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STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ENGLISH IN THE TURKISH SECONDARY SCHOOL CONTEXT

THESIS BY
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DEDICATION

To my husband

To my mother

ETHICS DECLARATION

Student's

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Master Thesis (√) Ph.D. Thesis ( )

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I prepared this thesis within the framework of academic and ethics rules,

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I hereby acknowledge all possible loss of rights in case of a contrary circumstance. (in case of any circumstance contradicting with my declaration)

13 / 07 / 2020

Hülya Seren AKDAMAR

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ABSTRACT

STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ENGLISH IN THE TURKISH SECONDARY SCHOOL CONTEXT

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The present study was carried out in Diyarbakır, Ergani in the second semester of the 2019-2020 education year with the participation of 353 secondary school students. This study firstly aimed to analyse secondary school students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English. This study then sought to investigate whether gender, parents' level of education, parents' employment status, weekly English lesson hours, and grade level had an impact on students' attitudes. In line with the aims, both a demographic information form and the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale (Çelik, 2015) were employed to gather data. The data were analysed via the SPSS programme. As a first step, descriptive analyses were made, and the demographic variables of the students were distributed in the frequency tables. Then, the frequency distributions of the students' responses to the attitude scale were determined. Independent samples t-test and ANOVA were employed to analyse students' attitudes in accordance with their demographic variables. According to the results, students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English were positive. Nevertheless, female students had more positive attitudes than male students. In addition, English intensive class students' attitudes were more positive than regular class students' attitudes. Moreover, fifth grade students' attitudes were found to be more positive than sixth and seventh grade students' attitudes. Also, the education level of father and students' attitudes were found to be related. On the other hand, no relationship was found between the education level of mother and students' attitudes. Likewise, no relationship was found between the employment status of parents and students' attitudes.

Keywords: Attitude, demographic variables, English intensive class, language learning.

ÖZET

TÜRK ORTAOKUL BAĞLAMINDAKİ ÖĞRENCİLERİN İNGİLİZCEYE YÖNELİK TUTUMLARI

Hülya Seren AKDAMAR

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Temmuz 2020, 105 Sayfa

Bu çalışma 2019-2020 öğretim yılının ikinci döneminde 353 ortaokul öğrencisinin katılımıyla Diyarbakır Ergani'de gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu çalışma, ilk olarak ortaokul öğrencilerinin İngilizce ve İngilizce öğrenmeye yönelik tutumlarını incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Çalışma daha sonra cinsiyet, ebeveynlerin eğitim düzeyi, ebeveynlerin istihdam durumu, haftalık İngilizce ders saatleri ve sınıf düzeyinin öğrencilerin tutumları üzerinde bir etkisi olup olmadığını araştırmaya çalışmıştır. Amaçlar doğrultusunda veri toplamak için hem demografik bilgi formu hem de Gülen Yüz Dil Tutum Ölçeği (Çelik, 2015) kullanılmıştır. Veriler SPSS programı ile analiz edilmiştir. İlk olarak betimsel analizler yapılmış ve öğrencilerin demografik değişkenleri frekans tablolarına dağıtılmıştır. Ardından, öğrencilerin tutum ölçeğine verdikleri yanıtların sıklık dağılımları belirlenmiştir. Demografik değişkenlerine göre öğrencilerin tutumlarını analiz etmek için bağımsız gruplar t-testi ve ANOVA kullanılmıştır. Sonuçlara göre, öğrencilerin İngilizceye ve İngilizce öğrenmeye yönelik tutumları olumludur. Bununla birlikte, kız öğrencilerin tutumları erkek öğrencilerin tutumlarından daha olumludur. Ek olarak, İngilizce ağırlıklı sınıfta okuyan öğrencilerin tutumları, normal sınıfta okuyan öğrencilerinin tutumlarından daha olumludur. Dahası, beşinci sınıf öğrencilerinin tutumları altıncı ve yedinci sınıf öğrencilerinin tutumlarından daha olumludur. Ayrıca, baba eğitim düzeyi ile öğrencilerin tutumları arasında bir ilişki bulunmuştur. Ancak, anne eğitim düzeyi değişkeni ile öğrencilerin tutumları arasında bir ilişki bulunamamıştır. Benzer şekilde, ebeveynlerin istihdam durumu ve öğrencilerin tutumları arasında bir bulunamamıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tutum, demografik değişkenler, İngilizce ağırlıklı sınıf, dil öğrenimi.

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ABBREVIATIONS

SPSS : Statistical Package for Social Sciences

ANOVA : Analysis of Variance

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CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the background to the study, statement of the problem, purposes, research questions, and operational definitions of the study.

1.2. Background to the Study

In today's globalized world, international communication has become crucial due to scientific and technological advancements, changes in economic standards, and political developments. Inevitably, almost all developments and changes that happen in a country closely concern the rest of the world, and there are no longer borders between countries in means of communication. Besides, countries need more sources in order to develop themselves, fulfil the needs of contemporary citizens, and survive in the face of globalization. Hence, countries need to trade and help each other. In addition to all these, in order to reach universal standards, knowledge, and values, it has become almost a must to learn English which is accepted as a *lingua franca* around the world (Kasap, 2019; Kızıldag, 2009; Munat, 2005; Yaman, 2018). For a language to be lingua franca, it must be a common language used by people with different first language backgrounds (Seidlhofer, 2005), and English stands out with this feature.

Surely, the domination of the English language and globalization are interrelated. At the present time, English is the language of the internet, technology, art, education, and the world economy. Almost 1.5 billion of the world's citizens speak English as a first and second language (Rao, 2019), and English is the official language of over 60 countries (Kasap, 2019). It is also known that the number of bilingual people is increasing all around the world, and English is being learned as a second or foreign language by a vast number of people thanks to globalization (Mohammed, 2020).

As is the case with many other countries, the influences of globalization manifest themselves in the context of Turkey through political, social and cultural life, and the education system. In parallel with this, the Turkish Ministry of National Education attaches importance to foreign language education at the global level, and English language education comes in the first place. As a matter of fact, as the Turkish

government has been making great efforts in order to be a member of the European Union (EU) since the 1980s, English language education has become even more important for Turkish (education) policy (Demirpolat, 2015). Therefore, the Turkish Ministry of National Education has taken some steps for the purpose of improving English language education. For example, in the 2013-2014 academic year, compulsory English education was extended to second grade from fourth grade in primary school education. Besides, more and more English teachers have been appointed to schools, and English education programmes have attempted to be updated in accordance with the Common European Framework. However, despite all the efforts, learning outcomes of English language education have not been reported at a satisfactory level (Aktaş, 2005; Işık, 2008; Kızıldag, 2009; Saka, 2018). The problems in English language education might be derived from such factors as lack of qualified teachers (Günday, 2007), the inadequacy of textbooks, ineffective education programmes, the shortage of technological resources (Erdem, 2016), and the length of lesson hours (Uztosun, 2018). In fact, when taking into account the factors in question, it can be seen that they are not able to clarify the shortcomings of English language education in all respects. This is because almost all students are taught English under the same conditions in Turkey (e.g. same curriculum and same textbooks); yet, some of them succeed while others fail. Hence, the need for researching the factors that might be behind the failure in English rises. As a matter of fact, it should be noted that the problems in English education might not be limited to the asserted reasons since language learning also depends on individual differences that are under the umbrella of social, cognitive, and affective factors (Ellis, 2004). To clarify, failure to learn English might arise from individual differences referring to factors such as *social factors* (e.g. family support), *cognitive factors* (e.g. language aptitude), and *affective factors* (e.g. learner motivation, attitude, inhibition, or anxiety). Therefore, individual differences might be the reason why a learner learns faster than others or a learner is not be able to achieve the ultimate learning skills unlike others in a classroom. Considering individual differences play a critical role in the process of second/foreign language learning, and affective factors are important components of the second/foreign language learning process regarding individual differences, it is worth investigating affective factors. Starting from this point of view, the current study deals with one of the affective factors: attitude.

