S3, S9, S12, S19).

When the students' suggestions regarding the horizontal transfer process and its implementation were examined, it was stated that only programmes with the same names and course curricula should be transferred, and especially for music departments, horizontal transfers should be reorganised. In addition, it is seen that there are many suggestions, such as academicians should be more understanding of course exemptions, students should be informed before the transfer, transfer students should be flexible in their absenteeism and problems in the course programmes should be eliminated (Table 3).

Table 3.

Suggestions for the horizontal transfer process

Suggestions	Students who expressed opinions	f
Course programmes should be arranged.	S1,S5	2
Counsellors should be more interested.	S1	1
The lecturers in the horizontal transfer board should be the same or should be treated equally in terms of exemption.	S2,S3,S14	3
Horizontal transfer students should be treated more flexibly in terms of absenteeism.	S4,S14,S24	3
Students should be informed before horizontal transfer.	S6,S9,S25	3
Right of return should be recognised for repentant students	S9	1
Horizontal transfers should be made between the same departments and these departments should have common curricula.	S9,S11,S16,S19,S20	5
Lecturers should be more understanding of exemptions.	S10,S14,S23,S24	4
Horizontal transfers should be reorganised and standardized, especially for music departments.	S12,S13,S17,S18,S21	5

Conclusion and Discussion

In this study, the reasons for students to transfer were investigated and the problems they experienced during and after the transfer process were examined. In addition, the students' thoughts on how to implement transfer applications more effectively and efficiently were included at the end of the study. The reasons for transferring may be due to individual preferences, but may also arise from mandatory circumstances (economic, family, etc.) beyond the individual's own initiative. Altbach (1998) presented a pull-push model to explain the reasons that push students to transfer. He argued that unfavourable conditions in students' own countries push them to transfer, whereas attractive opportunities in the destination country attract students to transfer. Kolster (2010), on the other hand, argues that pushes towards particular countries, cities or institutions are often the result of personal effort, but can also be caused by structural or environmental factors, such as inadequate access to higher education institutions, low quality higher education, and exorbitant costs of higher education. He stated that pull factors are generally related to the academic attractiveness of a particular location for a student. The factors affecting student mobility are multidimensional and it is seen that these factors vary according to different factors such as person, environment and time (Kumral & Şahin, 2017). In this context, the factors that cause students to transfer horizontally were primarily discussed in the research.

The studies on horizontal transfer, which is the focus of the research, are limited in our country. These studies show that horizontal transfers are mostly from east to west, and arise from the need to live in a better city with a high level of welfare or to receive a better education. Çınar (2016) stated that the reasons why students transfer to other universities are negative academics, the influence of the city, the teaching process, and the influence of the university. Another striking factor is the desire to receive education with a family (Çınar, 2016; Doğan & Oktay, 2020; Yaralı Akkaya, 2020). Similarly, in this study, horizontal transfers between music programs are grouped under many items such as financial, family, university, city influence, professional and health problems.

In the study, the most prominent reason for students to transfer is the family factor. Türk (2019) stated that the distance from the parental residence to higher education institutions is a factor that affects the likelihood of participation and the outcomes of students. As a result of the study conducted by Yaralı Akkaya (2020), the most important factor among the reasons for transferring is family. Holdsworth (2009) stated that students choose to stay with their families to support their families both emotionally and financially as a result of the interviews he conducted. In this study, factors such as having a more comfortable education process financially, being with the family, and having to share responsibilities because they are the eldest child of the house are the reasons that push students to transfer. In Turkish society, family is given great importance and there are strong family ties. This situation is experienced more intensely in the East/Southeast Region. For this reason, students may want to study in the city where their families are located. However, studying at a university while living with a family provides some vital

advantages for students, but it can also have disadvantages. Many advantages can be mentioned such as eliminating housing and food problems while living with a family, the opportunity to live a more comfortable student life economically, and emotional support. However, sometimes, the opposite of this, the need to share the financial and moral responsibility of the family may force students to transfer.

Another important factor that stands out in the study is the university effect. Ciriaci (2013) stated that students are impressed by high-quality universities and that they are more likely to leave the city they study in to get a good education. Faggian, et al., (2007) stated that people who have a quality higher education institution in their city or region are less likely to go elsewhere for higher education. On the other hand, the fact that the city they arrive in is more attractive and developed in terms of social activities (cinema, theater, sports, cafes and restaurants) also greatly affects horizontal transfers. Students want to get a good education and also want to travel and have fun, and they want to avoid being stuck in a small city. In the literature, many studies have addressed the geographical mobility of students in order to access quality higher education and live in cities with a high level of development. (Baryla & Dotterweich, 2001; Beine et al., 2014; Cao et al., 2015; Ciriaci, 2013; Çınar, 2016; Pineda et al., 2008; Staniscia, 2012; Türk, 2019; Wells, 2017).

However, horizontal transfers that are realized as a result of all these demands and needs mentioned above may also bring many problems. The most important of these is curriculum problems. Conservatories and Fine Arts Faculties in Türkiye do not have a common curriculum program. Except for some courses that are necessary and compulsory for all other departments (History, English, Turkish Language), the curriculum programs in music departments differ. It can be said that the courses are determined by the departments (Turkish Folk Music, Turkish Folk Dances, Voice Education, etc.) that music programs include or the number or expertise of the academicians present. In music programs, courses such as hearing, solfege, and instrument are the basic courses in these departments. However, for example, if there is no violin teacher in the department, violin is not included in the program as a course in the course content. For this reason, students who transfer horizontally are forced to change instruments. Such a situation was also encountered as a result of the research. As a result, the biggest problem encountered with university transfer is a new curriculum program and course exemptions. Students have to retake courses due to many reasons such as different courses or hours they took at their previous universities, overlapping courses, exemption problems. This also causes students to extend their semester or year. In this direction, it can be said that the basis of the problems experienced in horizontal transfers is the difference in the curriculum programs, even if the transferred departments are the same. Sal-İlhan & Külekçi (2022) draw attention to the fact that there are curriculum problems in Erasmus mobility and these incompatibilities should be eliminated. Oliinyk et al. (2020) mentioned the curriculum problems and lack of educational standards between Ukraine and European states in international student mobility. They mentioned that the courses can be individualised by arranging them

according to the students. Wen et al. (2018) stated that there are areas for improvement in student mobility regarding limited student-faculty interaction and especially student experience.

Apart from curriculum problems, other problems experienced by students during the horizontal transfer process are related to the university, academicians and accommodation. It is important for universities to manage the horizontal transfer process meticulously. In particular, indifferent and inconsistent behaviors and issues regarding courses and course exemptions make it difficult for students. In addition, universities are inadequate in informing students about horizontal transfer. Again, the indifference of academicians and their negative behavior (seeing others as inadequate, behaving badly, discriminating...) towards students who come with horizontal transfer are reflected on students. Problems regarding accommodation have arisen due to students having to wait for additional applications to stay in dormitories and having difficulty finding housing. Due to all these problems and disruptions, students have made suggestions that the horizontal transfer process and its operation should be reorganized and brought to a certain standard.

As a result, this study revealed that the most important reasons for students to horizontal transfer are to be with their families and to get a better education. However, university or programme differences force them to cope with various problems in this process. The findings suggest that the problems reported here have even pushed students to think of returning to the university they came from. Horizontal transfers, especially for programs that include different departments and main branches of art, such as music, and are based on practice, should be rearranged and implemented within the framework of certain rules in order to both prevent students from being victimized and to eliminate inconsistencies.

Although there are studies in the literature investigating the reasons for horizontal transfer, no local or foreign source has been found that directly examines the problems experienced. In addition, it has been observed that horizontal transfers between music programs have not been mentioned at all. The issue of horizontal transfer is also an area that should be evaluated and studied as a problem in terms of music programs in Türkiye. Because music departments are programs with different aims and contents, especially the names of the faculties. In addition, the fact that applied courses are in the majority causes individual differences to occur more. Especially in music faculties, in horizontal transfer processes, whether the universities are in rural or developed regions, course contents, the number of academicians and many other factors should be taken into consideration. All these factors are interconnected like the links of a chain. In universities located in short regions, the number of academicians may be insufficient, which requires the courses to be organized accordingly. Or, since students have less infrastructure, they have difficulty in the courses at the university they come from. Thus, students face many difficulties and lose years while transferring with the desire to live and study in better conditions. In this direction, the research is important in terms of

revealing the reasons for horizontal transfer between music programs and the problems experienced. At the same time, this study sheds light on future studies in order to solve all these problems and to carry out the horizontal transition process in a healthier way.

Recommendations

The family factor has been of great importance in the reasons for horizontal transfer. Students have mostly transferred to the university in the city where their family is located due to the need to live more comfortably financially and take responsibility. This situation has brought us face to face with the fact that students face economic difficulties while studying in other cities. Supporting students studying away from their families, providing scholarships or work opportunities by universities can offer a solution for students who have to transfer due to economic difficulties.

The research shows that students come from universities in small cities and they want to study at a higher quality university. It can be said that the fact that universities are opened even in small cities in Türkiye unfortunately affects the quality of education negatively. Therefore, a quality higher education policy should be targeted in all universities. Thus, in cases where horizontal transfers are made mandatory, the problems experienced by students in the universities they go to can be reduced by ensuring equality in education. In order to ensure equality in education in music programs, studies should be carried out on reducing the number of departments opened in music programs (Voice Education, Turkish Music, Folk Music, Folk Dances...), creating a common curriculum or increasing the current academic staff.

Universities and student affairs departments have important responsibilities, especially for programs that include different departments and main branches of art such as music and are based on practice. In order for students to carry out the horizontal transfer process more healthily in the current situation, the student affairs departments of universities should be more interested and provide more information to students who will transfer. A large portion of students lose a year after transferring. The biggest reason for this is that course exemptions are not accepted. When approving student transfers, horizontal transfer boards should also consider possible problems related to courses and course hours. In order to prevent problems arising from differences in student levels, an additional talent exam can be considered during the transfer process.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Bu araştırmada, müzik programları arasında gerçekleştirilen yatay geçişler ele alınarak, bu geçişlerin hangi üniversite ve programlar arasında yapıldığını, yatay geçiş yapma nedenlerini ve yatay geçiş sürecinde yaşanan sorunları ortaya çıkarmak amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmada nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden açıklayıcı/tanımlayıcı durum çalışması deseni kullanılmıştır. Çalışma grubunun belirlenmesinde, amaçsal örnekleme yöntemlerinden ölçüt örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Katılımcıların belirlenmesindeki ölçütler; öğrencilerin 2022-2023 eğitim öğretim yılı içerisinde öğrenim görüyor olması ve Dicle Üniversitesi Devlet Konservatuarına yatay geçişle gelmiş olmalarıdır. Bu doğrultuda araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, Dicle Üniversitesi Devlet Konservatuarına yatay geçişle gelen ve halen öğrenimini sürdürmekte olan 25 öğrenci oluşturmaktadır.

Araştırmanın verileri başka üniversitelerden yatay geçiş yaparak Dicle Üniversitesi Devlet Konservatuarına gelen müzik bölümü öğrencileri ile yapılan yüz yüze görüşmelerden elde edilmiştir. Görüşmeler araştırmacı tarafından hazırlanan yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışmada kullanılmak üzere oluşturulan görüşme formu için öncelikle taslak bir form oluşturulmuştur. Hazırlanan taslak form alanda uzman üç eğitimciye sunulmuş, görüş ve önerileri doğrultusunda gerekli düzeltmeler yapılmıştır. Görüşme soruları hazırlandıktan sonra araştırmaya dahil edilmeyen iki katılımcı ile pilot bir çalışma gerçekleştirilmiştir. Yapılan görüşme sonrasında anlaşılmayan veya benzer cevaplar alınan sorular yeniden düzenlenmiştir.

Araştırma verilerinin analizinde içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Öncelikle görüşmelerden elde edilen ses kayıtları bilgisayar ortamına yazılı olarak aktarılmıştır. Yazıya dökülen veriler kodlanarak alt temalar oluşturulmuştur. Katılımcılar Ö1, Ö2, Ö3... biçiminde numaralandırılmıştır. Analizin güvenilirliği için başka bir uzmanın daha desteğine başvurulmuştur. Son olarak araştırmanın her bir temasını oluşturan sorular tablolar halinde sunulmuş, tablolarda yer alan verilerin desteklenmesi ve güvenirliliğin artırılması amacıyla ise kimi zaman doğrudan aktarmalara yer verilmiştir.

Araştırmanın amacı doğrultusunda cevap aranan soruların ilki yatay geçiş yapan öğrencilerin hangi üniversite ve programdan geldiğidir. Bu doğrultuda öğrencilerin; Şırnak Üniversitesi, Kars Kafkas Üniversitesi, Ardahan Üniversitesi, Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi, Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa Üniversitesi, Batman Üniversitesi, Konya Selçuk Üniversitesi, Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam Üniversitesi ve Elazığ Fırat Üniversitesi olduğu görülmüştür. Bunun yanı sıra öğrencilerin sadece 8'i Türk müziği bölümünden Türk müziği bölümüne ve 6'sı Türk halk oyunları bölümünden yine Türk halk oyunları bölümüne geçiş yapmıştır. Diğer öğrencilerin geldikleri müzik programları ile yatay geçiş yaptıkları müzik programlarının birbirinden farklı olduğu görülmüştür.

Araştırmanın ikinci sorusu olan, öğrencilerin yatay geçiş yapma nedenleri incelendiğinde, maddi, ailevi, üniversite, şehir etkisi, mesleki ve sağlık olmak üzere altı alt tema altında toplandığı görülmüştür. Öğrenciler ailelerinin bu şehirde yaşaması

nedeniyle maddi olarak daha rahat bir üniversite hayatı için yatay geçiş yaptıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Ailevi nedenler içerisinde; ailelerinin yanında olmak, onlara maddi ve manevi anlamda destek olmak ve aile bütünlüğünü sağlayabilmek bulunmaktadır. Daha iyi bir eğitim alma beklentisi ve daha iyi akademisyen kadrosu öğrencilerin bu üniversiteye geçiş yapmalarına neden olmuştur. Yatay geçiş yapılan üniversitenin büyük bir şehirde olması ve şehrin yaşam koşullarının geçiş yapılan üniversiteye göre daha iyi olması geçiş yapma nedenleri arasında yer almıştır. Bazı öğrenciler ise yaşadıkları bazı sağlık sorunları nedeniyle geçiş yaptıklarını ifade etmişlerdir.

Araştırmanın bir diğer sorusu yatay geçiş yapan öğrencilerin yaşadığı problemlerin neler olduğudur. Yatay geçiş yapan öğrencilerin yaşadıkları sorunların daha çok dersler ve ders muafiyetleri ile ilgili olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bunu sırasıyla üniversite, akademisyen ve barınma alt temaları izlemektedir. Öğrencilerin ders muafiyetleri ile ilgili yaşadığı en büyük sorun geldikleri üniversitedeki ders saatlerinin uyuşmaması nedeniyle dersleri tekrar almak zorunda kalmaları olmuştur. Yatay geçiş sonrası çalgı değiştirmek zorunda kalmak, dersler çakıştığı için dersleri alamamak ve ders isimlerinin aynı ama içeriğinin farklı olması nedeniyle dersi tekrar almak da en fazla yaşanan sorunlar arasındadır. Yatay geçiş öğrencileri, muafiyetlerle ve derslerle ilgili yaşadıkları problemler dışında akademisyen, üniversite ve barınma ile ilgili de problemler yaşadıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Bütün bu yaşanan problemler nedeniyle de çoğu öğrenci yıl uzattığını belirtmiştir

Araştırmada son olarak yatay geçiş yapan öğrencilerin yatay geçişlerin uygulanması ve işleyişine yönelik görüş ve önerilerine yer verilmiştir. Öğrenciler; yatay geçişlerin özellikle müzik bölümleri için yeniden düzenlenmesi ve bir standarda oturtulması, yatay geçişlerin aynı bölümler arasında yapılması ve bu bölümlerin ortak müfredatlarının olması, yatay geçiş yaptıktan sonra pişman olan öğrenciler için geri dönme hakkı tanınması, yatay geçiş öncesi öğrencilere bilgilendirme yapılması, yatay geçiş yapan öğrencilerin devamsızlığı konusunda daha esnek davranılması, yatay geçiş kurulunda yer alan hocaların muafiyet konusunda eşit davranması, danışman hocaların daha ilgili olması ve ders programlarının düzenlenmesi gerektiği gibi görüş ve önerilerde bulunmuştur.

Sonuç olarak, yatay geçiş nedenlerinde aile faktörünün önemi büyük olmuştur. Öğrenciler çoğunlukla finansal açıdan daha rahat yaşama ve sorumluluk alma gerekliliğinden ailelerinin bulunduğu şehirdeki üniversiteye geçiş yapmışlardır. Bu durum bizi öğrencilerin başka şehirlerde okurken ekonomik zorluklarla karşılaştığı gerçeğiyle yüzleştirmiştir. Ailelerinden uzakta öğrenim gören öğrencilerin, üniversiteler tarafından desteklenmesi, burs veya çalışma imkânı sağlanması, ekonomik zorluklar yüzünden geçiş yapmak zorunda kalan öğrencilere bir çözüm yolu sunabilir.

Araştırmada öğrencilerin küçük şehirlerdeki üniversitelerden geldikleri görülmektedir ve öğrenciler daha kaliteli bir üniversitede öğrenim görmek istemektedir. Türkiye’de küçük şehirlerde bile üniversitelerin açılmış olmasının maalesef ki eğitimdeki kaliteyi olumsuz yönde etkilediği söylenebilir. Bu nedenle üniversitelerin tümünde kaliteli bir

yükseköğretim politikası hedeflenmelidir. Böylece yatay geçişlerin zorunlu yapıldığı durumlarda öğrencilerin gittikleri üniversitede yaşadıkları sorunlar, eğitimde eşitliğin sağlanması ile azalabilir. Müzik programları özelinde eğitim eşitliğinin sağlanabilmesi için müzik programlarında açılan bölümlerin azaltılması (Ses eğitimi, Türk Müziği, Halk Müziği, Halk Oyunları....), ortak bir müfredat oluşturulması veya mevcut akademisyen kadrosunun artırılması konusunda çalışmalar yapılmalıdır.

Özellikle müzik alanı gibi farklı bölüm ve ana sanat dallarını içeren ve uygulamaya dayalı programlar için üniversiteler ve öğrenci işleri birimlerine büyük görevler düşmektedir. Öğrencilerin yatay geçiş sürecini mevcut durumda daha sağlıklı bir biçimde yürütebilmeleri için üniversitelerin öğrenci işleri birimleri daha ilgili olmalı ve yatay geçiş yapacak öğrencilere daha fazla bilgi sağlamalıdır. Öğrencilerin büyük bir kısmı geçiş yaptıktan sonra sene kaybetmektedir. Bunun en büyük nedeni ise ders muafiyetlerinin kabul edilmemesidir. Yatay geçiş kurulları öğrenci geçişlerini onaylarken dersler ve ders saatleri ile ilgili yaşanabilecek sorunları da düşünmelidir. Öğrenci seviyelerinin farklılıklarından doğan sorunların önlenmesi için geçiş sürecinde ayrıca bir yetenek sınavı yapılması düşünülebilir.

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Exploring Faculty Digital Competencies in the Context of Online Course Delivery: An Analysis Based on DigCompEdu*

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Abstract

In the current era, the development of digital competencies among educators is of significant importance for the creation of a digital-age-compatible society and the assurance of its long-term sustainability. Given the pivotal role of higher education within innovation dissemination, the enhancement of digital competencies among academics and students may help facilitate societal digitalization via indirect impact. It is widely acknowledged that enhancing the digital competencies of academic staff represents a critical step in fostering digital transformation within higher education. The objective of this study is to examine the digital competencies of instructors in their utilization of instructional technologies in distance education. The study analyzed online courses and conducted interviews as an indicator of the digital competencies of instructors employed at Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University. Data on instructors' digital competencies and their technology usage within online courses were collected through interviews with volunteer participants using an interview form prepared based on the European Framework for Digital Competence of Educators (DigCompEdu) and course analyses using a prepared rubric. The interview data together with the course review results were found to be compatible in terms of the instructors' digital competencies.

Keywords: digital competence, open and distance learning, online courses, faculty members.

About the Article

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Introduction

The advent of digital technologies has brought about transformative shifts in learning and teaching environments, with notable increases in the durability of these changes. To consolidate progress and ensure sustainability, educational institutions must develop their capacity for innovation and review their institutional strategies to exploit digital technologies to their full potential. Digital technologies represent a primary driver behind the modernization of educational systems. This process has led to a notable increase in the importance of open and distance learning activities, particularly within higher education. Consequently, the utilization of digital technologies in learning and teaching activities is no longer confined to open and distance learning, but has also become a prominent feature in face-to-face courses. From these developments, it has become imperative for instructors to leverage digital technologies for their personal and professional development, and to exemplify the integration of technology in teaching and learning for their students. The current study focuses on faculty members' digital competence and their utilization of technology for teaching and learning within higher education.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency remote teaching protocols meant instructors at all levels of education had to suddenly move their courses to online platforms. This resulted in the implementation of procedures and activities that would normally have required a long preparatory period, but instead happened with little or no preparation. Despite the extraordinary efforts of institutions to continue teaching and learning through online education, significant challenges were experienced practically worldwide, with Turkey no exception, in terms of resource management, Internet access and device availability, logistics, as well as instructional processes (TEDMEM, 2020). Challenges regarding instructors' lack of knowledge and experience in online teaching became evident due to limited or lacking institutional support, with various solutions used to address these issues. However, the caliber of the support and of the online courses was rarely questioned during the emergency period itself. Nevertheless, educational institutions have a responsibility to ensure the quality of their online education through investing in the professional development of their teaching faculty. During the pandemic, many educational institutions attempted to plan and rapidly implement training and informative activities to enable faculty members to teach online. However, preparing instructors for new roles to teach online with new knowledge and skills is only really possible through well-planned, purposefully designed, coordinated, and unique professional development programs (Kocatürk-Kapucu & Adnan, 2018). Hence, educational institutions are provided with several baseline documentation for guidance by expert institutions such as the European Commission's Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027 and the European Strategy for Universities (European Commission, 2022) regarding upskilling activities to promote the efficient use of digital technologies within educational environments.

Digital technologies used by instructors in the classroom are considered indicative of their digital competence (Artun & Günüş, 2016; Keleş & Turan-Güntep, 2018; Kır,

2020; Orhan & Tekin, 2019; Ruiz-Cabezas et al., 2020). The current study aims to reveal faculty members' digital competences through analysis of their online courses and in-depth interviewing.

Digital Competence: A Key Competence for Lifelong Learning

Competence is defined as "proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and professional and personal development in terms of responsibility and autonomy" (European Union, 2008). Within the framework of lifelong learning, the European Union identified "key competences" for all member state citizens in 2006 for lifelong learning and adaptation to societal changes in a volatile era. The Recommendation of the European Parliament and European Council (December 18, 2006) set out eight key competences for lifelong learning as essential for personal growth, participation in civic life, social inclusion, and employment (European Union, 2006):

- 1) Communication in the mother tongue;
- 2) Communication in foreign languages;
- 3) Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;
- 4) Digital competence;
- 5) Learning to learn;
- 6) Social and civic competences;
- 7) Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; and
- 8) Cultural awareness and expression.

Digital competence refers to the safe, critical, and creative use of information and communication technologies in personal and professional contexts. This skillset aims to empower students' competence in performing necessary tasks through problem solving, communication, information management, collaboration, creativity, and content sharing. Knowledge should be structured and information-communication technologies and digital media should be used in an effective, efficient, appropriate, critical, creative, autonomous, flexible, ethical, and reflective style at the appropriate time to promote participation, learning, socialization, and knowledge dominance (Ferrari, 2012). In today's society, digital competence is considered both a necessity and a right for all citizens and is supported by basic skills such as using computers to access, assess, store, produce, and exchange information, and to communicate within collaborative networks via the Internet (European Union, 2006; Ferrari, 2012). Although there are ambiguities regarding the practical meaning of digital competence, the common view is that competence can be analyzed and classified based on knowledge, skills, and attitudes; and several studies have been conducted for different contexts (e.g., Cheetham & Chivers, 2005; Dias-Trindade & Albuquerque, 2022; Kampylis et al., 2015; Mora-Cantallos et al., 2022).

Various digital competence frameworks have been developed to assess competence development, provide common benchmarks for comparison, analyze conditions, and

evaluate the digital competence development of citizens, students, and educators (Mattar et al., 2022; Velandia-Rodriguez et al., 2022). These include the ISTE Standards, Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK), UNESCO's Information and Communication Technologies Competence Framework for Teachers, the European Framework for Digitally Competent Educational Organisations, the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp), and the European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators (DigCompEdu).

Cabero-Almenara, et al. (2020) assessed various frameworks, including DigCompEdu, the ISTE Standards, and UNESCO's ICT Competency Framework. Involving experts and higher education lecturers, they revealed DigCompEdu as the preferred choice for enhancing educators' digital competence. Tondeur et al. (2023) recently introduced a novel framework (HeDiCom: Digital Competence Framework for Higher Education) developed through comprehensive analysis of existing frameworks to guide instructor digital competence.

Digital Competence in Higher Education

Higher education institutions are crucial to preparing students for today's 21st-century demands by developing the necessary knowledge and skills. To fulfill this responsibility, institutions should effectively integrate current information and communication technologies into both administrative and instructional practices within a well-structured framework (Nişancı, 2005). Today's higher education instructors need to be skilled in using digital technologies, including communicating with students and colleagues and incorporating digital tools into their teaching, as well as for self-improvement and improving educational quality (Duman, 2011). Digital competence helps enhance teaching quality and student skills (Tondeur et al., 2023), and is also crucial for guiding students' digital proficiency (Timur et al., 2014).

Expecting instructors to be digitally competent and excel in various other roles is unrealistic (e.g., competent subject area expert, successful researcher, active teacher) (Cleveland-Innes, 2013), but an awareness of online teaching roles and technology support is nevertheless important. Hence, every instructor should integrate digital skills into their teaching (Cleveland-Innes, 2013) and should prioritize modern instructional technologies for knowledge-based activities (Bates, 2015) and embed digital skills into their expertise. Grammens et al. (2022) summarized instructor competences for synchronous online learning and highlighted the multifaceted benefits of integrating digital technologies in assessing students' readiness, identifying interests, and enhancing motivation. Incorporating digital tools in materials design and timely feedback through digital tools not only addresses individual needs, but also boosts learning outcomes and motivation (Alvarez-Valdivia et al., 2009). Elevating online instructors' proficiency improves the overall efficiency of online learning environments.

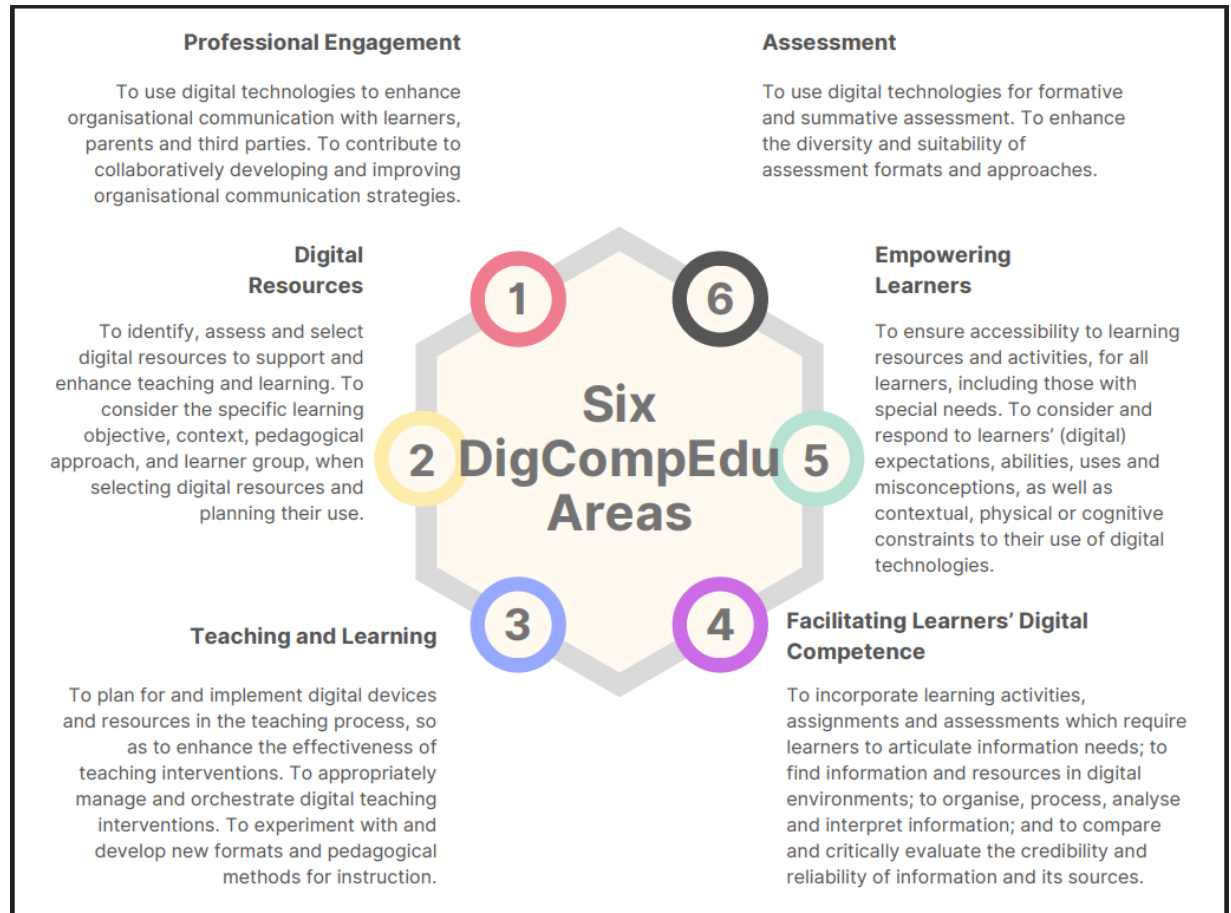
European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators

The European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators (DigCompEdu) is a scientific framework developed in the context of research on Learning and Skills for the Digital Age. Launched in 2005 by the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, the aim was to provide evidence-based policy support on the role of digital technologies in education and training processes, and to specify the digital competences required for employment, personal development, and social inclusion (Redecker & Punie, 2017). DigCompEdu responds to the growing awareness among many European states that educators need a set of digital competences specific to their profession in order to realize the potential of digital technologies to develop and innovate.

DigCompEdu's six core competence areas focus on different aspects of educators' professional activities (Figure 1).

Figure 1.

Definitions of DigCompEdu Core Competency Areas (illustrated from Redecker & Punie, 2017)



DigCompEdu sets out 22 competences organized in six areas and with six competence levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2) and addresses educators at all levels, from preschool to vocational, higher, and adult education. The framework's focus is to support and encourage educators to utilize digital tools to improve and innovate education (Figure 2).

DigCompEdu's six core competence areas and 22 sub-competences detail the skills that educators need in order to promote effective, inclusive, and innovative learning strategies using digital tools. Through analyzing these details, teaching materials and assessment tools can be developed that align with the framework. Figure 3 details competence level descriptions for the DigCompEdu framework (Redecker & Punie, 2017).

Figure 2.

DigCompEdu's Core and Sub-Competences (Redecker & Punie, 2017)

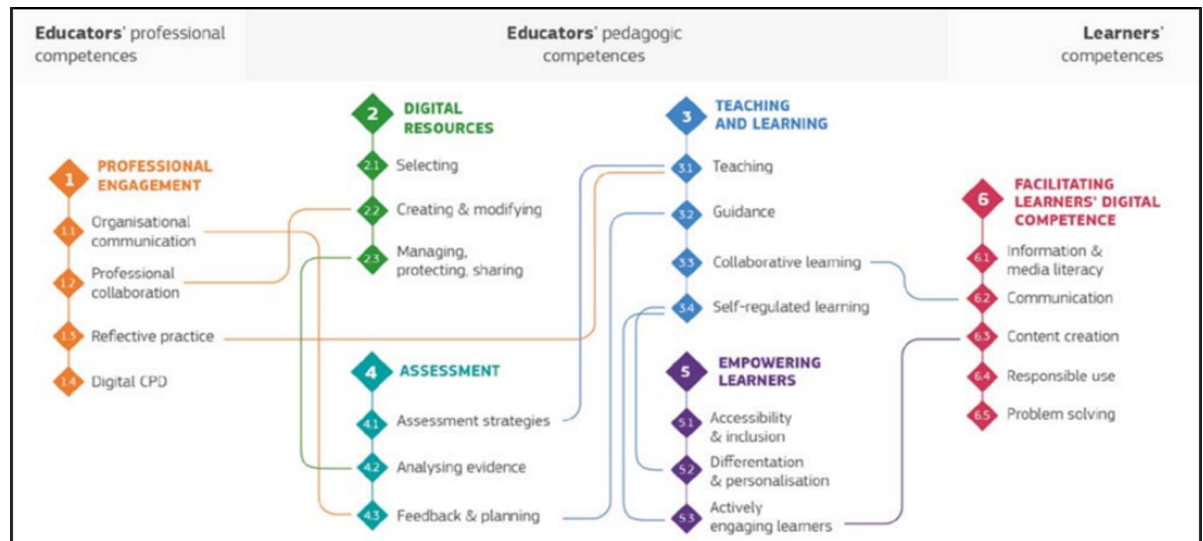
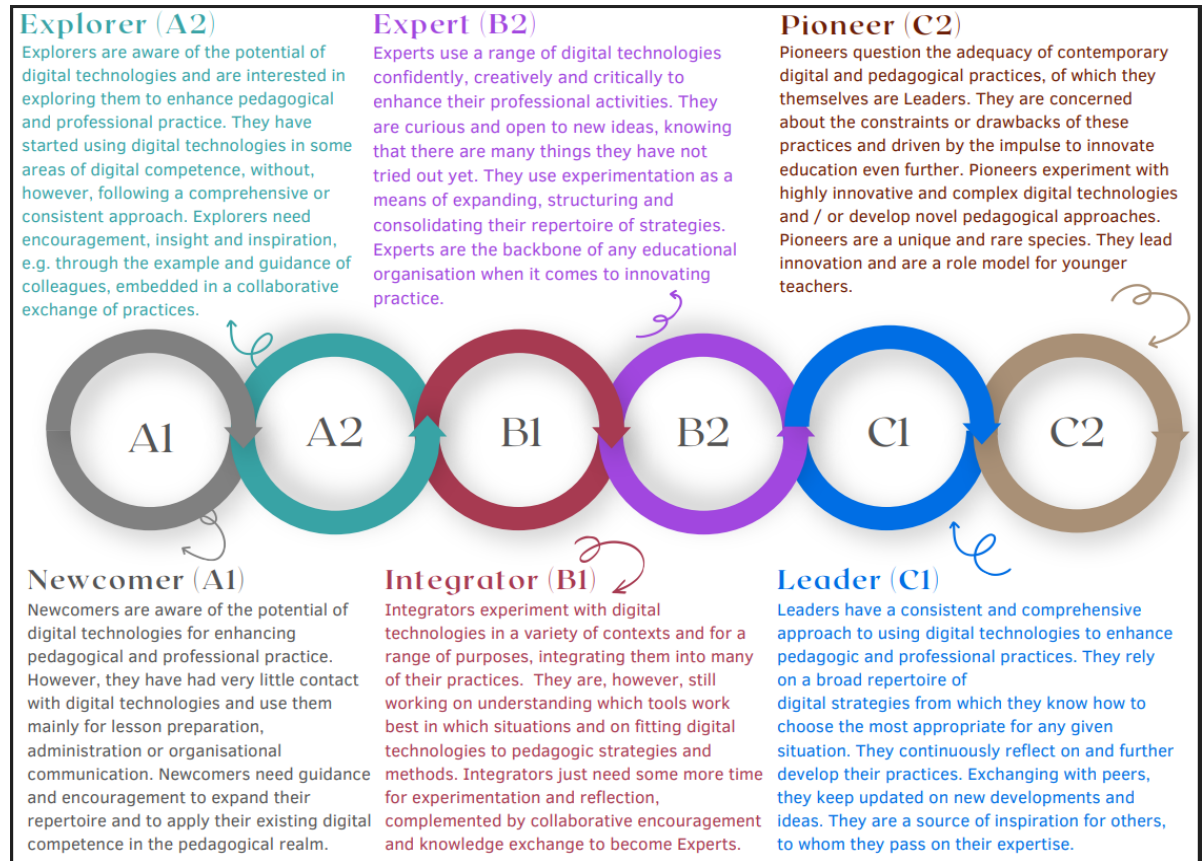


Figure 3.

Descriptions of Digital Competence Levels



Quantitative studies aimed at determining instructors' digital competence levels may use DigCompEdu or similar frameworks, yet it would be difficult to obtain complete and accurate results due to the indirect measurement process and the self-reflection of participants' perceptions. From this starting point, the current qualitative study investigates the digital competence level of faculty members in relation to their actual technology usage within online courses. Taking the DigCompEdu framework as the determinant of digital competence, the study seeks to understand faculty members' digital competence based on learning management system data as well as narratives of experiences through in-depth interviews.

Method

Research Design

The study was conducted within a project focused on improving and evaluating faculty members' digital skills, funded by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK; Project 122K043), and consisted of four main stages (see Table 1).

Table 1.

Project stages

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Development and administration of the Digital Competence Scale for Teaching Staff to assess digital skills	Participant classification based on digital competency levels	Interviews conducted with voluntary participants	Analysis of online courses offered by interviewees

This paper presents results of stages three and four, and was designed as a case study. Case studies delve into present phenomena within their real-life contexts (Yin, 2003), aiming to unveil a final product from field-oriented research (Merriam, 2018). According to Creswell (2003), case studies enable the acquisition of profound insights about subjects, often exploring their outermost edges, through in-depth analysis of a limited study cohort.

The current study was two-phased, with participating faculty interviewed face-to-face or online to uncover their perceived integration of technology into online courses, linked to their digital competences. Then, document analysis of the participants' online courses offered via the institutional learning management system aimed to ascertain their actual technology utilization. Document analysis is a systematic method involving the assessment of both printed and electronic materials (Corbin & Strauss, 2012). Combined with other qualitative data collection methods (e.g., interview, observation), it bolsters research validity through triangulation (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the interview content, the current study meticulously examined how instructors employed instructional technologies within their online courses. This was facilitated by carefully devised rubrics, enabling methodical and rigorous data evaluation.

Study Group

The study's participants were faculty members of Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University (MSKU) in Turkey. Purposive random sampling technique was used, wherein a small number of analytical units were randomly selected from a larger population.

Faculty members teaching online courses were emailed, and 50 instructors volunteered to take part. From the pool of 50 instructors, an initial study group of 10 participants was formed to ensure optimal diversity considering their study field, academic title, and digital competence level. In selecting interview participants, particular attention was given to including two representatives from each digital competence tier (see Table 2).

Table 2.

Distribution of Interviewed Participants

Participant Code	Digital Competence Score	Digital Competence Level	Title	Discipline
P1	67	A2 Explorer	Assistant Prof.	Social Sciences
P2	66	A2 Explorer	Associate Prof.	Health Sciences
P3	79	B1 Integrator	Associate Prof.	Natural Sciences
P4	95	B1 Integrator	Professor	Social Sciences
P5	95	B2 Expert	Associate Prof.	Education
P6	108	B2 Expert	Associate Prof.	Education
P7	129	C1 Leader	Assistant Prof.	Education
P8	116	C1 Leader	Professor	Natural Sciences
P9	132	C2 Pioneer	Instructor	Social Sciences
P10	130	C2 Pioneer	Instructor	Education

Interviews were conducted to assess participants' technology integration in their online classes as an indicator of their digital competence. Following 10 interviews, a preliminary data review revealed that data saturation had been attained, with no further interviews deemed necessary.

Data Collection

Interviews

An interview questionnaire was formulated based on the six competence areas outlined within the DigCompEdu framework. Primary and follow-up questions were devised to reveal the participants' perceived digital proficiency levels and their technology usage within online instructional settings. The developed questions were subjected to expert review, and necessary refinements were applied based on their feedback.

Interviews can encompass various query types (e.g., experiential or behavioral), inquiries about concepts or values, explorations of emotions, knowledge, sensory perceptions, historical context, and demographic attributes (Patton, 2014). This study used queries pertaining to experiences, concepts, and emotions (see Table 3).

Table 3.

Interview Questions, Sample Probes, and Corresponding Competences

Questions	Competence
Do you use digital technologies to design, plan, and implement instruction at different stages of the teaching and learning process?	Teaching & Learning
Do you use digital technologies to promote collaborative learning? If so, which?	
What do you consider in the selection and use of digital resources?	Digital Resources
How do you select your digital resources?	
Do you use digital technologies within online classes to ensure students' active participation in the learning process?	Empowering Learners
Do you use digital technologies to develop your students' scientific inquiry and problem-solving skills and to foster active participation and creativity? If so, how?	
Do you include digital technologies within online classes to develop your students' digital literacy?	Facilitating Learners' Digital Competence
Do you help your students solve problems encountered while using digital technologies? If so, how?	
Do you use digital technologies for more contemporary and robust assessment within online classes?	Assessment
Which digital technologies do you use for assessment?	
How do you use digital technologies in your professional life?	Professional Engagement
Do you use digital technologies to contribute to your professional development? If so, how?	

Prior to data collection, the participants were informed about the study, provided contact details for queries, and assured that their involvement was voluntary with optional withdrawal throughout. Interviews lasted up to 30 minutes, were scheduled when mutually convenient and were mostly held online due to the pandemic. Questions were shared in advance via email.

During the interviews, demographic information was first collected, followed by interview questions and probes. Consent was obtained for scientific use of their responses, with anonymity ensured (i.e., coded names; "Participant n"). Audiovisual recordings were used for verbatim transcription; starting the same day to avoid data loss. Dialect variations were ignored, and participant statements were quoted directly, with minor specified adjustments.

Online Course Assessment Rubric

Assessing instructors' digital competences typically leans towards qualitative inquiry. Rubrics with scores and ratings can enhance comparability when assessing behaviors

indicative of digital proficiency (Taddeo et al., 2016). The current study employed a rubric to evaluate technology integration within online courses (adapted from Kocatürk-Kapucu & Adnan, 2018). The rubric scored technology use and digital competence on a 3-point, Likert-type scale, with 15 items giving a total score of 15-45 points. Instructors were classified as “Advanced” (36-45 points), “Proficient” (26-35 points), or “Basic” (15-25 points).

Rubric reliability relies on consistency of evaluative scores when assessments are conducted at different times or by different people (Moskal & Leydens, 2000; Simon & Giroux, 2001; Tuncel, 2011). The current study’s rubric reliability had a .928 intra-group correlation coefficient, indicating desired reliability as close to 1 (Tuncel, 2011). A strong correlation between course analysis outcomes and different assessors’ ratings affirms a tool’s reliability. During rubric development, criteria were crafted for interpreting technology integration and digital proficiency assessment. For robust content validity, criteria strictly matched objectives, comprehensively covering all aspects and aligning to the evaluation purpose. The rubric underwent refinements and expert endorsement for validation.

Researcher’s Role

In qualitative studies, the researcher plays an active role in data collection, analysis, and interpretation to uncover insights within the study’s context. Researcher subjectivity and reflexivity are essential in shaping the process and deepening understanding. The two primary researchers’ extensive experience in distance education, e-learning, and online professional development significantly influenced the research concept. Their roles at the university’s Distance Education Centre, covering emergency remote teaching and prior methodologies, provided valuable insight into concerns about digital competency and technology use in distance education courses, facilitating the exploration of potential solutions.

Data Collection and Ethics

Data were collected from academic staff working at MSKU during the 2022-2023 autumn semester using data collection tools developed within the study. Prior to the data collection, approval was obtained from the university’s Human Research Ethics Committee.

Data Analysis

Data collected from interviews and course reviews were analyzed by content analysis. Content analysis can use predefined codes, those based on extracted concepts, or a combined approach. The current study inductively analyzed the qualitative data considering the six core DigCompEdu competencies as initial markers, forming themes and categories based on qualitative data codes. Both inductive and deductive angles were taken, aiming for higher-level conceptual insight (Bouma & Atkinson, 1995;

Creswell, 2003; Keller, 1995). During analysis, text sections were content-coded, leading to category and theme formation, guided by the literature.

For content analysis, collaboration with a curriculum and instruction expert allowed for independent and joint coding (with inter-coder consensus through code alignment following discussion and agreement) in consideration of the interpretative nature of qualitative analysis (Creswell, 2003). The analyzed interview data yielded six themes, 16 categories, and 79 codes for comprehensive representation and validity (Miles & Huberman, 2015), with each jointly agreed by the coders and aligned with the DigCompEdu competencies. Categories and codes were formed from responses linked to these competencies. One week after initial coding, re-coding was conducted to ensure reliability and guard against code leaks.

Reliability

The study prioritized credibility, transferability, consistency, confirmability, and diversification. Credibility was ensured through 30-minute in-depth interviews and additional questioning when necessary. Maximum diversity was achieved by including participants with varying digital competence, academic fields, and titles, using both interviews and course analysis. Expert evaluations guided methodology, data analysis, and adjustments, while data accuracy was validated through emailed summaries and participant confirmation. Transferability was supported by diverse sampling and detailed documentation, allowing readers to assess the findings' applicability. Consistency was ensured through expert oversight in data collection and analysis. Confirmability was demonstrated by transparent processes, participant feedback, and expert review to maintain objectivity.