Attitude is closely related to second/foreign language learning owing to the fact that positive attitude boosts motivation while negative attitude influences adversely.

Gardner (1968) is one of the well-known scholars who draw attention to the important roles of attitude and motivation in second/foreign language learning. In addition, there is a great amount of research focusing on attitude and demonstrating the influence of attitude on second/foreign language learning process (Anbarlı-Kırkız, 2010; Gardner & Lambert, 1959; Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Also, as one of the leading scholars in the second language education field, Krashen (1981) emphasizes the role of affective factors in the second language acquisition process. Krashen argues that it is important to be exposed to the second language; however, mere exposure is not sufficient in a situation where the target language is a second language. For a successful acquisition, the learner should be internally ready. In the following quotation, Krashen (1981) underlines the importance of the affective factors in the process of second language acquisition:

> Attitudinal factors relating to acquisition will be those that enable the performer to utilize the language heard for acquisition. Simply hearing a second language with understanding appears to be necessary but is not sufficient for acquisition to take place. The acquirer must not only understand the input but must also, in a sense, be "open" to it (p. 21).

According to the quotation above, it is obvious that being *open* to language acquisition refers to individual differences and especially affective factors. One of the most famous studies of Krashen is known as the *Affective Filter Hypothesis*, in which he discusses how affective factors including motivation, anxiety, and attitude have an impact on second language acquisition. It is indisputable that the first and most important prerequisite for acquiring or learning a language is exposure. However, in second/foreign language contexts, an adequate level of exposure might not exist. To set an example, in the context of Turkey, English is taught as a foreign language. Hence, Turkish learners of English have less of a chance to be exposed and practice. Accordingly, as second/foreign language learning is an individual process and is therefore under the influence of one's motivation, anxiety level, and attitudes, it has become important to investigate the affective factors in the field of second/foreign language learning in order to understand and reinforce the process thoroughly.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

As noted previously, there might be various reasons causing problems in English language education in Turkey such as the inadequacy of textbooks, the length of lesson hours, and ineffective teaching methods. However, except for the external factors, individual differences such as affective factors might have an impact on the second/foreign language learning process. In particular, attitude is accepted as one of the crucial affective factors in second/foreign language learning (Gardner, 1985; Storm, 2007). Therefore, investigating student attitudes has become an important research topic both in Turkey and around the world in order to yield a critical awareness in understanding the second/foreign language learning process.

1.4. Purpose and Research Questions of the Study

In the scope of this study, the first aim is to investigate students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English in the Turkish secondary school context. Secondly, the study aims to analyse the relationship between students' demographic characteristics and their attitudes with the thought that they might have an impact on their attitudes. The study thirdly aims to determine whether there are attitudinal differences between English intensive class students and regular class students. Besides, the study aims to find out whether there are attitudinal differences among fifth, sixth, and seventh grade students. In accordance with the aims, the study looks for answering the following research questions:

1. What are the secondary school students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English?

2. Do secondary school students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English differentiate in terms of:

- **a)** gender?
- **b)** employment status of parents?
- **c)** education level of parents?

3. Is there an attitudinal difference between English intensive class students and regular class students:

- **a)** towards English?
- **b)** towards learning English?

4. Is there an attitudinal difference among fifth grade, sixth grade, and seventh grade students:

a) towards English?

b) towards learning English?

1.5. Operational Definitions

Affective Factors: Emotions and feelings that affect language learning process such as attitude, motivation, and anxiety.

English as a second language (ESL): Teaching English in a country where English is the official or main language (Moussu, 2006).

English as a foreign language (EFL): Teaching English in a country where English is not the official or main language (Moussu, 2006).

Second Language Acquisition (SLA): The term used for the process of learning a second language in addition to the first language.

CHAPTER II

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter begins with an overview of the status of the English language in the global, and then in the Turkish context. The chapter then focuses on Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis. Following this, among the affective factors, the concepts of motivation and attitude are detailed as they are accepted to be in relation to second/foreign language learning. Finally, the chapter concludes with an overview of research on the attitude concept and second/foreign language learning abroad and in Turkey.

2.2. The Status of the English Language

Today, it is an incontestable truth that being able to communicate in more than one language is prestigious. Especially the English language is getting more and more significant as it is on the stage as the international language. Therefore, to be able to communicate in the English language has become almost a necessity rather than a privilege, and there might be many underlying reasons for this. For example, as new youth trends, it is a requirement to know English to be able to study abroad and travel around the world. Especially, being able to communicate in the English language is vital for being a part of the globalized world. Moreover, millions of people around the world actively use social media and therefore need the language of the internet, namely English. Consequently, English has inevitably become more widespread. To give a fairly new example, due to the recent coronavirus pandemic that is being experienced worldwide, news from every country is followed continuously by millions of people, and such a situation has raised the significance of English as a useful tool of communication.

Turkey, as one of the developing countries, is in need of catching up with technological and scientific developments. Particularly, since European Union (EU) membership was added to the agenda, English language education has been paid more attention in Turkey (Haznedar, 2010). In accordance with this, the Turkish Ministry of National Education has taken some steps for the purpose of improving English language

education. As mentioned previously, in the 2013-2014 academic year, compulsory English education was extended to second grade from fourth grade in primary school education. This can be evaluated as a positive step when considering the studies suggesting that a language can be learned better at young ages. Furthermore, to mention the place of the English language in the current Turkish education system, it can be seen that English begins compulsory in the second year of primary education. In primary education, there are two hours of English lessons per week, and these lesson hours increase in secondary education. Accordingly, while fifth and sixth grades have three hours of English lessons, seventh and eighth grades have four hours of English lessons per week. In addition to this, English education continues in high school education and in Turkish universities, with many departments having English preparatory classes. Apart from formal education, it can be said that almost all Turkish parents would like their children to learn a foreign language, especially English, to be successful in their future careers (Yıldırım & Okan, 2007). However, whether or not English education has reached the desired level despite many attempts has become a matter of debate for the Turkish education system. Although the Ministry of National Education has endeavoured to improve English language education, it is argued that the learning outcomes of English language education are not satisfactory (Aktaş, 2005; Işık, 2008; Kızıldağ, 2009; Saka, 2018). While it is expected that youngsters would be willing to learn this new tech-age language that their favourite TV shows and singers use, it has been reported that their proficiency level, especially in speaking, is not meeting expectations. What is more, according to the 2019 English Proficiency Index (Education First, 2019), Turkey ranks 79th among 100 countries in the world, and out of 33 European countries, Turkey ranks 32nd. To be more precise, Turkey's English proficiency point is 46.81 which is accepted as *very low proficiency*. As a result, even though English education starts at the primary level, it is a thought-provoking fact that the desired learning outcomes have not been achieved.

As mentioned earlier, the reasons behind the problem of English language education in Turkey may be due to various external factors (e.g. ineffective educational programmes, limited lesson hours). However, the fact that there may also be determinant internal factors should not be neglected. Therefore, in order to attain a better comprehension of the inefficiency of English language education in Turkey, it will be appropriate to examine internal factors such as affective factors, and then curriculums can be organized accordingly.

Kachru (1990) classifies countries as the inner circle, outer circle, and expanding circle according to the usage of English (see Figure 1 below). English is the native language of the inner circle countries and the second or official language of the outer circle countries. So, people living in the inner or outer circle countries are able to acquire English as it is common enough to be acquired (Yaman, 2018). On the other hand, when it comes to the expanding circle countries, English is not common enough to be acquired naturally. That is to say, English is not acquired but learned in the expanding circle countries. As Turkey is one of the expanding circle countries, students probably only encounter English during the limited lesson hours at school. Furthermore, Turkish people are not in need of using English in their daily lives or they do not want to use English unless it is necessary for their occupations. Hence, affective factors such as attitude and motivation play more important roles in the expanding circle countries like Turkey compared to the outer circle countries like India or Pakistan because positive attitude and motivation facilitate learning.

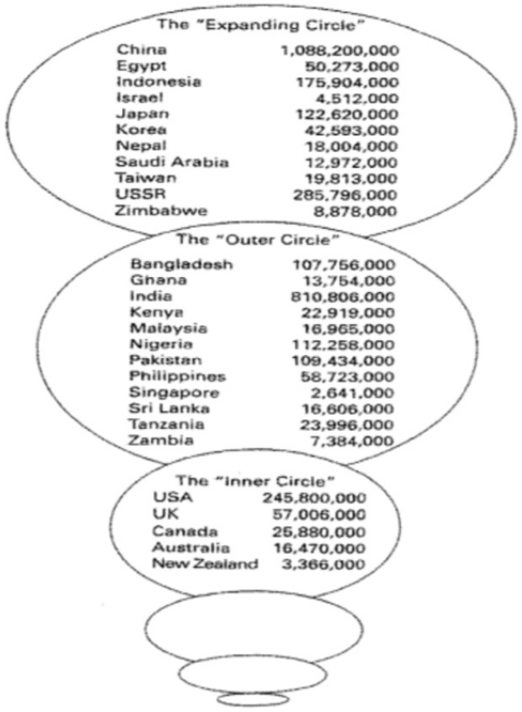

Figure 1. Three-circle Model for World Englishes (Kachru, 1990, p.4).

As seen in Kachru's model (1990), Turkey is among the countries where English is taught as a foreign language. Hence, it can be concluded that students are exposed to the target language solely during lesson hours which is a very limited chance to

encounter English speaking people in their speech community. Nevertheless, it is a fact that language learning requires a lot of practice. As mentioned earlier, it is seen that even if Turkish students take English lessons throughout their academic lives, they still have difficulty in learning English. In fact, one of the reasons why expected learning outcomes have not been obtained may be the limited chance of practicing. Unfortunately, learners may experience helplessness when they do not succeed in English, they may develop negative attitudes towards English, and negative attitudes may lead to a lack of motivation. Therefore, when taken into account the limited lesson hours and the limited chance of practicing, affective factors such as motivation and positive attitude become vital in the second/foreign language learning process.

Given that attitudes are manifested through behaviour, beliefs, and opinions, they can be a source of motivation. As Gardner (1985) puts forward, positive attitudes towards target language learning empower motivation. Hence, holding positive attitudes towards the target language can enable learners to be motivated. In accordance with this, the more enthusiastic and eager the learners are, the easier the process of learning the target language is. As a result, it can be concluded that positive attitudes empower motivation, and the prerequisite for success in learning a second/foreign language is connected with having positive attitudes and being motivated.

Thus far, the status of the English language has been discussed. Then, the place and importance of the English language in the Turkish education system have been mentioned by referring to Kachru's model (1990). Finally, the significance of attitude in second/foreign language learning has been emphasized. As mentioned before, Krashen (1982) indicates the importance of the affective factors in the second language acquisition process under the title of the Affective Filter Hypothesis. Although Krashen emphasizes affective factors in the context of second language acquisition, these factors can also be considered critical in the context of second/foreign language learning. Therefore, in the next section, Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982) is introduced, as it can be evaluated in relation to the research topic of the present study.

2.3. Affective Filter Hypothesis

Krashen (1982) advocates a second language acquisition theory called "Monitor Model" and argues that the second language can be acquired just like the first language. The theory is of five basic hypotheses: "The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis, The

Natural Order Hypothesis, The Monitor Hypothesis, The Input Hypothesis, The Affective Filter Hypothesis." Given that the focus of this research is to investigate the attitudes of secondary school students, the last one of the hypotheses is discussed in the scope of the current study.

To clarify, according to the Affective Filter Hypothesis, affective factors have the power of either facilitating or impeding the second language acquisition process. For instance, such affective factors as negative attitudes, a lack of motivation, and anxiety may create an obstacle named "affective filter" between comprehensible input and the language mechanism which is also called as "Language Acquisition Device" (proposed by Chomsky in the 1960s). As a result, the arrival of the comprehensible input to the mechanism may get difficult. Du (2009, p. 162) supports the Affective Filter Hypothesis and suggests that "the affective filter acts as a barrier to acquisition" due to the fact that negative attitudes, a lack of motivation, and anxiety may increase the impact of the filter. The following figure symbolizes the Affective Filter Hypothesis:

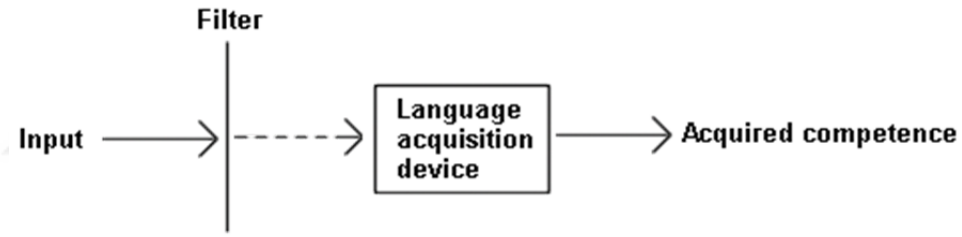

Figure 2. Operation of the Affective Filter (Krashen, 1982, p. 32)

Furthermore, Krashen (1982) argues that motivation, positive attitude, and low anxiety are also affective factors that may reduce the influence of the affective filter. In other words, motivation, low anxiety, and positive attitudes towards the target language may pave the way for the arrival of comprehensible input to the mechanism. Thus, the acquisition of the second language takes place. It should be noted that Krashen discusses the affective factors in the second language acquisition context; however, these factors are worth considering in the context of second/foreign language learning, as well. It is apparent that language learning is individual, and therefore it is a multidimensional process. In line with this, Kumaravadivelu (2012) agrees on the existence of individual differences that influence success in language learning such as aptitude, motivation, and attitude. From this point of view, it can be said that not only language aptitude but also affective factors such as attitude and motivation should be

taken into account in the second/foreign language learning process. Lightbown and Spada (2013, p. 106) state that "a*ffect* refers to feelings of anxiety or negative attitudes that may be associated with poor learning outcomes." As it is understood, the language learning process might be under the impact of students' affective characteristics, and supposing that students feel anxious, hold negative attitudes towards the target language, the process will probably not be fruitful. Therefore, students' positive attitudes should be fostered, students should be motivated, and students' anxiety level should be reduced in order to decrease the impact of the affective filter and realize language learning (Gökcan & Çobanoğlu-Aktan, 2018). To do so, language teachers need to be aware of the emotional state and affective characteristics of their students. As a matter of fact, the cognitive characteristics of students in a class may not differ much, but it is indisputable that the affective characteristics differ from each other because students are ultimately human beings.

Moving from the discussion held so far, this study focuses on student attitudes since attitudes are considered as one of the affective factors having an important influence on the language learning process. In the next sections, in parallel with the issues mentioned above, motivation and attitude are discussed as they are accepted as interrelated affective factors.