Findings

Findings From Interviews

The coding plan is based on the DigCompEdu framework. Analysis indicated 79 codes classified under 16 categories within DigCompEdu's six competency areas.

Learning and Teaching

This theme revealed categories of "virtual classroom system," "learning management system," "learning and teaching activities," and "feedback" (see Table 4).

Table 4.

Code List for Learning and Teaching Theme

Theme	Category	Codes
Learning & Teaching	Virtual Classroom System	Adobe Connect Zoom Google Meet
	Learning Management System	Learning Management System (dys.mu.edu.tr) Canvas Google Class Edmodo
	Learning & Teaching Activities	Collaborative learning activities Interactive whiteboard/graphic tablet use Discussion forums Homework/projects Quizzes
	Feedback	Online feedback Video feedback Individualized feedback Task feedback/correction

Instructors expressed learning and teaching digital competences as using digital tools and applications when teaching, enriching their courses using digital technologies, and giving feedback. Frequently cited codes within this theme included learning management systems and virtual classroom systems for distance education courses.

"I share topics with students on applications such as Coursera, Khan Academy, and YouTube related to the subject I'm teaching and suggest they watch them. I share links via our LMS and data online from institutions such as UNWTO, TUIK, and OECD; and explain how to access current data and how to use this information in lessons. These links are added to the LMS each week." (P4)

"I track whether they completed tasks given through our LMS and provide feedback. Even if I cannot read all the tasks every week, I try to write feedback to five or 10 students. Some students take the opportunity to organize their next work based on this feedback." (P6)

Digital Resources

Categories under this theme were "selecting," "creating," and "storing" digital resources (see Table 5).

Table 5.

Code List for Digital Resources Theme

Theme	Category	Codes
Digital Resources	Selecting	Internet search Social media (Twitter, Instagram, YouTube) Colleague support Animation/visual search E-book sites Online articles (Dergipark, Science direct, Libgen, Sci hub) Official webpages Online course videos (Khan Academy, Coursera) Podcast pages
	Creating	PowerPoint preparation Video creation/editing Creating images/drawings Canva design creation
	Storing	Filing/archiving Backup/matching Storage on computer Storage on portable discs Storage using cloud technology (Google Drive, Yandex Disk, OneDrive)

Participants provided insight into their approaches for selecting, creating, and storing digital resources for distance education courses. They expressed limited familiarity with cloud technology, particularly regarding their usage for digital resource storage, and voiced concerns about copyright issues.

"I think this is the weakest part about online courses. I didn't take any precautions regarding copyrights or resource sharing. I've had no problems so far, and just followed the rules I know about copyright. I don't use flash drives anymore, and cloud store all my files." (P5)

"I prepared materials in the form of videos and infographics. I don't share them on open platforms, and only give them to students via LMS or WhatsApp. I share my videos on the drive only with those who know the link." (P6)

Empowering Learners

Under this theme, opinions focused on "adaptation for disadvantaged groups" and "ensuring active participation" to support students with low digital competence, limited Internet/device access or individuals with special needs (see Table 6).

Table 6.

Code List for Empowering Learners Theme

Theme	Category	Codes
Empowering Learners	Adaptation for disadvantaged groups	Peer cooperation Explanatory/tutorial videos Sharing detailed instructions Orientation meetings Teaching digital technology usage Keeping in constant contact
	Ensuring active participation	Online Q&A Continuity of communication in WhatsApp groups Working together during extracurricular time Open and continuous communication

Participants indicated their commitment to supporting disadvantaged students in distance education, primarily by offering guidance on Internet and device usage. They also emphasized student empowerment through peer support and online interviews. Notably, during the pandemic, they remained dedicated to providing instructional assistance by maintaining open communication channels with their students.

"I didn't have any students with disabilities or special education needs, but if I had, I would adapt accordingly. I try helping students who experience problems with computer and Internet access. For example, I kept exam-assignment times a little more flexible for students who couldn't use computers or had difficulty reading and writing online, shared detailed instructions with them in advance, answered their questions beforehand, planned online meetings, and provided explanations." (P7)

Facilitating Learners Digital Competence

This theme included activities and practices regarding "media literacy," "providing information" to students, and "problem solving" for digital technology usage (see Table 7).

Table 7.

Code List for Facilitating Learners' Digital Competence Theme

Theme	Category	Codes
Facilitating Learners' Digital Competence	Media literacy	Peer learning/interaction Incentives for participation in training
	Providing information	Introducing digital technologies/being an example Guiding/encouraging Gaining experience
	Problem solving	Peer support Helping/supporting Solutions: Device access problems Solutions: System utilization problems Solutions: Internet connection problems Warnings: Physical/psychological problems Warnings: Online game playing Warnings: Watching TV series/films online Warnings: Information ethics, copyright infringement

From examining the participants' responses, it was evident that the adjustments made in online courses to enhance learners' digital competencies encompassed information and interaction activities beyond course requirements and addressing issues related to course access. Participants showed strong commitment to resolving their students' online course challenges and guided them to appropriate resources for solutions.

"Male students play online games a lot, while female students watch TV series online for many hours, so, they are very distracted and tired. I think this negatively affects their lives. I tell them they need to be very careful in some laboratory applications. They can have difficulty maintaining focus, so of course I warn them." (P3)

"I provide a brief overview on information ethics, focusing primarily on topics like Internet plagiarism and copyright. In the first lesson, I tell students they can contact me via email for any issues and that I'll respond within 24 hours. I also explain steps to take if they face difficulties accessing the system, watching lessons, or dealing with Internet problems. For issues I cannot resolve, I refer them to the Distance Education Center for help." (P4)

Assessment

Two categories were revealed under this theme, "e-evaluation" and "producing/using digital evidence" (see Table 8).

Table 8.

Code List for AssessmentTheme

Theme	Category	Codes
Assessment	E-evaluation	Collaborative assessment practices Online assessment activities (Kahoot, Quizizz, Flipgrid, Edpuzzle) Online assignment/project assessment Online exams Ethical violation/plagiarism
	Producing/using digital evidence	LMS system records review Live lecture attendance tracking Monitoring class attendance Exam test/question analysis

The participants primarily employed electronic assessment tools for assessment in online courses; thoroughly examining the generated digital evidence. Notably, participants with lower digital competence levels exhibited hesitancy in fully embracing electronic assessment tools; instead preferring to utilize the tools' basic functionalities, potentially due to limited familiarity with the more advanced features.

"I do 9-10 online assessments throughout the semester. I assign homework at the end of each course, and students upload their work. I do e-exams, and use web tools such as Kahoot, Quizizz before/after the course. I arrange appropriate times for students to participate in these assessments. If they don't participate, it's very difficult for them to pass the course since I evaluate the whole process." (P9)

"I offered an online exam once, but couldn't ensure reliability. I couldn't calculate the exam time well. When the time was greater, they cheated and all had very high scores: I gave up and haven't done it since." (P1)

Professional Engagement

This theme had two categories, "communication and cooperation," and "professional development" (see Table 9).

Table 9.

Code List for Professional Engagement Theme

Theme	Category	Codes
Professional Engagement	Communication & Cooperation	Social media Email groups Online meetings Online project management Online cooperation Online thesis defenses/jury memberships Resource sharing
	Professional Development	Webinar/online workshop participation Online training Online conference/symposium/panel participation Online course participation (Coursera, Udemy, AYEUM) Online data collection studies

On the assessment of digital technologies concerning professional development, it was evident that participants leveraged digital tools for peer communication and collaboration. Additionally, they actively participated in training programs for both their specific professional domains and digital technology integration into their teaching and learning practices to advance their professional growth.

“We can communicate and share files and information very quickly through social media. I’ve participated in seminars and meetings online, and in international and national meetings. Normally, such participation is expensive, so this way is better. I can get answers to my questions from the most accurate source and for questions I cannot ask at face-to-face events.” (P3)

“In surveys I conducted in the past, I received feedback from students that I used technology insufficiently, so I’m trying to improve my practices.” (P5)

Notably, these training opportunities intensified during the pandemic. The participants indicated that individuals with varying levels of digital competence actively engaged in these training programs, motivated both by professional and personal development objectives. Emphasis was placed on academic collaboration, with researchers from different geographic locations meeting online, highlighting the increasing prevalence of such activities.

Findings From Course Reviews

Reviewing instructors’ learning management system courses was crucial to evaluating their digital competencies and use of instructional technology. Interview questions explored their technology integration in teaching, while course page analysis provided additional context. A rubric was used to assess technology usage in online classes, categorizing instructors based on their scores (see Table 10).

Table 10.

Evaluation of Instructors' Use of Technology in Online Classes

Participant Code	Rubric Level	Score
P1	Basic	18
P2	Basic	21
P3	Basic	23
P4	Proficient	30
P5	Proficient	32
P6	Proficient	34
P7	Proficient	34
P8	Advanced	38
P9	Advanced	40
P10	Advanced	42

Evaluation of the instructors' technology usage in online courses revealed alignment between rubric scores and digital competence levels. To support this, a course page screenshot from a randomly selected participant at each level is presented (see Figures 4-8).

Figure 4 displays an Explorer-level (A2) instructor's course screenshot, indicating mere written materials and virtual classroom links for live lectures or recordings. This underscores congruence between the instructor's digital competence level, interview responses, distance education practices, and course page content since Explorer-level instructors recognize the potential of digital technologies but need encouragement.

Participant P1 shared general views on the use of digital technologies in their lessons:

"I cannot use digital technologies in my lessons because of my lack of knowledge and time constraints. It's very difficult for me to research these technology applications, learn how to use them, and prepare before the lesson. My students know much better than me, and they even use them in their lectures. I actually like it very much, but unfortunately I cannot spare the time." (P1)

Figure 4.

Lesson screenshot: Participant at Level A2

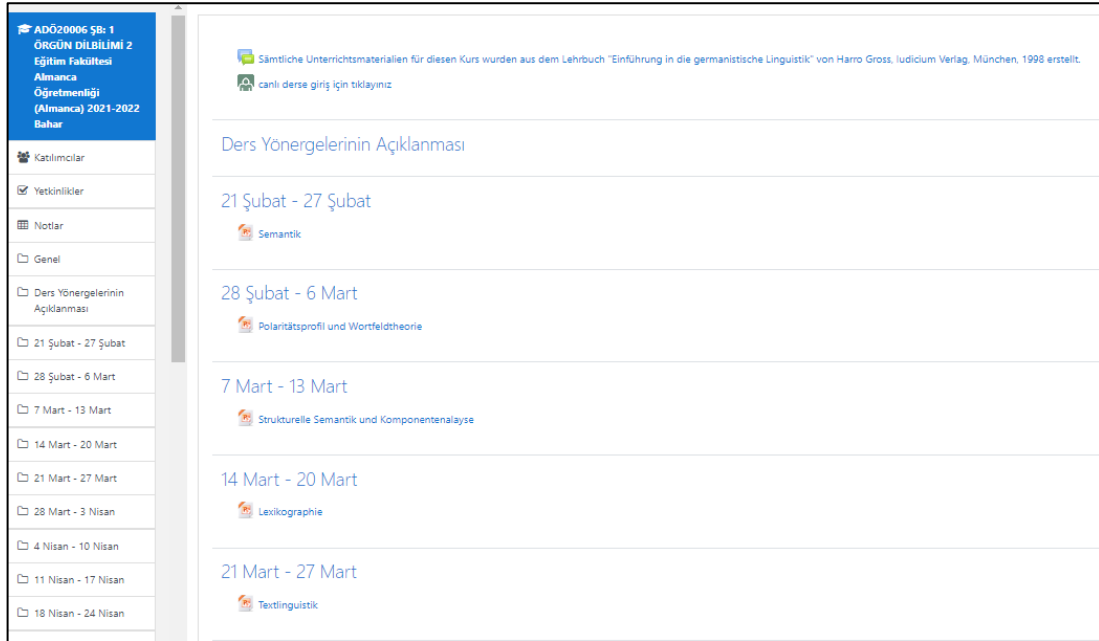


Figure 5 presents a screenshot of a course page on the institutional LMS of an instructor operating at the Integrator level (B1) in terms of digital competence. The course incorporates written materials, e-assessment tools, and a virtual classroom link for live lectures or recordings. However, the course page appears disorganized, with a lack of separation between weekly achievements and lecture notes, and no instructions for evaluation tools. Participant P3 explained the use of technology for assessment purposes in their lessons:

"I did exams on LMS, but I didn't use different question styles. For example, there are things like creating a question bank and using random questions, but I've never used that. I give online homework, but some students copy/paste assignments from websites without adding anything. Some students upload incomplete assignments or files that won't open, so I provide feedback and warn them. Sometimes I've organized online meetings and provided explanations about assignments. I communicate with students via email or through their peers." (P3)

Alignment was seen between the instructor's digital competence level (B1), interview responses, distance education practices, and the course page content. At the integrator level, instructors are open to experimenting with digital technologies in various contexts, willing to expand their repertoire of applications, but lack sufficient knowledge about which tool to use and how to use it.

Figure 5.

Lesson screenshot: Participant at Level B1

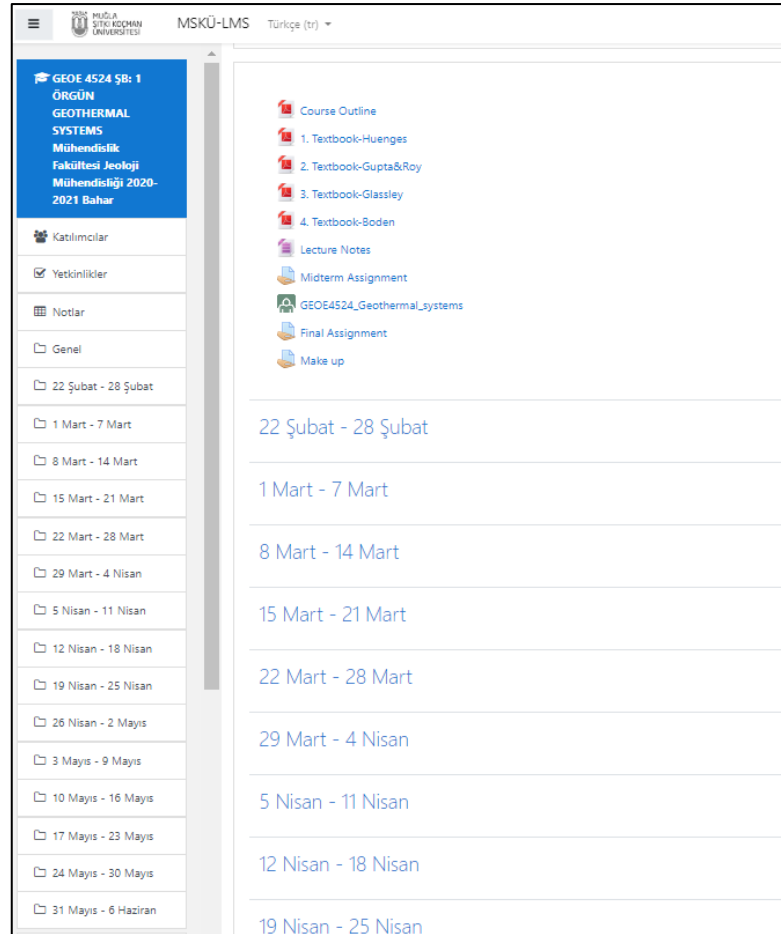


Figure 6 shows a course page by an instructor at the Expert level (B2) of digital competence. The course offers a virtual classroom for live lectures, recorded lectures, an e-course syllabus detailing resources, activities, evaluation methods, discussion forums, and evaluation tools. Yet, enriching the materials and providing explanations for each week would have enhanced the course's effectiveness for students.

The expert-level participant exemplified the use of technology in their lessons:

"I give students research topics and direct them to sites such as WebQuest. Sometimes I give reading assignments, where they need to do reflective thinking and write an answer. I then highlight certain words for them to look up. I assign creative tasks, but these are usually like preparing a presentation. They try to resolve any problems they encounter while preparing their presentations, but I don't offer them any digital solutions." (P6)

Alignment is evident between the instructor's digital competence level (B2), interview responses, and course page content. Expert-level instructors are curious about digital

technologies and accept that there are many things they have yet to try. They use experimentation as a means to expand, structure, and consolidate their repertoire of digital technologies.

Figure 61.

Lesson screenshot: Participant at Level B2

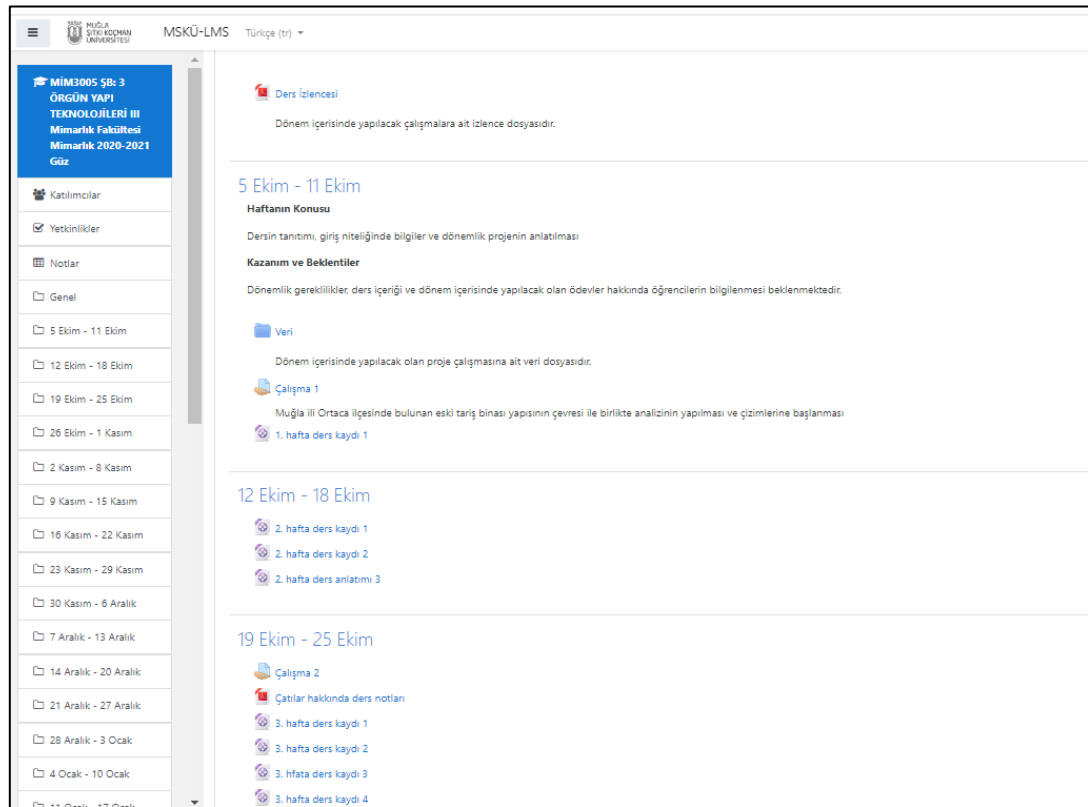


Figure 7 presents a course page screenshot of an instructor with a Leader level (C1) digital competency. The course comprises e-entertainment elements, including introductions, learning outcomes, written materials, e-assessment tools (assignments), and a virtual classroom link for live classes or lecture recordings. This design and technology usage aligns with the participant's (P8) competence at the leader level, since leaders utilize a large repertoire of digital strategies, from which they know how to choose the most appropriate for any given situation. They continuously reflect and further develop their practices.

The instructor commented on their use of technology in terms of storing digital resources and using them for collaborative purposes:

"I archive course-related resources both on my computer and on an external drive in separate folders each semester. I used OneDrive for one semester, but couldn't keep up with it. I couldn't follow it for update-matching purposes. Today I use Google Drive. It is also good for sharing, especially with graduate students." (P8)

Figure 7.

Lesson screenshot: Participant at Level C1

The screenshot in Figure 8 is from an instructor with a Pioneer (C2) digital competence level. The course shows several materials such as virtual classroom links to join live lectures and watch lecture recordings, an e-syllabus containing details such as resources, activities, evaluation methods related to the course, tutorial materials on how to use digital technologies and Web 2.0 tools and how students can use these technologies, videos, web links, and evaluation tools. The course is designed efficiently in terms of educational use of technology. The interview with the instructor (P9) also revealed detailed information about the course design, which showed alignment with their digital competence level, with clear overlap of statements and practices. Pioneer-level instructors develop and innovate highly innovative and complex digital technologies and/or new pedagogical approaches. They act as role models for their students and junior colleagues.

"I make tutorial videos for all technologies I use. To facilitate students' use, I first teach what I am going to use as an orientation. In the first 2-3 lessons, I only give information about how to use them. In fact, I pretend to teach the use of technology, but I do this to facilitate the teaching of the lesson." (P9)

Figure 8.

Lesson screenshot: Participant at Level C2

Findings from reviewing the participants' online course pages indicate that their digital competence levels, based on their digital competence scale scores, aligned with their technology use in lessons, as evidenced by their interview responses and course reviews. For example, a participant at the Pioneer level (C2) structured their lessons akin to an educational technologist, while another at the Explorer level (A2) acknowledged digital technologies but faced challenges incorporating them into lessons for various reasons.

Results and Discussion

Digital competence is crucial for teachers to integrate digital technologies into learning effectively. As digital transformation accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic

continues, the digital competency levels of higher education faculty have become a key focus. The DigCompEdu framework offers a structured approach to assessing and improving these competencies. This study used the framework to explore faculty digital competence through learning management system data and in-depth interviews.

Content analysis focused on the six competencies in the DigCompEdu framework, using participants' responses to generate themes, categories, and codes. The instructors' statements about technology use in their courses reflected their digital competency levels. Findings showed proficiency in selecting and presenting existing learning materials, but limitations in creating interactive materials, using diverse storage methods, guiding students in digital competency development, and facilitating complex tasks. Overall, the study highlighted instructors' strengths in digital competencies while identifying areas for improvement in technology integration in distance education. These findings are discussed by core competency below.

The first core competency of the DigCompEdu framework, *professional engagement*, focuses on using digital technologies to improve communication, foster educator collaboration, and support co-development of teaching practices. It also promotes reflection on digital pedagogy and emphasizes continuous professional development. Our findings showed that faculty actively use digital technologies, such as social media, email groups, and online meetings, to enhance collaboration. However, ongoing digital professional development was more evident among the faculty members.

Professional development is crucial for addressing gaps in faculty members' digital competencies. Research highlights the need for personalized, context-specific training programs to meet educators' unique needs. Cabero-Almenara et al. (2022) stress the importance of continuous training to upskill educators in digital technologies and develop expert-level competencies. Training should be aligned with educators' needs and regularly updated to incorporate technological advancements, ensuring effective integration of digital tools into teaching (Dias-Trindade & Albuquerque, 2022). Continuous professional development also boosts educators' confidence and awareness in using digital tools effectively (Lee et al., 2020). Muammar et al. (2022) further emphasize the necessity for ongoing development as digital technologies evolve.

Faculty members' participation in webinars, online workshops, conferences, and courses through platforms like Coursera and Udemy demonstrates their commitment to continuous professional development, aligning with the framework's focus on using digital resources for ongoing learning. The second core competency, *Digital Resources*, involves selecting, adapting, and creating digital materials based on learning goals and context, as well as managing, protecting, and sharing resources responsibly while respecting privacy, copyright, and open licensing.

The creation and use of digital resources are well-established competencies among faculty members. Studies conducted in Spain and Ecuador report high levels of

proficiency in this area (e.g. Martínez España et al., 2024; Moreira-Choez et al., 2023). However, participants expressed concerns about copyright and ethical issues when integrating digital resources. Kaya (2006) noted the lack of clear examples on legal regulations, making it difficult for instructors to interpret intellectual property laws. As a result, faculty often approach digital resources cautiously, fearing legal errors. Institutional support is essential to provide instructors with the knowledge and resources on copyright and ethics, enabling them to use digital resources confidently and enhance the learning experience.

Learning and Teaching focuses on integrating digital technologies to enhance instructional strategies, support learner interaction, and foster both individual and collaborative engagement. It encourages guiding students through digital means, promoting cooperative learning, and supporting self-regulated learning. Faculty generally show strong competencies in using digital tools to enhance student engagement (e.g., Dias-Trindade et al., 2023; ; Muammar et al, 2022; Palacios-Rodríguez et al., 2024), though some still exhibit lower competency levels in integrating technology for teaching and learning (e.g. Sánchez-Caballé & Esteve-Mon, 2022).

Assessment emphasizes using digital technologies to enhance both formative and summative strategies, including collecting and analyzing digital evidence of student performance, providing timely feedback, and adapting instruction. It also ensures that assessment data is understandable and useful for learners and parents. In our interviews, instructors commonly used digital technologies for assessments, such as electronic exams and online homework. This aligns with Akşan-Kılıçaslan et al. (2022), who found that teachers use digital tools throughout the course, but only occasionally during evaluations. In our study, instructors leveraged digital technologies to streamline assessment and create an engaging learning environment. However, across various studies, assessment remains an underdeveloped area and a key weakness (e.g. Martínez España et al., 2024; Moreira-Choez et al., 2023).

DigCompEdu's fifth core competency, *Empowering Learners*, focuses on using digital technologies to ensure accessibility and inclusion for all students, considering their diverse needs and abilities. It promotes personalized learning paths, differentiated instruction, and self-paced progress. Additionally, it emphasizes fostering active, creative engagement through meaningful, inquiry-based, and collaborative digital learning experiences.

Our participants with lower digital competence recognized digital technologies but faced challenges in integrating them into their teaching. Conversely, those with higher competence incorporated activities that not only met course objectives but also fostered students' technological skills. These findings suggest that the ability to empower learners through digital tools is closely tied to the instructor's digital competence. Studies in Spain and Peru show that while teachers excel in creating digital resources and integrating technology, there is room for improvement in empowering learners (Dias-Trindade et al., 2023; ; Martín-Párraga et al., 2023). Cabero-Almenara et al.

(2020) emphasize the importance of instructors understanding how to empower students in using digital technologies and supporting their digital competence development to meet the demands of the information society.

The final competency, *Facilitating Learners' Digital Competence*, involves activities to enhance digital skills in areas like information literacy, responsible use of technologies, and solving digital problems. It also emphasizes promoting students' well-being and safe technology use. Research shows that faculty members often struggle to empower students through digital tools, particularly in fostering digital competencies, as seen in studies from Spain, Portugal, and Latin America (e.g., . Cabero-Almenara et al., 2023; Dias-Trindade et al., 2023; Palacios-Rodríguez et al., 2024). In Turkey, Ültay and Uludüz (2016) found that teachers recognize the importance of technology but face practical barriers like time constraints and lack of resources. Similarly, Keleş and Turan-Güntep (2018) highlighted issues like inadequate technical infrastructure and limited technology knowledge. In our study, instructors with lower digital competence reported needing assistance for basic problems, underscoring the need for further support and training to enhance digital competencies and effectively integrate technology into teaching.

Our interviewees also emphasized the value of adopting the European Commission's Digital Competence Framework to enhance digital competencies, a view aligned with Geçgel et al. (2020). They found this framework effective in fostering digital skills and knowledge, particularly in the Turkish context, to promote better technology and digital resource use. The findings from both interviews and course analyses revealed a strong alignment between participants' reported use of technology and the course data from the institutional LMS, indicating a high level of compatibility.

Implications and Conclusion

Our findings indicate that while faculty members excel in certain aspects of digital competency, such as presenting existing learning materials, they face challenges in more complex areas like assessment and guiding students' digital skill development. This underscores the need for continuous professional development, tailored to educators' specific needs, to keep them up to date with evolving digital technologies and pedagogical practices. Additionally, concerns about copyright and intellectual property rights were identified as barriers to fully utilizing digital resources. Institutions must provide guidance and resources to help instructors navigate legal issues. Lastly, the study highlights the importance of faculty members not only using digital tools but also empowering students to develop their digital competencies, ensuring they are prepared to become responsible digital citizens in an increasingly digital world.

Recommendations

1. Continuous Professional Development Programs: Institutions should develop ongoing, personalized professional development programs that align with faculty needs and are regularly updated to incorporate emerging technologies and evolving teaching practices.
2. Institutional Support for Digital Resource Usage: Clear guidelines and training on legal and ethical issues related to digital resources, such as copyright laws and privacy concerns, should be provided to help faculty confidently use a wide range of digital tools in their courses.
3. Fostering a Collaborative Culture: Encourage collaboration among faculty members through digital communities of practice, allowing them to share resources, strategies, and experiences, fostering a more innovative use of digital technologies in education.
4. Empowering Students through Technology: Faculty should receive training to empower students in using digital technologies effectively, focusing on digital literacy, critical thinking, and problem-solving, while incorporating activities that promote self-regulated and collaborative learning.
5. Conduct Comparative Studies Across Disciplines: Future studies should compare how digital competencies and technology use vary across academic disciplines and explore their impact on student learning outcomes, offering discipline-specific insights for enhancing digital integration.
6. Investigate the Student Perspective: Research should include student evaluations of digital tools to identify best practices and areas for improvement, ensuring teaching strategies align with student needs and preferences.
7. Need for a Customized Framework for Higher Education: A tailored digital competence framework for higher education institutions will address specific challenges and needs of faculty, ensuring effective integration of ICT into teaching practices.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Günümüzde dijital çağın gereklerine uygun bir toplum yaratmak ve bu toplumun sürdürülebilirliğini sağlamak açısından, öğretmenlerin dijital yetkinliklerinin geliştirilmesi büyük önem taşımaktadır. Yükseköğretimin yeniliği tanıtma ve yayma için önemli bir kaynak oluşturmaları sebebiyle akademisyenlerin ve öğrencilerin dijital yetkinliklerinin geliştirilmesi, dolaylı etki yoluyla toplumun dijitalleştirilmesinin önünü açacaktır. Öğretim elemanlarının dijital yetkinliklerinin artırılması, yükseköğretimde dijital dönüşümün anahtarı olarak nitelendirilmektedir. Çevrimiçi ders veren öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimlerini katkı sunarak, nitelikli bir e-öğrenme sürecinin yürütülmesini sağlamak, e-öğrenme çalışmalarını başlatan eğitim kurumlarının görevidir (Sakal ve Adnan, 2015). Kurumlarda e-öğrenmenin önündeki engellerin en önemlilerinden birinin insani faktörler, bir diğerinin de öğretmenlere uygun mesleki gelişim olanağı sağlanmaması olduğu ifade edilmektedir (Rosenberg, 2007; Stein ve diğerleri, 2011). E-öğrenme sürecinde yer alacak öğretmenlerin yeni bilgi ve becerilere, yeni rollere doğru şekilde hazırlanmaları, ancak iyi planlanmış, amaca uygun tasarlanmış, koordineli ve özgün mesleki gelişim programlarıyla mümkün olabilir (Kocatürk-Kapucu ve Adnan, 2018). Son yıllarda teknolojinin, öğrenme aktivitelerini daha aktif ve daha öğrenci merkezli kılması, öğrenme deneyimlerini zenginleştirmesinden dolayı (Thiele ve diğerleri, 2014), öğretmenlerin gerekli hazırlıkları yaparak ders etkinliklerini öğrenci merkezli hale getirmesi gerekmektedir. Öğretmenler, modern çağın gerektirdiği, öğretim teknolojilerini bilmeleri ve eğitim-öğretim faaliyetlerinde yer vermeleri hususunda gerekli önemi göstermeleri için cesaretlendirilmelidir. Hızla değişen teknolojileri tanıma, seçme ve kullanma konusunda öğretim elemanları yeterli bilgi ve tecrübeye sahip olmayabilir. Kendi uzmanlık alanlarının dışında kalan bu becerileri kazanmalarına yönelik gerçekleştirilen eğitimlere katılmak, zaman ayırmak ve emek vermek birçoğu için oldukça zordur. Çoğu öğretici, en azından üniversitelerde görev yapanlar, içerik açısından son derece iyi eğitilmiş ve öğrettikleri konu alanına oldukça hâkim kişiler olmalarına rağmen, yükseköğretim kurumlarında çalışan öğretim elemanları, genellikle, öğretim, pedagoji veya öğrenme alanında yapılan araştırmalar konusunda ya hiç eğitimli değildir ya da çok sınırlı bir eğitim almışlardır (Bates, 2015). Dijital yetkinliklerin geliştirilmesi amacıyla eğitimler açılması, kurslara katılım konusunda öğretmenlerin teşvik edilmesi ve desteklenmesi kurumsal olarak önemli bir sorumluluktur. Cleveland-Innes'e (2013) göre; üniversitelerde görev yapan öğretim elemanlarının hem yetkin bir konu alanı uzmanı, başarılı bir araştırmacı ve aktif olarak derse giren bir öğretmen, hem de dijital olarak yetkin bir çevrimiçi öğretici olmalarını beklemek pek de gerçekçi bir yaklaşım değildir. Ancak çevrimiçi öğretmenlik rollerinin bilincinde olmaları ve hem uzaktan hem de yüz yüze derslerini dijital teknolojilerle desteklemeleri konusunda farkındalık sahibi olmaları önemlidir. İçinde yaşadığımız dijital çağda, tüm öğretmenlerin dijital yetkinlikler konusunda farkındalığı yüksek ve öğrenmeye açık olmalarını sağlamak öncelikli olmalıdır. Bu nedenle de her öğretim elemanının, öğretim rolüyle ilgili yetkinlikleri içerisinde dijital teknolojilere alan açması kaçınılmazdır. Bu bağlamda, Avrupa Komisyonu Ortak Araştırma Merkezi'nin dijital teknolojilerin eğitim-öğretim süreçlerindeki rolü ve istihdam, kişisel gelişim ve sosyal

içerme için gerekli olan dijital yetkinliklere ilişkin olarak, kanıta dayalı politika desteği sunmak amacıyla 2005 yılında başlattığı “Dijital Çağ İçin Öğrenme ve Beceriler” araştırması kapsamında hazırlanan Eğitimcilerin Dijital Yeterliliği için Avrupa Çerçevesi (DigCompEdu) büyük önem taşımaktadır (Redecker ve Punie, 2017). DigCompEdu, pek çok Avrupa Devleti arasında, eğitimcilerin, dijital teknolojilerin geliştirme ve yenilik yapma potansiyelini yakalayabilmeleri için mesleklerine özgü bir dizi dijital yeterliliğe ihtiyaçları olduğuna dair artan farkındalığa yanıt vermektedir. DigCompEdu Çerçevesi içerisinde yer verilen altı temel yetkinlik alanı ve 22 alt yetkinlik, eğitimcilerin dijital araçları kullanarak etkili, kapsayıcı ve yenilikçi öğrenme stratejilerini teşvik etmek için sahip olmaları gereken yeterlilikleri detaylandırır. Bu detaylar incelenerek, DigCompEdu kapsamında yapılan çalışmalarda, öğretim materyallerinin geliştirilmesi ve değerlendirme araçlarına karar verilmesi sağlıklı şekilde mümkün olur.

Bu çalışmada, öğretim elemanlarının dijital yetkinliklerinin uzaktan öğretim derslerindeki öğretim teknolojileri kullanımları açısından incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Belirlenen amaç doğrultusunda, güncel bir olguyu gerçek hayattaki bağlamıyla inceleyen ve sınırlı bir çalışma grubunun derinlemesine incelenmesini içeren durum çalışması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırma kapsamında, Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesinde görev yapan öğretim elemanlarının dijital yetkinliklerinin bir göstergesi olarak uzaktan öğretim dersleri incelenmiş ve görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. DigCompEdu Çerçevesi doğrultusunda hazırlanan görüşme formu aracılığıyla gönüllü katılımcılarla gerçekleştirilen görüşmelerde yöneltilen sorulara verilen cevaplar, içerik analizine tabi tutulmuştur. Hazırlanan rubrik yardımıyla gerçekleştirilen uzaktan öğretim ders incelemeleri ile öğretim elemanlarının dijital yetkinlikleri ve uzaktan öğretim derslerinde teknoloji kullanım durumlarına yönelik veriler toplanmıştır. Bu aşamanın doküman analizi olarak adlandırılması uygun bulunmuştur. Araştırma evrenini, Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesi bünyesinde görev yapan öğretim elemanları oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada, geniş bir evrenden az sayıda analiz biriminin seçkisiz olarak belirlemesi işlemi olan amaçlı seçkisiz örneklem (amaca uygun seçkisiz örneklem) tekniği kullanılmıştır. Gönüllü olan 50 öğretim elemanı, kendileriyle mülakat yapılmasını ve uzaktan öğretim derslerinde teknoloji kullanımının incelenmesini kabul etmiştir. Amaca uygun seçkisiz örneklem içerisinden maksimum çeşitliği (çalışma alanı, kadro unvanı ve dijital yetkinlik düzeyi dikkate alınarak) sağlayacak biçimde belirlenen gönüllü 10 katılımcı ile görüşme tamamlandığında, veriler üzerinde yapılan ön incelemede, veri doygunluğunun sağlandığı konusunda hem fikir olunduğu için daha fazla görüşme yapmaya gerek duyulmamıştır. Elde edilen nitel verilerin analizinde, veriler toplanmış, azaltılmış ve düzenlenmiş, sonrasında kodlara ayrılmış ve ayrılan kodlarla kategorilerin oluşturulması sağlanmıştır. Daha sonra gruplanmış kodlardan kategoriler, kategorilerden temalar oluşturulmuştur. İçerik analizi işlemi yapıldıktan sonra 79 kod, 16 kategori ve altı tema belirlenmiştir. Kodlar, kategoriler ve temalar belirlenirken iki kodlayıcı uzlaşarak ortak karar vermiştir. Temalar, DigCompEdu çerçevesinde belirtilen altı yetkinlik olarak önceden belirlenmiştir. Kategori ve kodlar bu yetkinlikler kapsamında oluşturulan sorulara verilen yanıtlardan derlenmiştir. Ayrıca ilk kodlamanın ardından geçen bir haftalık bir

aranın ardından tekrar kodlama yapılarak, kod kaçaklarının önüne geçilmiş ve kodlama güvenilirliği sağlanmaya çalışılmıştır. Öğretim elemanları ile yapılan görüşmelerden elde edilen veriler doğrudan alıntılarla yorumlanmıştır. Ayrıca aynı öğretim elemanlarının uzaktan öğretim ders görüntüleri de doğrudan gösterilerek elde edilen veriler desteklenmiştir.

Araştırma sonucunda, öğretim elemanlarının dijital yetkinlikleri açısından, görüşmelerden elde edilen veriler ve ders inceleme sonuçlarının birbiriyle uyumlu olduğu görülmüştür. Genel olarak öğretim elemanlarının, mevcut öğrenme materyallerini bulma, seçme ve sunma konusunda başarılı olduğu, ancak kendi etkileşimli öğrenme materyallerini yaratma, çeşitli şekillerde saklama, öğrencilerin dijital yetkinliklerini geliştirmeleri konusunda rehber olma, öğrencilerin dijital teknolojileri kullanarak karmaşık ve probleme dayalı görevleri yerine getirmelerini sağlama konusunda yetersiz olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca öğretim elemanlarının uzaktan öğretim derslerinde dijital kaynaklara yer verme konusunda dile getirdikleri en önemli sorunlardan birinin telif hakları ve etik ihlal çekincesi olduğu görüşme verilerinden anlaşılmaktadır. Katılımcıların, görüşmedeki ifadeleri ile öğrenme yönetim sistemi içerisindeki uzaktan öğretim ders görüntüleri birbirlerini destekler nitelikte bulunduğundan, öğretim elemanlarının uzaktan öğretim derslerinde dijital teknolojilere yer verme durumlarının dijital yetkinlik düzeylerine bağlı olarak biçimlendiği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

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Investigation into the Process of Providing Speech and Language Therapy to Students with Special Needs

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Abstract

This study examines the delivery of speech and language therapy services to students with hearing loss (HL) and Down syndrome (DS) at a special education and rehabilitation center (SERC). Accordingly, speech and language therapy services were delivered to three students with HL and two with DS. The study employed an action research design. Data were collected through field observations, a reflective research diary, video recordings, interviews, document analysis, and standardized tests. During the preparation phase, field observations were conducted at the SERC. During the implementation phase, the speech and language abilities of the participating students were assessed, and individualized speech and language therapy interventions were planned and delivered. The assessment and monitoring phases systematically analyzed students' speech and language development. Data were analyzed concurrently using a systematic approach. The findings guided the planning of subsequent actions. The results of the study indicate that speech and language therapy services significantly contributed to the speech and language development of the participating students. Based on these findings, recommendations are proposed to enhance speech language therapy support services in similar educational settings.

Keywords: Special education and rehabilitation, students with hearing loss, students with Down Syndrome, speech and language therapy

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Introduction

Speech and language difficulties can significantly hinder individuals' communication, academic achievement, and social interactions (Hitchcock et al., 2015). Students with special needs often face challenges in these domains, making it essential to provide appropriate support services to help overcome or minimize such difficulties (Allen & Mayo, 2020; Westby, 2021). Speech and language therapy for students with special needs encompasses the assessment, prevention, and treatment of disorders related to speech, language, communication, and swallowing (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association [ASHA], n.d).

The term "students with special needs" includes various groups who require specialized educational, therapeutic, and supportive services. Among them, students with hearing loss (HL) often experience significant delays in acquiring speech and language skills. Language development in children with HL can be affected across all components of language. Their phonological awareness may be limited, resulting in difficulties distinguishing sounds and achieving accurate articulation. Morphological and syntactic structures develop with delays; sentences may be simple and grammatically incomplete. In terms of lexical development, they often struggle with learning, understanding, and generalizing new words. Semantically, they may experience limitations in comprehending and using concepts appropriately. Therefore, interventions should be planned holistically to target all components of language (Girgin & Büyükköse, 2015; Goberis et al., 2012; Spencer & Guo, 2013; Wiggin et al., 2021; Zaidman-Zait & Most, 2020). Effective use of hearing technologies, early intervention, and family involvement are critical factors that contribute to the development of speech and language in individuals with HL. Research has shown that children with hearing loss can develop language skills comparable to their typically developing peers when provided with early diagnosis and appropriate interventions (Kaipa & Danser, 2016). Consequently, speech and language therapy programs tailored to the individual needs of students with HL are crucial in supporting their communication development (Asad et al., 2018; Nitttrouer, 2016; Paul & Norbury, 2012).

Students with Down syndrome (DS) generally experience difficulties across many components of language development, although certain areas of strength can also be observed. Research on articulation and phonology indicates the presence of developmental delays and atypical speech errors that are not commonly observed in typical development (Kent & Vorperian, 2013). Sentence formation (syntax) is usually weak, with utterances tending to be short and simple (Witecy & Pence, 2017). Significant difficulties are commonly observed in morphology, another language component. Grammatical structures, such as tense, person, and plural markers, are often acquired late or used inaccurately. This adversely affects expression accuracy and sentence construction (Smith et al., 2017; Katsarou & Andreou, 2022). Pragmatic language skills are notably difficult, particularly with regard to understanding context, initiating conversations, and maintaining narratives. While weaknesses in the appropriate use of context are evident, nonverbal communication skills, such as gestures, facial expressions,

and body language, as well as receptive vocabulary, are considered relative strengths. However, compared to their typically developing peers, these strengths may become more limited over time (Laws et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2017; Smith et al., 2017). This complex profile highlights the importance of early, individualized, and comprehensive language interventions that address all areas of language development (Burgoyne et al., 2013; Moraleda-Sepúlveda et al., 2022). Furthermore, families should engage in communication practices that promote language development. Active parental involvement in speech and language therapy can improve outcomes, and therapy goals should promote effective parent–child interaction (Seager et al., 2022).

Supporting the communication skills of students with special needs not only helps reduce barriers in daily life but also enhances their participation and achievement in academic domains such as reading and writing (Hitchcock et al., 2015; Marschark et al., 2007; Snowling & Hulme, 2011). To address these needs effectively and promote inclusion in educational and everyday contexts, integrated therapy services delivered in coordination with school-based programs and interdisciplinary teams are essential (Blosser & Means, 2020; Cahill et al., 2024). In Türkiye, speech and language therapy services are predominantly provided outside the school setting, including university-affiliated centers, private clinics, hospitals, and special education and rehabilitation centers (SERCs). These centers offer individualized support programs tailored to different types of disabilities and employ a range of specialists to support the development of communication, language, and academic skills from early childhood onwards (Atmaca & Uzuner, 2020; Bekar et al., 2021; Gürgür et al., 2016; Kalaycı, 2019; Savaş & Toğram, 2013).

Speech-language therapists (SLTs) must possess specialized expertise in providing effective communication and academic support to students with special needs. Ongoing professional development is essential for SLTs to implement up-to-date, evidence-based therapeutic approaches (Houston & Perioge, 2010; Page et al., 2018). However, research examining the internal processes of SERCs and strategies to enhance service quality remains limited. Existing studies primarily reflect expert opinions, highlighting the need for more comprehensive investigations into the implementation of speech and language therapy (Kalaycı, 2019; Savaş & Toğram, 2013). Students with HL and those with DS experience various challenges in speech and language development. Systematic and individualized interventions, however, are effective in addressing these challenges. Studies indicate that early-starting programs involving parental participation significantly enhance both language development and social–academic engagement (Arráez-Vera et al., 2023; Moraleda-Sepúlveda et al., 2022). Although current research provides a valuable foundation for speech and language interventions, further comprehensive studies are needed, particularly about age groups, intervention types, assessment methods, and long-term outcomes. Notably, original research investigating the delivery of speech and language therapy services in SERCs remains scarce.

Given this gap in the literature, examining the provision of speech and language therapy as an out-of-school support service is essential for informing and guiding practitioners in enhancing the quality of the services they deliver. Moreover, such research can provide a valuable foundation for future studies in the field. In this context, this study aims to examine the speech and language therapy service delivery process provided to students with special needs. Accordingly, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How was the speech and language therapy service structured and delivered in the SERC context?
2. How was the speech and language therapy service implemented for students with HL and DS during the study?
3. What improvements were observed in the speech and language skills of students with HL and DS following therapy?
4. In what ways did the research process enhance the researcher's professional practice and reflective skills?

Method

Research Methodology

This study, which was conducted to examine the speech and language therapy service to be provided to students with HL and DS in a SERC, was conducted as action research. While defining the current situation, action research also aims to develop active interventions and innovative strategies to improve this situation. The researcher meticulously collects data at every stage of the process, makes in-depth reflective inquiries based on these data, and prepares and implements new action plans in line with these inquiries (Gürgür, 2017; Johnson, 2012).

This research process aligns with the steps of the action research cycle defined by Johnson (2012), including identifying the issue, gathering information, conducting a literature review, developing a research plan, implementing the plan and analyzing the data, and writing the final report. In the first phase, the research topic/problem was identified based on the researcher's academic background in special education and speech-language therapy, professional experience in the SERC, and a literature review. Observations were conducted at the SERC during the initial stage of the study. In the implementation phase, assessments were carried out for the participating students, individualized education plans (IEPs) were prepared, and speech and language therapies were planned and applied. During the assessment and follow-up stages, the students were reassessed.

Throughout the process, the therapies provided to the students during the implementation phase were revised and planned in line with the opinions of the validity

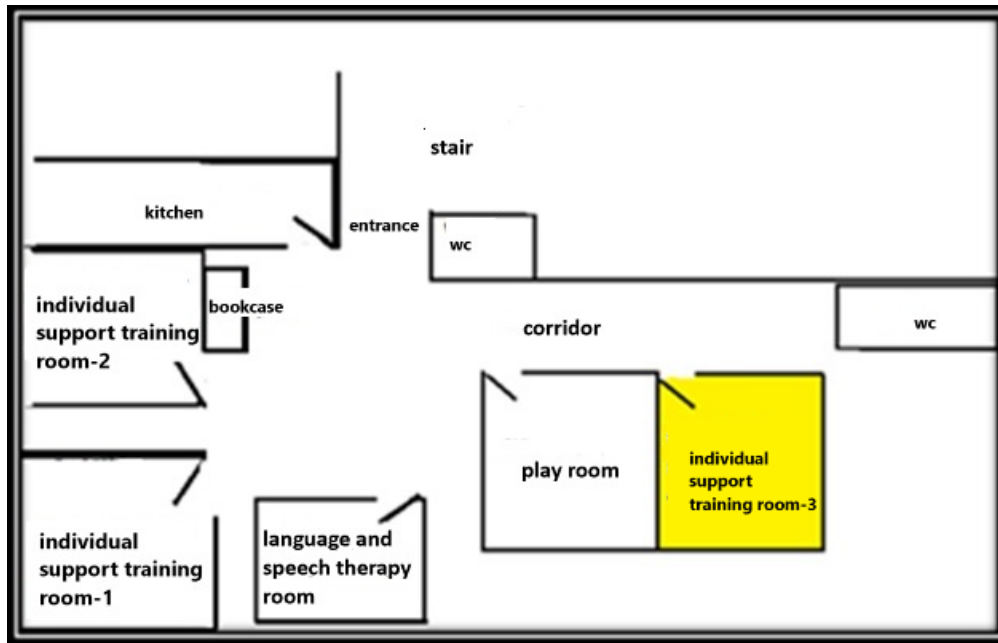
committee. Thus, as is characteristic of action research, the steps of continuous assessment, planning, and intervention were carried out in an integrated manner.

Research Environment

This research was conducted in a SERC in Eskişehir Province. The SERC has three floors, and the implementation took place in one of the individual education rooms on the first floor. As shown in Figure 1, the first floor includes three individual education rooms and one speech language therapy support room. The study was carried out in the third individual education room visible in the figure.

Figure. 1

Sketch of the First Floor of the SERC



Researchers

In this study, the first author assumed a multifaceted role as data collector, practitioner, and observer. As a professional specialized in both special education and speech and language therapy, the researcher actively participated in all phases of the research. During the implementation phase, the researcher conducted student assessments, prepared IEPs, and carried out speech and language therapies. In addition, observations related to the sessions were recorded in reflective diaries, enabling continuous evaluation of the process.

The second and third authors served as members of the credibility committee during the research process. They contributed expert opinions in the evaluation of the therapies, validation of findings, and interpretation of the data. Furthermore, they played an active role in the preparation of the research report by contributing to the organization of the findings and the refinement of the manuscript.

Participants

The participants of the present study were three students with HL and two DS. Also involved in the research process were the students' mothers, members of the validity committee, and other experts. The information about the students with HL who participated in the present study is given in Table 1. The information on students with DS is also given in the Table. 2. The students' names were changed, and they were given code names to keep their identity information confidential.

Table 1
Information about Students with Hearing Loss

Student Name	Age	Hearing technology used	Degree of hearing loss	Age of diagnosis of hearing loss
Ayşe	8	Right ear: Hearing aid Left ear: Cochlear implant	The right ear is severe, Left Ear profound sensorineural hearing loss	2
Ali	9;02	Right ear: Cochlear implant Left ear: Hearing aid	Profound bilateral sensorineural hearing loss	Congenital
Emre	9;02	Right Ear: Hearing aid Left Ear: Hearing aid	Moderate bilateral sensorineural hearing loss	Unknown

Students with HL received special education support, but have not received speech and language therapy support before.

Table 2
Information about Students with Down Syndrome

Student Name	Information
Duru	The student is 5 years and 8 months old. She began speaking her first words at the age of 1 year and 8 months. According to the report from the guidance and research center, she has a diagnosis of mild intellectual disability. She currently uses single-word utterances.
Feyza	The student is 6 years old. Babbling began at around 7–8 months of age, but there was a delay in the transition to meaningful words. According to the report from the guidance and research center, she has a diagnosis of mild intellectual disability. She can produce two-word phrases.

Students with DS receive special education support, but have not received speech and language therapy support before.

The families of the students: The educational processes of the students participating in the study were generally overseen by their mothers. Duru, Feyza, and Ayşe came to the SERC with their mothers. Meanwhile, Ali and Emre arrived at the center using its transportation service. Ayşe's mother was 36 years old and a teacher. Duru's mother is 46 years old, a high school graduate, and a housewife. Feyza's mother was 45 years old and had retired from a public institution. Ali and Emre were twin brothers, and their mother was a 39-year-old housewife. She had severe congenital hearing loss.

SERC staff: The IEP development for students was carried out in cooperation with the education coordinator and the SLT of the SERC. To understand how the SERC functions, the therapies performed by the SLT were observed. The SERC speech and language therapist had a bachelor's degree in Speech and Language Therapy and was pursuing a master's degree in the same field. The education coordinator specialized in Psychology and held a master's degree in the field.

Validity committee member 1: A Professor Doctor in the Department of Education for the Hearing Impaired, who supported the planning and finalization phases of the research. He had experience with action research in the education of students with HL.

Validity committee member 2: A lecturer in the field of Speech and Language Therapy who provided expert feedback on therapy sessions and contributed to process planning. Her research focused on phonological awareness and speech sound disorders, and she taught these topics in the undergraduate Speech and Language Therapy program.

Validity committee member 3: An expert with 40 years of experience in the education and communication skills of children with hearing loss.

Validity committee member 4: A professor in the English Language Teaching program who also taught in the Speech and Language Therapy program.

Data Collection

In the present research, various data collection techniques were employed to ensure data diversity. The data sources included a researcher diary, interviews, observations, documents, video recordings, and standardized tests (Table 3).

Table 3

Data of the Research

Observation	Field notes on the sessions of the speech and language therapist in the SERC 50 pages
Video recordings	65 therapy videos, 21 assessment videos A total of 11 video recordings of validity committee meetings and 2 IEP meeting videos
Researcher diary	127 pages
Documents	Validity committee minutes, reports issued by the guidance and research center for the students, audiological tests, therapy plans and materials for students, and messages with families.
Interviews	Unstructured interviews with families 133 minutes in total
Standardized Tests:	Turkish Articulation and Phonology Test, Turkish (TEDİL: Test of Early Language Development-Third Edition and TODİL: Test of Language Development-Primary-Fourth Edition)

Data Analyses

An iterative and systematic qualitative data analysis approach was adopted in this action research. Data collection and analysis were conducted simultaneously, and the findings from each implementation cycle guided the planning of subsequent steps (Feldman et

al., 2018). The analysis involved rapid data review, comparison with the research questions, validation of findings, and the development of action plans for future practice. This approach ensured that analysis was not limited to a single stage but embedded throughout the entire research process in a continuous analytic cycle (Miles et al., 2014).

The researcher presented preliminary findings to the thesis monitoring committee and revised implementation strategies by the committee's feedback. This process reflected both reflective thinking and action-oriented decision-making, aligned with the fundamental principles of action research, where data collection, analysis, planning, and implementation proceed in an iterative, interconnected manner (Johnson, 2012; Mertler, 2014).

Trustworthiness

In qualitative action research, trustworthiness refers to the rigor and credibility of the entire research process, including data collection, analysis, and the reporting of findings (Mertler, 2014; Miles et al., 2014). To ensure trustworthiness in this study, several strategies were implemented. First, the researcher employed triangulation through the use of multiple data collection methods, thereby enhancing the credibility and depth of the findings. Following each speech and language therapy session, therapy videos were reviewed, and observational notes were documented in a reflective diary. These records, including the challenges experienced during sessions and observed student progress, were shared with a credibility committee composed of field experts. Feedback received from this committee guided the refinement of practices throughout the research process (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Before the implementation phase, the researcher conducted field observations at the SERC to gain contextual awareness. The researcher holds dual expertise as both a speech and language therapist and a special education specialist. Additionally, she previously worked for two years as a Teacher of the Hearing Impaired at a different SERC. This professional experience and dual-field expertise enabled the researcher to develop a deeper understanding of the context (Mertler, 2014).

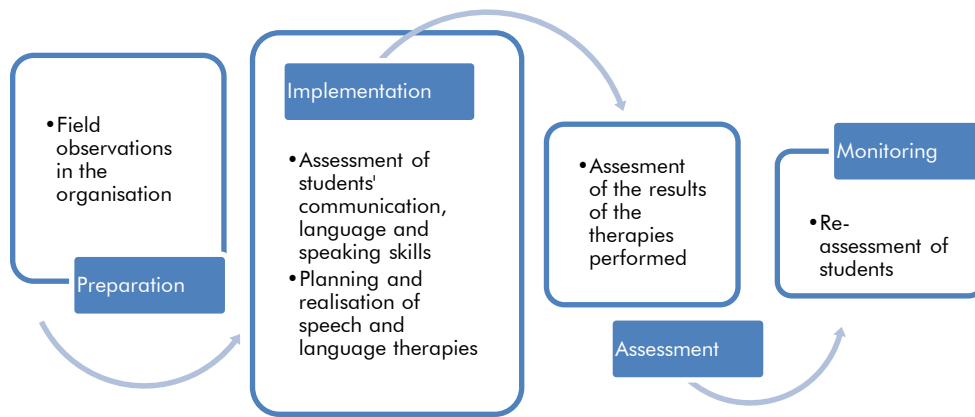
Research Ethics

In this research, ethical approval was obtained from the Anadolu University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee with the decision numbered 122612. Before this research, verbal and written information about this research was given to SERC managers and the coordinator, and permission was obtained. The families of the students participating in this study were informed about the research, and consent forms were signed. Families were informed at every stage of the research. The identity information of the families and students was kept confidential. Students were given code names in this study.

Findings

In this study, which was conducted in a SERC to provide speech and language therapy services to children with HL and DS, four main stages were found. The stages of this research included preparation, implementation of practices, assessment of students, and monitoring of student progress. This section presents the findings obtained from the action research in line with the four main research questions. First, the structure and delivery of the speech and language therapy service within the context of the SERC were examined. Second, the implementation process of speech and language therapy services for students with HL and DS was addressed. Third, students' speech and language improvements were assessed after the therapy sessions. During the monitoring phase, students were re-evaluated three months after the completion of the speech and language therapy sessions. Finally, the impact of the research process on the researcher's professional development and reflective practices, as the therapist conducting the study, was analyzed. The findings are presented in a manner consistent with the research questions and the emerging themes. Figure 2 shows the stages of this research visually.

Figure 2
Research Process



Preparation Phase: Observations Conducted in the SERC

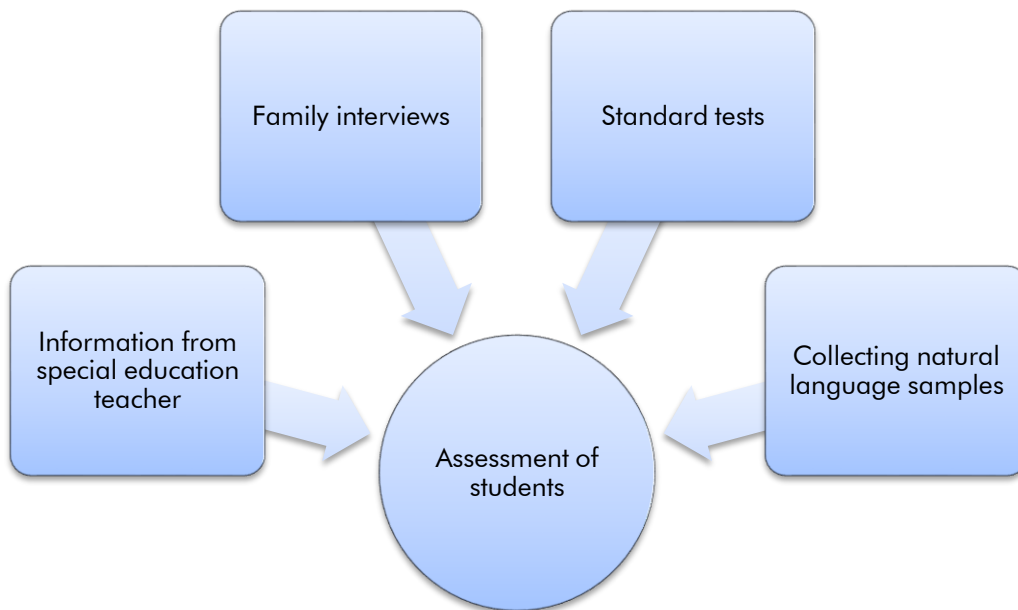
In the preparatory phase of this research, field observations were carried out to determine how the speech and language therapy support service provided in the SERC was implemented. The researcher conducted field observations focusing on the practices of the SLT working at the SERC. In total, 15 field observations were made, and field notes were recorded. The observations revealed that the students receiving services from the SLT had various diagnoses (e.g., autism, speech sound disorder, stuttering, HL) or had come to the SERC solely for assessment purposes. These students were referred to the

SLT by the SERC coordinator. One of the students with HL who attended during the observation period did not have a diagnostic report and had come for assessment only. The other student was enrolled at the SERC and was referred by the coordinator to determine whether speech and language therapy was needed. The SLT assessed students' speech and language skills through observation, family interviews, and standardized tests to determine the need for speech and language therapy. Following the assessment, the therapist planned the therapy process, informed families, and assigned homework (Field observation notes, pp. 1–50). Based on a meeting with the validity committee member 1, it was concluded that the field observations were sufficient, and it was decided to proceed to the implementation phase.

Implementation Phase: Speech and Language Therapy Practices for Students with HL and DS

During the implementation phase of the study, students' speech and language skills were assessed, and IEP plans were created. Then, therapies were planned based on these plans. Speech and language therapy services were provided to students. Student assessments included family interviews, input from special education teachers, analysis of natural language samples, and the administration of standardized tests to evaluate language and speech abilities (Figure 3).

Figure 3
Assessments of Students



After assessing the students' speech and language development, the areas that would receive speech and language therapy support were determined. Table 4 shows the areas in which support was provided. In determining the target areas for speech and language therapy, various factors were taken into account, including the results of the student's speech and language assessment, the educational and support services previously received, parental input, and the planned duration of the therapy.

Table 4

Language and Speech Areas Identified for Support After Assessment

Students	Language and Speech Areas Identified for Support
Ayşe	Articulation, pragmatics
Ali	Articulation, pragmatics
Emre	Articulation, pragmatics
Duru	Providing language therapy in the areas of morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics
Feyza	Providing language therapy in the areas of morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics

IEP Meetings: To create IEPs for the students, the researcher held two meetings with the coordinator of the SERC, the SLT working in the SERC, and committee member 1 at the SERC. In the meetings, the students' assessment results were discussed, and IEP decisions were made for the students.

Speech and language therapies with Ali

Individual speech and language therapy intervention was carried out with Ali for 15 weeks. The student who was assessed with the Articulation subtest of the Turkish Articulation and Phonology Test revealed that he had difficulty in producing only the phoneme /r / correctly. For 14 weeks, articulation therapies were carried out for the correct production of the phoneme /r /. In the therapies with the student, studies on the production of the phoneme /r / were generally carried out for the first 30 minutes. In some therapies, dialogues were planned to support the student's usage knowledge without disturbing the naturalness of the game. In some therapies, the student was asked to explain the rules of the game (Figures 4 and 5). For example: In one therapy session, Ali was asked to explain the rules of a game they had played before and discussed the rules (Video recording, No: 65):

Ali: "I choose one, the numbers are written on the paper, and it goes up to five. But if it was three, there would be a staircase at three. Then it goes to high numbers. The one who goes up to 100 wins. For example, there is a snake here. The snake takes us down, how far is its tail, then it goes down."

Researcher: "We're going down to the snake's tail."

Figures 4 and 5

Play in Therapy Session with Ali



100	99	98	97	96	95	94	93	92	91
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
80	79	78	77	76	75	74	73	72	71
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
60	59	58	57	56	55	54	53	52	51
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
40	39	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31
21	20	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Speech and language therapies with Emre

A total of 14 individual speech and language therapy sessions were conducted with Emre. In the therapy sessions, the primary focus was on the correct use and generalization of the phoneme /t/ in all word positions. Emre was able to produce the phoneme /t/ correctly in isolation, but during connected speech, he substituted it with the phoneme /k/ or its allophone. After three weeks of phoneme-level work, the generalization phase for /t/ was initiated, and while this phase continued, work on a new phoneme also began. Emre was able to produce the phoneme /tʃ/ correctly in isolation. (The /tʃ/ symbol, part of the International Phonetic Alphabet [IPA], represents a voiceless postalveolar affricate sound, as in the initial sound of the English word "chair." In Turkish, it corresponds to the letter "ç.") However, since he made various errors at the beginning and end of words, targeted practice was planned to support correct production of this phoneme in those positions. Articulation therapy with the /tʃ/ phoneme continued until the end of the intervention (Video Recording, No: 64). After the articulation sessions, age-appropriate games were played with Emre, and planned conversations were conducted. These activities were intended to support the pragmatic dimension of language use (Researcher's diary, p. 81).

Figure 6

A Therapy Session with Emre

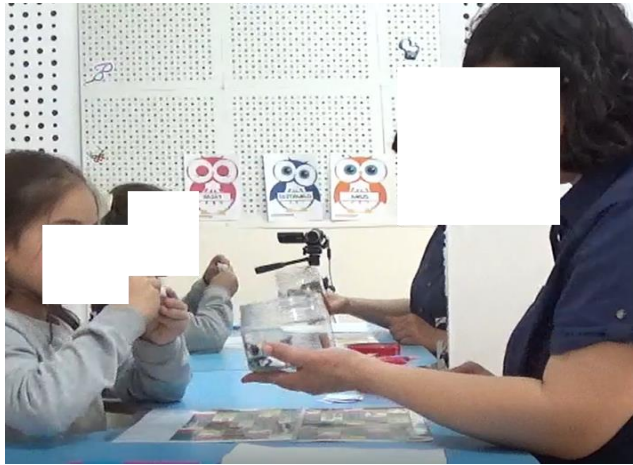


Speech and language therapies with Ayşe

A total of 12 individual speech and language therapy sessions were conducted with Ayşe. It was determined that Ayşe's language development matched her age level, except for a persistent difficulty with the phoneme /r / (Video recording, No: 63). For 12 weeks, articulation therapies were carried out for the correct production of the /r / phoneme. In some of the therapies with Ayşe, as with the other students, planned games were played and conversations were held to support pragmatics (Figure 7).

Figure 7

A Therapy Session with Ayşe



Speech and language therapies with Duru

14 individual speech and language therapy sessions were conducted with Duru. During the individual speech and language sessions with Duru, it was aimed to support her language development through planned conversations. The therapist prepared pre-therapy materials and identified possible questions about the child's language development. The mother attended and observed all sessions, and she also conducted some of the conversations herself. The mother actively participated in the therapies to observe and implement strategies that support language development. When Duru began therapy, she typically used single-word utterances. The therapy sessions aimed to support her in producing two- to three-word sentences and to enhance her use of morphemes and vocabulary. For example, in one session, the therapist introduced a sequencing card activity about a picnic. During this session, which also included the mother's participation, a conversation was conducted based on the visual stimulus (Figure 8). When the researcher asked, "What are you going to put on it?" Duru said, "Plate" and the researcher expanded it as "I will put a plate". Duru repeated, "Tabak koyacağım. (I will put a plate)" (Video recording, No: 39).

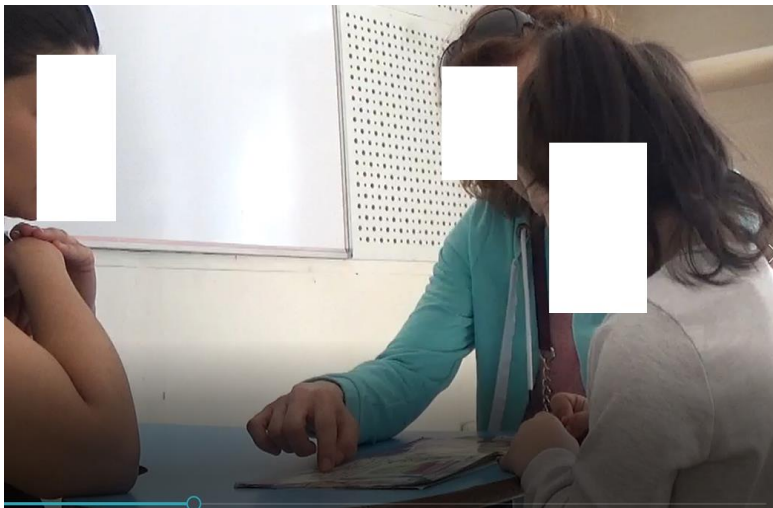
Figure 8
A Therapy Session with Duru



Speech and language therapies with Feyza

Feyza participated in this study after the other students. Therefore, 10 individual speech and language therapy sessions were conducted. In the therapies, efforts were made to increase the use of three-word sentences, to support her in the morphological field, and to increase her vocabulary. The mother participated in all therapies. The mother was also asked to participate in the dialogues (Figure 9)

Figure 9
A Therapy Session with Feyza



Assessment Phase: Monitoring the Progress of Students with HL and DS

This section presents the findings obtained from the assessment of the students. Students' performances were regularly assessed after the therapies and their progress was shared in the validity committees. At the end of the therapies, a final assessment was made and reported (Figure 10 and 11).

Figure 10.
Assessment of Students with Hearing Loss

Ali

- The first aim of the therapy with Ali was the correct production of the phoneme /r/. Ali was not able to produce the target phoneme in isolation. He gained awareness about the location and form of the target phoneme (Video recording, No:65). The planned conversation had some benefits in terms of the learner's usage knowledge.

Emre

- In Emre's spontaneous utterances, it was found that he rarely made errors with the phoneme /t/ and generally used it correctly (Video recording, No: 68). In the assesment, it was observed that he could produce the phoneme /tʃ/ with 90% accuracy in all positions of the words. However, due to the termination of the therapies, the phoneme /tʃ/ could not be studied at the sentence level. In Emre's therapies, the use of language was supported by the conversations about the rules of various games. These studies contributed positively to Emre's language development (Researcher Diary, p. 82).

Ayşe

The last assessment session determined that she could not produce the phoneme /r/ correctly in isolation. At the end of the therapies, Ayşe's mother expressed that she found the therapies useful. At the end of the therapies, the researcher tried to support other areas of language during activities and games (Researcher's Diary, p. 84).

Figure 11*Assessment of Students with Down Syndrome***Duru**

- In Duru's final assessment, it was observed that she could repeat the negativity suffix and used it spontaneously in the activity. It was observed that she could use the complement suffix. She started to use two-word sentences. She started to use words, such as "cow, horse, chick" instead of animal sounds. Since the weather and the day of the week were routinely discussed before each therapy, the child started to use expressions, such as "Yağmur yağıyor (*it is raining*).". She answers the question of what day it is today? (Video Recording, No: 69).

Feyza

- A total of 10 speech and language therapy sessions were conducted with Feyza. At the end of the therapy, Feyza was able to use the negativity suffix correctly. During daily conversations, she usually responds with simple two-word sentences. She can repeat and use three-word sentences, but it was observed that the frequency of such sentences was less than two-word sentences (Video recording, No: 70). To the why question, Feyza gave answers. For example: "Hasta olmuş. (*She got sick.*)". It was observed that the student started to answer why questions (Video recording, No: 70).

Monitoring Phase: Reassessment of Students

Three months after completing the speech and language therapy sessions, follow-up assessments revealed that Ali and Ayşe were still unable to produce the /r/ phoneme in isolation. Emre was able to use the /t/ phoneme correctly in spontaneous speech and produced the /tʃ/ phoneme accurately at the lexical level, although errors persisted in spontaneous speech. Feyza began to use the "why" question spontaneously and produced two- to three-word sentences. However, due to difficulty in forming longer sentences, she often used simpler expressions. In Duru's follow-up assessment, her mother brought books from home and had a conversation with Duru about her drawings. During the interaction, the mother was observed giving her child adequate response time and using a variety of question types, including "why." Duru was able to spontaneously produce two-word sentences such as "Anne kızacak (Mum will be angry)." In the follow-up assessment, no significant changes were observed in the students' speech and language skills (Researcher's diary, p. 101).

Contributions of Speech and Language Therapy Service Provision Process to the Researcher

The researcher wrote a reflective diary throughout the whole process. Expert opinion was obtained from the members of the validity committee. The videos of the therapies performed in the committees were watched by the committee members, and feedback was given. During the implementation process, the researcher constantly questioned how to provide more effective therapies for the students and planned actions to solve the problems that emerged. For example, after the therapy session, the researcher reflected on the process and wrote the following note in her diary: "I noticed that the mother had

difficulty expanding the child's language and waiting for the child for a sufficient amount of time. Maybe I should review my modeling style. I was able to increase the time I allocated to the mother today and observe the interaction better." (Researcher's diary, p. 69). She received support from Committee Member 1 for reflective diary writing. Committee member 1 read the diaries and wrote her suggestions using email.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, support services were provided to students with HL and DS in a SERC. During the preparation phase, field observations revealed that students with speech and language disorders were referred by the education coordinator and received assessment and therapy services from the specialist. However, a significant limitation observed in the process was that these services were typically carried out individually, without systematic IEP team collaboration. Similarly, previous studies have indicated that specialists often work in isolation when assessing students and determining the goals of support services, and that structured IEP teamwork is not implemented (Aslan-Armutcu et al., 2024; Gürgür et al., 2016).

One of the key reasons for this issue is the intense daily schedules of professionals working in SERCs. As highlighted in the literature, specialists conduct consecutive individual sessions throughout the day, leaving them with little to no time for collaborative planning (Aslan-Armutcu et al., 2024; Eldeniz-Çetin & Şen, 2017; Yenigün & Odluyurt, 2020; Yıldız, 2023). The lack of available time and structural limitations stand out as major barriers to effective IEP team collaboration. Yet, the literature consistently emphasizes the need for a cooperative, team-based approach involving all stakeholders in the planning and implementation of support services (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2010; Mathers et al., 2024; Veyvoda et al., 2019; Wallace et al., 2022). Therefore, fostering a culture of teamwork in SERCs, revising organizational structures, and allocating designated time within working hours for professionals to engage in collaborative IEP development should be considered essential.

This study involved three students with HL. The therapies focused on speech sound disorders and targeted the phonemes that the students with HL struggled to produce. Ayşe and Ali could not produce the /r/ phoneme correctly, though they did not have difficulty with other phonemes. Despite therapy, producing the /r/ phoneme remained challenging for them, which is consistent with findings in other languages (Gosling, 2012). Unlike phonemes such as /b/, /p/, and /m/, which have visible articulation cues, /r/ lacks these cues, making it more difficult to teach. Previous research has also documented this articulation challenge in individuals with HL (Girgin & Büyükköse, 2015; Büyükköse & Girgin, 2018). Emre successfully learned to produce the /t/ phoneme through therapy and generalized this skill to sentence-level speech. He also produced the phoneme /tʃ/ correctly in various word positions. Post-therapy activities included games in which students explained rules to enhance skills such as providing

information and maintaining communication by rephrasing when misunderstood (Paul & Norbury, 2012). This study involved conducting articulation therapy with students once a week for a limited period. There is no definitive research on the optimal frequency of speech sound disorder therapy for children with hearing loss. Kaipa and Peterson (2016) emphasized the need for more research on therapy duration, suggesting that higher intensity may improve outcomes; however, they did not provide any specific recommendations. Further research is needed to determine the ideal frequency and duration of articulation therapy for students with hearing loss.

Individuals with DS exhibit a complex language profile characterized by pervasive difficulties across multiple components (Kent & Vorperian, 2013; Witecy & Pence, 2017; Smith et al., 2017; Lee et al., 2017). Their sentence construction skills are usually limited to short, simple structures, and they often acquire morphological elements such as tense, person, and plural markers late or use them incorrectly. This negatively affects their grammatical accuracy (Smith et al., 2017; Katsarou & Andreou, 2022). The findings of this study are consistent with previous research. Students with DS demonstrated particular difficulties in syntax, morphology, and other areas. Their utterances were generally short and lacked some grammatical markers, confirming the need for early, individualized interventions targeting these domains. In response to these needs, the current study implemented an intervention aimed at supporting language development through planned, natural conversations, encouraging active maternal participation. Language support strategies were modeled directly for mothers, who participated actively in therapy sessions. Paternal involvement was limited due to work-related constraints. Nevertheless, mothers' active role made a meaningful contribution to the therapeutic process. Previous studies have emphasized that family involvement improves therapy outcomes and equips parents with strategies they can apply in daily interactions (Erim & Seçkin-Yılmaz, 2021; Owens, 2016; Seager et al., 2022). Furthermore, therapy planning should consider the child's individual needs and the level of family engagement (Klatte et al., 2020; McKean et al., 2012; Roberts & Kaiser, 2011). In this context, it is important to regularly inform families about the child's development, even if progress is slow. The findings of this study suggest that language interventions for students with DS should be planned and include regular family involvement. In this study, children with DS received language and communication support only one day per week. However, previous systematic reviews have highlighted the potential benefits of higher-intensity interventions. For example, Seager et al. (2023) emphasized that high-intensity interventions implemented in naturalistic settings and co-delivered by parents and professionals may yield more positive outcomes for children with DS.

In this study, the researcher planned and implemented the speech and language therapies. Following the planning and implementation of the therapies, she kept reflective diaries about her practice. Reflective practice involves processes that help individuals increase their awareness and improve their therapeutic skills. The literature emphasizes that reflective practices are important for enhancing the practices of speech and language therapy students and therapists (Cook et al., 2019; Geller & Foley, 2009a, 2009b). Throughout the implementation process, the researcher developed a critical

perspective on her interventions and continually questioned how to improve her practice. Previous action research studies have also reported improvements in researchers' practices (Akay & Gürgür, 2018; Ertürk-Mustul, 2021; Tozak et al., 2018).

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

One limitation of this study is that it was conducted in a single SERC with a small sample consisting of three children with HL and two with DS. Additionally, due to constraints specific to the SERC, speech and language therapy sessions were limited to once per week, which may have affected the intensity and overall impact of the intervention. These limitations should be taken into account when interpreting the findings.

Future research could address these limitations by implementing studies in multiple settings with larger and more diverse samples. Investigating speech and language therapy services delivered within school environments may offer further insights into integrated and inclusive support models. Studies exploring collaboration among professionals (e.g., teachers, speech-language therapists, and special education staff) are also recommended. In addition, research focusing on parental involvement in therapy processes, mentoring and reflective practices for speech-language therapist candidates, and interdisciplinary teamwork could enrich the existing literature and contribute to more effective service delivery for students with special needs.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Dil ve konuşma sorunları bireylerde iletişim güçlüklerine ve aynı zamanda akademik ve sosyal becerilerde zorluklara yol açabilmektedir (Hitchcock vd., 2015). Özel gereksinimli öğrenciler iletişim, dil ve konuşma alanlarında güçlüklerle karşılaşmaktadırlar. Bu güçlüklerin azaltılması ve giderilmesi için özel gereksinimli öğrencilere uygun destek hizmetlerinin sunulması önem taşımaktadır (Allen & Mayo, 2020; Westby, 2021). Özel gereksinimli öğrencilere sunulan dil ve konuşma terapisi; konuşma, dil, iletişim ve yutma bozukluklarının değerlendirilmesi, önlenmesi ve terapisini kapsamaktadır (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association [ASHA], t.y.).

Özel gereksinimli öğrenciler ifadesi özel eğitim, dil ve konuşma terapisi ve diğer destek hizmetlere ihtiyaç duyan farklı grupları kapsamaktadır. İşitme kayıplı (İK) öğrenciler bu grupta yer almaktadır. İK öğrenciler dil ve konuşma becerilerinin ediniminde çeşitli güçlükler yaşayabilmektedir. İK öğrencilerde konuşma sesi bozuklukları, dildeki biçimbirimleri edinme ve kullanmada, dilbilgisi kurallarını kullanmada, sözcük dağarcığının geliştirmede, kullanımbilgisi becerilerinde gecikmeler ortaya çıkabilmektedir (Girgin & Büyükköse, 2015; Goberis vd., 2012; Spencer & Guo, 2013; Zaidman-Zait & Most, 2020).

Down sendromlu (DS) bireyler, dilin birçok bileşeninde yaygın zorluklar sergilemekte; ifadeleri genellikle kısa, basit yapılarla sınırlı kalmakta ve zaman, kişi, çoğul gibi biçimbilimsel öğeleri geç ya da hatalı edinmektedirler. Öğrencilerin kısa ve bazı biçimbilgisel yapıları kullanmakta yaşadıkları sorunlar, bu alanlara yönelik erken ve bireyselleştirilmiş müdahalelerin gerekliliğini göstermektedir (Katsarou & Andreou, 2022; Kent & Vorperian, 2013; Smith vd., 2017; Witecy & Pence, 2017). Aile katılımının terapötik süreci güçlendirdiği ve ebeveynlerin günlük etkileşimlerde kullanabilecekleri stratejiler edinmelerini sağladığını vurgulanmaktadır (Erim & Seçkin-Yılmaz, 2021; Owens, 2016; Seager vd., 2022). Ayrıca, terapilerin çocuğun bireysel ihtiyaçları ve ailenin katılım düzeyi dikkate alınarak planlanması gerektiği belirtilmektedir (McKean vd., 2012).

Özel gereksinimli öğrencilere dil ve konuşma terapisi destek hizmeti veren dil ve konuşma terapistleri ile gerçekleştirilen araştırmalar, terapistlerin özel gereksinimli öğrencilere yönelik terapileri daha etkili bir şekilde planlayabilmeleri ve gerçekleştirebilmeleri için sürekli mesleki gelişim ve bilgi güncellemelerine ihtiyaç duyduklarını göstermektedir. Dil ve konuşma terapistlerinin özel gereksinimli öğrencilerin terapilerine dair derinlemesine bilgi sahibi olmaları ve güncel yaklaşımları takip etmeleri, bu alanda dil ve konuşma terapistlerine yol gösterecek daha fazla bilimsel araştırma yapılması önem taşınmaktadır (Houston ve Perioge, 2010; Kalaycı, 2019; Page vd., 2018; Savaş & Toğram, 2013). Bu açıdan, okul dışı destek hizmeti sunan özel eğitim ve rehabilitasyon merkezinde (ÖERM) dil ve konuşma terapisi hizmetinin sunum sürecini inceleyen bir araştırmanın bulgularının, uzmanların sundukları hizmetin

niteliğini geliştirmeleri açısından yol gösterici olması bakımından önemli olduğu söylenebilir. Araştırmada bu bakış açısıyla ÖERM’de uzman bir dil ve konuşma terapistinin özel gereksinimli öğrencilere yönelik dil ve konuşma terapisi sunma sürecinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır.

ÖERM’de İK ve DS öğrencilere sunulan dil ve konuşma terapisi hizmetinin incelenmesi amacıyla gerçekleştirilen bu çalışma eylem araştırması şeklinde desenlenmiştir. Araştırmacı öncelikle konuyu belirlemiş, ÖERM’de özel gereksinimli öğrencilere yönelik hizmetin nasıl gerçekleştiğine dair saha gözlemleri gerçekleştirmiştir. Eş zamanlı olarak alanyazın taramasına devam etmiştir. Araştırmaya katılan özel gereksinimli öğrencilerin belirlenmesi sonrası öğrencilerin değerlendirmelerini gerçekleştirmiş ve öğrencilere yönelik planlamalar yapmıştır. Geçerlilik komitelerinde verilen kararlar ve bireysel eğitim plan (BEP) amaçları doğrultusunda dil ve konuşma terapisi hizmetini sunmuştur.

Araştırmada verilerin çeşitliliğini sağlamak için farklı veri kaynaklarından yararlanılmıştır. Araştırmacı günlüğü, görüşme, gözlem, doküman incelemesi, video kayıtları ve standart testler kullanılmıştır. Eylem araştırması olarak gerçekleştirilen araştırmada sistematik ve analitik bir yaklaşımla analiz edilmiştir. Veriler toplandıktan sonra eş zamanlı analizler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Elde edilen bulgular ışığında bir sonraki adım planlaması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Sistematik analiz verilerin hızla gözden geçirilmesi, araştırma soruları ile karşılaştırılması ortaya çıkan sonuçların sınanması ve sonraki aşamaların planlanması ve gerçekleştirilmesi şeklinde gerçekleştirilmiştir (Feldman vd., 2018).

Araştırmanın katılımcıları 3 İK öğrenci ve 2 DS öğrenci, onların anneleridir. Ayrıca kurumda gerçekleştirilen BEP toplantılarına kurum koordinatörü ve kurumdaki dil ve konuşma terapisti de katılım göstermişlerdir. Araştırmanın diğer katılımcıları geçerlik komitesi üyeleridir. Araştırmada hazırlık, uygulama, değerlendirme ve izleme olmak üzere dört aşama olduğu bulunmuştur. Hazırlık aşamasında kurumdaki dil ve konuşma terapistinin uygulamaları gözlenerek saha notları tutulmuştur. Araştırmanın uygulama aşamasında öğrencilerin dil ve konuşma becerileri değerlendirilmiş, bu değerlendirmeler sonrasında bireyselleştirilmiş eğitim planları oluşturulmuş ve bu planlar doğrultusunda öğrencilerin terapileri planlanmıştır. Öğrencilere dil ve konuşma terapisi hizmeti sunulmuştur. Değerlendirme ve izleme aşamalarında öğrencilerin dil ve konuşma becerileri değerlendirilmiş ve raporlanmıştır.

İK öğrencilerle sesletim terapileri, DS öğrencilerle dil terapileri gerçekleştirilmiştir. Ali ve Ayşe ile /r/ sesbiriminin doğru üretimi üzerine çalışılmıştır. Öğrenciler terapilerin sonunda /r/ sesbiriminin doğru üretimini gerçekleştirememiştir. Emre ile terapilerde öncelikle /t/ sesbiriminin doğru üretilmesi ve genellemesi üzerine çalışılmış, ardından /tʃ/ sesbirimi üzerine odaklanılmıştır. Emre /t/ sesbirimini cümle düzeyinde genellemiştir, /tʃ/ sesbirimini sözcük içinde tüm pozisyonlarda doğru kullanmaya başlamıştır. Tüm öğrencilerde planlı oyunlar ve söyleşilerle kullanım bilgisi alanı desteklenmiştir. DS öğrencilerle dil becerilerini destekleyecek terapiler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Her iki öğrencinin annesi de terapilerde katılım göstermiştir. Terapilerin öğrencilerin dil gelişimine çeşitli

katkıları sağladığı görülmüştür. Bu katkılardan bazıları şunlardır: Duru iki kelimelik cümle kullanmaya başlamıştır. Feyza neden sorusunu anlayıp cevaplar vermeye başlamıştır.

Araştırmacı tüm süreç boyunca yansıtıcı araştırmacı günlüğü yazmıştır. Geçerlik komitesinde üyelerden uzman görüşü almıştır. Komitelerde gerçekleştirilen terapilerin videoları komite üyeleri tarafından izlenmiş ve dönütler verilmiştir. Uygulama süreci, terapilerin etkililiğini artırmaya yönelik sürekli sorgulamalar ve karşılaşılan sorunlara çözüm getirecek eylemlerin planlanmasıyla yürütülmüştür. Sürecin araştırmacının uygulama becerilerine de katkısı olduğu görülmüştür.

Sonuç olarak ÖERM’de gerçekleştirilen dil ve konuşma terapisi hizmeti sunmaya yönelik bu araştırmanın öğrencilere, özellikle DS öğrencilerin annelerine ve araştırmacıya çeşitli katkıları olmuştur. Dil ve konuşma terapisi uygulamalarında yansıtıcı öz değerlendirmelerin önemli olduğu düşünülmektedir. Özel gereksinimli öğrencilere yönelik destek hizmet sağlayan kurumlarda uzmanlar arasında işbirliği gerçekleştirmeye yönelik olanakların oluşturulması gerekmektedir.

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Analyzing the Movie “Catch Me If You Can” in Terms of Character Traits

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Abstract

This study aims to analyse the movie “Catch Me If You Can” in the context of character traits. This research employed a qualitative approach, with data analyzed using document analysis methods. In analyzing the movie content, the main character was examined based on the character traits listed in the Index of Character Virtues. According to the findings, the main character, Frank Abagnale, exhibits positive behaviors related to the traits of perseverance, wisdom, and optimism. Conversely, his behaviors concerning humility and forgiveness were observed to be negative. Additionally, in terms of kindness, closeness, peace, honesty, he demonstrated both positive and negative behaviors. This study suggests that family structure and familial relationships play a significant role in shaping Frank Abagnale's character traits. The movie "Catch Me If You Can" can be used as a course material in "Character and Value Education," and "Positive Psychology" courses.

Keywords: Character, Character traits, Character Virtues Index, Movie analysis, Catch Me If You Can

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Introduction

Despite the challenges in life, every person possesses certain strengths (Bannink, 2017). Character strengths are defined as positive personal attributes (Peterson, 2006), whereas virtues are psychological processes that enable one to acquire thoughts and behaviors that contribute to oneself and their environment (Ekşi et al., 2017). Studies classify virtues under various dimensions (Macdonald et al., 2008; McGrath, 2014; Shryack et al., 2010). In their comprehensive research, Peterson and Seligman (2004) defined 24 character strengths (VIA Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues). According to this research, the 24 strengths are grouped under six virtues: Wisdom and knowledge (creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning, perspective), courage (bravery, persistence, integrity/honestly, vitality), humanity (love, kindness, social intelligence), justice (citizenship, fairness, leadership), temperance (forgiveness and mercy, prudence, humility/modesty, prudence, self-regulation/self-control) and transcendence (appreciation of beauty and excellence, gratitude, hope, humor, spirituality).

Studies focusing on character strengths aim to enhance well-being and success by identifying and fostering these strong attributes (Güldal, 2023). In the Character Virtues Index developed by Liston (2014), character traits are evaluated under 11 dimensions: perseverance, humility, optimism, kindness, closeness, peace, wisdom, forgiveness, honesty, spirituality, and courage, with a focus on their progression over time in character development.

The environment in which a person is born and raised shapes character by developing character traits positively or negatively (Kayan, 2022). Scientists also agree that the strong aspects of character are reflections of family and school life during the healthy growth process (Li & Liu, 2016). Hence, character possesses a developable quality. The development of character strengths is essential for children's and adolescents' social adaptation (Liu & Wang, 2021). Research on character development highlights the significance of character education and values education (Levent & Baş Doğan, 2022). One of the materials used for character education is movies (Yilmaz, 2017).

Movies can create a stimulating effect by being recurrently recalled in human memory over a long period (Niemić & Wedding, 2011). The intertwining of psychology and cinema allows the use of movies for educational purposes (Derin & Voltan Acar, 2016). Research by Canpolat (2021) concluded that TV series and movies focusing on psychology can be attention-grabbing due to their incorporation of real-life stories, potentially beneficial for developing character strengths and preventing mental disorders. Rufer (2014) regarded character strengths as the essence of a good life, emphasizing that movies offer a rich resource for their formation and development.