2.4. Motivation and Language Learning

Motivation can be defined as an instinct that inspires individuals to do a job, and there is a long-standing debate about the importance of motivation in educational sciences. Especially in the field of language learning, motivation is accepted as one of the affective factors having a leading role. Gardner (1985) defines motivation as a desire and effort for learning. Gardner further states that there is a connection between motivation and learning. According to Reece and Walker (1997, as cited in Gömleksiz, 2001), motivation is a key element in the language learning process. Within that spectrum, Rost (2006) remarks on the significance of motivation in language teaching via the term "neglected heart." Given that language teaching can be difficult unless students are motivated to learn, it becomes crucial to motivate them (Gömleksiz, 2001). To be honest, since it is almost impossible to teach unmotivated students, a classroom full of enthusiastic and motivated students is probably the dream of every teacher. As motivation can help the learning process to be continuous, it is crucial to increase

students' motivation. As a parallel statement, Dörnyei (2005) proposes that motivation is necessary for both starting and continuing the learning process. Hence, it can be argued that motivated students are willing to learn on their own.

What is more, it can be argued that motivation is a multidimensional concept as there can be many underlying aims of language learning. According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), motivation can be divided into two dimensions as *instrumental motivation* and *integrative motivation*. Instrumental motivation can be detailed as learning a language for getting a job or being successful academically. Hence, if there is a goal to be accomplished, this is instrumental motivation. Therefore, it can be said that instrumental motivation is about external factors instead of one's own opinions and feelings. On the other hand, integrative motivation is relevant to a desire of being a part of the target language's community and culture. In fact, it is possible to have either type of motivation. However, it would not be wrong to comment that students who have both types of motivation will probably be more successful in language learning.

In addition, there are several studies related to motivation in the field of second/foreign language learning. For instance, Dörnyei, Csizer, and Nemeth (2006) conducted a study on Hungarian young learners' motivation and attitudes towards five languages (English, German, French, Italian, and Russian). The study was carried out in the years 1993, 1999, and 2004 with more than 13.000 participants. At the end of the study, Dörnyei et al. (2006) stated that globalization had affected the status of the languages for 12 years, and the results were on the side of the English language due to the political and economic changes over the years. The findings of the study are notable since they emphasize the role of the English language as the international language of the 21st century. Additionally, it can also be deduced that social-economic changes might have an impact on attitude and motivation in the foreign language learning process.

In another study dealing with motivation and attitude towards English as a foreign language, Tahaineh and Daana (2013) studied with 184 female university students in Jordan. The results showed that students were motivated to learn English for pragmatic gains, and they held positive attitudes towards English. It was also found that students were interested in learning English. Hence, according to the findings of the study, it can be interpreted that instrumental reasons such as academic achievement might be the source of student motivation. Also, it can be concluded that motivation accompanies positive attitudes, and they pave the way for learning the target language.

Moreover, Anjomshoa and Sadighi (2015, p. 126) put forward that "a learner has to have extraordinary motivation in order to succeed at learning English" in order to highlight the importance of motivation, especially in foreign language learning context. Given that there is not enough input in foreign language learning contexts, learners need to be highly motivated to realize language learning. Hence, it can be argued that affective factors such as motivation and positive attitude facilitate language learning even in an environment where there is not adequate exposure to the target language. To give an example, as stated earlier, the English language is neither an official nor a second language in Turkey, and Turkish people have almost no chance of acquiring English. Thus, positive attitudes and high motivation are crucial factors for Turkish learners of English due to the lack of the environment for acquiring English.

Furthermore, Young (1994) found an association between negative attitudes and a lack of motivation. In line with this, to touch upon the topic of the current study, it is worth rewording that attitude and motivation are interrelated. Gardner (1985) deems positive attitudes towards language learning as complementary elements of motivation. As a parallel statement, according to Lightbown and Spada (2013), learners' positive attitudes towards target language speakers increase motivation. Hence, it can be argued that positive attitudes strengthen motivation. Accordingly, if students exhibit positive attitudes towards the English language, English culture, and the English-speaking community, they are likely to hold a high motivation to learn English, and thus the learning process will be facilitated by the students themselves. In harmony with these, it is noticeable that motivation is an output of positive attitudes. From this point of view, the focus of this study is to investigate secondary school students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English.

2.5. The Attitude Concept

There are various definitions of the attitude concept as it has been a research object in social psychology since the 1900s, and it is still a current research object in many fields such as education sciences, economy, and politics. Attitude is a mental, emotional, and behavioural response predisposition (İnceoğlu, 2010) and is a positive or negative reaction tendency (Tezbaşaran, 2008). According to Ülgen (1995), learning creates attitude, and attitude directs behaviour (as cited in Ardıç-Ekiz, 2012). As it is seen, there are several definitions of the attitude concept. In line with these definitions,

it can be said that attitude is an individual trait that is not innate but learned, and it is also an affective factor that has an impact on behaviour.

Related literature indicates that there are three components of the attitude concept, namely: *cognition*, *affect*, and *behaviour*. The first component, cognition builds one's thoughts or beliefs on something, someone, or a situation. For instance, whether a student believes doing homework is necessary or unnecessary belongs to the cognition component of attitude. The second component represents one's positive or negative emotions and evaluations. To set an example, whether a student likes doing homework creates the affect component. As the third of the components, behaviour is an observable component through one's verbal or physical actions. To wit, a student's act of doing homework or not is the behaviour component of attitude. Thus, in order for an attitude to be formed, it is the first condition for the individual to have knowledge. Accordingly, after having a piece of information, positive or negative evaluations and dispositions begin to develop. Hence, the third component of the attitude concept occurs as a result of the cognition and affect components. In parallel with this, İnceoğlu (2010) suggests that the consistent and harmonious relationship among this trio constitutes attitude. Moreover, Bandura (1986) points out that thoughts, beliefs, and emotions influence behaviour. To this respect, it can be said that behaviour is a reflection of attitude.

2.5.1. The Formation of Attitude

Considering the definitions of the attitude concept, it can be said that attitudes are the outcomes of experiences. To exemplify, students who do not like English may change their minds thanks to a qualified teacher. A student who thinks English is neither important nor necessary may think that English is quite important after participating in an international project. Such situations demonstrate that attitudes may form and change through experiences. However, it may be insufficient to mention mere experiences in the formation of attitudes as it is almost impossible for a person to experience everything. In sober fact, people are social beings and are inevitably influenced by the society they are in. Therefore, the existence of other factors playing a role in the formation of attitude aside from experiences cannot be denied.

First of all, parental influence can be shown as an important factor in the formation of children's attitudes. Gardner (1985) asserts that parents play a role in the

development of their children's attitudes. As a parallel statement, İnceoğlu (2010) states that people have been under the influence of their families since their birth. Especially young children take the example of their parents in every sense before school age (Anbarlı-Kırkız, 2010). According to Oskamp (1977, as cited in Keskin, 2019), given that children do not experience everything alone, parents influence their children's attitudes towards unfamiliar people and countries. In this case, it can be argued that parents' attitudes and behaviour inevitably influence their children's attitudes as parents are the first role models of their children. Plus, the home is a learning environment where children's education begins. Therefore, parents' views on a topic or a society are crucial for their children's attitudes towards the topic or the society in their future life. For example, if parents think that reading is important and they read at home, their children will probably have both positive attitudes towards reading and a habit of reading. In relation to this, related literature indicates that the involvement of parents in their children's educational process contributes to the development of positive attitudes. For instance, MacNamara (1973, as cited in Ardıç-Ekiz, 2012) revealed a positive correlation between parental attitudes and student attitudes. Therefore, as well as almost everything else, children's understanding of the importance of education and language learning can be shaped through their parents' attitudes. In a similar vein, Gardner (1968) highlights that parents' attitudes towards the target language's society have an impact on their children's attitudes. Moreover, Çakıcı (2007) states that "attitudes towards a language develop beginning from childhood. In other words, attitudes are held at home by parents, later they are shaped by peers and by some other variables" (p. 23). Hence, it can be argued that children's attitudes towards language learning begin to develop at an early age, and their attitudes are most probably under the influence of their parents. Additionally, according to the results of her study, Young (1994) concluded that parents' negative attitudes towards foreign language learning had a negative impact on their children's foreign language learning motivation.