The use of movies as a therapeutic tool has become more prevalent in educational fields in recent years (Şenol Durak & Fıfıloğlu, 2007). "Catch Me If You Can" a movie inspired by real events, is one such example that encompasses various character traits and their development. This study aims to analyze the movie "Catch Me If You Can" in the context of the character traits listed in the Character Virtues Index developed by Liston (2014). The Character Virtues Index, designed to evaluate character traits, was used as a

checklist in the content analysis of the movie's script. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the field as movie analysis and raise awareness regarding the development of character traits.

Method

Research Design

This study was qualitative research that focused on character traits in the movie "Catch Me If You Can". In this study, document analysis was utilized as the qualitative research method. Documents analyzed in qualitative research include texts and images not influenced by the researcher (Kıral, 2020). Document analysis systematically evaluates books, reports, archival files, videos, audio recordings, photographs, etc., related to the research subject in their original form (Karataş, 2015). Cinema movies fall under the category of audiovisual documents (Geray, 2014). Movies used in qualitative research provide comprehensive insights for researchers on the topic (Zengin, 2019). Therefore, the scenes from the movie "Catch Me If You Can" were treated as documents in this study.

Procedure

The screenplay for the movie analyzed is based on the real-life story of Frank Abagnale, known as a former fraudster (Solon, 2017). Information regarding the movie is provided in Table 1:

Table 1

Details of the Movie

Title:	Catch Me If You Can	
Director:	Steven Spielberg	
Screenwriter:	Jeff Nathanson	
Release Date:	December 25, 2002 (USA) January 31, 2003 (Türkiye)	
Cast	Leonardo DiCaprio Tom Hanks Christopher Walken Nathalie Baye Martin Sheen Nancy Lenahan Amy Adams James Brolin	Main character (Frank Abagnale Jr.) FBI agent (Carl Hanratty) Father (Frank Abagnale Sr.) Mother (Paula Abagnale) Brenda's father (Roger Strong) Brenda's mother (Carol Strong) Nurse (Brenda Strong) Father's friend (Jack Barnes)
Genre:	Crime, Drama	
Country:	USA	
IMDb Rating:	8.1 (14.01.2025)	
Duration:	141 minutes	

Data Analysis

In this study, the content analysis method was used to analyze data collected through document review. Content analysis is a technique used to draw inferences from transcriptions, recordings, and visual or written media messages (Olgun, 2008). It is also one of the fundamental strategies employed in document review studies (Armstrong, 2021). The analysis of movie scenes was conducted using a checklist containing character traits. Since the aim was to assess the character development of the movie's main character, Frank Abagnale Jr., the checklist was prepared with the character traits included in the Character Virtues Index developed by Liston (2014). The checklist is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Checklist

Character Traits	Definition
Perseverance	Continuing effort to complete one's goal despite difficulty and delay.
Humility	The willingness to admit mistakes, enjoy other's success, and know one's strengths and weaknesses without need for acclaim.
Optimism	Hopefulness, positivity, confidence, and enthusiasm.
Kindness	Charitable, compassionate, and protective treatment of others.
Closeness	Relational awareness enabling loving, safe attachment.
Peace	Calmness despite agitation and stress.
Courage	Brave, noble, reasoned choices to act despite danger.
Wisdom	Perception and foresight to make good decisions.
Spirituality	Awareness of transcendence or divinity that influences mood, thought, and behavior.
Forgiveness	Overcoming reactivity to perceived injustice.
Honesty	Truthful overtly and covertly; authentic, creditable; without duplicity or deceit; choosing not to lie, cheat, or steal.

Credibility and Ethics

Credibility and transferability are emphasized in qualitative research over the validity and reliability used in quantitative studies (Tutar, 2022). Credibility relates to the recognition of experiences in the study content by others (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011), while transferability refers to the reproducibility of the research design or findings with different participants or contexts (Arslan, 2022). One fundamental measure to ensure these aspects is providing detailed descriptions with strong descriptors (Johnson et al., 2020). In this study, comprehensive information across all phases of this research was presented; findings resulting from the data analyses were duly tabulated and clearly outlined.

In qualitative research, credibility can be established through prolonged engagement (Long & Johnson, 2000). In line with this, the movie "Catch Me If You Can" was viewed multiple times at intervals throughout the data collection and analysis process. The first viewing aimed to develop a general understanding of the movie and to determine its

relevance within the research framework. During the second viewing, attention was given to the dialogues and non-verbal communication elements to identify character traits. In the third viewing, the movie was segmented into distinct sequences. The fourth viewing involved a detailed analysis of each sequence, during which the character's traits were evaluated using the checklist.

An expert examination can be employed to ensure credibility (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). This involves a non-research-involved expert reviewing the study to ensure no issues in the researcher's analyses or interpretations (Arslan, 2022). In this study, opinions from two experts with specialty degrees in clinical psychology and educational sciences were consulted, and each study phase was re-evaluated with these specialists. Data for this study were not collected from human participants. Thus, it has been reported by the Directorate of the Institute of Educational Sciences of Marmara University with the document dated 20.05.2024 and numbered 796614 that this study does not require an ethics committee application.

Findings

In this study, the movie was segmented into sequences, and their display locations in the movie were determined. Subsequently, positive and negative behaviors related to the character traits in the Character Virtues Index observed in the main character during these sequences were identified. Finally, scenes displaying each character trait and related behaviors of the main character were outlined. The character traits "spirituality" and "courage" were not distinctly evident and were therefore excluded from the study. Table 3 presents the time stamps of sequences in the movie used for analysis.

Table 3

Time Stamps of Sequences in the Movie

Scenes	Scene time intervals	Scenes	Scene time intervals	Scenes	Scene time intervals
S1	03:09-04:54	S17	34:04-35:43	S33	89:09-90:39
S2	04:55-08:55	S18	35:44-37:35	S34	90:40-92:12
S3	08:56-11:01	S19	37:36-39:14	S35	92:13-96:06
S4	11:02-12:50	S20	39:15-41:25	S36	98:26-103:34
S5	12:51-14:07	S21	41:26-44:31	S37	103:35-105:54
S6	14:08-16:01	S22	44:32-49:09	S38	105:55-107:44
S7	16:02-18:36	S23	49:10-56:56	S39	107:45-109:56
S8	18:37-19:05	S24	56:57-58:35	S40	112:24-118:00
S9	19:06-21:15	S25	58:36-59:54	S41	118:01-120:03
S10	21:16-21:53	S26	63:16-66:35	S42	120:04-121:17
S11	21:54-22:50	S27	70:06-73:37	S43	121:18-124:00
S12	22:51-26:00	S28	73:38-75:06	S44	124:01-125:40
S13	26:01-29:03	S29	75:07-75:21	S45	125:41-127:06
S14	29:32-32:32	S30	76:53-78:12	S46	127:07-132:33
S15	32:33-32:49	S31	82:27-85:11	S47	132:34-135:58
S16	32:50-34:03	S32	85:12-88:02		

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Perseverance

The scenes in which the main character displays the trait of perseverance, and the behaviors related to this trait are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Perseverance and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S2	Escaping from prison despite being ill	Positive
S23	Successfully escaping just before being captured in the hotel room	Positive
S33	Trying to learn legal knowledge	Positive
S36	Escaping just before being captured at the wedding	Positive
S39	Hiding among the flight attendants to escape unnoticed	Positive
S42	Escaping from the restroom while being transported by plane	Positive
S47	Working hard to pass the bar exam	Positive

Perseverance reflects one's ability to progress towards their goals despite encountering obstacles (Demirci & Ekşi, 2015). As seen in Table 4, throughout the movie, the main character pursues his aims with determination in challenging situations.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Humility

The scenes in which the main character displays the trait of humility, and the behaviors related to this trait are outlined in Table 5.

Table 5

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Humility and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S17	Acting like a real pilot when a young child approaches while wearing a pilot uniform	Negative
S18	Engaging in dialogue with bank clerks and managers in a manner that presents himself as superior	Negative
S24	Enjoying being compared to James Bond in a fraud news article and trying to portray himself differently	Negative
S25	Emphasizing that one car in front of a building is just one of his cars	Negative

Humility is characterized by the acceptance of mistakes, the enjoyment of others' successes, and the awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses without seeking praise (Liston, 2014). Individuals possessing this trait do not highlight their own successes to draw attention (Kabakçı, 2013). As seen in Table 5, however, the main character occasionally attempts to attract attention by presenting himself differently in the movie.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Optimism

The scenes in which the main character exhibits the trait of optimism, and the behaviors related to this trait are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Optimism and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive / Negative
S15	Setting a goal to become a passenger airplane pilot and informing his father in writing	Positive

Optimism is a trait defined by focusing on the positive and believing that good things will happen in the future (Avşaroğlu & Okutan, 2018). A high level of optimism is associated with an individual's ability to plan their career, have confidence in career decisions, and set career objectives (Creed et al., 2002). In the movie, the main character's decision to aspire to be a pilot is influenced by an actual pilot, and his communication of this goal to his father (S15) exemplifies positive behavior related to the trait of optimism.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Kindness

The scenes in which the main character displays the trait of kindness, and the behaviors related to this trait are outlined in Table 7.

Table 7

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Kindness and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S4	Bringing a cloth to clean after his mother spills a drink on the carpet	Positive
S8	Disposing of his mother's cigarette for her health	Positive
S22	Efforts to support his father financially and socially	Positive
S27	Supporting the crying nurse	Positive
S28	Belittling a colleague by the answer given to their question when starting work	Negative
S35	Attempting to support his father in improving his relationship with his mother	Positive
S44	Assisting Agent Carl with his knowledge to catch the check fraudster	Positive

Kindness signifies being helpful, compassionate, and protective towards others (Liston, 2014). A person's sense of compassion is closely associated with demonstrating generous and thoughtful behaviors (Yıldız, 2022). As seen in Table 7, the main character mainly exhibits positive behaviors related to kindness.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Closeness

The scenes in which the main character displays the trait of closeness, and the behaviors related to this trait are detailed in Table 8.

Table 8

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Closeness and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S3	Listening attentively to his father during the award ceremony and embracing him in pride	Positive
S4	Dancing with his mother and actively participating in dialogues while they dance	Positive
S7	Playfully joking with his father about his mother	Positive
S12	Realizing that his mother is cheating on his father	Negative
S13	Learning about his parents' divorce in an unhealthy manner and being forced to choose between them	Negative
S22	Having a sincere meal with his father	Positive
S26	Emphasizing that Agent Carl has no one to contact when he tries to reach out before Christmas	Negative
S28	Establishing eye contact with Brenda in a warm manner that evokes a sense of closeness	Positive
S31	Having dinner with Brenda's family	Positive
S34	Spending an evening singing with Brenda's family in a family setting	Positive
S35	Learning that his mother has married his father's friend	Negative
S36	Damaging the trust in his relationship with Brenda by revealing his true identity just before the wedding	Negative
S37	Completely ruining his relationship by confessing to agents while planning to escape with Brenda	Negative
S41	Informing him that his father has died while on the plane despite stating that Carl could meet his father	Negative
S43	Feeling disappointment upon looking through the window and seeing his mother's new husband and daughter	Negative
S44	Celebrating Christmas and receiving comic book gifts from Carl	Positive
S46	Realizing Carl's lack of attention to him while he is adjusting to the job and discovering that Carl lied regarding his child	Negative

Closeness signifies the ability to form loving and trusting relationships (Liston, 2014). Throughout the movie, positive and negative behaviors related to the trait of closeness exhibited by the main character can be observed as summarized in Table 8.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Peace

The scenes in which the main character exhibits the trait of peace, and the behaviors related to this trait are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Peace and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S1	Appearing calm while admitting his name and acknowledging the person who captured him during a TV program revealing his fraud	Positive
S10	Biting his nails and shaking his legs while the principal recounts what he did to his parents at school	Negative
S12	Not reacting when realizing his mother has cheated on his father	Positive

S13	Displaying tense body language when forced to choose one parent after learning about their divorce	Negative
S17	Clenching and shaking his hands while trying on his uniform after lying about its loss	Negative
S20	Showing anxiety as the plane takes off	Negative
S23	Acting coolly while deceiving the agent that has come to capture him	Positive
S35	Becoming tense upon learning that his mother is married to his father's close friend	Negative
S36	Worrying during the agent's raid on his wedding	Negative
S40	Becoming anxious when the agent tracks him down	Negative

Peace refers to the ability to maintain a sense of tranquility and composure, especially in stressful situations (Liston, 2014). Throughout the movie, the main character predominantly exhibits negative behaviors related to peace. However, as seen in Table 9, the character exhibits positive behaviors related to peace, albeit in small numbers.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Wisdom

The scenes in which the main character exhibits the trait of wisdom, and the behaviors related to this trait are presented in Table 10.

Table 10

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Wisdom and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S16	Asking many questions to learn about airplanes	Positive
S29	Attempting to learn about the duties of a doctor	Positive
S33	Trying to gain information related to the legal field	Positive
S44	Possessing knowledge regarding the preparation of fake checks	Positive
S45	Being able to discern whether checks are genuine or fake through reasoning	Positive
S47	Attempting to analyze checks with reasoning ability	Positive

Wisdom is a virtue that manifests as the ability to acquire and utilize knowledge (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) and can be reached through qualities such as love of learning, curiosity, and a multifaceted perspective (Kabakçı, 2016). As seen in Table 10, the main character exhibits positive behaviors related to wisdom.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Forgiveness

The scenes in which the main character exhibits the trait of forgiveness, and the behaviors related to this trait are presented in Table 11.

Table 11

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Forgiveness and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S9	Seeking revenge after being pushed by friends in the hallway and laughed at	Negative

Forgiveness entails avoiding anger and aggressive behaviors when faced with wrongdoing, accompanied by kindness and compassion (Sarıçam & Biçer, 2015). As seen in Table 11, the main character exhibits a negative attitude towards forgiveness.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Honesty

The scenes in which the main character exhibits the trait of honesty, and the behaviors related to this trait are presented in Table 12.

Table 12

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Honesty and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S1	Accurately stating his name and the name of the agent who captured him during a TV program	Positive
S2	Relying on deception to escape from his cell	Negative
S5	Remaining silent about his father's lies and cheating, thus becoming complicit	Negative
S6	Assisting his father in deceiving bank employees by pretending to be his chauffeur	Negative
S9	Introducing himself as a substitute teacher	Negative
S11	Giving a hint to a friend regarding the preparation of a fake document	Negative
S12	Not telling his father that his mother is cheating on him when offered money	Negative
S14	Discovering the process of creating fake checks and deceiving bank employees	Negative
S16	Presenting himself differently and requesting items to appear as a pilot	Negative
S17	Claiming to be a co-pilot and lying about losing his uniform	Negative
S18	Cashing and writing a fake check	Negative
S19	Presenting himself as a passenger while cashing a fake check	Negative
S20	Introducing himself as a co-pilot	Negative
S21	Cashing a fake check	Negative
S23	Impersonating a secret service agent to deceive an agent	Negative
S26	Correctly stating the room number when sharing his location with the agent	Positive
S27	Claiming to be a doctor to Brenda	Negative
S28	Identifying himself as a doctor during a job interview	Negative
S30	Discussing with hospital staff as if testing their knowledge to conceal he is not a doctor	Negative
S31	Claiming to Brenda's family that he studied law	Negative
S32	Honestly stating to Brenda's father that he is not a doctor, lawyer, or pilot	Positive

S36	Confessing his true identity to Brenda	Positive
S38	Introducing himself as Frank Roberts and misleading hostesses with empty promises	Negative
S39	Deceiving the agent and escaping amidst a crowd of hostesses	Negative

Honesty is characterized by not lying, cheating, stealing, or acting hypocritically, and it reflects reliability (Liston, 2014). As shown in Table 12, the main character exhibits mostly negative behaviors related to honesty.

Discussion

Possessing good character promotes behaviors that are beneficial both to the individual and to their environment (Damon & Hart, 1992). However, the surrounding context can significantly influence character development, either positively or negatively (Kayan, 2022). Studies demonstrate that character education within schools leads to positive outcomes in character development (Hanafiah et al., 2024). Movies are also utilized as materials for character education (Yılmaz, 2017).

In this research, the movie “Catch Me If You Can” has been analyzed regarding character traits. The character traits of the main character in the movie have been examined in the context of the character traits listed in the Character Virtues Index developed by Liston (2014). The movie is divided into 47 meaningful and cohesive sequences, and the behaviors observed in the main character are categorized as positive or negative based on the character traits.

The findings reveal that the main character, Frank William Abagnale, exhibits positive behaviors regarding the traits of perseverance, wisdom, and optimism; negative behaviors concerning humility and forgiveness; and both positive and negative behaviors in relation to kindness, closeness, peace, and honesty. Human life is shaped by both similarities and differences, reflecting the development of traits within an environment defined by contrasts (Ülkü & Polatçı, 2023). All individuals possess both light and dark sides (Kaufman et al., 2019). Therefore, it is unrealistic to expect anyone to be entirely good or bad. Frank William Abagnale’s demonstration of both positive and negative behaviors can be linked to the inherent quality of humans having both light and dark aspects. Furthermore, the differences between a person's light and dark sides are formed by the reflection of their personality in their behaviors (Kavak & Naldöken, 2024).

Character, which reflects the moral dimension of personality (Aydın, 2016), significantly influences attitudes toward various situations (Taşdöven et al., 2012). The behaviors exhibited by Frank in response to various circumstances can be attributed to his character. Character is not innate; rather, it is developed through experiences within the social environment (Karatay, 2011). Childhood experiences, in particular, play a significant role in the formation of character, and new experiences can modify it to some extent (Demirci, 2017). The family is a fundamental element in the character development

process (Avcı & Göksel, 2023). Character strengths, including those based on virtues, are influenced by elements such as family and society (Işık et al., 2019). It is believed that childhood family experiences play a significant role in shaping Frank's character traits, resulting in both positive and negative behaviors. Literature indicates that family functionality (Raimundi et al., 2016) and family support (Noronha et al., 2019) are positively associated with the development of character strengths.

Frank is depicted as having undergone an unhealthy divorce process experienced by his parents, which results in a disconnected relationship with his mother and sporadic emotional exchanges with his father. Family integrity is one of the most vital components of a child's personality development (Bilici, 2014). A dysfunctional family can negatively impact the development of moral identity (Yılmaz, 2021). A study conducted by Çakır and Turan (2021) found that the scores for the traits of peace and wisdom varied according to family type; individuals from extended families showed higher scores in peace, while those from intact families scored higher on wisdom compared to those from fragmented family units. Based on these findings, it can be interpreted that Frank's predominantly negative behaviors concerning peace are influenced by his fragmented family background.

After his parents' divorce, Frank had almost no communication with his mother and only occasionally met with his father. The movie highlights the supportive attitudes present in the dialogue between Frank and his father. The literature indicates that perceived levels of social support from family correlate positively and significantly with traits such as kindness (Yıldız, 2022) and hope (Mantar, 2021); other studies show that family social support is positively and significantly related to character strengths (Khosrojerdi & Pakdaman, 2022). Based on these findings, it can be interpreted that the social support perceived by his father has influenced Frank's exhibition of positive behaviors regarding his character traits.

Although Frank demonstrates positive behaviors linked to his character traits, he is also capable of exhibiting negative behaviors, evidenced by his involvement in various fraudulent activities. Misbehavior and aggressive dispositions in children can be explained through social learning and attachment theories, particularly regarding familial influences (Özada & Duyan, 2018). From a social learning perspective, Frank witnessed his father repeatedly using lies and deceit to manipulate others during his childhood. Social learning theory posits that individuals learn not only through personal experiences but also by observing and imitating others' experiences and behaviors (Erjem & Çağlayandereli, 2006). This learning mode can lead to the acquisition of both desirable and undesirable behaviors (Samancı & Uçan, 2017). Research by Gürel (2014) shows that modeling behaviors significantly influences children's moral judgments. Frank's predominantly negative behaviors regarding honesty, such as lying, cheating, and deception, can stem from the lack of a positive role model in his father for character development.

From the perspective of attachment theory, Frank's relationship with his mother—lacking a foundation of trust—along with the poor handling of his parents' divorce, has negatively impacted his character development. Healthy communication between a mother and child is vital for fostering positive relationships with others (Kırman & Doğan, 2017). Individuals who maintain healthy and fulfilling relationships with their parents are more likely to develop positive interactions with their peers (Özdemir et al., 2012). For interpersonal relationships to be fulfilling and secure, individuals must establish secure attachments with their caregivers (Ulusoy et al., 2018). It can be suggested that Frank's sense of isolation related to the trait of closeness throughout the movie—as well as the instability of his romantic relationship—originates from the lack of a secure attachment to his mother. A study by Liu and Wang (2021) found that perceived parental emotional warmth and secure attachments are positively and significantly related to the character strengths of adolescents. Similarly, Lavy and Littman-Ovadia (2011) have discovered that most character strengths are negatively and significantly correlated with avoidant and anxious attachment styles. The research findings suggest that Frank's negative behaviors concerning closeness are influenced by his inability to establish a secure bond with his parents.

The indifference Frank exhibits towards the crimes he commits is particularly striking. The apparent indifference displayed by individuals involved in criminal activities often stems from underlying insecurities, feelings of inferiority, and a self-perception of unworthiness (Kımtır, 2008). Research by Güneri Yöyen (2017) indicates that childhood traumas increase the likelihood of developing low self-esteem. It can be suggested that Frank developed low self-esteem as a result of his traumatic experiences in childhood, leading him to adopt behaviors that present an image different from his true self as a means of compensation. Adler asserts that self-esteem reflects the transition from feelings of inferiority to feelings of superiority (Kımtır, 2008). An individual strives to assert themselves as superior to the extent that they perceive themselves as inferior (Fırat & Güngör, 2021). A superiority complex is frequently interpreted as overcompensation for feelings of inferiority (Selvi, 2018). Individuals with a superiority complex tend to exaggerate their physical, intellectual, or social abilities (Güneş, 2010). Those who wish to enhance their self-concept tend to seek to elevate their social status (Varışoğlu & Irmak, 2011). Frank's inclination towards prestigious occupations such as being a pilot, doctor, or lawyer can be seen as efforts to enhance his social standing and strengthen his self-image.

In conclusion, this study establishes that the main character in the movie "Catch Me If You Can" demonstrates both positive and negative behaviors concerning his character traits. This duality can be explained by acknowledging the dual nature of human beings. Furthermore, it can be inferred that family structure and interpersonal relationships significantly shape character traits during the main character's development process. The omission of obvious representations of spirituality and courage in the movie suggests a limitation of this research, as it focuses on character traits within the framework of perseverance, humility, optimism, kindness, closeness, peace, wisdom, forgiveness, and honesty

outlined in the Character Virtues Index. The movie "Catch Me If You Can" could be used as a course material in "Character and Value Education" and "Positive Psychology" courses.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Karakter; katılım ve çevrenin etkisi ile oluşmakta (Çapuk, 2022), kişinin içinde doğup büyüdüğü ortam karakter özelliklerini olumlu veya olumsuz yönde geliştirerek karakteri biçimlendirmektedir (Kayan, 2022). Bilim insanları da sağlıklı büyüme sürecinde karakterin güçlü yönlerinin aile ve okul yaşantısının yansıması olduğu görüşünde uzlaşmaktadır (Li & Liu, 2016). Dolayısıyla karakter geliştirilebilir bir niteliğe sahiptir. Çocukların ve ergenlerin sosyal uyumları için karakter güçlerinin geliştirilmesi de önem arz etmektedir (Liu & Wang, 2021). Karakter gelişimini konu edinen çalışmalarda karakter eğitimi ve değerler eğitimi ifadelerine yer verildiği görülmektedir (Levent & Baş Doğan, 2022). Karakter eğitimi amacıyla kullanılan materyallerden biri sinema filmleridir (Yılmaz, 2017).

Sinema filmleri uzun süre boyunca insan hafızasında tekrarlı biçimde hatırlanarak canlandırıcı bir etki oluşturabilmektedir (Niemiec & Wedding, 2011). Psikoloji bilimi ile sinemanın iç içe olması, filmlerin eğitim amacıyla kullanılmasını sağlamaktadır (Derin & Voltan Acar, 2016). Senaryosu gerçek hayatta yaşanmış olaylardan esinlenerek yazılmış olan “Sıkıysa Yakala” filmi, birçok karakter özelliğini ve karakter özelliklerinin gelişimini içeren bir filmidir. Bu çalışmada Karakter Erdemleri İndeksi’nde yer alan karakter özellikleri açısından “Sıkıysa Yakala” filminin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Filmin içeriğinin analizinde kontrol listesi olarak Liston (2014) tarafından karakter gelişim özelliklerinin değerlendirilebilmesi için geliştirilen Karakter Erdemleri İndeksi kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın karakter özelliklerinin gelişimi açısından farkındalık oluşturması ve alanyazına film incelemesi çalışması olarak katkıda bulunması bakımından yararlı olabileceği umulmaktadır.

Bu araştırma, “Sıkıysa Yakala” filminin karakter özellikleri açısından ele alındığı nitel bir çalışmadır. Araştırmada nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden doküman analizi kullanılmıştır. Çalışmada doküman olarak “Sıkıysa Yakala” filminin sahneleri ele alınmıştır. Doküman incelemesi ile toplanan verilerin analizinde içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Film sahnelerinin analizi karakter özelliklerini içeren bir kontrol listesi üzerinden gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmada filmdeki ana karakterin karakter özellikleri karakter gelişimi bağlamında değerlendirilmek istendiğinden, kontrol listesi oluşturulurken karakter gelişim özelliklerinin değerlendirilebilmesi için geliştirilen Karakter Erdemleri İndeksi’ndeki karakter özellikleri dikkate alınmıştır.

Filmin analizinde öncelikle film sekanslara ayrılmış ve bu sekansların filmdeki gösterim yerleri belirlenmiştir. Ardından filmin ana karakterinde Karakter Erdemleri İndeksi’nde yer alan karakter özelliklerine yönelik olumlu ve olumsuz yöndeki davranışların görüldüğü sahnelerin bulunduğu sekanslar tespit edilmiştir. Daha sonra ana karakterde her bir karakter özelliğinin görüldüğü sahneler ve bu özelliklere ilişkin davranışlar ortaya konulmuştur. Ana karakterde Karakter Erdemleri İndeksi’nde yer alan cesaret ve maneviyat özellikleri ana karakterde belirgin biçimde görünmediğinden analizlere dahil edilmemiş; ana karakterin karakter özellikleri kararlılık, alçakgönüllülük, iyimserlik, nezaket, yakınlık, sakinlik, bilgelik, affedicilik ve dürüstlük olmak üzere dokuz tema

altında değerlendirilmiştir. Elde edilen bulgulara göre filmin ana karakteri Frank Abagnale'in karakter özellikleri arasında kararlılık, bilgelik ve iyimserlik özelliklerine yönelik davranışları olumlu yönde; alçakgönüllülük ve affedicilik özelliklerine yönelik davranışları olumsuz yönde; nezaket, yakınlık, sakinlik ve dürüstlük özellikleri açısından ise olumlu ve olumsuz yönde davranışlar sergilediği görülmektedir. Karakter özellikleri açısından olumlu ve olumsuz yönde davranışlar göstermek, insanın aydınlık ve karanlık yönü olan bir canlı olması ile açıklanabilir. Bunun yanı sıra ana karakterin karakter gelişimi sürecinde aile yapısının ve aile ilişkilerinin karakter özelliklerini şekillendirdiği yorumu yapılabilir. "Sıkıysa Yakala" filmi "Karakter ve Değer Eğitimi" ve "Pozitif Psikoloji" derslerinde ders materyali olarak kullanılabilir.

Ethics Committee Approval: Data for this study were not collected from human participants. Thus, it has been reported by the Directorate of the Institute of Educational Sciences of Marmara University with the document dated 20.05.2024 and numbered 796614 that this study does not require an ethics committee application.

Informed Consent: Informed consent was not obtained because this study was not conducted with human participants.

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The Focal Point of Stigma and Alienation in Education: Evaluation of Professional Lives Through the Eyes of Paid Teachers

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to examine the professional lives of primary and secondary school teachers who have undisguised disadvantages, within the framework of their own narratives and experiences. In other words, it reveals how the concept of alienation, used by Karl Marx as an expression of the result of economic exploitation, and the concept of Stigma, used by Goffman, emerge and intersect in the lives of paid teachers. The data for the present study were collected from paid teachers working in schools located in the Kemalpaşa district of İzmir, where the population density is high. In this study, phenomenological design was preferred among qualitative research methods, while the snowball method among purposeful sampling types was used in determining the interviewees. Structured interview questions were preferred in this study. The analysis of the obtained data was resolved by content analysis. Research findings showed that paid teachers received salaries far below those of permanent teachers, which wears them out. Their insurance was paid in half, and as paid teachers, they were subject to stigmatization in their work areas and daily lives, and over time, alienation from their profession. This research was conducted with paid teachers working in five schools within a single district. Therefore, further research involving more schools and a larger sample size will likely yield richer data.

Keywords: Stigma, Alienation, Paid Teaching.

About the Article

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Introduction

The social welfare and development of countries and nations are parallel to the degree and quality of their education levels. Societies that have achieved educational success and stability in the context of this success are ahead of other societies in social, cultural, and economic aspects. These societal successes are linked to appropriate, strong, and balanced dynamics within the education system. Otherwise, disruptions occur with the aim of reaching developed, educated individuals and societies. In this context, it is possible to talk about the effects of neoliberal approaches on educational life. It is believed that these effects, which are not limited to business life, have reflections on educational life.

Approaches of neo-liberal policies such as flexible production and flexible working have also had an impact on education life and have also affected teacher employment, which is a critical point for an educational activity. Free market policies have caused significant restrictions on the state's health, social and education expenditures (Suğur & Doğru, 2010: 115). According to Dali (2017); as the relationship between the market and education deepens under the influence of neoliberal policies, this has led to the transformation of teacher employment. In this context, a form of employment called "paid teaching" has emerged and has caused many discussions. Paid teachers are teachers employed in schools under the Ministry of National Education and work in exchange for additional lessons (Gökşen, 2019). Before this situation, becoming a permanent teacher in the state or public sector required graduating from education faculties and having pedagogical formation training. In addition, candidates are expected to get sufficient scores from the Public Personnel Selection Exam KPSS exam and be successful in the interviews (Cantürk, 2023).

At this point, in Türkiye, the number of candidate teachers is more than needed, and the process of starting a job as a teacher and being appointed requires going through different difficult processes. A person who wants to become a teacher must first pass the Basic Proficiency Test (TYT) and Field Proficiency Test (AYT) in the context of the Higher Education Institutions Exam (YKS) conducted by the Measurement, Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM) in Türkiye. In addition, teacher candidates who have successfully completed university must take the Public Personnel Selection Exam (KPSS) conducted by ÖSYM and get the sufficient score for the department they want. After getting the sufficient score from this exam, the interview process begins, and if they get the sufficient score from the interview, their appointment is made. Of course, the process does not end here, and teachers who are appointed on a contract basis gain the status of candidate teachers from the status of teacher candidates, and in order to pass from

the status of candidate teachers to full teachers, they are also subjected to another exam called the “Candidacy Removal Exam” (Demirbaş, 2022: 308).

In addition to the fact that these exams are thought to seriously tire candidate teachers, the number of candidates taking the exam increases every year. In this context, when the KPSS held in 2023 is taken into consideration, a total of 572.020 candidates applied to the Education Sciences session (ÖSYM, 2023). While people who do not meet these conditions are trying to fulfill these conditions again, they are also preparing for the KPSS exams again. Simultaneously, they apply to the National Education institutions in the provinces or districts and request to work as paid teachers.

Paid teaching is the practice of assigning teachers to schools with teacher vacancies or during periods when a permanent teacher is not at school (on leave, on sick leave, etc.) in return for an additional lesson fee in order to prevent disruption of education and training. The legal basis for the paid teaching practice is the decision of the Ministry of National Education administrators and teachers regarding the lesson and extra lesson hours in article 4/C of the Civil Servants Law No. 657. According to this law and decision, in cases where the number of teachers is insufficient, paid, part-time and temporary teachers who are called paid teachers can be employed according to article 4/C of the Civil Servants Law No. 657 (Öğülmüş et al., 2023).

In educational institutions of all levels, universities and academies (including military academies), schools, courses or non-formal education institutions and similar institutions, if there are no teachers or lecturers, teachers, lecturers or other civil servants or those to be appointed openly may be assigned additional teaching duties in return for payment (Civil Servants Law, 1965). The number of paid teachers is not clearly known throughout Turkey because they are assigned temporarily and the ministry does not share these numbers with the public (Tunç & Gülseven-Taner, 2020: 23). However, according to the results of a study conducted by Türk Eğitim-Sen in February 2025 and covering the years 2024-2025, a total of 86,136 paid teachers work in 78 provinces. While this information is based on information received from the governorships of 78 provinces, it is also seen that the province with the highest number of paid teachers is Istanbul with a number of 19,757 (Türk Eğitim-Sen, 2025). On the other hand, it is seen that this number is lower in a previous study covering the 2023-2024 year and the number of paid teachers in Turkey is 66,780 (Türk Eğitim-Sen, 2025). This situation reveals that the number of paid teachers is increasing and the number of teachers needed is increasing.

After paid teacher applications are made via e-government, graduation information is seen, province, district and branch preferences are determined. Applications are shown on the screens of provincial or district national education directorates and in the

following process, assignments are made to schools according to needs. The term of office of paid teachers during the education period ends with the appointment of a permanent teacher, the return to duty of the teacher after maternity leave, and the completion of the term or academic year. Sometimes, paid teachers may suddenly and unexpectedly learn from the administrative authorities of the institution where they work that their term of office has ended. Since paid teaching is temporary, if there is no cooperation between students, administration, teachers and parents, the process is disrupted and the paid teacher ends his/her duty without getting to know and adapt to the school and parents (Tunç & Gülseven-Taner, 2020). This can cause significant disappointment for paid teachers and their students.

On the other hand, these and similar possibilities affect the insecurity of paid teachers in the future and the decrease in their motivation in their work, as well as their ability to establish improved relationships with the administrative group and other permanent teachers in the school where they work. On the other hand, according to Ayna and Deniz (2022), since paid teachers are compensated based on the hours they teach, their earnings are very low, less than half of the salaries of permanent teachers. In addition, paid teachers do not receive compensation for medical reports when they are sick and do not receive wages during these periods. Due to these and similar reasons, the salary of paid teachers sometimes does not even meet the minimum wage. While paid teachers can take up to 30 hours of lessons per week, most paid teachers cannot take 30 hours of lessons. When looking at the hourly wage, the hourly wage of a paid teacher (for the 2nd Term of 2025) is equivalent to 120,67 liras, which is approximately \$3.09 (US Dollars). A paid teacher who takes 30 hours of lessons per week takes 120 hours of lessons in a month, provided that there are no holidays or interruptions. When it is also considered that the state provides an additional lesson every two hours, a total of 180 hours of lessons are formed. In this case, when calculated based on the single hourly wage (120,67) as stated above, the monthly salary of a paid teacher who takes 30 hours of lessons corresponds to 21,720 liras. In contrast, the lowest and highest salary ranges of permanent teachers vary between 52.000 and 62.000.

In addition to the economic discrimination that paid teachers experience, as well as the partial or lack of insurance-like rights, being described as “paid” causes them to experience a stigma both in their business life and personal lives. While this situation damages the sense of justice of paid teachers (Dogan et al., 2013), it causes job dissatisfaction, lack of belonging, alienation from work and quality problems in education (Polat, 2014). Studies on paid teachers reveal that; in addition to not being accepted as regular teachers, the work they do is not valued and they are not treated

fairly (Karadaş & Yıldız, 2024). People who work as paid teachers have many problems and these problems are waiting to be solved. It is not possible to move forward or ignore these problems without solving them (Bilgiç & Ekinci, 2020).

The situation of paid teachers and the problems they experience have characteristics that overlap with the “precariat” group emphasized by Guy Standing. Precariat is the expression of a group formed by individuals, workers and their families who suffer the consequences of the risk and insecurity brought about by the flexibility in the labor market that emerged under the influence of neo-liberal policies (Standing, 2020: 11). While this concept is translated into Turkish as “precariousness”, it aims to define an increasingly expanding insecure mass (Günerigök & Oğur, 2018: 138). On the other hand, another way to understand the precariat is to understand how people become precarious. This means being exposed to pressures that cause living in an insecure existence and going through these experiences (Standing, 2020: 36). In fact, precariat is an expression of not being able to gain a protected area within social networks while being excluded from social institutions and systems (Günerigök & Oğur, 2018: 142). On the other hand, another way of describing the precariat is the concept of “partial citizen”. It is the name given to a person who has more limited rights compared to normal citizens for one reason or another (Standing, 2020: 31). When considered in this context, the pressures and problems experienced by teachers assigned as paid employees in terms of social rights and relationships, especially in terms of salary, are significantly similar and overlap with the group called the precariat. Especially, the serious differences in terms of job description, income status and personal rights compared to permanent teachers who do similar jobs in the same places cause paid teachers to become precariat and to have serious concerns about the future. This situation damages their sense of belonging and causes them to become alienated from their profession (Yağan, 2022: 16).

The precarious situation of paid teachers, the lack of any employment contract, the anxiety of being laid off or the uncertainties after the temporary working period show the feelings and discourses of the social classes belonging to the precariat (Günerigök & Oğur, 2018: 142). The precariousness experienced by paid teachers regarding their future, the lack of a clear situation about what will happen to them, wears them out emotionally and negatively affects their motivation. As Standing (2020: 90) also stated, precariousness causes stress and negative erosions from the individual’s life, making the situation worse. Although it is not a support provided by economic security, it is likely that the flexible labor market will produce such results.

In this context, this study addresses the problems faced by paid teachers working in secondary and high school institutions affiliated with the Ministry of National Education in terms of their economic and social relations and their perceptions of these problems. In addition, conducting research that will reveal the problems of paid teachers comprehensively and scientifically will affect the expected important regulations. Considering the importance of the research, the fact that it will have an up-to-date quality regarding the material and moral problems of paid teachers will provide an important source of information. On the other hand, the fact that the research is carried out in the form of in-depth interviews will shed important light on the unknown and unclear problems of paid teachers in terms of their financial problems as well as their relationships. A review of the literature shows that there are limited studies addressing the problems of paid teachers, making this an important educational issue both qualitatively and sociologically. Therefore, this study can fill an important gap.

Stigma

The symbolic interactionist approach is a micro-level theoretical approach within the sociological framework that examines how society is formed and maintained through repeated interactions between individuals (Carter & Fuller, 2015). Symbolic interactionism studies, which focus on the origin and interpretation of the interaction process during interpersonal relationships, form the basis for semantic and communication science studies (Alver & Çağlar, 2015). In terms of interaction, the symbolic interactionist approach provides a framework for addressing “stigma”, which is an important phenomenon in interpersonal relations (Roe et al., 2010). “Stamp” is associated with Goffman within the symbolic interactionist approach. According to Goffman, stigma refers to the fall from grace itself, rather than the physical symptom of the fall from grace (Goffman, 2014). Similarly, according to Goffman, normal and stigmatized individuals are not concrete persons, but rather constitute a point of view and are socially produced (Goffman, 2014). In fact, Goffman is interested in the gap between what people should be, that is, the “supposed social identity”, and what they actually are, that is, the “real social identity”. People who have a gap between these two identities are stigmatized (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2014). On the other hand, stigma is a complex construct with personal, structural and public components (Corrigan et al., 2014). According to Goffman, three different types of stigmas can be mentioned: The first type is the horrors of the body and physical deformations, while the second type of stigma includes character disorders defined as oppressive or more unnatural passions, weak will, rigid beliefs, perversions and immorality, such as imprisonment. Examples include alcoholism, unemployment, suicide attempts mental disorders, alcoholism,

addiction and radical political attitudes. Finally, in the third stamp, there are ethnological types. These stigmas are the ones that are transmitted through lineage and infect all members of the family equally (Goffman, 2014).

On the other hand, since the stigma is contagious, the stigmatized person shares some of the stigma and disrepute with their relatives, and their circle of friends, acquaintances and people with whom they have relationships other than their relatives tend to terminate their relationships with the stigmatized person (Goffman, 2014). As can be understood, stigma can affect many disadvantaged people and groups in society and affect them negatively. In its most general terms, this disadvantaged position is explained as a place occupied by people who experience certain characteristics of the person and inadequate or limited living conditions (Burcu-Sağlam, 2017). One of the disadvantaged groups in question is paid teachers who experience financial problems as well as relational problems in their professional lives.

Paid teachers may face problems such as exclusion, discrimination, marginalization and stigmatization in the schools they work. Paid teachers, who are also referred to as unassigned teachers, may experience psychosocial problems such as burnout and alienation during this process, as well as problems such as financial difficulties and working in insecure jobs due to employment-related problems (Çinkır & Kurum, 2017). According to Kızıldağ (2021); paid teachers may face problems such as marginalization in the institutions they work for. In addition to the fact that the rights provided to them such as salary and insurance are very few compared to permanent teachers, the relational problems they experience negatively affect the motivation of paid teachers and cause them to face problems such as stigmatization over time.

Alienation

The concept of alienation is generally the deterioration of the relationship between the object and the subject or between consciousness and things, or the alienation of the subject unit. Historically, the first name that comes to mind regarding this concept is Hegel. Although this concept of being someone else is seen in Hegel, Marx, unlike Hegel, deals with this concept in a social and economic context. While discussing this concept in an economic context, it declares production processes and working life as criminals (Aydoğan, 2015). Although alienation is a difficult concept to understand, it has been found to be a concept that constitutes the central area of interest of sociological analysis (Sarfraz, 1997). Alienation indicates that he cannot be himself, loses his excitement and becomes mechanical. (Atmaca et al., 2021). Alienation is the state of knowing that anything done is done not for our own or anyone else's admiration or respect, but on the orders of someone else and for someone else's sake (Standing, 2020: 42).

When this concept is considered in the context of Marx, it reveals the situation where the worker cannot perceive the flow of life as a whole and cannot realize himself in the context of his labor, and perceives the outside world, the people around him, and even himself in an alienated state due to the effect of alienation (Yedekci, 2016). In other words, working life leads to alienation and creates places where employees are exploited (Bozkurt, 2015). We can think of alienation as consisting of four types of components: (1) alienation of employees from their productive activities, (2) alienation from the product and service they provide, (3) alienation from their colleagues at work, and finally (4) alienation from their human qualities and human potential (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2014). Alienation, which is also expressed as psychological and intellectual distance and loneliness, as well as being perceived materially, is related to the person feeling worthless and meaningless (Shah, 2015). In this case, the environment and the self emerge as a disorder that leads to deep loneliness and despair (Ghaleb, 2024).

For paid teachers, it can be said that their lack of job security and their concerns and feelings of uncertainty about their future lives increase their alienation from their profession (Atmaca, 2020). In addition, it can be said that the emotional stress and pressure created by the “unappointed teacher” stigma developed about them by both their environment and their colleagues causes alienation from themselves and their profession (Güvercin, 2014). On the other hand, while alienation affects educational institutions in various ways, this situation may occur depending on the qualifications of the school where the teacher works, the value given to the teacher by the administration, and the opportunities provided to the students (Özgen & Erdem, 2023).

Purpose of the Research

The main purpose of this research is to examine the experiences of paid teachers who are disadvantaged compared to permanent teachers in terms of material and moral rights. In this context, the following questions were sought:

1. Is the professional experience of paid teachers limited to only financial elements and certain rights?
2. How do paid teachers explain their situation?
3. What are the perceptions of paid teachers about their current schools?

Method

Model of the Research

In this study, the qualitative research method was preferred to understand the economic, social and cultural problems of paid teachers in more detail, and to reveal in detail the problems arising from being a paid teacher, both in their relationships in business life and social life. This method was preferred especially to ensure that paid teachers provide broader, more comprehensive and more detailed information to the questions asked. Thus, it was possible to reach deeper information. Qualitative research can be defined as research in which data collection techniques such as observation, interviews and document analysis are used, and a qualitative process is followed to reveal perceptions and events in a realistic and holistic way in their natural situations. From a different perspective, qualitative research is an approach that prioritizes researching and understanding social phenomena within and within the environment they are connected to, with an approach based on theory building (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

Qualitative approaches express a different scientific research perspective than quantitative research techniques. Although the processes of both are similar, qualitative approaches are based on text and imaginary data and have their own unique steps and different patterns in the analysis of the collected data (Creswell, 2016). In this context, snowball (chain) sampling, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was preferred as the sample selection of the research, as it would be most suitable for the purpose of the research. This type of sampling consists of reaching other people to be interviewed from the source people in the research area and growing the sample by reaching new people as a snowball continues (Kümbetoğlu, 2008). In this context, to reach the participants of this study, people who were assistant principals in two different schools were contacted, and then interviews were conducted by talking to the paid teachers working in those schools. Later, through the interviewed paid teachers, the interviewed paid teachers working in other schools were reached. On the other hand, for the field research part of this study, ethics committee approval was received from Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University Human Research in Social Sciences Ethics Committee, in the context of issue 2024/205.

Interviewers

The interviewees of this research consisted of 17 paid teachers who resided in the Kemalpaşa district of Izmir and worked in secondary and high school institutions affiliated with the Kemalpaşa Directorate of National Education (Table 1). The reason for the selection of research topics in this region is to ensure that studies of sufficient

quality to fully reflect the research topics are conducted and networks are provided in different educational institutions for application.

Table 1: Information about Interviewers

Nickname	Gender	Graduation Branch	Officer Branch	Formation Status	Graduation Degree	Term of Office
P1	Female	Theology	Religion	None	Associate Degree	3 Months
P2	Male	Physics	Physics	Yes	Undergraduate	2 Months
P3	Female	Science	Science	Yes	Undergraduate	3 Months
P4	Female	History	Special Education	Yes	Undergraduate	6 Years
P5	Female	Religion	Religion	Yes	Undergraduate	4 Years
P6	Female	History	History	Yes	Undergraduate	2 Years
P7	Female	Art	Art	Yes	Undergraduate	1Months
P8	Female	Literature	Literature	Yes	Undergraduate	3 Years
P9	Female	Maths	Maths	Yes	Undergraduate	3 Years
P10	Male	Machine	Machine	Yes	Undergraduate	3 Years
P11	Female	Literature	Special Education	Yes	Undergraduate	7 Years
P12	Female	Literature	Special Education	Yes	Undergraduate	4 Years
P13	Female	Philosophy / Child Development	Special Education	Yes	Undergraduate	9 Years
P14	Male	Guidance	Special Education	Yes	Undergraduate	1 Years

P15	Female	Geography	Social Studies	Yes	Undergraduate	1 Years
P16	Female	Religion	Religion	Yes	Master	4 Years
P17	Female	Literature	Special Education	Yes	Master	3 Years

Interviewers worked at five educational institutions. Four of them were secondary schools and one was a high school. Interviews were conducted with 10 paid teachers in secondary schools and seven in high schools. Teachers mainly work in special education and give special education lessons. The remaining paid teachers teach Physics, Mathematics, Religious Culture, Social Studies, Science, Machinery, Art and Literature courses. Three of the participants were men and the remaining 14 were women.

Data Collection Tools and Process

First of all, the prepared questionnaire forms were examined by two different academicians, the questions that were requested to be removed were removed, and the questions that were requested to be added were added. Before collecting the data, people who could be contacted by the interviewees were identified and the paid teachers to be interviewed were reached through them. School principals, especially those working in different schools, were contacted and asked to meet with paid teachers in their schools. Interviews were held on days and class intervals that were convenient for the paid teachers who accepted the interview. Teachers' rooms, special education classes and empty classrooms deemed suitable were preferred as the places where the interviews were held. The research data were collected through a social demographic form and interview questions in the semi-structured questionnaire (*What do you think paid teaching means, how do you define the concept of paid teaching? How do you evaluate the working situation as a paid teacher? What would you like to say about the advantages of paid teaching? etc.*) The most important part of qualitative studies is to reveal which questions the research seeks answers to and the nature of the answers in question. While dealing with problems, researchers seek answers to one or more of the questions such as what, where, who, how and for what (Kümbetoğlu, 2008). Therefore, the questions in the interview form were evaluated by three academicians who experts in their fields before the interviews are. In addition, the interview questions were evaluated by the ethics committee academic team, and questions that were deemed inappropriate and needed to be changed were removed or edited. To avoid data loss and save time during the interviews, the interviews were recorded with a voice recorder and later transcribed. All participants are confirmed daily based on their voluntary and

marital principles. The names of the contestants are guaranteed to be kept confidential and not shared with anyone. The meetings were recorded with permission.

Data Analysis

The content analysis method was preferred in order to examine the research data more appropriately and systematically and to reveal meaningful themes and relationships. Firstly, the research interviews were analyzed by two experts. During the analysis phase of the research data, the recorded voice recordings were transcribed in an orderly manner. Appropriate common areas were identified in the transcribed interview texts with the help of codes, and these were titled superordinate themes. Then, the codes and themes were arranged, and the findings were defined, and then the interpretation phase began (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). As mentioned above, before the data of the study were subjected to content analysis, the transcriptions obtained were reviewed and read several times. The main reason here was to make the coding stronger and to create it. The coding stage took place within a general framework, and in this context, codes appropriate to the purpose and conceptual frameworks of the study were prepared before the data were collected, and then new codes were created after the data were read.

For example, while codes such as “Dam” and “Yab”, which express stigmatization and alienation in accordance with the purpose of the study, were prepared before the data were collected, codes such as “Dış” and “Ayrı”, which express exclusion and discrimination, were later included in the list after the data were collected. As in the codes given in this example, appropriate themes were developed to express each section in the code lists. For example, the theme “relations of paid teachers”, which is above the codes and related to the codes in subjects such as stigmatization and alienation experienced by paid teachers, constitutes an example of the themes to which the code lists are connected. As mentioned before, the data were analyzed using the content analysis method. The names of the teachers were kept confidential and were given codes as P1, P2, ..., P17. After the hard copies of the written texts and reports were read several times by the researcher, the coding phase began. On the other hand, the data of this research were evaluated in the context of the concepts of “*stigma*” and “*alienation*” to help better understand the problems of paid teachers such as alienation, stigma and exclusion.

Validity and Reliability

One of the most important criteria for a study is that its results are convincing. In this context, “*validity*” and “*reliability*” are the two most commonly used criteria in studies (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013: 289). In terms of the validity and security of the study, control

was provided regarding the data collection and data analysis process from the beginning to the end of the study. The survey questions of the study were checked by three different academicians before the study. The data obtained from the first participant to the last participant was tried to be checked, and factors and situations that could harm validity and reliability were tried to be isolated. The voluntary consent and participation approval of each participant was obtained before the interview, and care was taken to obtain the data and comments correctly. In this context, the time required for the participants and the ease with which they could respond were provided. After the survey questions were completed, an effort was made to obtain additional information about the topics they wanted to add. In addition, participants were asked questions that were similar to each other in terms of validity and security. Before this entire process, participants were given extensive and satisfactory information about the subject before the research began, and the research was not started without obtaining the approval of the ethics committee.

Findings

Paid Teaching by Definition

All participants answered the question *"How do you define the concept of paid teaching?"*, which was asked to 17 paid teachers who participated in this research. Considering the findings, the concept of "paid teaching" was evaluated by considering financial limitations and generally included *"not being paid in terms of salary"*, *"education provided in exchange for additional lessons"*, *"employment for less than the minimum wage"*, *"slavery"*, and *"per lesson"*. It is handled with definitions such as *"wage earner"* and *"seasonal worker"*. Some of the answers given by the participants to this question were as follows; for example, in the words of P10; *"In my opinion, doing the same job for less salary and being less satisfied is paid teaching"*. Another participant P13 said; *"Paid teaching is, in a sense, slavery. Since nothing is financially covered, it is only done by people who love students and value their profession"*. When an evaluation is made based on these quotes, it can be seen that; the perspective of the people who work as paid teachers on the concept of paid teaching is that they do not receive the salary that is in return for their labor in financial terms and the rights that they do not receive compared to the permanent teachers whom they compare in the quotes. The fact that paid teachers have fewer and more limited rights than permanent teachers in many matters, especially salary, also affects their views on their profession and the definition

of this profession. The descriptions of “being less satisfied” in the first quote, and “slavery” as an expression of economic inadequacy are important symptoms of this situation.

Within the scope of the interview research questions, the participants who were working as paid teachers were asked questions. For example, “what they would like to say based on the salary they receive and how they evaluate the situation of working as a paid teacher.” Participants first of all emphasized that the wages earned in terms of salary are very low and insufficient. Although the same work is done for permanent teachers, the wage is much lower than what permanent teachers receive. This situation significantly impacts their personal and professional lives. Some evaluations of the participants who work as paid teachers regarding their narratives on this subject are as follows: In the words of P12, *“Let me say this clearly and clearly, I remember crying while working in Armutlu that I had no money and could not send money to eshot. “I’m stuck on the road; I’m crying because it’s not enough to do anything.”* Similarly, P8 said: *“A very, very small amount at a time. In other words, you cannot support a married person with this money. A married person with a child cannot do anything in life with only one salary.”*

These narratives reveal that the participants who work as paid teachers are not satisfied with the wage or salary, they receive in return for the labor they put in, and this has a negative impact on their lives and professional lives. In the first quote above, the descriptions in the participant’s narrative of *“crying that I have no money”* and in the second quote *“we work the same but”* reveal the significant difficulties that paid teachers experience in terms of getting their salaries and the return of their labor. In another quote, P9 said, *“I mean, we are people who have proven certain things. You know, we are not workers, but we cannot even get the money that workers get, and I am saying this again, we work like permanent teachers, so there is no difference between us. We are people who are rotten”* and *“we cannot even get the money that workers get.”* These statements reveal the intellectual and psychological difficulties experienced, as well as the teachers’ perspective and alienation towards their own profession.

Stigma: A kind of common disadvantaged situation

In general, if we evaluate the results of the research data, the relations of paid teachers with the administrative staff, permanent teachers, students and students’ parents in the period when this research was conducted and, in the institutions, where they worked were mostly and almost entirely positive and good. On the other hand, when the interviews of each paid teacher participant at the end of this study were analyzed, 8 out of a total of 17 participants stated that they were exposed to attitudes and behaviors that could be subject to stigmatization, either in the institutions where they had previously worked or by a relative of a paid teacher. Some of the narratives of the participants who

stated that they had grievances due to being a paid teacher or having the “paid” stigma were as follows: P5 said, *“So I can’t say anything about the school I work at, but my friend works at a school in Izmir, and even his principal and yes, his teachers and principal constantly emphasize that he is a paid teacher and constantly rub it in his face.”* Similarly, the statements of the 10th participant can be seen as quite interesting. *“Even if you teach the same course as a grade teacher, you are seen as a second-grade teacher [...]. They say yes, you are a teacher too, etc., but generally people’s looks are from outside...”*

On the other hand, P15 states, *“Paid teaching and normal teaching are both teachers, but when we look at one of them, it has the word paid at the beginning, and even that can sometimes push a person to a very different position”*. In the quotations given regarding the relationships of the participants who work as paid teachers, it is seen that they face the problem of the concept of paid and the stigma that comes from being a paid teacher. In particular, the concept of “paid” in the first quote and the negative consequences of its weight in relationships, and the participant’s anxious approach to the concept of “paid” in the third quote, stand out as an expression of significant pressure and stigma against the participants who actually work as paid teachers.

On the other hand, the participant’s “second-class teacher” approach in the second quote and his statements about trying not to make this felt in mutual relations are actually what Goffman (2014) stated as a situation of contradiction when expressing the situation of the stigmatized person; In fact, it reveals the approach that non-stigmatized people express to stigmatized people that they are like one of them, while on the other hand, they somehow explain that it would be futile to deny the difference in question. In addition, the statements of the participant in the last quote, such as *“They look at us as normal teachers”* and *“We are no different from them”*, reveal that the participants who are actually working as paid teachers have adopted and internalized the categories of “normal and non-normal”, “Us and Them”.

Alienation: Paid teachers’ traditional trauma

An important problem of the participants who work as paid teachers in terms of their social relations is the alienation process; they experience towards themselves and their profession. Although the participants do not directly state this concretely, they reveal the alienation process in question with the relationships they have experienced, their feelings and thoughts. Some of the evaluations of the participants (5 Participants) regarding the narratives of their alienation experiences are as follows: in the words of P6 said, *“I don’t have any other definition for such paid teaching. Frankly, it’s just a concept that upsets me[...]when we look at it, it is not a very good thing for a teacher to be working in a*

working class.” Similarly, P13 said, “We are not at all satisfied with the negative situations, that is, economically. Psychologically, there is pressure in the environment and the pressure in my social environment. Is it possible to work for this price? Go to the market and work, you will get better, I see the same pressure from my family.” These quotes show the alienation practices of the participants who work as paid teachers.

First of all, despite not having the full teaching qualification in the first quote, being “forced” to work with non-experts, as well as the problems posed by the economic and social relations experienced, and despite everything, wanting to do a profession in line with his education and having to continue doing it, being paid, it wears out teachers significantly. Especially, as stated in the second quote, the significant impact of “psychological and social pressure”, not being able to receive adequate financial and other rights, as well as the exclusion, discrimination and stigma problems they experience in their relationships, cause paid teachers to feel a significant alienation from their own profession, their relationships and life. Apart from these, in another quote, P1 stated the following: *“This definitely reduces one’s motivation at some point. I mean, I don’t know, people want to be materially and spiritually happy in their work, after all, there is only one thing we do in life. But of course, this does not meet financial expectations.”* As a matter of fact, the approaches of “discrediting” in the last quote and “wanting to be materially and spiritually happy” in the 3rd quote, but not being able to have them, explain the process of alienation.

Current workplace relationships

One of the important findings of this research was to reveal the existing relationships in the schools where one of them was official at the time it was used in the treatment process. Although paid teachers have previous problems in terms of salary, social rights and important problems in terms of their relationships, they have had positive and important approaches to the permanent teachers, administrators, students and their parents in the schools where they currently work. The participants thoughts coded P8 regarding the relationships in question were as follows: *“Our administrator is very good in this regard, our teachers at the school are really good, we have not experienced any problems, that is, we have never seen the distinction between paid staff. I mean, I am speaking for this school. For example, there is discrimination in some schools in the center, not by the administration, but at least I see that the teachers do it, I have friends, they say it.”* In the words of P14 *“There is a completely fair approach in this school. I think I do not see any discrimination. I think there is no discrimination between them, but I can say this specifically for this school.”* The thoughts of these participants show that; participants are satisfied with the administration and permanent teachers in the schools they work in. In

addition, the thoughts of the 9th participant confirm these: *"There is no difference. I am lucky in that regard at the school where I work. I mean, I have heard of different ones, but there is no difference at our school, we are just like a normal teacher."* The last participant's thoughts also coincide with the previous two participants. But it is different in one aspect. Although participant 9 stated that they did not experience discrimination and exclusion, the approach of *"we are like normal teachers"* stated that he actually internalized and accepted the categories of 'normal and non-normal', 'paid teacher', 'permanent' or 'contracted teacher', although he did not want to and was conscious of it.

Even if it is not, it can be evaluated as being under their influence and reproducing this process of stigmatization and exclusion. On the other hand, the participants described the approaches of the management staff and other permanent teachers with sentences such as *"good"*, *"completely fair"* and *"normally"*. They emphasized that the students and parents also have promising approaches. It is evident from the above quotes that paid teachers did not experience any problems in terms of their relationships with both administrators and permanent teachers in the schools where they worked at the time of this research, and that they did not feel discrimination or exclusion.

However, an important point that should not be overlooked is that, while the participants express their thoughts about permanent teachers and administrators, they express their opinions such as *"we are lucky"* and *"there is no discrimination"*, as well as positive approaches, and that their opinions are limited and related to the school where they are currently working. In other words, the participants want to express that they faced problems such as exclusion, discrimination and stigmatization before their professional lives and in the experiences, they gained from other paid teacher colleagues. This result explains that the social problems experienced by paid teachers may differ depending on the schools and administrators they work for. Approaches such as *"in our school"*, *"I can limit it to this school (positive thoughts)"*, *"discrimination is made in some schools"*, which the researchers use when expressing their thoughts, are seen as important in terms of expressing the social problems that paid teachers experience from time to time.

Results and Discussion

The neo-liberal model that emerged after the 1970s was based on the idea that growth and development depend on competitiveness and that everything should be done to increase competition and competitive potential. According to this model, it was necessary to increase the flexibility in the labor markets of countries. However, this meant that the

costs of risk and precarious work had to be borne by employees and their families (Standing, 2020). The impact of this model has shown itself in many areas and has also caused significant negative effects in the field of education. The effects of qualities such as flexibility and insecure employment on teacher employment are among the important examples of this situation. In addition to permanent and contracted teacher employment, there is also the increasing number of paid teacher employment.

Paid teachers aspire to study for a long time and begin working life after graduating from university. If they cannot be appointed, they seek work as paid teachers. Teachers who start teaching as “paid” teachers as they try to practice their profession, find a job suitable for the education they have spent, and shoulder the economic burden of life, even if the earnings are minimal, face important problems. The problems of paid teachers primarily and predominantly focus on salary; although they do the same job and put in the same effort as permanent teachers in the institutions where they work, they receive salaries approximately three times less than permanent teachers. This situation may affect the motivation of paid teachers in their work lives, their relationships in the institutions where they work, and their family and social lives. The salary problem identified in this research is consistent with previous studies (Ayna & Deniz, 2022; Doğan et al., 2013; Doğan & Aydın, 2023; Kanat, 2018; Yılmaz, 2018). On the other hand, the problems that paid teachers find themselves in can also affect the atmosphere in the schools they work in and can cause the concept of justice to be questioned. Paid teachers, who receive approximately one third less salary than permanent teachers, can feel excluded, subjected to inequality, and can have an internal attitude towards permanent teachers. This can sometimes cause a division into paid and permanent teachers within institutions and can have negative effects on the school climate and work peace.

As a result, there is a serious salary problem for paid teachers, which is basically not being appointed after graduation and not being able to receive the reward of their labor afterwards. In this case, two controversial questions and situations arise. First, why are paid teachers not appointed after graduation? Second, if there is a need for teachers, why are permanent teachers not appointed but paid? When considered as the first problem, reasons such as not being able to open enough positions and not being able to win the KPSS exam come to the fore. However, this situation also manifests itself in paradoxical situations that bring discussions.

First of all, the discussions about the nature of the KPSS exam and the objectivity of the interview process afterwards are voiced by paid teachers, and this situation creates a discussion and then hopelessness for paid teachers. On the other hand, as the second question, in addition to the fact that people who are not allowed cannot be appointed,

there are many protected people who come with assignments like themselves in the schools they are assigned to, this does not question some situations from its own perspective. Although there is a need for teachers in schools, the fact that there are many people who are not assigned as permanent staff and are employed creates a distrust towards the people who are hired, while an alienation and coldness towards themselves and their professions emerges.

While the issue of salary constitutes the most important problem of paid teachers, discrimination arises from this situation and the concept of “justice” is questioned. The participants’ descriptions of the salary such as “a funny wage”, “something like pocket money” and “a small fee” also emphasize this. On the other hand, regarding their social rights, the fact that their insurance is paid for half the number of days they have worked can be considered the loss of an important social right of paid teachers. Particularly, paid teachers are insecure about their retirement because their insurance is not paid in full and is paid very little. This emerging situation coincides with the findings of some studies (Bayar & Çelik, 2020; Cantürk, 2023; Dali, 2017). While it is seen that paid teachers, who have serious problems especially in terms of salary and insurance, answer the question “What are the disadvantages of paid teaching?” mainly in terms of “salary”, and this problem, combined with the lack of insurance and other rights, causes them to feel significant discrimination and exclusion. Over time, this situation becomes exhausting, and when they compare themselves with permanent teachers who do the same job, their motivation for their profession decreases, causing them to feel alienated.

This situation in particular reveals that, as adults and educated individuals, paid teachers are particularly not paid for their labor, are not satisfied financially, and are deprived of a basic right such as insurance, which causes significant disappointment, low motivation, and, as mentioned in the literature, a serious alienation from their profession. In this context, when evaluated through Marx, the person whose right to use his labor is taken away falls into a passive situation and as a result becomes alienated from his labor, work, and environment (Yedekci, 2016: 891).

On the other hand, the fact that paid teachers are in a partial and limited situation in terms of their negativities and rights also brings forward a discussion on the concept of “partial citizen” that Guy Standing uses for individuals and communities (Precariat) who are in flexible and precarious working conditions caused by neo-liberal approaches and globalization. Because although paid teachers are defined within the concept of “teacher” and are in the same place and doing the same job as permanent teachers, as Standing (2020 :11) puts it, for one reason or another, they have more limited rights compared to a normal citizen (or a permanent teacher).

Paid teachers have low salaries, half insurance, and are in an isolated situation in terms of their social rights. In particular, as one participant put it, the approach of “we have no guarantees” and “there is no institution we can take refuge in” reveals a significant precariousness in terms of future social rights as well as negative material conditions. Precarious work causes stress and negative emotions, as well as erosion in a person’s life and worsens this situation (Standing, 2020: 90). In total, this situation and the precarious way of working cause alienation and create environments where employees are exploited through their salaries (Bozkurt, 2015). In short, in addition to the financial deficiencies, anxiety about the future and precarious working conditions cause significant psychological and mental damage to paid teachers and increase the problems they experience.

The segregation of teachers by employing them in different capacities such as permanent, contracted and paid, causes issues like job insecurity and inequality for working teachers. This situation leads to significant issues such as a decrease in the quality of education, dissatisfaction, lack of belonging and alienation (Polat, 2014). As a result, deep economic and social problems arise in education and society. The reflection of inequalities within the class also manifests in many ways (Kaymaz & Atmaca, 2022). In addition, while the participants who are working as paid teachers stated that the paid teaching profession obviously does not have any advantages, it was observed that some of the paid teachers who evaluated in terms of advantages highlighted situations such as “gaining experience” and “doing their job”.

While this situation provides some advantages for the paid teachers who are newly appointed or will be appointed in terms of warming up to their profession and being able to overcome their excitement, this situation constitutes a very minor point when compared to the problems experienced and felt by paid teachers. Because the limited number of positions in terms of appointments and the prolongation of the processes of not being appointed cause significant wear and tear and burnout for paid teachers. On the other hand, an important part of the discussion is the difference in the society’s view of teaching. The significant problems experienced by paid teachers individually cause significant discredit and stigmatization in the view of the teaching profession in society. Because the employment of a portion of the society that is educated as teachers who have received university education and formation training with low wages and insufficient rights affects the view of individuals towards the teaching profession in society and causes a loss of reputation in the eyes of society. According to Kızıldaş (2021); it is possible to say that the practice of paid teaching damages the reputation of the teaching profession. In addition, paid teachers are socially described as “unappointed”,

“unearned”, “unsuccessful” teachers due to the working conditions and problems they experience, and they are subject to a kind of stigmatization.

A critical aspect of this research is the relationships in the institutions where paid teachers work. The research findings reveal that the relationships between administrators and permanent teachers, parents and students in the schools where paid teachers work are positive and continue with mutual respect and assistance. While the participants expressed the approaches of the management staff and other permanent teachers with sentences such as “good”, “completely fair”, “normally”, they also emphasized that the students and their parents had good approaches. While paid teachers stated that they did not experience any problems with students and students’ parents, a significant number of them also stated that they did not know the distinction between paid staff and the difference between students and students’ parents.

This finding is in terms of the relationships of 17 paid teachers in the schools and institutions where they worked as of the period when this research was conducted and the interviews were conducted. Otherwise, it is not possible to generalize this finding. Because, as stated in the literature, many studies and findings reveal the relational problems of paid teachers in the schools they work. In fact, almost all of the 17 paid teachers who participated in the study touched upon the relational problems that emerged in terms of their past experiences and the relatives of other paid teachers they knew. On the other hand, while this finding of the study differs from the studies that show that paid teachers are not taken seriously and are marginalized by parents, teachers and students (Ayna & Deniz, 2022; Bayar & Çelik, 2020), it aligns with the study indicating that paid teachers do not have problems with administrators (Polat, 2014).

However, it is in contrast to the studies (Gökşen 2019, Polat, 2014), which show that paid teachers do not communicate adequately with permanent staff and are not considered by students. In this context, it is thought that these differences may differ in the context of factors such as the openness of communication between the administrative staff and teachers in the schools where paid teachers work, the level of sharing and dialogue between parents, students and teachers, and the socio-cultural situation of the city, district or settlement where the schools are located. On the other hand, although the participants in the research stated that the relationships in the schools they worked in were smooth and positive, nearly every paid teacher faced problems such as stigmatization, alienation in their experiences in the institutions where they had previously worked or through paid teachers who were their relatives. They appear to be face-to-face.

As stated above, while the problems of discrimination and exclusion primarily arise from the salaries paid to paid teachers and the low insurance paid, they are also seen in the attitudes and behaviors of the administrators and other permanent teachers in the institutions where they work, in terms of relations. As stated in their experiences with paid teachers who are friends and relatives of the previous institutions they have worked for or they know, the participants are labeled as “paid”, and since they are not permanent staff and their working hours are short and temporary, the approaches towards them are distant and distant. In this context, as expressed in Goffman, paid teachers are categorized and stigmatized based on their working hours and salaries, whether they are permanent or paid teachers. Stigmas are produced by individuals and society as a perspective (Goffman, 2014).

Particularly the description of “*landlord-tenant*” stated by one participant is a significant example of this situation. Stigma actually refers to the fall from grace itself, rather than the physical symptom of it. This situation may result in not being included in relationships and sometimes brings with it problems such as exclusion and discrimination. However, paid teachers put the same effort and perform the same job as permanent teachers but are deprived of most of the rights they should have. According to Öğülmüş et al. (2013); while paid teachers feel adequate in terms of their profession, they are dissatisfied in terms of wages and other rights and feel a lack of commitment to their profession. Although they see themselves as competent, their negative feelings about their personal rights and the wages they receive negatively affect their commitment to their profession. Paid teachers sometimes work on duty and do not receive money for their shifts like permanent teachers.

On special days, they prepare the class for ceremonies and take responsibility for the class by becoming class guidance teachers. In addition, although paid teachers can get a medical report when they are sick, their wages are cut and they cannot receive money like permanent teachers for periods such as leave, public holidays and snow holidays. This situation causes significant financial and economic pressure and stress for paid teachers, leading to a decrease in their motivation. On the other hand, the problems they experience such as stigma, exclusion and discrimination cause them to feel burnout, distance, disrepute and alienation towards their own lives, professions and relationships. According to Yıkılmaz and Altınacak (2021); the problems that paid teachers experience are not limited to the people they find in relationships at work and in relationships, but also stand out as anxiety about being appointed outside of school, financial difficulties and problems within the family. These issues reveal the alienation of the person from

production activities, the products and services they provide, their colleagues at work, and their human quality and potential (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2014).

In addition to these, when we look at it, another important issue that emerged in the research is that a significant portion of the participants who work as paid teachers demand the abolition of paid teaching. This situation is particularly caused by the idea that it constitutes a major obstacle to permanent appointment, and it has been determined that 3 different views have emerged, with participants who want to make arrangements and improvements in the paid teaching practice. The first view consists of participants who work as paid teachers and want the conditions to be improved and corrected. While they state that they can continue their profession in this way, they expect the conditions to be corrected and improved.

Another view expects paid teachers to be transferred to the permanent staff, and to be increased to the permanent staff level in terms of current salaries and social rights. The defenders of the last and third ideas are mostly composed of participants who are graduates of education faculties and who are graduates of four-year universities and branches. Although there are those who state the other two different views among these three views, especially those who are in the third view want paid teaching to be both a way of restoring the lost reputation of the teaching profession, and to be carried out by people who are graduates of teaching departments, competent and in their own field, and to have the rights provided to permanent teachers as permanent teachers.

On the other hand, some of the participants who want the abolition of paid teaching want the abolition of paid teaching practice, thinking that this practice prevents the increase in the number of quotas. This situation that has emerged is in a situation that may cause the innocence of the paid teaching practice to be questioned. The fact that the number of people who graduate from teaching is increasing every year and the number of people assigned as paid teachers is also increasing in parallel is a situation that is criticized by the candidates who graduated from teaching and are waiting for a position. In addition, it would be valuable to think that the fact that paid teachers do not have any union activities and are not members of any union, the procedures and conditions of their assignment are lighter than those of permanent staff, and that they do not impose a significant financial burden in terms of salary and social rights may weaken the collective bargaining and resistance capacity of permanent teachers. As a result, when evaluated, it is seen that the paid teaching practice has an important role in many parts of the education sector, and paid teachers work within the broad labor dynamics in many areas where there is a teacher shortage. In addition to this study, when previous studies and the extensive literature are taken into consideration, it can be

thought that paid teaching will continue to play a structural role in broader labor dynamics with newness to be made regarding the paid teaching practice, salary, social rights or staff arrangements.

Suggestions

In the context of the findings and results of this research, the following suggestions are considered important:

- First of all, the very low salaries of paid teachers can be regulated and improved.
- In particular, the social rights of paid teachers should be taken into consideration and their half-paid insurance should be provided in a way that it will be full.
- When assigning paid teachers, first of all, branch graduates should be assigned, and those who are 4-year faculty graduates and have formation training should be preferred.
- In order for the existing relationships in the institutions where paid teachers work to be more regular and fluent, information can be provided to both the teachers who will be employed as paid and the permanent teachers in the school, which will increase the relational sensitivity and awareness.

Limitations

When the limitations of the research are evaluated, the following issues come to the fore:

- The research is limited to one high school and four middle schools.
- The research is limited to 14 female and 3 male participants.
- The research is limited to paid teachers working in 5 different institutions in Kemalpaşa district of İzmir province.
- The branches in which the participants in the research work are limited to theology-religion, physics, science, history, painting, mathematics, machinery, literature and special education.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Ülkelerin ve milletlerin toplumsal refah ve gelişmişlikleri eğitim seviyelerinin derecesi ve kalitesi ile paralellik göstermektedir. Eğitim açısından başarı ve bu başarı bağlamında istikrarı yakalamış toplumlar, sosyal, kültürel ve ekonomik olarak diğer toplumların önünde yer almaktadır. Toplumların söz konusu başarıları eğitim sistemi içerisindeki dinamiklerin yerinde, güçlü ve dengeli olmaları ile bağlantılıdır. Aksi durumda gelişmiş, eğitilmiş birey ve toplumlara ulaşmak amacıyla aksamalar ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu bağlamda neoliberal yaklaşımların eğitim hayatı üzerine etkilerinden bahsetmek mümkündür. İş hayatıyla sınırlı kalmayan bu etkilerin eğitim hayatında yansımalarının olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Neoliberal politikaların esnek üretim ve esnek çalışma gibi yaklaşımları, eğitim hayatında da etkisini göstermiş ve bir eğitim faaliyeti için önemli bir noktada olan öğretmen istihdamını da etkilemiştir. Dali'ye (2017) göre; neoliberal politikaların söz konusu bu etkisinde piyasa ve eğitim arasındaki ilişki derinleşirken, bu öğretmen istihdamının dönüşmesine neden olmuştur. Bu bağlamda “ücretli öğretmenlik” ismi altında bir istihdam biçimi oluşmuş ve beraberinde birçok tartışmaya da neden olmuştur. Ücretli öğretmenlik, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'na bağlı olarak okullarda istihdam edilen ve ek ders karşılığında çalışan öğretmenlerdir (Gökşen, 2019).

Bu durumun öncesinde, normal şartlarda devlete bağlı, kamuda ve kadrolu olarak öğretmen olabilmek ve görev yapabilmek için, eğitim fakültelerinden mezun olmak ve pedagojik formasyon eğitimi sahibi olmak gerekmektedir. Yanı sıra, adayların KPSS'den yeterli puan alarak, girilen mülakatlardan da başarılı olması beklenmektedir (Cantürk, 2023:128). Bu şartları sağlamayan kişiler tekrar söz konusu şartları yerine getirmeye çalışırken, aynı zamanda KPSS'ye yeniden hazırlanmakta ve aynı zamanda il veya ilçelerde bulunan Milli Eğitim kurumlarına müracaat ederek ücretli öğretmenlik yapmayı talep etmektedirler.

Ücretli olarak görevlendirilmesi sağlanan öğretmenlerin eğitim dönemi içerisindeki görev süresi, kadrolu öğretmen atamasının olması, doğum izni tamamlanan öğretmenin göreve geri dönmesi, dönemin veya eğitim yılının tamamlanması ile birlikte sona ermektedir. Bazen ücretli öğretmenlerin görev sürelerinin bittiğini, çalıştığı kurumdaki idare yetkililerinden öğrenmesi ani ve beklenmedik bir zamanda oluşabilmekte, bu ücretli öğretmenler ve öğrencileri açısından önemli bir hayal kırıklığına neden olabilmektedir.

Diğer taraftan bu ve benzeri ihtimaller ücretli öğretmenlerin ileriye yönelik olarak güvensizlik duymasına ve beraberinde işlerindeki motivasyonun düşmesine, yanı sıra

görev yapmış oldukları okuldaki yönetici grubu ve diğer kadrolu öğretmenlerle gelişmiş ilişkiler kurabilmesine de etki etmektedir. Diğer taraftan, Ayna ve Deniz'e (2022 :67) göre; ücretli öğretmenler girmiş oldukları ders saati kadar ücret aldıkları için kazançları kadrolu öğretmenlerin maaşlarına kıyasla yarısının da altında ve çok düşüktür. Ayrıca ücretli öğretmenlerin hasta olduklarında almış oldukları raporların karşılığı bulunmamakta, ücret alamamaktadırlar. Bu ve benzeri nedenlerle bazen, ücretli öğretmenlerin maaşı, asgari ücrete bile karşılık gelmeyecek durumda kalmaktadır.

Nitekim araştırma bulguları dikkate alındığında öncelikli olarak ayrımcılık ve dışlanma sorunları ücretli öğretmenlerin almış olduğu maaş ve az yatırılan sigorta ile öne çıkarken, ilişkiler açısından da çalışmış oldukları kurumlardaki yönetici kadro ve diğer kadrolu öğretmenlerin kendilerine yönelik olarak tutum ve davranışlarında da görülmektedir. Önceki çalışmış olduğu kurumlarda veya tanımış oldukları arkadaş ve yakını olan ücretli öğretmenler üzerinden deneyimlerinde belirtildiği gibi, katılımcılar "ücretli" damgası yemekte, kadrolu olmadıkları ve çalışma sürelerinin kısa ve geçici olduğu bilindiği için kendilerine yönelik yaklaşımlar mesafeli, uzak olmaktadır.

Özellikle bir katılımcının belirttiği "ev sahibi-kiracı" betimlemesi bu durumun önemli bir örneğini teşkil etmektedir. Bu durum ilişkilere dahil edilmeme yönünde ortaya çıkabilmekte, bazen dışlanma ve ayrımcılık gibi sorunları da beraberinde getirmektedir. Diğer taraftan ücretli öğretmenlerin yaşamış oldukları olumsuzluklar ve hakları açısından kısmi ve sınırlı bir durum içinde bulunmaları Guy Standing'in neo-liberal yaklaşımlar ve küreselleşmenin neden olduğu esnek ve güvencesiz çalışma şartları içinde bulunan kişi ve topluluklar (Prekarya) için kullandığı "kısmi vatandaş" kavramı üzerinden bir tartışmayı da ileri sürmektedir. Çünkü her ne kadar ücretli öğretmenler "öğretmen" kavramı içinde tanımlansalar, kadrolu öğretmenlerle aynı mekanda bulunup, aynı işleri yapmakta olsalar da, Standing'in (2020:11), ileri sürdüğü biçimde o veya bu sebepten ötürü normal bir vatandaşa (veya kadrolu bir öğretmene göre) kıyasla daha sınırlı haklara sahip durumdadır.

Ücretli öğretmenlerin maaşları az, sigortaları yarım, sosyal hakları açısından dışlanmış bir durum içinde bulunmaktadır. Özellikle bir katılımcının ifade ettiği şekilde "ücretli öğretmenlikten emekli olamazsın" yaklaşımı olumsuz maddi şartların yanında geleceğe yönelik sosyal haklar açısından da önemli bir güvencesizlik durumunu gözler önüne sermektedir. Güvencesizlik, strese ve olumsuz duygulara neden olmasının yanında kişinin yaşamında aşınmalara neden olmakta ve bu durumu daha kötü bir seviyeye taşımaktadır (Standing, 2020:90).

Ücretli öğretmenler, kadrolu öğretmenlerle aynı emeği vermekte, aynı işi yapmakta fakat olması gereken hakların çoğundan mahrum kalmaktadırlar. Ücretli öğretmenler bazen nöbet tutup, nöbetin karşılığı kadrolu öğretmenler gibi para alamamakta, özel günlerde sınıfı törene hazırlayıp görev almakta, sınıf rehber öğretmeni yapılarak sınıfın sorumluluğunu üstlenmektedirler. Ayrıca ücretli öğretmenler hasta olduklarında rapor alabilmelerine rağmen ücretleri kesilmekte, izin, resmi tatil, kar tatili gibi süreçlerde kadrolu öğretmenler gibi para alamamaktadırlar. Söz konusu durum maddi ve ekonomik açıdan ücretli öğretmenler için önemli bir baskı ve stres unsuru olarak ortaya çıkarken, motivasyonlarının düşmesine diğer taraftan yaşamış olduğu damgalanma, dışlanma ve ayrımcılık gibi sorunları kendi yaşamlarına, mesleklerine ve ilişkilerine yönelik olarak bir tükenmişlik, uzaklık, itibarsızlaşma hissetmelerine ve yabancılaşmalarına neden olmaktadır. Söz konusu durumlar ücretli öğretmenlerin kadrolu öğretmenler içerisine dahil edilmemesi yönünde, Giddens'in (2008: 403-404) ortaya koyduğu dışlanma biçimlerinden ilkinin ifade ederken, diğer açıdan ücretli öğretmenin veya damgalı kişinin çok önemsenmeyip, ilişki kurulmak istenmemesi ve ilişkiden kaçınılmak istenmesi açısından Goffman'ın (2014:61-62) vurguladığı damgalı kişi ile ilişkileri sonlandırma ve kaçınma durumuna örnek teşkil etmektedir. Diğer taraftan bu bulgu, yabancılaşma ve benzer sorunlar açısından (Dali, 2017; Güvercin, 2014) gibi çalışmalarla örtüşmektedir. Ayrıca her ne kadar dönemlik veya yıllık olarak ücretli öğretmenler görevlendirilse de kadrolu öğretmenin izinden döndüğü gün ücretli öğretmenin işine son verilebilmektedir. Hatta bu bilgi ücretli öğretmenin kendine ani olarak verilebilmekte, ders arası veya gün sonu büyük bir hayal kırıklığı ve şok yaşayabilmektedir. Ücretli öğretmenin kendi yaşamış olduğu bu hayal kırıklığı, aynı zamanda öğretmenini seven ve ona bağlı birçok öğrencinin de üzülmeye ve hayal kırıklığı yaşamasına neden olmaktadır. Toplamda çoğu da genç ve hayatının baharında denilebilecek eğitimli insanların "ücretli öğretmen" kavramı altında yaşamış olduğu maddi ve sosyal bu tarz gerçekler, bir neslin "adalet" ve "eşitlik" kavramlarını sorgularken, toplumundan, devletinden ve yaşamından güvensizlik duymasına sonuçta önemli bir insan kaynağının günden güne "erimesine" neden olmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, ücretli öğretmenler maddi ve sosyal olarak birçok sorunla yüz yüze gelmekte, yaşamış oldukları problemler nedeniyle motivasyonları düşmekte, geleceğe ümitli bir biçimde bakamamakta, mesleki yaşamlarına ve hayata ilişkin yabancılaşma yaşayabilmektedirler.

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The Pedagogies of Precariat and Symbolic Violence in the Neoliberal Education System: A Case Study*

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of neoliberal policies on the teaching profession through the lens of Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence and the perspective of precarity. A qualitative case study method is employed with maximum variation sampling, involving participants composed of tenured, contracted, and hourly-paid teachers from public schools as well as teachers from private schools in the Gaziemir District of İzmir Province. Data were collected through semistructured interviews and subjected to content analysis. Five major themes emerged from the findings. The theme of restriction of professional autonomy by political and administrative expectations illustrates how centralized policies and ideological expectations exclude teachers from pedagogical decision-making. The perception of audit mechanisms as symbolic violence reveals that performance-oriented, continuous supervision creates implicit pressures on teachers. Teachers' position in decision-making processes indicates that they are reduced to passive implementers in terms of school policies and curriculum development. Inequalities in recognition and professional development highlight discriminatory practices in career advancement and professional opportunities. Lastly, the erosion of teacher authority demonstrates the declining respect and authority of teachers in their relationships with parents and students. The results underline the need for structural and cultural transformations to strengthen teachers' professional standing.

Keywords: Precariat, symbolic violence, neoliberal education policies, precarity in education, case study

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Introduction

The implementation of neoliberal policies over the last three decades has fundamentally changed education systems (Davies & Bansel, 2007), steering schools towards competition, performance measurement, and market logic (Hursh, 2007). These have necessitated new modes of governance, emphasizing quantitative outputs over content (Evans et al., 1996) and practices like “high-stakes testing” and “performance audits,” which, while fostering competition, have sidelined public interest (Apple, 2015) and required acceptance of capital-focused policies at social and cultural levels.

This market-driven shaping of education has transformed the teaching profession, with privatization leading to varied employment forms, increased nontenured positions, weakened unionization, and heightened insecurity (Castro, 2022). Flexible employment models have commodified teachers’ labor, eroding protection and autonomy and increasing competition and anxiety (Dağ, 2020; Ozbay et al., 2016), pushing teachers into disadvantaged positions and precarization (Ergin et al., 2018; Standing, 2011). The precariat, a social segment defined by insecure, unpredictable, and flexible working conditions (Standing, 2011), provides a perspective to understand the economic dynamics and accompanying sociosubjective vulnerabilities shaping teachers’ work. This often translates to an erosion of professional identity and devaluation (Connell, 2013), affecting not just low-skilled workers but also highly educated professionals (Standing, 2014) due to accountability policies and pressure for “results.”

These neoliberal impacts are reinforced by “symbolic violence” (Bourdieu & Nice, 1998; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; 1990; 2015), a form of domination operating through internalized acceptance of dominant values, often mediated by educational institutions reproducing these norms through formal and hidden curricula (Beck, 1997; Pryke, 1997). Reducing teaching to market logic deters teachers from criticizing policies (Murphy, 2018; Sklar, 1980). Neoliberal policies also diminish professional autonomy by evaluating educators’ cultural and social capital via market criteria (Brown, 2003; Bourdieu, 1986), creating disparities in job security and satisfaction. This can generate consent to insecure conditions through symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; 1990; 2015), weakening collegial solidarity (Crozier & Reay, 2011).

The research context is Türkiye’s educational framework, shaped by long-term neoliberal repercussions since the 1980s, including privatization and marketization (Başaran et al., 2024), weakening education as a public service amidst rising competition (Aslan, 2014; Kartal, 2020). Increased private schooling (Altun-Aslan, 2019; Atay, 2024; Polat, 2013) has deepened public–private disparities. Global education reform trends also prompt comparisons between practices such as Türkiye’s “project schools” and England’s “academy schools,” with the former often critiqued for new forms of stratification and issues in appointment processes (Baktır, 2022). Neoliberal policies have significantly affected the teaching profession, with flexible employment since the 2000s concretizing intraschool inequalities along tenured-contracted-hourly-paid lines (Dağ, 2020), fostering precarization with adverse psychological and institutional consequences

(Buckworth, 2018), including quiet quitting (Özen et al., 2024; Yılmaz, 2024). High-stakes examinations (LGS and YKS) have narrowed curricula and increased psychological pressure (Çetin & Ünsal, 2019; Baştürk, 2022; Baş & Kılıncım, 2019; Özdaş, 2019), alongside persistent regional inequalities in teacher distribution and infrastructure (Ilgar, 2023; Işık & Bahat, 2021).

While the literature addresses neoliberalism's impact on students and curricula, the symbolic violence and precarization affecting teachers remain under-researched (Scott, 2012). The "normalization" of precariat status promotes performance-driven, competitive atmospheres over solidarity (Reygadas, 2015). It is crucial to analyze neoliberalism's effects from precariat teachers' perspectives, as precarization reinforces employer power and restricts teachers' self-expression (Standing, 2014), potentially leading to consent to job insecurity (Freire, 2005; 2014) -a clear manifestation of symbolic violence where individuals adopt status-quo-maintaining practices (Bourdieu, 1979; 1986). The specific literature gap lies in insufficiently addressing precarity within education and teaching through the lens of symbolic violence. Thus, how teachers experience and legitimize precarization and its effects on education warrants in-depth investigation (González, 2015), prompting the central question: As teachers become precaritized, how do they internalize this situation instead of questioning it?

The present study is significant as it offers a critical perspective on teachers' working conditions and contributes to understanding inequality mechanisms within education, particularly through employment policies (Reygadas, 2015; Standing, 2011). In the Turkish context, by highlighting the critical role of tenured employment and professional autonomy for educational quality (Dağ, 2020; Kılınc et al., 2018), practical contributions are proposed for improving teacher employment policies.

The current research posits that the neoliberal order incorporates teachers into the precariat class, legitimizing this process through symbolic violence. It is aimed to reveal how teachers experience precarization within neoliberal educational structures and the ways these experiences are linked to symbolic violence. Within this general objective, the research questions are as follows:

1. In what dimensions and how do teachers experience precariat conditions stemming from neoliberal education policies?
2. What are the mechanisms of symbolic violence associated with teachers' precariat experiences, and how are these mechanisms reflected in teachers' perceptions?
3. Through which mechanisms of consent is the precarization process internalized by teachers legitimized via symbolic violence, and what resistance strategies do they develop in response?
4. When evaluating the experiences of teachers with different employment statuses, in which areas is symbolic violence most intensely experienced?

5. How can policy recommendations for the improvement and empowerment related to teacher employment policies be developed?