What is more, individuals' attitudes can be shaped not only through their parents but also other people around them as well as mass media. To be more specific, children are most likely to be influenced by their friends, television, or social media after their families. School is another important determinant that plays a role in the formation and changing of attitudes over time. For example, even if students hold negative attitudes towards the target language, it may be possible to influence their attitudes positively. It can be said that teachers have the potential of influencing their students' attitudes and

motivation levels (Çakıcı, 2007). Therefore, in order to increase the quality of education, teachers need to have awareness about their students' attitudes towards their lessons. Moreover, teachers and parents should cooperate for the sake of their students' education and seek help from each other in improving positive attitudes and motivation.

In addition, examination and measurement of the attitude concept have been a research object for a long while. To clarify, attitudes can be measured indirectly through behaviour. For example, attitudes towards English can arise with the behaviour of practicing English out of the classroom. As a matter of fact, different measurement methods and tools, such as observations, interviews, and scales, can be applied to measure attitudes. From among these tools, the objective of attitude scales can be defined as determining individuals' dispositions towards an idea or an object. In addition, like other scales, attitude scales must provide continuity, unidimensionality, and linearity to be valid. In the relevant context, there are the three most common attitude scales: Thurstone, Likert, and Guttman. Among these, the Likert scale is the most common (Aydoslu, 2005). In this study, a Likert-type attitude scale is utilized in order to investigate secondary school students' attitudes towards English and English learning.

2.5.2. Positive and Negative Attitude

It has been stated in the second/foreign language learning field that attitude can be classified as positive or negative (Youssef, 2012). As related research indicates, it is evident that both positive and negative attitudes play a critical role in the language learning process. Gardner (1985) states that learners' positive attitudes towards the target language community and target language learning associate with language achievement. Thus, the language learning processes of students who have positive attitudes towards target language speakers and target language learning improve thanks to their positive attitudes. Moreover, such students try to develop their language skills voluntarily and are acquainted with the target culture. Hence, it can be said that when students are aware of the importance of English and want to study in an English-speaking country, they will probably look for an opportunity to learn English. To put it differently, if language learning was a journey, positive attitudes would be the compass.

On the other hand, negative attitudes can lead to a loss of motivation. Storm (2007) argues that "negative attitudes towards language learning can weaken learners'

motivation and hinder learning, whereas positive attitudes can do the opposite" (p. 10). That is, since positive attitudes can increase motivation and negative attitudes can decrease motivation, attitudes are critical factors in the process of learning a second/foreign language.

As a result, positive attitudes and motivation are a whole, and they are crucial in the second/foreign language learning process. Therefore, language teachers should distinguish whether their students' attitudes are positive or negative since awareness of teachers about their students' attitudes can help them use more useful strategies in the language teaching process (Chung, 2006).

2.5.3. Attitude and Language Learning

As is aforementioned, there are several determinants in the second/foreign language learning process, and several researchers have demonstrated that language learning is under the influence of both cognitive and affective factors. Hence, investigation of the affective factors is important in order to improve the process. In particular, attitudinal variables are seen as important affective factors in second/foreign language learning. To set an example, Krashen (1982) considers attitudes as agents with the power of both facilitating and complicating in the second language acquisition process. In other words, as attitude and motivation are interrelated, positive attitudes can support the language learning process while negative attitudes can undermine it. Besides, at the end of her study, Hancı-Yanar (2008) concluded that students' self-efficacy perceptions and positive attitudes are parallel to each other. Therefore, it can be argued that students with positive attitudes are also able to control their own learning processes. From this point of view, it is important to take into account students' attitudes towards the target language to achieve educational goals.

Furthermore, language attitudes may be related not only to that language but also to the society and culture to which it belongs. To be more specific, in the scope of language learning, Gardner (1985) classifies attitudes into three components: *private and general*, *educational*, and *social*. According to the first component, attitudes towards a foreign language refer to private attitudes while attitudes towards all foreign languages refer to general attitudes. The second component is educational attitudes, which include educational factors such as target language, teacher, and classroom environment. The third and last component signifies social attitudes in the relationship

between the target language and the culture it belongs to. Furthermore, Gardner points out that attitudes towards both the target language community and target language learning have an impact on language success; nevertheless, he signifies that the latter is more dominant. As a matter of fact, language and culture are interwoven. Therefore, meeting the culture of a society may mean learning the language of that society. In other words, the attitudes of an individual towards the target language-speaking community may impact language learning achievement. For example, a person who is curious about the disciplined and conscious lifestyles of the Japanese probably wants to learn more about their culture and Japanese.

Moreover, the attitude concept has been examined many times in the second/foreign language learning field from different perspectives. For example, several studies have been carried out to examine the relationship between attitude and academic achievement (Anbarlı-Kırkız, 2010; Fırat, 2009; Genç & Kaya, 2011; House & Prison, 1998; İnal, Evin, Saracaloğlu, 2005; Kazazoğlu, 2013; Selçuk, 1997; Shah, 1999; Ushida, 2003). In addition, several studies have been conducted to investigate the relationship between attitude and various variables such as gender (Ardıç-Ekiz, 2012; Chung, 2006; Çakıcı, 2007; Çelik, 2015; Geddes, 2016; Genç & Kaya, 2011; Ghazvini and Khajehpour, 2011; Gökyer & Bakcak, 2014; Gömleksiz, 2010; Karahan, 2007; Kavgacı; 2017; Kaya, 2019; Kazazoğlu, 2013; Kızıltan & Atlı, 2013; Memduhoğlu & Kozikoğlu, 2015; Selçuk, 1997; Tok, 2010; Yılmaz, 2010), grade level (Anbarlı-Kırkız, 2010; Çelik, 2015; Gümüş, 2018; Kavgacı, 2017; Kaya, 2019), and so on.

Altogether, it is obvious that attitudes are influential and crucial factors in second/foreign language learning along with other cognitive and affective factors. Students' attitudes towards the target language are important because emotions, thoughts, and behaviour are capable of both increasing and decreasing enthusiasm, motivation, and willingness to communicate. In other words, the language learning process can get easier or harder depending on students' attitudes to some extent.

2.6. Review of Related Research in Global Context

In the existing literature, there has been a variety of research dealing with the relationship between the attitude concept and second/foreign language learning. To set an example, Gardner and Lambert (1959) revealed that motivation and attitudes are crucial factors in the second language acquisition process. Following Gardner and

Lambert, the attitude concept has been investigated in relation to second/foreign language learning.

There have been many studies aiming to describe students' attitudes towards English. For example, Geddes (2016) carried out a study in South Korea in order to examine 52 university students' attitudes towards learning English through a Likert type attitude scale. The results of the study showed that students' attitudes towards English were generally positive. It was also stated that students were not worried about studying for English exams. In a previous study, Alkaff (2013) found that students who had positive attitudes towards English were also motivated to learn English. It was concluded that students were looking for opportunities to improve their English. The findings of these studies are important since they suggest a relationship between positive attitude and motivation concepts.

What is more, there are also studies that have been carried out to investigate the relationship between language attitudes and academic achievement. For instance, House and Prison (1998, as cited in Ardıç-Ekiz, 2012) carried out a study in America with 257 freshmen university students. The results revealed a positive correlation between the attitudes of students towards English and their academic achievements. Besides, Shah (1999, as cited in Noursi, 2013) conducted a study in Malaysia and concluded that negative attitudes towards English led to failure. Likewise, Ushida (2003) found a positive correlation between students' positive attitudes, motivation, and academic achievement. These findings are important as they indicate that positive attitudes promote language learning.