Method

Research Design

This qualitative study employed a case study design, an approach allowing in-depth examination of complex phenomena in real-life contexts through “how” and “why” questions, using multiple data sources to understand phenomena holistically (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Debout, 2016; Creswell, 2017). Unlike narrative research, it emphasizes contextual dynamics rather than individual life stories. The “case” was the perceptions of precarization and symbolic violence among teachers in public (tenured, contracted, and hourly-paid) and private schools in İzmir, Türkiye. This design was chosen to analyze in-depth how neoliberal education policies manifest in teachers’ experiences and reflect symbolic violence mechanisms, thus addressing the study’s core aims. The perceptions of teachers under varied employment conditions regarding these phenomena constitute the central case, assumed to be linked to neoliberal practices and policies.

Participants

The participants were teachers from public and private schools in İzmir’s Gaziemir District, a first-tier socioeconomically classified area (Ministry of Industry and Technology, 2022). From 54 schools, 20 were selected, and 15 teachers were identified using maximum variation sampling to capture a broad spectrum of experiences concerning precarization and symbolic violence across diverse school contexts and employment statuses (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011; Patton, 2002).

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants

Code Name	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Teaching Experience	School Type	Employment Status	School Level
P-1	Female	22	Single	1 year	Public	Hourly-paid	Middle School
P-2	Female	44	Married	23 years	Public	Tenured (Expert)	High School
P-3	Female	47	Married	8 years	Public	Hourly-paid	Special Education
P-4	Female	42	Married	15 years	Public	Tenured	Vocational High School
P-5	Female	28	Married	5 years	Public	Tenured (Excess Staff)	Primary School
P-6	Female	30	Single	2 years	Public	Contracted	Middle School
P-7	Female	31	Single	3 years	Public	Contracted	High School
P-8	Female	29	Married	2 years	Public	Contracted	Middle School
P-9	Male	40	Married	20 years	Private	-	High School
P-10	Male	41	Married	22 years	Public	Tenured	Middle School
P-11	Female	37	Married	14 years	Public	Tenured	High School
P-12	Male	26	Single	3 years	Public	Hourly-paid	Primary School
P-13	Male	33	Married	10 years	Private	-	Middle School

P-14	Female	36	Married	13 years	Private	-	High School
P-15	Female	30	Single	7 years	Private	-	Middle School

All 15 teachers who participated in the research exhibit diversity in terms of school types and employment statuses. Accordingly, 11 of the participants work in public schools; in this group, five teachers are tenured (P-2, P-4, P-5, P-10, P-11), three are contracted (P-6, P-7, P-8), and three have hourly-paid status (P-1, P-3, P-12). The other four participants are teachers working in private schools (P-9, P-13, P-14, P-15). Gender distribution consists of ten female and five male teachers. The participants' ages range from 22 to 47. In terms of marital status, ten teachers are married while five are single. Their teaching experience varies between 1 and 23 years. School level distribution is as follows: six teachers work at middle schools, six at high schools (including vocational), two at primary schools, and one at a special education institution. This participant diversity provided an opportunity to comparatively analyze the effects of neoliberal education policies on teachers' experiences in different institutional contexts and employment statuses, considering variations in gender, seniority, school type, school level, and employment conditions.

Data Collection Tools

The primary data collection tool was a semistructured teacher interview form, developed to explore in-depth perceptions of precarization and symbolic violence. Initial draft questions, based on an extensive literature review (neoliberalism in education, teacher precarity, symbolic violence, autonomy, and working conditions), were revised in accordance with feedback on clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness from three field experts (two in educational administration and one in sociology of education) and one qualitative method consultant. A subsequent pilot study with four nonsample teachers (one tenured, one contracted, one hourly-paid, and one private school teacher) tested question comprehensibility, interview flow, and data generation effectiveness, leading to minor wording and sequence adjustments. The final form contained 13 open-ended main questions (e.g., "How do political and administrative expectations affect your professional autonomy?") and potential probes, designed to allow free expression while addressing the research questions.

Researcher Role

The researcher, as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (Patton, 2002), acted primarily as a facilitator and active listener during interviews. Efforts focused on building rapport and trust to encourage open sharing, by ensuring a comfortable environment, clarifying research purposes, and reiterating confidentiality. Mindful of potential biases from the literature and personal perspectives, the researcher maintained a reflexive journal (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and utilized the structured interview guide, expert consultations, and peer debriefing with supervisors to mitigate these. The researcher maintained an ethically responsible stance throughout the study, prioritizing the well-being and rights of the participants.

Data Collection Processes

After official permissions (MEB[MoNE].TT.2024.007771) and ethics committee approval were obtained, school principals were contacted for permission to reach out to teachers. Teachers meeting the maximum variation sampling criteria were then invited, provided with an information sheet, and gave written informed consent. Face-to-face, individual, semistructured interviews were conducted by the researcher during the 2024-2025 academic year at a time and place convenient for each participant, typically in a quiet room at their school or a neutral location. Interviews, averaging 55 minutes (range 45-70), were audio-recorded with consent. Detailed field notes captured context, nonverbal cues, and researcher reflections to ensure data richness. Data collection ceased after the 12th interview upon observing thematic saturation, with three additional interviews confirming this point and ensuring comprehensive understanding. Interview flexibility allowed for follow-up questions and probes based on responses (Merriam, 2013).

Data Analysis

Interview recordings were transcribed verbatim by the researcher within 48 hours, with field notes integrated for richer context. The data were analyzed using three-stage inductive content analysis (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). Open coding involved line-by-line assignment of initial codes to meaningful text segments after multiple readings. Axial coding grouped similar codes into broader subcategories through comparative analysis. Selective coding consolidated subcategories into overarching themes that interlinked the structural and subjective dimensions of teachers' experiences with precarization and symbolic violence, directly addressing the research questions.

Coding procedures were carried out manually by the researcher using Word documents for transcripts and Excel spreadsheets for organizing codes, categories, and themes. Each code was recorded in a coding sheet, specifying the participant pseudonym, date, and page/line number from the transcript for easy retrieval and verification. For consistency, the code list and emerging categories were discussed and cross-checked by two independent researchers, establishing over 90% intercoder agreement on a sample, with disagreements resolved through discussion. The final thematic schemes were validated by two field experts.

Credibility and Ethics

The study was performed in accordance with established principles for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility was enhanced by fostering trusting relationships with the participants for genuine responses, expert consultation for question clarity, and allowing free expression. Meticulous data handling involved direct transcription and repeated coding. Dependability and confirmability were supported by a consistent data collection approach (same semistructured guide) and systematic, collaboratively analyzed data, with emerging themes discussed to reach a consensus. The findings were interpreted within the study's theoretical framework.

Ethical considerations were paramount. The participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, procedures, voluntary nature, and confidentiality via an informed consent form, from which signed consent (including for audio recording) was obtained. The confidentiality of the participants' identities and their schools was rigorously maintained through the use of pseudonyms (e.g., P-1, P-2) in all research outputs, and care was taken to ensure that no identifying details were decipherable in reported data. All ethical principles were strictly followed before, during, and after the interviews to prevent any harm to the participants and to uphold the integrity of the research process.

Findings

This section thematically analyzes teachers' symbolic violence experiences linked to precarization via Bourdieu's framework. The findings reveal constrained professional autonomy from invisible domination (institutional, administrative, audit, and social factors) as external pressures and internalized norms. Neoliberal policies reportedly weaken professional status, normalizing symbolic violence like exclusion from decisions, persistent audits, and discriminatory practices. Five main themes emerged from these experiences: (1) restriction of professional autonomy by political and administrative expectations, (2) perception of audit mechanisms as symbolic violence, (3) teachers' position in decision-making processes, (4) inequality in recognition and professional development, and (5) erosion of teacher authority. Each theme is subsequently detailed with supporting participant quotes.

1. Restriction of Professional Autonomy through Political and Administrative Expectations

The participants' statements indicate that their professional autonomy is limited by factors such as the political dependency of education policies and institutional hierarchy, interfering with pedagogical decision-making. Within Bourdieu's framework, this pressure occurs through overt coercion and internalized norms.

Political interventions frequently limit professional autonomy. P-2 described the Ministry's political involvement: *"Our Ministry of National Education is very involved in politics... No lie. Unfortunately, this is the situation in our country."* P-6 noted the effect of ideological orientations on pedagogical practices: *"In this country, every year teachers struggle with a different political wind, a different curriculum. Good teaching isn't expected of us, but good compliance is."* P-8 pointed to the political nature of frequent educational changes: *"So many changes happen... often political, not pedagogical."* P-14, a private school teacher, highlighted externally imposed formats: *"Every year a new project is imposed. They say, 'Teach according to this format,' as if we were robots. All our years of experience are disregarded."* P-10 noted that even idealistic practices could be labeled: *"I teach my lesson the best way I can... But sometimes even with this approach I can be accused of 'taking sides.'"* Conversely, some offered different perspectives. P-11 found some top-down implementations helpful: *"I mean, sometimes implementations from above make our job easier. We shouldn't criticize everything."* P-

12 acknowledged political aspects but felt less affected: *"Yes, political things happen, but we still do our own work. Honestly, we aren't much affected."*

Inequality in audit mechanisms also significantly impacts professional autonomy. P-3 highlighted nepotism favoring tenured teachers: *"The administration can't say anything to a tenured teacher... Everyone already has an acquaintance in the Ministry; everyone gets things done that way."* P-1 reported differential treatment for similar mistakes: *"When tenured teachers make a mistake, it's [considered] a human error; when we do, necessary procedures are initiated."* This sense of unequal treatment was underscored by P-8, who reported that *"some teachers are untouchable"* and that nontenured teachers often feel they *"cannot cross an invisible line."* In contrast, P-4 attempts to maintain autonomy by disregarding such pressures: *"It doesn't affect my professional autonomy because I generally deliver my teaching without heeding these expectations."* Regarding private schools, P-9 linked audits to job security: *"I'm in a private school; if a parent complains, my job is at risk."* P-13 expressed a sense of commodification: *"Our sector is all about auditing anyway, like production in a factory."*

2. Perception of Audit Mechanisms as Symbolic Violence

Audit processes in education can be perceived as pressure and become instruments of symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; 1990; 2015), operating through internalized norms to limit autonomy.

2.1. Increased Audit Pressure on Insecure Teachers

Hourly-paid and insecurely employed teachers often face stricter audits. P-1 linked this increased scrutiny directly to job insecurity and a form of consented control:

"If you are tenured, you will be working in the same school... next year. But I might be thinking I won't be here next year anyway... and consequently, the administrator might be more inclined to audit more, wondering 'is this person doing their job properly...?'"

This precarity was vividly expressed by P-7 (contracted public school): *"Tenured ones are comfortable. The principal doesn't pick on them. But us? Anything can happen at any moment,"* and P-9 (private school teacher): *"While it's uncertain if I'll be here next year, I weigh every word I say in case my behavior offends someone now."* The constant feeling of scrutiny had tangible effects, as P-8 stated they *"cannot start a lesson without checking if someone is watching."* P-10 described the classroom as a sanctuary: *"When I close the door, another world begins. Inside, there are only me and my students."* However, P-11 offered a justification for systemic oversight: *"I mean, frankly, it's necessary for the system to check. After all, this is a service provided to children."* In private schools, this pressure manifested intensely. P-14 recounted experiences of direct intimidation:

"The administrator stands at the classroom door and listens to the lesson. Then they shower you with feedback like 'this part is missing, that part is faulty.' But they haven't been in a classroom to teach for 10 years. It's not auditing; it's intimidation."

P-15 highlighted multiple layers of evaluation: *"As if curriculum changes weren't enough, the school also has its own quality standards. At the end of every term, they make students fill out surveys. I don't even know what to say."*

2.2. Inadequacy of Audits and Teachers' Criticisms of Administration

Views on audit functioning varied, with some participants finding current audits insufficient or ineffective. P-3 emphasized a need for more auditing in special education due to student vulnerability: *"The school where we work is very open to abuse... children cannot express themselves. I think principals should audit more frequently."* P-2 also preferred more administrative oversight, stating a lack of it increased pedagogical burdens: *"The school I currently work at is a bit relaxed in this regard. But I would have preferred a bit more control."* P-7 noted that some colleagues might benefit from stricter auditing: *"Especially some colleagues, when the system gives them an empty space, they stray from the line of teaching."* In private schools, P-9 argued auditing was necessary for equitable workload distribution: *"When there is no audit, responsibility is not distributed equally."* However, P-15 critiqued the perceived superficiality of some audits: *"Nobody really knows what or how they are auditing... shortcomings they find are forgotten the next day."*

2.3. Ideological/Individual Perception of Audits and Teacher Strategies

Teachers' individual perceptions of audits varied, often linked to audit purposes and school relationships. P-4 saw certain audits as necessary to prevent abuse: *"Our administration keeps us under audit in certain aspects, generally not regarding teaching methods."* P-12 highlighted the subjective nature of some audits, influenced by personal relationships: *"how they see you is important. If you are not liked, you'll get caught in an audit even if you're good."* Some felt audit mechanisms were limited. P-5 found their school's observation process reasonable: *"I find what my own administrator does to be reasonable."* In response, teachers developed various strategies. P-6 described engaging in self-auditing: *"nobody interferes with them; they audit themselves anyway."* P-8 prioritized student perception: *"sometimes how the student looks at you is more important than what the principal says."* P-9 developed internal standards against arbitrary external ones: *"they establish their own criteria; otherwise, those coming from outside are always arbitrary."* P-13 expressed conditional acceptance of audits, demanding fairness: *"I am not afraid of audits, but I will not forgive one that is done with a malicious purpose."*

3. Teachers' Position in Decision-Making Processes

Decision-making processes critically affect teachers' professional satisfaction, belonging, and motivation. The participants reported varied inclusion levels, often facing exclusion and unilateral administrative decisions, limiting their autonomy and positioning them as "implementers."

3.1. Systematic Exclusion of Teachers from Decision-Making Processes

Most participants felt insufficiently included in decision-making by the school administration. P-2 described the administration's dismissive and threatening response to objections: *"When we objected in meetings, I was met with the sentence, 'if you don't like something, request a transfer.' The assistant principal said it directly in front of 80 people."* P-7 stated the feeling of being merely informed: *"Decisions are already made in their minds; we are just informed."* This lack of voice was particularly emphasized by P-9, a private school teacher: *"We don't even have a say at the class level. Especially here, we have no right to speak at all."*

This exclusion was vividly expressed through metaphors: P-10 *"felt like a guest rather than a teacher"*; P-6 perceived decision-making as an *"administration monopoly"* with teachers as *"just extras"*; and P-8 found meetings *"like theater because whatever they suggest, what is to be done has already been determined."* P-12, an hourly-paid teacher, highlighted the precarious position of voicing opinions: *"When we express an opinion, we are told we're 'talking too much,' and when we keep quiet, we're 'indifferent'."* In private schools, P-13 noted that administrators often prioritize external pressures: *"When administrators make decisions, they only look at parent satisfaction. No one takes the teacher into account."* P-14 described tokenistic consultation: *"In meetings, they start by saying, 'let's get your ideas,' but the decisions have already been made... 'The market demands it.'"*

3.2. Participation in Decision-Making Processes Being Dependent on School Culture

Inclusion in decision-making, when it occurred, often remained symbolic. P-1 questioned the impact of solicited opinions: *"Especially if it's something teachers can also contribute to, they ask for their opinions. But of course, how much of it is actually implemented?"* P-6 found these comments more frustrating than no consultation at all: *"They ask for our ideas, but then nothing changes. That's even worse."* P-15, a private school teacher, offered a striking comparison highlighting power imbalances: *"In parent-teacher association meetings, parents have more say than we do... I felt like a vendor in a marketplace."* However, some participants reported positive, collaborative experiences. P-5 described a culture of shared decision-making: *"decisions are entirely made by the majority... We all choose together."* P-11 noted active participation and a responsive administration: *"I speak in all meetings, and our principal... tries his best to implement what I suggest."*

4. Inequality in Recognition and Professional Development Processes

The visibility of teachers' efforts and access to professional development significantly affect their motivation and satisfaction. The participants reported systemic injustice in recognition and unequal distribution of development opportunities.

4.1. Unfair Distribution of Recognition and Discriminatory Attitudes of the Administration

Hourly-paid teachers frequently faced systematic exclusion from recognition. P-1 expressed how their efforts are often unrecognized or viewed negatively: *"I get feedback like 'you try so hard even though you are hourly-paid,' but sometimes 'are you going to save the world?'"* P-3 confirmed this oversight: *"everyone was given a certificate from the MoNE, but there was nothing like that for hourly-paid teachers."* P-7 felt ignored by the administration despite parental appreciation: *"I teach most of the lesson, I receive appreciation from parents, but the administration ignores me."* P-9 (private school) never recalled even a verbal *"well done."* P-13 linked recognition to external metrics: *"being recognized depends on 'how many parents you please' and 'how many students you help pass exams.'" P-10, a tenured teacher, sarcastically stated they "have never seen a certificate of appreciation."*

In contrast, P-12 adopted a self-reliant stance: *"Frankly, I don't expect recognition. I get my reward from the students."* Favoritism was also prevalent. P-8 bluntly stated: *"Those close to the administration win. Relationships, more than success, determine recognition."* P-6 elaborated on the predictability of such favoritism: *"If an award is to be given, it's already clear who will get it. No one notices the one who does their job quietly."* P-14 highlighted this in private schools: *"The best teacher competition is held, but the winners are always the same names... parent satisfaction... So, the popular one wins."* P-11, however, offered a system-justifying perspective: *"Projects bring schools to the forefront, so the administration recognizes them. This is natural."*

4.2. Access Inequalities in Professional Development Opportunities

Significant inequalities in accessing noncompulsory professional development were also reported. P-1 stated direct exclusion due to status: *"Naturally, I was not included in these, because I am an hourly-paid teacher."* P-3 echoed this, noting how they seek alternatives: *"These courses are available for tenured teachers. We try to develop ourselves in places like public education centers."* P-9 described this exclusion as normalized in private schools: *"We are not even accepted into courses. This exclusion is like the norm now."* The selection process was questioned by P-7, who perceived it as predetermined and tokenistic: *"Teachers who will receive training are predetermined by the administration; selections are made for show."* P-5, however, reported accessible opportunities: *"Teachers can apply for and participate in all of these themselves."*

5. Erosion of Teacher Authority

Teachers' authority, critical for healthy pedagogy, is weakening due to neoliberal policies and societal changes (Apple, 2006a; Ball, 2003). The participants discussed challenges to their authority and coping strategies. Within the symbolic violence framework, this involves systematic weakening of the teacher's position, with diminishing prestige leading to increased questioning.

5.1. Effect of Parent Attitudes on Student Behaviors

Parent attitudes were seen as major contributors to authority issues. P-1 explained the foundational impact of parental respect on student behavior: *"I think one of the biggest reasons students overstep the boundaries of respect is the parents. If parents don't respect teachers, expecting it from the child may be very utopian."* P-14 illustrated heightened expectations in private schools: *"Parents constantly send messages on WhatsApp 'Why did you give my child 95 for the project?' Even giving grades isn't free anymore."* P-15 shared an experience of administrative siding with parents over professional judgment: *"The principal also said, 'act according to the parent.' Now I think twice before giving a warning."* P-7 highlighted the direct impact of parental actions on classroom authority: *"Parents scold us in front of the child. What can I say to the student then?"* P-6 noted a different dynamic linked to parental indifference: *"The more indifferent the parent, the more relaxed the child."* P-8 described challenges to their professional role: *"Someone wanted their child to change classes... 'the teacher was too rule-based.' Yes, because I am a teacher."* P-13 observed a shift in parent-teacher dynamics: *"There used to be parent-teacher cooperation. Now it's the parent versus the teacher."* However, P-11 offered an alternative view on parental influence: *"It ultimately comes down to the student; parents only influence them up to a point."*

5.2. Teachers' Strategies to Maintain Authority

The participants described individual strategies to deal with authority violations. P-2 focused on stepping back with parents: *"I try not to react too much; never get into a verbal altercation with a parent."* P-12 and P-6 emphasized establishing clear rules: they *"set clear rules from the beginning."* P-7 adapted their communication style to "survive": *"I learned to speak firmly without being offensive. You can't survive otherwise in this age."* Silence was a reflective or stepping back tool for P-8: *"Sometimes just listening is enough,"* and P-9: *"If I react, things worsen. I keep quiet."*

5.3. Parents' Selective Information Sharing and Teachers' Sense of Exclusion

Parents' selective communication reportedly led to exclusion for some teachers. P-5 found this lack of information frustrating: *"We are expected to know some things, but information is not given. This is very wearing."* In contrast, P-3, a special education teacher, relied on professional experience: *"We already understand a child's psychological state. The parent doesn't need to say anything."* P-8 tolerated such situations by focusing on student relationships: *"My bond with my student is more precious."* P-4 acknowledged a reciprocal dynamic in communication: *"I also have parents with whom I have special communication."*

Results and Discussion

The findings obtained in the present research indicate that teachers in Türkiye face significant limitations in their professional activities, particularly in pedagogical decision-making, which often relegates them to being passive implementers of centrally

determined curricula. This long-standing curtailment of teacher autonomy is a frequently voiced problem in the Turkish literature (Canbolat, 2020; Çelik et al., 2017; Çolak & Altinkurt, 2017; Özaslan, 2015; Yirci, 2017). The top-down determination of educational content and methods transforms teachers into technical implementers, hindering the development of individual pedagogical competencies (Frostenson, 2015) and negatively affecting professional satisfaction and innovation. Conversely, research shows that greater autonomy fosters more creative, motivated, and effective teachers (Ertürk, 2023; Evers et al., 2023; Kiemer et al., 2018; Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977; 1990) concept of "symbolic violence" aptly explains these implicit, internalized restrictions on teacher autonomy, where seemingly consented political or bureaucratic interventions represent systematic control. This deprivation of decision-making will, even without direct coercion, signify an implicit suppression of professional freedom. Insufficient inclusion in decision-making not only reduces job satisfaction but also impedes the development of student-sensitive teaching practices, despite the literature emphasizing autonomy as fundamental to educational quality (Akan & Ulaş, 2023; Akgündüz et al., 2015; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Seferoğlu, 2004; Üzüm & Karslı, 2014). The Finnish example, where high teacher trust and initiative yield positive outcomes (Chung, 2023; Erss, 2018; OECD, 2023; Sahlberg, 2010), underscores that positioning teachers as pedagogical decision-makers enhances satisfaction and educational quality. Thus, professional autonomy is a structural issue impacting the education system's efficiency, justice, and sustainability, especially in centralized systems like Türkiye where teacher exclusion suppresses initiative and promotes uniformity.

Research data also reveal that teachers perceive audit and evaluation practices not as support but as pressure mechanisms. Symbolic violence, as control through internalized norms without direct coercion (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2015), is manifest in hierarchical audit processes that establish invisible yet effective control, undermining pedagogical autonomy. Recent Turkish qualitative studies corroborate this; Yıldız et al. (2021) found that administrator and inspector attitudes in audits are perceived as pressure, with teachers feeling that they are "tilting at windmills." Similarly, Konal Memiş and Korumaz (2024) showed that project school teachers experience symbolic violence from multiple actors, often consenting to this intensely felt pressure. Such audits lead to negative outcomes like lost motivation, reduced self-efficacy, and diminished innovation. Continuous quantitative performance measurement can sideline creative pedagogical decisions, a situation not unique to Türkiye, as seen in analyses of Ofsted inspections in England (Gallagher & Smith, 2018). Ball (2003) notes such systems force a "legitimate pedagogical stance," a form of symbolic violence. In Türkiye, guidance-oriented audits often become punitive, with feedback focusing on deficiencies, transforming audits into a "professional disciplinary tool." This judgmental positioning creates latent tension, suppressing classroom creativity. Audit processes should therefore be restructured to be teacher-centered, developmental, and innovation-encouraging, rather than control-oriented, to prevent ongoing negative impacts on teacher satisfaction and educational quality.

Another prominent finding is teachers' extensive exclusion from decision-making at school and policy levels. Especially in traditionally centralized schools, teachers' opinions are often not sought, positioning them as passive implementers, a situation known to negatively affect professional satisfaction (Can & Ozan, 2020; Ulusoy et al., 2023). This structural exclusion fosters dissatisfaction, conflict, and weakened institutional belonging, undermining the principle of participation even within their own classrooms. The literature highlights that such exclusion hinders innovation and professional development (Ingersoll, 2003; Somech, 2002). Conversely, participatory school cultures, where teachers are viewed as decision-makers, positively impact educational quality, job satisfaction, and student achievement (Alanoğlu, 2019; Demirtaş & Alanoğlu, 2015; Farris, 2021; Ingersoll et al., 2017). International data, such as the OECD TALIS (2018) survey, starkly illustrate Türkiye's limited teacher involvement in decision-making (4% vs. 42% OECD average) (OECD, 2019), reinforcing their role as duty-fulfillers rather than strategic stakeholders (Erbıyık & Köybaşı Şemin, 2024; OECD, 2011; TEDMEM, 2014; Ulusoy et al., 2023; Yurdakul, Gür, Çelik & Kurt, 2016). Even when teachers participate in routine meetings, it is often a formality, lacking strategic impact, which can lead to feelings of worthlessness and reduced commitment (Dorukoğlu et al., 2023; Erdemli & Kurum, 2021; Kamalı & Kırıl, 2023). Ignoring teachers' valuable opinions limits the system's developmental potential, whereas participatory cultures enhance job satisfaction and belonging, and create better learning environments (Aksay & Ural, 2008; Kaşal et al., 2024; Somech & Bogler, 2002). Viewing teachers as pedagogical visionaries, and not just technicians, is crucial for their satisfaction and overall educational quality and sustainability.

The present research also reveals serious injustices in the recognition of teachers' labor and their access to professional development. When teachers' efforts are not objectively evaluated or recognized by management, motivation and commitment wane (Ada et al., 2013; Gümüştas & Gülbahar, 2022; Ertürk & Aydın, 2017; Uştu & Tümkaya, 2017) and miscommunication can lead to errors (Atmaca, 2020). Administrative favoritism in recognition undermines organizational justice and team equality (Okçu & Uçar, 2016), reducing trust and solidarity, leaving some feeling "favored" and others "ignored." This inequality extends to professional development, with Turkish in-service training programs long criticized as insufficient and misaligned with teachers' actual needs (Gencer et al., 2023; Ince vd., 2019; Özdemir, 2021; TEDMEM, 2014). Teachers in disadvantaged regions often have less access (Can, 2019), limiting their development and preventing equal opportunity. Yirci (2017) attributes these issues partly to the system's "status quoist" nature and misalignment of programs with field needs, noting teachers' desire for a supportive career system. While the Teacher Profession Law [ÖMK] No. 7528 (2024) introduced career stages, it faces criticism for creating discrimination and its examination-based structure negatively affecting motivation. The ÖMK's hierarchical system may produce symbolic violence, overshadowing pedagogical diversity, while its academy-based training's cultural capital focus and norm-based evaluations can disadvantage teachers and weaken organizational justice, negatively impacting motivation and satisfaction.

This perceived injustice in development and reward processes detrimentally affects individual motivation, job performance, and school culture, with damaged organizational justice weakening institutional commitment and job satisfaction (Okçu & Uçar, 2016). In contrast, countries in which teaching is highly regarded see more willing participation in professional development (Dolton et al., 2018), demonstrating a direct link between professional growth, appreciation, and equal opportunities. A system that makes individual contributions visible and equitably distributes development opportunities positively impacts educator satisfaction, student achievement, and system sustainability. Thus, restructuring recognition and development processes based on equality and inclusivity is essential.

Finally, the data provide strong evidence for the erosion of the teaching profession's societal standing and weakening teacher authority, consistent with concerns raised by Apple (2006a) and Ball (2003). The participants reported difficulties maintaining classroom discipline and authority in student-parent interactions, a situation supported by empirical findings linking declining prestige to negative parental attitudes and damaging media discourse (Bozkurt & Kutlu, 2021). Public portrayals devalue professional identity, while "customer-centric" parental expectations sometimes escalate into violence (Bayındır, 2024; Çimen & Karadağ, 2019), often linked to socioeconomic factors but severely impacting teacher authority and motivation (Atmaca & Öntaş, 2014). Teachers also face psychological violence and devaluation from various actors (Yener, 2023), making it difficult to feel valued. Furthermore, the proliferation of digital information has undermined the teacher's role as the "sole authority" (Çetinkaya et al., 2025; Fitria & Suminah, 2020), as students are more inclined to question. While pedagogically potent, this can decrease respect and increase discipline issues. This aligns with neoliberal shifts positioning teachers as "service providers" and parents as "customers" (Apple, 2006a; 2006b), eroding historical prestige. Multifaceted interventions (economic, cultural, and symbolic) are needed to strengthen teacher status, as high teacher prestige correlates with educational quality and commitment (Dolton et al., 2018).

In conclusion, the findings point to multidimensional problems concerning teachers' professional position. Lack of autonomy relegates them to technicians, oppressive audits damage dignity and stifle innovation, exclusion from decision-making reduces motivation, and injustices in recognition and development can alienate even dedicated teachers. Declining respect and authority further complicate their roles. Collectively, these issues signify a weakening of the teaching profession's professional status, risking teacher alienation due to structural and cultural barriers, demonstrating how power relations and policies can operate to their detriment. While Giroux (1988) advocates for teachers as "intellectual professionals," current conditions often compel passive role fulfillment. Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence is explanatory for the invisible pressures faced. The research confirms the unbreakable link between educational quality and teachers' professional status. Empowering teachers is critical not only for protecting their rights but also for ensuring student success and overall educational quality. Thus,

improving teacher status and centering them in decision-making processes are key to educational transformation.

Limitations of the Study

The present study is derived from the first author's doctoral dissertation, which was conducted at Eskişehir Osmangazi University under the supervision of the second author and explored the themes of neoliberalism, precarity, and symbolic violence through three-dimensional semistructured interviews with teachers. To achieve a detailed and in-depth examination for this article, its scope was narrowed to focus solely on findings related to the "symbolic violence" dimension. Consequently, the dimensions of neoliberalism and precarity, while evaluated in the full dissertation, are partially excluded here. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted within its focused theme of symbolic violence, acknowledging that they represent one aspect of a more extensive dataset.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that teachers' professional autonomy be increased, audit and evaluation processes be made guidance-oriented, teacher participation in decision-making mechanisms be ensured, fair recognition and incentive systems be established, professional development and career opportunities be improved, and initiatives aimed at enhancing the status of the teaching profession be implemented. These steps will increase teachers' professional motivation and job satisfaction, thereby preparing the ground for students to receive a higher quality education. Lasting improvement in the education system will be possible through a transformation in which the teacher is centralized and empowered. Therefore, policymakers and school leaders should see teachers as solution partners rather than engaging in power struggles with them and should demonstrate determination to take the steps mentioned above. In this way, the societal prestige of the teaching profession will be re-established, and educational environments will become more productive for both teachers and students.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Neoliberal politikaların son otuz yılda eğitim sistemlerini piyasa dinamiklerine göre yeniden şekillendirmesi (Davies & Bansel, 2007; Hursh, 2007), öğretmenlik mesleğini derinden etkilemiştir. Rekabet, performans ölçümü ve niceliksel çıktılara odaklanan yönetim biçimleri (Evans vd., 1996; Apple, 2015), öğretmenleri değerleri düşürülerek baskı altına alınan bir emek kategorisine dönüştürmüştür. Bu süreç, çalışma koşullarının esnekleşmesi ve güvencesizleşmesiyle karakterize olan prekaryanın (Standing, 2011) eğitim alanında da yaygınlaşmasına zemin hazırlamıştır. Öğretmenler, mesleki kimlik erozyonu ve sosyo-duygusal kırılganlıklarla (Connell, 2013; Standing, 2014) karşı karşıya kalmıştır. Türkiye’de de 1980’lerden itibaren benzer bir dönüşüm yaşanmış, özelleştirme ve piyasalaşma hız kazanmış (Başaran vd., 2024), eğitimin kamusal niteliği zayıflamıştır (Aslan, 2014; Kartal, 2020). Artan güvencesiz istihdam biçimleri (Dağ, 2020; Güvercin, 2014; Kablay, 2012) öğretmenler arasında prekaryalaşmayı artırmış, bu durum mesleki statülerini ve çalışma koşullarını olumsuz etkilemiştir (Buckworth, 2018).

Bu neoliberal etkiler, Bourdieu’nün (Bourdieu & Nice, 1998; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; 1990; 2015) “simgesel şiddet” kavramıyla analiz edilebilir. Simgesel şiddet, egemen değerlerin içselleştirilmiş kabulüyle işleyen bir tahakküm biçimidir ve eğitim kurumları bu normların yeniden üretiminde rol oynar (Apple, 2015). Öğretmenlerin mesleki özerkliklerinin piyasa kriterleriyle değerlendirilmesi (Brown, 2003; Bourdieu, 1986), onların bu durumu sorgusuzca kabullenmelerine yol açan bir rıza üretebilir (Freire, 2005; 2014). Alanyazında, öğretmenlerin deneyimlediği simgesel şiddet ve prekaryalaşma süreçlerinin kesişimi yeterince incelenmemiştir (Scott, 2012; González, 2015). Bu çalışma, bu boşluğa odaklanarak, neoliberal politikaların öğretmenlik mesleği üzerindeki etkilerini prekarya perspektifi ve simgesel şiddet kavramlarıyla, öğretmen deneyimleri üzerinden anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Temel araştırma sorusu, öğretmenlerin prekaryalaşırken bu durumu nasıl içselleştirdikleridir. Çalışma, mevcut duruma eleştirel bir bakış sunmayı ve öğretmen istihdam politikalarının iyileştirilmesine katkıda bulunmayı hedeflemektedir (Reygadas, 2015; Standing, 2011; Dağ, 2020; Kılınc vd., 2018). Araştırma, neoliberal düzenin öğretmenleri prekaryalaştırırken bu süreci simgesel şiddetle meşrulaştırdığını ve bu mekanizmaların öğretmen anlatılarıyla nasıl ortaya konduğunu incelemektedir.

Bu nitel araştırma, karmaşık olguları gerçek yaşam bağlamlarında derinlemesine incelemeye olanak tanıyan durum çalışması deseniyle (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Creswell, 2017) yürütülmüştür. Araştırılan durum, İzmir Gaziemir’deki kamu (kadrolu, sözleşmeli, ücretli) ve özel okul öğretmenlerinin prekaryalaşma ve simgesel şiddet algılarıdır. Katılımcılar, sosyo-ekonomik gelişmişlik endeksine göre birinci kademede yer alan (Sanayi ve Teknoloji Bakanlığı, 2022) bu ilçeden, maksimum çeşitlilik örneklemesiyle (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Patton, 2002) seçilen 15 öğretmenden (11 kamu, 4 özel) oluşmaktadır. Veriler, ilgili alanyazın ve uzman görüşleriyle geliştirilip pilot uygulaması yapılan 13 açık uçlu soruluk yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formuyla toplanmıştır. Araştırmacı, veri toplama ve analizde birincil araç rolünü üstlenmiş (Patton, 2002),

yansıtıcı günlük tutmuş ve uzman görüşlerinden yararlanmıştır (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Gerekli resmi ve etik kurul izinleri alındıktan sonra, 2024-2025 eğitim yılında yapılan ve ortalama 55 dakika süren görüşmeler ses kaydına alınmış, ayrıca alan notları tutulmuştur. Tematik doygunluğa (Creswell, 2013) ulaşıldıktan sonra veri toplama sonlandırılmıştır. Veriler, üç aşamalı tümevarımsal içerik analiziyle (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013) manuel olarak analiz edilmiş, kodlayıcılar arası güvenirlik %90'ın üzerinde sağlanmış ve temalar uzman görüşleriyle son haline getirilmiştir. Araştırmanın güvenirliği için üye kontrolü, uzman değerlendirmesi, ayrıntılı betimleme ve yansıtıcılık gibi stratejiler (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) kullanılmış; bilgilendirilmiş onam, gizlilik ve anonimlik gibi etik ilkelere titizlikle uyulmuştur.

Araştırmada, öğretmenlerin prekaryalaşma ve simgesel şiddet deneyimleri beş ana tema altında toplanmıştır: (1) politik ve idari beklentilerle mesleki özerkliğin kısıtlanması, (2) denetim mekanizmalarının simgesel şiddet olarak algılanması, (3) karar alma süreçlerinde öğretmenlerin konumu, (4) takdir ve mesleki gelişimde eşitsizlik, (5) öğretmen otoritesinin erozyonu. Mesleki özerkliğin kısıtlanması temasında, öğretmenler eğitim politikalarının siyasi yönelimleri, merkeziyetçi uygulamalar ve kurumsal hiyerarşi nedeniyle pedagojik karar alma süreçlerinde sınırlı kaldıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Bu durum, Bourdieu'nün simgesel şiddet kavramıyla uyumlu olarak, içselleştirilmiş bir kabulle sonuçlanabilmektedir. Denetim mekanizmalarının simgesel şiddet olarak algılanması temasında, özellikle güvencesiz öğretmenlerin daha yoğun bir denetim baskısı hissettiği, denetimlerin gelişimden ziyade kontrol ve gözdağı aracına dönüşebildiği, ancak bazı öğretmenlerin de yetersiz veya göstermelik denetimden şikâyetçi olduğu görülmüştür. Öğretmenlerin karar alma süreçlerindeki konumu incelendiğinde, çoğunlukla süreçlere dahil edilmedikleri, katılımın sembolik kaldığı ve kendilerini "misafir" ya da "figüran" gibi hissettikleri ortaya çıkmıştır. Özel okullarda veli memnuniyeti ve piyasa talepleri bu dışlanmayı pekiştirmektedir. Takdir ve mesleki gelişimde eşitsizlik teması altında, öğretmenlerin çabalarının yeterince görülmediği, takdirde kayırmacılık yapıldığı ve özellikle güvencesiz öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişim fırsatlarından dışlandığı bulguları öne çıkmıştır. Son olarak, öğretmen otoritesinin erozyonu temasında, veli tutumlarının öğrenci davranışları üzerindeki olumsuz etkisi, öğretmenlerin mesleki yargılarının sorgulanması ve "müşteri odaklı" taleplerle karşılaşmaları öğretmen otoritesini zayıflatan temel unsurlar olarak belirlenmiştir. Bu baskılar karşısında öğretmenler çeşitli bireysel başa çıkma stratejileri geliştirmektedir. Tüm bu temalar, öğretmenlerin neoliberal politikalar ve güvencesizleşmeyle birlikte mesleklerinde yaşadıkları simgesel şiddetin farklı veçhelerini yansıtmaktadır.

Bu araştırmanın bulguları, Türkiye'deki öğretmenlerin neoliberal politikaların etkisiyle mesleki özerkliklerinin ciddi şekilde kısıtlandığını, denetim süreçlerini baskı ve simgesel şiddet olarak algıladıklarını, karar alma mekanizmalarından dışlandıklarını, takdir ve mesleki gelişimde adaletsizlikler yaşadıklarını ve öğretmen otoritesinin aşındığını göstermektedir. Bu deneyimler, öğretmenlik mesleğinin profesyonel statüsünün zayıflamasına ve öğretmenlerin mesleklerine yabancılaşmasına yol açmaktadır. Bulgular, Bourdieu'nün simgesel şiddet kavramının (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; 1990; 2015), öğretmenlerin maruz kaldığı bu görünmez baskıları ve bunlara gösterdikleri rızayı

anlamada önemli bir çerçeve sunduğunu teyit etmektedir. Öğretmenlerin edilgen uygulayıcılara indirgenmesi (Canbolat, 2020; Frostenson, 2015), eğitim kalitesini olumsuz etkileyen bir durumdur (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Baskıcı denetimler (Yıldız vd., 2021; Ball, 2003), karar alma süreçlerinden dışlanma (OECD, 2019; Ulusoy vd., 2023) ve takdirde adaletsizlik (Okçu & Uçar, 2016; Yirci, 2017), öğretmen motivasyonunu düşürmektedir. Otorite erozyonu ise (Apple, 2006a; Bozkurt & Kutlu, 2021), eğitimin piyasalaşmasının bir sonucudur.

Sonuç olarak, öğretmenlerin mesleki konumlarını ve dolayısıyla eğitimin niteliğini güçlendirmek için yapısal ve kültürel dönüşümlere ihtiyaç vardır. Giroux'nun (1988) vurguladığı gibi, öğretmenler "entelektüel profesyoneller" olarak eğitimde söz sahibi olmalıdır. Bu doğrultuda, öğretmenlerin mesleki özerkliklerinin artırılması, denetim süreçlerinin rehberlik odaklı hale getirilmesi, karar alma mekanizmalarına etkin katılımlarının sağlanması, adil takdir sistemlerinin kurulması, mesleki gelişim olanaklarının eşitlikçi bir temelde iyileştirilmesi ve öğretmenlik mesleğinin toplumsal statüsünün yükseltilmesi önerilmektedir. Politika yapıcılar ve okul liderleri, öğretmenleri çözüm ortağı olarak görerek bu adımları atmalıdır. Bu sayede, öğretmenlik mesleğinin saygınlığı yeniden tesis edilebilir ve eğitim ortamları daha üretken hale getirilebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Prekarya, simgesel şiddet, neoliberal eğitim politikaları, eğitimde güvencesizlik, vaka analizi

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Foreign Language Teaching Enjoyment: In-Service English Language Teacher Perspectives

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Abstract

Emotions are essential in the language learning process because they influence the quality of education. A review of the literature reveals that most of the studies centered on negative emotions, specifically learners' language learning anxiety, while there is limited research on the emotions that teachers report experiencing during language teaching. This study aims to explore the experience of foreign language teaching enjoyment (FLTE) among teachers. A qualitative research methodology was used to gain a thorough understanding of FLTE sources. A focus group semi-structured interview was employed to receive in-depth responses from the interviewees. To ensure reliability, multiple coding rounds were conducted for intra-coder consistency, and another researcher was recruited to ensure inter-coder consistency. Nine in-service teachers teaching at different educational stages participated in the study. As a result of the interviews, three sets of variables were identified: teacher-related, student-related, and teaching practice-related factors. The study found both common and different sources of FLTE at each stage. Based on the findings, it can be suggested that pre-service language teacher training programs and in-service professional development courses can implement strategies to enhance FLTE. Moreover, curriculum designers should consider incorporating elements of flexibility that allow for differentiation and individualization of instruction to foster FLTE.

Keywords: Teaching enjoyment, positive psychology, foreign language enjoyment

About the Article

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Introduction

Emotions are an indispensable part of foreign language teaching (henceforth FLT) since the manner in which both students and their teachers handle emotions can have an impact on the quality of education that students receive, ultimately affecting their social, emotional, and cognitive growth and development over time. It can be asserted that, for about forty years, investigations of emotions have predominantly centered on negative emotions, specifically language learning anxiety, as noted by Daubney, Dewaele, and Gkonou (2017). Although there exists a plethora of studies focusing on language learners' emotions, the investigation of particular, distinct emotions felt by teachers, e.g. enjoyment, anger, or anxiety, has not been extensively studied (Frenzel, 2014). Currently, there is insufficient research on the stages of emotions that teachers commonly report experiencing in the course of FLT (Frenzel et al., 2016). There is a common view among researchers that emotions are an essential aspect of both teaching and being a teacher (Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2014). In fact, teaching is fundamentally driven by emotions (Hargreaves, 1998).

Frenzel et al. (2020) stated that the term "teacher emotions" refers to the emotions teachers go through while carrying out their professional responsibilities. Since teachers engage with various groups, including students, colleagues, superiors, and parents, their emotions are socially constructed and personally experienced (Schutz et al., 2006). Wu and Chen (2018) further demonstrated that teacher emotions are linked to the teachers' personal characteristics and teaching methods, their relationships with students. Another contributing factor is out-of-class communication, which enables teachers to observe the long-term impact of their teaching through ongoing contact with students. This sustained connection can foster a sense of fulfillment as teachers witness their students' continued achievements and progress, thereby further enhancing FLTE, which is shaped by context-specific variables such as institutional requirements, workplace interactions, and policy revisions. As a consequence, teacher emotions have a prominent impact on shareholders in the journey of language teaching and learning. Frenzel et al. (2021) highlighted that despite the significant influence of teacher emotions on both the teachers themselves and their students, there has been a lack of focus on the specific emotions experienced by teachers. Therefore, expanding the understanding of emotions felt within the context of FLT is a valuable endeavor.

The majority of prior research on emotions in the context of FLT has primarily focused on negative emotions, with less attention given to positive ones (Arnold, 2011). However, over the past decade, there has been an increased emphasis on examining positive emotions, specifically enjoyment, which can be defined as "a complex emotion, capturing interacting dimensions of the challenge and perceived ability that reflects the human drive for success in the face of difficult tasks" (Deweale & MacIntyre, 2016, p. 216). In other words, it can be interpreted as a positive emotion that assists language users in overcoming negative emotional responses by enhancing their ability to adapt and persevere during the language learning process. Following the increase in the positive movement, known as a "positive renaissance" in psychology and "positive turn"

(Dewaele & Li, 2018) or "affective turn" (MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014) in the EFL field, new practical dimensions and applications have emerged (MacIntyre, 2016). Among a range of positive emotions, enjoyment plays a crucial role in academic achievement, particularly in the foreign language classroom. Despite an increasing focus on investigating foreign language enjoyment among students in recent years, limited attention has been paid to this emotion from the perspective of language teachers (Dewaele et al., 2018; Dewaele et al., 2019; Piechurska-Kuciel, 2017).

Research Aim

It is disappointing that there is limited information about foreign language enjoyment from the perspective of foreign language teachers, considering their crucial role in the language learning process. Therefore, this research aims to explore the experience of foreign language enjoyment among foreign language teachers. Given the recent increase in interest in this area, investigating enjoyment can provide valuable insights into the emotions of language teachers, which are an integral part of the system that affects student emotions, cognition, and behavior (Frenzel et al., 2021) as well as the quality of the language learning process. Likewise, in response to Mercer's (2016) call for "a little more of a teacher-centered approach in the field" (p. 214), the current study was designed.

Accordingly, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What might be the possible sources of FLTE for EFL teachers while teaching English at different educational stages: primary school, secondary school, high school, and university?
2. What might be the common possible sources of FLTE regarding teacher-, student-, and teaching practice-related factors?

Method

Research Design

Qualitative research was chosen for its flexibility and adaptability in exploring FLTE sources, allowing for a comprehensive understanding through rich data generation (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018). Among qualitative research designs, this study employed focus group interviews as the research method since they enable detailed discussions among participants with a common interest. This method proved suitable for identifying perceptions, opinions, and attitudes, providing insights into group dynamics and interactions (Krueger, 2014). The preference for focus group interviews was also driven by their cost-effectiveness and interactive nature. The meticulous execution of the focus group interview followed the recommended steps by Krueger and Casey (2015): planning, developing questions, recruiting, moderating, and analyzing.

Participants

A multi-stage recruitment procedure using convenience sampling, where participants are selected based on ease of access and availability, was implemented (Cresswell &

Cresswell, 2018). In-service English language teachers were recruited from graduates of the English Language Department at Ondokuz Mayıs University, ensuring their familiarity with one another to facilitate focused group interviews. Nine participants, seven females and two males, with diverse teaching levels, including primary, secondary, high school, and university stages, were recruited. Their average age was 29, and their teaching experience ranged from 3 to 33 years. Participant identities remained confidential, coded as T1 to T9, to ensure anonymity in the research.

Data Collection Tools

A flexible semi-structured interview format, featuring open-ended questions and follow-up probes, was employed to gather data in a comfortable and natural manner while ensuring consistency across interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The interview form was developed in accordance with the research objectives and relevant literature. Additionally, expert opinions from four field specialists were obtained to ensure the clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness of the questions. Based on their feedback, necessary revisions were made meticulously. The interviewer prepared a list of open-ended questions but retained the freedom to explore emerging topics during the interview, facilitating a deeper exploration of participants' experiences, perspectives, and beliefs while ensuring coverage of key topics.

Data Collection and Analysis

Participants were briefed about the aim of the research and their consent was taken to record the online focus group interviews. Demographic questions were answered, followed by participants sharing enjoyable moments from their Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) experiences. Semi-structured interview questions were then tailored based on their responses. Each focus group interview lasted approximately 60 minutes, and data collection continued until thematic saturation was reached, ensuring that no new significant themes emerged. The qualitative data, transcribed for analysis, underwent multiple coding rounds using MAXQDA22 plus software. To ensure consistency, intra-coder rounds were performed, and another researcher was involved in inter-coder consistency checks, aligning with recommendations for unbiased results (Mierzwa, 2019; Revesz, 2011). An inter-coder agreement rate of 88% was achieved, indicating a high level of reliability. This level aligns with the standards suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), who regard 85% and above as strong agreement. Discrepancies were discussed and resolved through consensus.

Findings

The findings of the study were aligned with the research inquiries.

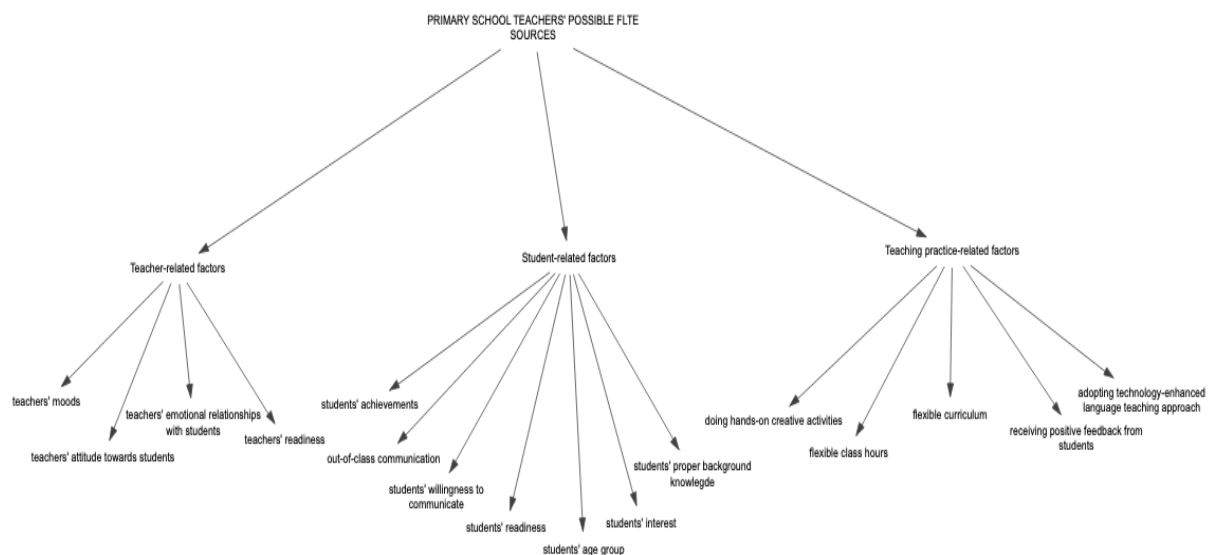
RQ 1: What might be the possible sources of FLTE for EFL teachers while teaching English at different educational stages: primary school, secondary school, high school, and university?

Regarding the first research question, the data extracted from interviews with educators were coded regarding four different educational stages—primary school, secondary school, high school, and university—and three sets of variables as teacher-, student-, and teaching practice-related factors. The analysis revealed that there are both common and stage-specific sources of FLTE, depending on the educational level at which participants teach English courses.

To start with the first educational stage, primary school EFL teachers' FLTE was found to be predicted by sixteen factors present in the teaching process.

Figure 1.

Single Case Model (Code Hierarchy) of Possible FLTE Affecting Factors for Primary School EFL Teachers



As shown in Figure 1, four were teacher-related, seven were student-related, and the remaining five were related to teaching practices in EFL classrooms.

An examination of the teacher-related factors revealed that teachers' moods, teachers' attitudes towards students, teachers' emotional relationships with students, and lastly, teachers' readiness to offer EFL courses were identified as key teacher-related sources of FLTE.

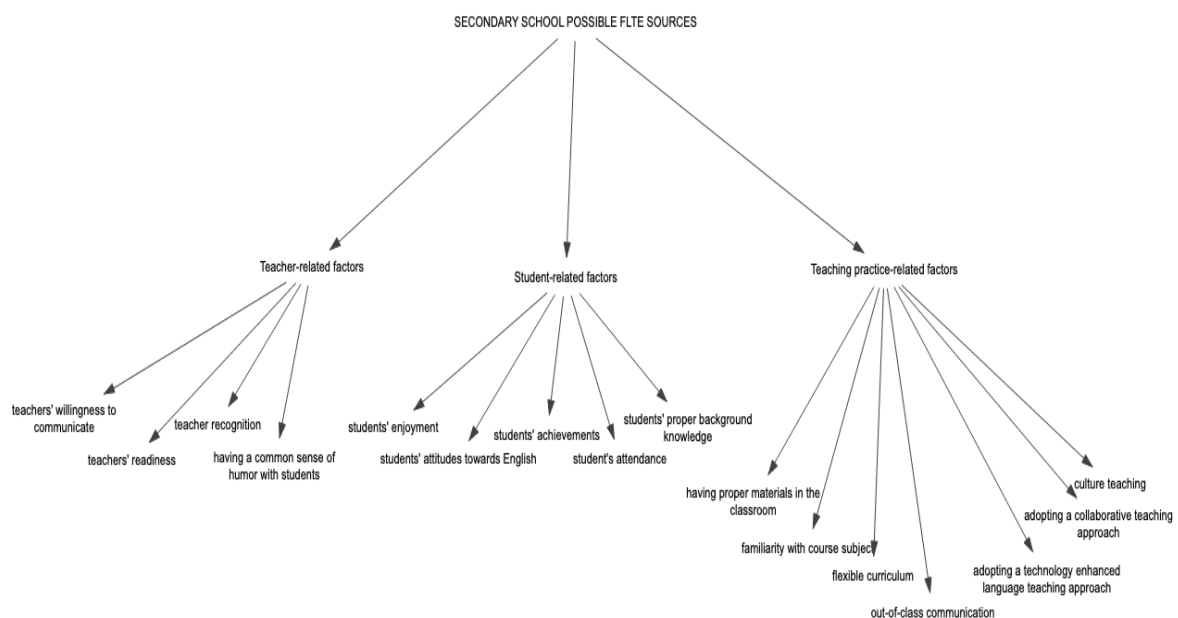
With regard to the student-related factors, the following were identified as determining sources of FLTE: students' achievements, out-of-class communication, students' willingness to communicate, students' readiness, students' age group, students' interest, and lastly, students' proper background knowledge.

Doing hands-on activities, having flexible class hours, having a flexible curriculum, receiving positive feedback from students, and adopting a technology-enhanced-language teaching approach were identified as the teaching-practice-related FLTE factors.

Continuing with the second educational stage, secondary school EFL teachers' FLTE was found to be predicted by sixteen factors present in the process of teaching.

Figure 2.

Single Case Model (Code Hierarchy) of Possible FLTE Affecting Factors for Secondary School EFL Teachers



As presented in Figure 2, four were teacher-related, five were student-related, and the remaining seven were related to teaching practices in EFL classrooms.

Regarding the teacher-related factors, teachers' willingness to communicate, teachers' readiness, teacher recognition, and having a common sense of humor with students were identified as effective factors for FLTE.

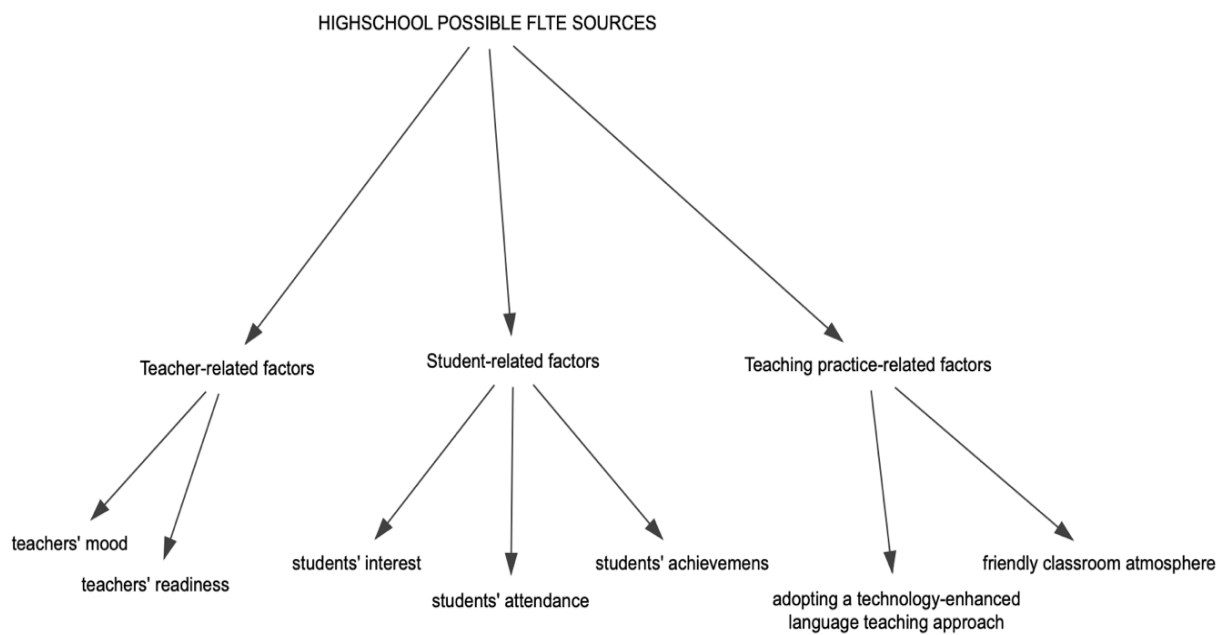
The student-related factors included students' enjoyment, students' attitudes towards English, students' achievements, students' attendance, and lastly, students' proper background knowledge.

The teaching practice-related factors were identified as follows: having proper materials in the classroom, familiarity with the course subject, a flexible curriculum, out-of-class communication, adopting a technology-enhanced language teaching approach, adopting a collaborative teaching approach, and culture teaching.

Continuing with the third stage, high school EFL teachers' FLTE was found to be predicted by seven factors.

Figure 3.

Single Case Model (Code Hierarchy) of Possible FLTE Affecting Factors for High School EFL Teachers

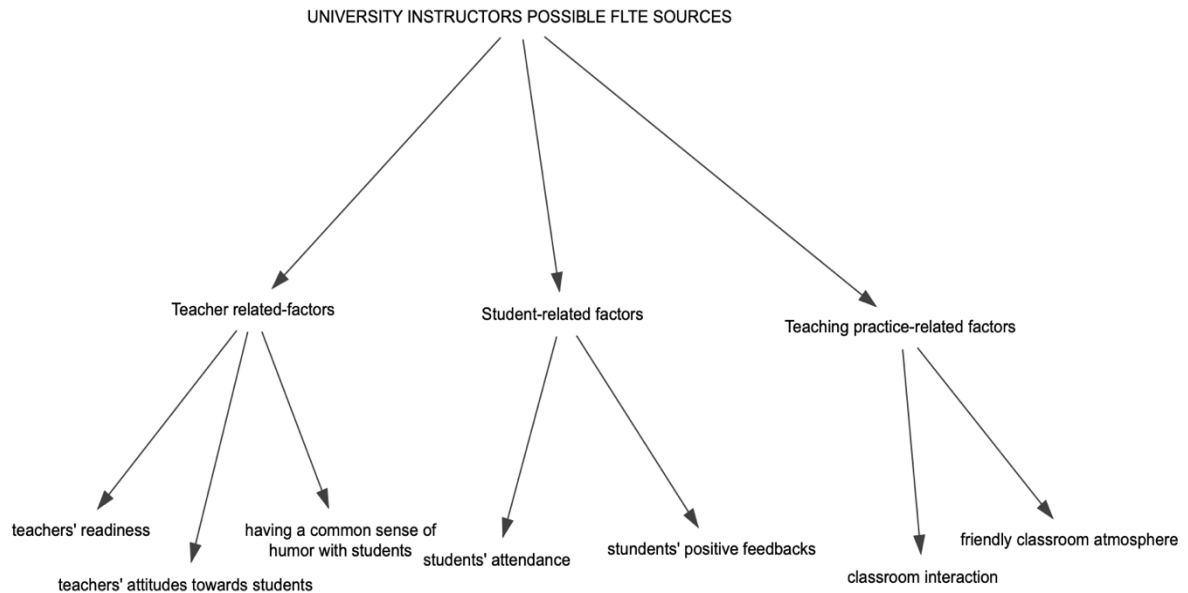


As presented in Figure 3, two were teacher-related, three were student-related, and the remaining two were related to teaching practices in EFL classrooms.

Starting with the teacher-related factors, teachers' mood and teachers' readiness were found to affect FLTE. The student-related factors comprised students' interests, students' attendance and students' achievements. Lastly, the teaching practice-related factors included adopting a technology-enhanced language teaching approach and a friendly classroom atmosphere.

The last educational stage examined in the present study was university.

Figure 4.
Single Case Model (Code Hierarchy) of Possible FLTE Affecting Factors for University EFL Instructors



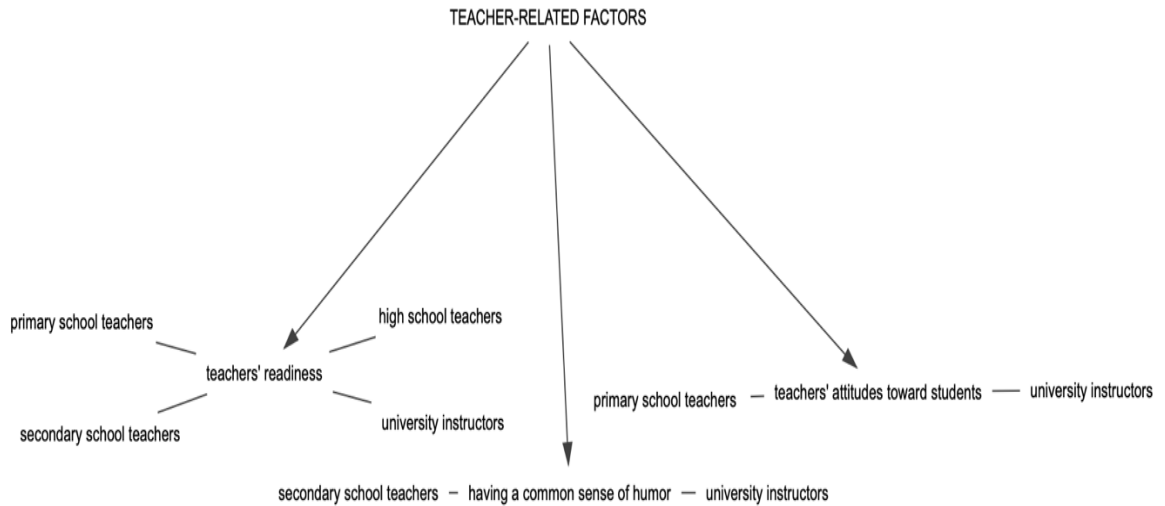
As presented in Figure 4, university EFL instructors' FLTE was found to be predicted by seven factors: three were teacher-related, two were student-related, and the remaining two were related to teaching practices in EFL classrooms.

The teacher-related factors included teachers' readiness, teachers' attitudes toward students, and having a common sense of humor with students. Students' attendance and students' positive feedback were identified as the student-related factors. Lastly, the teaching practice-related factors included classroom interaction and a friendly classroom atmosphere.

Appendix 1 presents a comparison of FLTE sources across educational stages, categorized by teacher-related, student-related, and teaching practice-related factors.

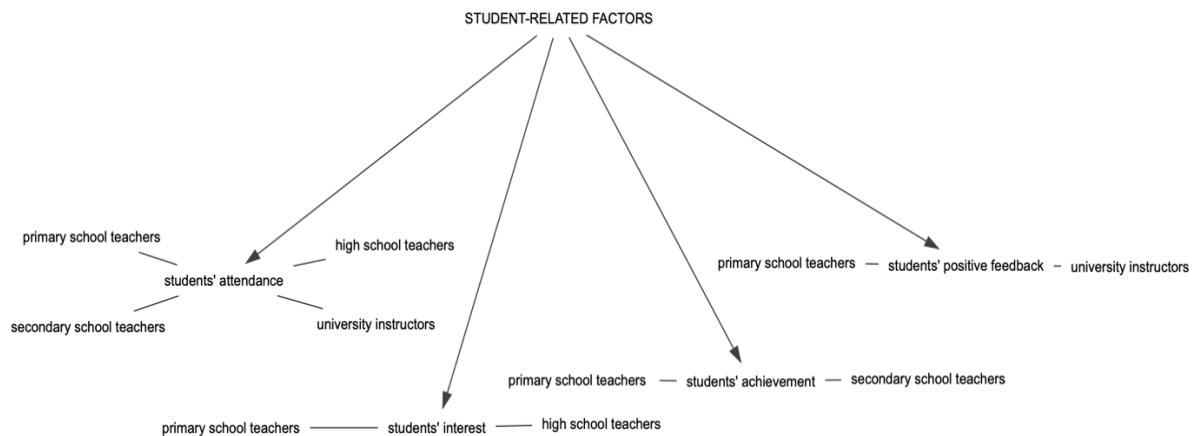
RQ 2: What might be the common possible sources of FLTE regarding teacher-, student-, and teaching practice-related factors?

Figure 5.
Common Teacher-Related Sources of FLTE



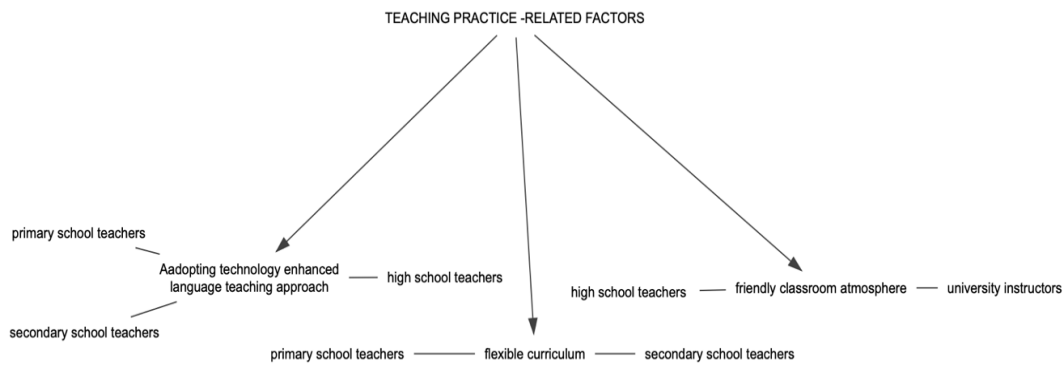
As shown in Figure 5, starting with common teacher-related sources, teacher readiness was identified as an FLTE-enhancing factor across all educational stages, while having a common sense of humor was noted in both secondary and university education. However, teachers' attitudes toward students were common in both primary and university education. Notably, teacher readiness emerged as a common FLTE-enhancing factor across all four educational stages.

Figure 6.
Common Student-Related Sources of FLTE



Analysis of common student-related sources showed that course attendance was a key determinant of educators' FLTE across all educational stages. Students' interest emerged as a shared FLTE-enhancing source in primary and high school education, while students' achievement was found to affect FLTE in primary and secondary education positively. Furthermore, receiving students' positive feedback was a common FLTE-enhancing factor for both primary school teachers and university instructors. Another crucial factor, students' interest, was consistently observed in both primary and high school settings, emphasizing its significance across different age groups. Additionally, students' achievement was identified as a factor that positively influenced teaching enjoyment in primary and secondary education.

Figure 7.
Common Teaching Practice-Related Sources of FLTE



Under this category, adopting a technology-enhanced language teaching approach was revealed as a common source for primary, secondary, and high school teachers. Moreover, adopting a flexible curriculum was observed as an FLTE-enhancing factor for both primary and secondary school teachers. Likewise, a friendly classroom atmosphere was regarded as an FLTE-enhancing factor by high school teachers and university instructors.

Results and Discussion

The present study discussed the increased focus on positive emotions, particularly enjoyment, in language teaching and aimed to explore the experience of foreign language enjoyment among foreign language teachers. A qualitative research methodology based on a semi-structured focus group interview was used to gain a thorough understanding of FLTE sources. Three sets of variables were considered, including teacher-, student-, and teaching practice-related factors. The study identified both common and distinct sources of FLTE at each educational stage. The data analysis and subsequent discussion were carried out by furnishing references from the existing literature.

Initially, the FLTE sources of primary school teachers were categorized into three groups: teacher-related, student-related, and teaching practice-related factors. The teacher-related FLTE factors included teachers' moods, teachers' attitudes, teachers' emotional relationships with students, and teachers' readiness. Teachers' mood, defined as teachers' well-being, one of the three constructs of FLTE by Proietti Ergün and Dewaele (2021), can create a positive and joyful classroom atmosphere that enhances FLTE. Furthermore, teachers' attitudes were identified as an FLTE-enhancing factor, possibly because the way teachers approach and interact with their students plays a vital role in shaping the overall classroom environment and dynamics. Consequently, a positive atmosphere is expected to emerge, fostering constructive teacher-student relationships. This, in turn, might contribute to the overall enjoyment experienced by teachers. T2 emphasized that receiving expressions of affection and appreciation from primary school students brings joy. Such emotional relationships between teachers and students might foster a sense of belonging and enthusiasm, which positively impacts work engagement and, ultimately, FLTE. The relationship between work engagement and FLTE was also highlighted in the research of Fathi and Naderi (2022) and Xiao et al. (2022) on teaching engagement and teaching enjoyment.

Additionally, teacher readiness emerged as a significant factor influencing FLTE. T1 emphasized the importance of being ready to implement contingency plans when necessary. This aligns with Wu and Chen's (2018) study, which found that the workplace environment affects teacher emotions, particularly for those working in village schools, where access to certain teaching facilities may be limited. Accordingly, it may be suggested that being ready may enhance teachers' sense of control and reduce anxiety associated with uncertainties. As a consequence, teachers can focus on offering instructions to foster a more focused, responsive, and productive learning environment instead of worrying about potential challenges.

Student-related factors comprised students' achievements, out-of-class communication, students' willingness to communicate, students' readiness, students' interest, students' age group and students' proper background knowledge. The emergence of students' achievement as an FLTE-enhancing factor might be attributed to the satisfaction teachers experience when witnessing their students' progress. Observing learners successfully apply acquired knowledge can be deeply rewarding, as it validates the teacher's efforts and affirms the effectiveness of their teaching. Similarly, Frenzel (2014) also put forward that the level of enjoyment a teacher experiences in the classroom is influenced by their evaluation of how well their teaching objectives align with their students' actions, which is interpreted as a sign of student achievement. Another contributing factor is out-of-class communication, which enables teachers to observe the long-term impact of their teaching through ongoing contact with students. This sustained connection can foster a sense of fulfillment as teachers witness their students' continued achievements and progress, thereby further enhancing FLTE. As supported by Zhang (2023), positive teacher-student relationships and supportive classroom environments enhance teachers' resilience and well-being, which in turn positively affect FLTE.

Regarding teaching practice-related factors, doing hands-on activities, flexible class hours, flexible curriculum, receiving positive feedback from students, and adopting technology-enhanced language teaching were highlighted as noteworthy factors that contribute to FLTE. In light of the fact that positive feedback brings a sense of joy to teachers and serves as a powerful motivator, students' appreciation of their teachers' efforts may create a cycle that fuels teachers' FLTE. Adopting technology-enhanced teaching approaches was recognized as facilitating FLTE because students' intention to use technology is expected to enhance the teaching experience.

Continuing with secondary school teachers' FLTE sources, the teacher-related factors included teachers' willingness to communicate, teachers' readiness, teacher recognition and having a common sense of humor with students. The willingness of teachers to communicate openly and engage with their students is likely to foster a positive and interactive learning atmosphere, which in turn enhances teaching enjoyment. Zhang (2023) emphasizes that such emotionally supportive environments play a critical role in strengthening teacher resilience and well-being—two elements that directly contribute to heightened FLTE. Furthermore, teachers' readiness, marked by thorough planning and the possession of essential instructional skills, is expected to create a productive and focused learning context that facilitates effective language acquisition. This aligns with Zhang's (2023) findings that teacher preparedness is an essential element in promoting emotional well-being and sustaining enjoyment in language instruction. Additionally, the recognition of teachers' efforts and professional value has been shown to positively influence their motivation and satisfaction levels, ultimately improving instructional quality and reinforcing a sustained sense of fulfillment in the language teaching profession.

With regard to student-related factors, students' enjoyment, achievements, attendance, attitudes towards English, and proper background knowledge were identified. Correspondingly, it can be observed that students' enjoyment of language learning holds a notable sway. Students' enthusiasm and active participation contribute to cultivating a positive and engaging classroom atmosphere, effectively fostering the joy that teachers derive from their instructional roles. Positive attitudes towards English seem not only to shape an environment receptive to learning but also play a pivotal role in elevating teachers' satisfaction with the delivery of language instruction, establishing a mutually beneficial cycle of positivity within the classroom setting. Furthermore, the achievements of students in language acquisition serve as a direct influence on teachers' motivation, with the witnessing of student success acting as a source of fulfillment and reinforcing the efficacy of the employed teaching methods. Additionally, the regular attendance of students, indicative of their commitment to the learning process, serves as a tangible demonstration of engagement, thereby enhancing teachers' overall sense of accomplishment and contributing to the enjoyment derived from foreign language teaching.

In terms of teaching practice-related factors, the following were identified: having proper materials in the classroom, familiarity with the course subject, flexible curriculum, out-

of-class communication, adopting a technology-enhanced teaching approach, adopting a collaborative teaching approach, and culture teaching. Thus, the provision of proper materials in the classroom is crucial for effective communication, enhancing engagement for both educators and students. Additionally, educators' familiarity with the course subject empowers them to impart knowledge confidently, fostering a positive teaching experience. The recognition of a flexible curriculum highlights its contribution to an enriched teaching environment and heightened enjoyment through adaptability and personalized approaches. The discussion also emphasizes the significance of out-of-class communication in expanding opportunities for interaction and enhancing the overall learning experience holistically. Furthermore, the adoption of technology-enhanced language teaching methods and collaborative approaches is seen as a strategic leverage for infusing innovation into lessons, making them dynamic and enjoyable. Lastly, the integration of culture teaching into the curriculum adds richness and relevance, further enhancing the overall enjoyment of foreign language teaching.

High school teachers emphasize two main sources of FLTE: teacher-related factors, including teachers' mood and readiness, and student-related factors, encompassing students' interests, attendance, and achievement. These factors contribute to a positive learning atmosphere, fostering curiosity, active participation, and enthusiasm among students, as noted in the work of Proietti-Ergün and Dewaele (2021). Additionally, student attendance is identified as an FLTE fostering factor, as initially disinterested or unmotivated students may become actively engaged through questioning or seeking clarification, positively impacting the overall enjoyment of the teaching process. Teaching practice-related factors comprise adopting a technology-enhanced language teaching approach and a friendly classroom atmosphere. This may stem from the fact that utilizing tools like smartboards allows teachers to augment the visual and interactive components of their lessons, attracting students' attention and enhancing their engagement in the course. This, in turn, is likely to provide teachers with the feeling of satisfaction in offering an interactive course. In addition, a friendly classroom atmosphere emerged as another FLTE-enhancing factor, which was also found as one of the FLTE constructs by Proietti Ergün and Dewaele (2021). Accordingly, T6 indicated that when students are engaged and interested, it positively impacts their own enjoyment of the class.

For university instructors' FLTE sources, teachers' readiness, attitudes toward students, and having a common sense of humor with students were found as teacher-related factors; students' attendance and students' positive feedback as student-related factors; and classroom interaction and friendly classroom atmosphere as teaching practice-related factors.

In addressing the second research question, common and divergent sources affecting FLTE across the four different educational stages were compared. Accordingly, it may be deduced that instructors value student participation even if they make mistakes, highlighting that the stage of involvement is more important than the final achievement. Since the interactive nature of the classroom is expected to enhance the enjoyment of

teaching, it may be safe to state that teachers derive joy from their teaching when effective classroom interaction takes place. Furthermore, a friendly classroom atmosphere was found to play a crucial role in FLTE, as put forward by T9, who indicated students as great determiners of classroom atmosphere, giving examples from two different groups of students. Based on the findings, it may be deduced that the classroom atmosphere created by students' positive psychology, motivation, and willingness to engage significantly impacts the overall enjoyment of teaching. Peers also contribute to a pleasant classroom environment, as their relationships and interactions enhance the overall enjoyment of the teaching process.

Regarding common teacher-related factors, teachers' readiness was favored by all educators as an FLTE-fostering factor. Teachers' attitudes toward students were emphasized by primary school teachers and university instructors while having a common sense of humor was supported by secondary school teachers and university instructors. Interestingly, only secondary school teachers and university instructors highlighted the importance of a shared sense of humor in the classroom. The lack of emphasis on this factor among high school teachers may be attributed to differences in students' learner profiles. This could be related to their developmental stage, where the ability to understand and appreciate humor contributes to creating a positive classroom atmosphere. Primary school teachers did not identify a common sense of humor as an FLTE-fostering factor, possibly due to the ongoing development of humor in younger students. At the university stage, teacher-student interactions may vary; however, university instructors who demonstrate respect, understanding, and genuine interest are recognized as contributing to a positive classroom atmosphere, which is expected to enhance FLTE.

Considering common student-related factors, students' attendance was considered important by all educators. Students' interest and students' achievement emerged as shared factors enhancing FLTE in both primary and high school settings. The consistent presence of students' interest underscores its significance across diverse age groups. Additionally, positive feedback from students was identified as a common FLTE factor for both primary school teachers and university instructors, further highlighting the importance of student perspectives in fostering teaching enjoyment. The recognition of students' achievements as a positive influence on teaching enjoyment emphasizes their impact on FLTE in both primary and secondary education. This might be related to the fact that, during these educational stages, students are at a critical stage of academic development where foundational knowledge and skills are established. As teachers guide and support students in their learning journey, witnessing their academic achievements becomes particularly more meaningful compared to other stages of education. Although the nature of feedback may differ between primary school teachers and university instructors—with primary school students often being more expressive and openly appreciative of their teachers' efforts, while students tend to be more reserved—educators of both stages enjoy receiving positive feedback from their students. On the one hand, primary school students might influence their teacher's sense of fulfillment and enjoyment in their role; on the other hand, university instructors might derive

enjoyment from students' feedback reflecting on recognition of their expertise and teaching effectiveness.

Lastly, among teaching practice-related factors, adopting a technology-enhanced language teaching approach was favored by primary, secondary, and high school teachers. This may be attributed to the fact that younger students in primary and secondary school may generally be more receptive to technology, often finding it particularly exciting and motivating, which in turn may enhance FLTE. Furthermore, both primary and secondary school teachers identified the adoption of a flexible curriculum as a factor enhancing FLTE. This may be due to the diverse backgrounds of students at these levels, encompassing varying interests, abilities and learning styles. A flexible curriculum enables teachers to address the unique requirements of each student, contributing to a greater sense of satisfaction in their teaching. Finally, high school teachers and university instructors acknowledged the creation of a friendly classroom atmosphere as an FLTE-enhancing factor. The emphasis on this factor at these levels may stem from the unique developmental stages, and traits of students in high school and university, where promoting positive relationships and social interactions holds special significance. Consequent to promoting the social aspects of the classroom environment, the overall enjoyment of foreign language teaching in these settings is likely to be enhanced.

It can be concluded that both common and distinct sources of FLTE exist across the four main educational stages, shaped not only by students' profiles but also by teachers' expectations considering the specific demands of each teaching stage. Accordingly, it may be suggested that language educators across different educational stages relate both shared and unique factors with their experience of FLTE throughout their teaching journey.

Implications

The implications of the present study suggest that recognizing FLTE-enhancing factors across different educational stages can support stakeholders in understanding the development of appropriate pedagogical approaches. Especially for primary and secondary school teachers, creating an engaging and supportive atmosphere that addresses learners' needs may be especially important, while high school teachers and university instructors may find that fostering positive relationships and social interactions plays a more significant role in promoting their FLTE. Regarding implications on professional development, pre-service language teacher training programs and in-service professional development courses can implement strategies to enhance FLTE. Since the present study highlights the significance of adopting a flexible curriculum for both primary and secondary education, curriculum designers should consider incorporating elements of flexibility that allow for differentiation and individualization of instruction, aiming not only to foster FLTE teachers but also to address the diverse needs and learning styles of students in primary and secondary school settings.

Limitations and Future Research Suggestions

This study presents certain limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the relatively small and context-specific sample limits the generalizability of the findings across different educational and cultural settings. The use of online focus group interviews may have introduced social desirability bias or restricted the depth of individual responses due to group dynamics. While inter-coder agreement was achieved at a high level, the inherently interpretive nature of qualitative analysis may still pose a risk of subjectivity. Furthermore, the study adopted a cross-sectional design, providing a snapshot of teachers' experiences with FLTE at a single point in time without capturing changes over time or across different stages of professional development. Based on these limitations, future research could expand the sample to include more diverse educational contexts and larger participant groups. Longitudinal studies are also recommended to explore how FLTE sources evolve over time and in response to institutional or policy changes. Additionally, mixed-methods approaches could enrich the findings by combining qualitative insights with quantitative measures of teaching enjoyment, engagement, and outcomes. Finally, cross-cultural comparative studies could provide a broader understanding of how different educational systems and cultural norms influence the sources and impact of FLTE.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Duygular, yabancı dil öğretiminde eğitimin kalitesini ve öğrencilerin sosyal, duygusal ve bilişsel gelişimini önemli ölçüde etkileyen kritik bir rol oynar. Dil öğrenimindeki olumsuz duygular, özellikle de kaygı, detaylı bir şekilde incelenmiş olmasına rağmen, yabancı dil öğretimi sırasında öğretmenlerin hissettiği belirli duygulara dair literatürde bir boşluk bulunmaktadır. Öğretmen duyguları, sosyal olarak yapılandırılmakta ve kişisel olarak deneyimlenmektedir bu nedenle kişisel özellikler, öğretim yöntemleri, öğrenci öğrenimi ve bağlamsal değişkenlerden etkilenir. Bu önemli etkilere rağmen, belirli öğretmen duygularının yeterli düzeyde ilgi görmediği gözlemlenmektedir.

Son yıllarda dil öğreniminde olumlu duygulara, özellikle de keyif almaya, daha fazla odaklanılmaktadır. Keyif, dil kullanıcılarına zorlukların üstesinden gelmelerine yardımcı olan, uyum sağlamalarına katkıda bulunan olumlu bir duygu olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Ancak, öğretmenler arasında yabancı dilden keyif alma üzerine yapılan araştırmalar sınırlıdır. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışma, yabancı dil öğretmenlerinin dil öğrenme sürecindeki kilit rollerini göz önünde bulundurarak, yabancı dilden keyif alma deneyimlerini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma soruları, farklı eğitim kademelerindeki yabancı dil öğretmenleri için yabancı dil öğretiminde keyif almanın olası kaynaklarını ve öğretmen, öğrenci ve öğretim uygulaması faktörleriyle ilgili ortak kaynakları belirlemek üzere tasarlanmıştır. Böylelikle, bu araştırma, alanda daha öğretmen merkezli bir yaklaşıma yanıt vermeyi ve dil öğretmenlerinin duyguları ile bunların dil öğrenme süreci üzerindeki etkileri hakkında bilgiler sunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Araştırmada, hizmet içi İngilizce öğretmenleri arasında yabancı dil öğretiminden keyif alma kaynaklarını kapsamlı bir şekilde araştırmak için odak grup görüşmeleri kullanılarak nitel bir yaklaşım benimsenmiştir. Esnekliği ve uyarlanabilirliği ile bilinen bu yöntem, ortak ilgi alanlarına sahip katılımcılar arasında zengin veri üretimini ve derinlemesine tartışmaları kolaylaştırmıştır. Çok aşamalı bir prosedürle çalışmaya dahil edilen katılımcılar, kapsamlı bir bakış açısı sağlamak için farklı öğretim kademelerinde görev yapmakta olan yedi kadın ve iki erkekten oluşmuştur. Açık uçlu sorularla karakterize edilen yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formatı, katılımcıların deneyimlerini rahatça paylaşmalarını teşvik ederek doğal bir veri toplama sürecine olanak sağlamıştır. Veri analizi, MAXQDA22 plus yazılımı kullanılarak çoklu kodlama turları düzenlenmiş, kodlayıcı içi ve kodlayıcılar arası kontroller yoluyla tutarlılık sağlanmıştır. Önerilen adımlarla uyumlu bu araştırma tasarımı, çeşitli eğitim kademelerinde yabancı dil öğretiminden keyif alma deneyimlerinin çok yönlü doğasına ilişkin içgörülerini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamıştır.

İlk araştırma sorusu, ilköğretim, ortaokul, lise ve üniversite dahil olmak üzere çeşitli eğitim kademelerindeki İngilizce öğretmenleri için 'yabancı dil öğretiminden keyif almanın' potansiyel kaynaklarını ortaya koymayı amaçlamıştır. İlköğretim kademesinde, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin yabancı dil öğretiminde keyif alma durumu, öğretmenle ilgili faktörler (ruh hali, tutum, duygusal ilişkiler, hazırbulunuşluk) ile öğrenciyle ilgili faktörler (başarılar, iletişim, iletişim isteği, hazırbulunuşluk, derse ilgi, yaş grupları, uygun temel bilgi) ve

öğretmenlik uygulamaları (etkinlikler, esnek saatler, müfredat esnekliği, öğrenci olumlu geribildirimi, teknoloji destekli öğretim) dahil toplamda on altı faktöre dayanmaktadır. Bu çok yönlü unsurların, ilkokul İngilizce öğretmenleri için genel yabancı dil öğretiminde keyif alma deneyimine katkı sağladığına ulaşılmıştır.

Ortaöğretim kademesinde ise öğretmenle ilgili dört faktör (iletişim isteği, hazırbulunuşluk, tanınma, mizah anlayışı) ve öğrenciyle ilgili beş faktör (eğlenme, İngilizceye tutum, başarı, devamlılık, uygun temel bilgi) ve öğretim uygulamaları ile ilgili yedi faktör (uygun materyallerin kullanımı, ders konusuna hakimiyet, esnek müfredat, sınıf dışı iletişim, teknoloji destekli öğretim, işbirlikçi öğretim, kültür öğretimi) belirlenmiştir.

Lise kademesinde ise öğretmenlerin yabancı dil öğretiminden keyif alma durumunun, öğretmenle ilgili (ruh hali, hazır bulunuşluk), öğrenciyle ilgili (ilgi, katılım) ve öğretim uygulamalarıyla ilgili (teknoloji temelli dil öğretimi, samimi sınıf atmosferi) olarak altı faktörden etkilendiği ortaya konulmuştur.

Yükseköğretim kademesinde üniversitede görev yapmakta olan öğretim görevlilerinin yabancı dil öğretiminde keyif alma durumları araştırıldığında, altı kilit faktör ortaya koyulmuştur. Öğretmenle ilgili faktörler arasında hazır bulunuşluk, öğrencilere karşı tutum ve mizah anlayışı bulunurken, öğrenciyle ilgili faktörler arasında derse katılım ve olumlu geri bildirimler yer almaktadır. Ayrıca, öğretim uygulamalarıyla ilgili faktörler arasında sınıf içi etkileşim ve samimi sınıf atmosferi olarak öne çıkmıştır.

İkinci araştırma sorusunun amacı öğretmenle ilgili; öğrenciyle ilgili ve öğretim uygulamasıyla ilgili faktörler açısından çeşitli eğitim kademelerinde yabancı dil öğretiminden keyif alma'nın ortak kaynaklarını belirlemektir. Bu doğrultuda öğretmenlerle ilgili ortak kaynaklardan başlamak gerekirse, öğretmen hazır bulunuşluğu her eğitim kademesi için keyif artırıcı faktör olarak bulunurken, ortak bir mizah anlayışına sahip olmak hem ortaöğretimde hem de üniversite eğitiminde tespit edilmiştir. Bununla birlikte, öğretmenlerin öğrencilere yönelik tutumlarının hem ilköğretim hem de üniversite eğitiminde ortak olduğu bulunmuştur. Dört eğitim kademesinde de öğretmen hazır bulunuşluğunun keyif almayı artıran ortak bir faktör olarak ortaya çıktığını net bir şekilde ifade etmek için, öğrencilerle ilgili ortak kaynaklar incelendiğinde, öğrencilerin derslere katılımının her eğitim kademesinde eğitimcilerin keyif alma durumunu belirlediği görülmüştür. Öğrencilerin ilgisi hem ilköğretim hem de lisede keyif alma durumunu artıran ortak bir kaynak olarak belirlenirken, öğrencilerin başarıları ilköğretim ve ortaöğretim için keyif alma durumunu olumlu yönde etkileyen bir faktör olarak tanımlanmıştır. Ayrıca, öğrencilerden olumlu geri bildirim almak hem ilkokul öğretmenleri hem de üniversite öğretim elemanları için ortak bir keyif alma faktörü olarak bulunmuştur. Bir diğer önemli faktör olarak, öğrencilerin ilgisinin hem ilköğretim hem de lise ortamlarında ortak olduğu görülmüş ve farklı yaş gruplarında öğrenci ilgi farkının önemi vurgulanmıştır. Ayrıca, öğrencilerin başarıları, ilköğretim ve ortaöğretimde öğretimden keyif almayı olumlu yönde etkileyen bir faktör olarak belirlenmiştir. Öğretim uygulamaları ilgili ise teknoloji temelli bir dil öğretimi

yaklaşımının benimsenmesi ilkökul, ortaokul ve lise öğretmenleri için ortak bir kaynak olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Ayrıca, esnek bir müfredatın benimsenmesi hem ilkökul hem de ortaokul öğretmenleri için keyif almayı artırıcı bir faktör olarak görülmüştür. Benzer şekilde, samimi bir sınıf atmosferi lise öğretmenleri ve üniversite öğretim elemanları tarafından keyif almayı artırıcı bir faktör olarak ortaya koyulmuştur.

Sonuç olarak, dil eğitimcilerinin yabancı dil öğretiminde keyif alma durumu, sadece öğrenci profillerini değil, aynı zamanda öğretmenlerin öğretim kademesi gerekliliklerini ve beklentilerini dikkate alarak belirlenmektedir. Bu bağlamda, dört eğitim kademesinde dil eğitimi veren öğretmenlerin, öğretim süreçlerinde benzer ve farklı faktörleri yabancı dil öğretiminde keyif alma deneyimleriyle ilişkilendirdikleri sonucuna varılabilir. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, farklı eğitim kademelerinde yabancı dil öğretmenlerinin keyif alma durumunu etkileyen faktörlerin anlaşılmasının, pedagojik yaklaşımları geliştirmelerine yardımcı olduğunu göstermektedir. Özellikle ilkökul ve ortaokul öğretmenleri için, öğrencilere uygun bir atmosfer oluşturma'nın önemli olduğu vurgulanırken, lise ve üniversite öğretmenleri, olumlu ilişkiler ve sosyal etkileşimlerle yabancı dil öğretiminden keyif alma durumlarını destekleyebilecekleri ortaya koyulmuştur. Bu doğrultuda, mesleki gelişimde, dil öğretmeni yetiştirme programları ve hizmet içi eğitim kursları, yabancı dil öğretiminden keyif almayı artırmak için strateji öğretiminde bulunabilir.