Furthermore, several studies have been conducted to investigate the relationship between various variables and language attitudes. To set an example, Chung (2006) conducted a research in Taiwan with 838 participants to investigate high school senior students' attitudes and perceptions of learning English. Research findings showed that gender was one of the influential variables on students' attitudes towards English. In parallel with Chung's study, Ghazvini and Khajehpour (2011) carried out a study with 123 Iranian high school students to investigate their motivation and attitudes towards English. According to the results, gender was found in relation to students' attitudes and motivation as the findings revealed that female students were more motivated and had more positive attitudes towards English. Moreover, Geddes (2016) found that gender was one of the independent variables that influence university students' attitudes towards studying English. Additionally, in a study conducted in China, Yu (2010)

revealed a positive correlation between students' attitudes and the length of the English education process.

To sum up, a large number of studies have been conducted on the concept of attitude since attitudes are accepted as one of the affective factors in the second/foreign language learning process. It is important to note that most relevant studies showed a positive correlation between attitudes and language success. Hence, researching attitudes is valuable in order to understand the flow of the language learning process. Especially in an environment where learners are prejudiced against learning English, investigating their attitudes can provide different perspectives for teachers.

2.7. Review of Related Research in Turkish Context

Parallel to the global context, the attitude concept has been a research topic for the second/foreign language teaching field in the context of Turkey, as well. In the related literature, there are studies conducted to examine the relationship between attitudes and academic achievement. For example, Selçuk (1997) conducted a study in Bolu province and aimed to investigate the relationship between the attitudes of 195 university students towards English lessons and their academic achievements. The findings of the study showed a positive correlation between students' attitudes and their academic achievements. In a similar vein, İnal, Evin, and Saracaloğlu (2005) carried out a study in Kahramanmaraş province in order to investigate the relationship between students' attitudes towards foreign language learning and foreign language achievement. A total of 421 high school senior students participated in the study. The results of the study indicated a strong relationship between attitudes towards foreign language learning and foreign language achievement. In other words, it was found that positive attitudes increased academic achievement. In parallel with these studies, Anbarlı-Kırkız (2010) conducted a study to examine the relationship between eighth and 11th grade students' attitudes towards English and their academic achievements. The study was conducted in İzmir province with 804 participants chosen from two secondary schools and three high schools. The findings of the study demonstrated a positive relationship at a modest level between students' attitudes and their academic achievements. Moreover, Genç and Kaya (2011) carried out a study with the participation of 145 university students. The results of the study revealed that students' positive attitudes increased their academic achievements. In another study dealing with

language attitudes and academic achievement, Kazazoğlu (2013) investigated the impact of students' attitudes towards Turkish and English lessons on their academic achievements. The study was conducted in Ankara province with 844 participants consisting of eighth and ninth grade students. According to the results, there was a relationship between attitudes towards English lessons and academic achievement. However, the results of the study indicated that there was not a correlation between attitudes towards Turkish lessons and academic achievement. Hence, this finding emphasized the importance of the attitude concept in the second/foreign language learning rather than in the mother tongue learning.

On the other hand, there are also studies that found contrary results from the studies mentioned in the previous paragraph. For instance, Fırat (2009) conducted a study in Adıyaman province and tried to investigate fifth grade students' attitudes towards learning English using a Likert scale. The study was carried out with a total of 300 participants from four different schools. According to the findings of the study, students' attitudes were found to be positive; however, no significant correlation was found between students' attitudes and their academic achievements.

Moreover, the attitude concept has been examined in terms of various independent variables such as gender in the Turkish context as in the global context. It can be said that most studies found a relationship between gender and student attitudes; yet, it cannot be argued that all the results are in favour of women or men. On the one hand, several studies found that female students held more positive attitudes towards English than male students (Ardıç-Ekiz, 2012; Çelik, 2015; Gömleksiz, 2010; Karahan, 2007; Kaya, 2019; Selçuk, 1997; Tok, 2010; Yılmaz, 2010). On the other hand, there are also studies revealing that male students had more positive attitudes towards English than female students (Genç & Kaya, 2011; Gökyer & Bakcak, 2014; Kazazoğlu, 2013). Nevertheless, there are also studies that did not find a relationship between the gender variable and attitude (Çakıcı, 2007; Kavgacı, 2017; Kızıltan & Atlı, 2013; Memduhoğlu & Kozikoğlu, 2015).

Furthermore, students' attitudes towards English have also been investigated in terms of grade level, the economic situation of the family, the educational background of parents, taking pre-university English courses, and studying abroad via the Erasmus programme. To set an example, in her study, Anbarlı-Kırkız (2010) concluded that 11th graders' attitudes towards English were less positive than eighth graders' attitudes. Similarly, Çelik (2015) conducted a study with 290 third grade students and 395 fifth

grade students from eight different public schools in Mersin province. The central goal of her study was to compare the attitudes of students who started to learn English in the second grade and with those who started to learn English in the fourth grade. The results showed that students who started to learn English in the second grade exhibited more positive attitudes towards English and English learning than those who started to learn English in the fourth grade. In parallel, Gümüş (2018) found that fifth and sixth grade students had more positive attitudes towards English than seventh and eighth grade students. Likewise, Kaya (2019) concluded that fifth graders' attitudes towards English were more positive than sixth, seventh, and eighth graders' attitudes. In a similar vein, Ardıç-Ekiz (2012) found that fourth and fifth graders' attitudes towards English lesson were more favourable than the attitudes of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. However, unlike these studies, Kavgacı (2017) conducted a study in order to analyse university students' attitudes towards English, and she did not find a correlation between grade level and students' attitudes.

What is more, Tok (2010) conducted a study with 300 university students in Van, aiming to examine their attitudes towards English in terms of different variables. As a result of the study, it was concluded that students from good economic conditions had more positive attitudes towards English. In another study, Ardıç-Ekiz (2012) examined 489 primary and secondary school students' attitudes towards English lesson. The study took place in Kırşehir province with the participation of fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. The findings of the study revealed a correlation between the attitudes of students and the income level of their families. In addition, the findings of the study showed a correlation between the attitudes of students and the education level of their parents.

More recently, Saka (2018) conducted a study with 226 first year students to analyse their attitudes towards English according to various variables. The data were obtained via a Likert scale, and the results showed that the educational status of students' parents had an impact on students' attitudes towards English. Similarly, Keskin (2019) conducted a study to investigate the parental influence on young learners' motivation and attitudes towards English as a second language at a private primary school in Bursa province with the participation of 72 students. According to the results of the study, a positive relationship was found between the parental influence and students' motivation and attitudes towards English. The results also revealed that English-speaking parents were considered as an advantage. In parallel with these

studies, Kaya (2019) conducted a study in İstanbul province and aimed to analyse the attitudes of 461 primary and secondary school students towards English in terms of different variables. The results of the study showed that students whose parents were university graduates and students without siblings had more positive attitudes towards English. Besides, Yılmaz (2010) examined seventh grade students' attitudes towards English in terms of various variables. The participants were chosen from two public and two private secondary schools in Manisa province. According to the findings of the study, the education level of mother was found to be an influential variable; however, the education level of father was not found to be influential on students' attitudes towards English. According to the further findings of the study, no correlation was found between students' attitudes and their families' economic situation.

Furthermore, Gökyer and Bakcak (2014) investigated university students' attitudes towards English lessons in Bingöl province. A total of 239 students who were taught English as compulsory participated in the study. The results showed that according to the variable of taking pre-university English courses, students taking English courses before university had more positive attitudes towards English lessons. This can be evaluated as an expected result since the prejudices and negative attitudes of students who had taken pre-university English courses might have changed as they learned English.

Additionally, Yardımcı (2014) carried out a study to examine the influence of the Erasmus programme on the exchange students' attitudes towards English. The research was carried out with the participation of 65 university students before and after attending the Erasmus programme. The results showed that the Erasmus programme influenced the attitudes of the students towards English in a positive way. That is to say, the opinions, beliefs, and dispositions of the students who studied in different European countries for a period and gained experience in using English as an international language changed positively.

As a consequence, it would be appropriate to put forward that learning a second/foreign language depends both on internal and external determinants. In other words, it is important to point out that the second/foreign language learning process cannot be addressed from a single dimension. In fact, the process may be under the influence of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. For example, language learning aptitude and practice are important. On the other hand, the learning environment and students' individual differences are also important. Furthermore, since having positive attitudes

increases motivation, the process is positively influenced, or the situation may develop in the opposite direction. What all the studies mentioned so far have in common is that they indicate that attitudes have an important place in the field of second/foreign language learning. That is to say, the review of the literature so far has indicated the significance of attitudes in second/foreign language learning, whether it is positive or negative. In other respects, most students today want to be a part of the globalized world and succeed academically. Therefore, the attitude concept comes to the fore as it can influence academic success. Moreover, it can be argued that several independent variables, such as gender, age, the role of parents, and the like, might be related to attitudes, and there have been various conclusions regarding the relationship between these variables and attitudes. For example, in the context of second/foreign language learning, there is no consensus on the relationship between gender and attitude. Hence, such different results of the above-mentioned studies have raised several questions for the current study, and variables such as gender, parents' education level, and parents' employment status are also the subjects of this study. In addition, it is concluded that the number of studies investigating whether weekly English lesson hours have an impact on language attitudes is low. Hence, this study aims to analyse students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English within the scope of a secondary school and then to investigate the relationship between their attitudes and weekly English lesson hours. In the next section, the methodology of the current study is presented.

CHAPTER III

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter submits the information about the method of the study. In the chapter, the current study's research design, context, participants, instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, and finally ethical considerations are presented in detail.

3.2. Research Design

The present study sought to describe secondary school students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English in the Turkish secondary school context. This study further aimed to analyse students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English in terms of gender, employment status of parents, education level of parents, weekly English lesson hours, and grade level.

In order to accomplish the objectives of the present study, quantitative survey research was administered as it is suitable for gathering information about human attitudes and behaviour (Apuke, 2017). This study employed a quantitative research design, and it included the analysis of numerical data using statistical methods. According to Maxwell (2010), quantitative research consisting of numbers is advantageous due to the fact that it ensures valid data. In sum, under the umbrella of descriptive research, this study was designed as a survey-based study employing a quantitative research design.

3.3. Context of the study

In Turkey, there is a 4+4+4 system which means primary, secondary, and high school education continues for four years each. Hence, secondary school education starts in grade five. This study was conducted in a public imam hatip secondary school in the Ergani district of Diyarbakır, Turkey during the second semester of the 2019-2020 academic year. Diyarbakır is a big province in Turkey, which is located in the south-east of the country.

Imam hatip secondary schools are official public schools that provide religious and moral education in addition to the regular secondary school curriculum. All the grade levels have two hours of Arabic lessons per week since lessons with religious and moral content are taught. Hence, there are two foreign languages taught in imam hatip secondary schools. In addition, while the weekly lesson hours in imam hatip secondary schools are 36, the weekly lesson hours in regular secondary schools are 35.

Furthermore, in this secondary school where the present study was conducted, there were also English intensive classes. It was stated by the school principal that the general purpose of this class type was to raise individuals who could communicate effectively in English, and students with a high grade-point average were selected for the English intensive classes. In the school, the regular fifth and sixth grades had three hours of English lessons and seventh and eighth grades had four hours of English lessons while all the English intensive classes had nine hours of English lessons per week. Besides, the English teachers of the school stated that in addition to the textbooks, supplementary practice books rich in content were used within the curriculum of the English intensive classes. Also, the teachers added that students of the English intensive classes were more successful in English as they had the opportunity to study more on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

3.4. Participants

The present study aimed to investigate the attitudes of secondary school students towards English and towards learning English. This study also tried to analyse whether students' demographic variables influence students' attitudes or not. In parallel with the aims of the current study, a public imam hatip secondary school was chosen to conduct the study as there were also English intensive classes. The aim of selecting these participants was that they were suitable for the purposes of this study. Hence, the participants within the current study were selected through a purposive sampling method. Also, since the researcher also worked in the same area, it became practical to reach and gather the required data.

In total, there were 603 secondary school students in the school; however, as eighth graders were concentrated on the high school entrance exam, they were not included in this study. Therefore, the scope of this research was limited to fifth, sixth, and seventh grades. In detail, there were five classes in each of the fifth, sixth, and

seventh grades of the school. There was also one English intensive class at each grade level. In total, there were three English intensive classes within the scope of this study. Thus, this study consisted of data from 15 secondary school classes. Nevertheless, there were 54 students who were absent on the day the study was conducted. Therefore, 121 fifth grade students, 119 sixth grade students, and 113 seventh grade students participated in the study. In a word, the study was carried out with the participation of 353 students. Also, the participants involved in the study ranged between 11 and 14 years of age.

3.5. Instruments

In order to gather data, a demographic information form and the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale (Çelik, 2015) were employed as instruments. The demographic information form was prepared by the researcher and was used to gather necessary information about the demographic characteristics of the students such as gender, class, grade level, the education level and employment status of parents. The Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale was adopted to collect data about the attitudes of the students towards English and towards learning English. Permission was obtained beforehand in order to use/adapt the scale and added to the appendices section. In her study, Çelik (2015) presented the scale in two languages, those being English and Turkish. In the current study, the Turkish version was administered to help the students understand the scale clearly. Also, some words in both versions of the scale were altered. For example, in the English version of the scale, the verb "to love" in items 2, 4, 5, 6, 10, and 11 was changed to "to like." Also, in the Turkish version of the scale, the option "çok az" in items 13, 16, 17, 18, and 19 was changed to "hiç."

The Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale contains 19 items prepared in a five-point Likert type and one open-ended question as the last item. Each item is scored by giving five scores for the most positive answer and one point for the most negative answer. The scale was designed to consist of two attitude domains as *attitudes towards English* and *attitudes towards learning English*. Accordingly, items 1, 2, 3, 12, and 14 included in the scale were designed to measure attitudes towards English while items 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 were designed to measure attitudes towards learning English. Also, the 20th item of the scale was designed as an open-ended question asking for favourite activities of students in English lessons.

An important indicator of the reliability of a scale prepared in the Likert type is the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which is also a measure of internal consistency. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient can be evaluated as follows according to a criterion that is widely accepted in the literature (Kartal & Bardakçı, 2019, p. 88):

If $0.00 \leq \alpha < 0.40$, the scale is unreliable.
If $0.40 \leq \alpha < 0.60$, the scale has low reliability.
If $0.60 \leq \alpha < 0.80$, the scale is fairly reliable.
If $0.80 \leq \alpha < 1.00$, the scale is highly reliable.

Table 1 below reveals Cronbach's Alpha coefficient values of the attitude scale and its sub-dimensions used for the collection of the data in the present study.

Table 1.
Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Values of the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale and Its Sub-Dimensions

	Cronbach's Alpha	**N of Items**
Attitudes towards English	.82	5
Attitudes towards learning English	.90	14
Total	.93	19

As can be seen in Table 1, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients calculated for the entire Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale and its sub-dimensions are values greater than 0.80. According to these values, it can be said that the data obtained from the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale and its sub-dimensions have a high degree of internal consistency and therefore reliability (Table 1).