Ethics Committee Approval: The ethics committee approval for this study/research was obtained from 19 Mayıs University Social and Human Sciences Research and Ethics Committee with the decision numbered 2023-645 on 28.07.2023.

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Appendix 1

Comparison of FLTE Sources Across Educational Stages by Teacher-Related, Student-Related, and Teaching Practice-Related Factors

	Teacher-related factors	Student-related factors	Teaching practice-related factors
Primary school EFL Teachers	Teachers' moods Teachers' attitudes towards students Teachers' emotional relationship with students Teachers' readiness	Students' achievements Out-of-class communication Students' willingness to communicate Students' readiness Students' interest Students' age group Students' proper background knowledge	Doing hands-on activities Flexible class hours Flexible curriculum Receiving positive feedback from students Adopting technology-enhanced language teaching
Secondary school EFL Teachers	Teachers' willingness to communicate Teachers' readiness Teacher recognition Having a common sense of humor with students	Students' enjoyment Students' attitudes towards English Students' achievements Students' attendance Students' proper background knowledge	Having proper materials in the classroom Familiarity with the course subject Flexible curriculum Out-of-class communication Adopting a technology-enhanced teaching approach Adopting a collaborative teaching approach Culture teaching
Highschool EFL Teachers	Teachers' mood Teachers' readiness	Students' interests Students' attendance Students' achievements	Adopting a technology-enhanced language teaching approach A friendly classroom atmosphere
University EFL Instructors	Teachers' readiness Teachers' attitudes toward students Having a common sense of humor with students	Students' attendance Students' positive feedback	Classroom interaction Friendly classroom atmosphere

Investigating the Appropriateness of a Course Evaluation Model: Preservice Teachers' Flipped Learning Experience

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Abstract

Parlett and Hamilton's (1972) Illuminative Evaluation Model (IEM) was adopted to research course evaluation in flipped learning environments. An integrated data set, including teaching videos, interviews from 17 preservice teachers, and course materials, was collected and analyzed in an educational sciences course. Both quantitative and qualitative data showed that this model, within its learning milieu and instructional systems aspects, had the potential to be a suitable method for instructors to evaluate the quality of their flipped courses. These relationships between the learning milieu and instructional systems provide evidence of the complexity of evaluation. This study demonstrates how the IEM helps uncover the design of a flipped educational sciences course and offers a suitable model for flipped course evaluation. Finally, the implications of this study for general instructional design are discussed.

Keywords: course evaluation; higher education; flipped learning; interpretive paradigm; illuminative evaluation model

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Introduction

Originating as a coined term in 2012, the "flipped classroom" model began to gain global recognition as the "flipped learning" education model by/since 2016, particularly with the rise of evidence-based educational approaches ("The Flipped Learning Global Initiative", 2025). As an innovative educational approach, it gives instructors some opportunities to make students at the center and to provide interactive short videos, AI-supported materials, adaptive learning platforms, activities such as discussions, exercises, assignments, and guided problem-solving processes. This approach fosters autonomous learning through online content interaction, enhanced student-student and student-teacher collaboration, active engagement with tasks, learner responsibility, unrestricted access to materials (e.g., asynchronous instructor videos), and self-paced use of instructional resources embedded in learning management systems (Şahin & Fell Kurban, 2016; Şahin & Fell Kurban, 2024).

Mathematics plays a fundamental role in everyday life and is essential for developing logical reasoning, problem-solving skills, and analytical thinking (Vinner, 2011). However, due to its inherently abstract nature, mathematics often poses difficulties for students at all educational levels compared to other subjects. In Türkiye, where those students have performed consistently under the OECD average in mathematical knowledge and skills (e.g., problem solving, critical thinking and reasoning) on The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (OECD 2023), the flipped learning model can offer a promising approach by shifting the focus to active, in-class engagement and personalized interpersonal support. Recent empirical studies and meta-analysis studies (e.g., Cheng et al., 2018; Jang & Kim, 2020; Jin et al., 2023), particularly covered practices in mathematics teaching and learning showed that the benefits are especially visible in terms of affective and interpersonal outcomes—indicating that students feel more engaged, motivated, and confident when learning in flipped environments. However, when narrowed down to specific subject areas, mathematics tends to show smaller cognitive gains compared to other fields, suggesting that implementation strategy plays a critical role. It can provide a channel for students with the opportunity to review abstract concepts at their own pace outside the classroom and engage in guided problem-solving during class, where teacher feedback is immediate. Methodologically, successful flipped learning in mathematics typically includes: pre-class instructional videos or readings, in-class interactive problem-solving or group activities, and post-class assessments such as quizzes or exercises.

In summary, while flipped learning is not a one-size-fits-all solution, it offers notable improvements in engagement, confidence, and conceptual understanding, especially when carefully designed to address the unique challenges of teaching abstract subjects like mathematics.

Present Research

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the appropriateness of the Illuminative Evaluation Model (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972) in the field of Education Sciences, specifically for a course designed using the flipped learning method of instruction as described by Bergmann and Sams (2012).

Research Question 1: To what extent and in what ways did the Illuminative Evaluation Model serve to evaluate a flipped educational sciences course?

Research Question 2: How do students describe their experiences in the flipped educational sciences course through an illuminative evaluation?

Method

The Participants of the Current Study

The population of the study consisted of all students enrolled in the department of elementary mathematics education program at the university. As the program was launched during the early years of the university, the total number of students was relatively small, with only 17 students registered at the time of the study. Therefore, instead of selecting a sample, the entire population was included in the research. We included 17 first-year pre-service teachers ($n = 16$ females and $n = 1$ male) majoring in elementary mathematics education. As flipped learning was the university's medium of instruction, all participants gained experience in engaging this method while taking departmental (e.g., Calculus, Introduction to Mathematics Teaching) and elective (e.g., Introduction to University Life) courses. All students gave consent to participate in the study for four weeks.

Author Positionality

This study involved researchers with diverse but complementary expertise to conduct a multi-faceted analysis of the integrated data set (i.e., observations, field notes, interviews, and course materials) collected from the students over four weeks. The first author's expertise is in mathematics curriculum and qualitative research, the second author's is in mathematics assessment and quantitative research, and the third author's is in teaching and learning in flipped classroom settings. The comprehensive expertise of the research team enabled us to examine the data from the perspective of IEM holistically and in-depth. In discussions about the data and framing of the article, all team members drew on their lived experiences with flipped learning and perspectives from the University within School (see Birgili et al., 2018 for detail) to represent the data as comprehensively as possible.

In Step 2, a detailed search was conducted with keywords to ascertain if any of the studies included the term "flipped learning" and/or "flipped classroom" either in the main text

or in the reference list. As none of the studies involved such keywords, the five most frequently used models were taken into consideration based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria used in the preliminary step: (1) Responsive Evaluation (Stake, 1975) ($n = 46$), (2) Empowerment Evaluation (Fetterman, 1993) ($n = 37$), (3) Countenance Framework (Stake, 1967) ($n = 32$), (4) Fourth Generation Evaluation Model (Guba and Lincoln, 1989) ($n = 29$), and (5) Illuminative Evaluation Model (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972) ($n = 18$). In Step 3, these five models were explored in terms of their potential for evaluating courses, especially under the umbrella of the internationally recognized global elements for flipped learning. This process revealed that Parlett and Hamilton's (1972) Illuminative Evaluation Model had the greatest potential for use in the present study for two reasons: (1) it concentrates on the information-gathering (e.g., interviews, observations, documentary information) rather than on the decision-making component of evaluation, and (2) it allows the evaluator to focus on processes within the classroom rather than on outcomes.

Table 1.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Potential Course Evaluation Models

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Interpretivist paradigm	Positivist paradigm
Mostly qualitative data sources and methods	Mostly quantitative data sources and methods
Internal stakeholders	External stakeholders
Formative	Summative
Students are the main stakeholders	External bodies are the main stakeholders
Educators are the evaluators	External bodies are the evaluators
Data sources are broad and varied	Data sources are narrow
Deliverables involve adaptations to future iterations of the course	Deliverables do not involve adaptations to future iterations of the course
Method has been successfully used as a course evaluation method in another research	Method has not been used as a course evaluation method in another research

Data Sources

The author team included three faculty members dedicated to the flipped learning method in education courses. The first author, a Ph.D. candidate in Educational Sciences,

acted as a non-participant observer, documenting classroom interactions, field notes, and focus group interviews. The second author, an expert in Secondary Science and Mathematics Education, brought 19 years of research experience, three years of flipped classroom teaching, and expertise in statistical data analysis. Both contributed to interpreting blended learning interactions. The third author, the Turkish Education and School System [TESSM] course instructor and director of the Center for Research and Best Practices in Learning and Teaching at MEF University, developed training sessions to enhance student performance and guided professional development for active, innovative learning. She also ensured quality assurance for flipped learning design and delivery.

Classroom Observations

A total of eight TESSM classes were recorded, focusing on the instructor's activities and students' involvement during the lessons. Each video lasted for about 90 minutes. All instructors and student dialogue were subsequently transcribed. These transcriptions aimed to examine the instructor's enactment (e.g., flipped activities) and students' interactions (e.g., production and use of texts/concepts from online flipped videos). Observation of an instructor's teaching practice is vital to access their knowledge of flipped learning, since it is most apparent in action; as such, Parlett and Hamilton named it the learning milieu. Parlett and Hamilton asserted that observations aim to uncover these actions (i.e., interpersonal relationships). (See Figure 1 for a video recording.)

Figure 1.

Example of a video recording

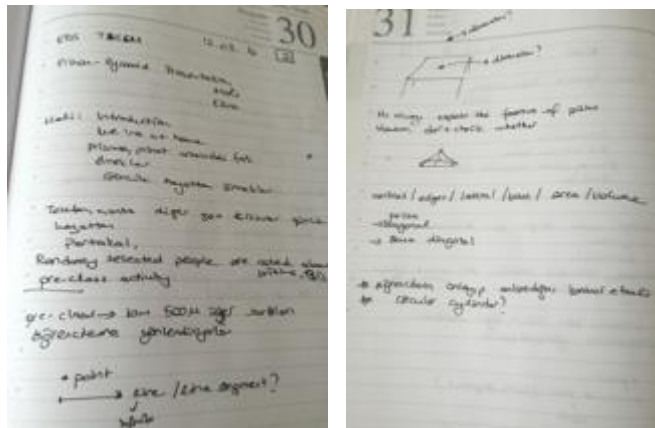


Field Notes

Along with the observations, field notes were written by the first author with the aim of critically reflecting upon her experiences in the classroom to proceed to higher levels of analysis and interpretation (Miles and Huberman, 1994). On a practical level, her status as an outsider provided informal knowledge about the flipped classroom environment, which stimulated greater depth of discussion concerning the instructor-student and student-student interactions. Such knowledge also permitted the first author to participate more readily in the flipped activities and reactions being observed. (see Figure 2 for a field note)

Figure 2.

Example of Field Notes



Student Interviews

A focus group interview with two groups—Group 1 ($n = 8$) and Group 2 ($n = 8$)—was conducted for about 40 minutes after observing the TESSM classes for four weeks. Students were randomly assigned to the groups, following the criterion that an ideal group size is 8 to 10 participants (Krueger and Casey, 2014). Since one student was not willing to participate in an interview, she was not involved in any of the groups. The students were expected to provide holistic reflections on their flipped learning experience during the semester. The interview aimed to understand (1) the difficulties they encountered in flipped learning, (2) how the instructor attempted to understand their learning difficulties, and (3) their general and specific views on the impact of flipped learning. Analyzing students' perceptions provided unique insights into the flipped learning process as experienced by different student groups.

Course Materials

The course materials, including the syllabus, handouts, activity sheets, and assessments were analyzed. This inspection aimed to understand the pedagogical assumptions, which had the potential to highlight the instructional systems aspect of IEM. All relevant teaching and learning materials related to the instructional systems, that is, flipped learning materials, enabled us to gain insight into what flipped learning in an educational sciences course entails and how it operates. In the case of TESSM, the documents constituting the instructional system also included the online pre-videos that students view before attending class.

Data Analysis

During the data collection process, the first author was assigned the role of evaluator (i.e., observer-researcher), and the third author was assigned the role of instructor (i.e., teacher-researcher). The data were analyzed in relation to two aspects of IEM: learning milieu (Phases 1 and 2) and instructional systems (Phase 3), including the following three phases:

Phase 1: Analysis of lesson observations. The learning milieu was assessed through a non-participant observation conducted in a natural classroom setting. All observations were video-recorded over a two-week period, with each session lasting 8 hours. The recordings of all the flipped lessons were transcribed verbatim for data analysis. The first and second researchers of the study watched all the lessons along with the transcribed texts to identify teaching moments that reflected an innovative classroom environment design. This design aligns with the principles of flipped learning (i.e., students' use of self-regulation strategies). The data were coded independently using Darst et al.'s (1989) framework (see Table 2). To produce an accurate reflection of the events that occurred in the flipped environment, the teaching and learning processes in the videos were divided into 30-second segments, the shortest timespan deemed meaningful for analyzing teaching-learning pattern changes (van der Mars, 1989) (see Figure 3 for analysis of time segments). This enabled us to answer questions of how many, how often, and how much, as we tended to describe 'what' rather than 'how well' a student or instructor was doing. Such quantitative descriptions of flipping – (behaviors) – most typically involved measurements of time or frequency of events. For any inconsistencies between the two researchers, the third researcher closely reviewed the corresponding lesson transcripts and interview texts to make changes where appropriate. The identified learning milieus are reported in the results section and received consent from all three authors.

Figure 3.

Example of Analysis of Time Segments Aligned with the Frequencies of Subcategories



Table 2.

Segments of Analysis of Lesson Observation

Category	Sub-category	Meaning
Teacher Talk Indirect Influence: This environment increases student participation and maximizes freedom of students' response and action.	Accepts feeling (1)	The teacher accepts and clarifies the feeling tone of students in a nonthreatening manner. Feelings may be positive or negative.
	Praises or encourages (2)	The teacher praises or encourages students' actions and behavior.
	Accepts or uses ideas of students (3)	The teacher clarifies, builds, or develops ideas suggested by the student.
	Asks questions (4)	The teacher asks questions about content or procedure with the intent that students answer.
Teacher Talk Direct Influence: This environment increases active control of the teacher and restricts the freedom of students' response.	Lectures (5)	The teacher gives facts or opinions about content or procedures, expresses their own ideas and asks rhetorical questions.
	Gives direction (6)	The teacher gives directions, commands, or orders with which the student is expected to comply.
	Criticizes or justifies authority (7)	The teacher makes statements intended to change student behavior from non-acceptable to acceptable.
Student Talk: This environment provides a check on freedom of student action.	Student talk-responds (8)	Student talk in response to teacher. The teacher initiates the contact and solicits the student's response.
	Student talk-initiates (9)	Students initiate talk.
Silence and Confusion: Category used when the observer cannot determine who is talking or when no one is talking.	Silence and confusion (10)	Pauses, short periods of silence, and periods of confusion in which communication cannot be understood by the observer.

Phase 2: Triangulation of interview data. Data from 40-minute, semi-structured focus group interviews were analyzed to confirm the roles of instructors and students in a learner-centered flipped classroom environment identified in Phase 1. Sample questions and prompts are in Appendix A. The first and second researchers separately examined preservice teachers' perceptions, focusing on how flipped learning strategies shaped their learning, influenced their experiences, and could be improved. Thematic analysis was used to code the data, transforming participant statements into emergent themes by identifying patterns and grouping similar ideas (Smith & Osborn, 2003; Patton, 2002). Students' perceptions about course materials, methods, and assessments were categorized as positive (+), neutral (*), negative (-), or counterargument (&), with Table 3 illustrating examples and comments.

Table 3.

Example of Data Analysis Chart used for Interviews

	Utterance	Symbols	Comments
FGI1	Student 4 (S4): '...Not for every course but for some it would be better to have a small handbook. For instance, in Geometry Course the instructor may give a paper and when we see the English terms in that paper it becomes very useful. For the TESSM course we analyzed the curriculum and the schema, but if a document had been given, it would have been more permanent...'	-	quality of the course in terms of course material provided in flipped learning environment
FGI1	Student 2 (S2): 'Actually there was no specific environment. We learned where we are. We went to [XXX], we went out for homework. We interviewed people about the subject. These are also adding something to us. You're learning people's point of view. Not only in class'.	+	quality of the course in terms of teaching method
FGI1	Student 1 (S1): 'It's learning when I do everything I've learned. When I watched the video, I did not have much of a contribution to it when I solved the tests . For me, it contributes even more to active learning in the classroom environment'.	-	quality of the course in terms of assessment

Phase 3: Document analysis. Based on the identified classroom interactions and student perceptions in the first two phases, we sought descriptive information about aspects of the course, such as the teaching approach, assessment types, and teaching methods. The course materials, such as the syllabus, handouts, assessments, and teaching materials, along with evidence from interviews, were then used to outline the paths representing the flipped learning sequences between the aspects (i.e., learning milieu and instructional systems). For each unit of the course content, written documents,

assigned readings, and other prepared activities were examined to assess alignment with learning outcomes. Documents archived in the course content related to in-class activities, as well as the learning and teaching process, were analyzed to determine whether they were effectively aligned with the course's learning outcomes. Therefore, we created a matrix to tabulate the course content, use of tools, and learning outcomes. Finally, we analyzed the documents to determine whether the resources, videos, readings, and activities provided each week by the instructor corresponded to the aims and outcomes. Documents were mapped in a chart against each outcome so that missing elements could be illuminated.

Results

Phase 1. Observations

Turning first to the observation data, results revealed that flipped classes consisted of the following activities: lectures (23.68%); student-talk responses (18.42%); use of student ideas (15.79%); student-initiated talk (10.53%); giving directions (10.53%); accepting feelings (7.90%); praising or encouraging (7.90%); and asking questions (5.26%). Criticism or justification of authority did not occur. The percentage of student-talk in response to the teacher was considerably high, indicating that the instructor communicated effectively with students throughout the teaching and learning process. This provided a flexible classroom environment in which students could enthusiastically engage in in-class activities. In summary, teacher talk involving indirect influence—which encourages freedom of student response and action—was relatively high (36.85%) compared to teacher talk involving direct influence, which limits student freedom due to active teacher control (34.21%); student talk, which allows checks on student freedom (28.95%); and silence or confusion, where the observer could not determine who was speaking or when no one was speaking (0%).

Phase 2. Interviews

Analysis of the focus group interview (FGI) data revealed seven themes (see Table 4). Preservice teachers viewed flipped learning as an active approach emphasizing group work and in-class activities. While they found it particularly effective for verbal courses (e.g., linguistics, psychology), they considered it less suitable for mathematics. Participants appreciated the immediate feedback from the instructor, comparative insights into education systems, and exposure to theoretical knowledge. They highlighted the need for supplementary materials such as handouts, course books, and technological tools. Benefits included collaborative group work and adapting to changes in Turkish educational system, though connectivity issues and limited formative assessments (e.g., fill-in-the-blank questions) posed challenges. While they learned to record flipped videos, they noted a lack of training in preparing mathematics lesson plans.

Table 4.

The Categories from the FGI

FGI Main Question	Themes	Categories
Students' perceptions on materials, teaching methods, and assessment procedures of the course	Definition of flipped learning and main features	1.1. Group working and in-class activity 1.2. Use of resources by the students 1.3. Teacher as facilitator
	Effectiveness in verbal lessons	2.1. Active and student-centered approach 2.2. Not traditional teaching of subjects 2.3. Gain attention
	Effectiveness of TESSM	3.1. Exciting 3.2. Comparison between Türkiye and abroad 3.3. Immediate feedback by the teacher 3.4. Planned course 3.5. Guest speakers
	The need of course tools	4.1. Computer-based applications 4.2. Need of handout or books
	Learning environments	5.1. Informal learning environments 5.2. Flexible and incentive to do research
	Advantages and disadvantages	6.1. Collaborative group working 6.2. Fill in the blank assignments 6.3. Technological problems
	Relation between TESSM and flipped learning in maths education	7.1. Being adaptable to change in education system 7.2. Learning how to create a video rather than lesson planning

Since the students were regularly engaged in an active, student-centered process as required in a flipped classroom, the results from the FGIs indicated that they perceived flipped learning as an appropriate instructional approach for both teaching and learning in the TESSM course. More specifically, students identified flipped learning as an instructional method that brings their attention to the content of the course. "For instance, in our TESSM course it [usage of method] was really good. Both online activities, in-class and out-of-class... it was student-focused..." (S1 FGI1); "I've always enjoyed... the lessons were more flexible" (S2 FGI1).

Much positive feedback came out of the FGIs. It emerged that the students liked that the course was carefully planned and unfolded throughout the semester in a systematic fashion (S15 FGI2). As an illustration, S15 FGI2 stated: "Many courses are unplanned

except this one [TESSM]. I could see the pre-class activity of the sixth week from the very beginning of the first week... We could see what we were supposed to do. This careful planning made us very comfortable and at the same time informed us." Students also reported that their attention was captured by the digital media activities, apps, and embedded links to course content on the learning management system (LMS) (S11 and S13, FGI2). In terms of teaching methods, the students emphasized that they gained satisfaction from the flipped method (all students from FGI1 and FGI2). For instance, S8 FGI1 said "There was as much group work as was possible." And S9 FGI1 added "It was totally student-oriented, and we always did something". In addition, S4 FGI1 explained how they were given opportunities to overcome prejudices and fears of working in groups, expressing "I've never liked group work. I thought if I could not match the people in the group, I would break the group harmony... For example, I learned to share my own thoughts. I was more passive before. I noticed that I could feed myself with the ideas of the others in my group. I was more motivated after that." The students expressed that they found it useful to be asked to find their own resources and share them in in-class activities so that peer-to-peer learning took place (S5 and S9 FGI1, S10 and S12 FGI2).

Students described the immediate feedback from the instructor as one of the most effective aspects of the course (S1, FGI1, and S10, FGI2). This finding was supported by classroom observations and video recordings, which showed that after students' discussions and behaviors related to the TESSM, the instructor both encouraged their actions and helped them clarify and develop their ideas by providing immediate feedback. While the students were doing a presentation or engaged in cooperative group work, for example, while they were conducting a SWOT analysis, the instructor always observed them carefully and interjected if needed. S4 from FGI1 said "Actually, during in-class activities, she [the instructor] always tests us secretly. If she realizes any information on the material, or classroom wall was wrong, she kindly points it out." In addition, students had positive views towards the active, student-centered instruction and expressed that the flexible, informal learning environment helped them to achieve the learning outcomes (S1, S2, S4, S5 FGI1; S10 FGI2). There is therefore evidence triangulated across the classroom observations and the FGIs that illuminates that the significance of the flipping on the TESSM came from providing the students with freedom of thought, freedom of action, and an expectation of collaborative learning and sharing.

However, it also emerged during the FGIs, that the students had not internalized learning outcome three: Illustrate and explain the organizational structure and management approaches within schools, as well as the roles of each of the stakeholders. The students reflected they could not fully grasp the role of each stakeholder in a school system (all students from FGI1; S11, S13, S15 from FGI2). For example, one of the participants [S15 FGI2] said "I think I learned everything about the Turkish educational system, however, on the other topic [school management], I do not have much idea now. Maybe inspections, or what happens when superintendents come" (S15 in particular, and other students). Hence, their experiences illuminated that the course activities or techniques had not effectively helped them to explain different management approaches in Turkish schools. This meant they had not fully internalized the concepts needed for them to

complete the final assignment where they had to write a reform plan to make changes in a school. When this data was triangulated with the document analysis, it became clear that the documents and activities lacked this learning outcome and that this is an area where the teacher-researcher needs to provide additional support to help students achieve this outcome in future iterations. Students also wanted a concise document containing all the readings, links to videos, and handouts in the LMS (S2, S4, S5, S7, S9 from FGI1; S11, S13, S15 from FGI2). For example, S13 FGI2 stressed, "A book was needed. At the very least, a book called Turkish Education System and School Management could be suggested, and even if we do not process it at least in class, it is an opportunity to reach those achievements at home. I think the only thing missing is that..." and when S4 FGI1 said "Then we can prepare a resource," S7 FGI1 agreed, saying of the resources "I think it's in the air. I do not know, it is due to our habit, but I want the written one to be in front of us. I wish it could be in our hands..." Finally, students commented that the pre-class quiz questions asked in the LMS (mostly multiple-choice or fill-in-the blanks) were not cognitively challenging and did not fully require them to show their understanding; they expressed that they thought short-answer questions would test their understanding better (S1 and S3 FGI1; all students from FGI2). This was further explained when S1 FGI1 said "It's learning when I do everything I've learned. When I watched the video, I did not make much of it when I only solved the tests." Furthermore, S15 FGI2 added "Because I was focusing on a word before it [fill in the blanks question], I was only paying attention when they said that word." Moreover, S13 FGI2 said "I would like to write a paragraph." And S10 FGI2 admitted that "Sometimes I asked my friends for the answers while they were doing it. Unfortunately, obvious answers need to be memorized word for word."

Phase 3. Document Analysis

Drawing on the detailed analysis of the course materials, results related to course content from Weeks 1 to 7 showed the following (see Appendix B for all content):

The course content for the entire semester was uploaded to the Blackboard LMS by the instructor from the first week, allowing students to be aware of upcoming content and prepare for each lesson. Additionally, a glossary was shared with students through Blackboard. In Week 1, students watched a welcome video about TESSM, learned the main aims and goals of the course, and were asked to complete pre-class quizzes. Using teaching techniques like the station technique, they learned the concept of timelines, how to create them, and then made a timeline covering the history of the Turkish education system, thus gaining foundational knowledge on the topic. In Week 2, students posed questions regarding the history, development, and reform of the education system to Professor Özcan, dean of the Faculty of Education and guest speaker for the course. They also presented a collaboratively created timeline, aligned with a cooperative learning activity. In Week 4, after studying the British Education Act of 1996 and reviewing a British student's presentation on it, students conducted group presentations. They learned how to prepare presentations on legal principles and compared aspects of the British and Turkish education systems, including curriculum content. In Week 5,

students watched a video on the UK education system and answered questions about its structure in a pre-class quiz. During class, they reviewed the UK system and created diagrams to visually communicate the structure to other groups, drawing these on writable walls at the university. They also gained knowledge about the 4+4+4 Turkish education system. Groups then created a video explaining the Turkish 4+4+4 education system for a selected audience (e.g., students, foreign teachers, new parents at a school), concluding with a critique of the system's advantages and disadvantages. In Week 6, students continued discussing the 4+4+4 system. Each group uploaded their video to share with the class, and in class, they critiqued both the video content and the pros and cons of the Turkish education system they had identified. In Week 7, they studied the administrative hierarchy of the Turkish education system by examining an organogram. Before class, they reviewed UK educational aims and responsibilities, answering questions from that perspective. In class, students worked on creating an organogram for the Turkish Ministry of National Education, discussed the roles of individuals in this structure, and explored the ministry's website (link is blind here) to enhance their understanding.

As a final course objective, students developed their own educational reform plans for the Turkish education system after conducting a SWOT analysis. They identified issues in need of change, gathered supporting evidence, and proposed a reform plan. Overall, the teaching and learning process was active and student-centered. The instructor's role was primarily to guide students as a facilitator, encouraging them to engage with the subject matter, internalize it, and build knowledge of the Turkish education system. By teaching the TESSM concept and serving as a role model for flipping a topic, the instructor demonstrated to the class how to flip their own mathematics unit in an informal learning environment. Toward the end of the semester, students took a final exam to assess whether the learning outcomes had been achieved.

Discussion

Based on the findings from this study, we find evidence that Parlett and Hamilton's IEM was an appropriate model for evaluating a flipped educational sciences course. In Phase 1, observations showed that teacher talk indirect influence—which allows freedom in students' responses and actions—was relatively higher than teacher talk direct influence, which limits students' freedom of response. In Phase 2, student interviews revealed that, despite high engagement and benefits from collaborative learning methods, there was a discrepancy between the instructional method, which relied on the flipped learning approach, and assessment procedures, which were based on traditional, non-cognitively challenging items. Additionally, in Phase 3, course materials documented that there was in-depth course content about education systems and comparative curricula. Nevertheless, there was a gap in the learning outcomes related to the school management content of the course. The course also lacked prepared class documents (i.e., handouts), as noted in Phase 2. This evaluation study, therefore, illuminated these

drawbacks to support future course redesign. The students asserted the need to be assigned relevant textbooks and handouts while actively experiencing flipped learning. The students were also asserted the need to use authentic assessment types by the instructors. They recommended that the instructor prepare flipped videos to be as interactive as possible. For instructors who wish to utilize flipped instructional strategies, these findings suggest that it can be implemented as conceptualized in this study without compromising student performance. However, other impacts of the flipped approach on student perceptions should also be considered.

While the findings of this study offer valuable insights for evaluating other flipped courses, it is essential to consider students' perspectives on the educational sciences course and their experiences with flipped instruction. The interview data indicated that students felt more motivated and were prompted to be more interactive during class, communicating with each other and the instructor regularly throughout the semester. This result we see as both desirable but also expected: freeing up class time from lecturing naturally provides space and time for deeper and more regular discussions. However, in support of what some others (e.g., Ferreri and O'Conner, 2013; Missildine et al., 2013) have found regarding student perceptions of flipped instructional approaches, our data similarly indicate some levels of dissatisfaction—particularly regarding use of class time, static flipped pre-class videos, non-challenging questions during formative assessment and the absence of a coursebook. The majority of students in the flipped class viewed in-class time as effective, important, and efficient—more so than those who expressed concerns about the inefficiencies in the structural and practical aspects of the flipped approach. This was also evident in the findings from the students' micro-teaching assignments, which indicated that the preservice teachers often reverted to traditional teaching methods. This tendency may stem from the fact that most teachers teach in the way they were taught (e.g., Birgili et al., 2016).

Evaluation models provide the means to describe, explain, or judge an evaluation-related matter and a model has an impact when it is adopted, adapted, or developed in a given evaluation context (Arbour, 2020). We have taken this first step given the relatively widespread use of flipped classroom techniques in the educational landscape. It is widely acknowledged that IEM can be used for evaluation in innovative programs (i.e., flipped instruction) as well as online courses in higher education (Altın and Altın, 2021; Buckley et al. 2021; Esau et al., 2020). The IEM model allowed us to evaluate a flipped educational science course from a qualitative perspective. This aligns with the findings of Topper and Lancaster (2016), Gültekin-Demirci (2020), and Castro-Calvino et al. (2020). Parlett and Hamilton's IEM model has demonstrated its durability and is widely preferred by researchers both nationally (e.g., Özüdoğru and Adigüzel, 2016) and internationally (Alderman, 2015; Bamkin et al., 2016). During the initial implementation of this flipped TESSM course, evaluating it from faculty perspectives and incorporating quantitative student success data would have been beneficial.

Using the Illuminative Evaluation Method, strengths and areas for improvement in the flipped TESSM course were identified. Key findings included: (1) high student

participation, with a strong ratio of student-to-instructor talk; (2) significant benefits from immediate instructor feedback; (3) positive perceptions of flipped learning, though students often reverted to direct instruction in micro-teaching; and (4) the method's effectiveness in evaluating a flipped course and highlighting unmet learning outcomes. Recommendations for improvement included: creating a table to map learning outcomes against activities to avoid omissions, diversifying assessments after pre-class videos, using open-ended questions or discussions to promote deeper understanding, training students in student-centered approaches for micro-teaching, and consolidating course resources into a single document. These suggestions aim to enhance future evaluations of flipped courses (see Table 5 for processes in Appendix B).

Limitations and Conclusion

This study proposed an innovative course evaluation model for flipped courses but has limitations. First, it was conducted in an educational sciences course, limiting generalizability to other courses. Future research could explore the applicability of the IEM in different fields, such as STEM disciplines (e.g., Physics), and with varied interview questions addressing technological challenges. Second, the study focused on the first iteration of the TESSM course. Replicating it in other semesters or with different student groups could reveal variations influenced by instructor and student biases or scheduling differences. Additionally, the structure of the study may have constrained the potential benefits of the evaluation model. Finally, while prioritizing descriptive and interpretive techniques over predictive ones, the study avoided in-depth instructor interviews due to time constraints, opting instead for transparent data analysis and actionable outcomes to support course improvement. These limitations suggest avenues for refining and expanding the use of IEM in future flipped course evaluations.

Future studies would benefit from using multiple data sources, such as think-aloud protocols with the instructor or pre-knowledge tests on course content with the students. Finally, the sample size in the present study was not sufficiently large, so caution should be exercised when generalizing the findings. Nevertheless, the current study adds to the literature in proposing a course evaluation model to explore the quality of a flipped course within a dynamic and interactive learning environment.

In conclusion, this study shifts the focus from the question of whether the flipped learning approach is effective to how to make it effective for more courses. The results demonstrate the importance of using an appropriate model to evaluate a course, particularly in the field of educational sciences. To effectively design a flipped course in any domain (i.e., Mathematics, Science, Education), instructors must consider the relationship between the identified aspects of the IEM and achievement (i.e., learning milieu), enact appropriate strategies to support students' learning (i.e., instructional systems), and ultimately guide them to succeed in a flipped classroom.

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Appendix A

Focus Group Interview Questions

1. In which types of courses do you think flipped learning can be effective? Why?
2. Could you tell us about the Turkish Education System and School Management course content?
 - What do you think about the effectiveness of flipped learning for this course?
3. What were the tools and materials used in the Turkish Education System and School Management course, which was taught according to the flipped learning approach?
 - For what purpose were these tools used in the course?
 - Have any needs required?
4. Could you describe the learning environment of the Turkish Education System and School Management course?
5. What did you pay attention to while preparing for the Turkish Education System and School Management course, which is taught in line with the flipped learning approach?
6. Do you think the Turkish Education System and School Management course was taught in accordance with the flipped learning? Please state your opinion with positive or negative aspects.
 - What would you say about whether the course content and the teaching method followed meet your expectations before the course?
7. How did you use flipped learning while preparing your math lectures for this lesson?
 - What did you experience? Give an example.
 - What do you think about the relationship between the subject/course content you explained during group presentations and the Turkish Education System and School Management course?
8. Do you think flipped learning is a useful approach to achieve the learning outcomes of the Turkish Education System and School Management course?
 - What are your experiences?
9. If you evaluate flipped learning in terms of the Turkish Education System and School Management course, what are the advantages and disadvantages?
 - What problems did you have?
10. What are your suggestions for the development of the Turkish Education System and School Management course according to the flipped approach?
 - What could be the suggestions in terms of content?
 - What are your suggestions in terms of teaching method

Appendix B

Table 5.

Course Evaluation Model Processes

Data to be collected	Why?	By Whom?	Procedure	How data will be analyzed	What does this inform?
Classroom Observations	•To gather data on non-verbal behaviors. •To analyze what is happening regarding ongoing behaviors as they occur and to make appropriate notes about salient features of the phenomena observed.	A colleague or Center for Research and Best Practices in Learning and Teaching (CELT) member as participant observer	•Gain permission from students to observe classes. •Observe classes (before, during, and after) and take notes of salient features. •Video the same classes.	•Break the video down into 30-second segments. •Interpret each segment according to the categories in the video analysis framework (See Table 2).	•FGI questions •Triangulation with other data
Focus Group Interviews (FGIs)	•Reveal how and why students hold certain beliefs about the program of interest. •Gather data from a variety of points of view. •Gather in-depth, considered responses with every interviewee contributing towards the discussion. •Understand the group's view on the quality of the course. •Trends and patterns in perceptions and experiences from the FGIs will be carefully and systematically analyzed so that how students perceive the quality of the course in terms of teaching method can be explored.	A colleague or CELT member	•Gain permission from students to participate in focus groups and for the interviews to be recorded. •Write open-ended questions based on what was illuminated in the classroom observations and document analysis. •Check the quality of questions with a third party. •Adjust questions based on the third-party feedback. •In the focus group, use guiding questions to encourage contributions from every interviewee.	•Transcribe the FGIs. •Break the transcription down into utterances. •Send the transcription to the participants to member check for accuracy. •Anonymize students using a code. •Give a number for each utterance. •Read the transcripts several times to reflect thoughts and interpretations of the phenomena. •Perform qualitative data analysis using thematic analysis. •Transform notes into emergent themes by making associations between actual participant statements and the researchers' interpretations.	•Document Analysis •Triangulation with other data

				•Group units of information with similar meanings into more comprehensive themes, to assist in organizing and interpreting the unstructured data. •Read each participant's views and interpret as positive, neutral, or negative and add a symbol added to the transcript (+, *, -). •If a participant provides a counter argument to any other peers, give a symbol. (See Table 4 for details)	
Document Analysis	•Documents can provide us with a condensed picture of data from several textual resources, which can then be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning.	A colleague or CELT member	•Conduct document analysis to the syllabus (including course description, aims, design, planned learning and teaching methods, learning outcomes and assessment criteria, as well as recommended readings and course policies).	•Map documents in a chart against each outcome so that missing elements can be illuminated (see Table 6 for details).	•Focus Group Interview questions •Triangulation with other data

Now, triangulate the data from the class observations, FGIs and document analysis and analyze and evaluate the results.

Share results with the teacher throughout the course to ensure transparency, ethics, and to allow changes to be made as data becomes available.

Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Pandeminin 2020 yılındaki etkileri, çevrimiçi ders tasarımı için en iyi uygulamaların küresel çapta dikkat çekmesine yol açmıştır. Bu kapsamda, öğretmen ve öğrenci arasındaki ilişkileri güçlendirmek amacıyla yeni yöntemler benimsenmiştir (Smith ve Becker, 2021). Eğitim alanında ters yüz öğrenme yaklaşımı (flipped learning), çevrimiçi öğrenmeyle özellikle uyumlu bir model olarak öne çıkmıştır (Låg ve Sæle, 2019; Stöhr vd., 2020). Bu modelin temel amacı, ders içeriklerini ders dışında öğrencilere sunarak, ders içerisindeki zamanı etkin, pratik ve uygulamalı faaliyetlere ayırmaktır ("The Flipped Learning Global Initiative," t.y.). Ters yüz öğrenme, öğrencilerin çevrimiçi içeriklerle etkileşim kurmasını, öğrenci-öğrenci ve öğrenci-öğretmen işbirliğini geliştirmesini, ödevlerle aktif olarak meşgul olmasını, sorumluluk almasını ve öğrenme kaynaklarına (eğitmen videoları gibi) serbestçe erişebilmesini sağlar (Birgili vd., 2016).

Daha önceki çalışmalar, ters yüz öğrenmenin tüm eğitim seviyelerinde etkili bir pedagojik yaklaşım olarak küresel tanınırlığına odaklanırken (Bond, 2020; Lopes ve Soares, 2017; Zou vd., 2020), son araştırmalar, bu yöntemin öğrencilerin başarısı üzerindeki etkisini incelemeye yönelmiştir (bir meta-analiz için bkz. Orhan, 2019). Ters yüz öğrenme uygulamalarının, öğrenci performansını önemli ölçüde iyileştirdiği ve bilişsel, duyuşsal ve sosyal beceriler üzerinde olumlu etkiler yarattığı belirtilmiştir (Birgili vd., 2021).

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Parlett ve Hamilton (1972) tarafından geliştirilen Aydınlatıcı Değerlendirme Modeli'nin (Illuminative Evaluation Model) eğitim bilimleri alanındaki uygunluğunu incelemektir. Bu model, Bergmann ve Sams (2012) tarafından tanımlanan ters yüz öğrenme yöntemi kullanılarak tasarlanan bir dersin değerlendirilmesi için kullanılmıştır. Çalışma, iki temel araştırma sorusuna odaklanmıştır:

1. Aydınlatıcı Değerlendirme Modeli, ters yüz eğitim bilimleri dersinin değerlendirilmesinde hangi yollarla ve ne ölçüde kullanılmaktadır?
2. Öğrenciler, ters yüz eğitim bilimleri dersindeki deneyimlerini aydınlatıcı bir değerlendirme yoluyla nasıl açıklamaktadır?

Yöntem

Araştırmaya, ilkökul matematik eğitimi alanında öğrenim gören 17 birinci sınıf öğrencisi (16 kız ve 1 erkek) katılmıştır. Ters yüz öğrenme yöntemi, üniversitenin eğitim modeli olarak kullanıldığı için tüm katılımcılar bu yöntemi farklı derslerde (analiz, matematik öğretimine giriş gibi bölüm dersleri ve üniversite hayatına giriş gibi seçmeli dersler) deneyimlemiştir. Katılımcılar dört hafta süreyle bu çalışmaya dahil olma konusunda gönüllülük esasıyla izin vermiştir. Toplamda sekiz ders kaydedilmiş ve her biri 90 dakika sürmüştür. Derslerde öğretmenin ve öğrencilerin etkileşimi kaydedilmiştir. Kayıtlar, öğretim uygulamalarını ve öğrenci etkileşimlerini analiz etmek için yazılı metne dönüştürülmüştür. Bu gözlemler, ters yüz öğrenme ortamını daha yakından anlamak için Parlett ve Hamilton'ın öne çıkardığı "öğrenim ortamı" kavramını temel almaktadır.

Birinci yazar tarafından yazılan saha notları, sınıfta gözlemlenen deneyimlere eleştirel bir bakış getirmeyi ve daha derin analiz seviyelerine ulaşmayı amaçlamıştır (Miles ve Huberman, 1994). Bu notlar, özellikle öğrenci-öğretmen ve öğrenci-öğrenci etkileşimlerini anlamak için detaylı bilgiler sağlamıştır. Araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerle, iki odak grup halinde toplam 40 dakikalık mülakatlar yapılmıştır. Bu mülakatlarda öğrenciler, ters yüz öğrenme sürecindeki deneyimlerini, karşılaştıkları zorlukları ve dersin genel etkisini tartışmıştır. Mülakatlardan elde edilen bulgular, ters yüz öğrenme sürecinin farklı öğrenci grupları üzerindeki etkilerini anlamada benzersiz bir bakış sunmuştur. Ders programı, el kitapları, etkinlik formları ve değerlendirme materyalleri incelenmiştir. Bu materyaller, ters yüz öğrenme ortamının öğretim sistemlerine nasıl entegre edildiğini ve bu sistemin nasıl işlediğini anlamak için kullanılmıştır. Özellikle, öğrencilerin ders öncesinde izlediği çevrimiçi videolar da bu incelemenin bir parçasını oluşturmuştur.

Araştırma ekibi, ters yüz öğrenme yöntemini benimsemiş üç akademisyenden oluşmaktadır. Birinci yazar, eğitim bilimleri alanında doktora öğrencisi olarak ders gözlemleri, saha notları ve odak grup mülakatlarını kaydetmiştir. İkinci yazar, 19 yıllık araştırma deneyimi, üç yıllık ters yüz sınıf öğretimi deneyimi ve istatistiksel veri analizi uzmanlığıyla katkı sağlamıştır. Üçüncü yazar ise eğitim ve okul sistemi dersi eğitmeni olarak profesyonel gelişim programları sunmuş ve ters yüz öğrenme tasarımlarının kalitesini sağlamıştır. Veri toplama süreci boyunca, birinci yazar değerlendirci (gözlemci-araştırmacı) rolü üstlenirken, üçüncü yazar eğitmen (eğitmen-araştırmacı) rolünde bulunmuştur. Veriler, Aydınlatıcı Değerlendirme Modeli'nin öğrenim ortamı (1. ve 2. aşamalar) ve öğretim sistemleri (3. aşama) olmak üzere iki boyutuna göre analiz edilmiştir.

Sonuç

Ters yüz öğrenme sürecindeki etkinlikler arasında; ders anlatımı (%23,68), öğrenci cevapları (%18,42), öğrenci fikirlerinin kullanılması (%15,79), öğrenci tarafından başlatılan konuşmalar (%10,53) yer almıştır. Öğretmenin iletişiminin öğrencilerle etkili olduğu görülmüş ve sınıf içi etkinliklere katılımın artmasını sağlamıştır.

Mülakat verileri, ters yüz öğrenmenin grup çalışması ve aktif katılımı vurguladığını ortaya koymuştur. Katılımcılar, eğitim sistemlerine ilişkin farklı bakış açıları kazandıklarını belirtmiştir. Ancak, matematik dersi için daha fazla materyal desteği gerektiğini vurgulamışlardır. Bir öğrenci, grup çalışmalarına ön yargısını aştığını ve başkalarının fikirlerinden fayda sağladığını belirtmiştir.

Dersin sonunda öğrenciler, eğitim sistemine dair SWOT analizi yaparak kendi reform planlarını geliştirmiş ve konuya dair bilgi birikimini derinleştirmiştir. Eğitmen rehberliğinde kendi matematik ünitelerini ters yüz öğrenme yöntemiyle tasarlama konusunda bilgi sahibi olmuşlardır.

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