3.6. Data Collection Procedures

As explained in the previous section, the current study took place in the second semester of the 2019-2020 academic year. First of all, ethics committee approval was obtained from Çağ University, and the scale was determined as suitable for secondary school students. Then, the researcher received the permission of Diyarbakır

Governorship, Diyarbakır Provincial Directorate of National Education, and the school management to be able to conduct the study. The instruments were applied to the students in early February 2020, and the study lasted until mid of March 2020. The researcher was present during the data collection procedure, and she explained the aims of this study to the students and teachers of the school. The students were informed about the aims of the study, and it was stated that participation in the study was based on voluntariness. Moreover, it was specified by the researcher that the names of the participants would be kept anonymous, and the information would only be used for the study. Also, the data collection tools were distributed in Turkish to facilitate understanding and thus ensure reliability. In order to gather the necessary data, both the demographic information form and the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale were distributed to the participants at the same time. Then, the students were informed to read the questions carefully and choose the most suitable option. It took approximately 15 minutes of the students to fulfil the demographic information form and the attitude scale.

3.7. Data Analysis Procedures

After gathering the required data, SPSS was utilized in the implementation of the statistical methods used in the analyses. First of all, the frequency distributions of the students' demographic variables were analysed. Then, the frequency distributions of the answers given by the students to the attitude scale were analysed. The answers given by the students to each item in the attitude scale were scored by giving five points to the most positive option and one point to the most negative option. By taking the average of the answers given by the students to the items numbered 1, 2, 3, 12, and 14, the average attitude scores of the students towards English were calculated. Furthermore, the average attitude scores of the students towards learning English were calculated by averaging their answers to the remaining 14 items.

Secondly, the standard z scores of the mean scores obtained from the sub-dimensions of the attitude scale were calculated, and 12 survey data that were out of the ± three range and containing extreme values were excluded from the study. As a result, 341 survey data were included in the rest of the analyses. Next, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test was administered in order to determine whether the data distributed normally or not. As the related literature indicates, the normality test is

crucial because the tests to be used differ depending on whether the data show normal distribution or not. According to the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the average attitude scores did not show a normal distribution. On the other hand, considering the skewness and kurtosis values, it was accepted that they showed a normal distribution, and parametric statistical techniques were decided to be used to describe the attitudes of students according to their demographic variables.

Furthermore, when comparing students' attitude scores in terms of various variables, the number of categories of the variables was taken into consideration. Accordingly, independent samples t-test was used for independent groups for the variables of two categories, and ANOVA was used for the variables of three or more categories. Then, the attitudes of the students towards English and towards learning English were analysed in accordance with their gender, weekly English lesson hours, and employment status of parents via t-test. After that, ANOVA was used to analyse students' attitudes in terms of grade level. According to Karagöz (2016), ANOVA is used to determine whether the average of more than two parametric main mass is equal. Hence, as a result of the ANOVA test, multiple comparison (Post-Hoc) tests were applied to determine the difference between which groups give rise to the possible disparity. In determining the multiple comparison test to be used, the homogeneity test of Levene variances was taken into consideration. As a result of this test, if group variances were homogeneous, Tukey Post-Hoc test was used. However, if group variances were not homogeneous, Tamhane's T2 Post-Hoc test was used. In line with these, after applying the ANOVA test for analysing students' attitudes in terms of grade level, Tukey Post-Hoc test was used. Afterwards, attitudes of the students towards English and towards learning English were also analysed according to their parents' level of education through the ANOVA test. As a result of the ANOVA test, Tamhane's T2 multiple comparison test was applied.

Finally, in the last item of the scale, the students were asked which three activities they liked the most in their English lessons. Since the item is an open-ended question, it requires qualitative analysis rather than quantitative analysis. Therefore, this was the only item subject to content analysis in the scope of the current study. On the other hand, some of the participants left the question unanswered, and some of the answers were illegible. There were also answers that could not be considered as an activity like "listening to the teacher." Hence, the researcher removed several

expressions. Then, the remaining answers were analysed by means of the thematic coding method and divided into specific categories.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

It is a matter of course that we respect the privacy of each participant in the study. We acknowledge the fact that we deal with human beings and do not treat them as subjects. While we carry out our study, we aim to work in cooperation and collaboration, and we appreciate the importance of rapport. As we work with secondary school students, we attach importance to their parents' permission and support. Therefore, the consent of relevant parties was obtained in advance.

CHAPTER IV

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the findings of the study. To address the aims of the study, the data were gathered via the demographic information form (see Appendix 4) and the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale developed by Çelik (2015) (see Appendix 5) with the participation of 353 secondary school students. Then, the data were analysed using SPSS programme. Finally, as the last item (Item 20) of the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale is an open-ended question, it was analysed qualitatively.

4.2. Findings Regarding Students' Demographic Variables

The demographic variables, which were included in this study in order to determine the distribution of the students according to their demographic characteristics with the thought that they might have influenced their attitudes towards English and towards learning English, together with frequency and percentage values obtained from the participant group related to these variables are given in the tables below.

Table 2.

Gender of the Students

Gender	**Frq.**	**%**
Female	196	55.5
Male	157	44.5
Total	353	100

According to the findings in Table 2, it can be seen that there were 196 female (55.5%) students and 157 male (44.5%) students participating in the study. Thus, there was a small difference between the number of participants in the study, and the difference (10%) was on the female students' side.

Table 3.

Grade Level of the Students

Grade Level	Frq.	%
5th	121	34.3
6th	119	33.7
7th	113	32
Total	353	100

The findings presented in Table 3 show that a total of 353 secondary school students participated in this study. As for grade level, 121 (34.3%) of them were fifth graders, 119 (33.7%) of them were sixth graders, and 113 (32%) of them were seventh graders. Hence, it can be said that there was almost a balanced distribution in terms of students' grade levels.

Table 4.

Status of the Class

Class Type	Frq.	%
English Intensive	62	17.6
Regular	291	82.4
Total	353	100

Table 4 indicates that while there were 62 (17.6%) students in English language intensive classes, the number of those who were in regular classes was 291 (82.4%). Hence, it is clear that the students studying in English intensive classes were a minority compared to the students studying in regular classes.

Table 5.

Is Your Mother/Father Alive?

Is Mother Alive?	**Frq.**	**%**
Yes	353	100
No	0	0
Total	353	100
Is Father Alive?	**Frq.**	**%**
Yes	348	98.6
No	5	1.4
Total	353	100

According to Table 5, it can be seen that the number of students whose mothers were alive is 353 (100%). On the other hand, the number of students whose fathers were alive is 348 (98.6%).

Table 6.

Education Level of Mother

Education Level of Mother	**Frq.**	**%**
Primary School	232	65.7
Secondary School	88	24.9
High School	24	6.8
University	9	2.5
Postgraduate	0	0
Total	353	100

In consideration of the data revealed in Table 6, it is understood that *primary school* was the most selected option (65.7%). In other words, mothers of the students were mostly primary school graduates. It was followed by *secondary school* (24.9%) and *high school* (6.8%) options. Lastly, *university* was the least selected option (2.5%) while *postgraduate* was never chosen.

Table 7.

Education Level of Father

Education Level of Father	**Frq.**	**%**
Primary School	99	28
Secondary School	127	36
High School	80	22.7
University	41	11.6
Postgraduate	6	1.7
Total	353	100

Findings revealed in Table 7 show that *secondary school* (36%) was the most selected option. So, it can be understood that most of the students' fathers were secondary school graduates. It was followed by *primary school* (28%) and then *high school* (22.7%) options. Additionally, it is seen from the findings in Table 7 that 11.6% of the students referred to the *university* option while 1.7% of them chose the *postgraduate* option.

Table 8.

Parents' Employment Status

Does your mother work?	**Frq.**	**%**
Yes	14	4
No	339	96
Total	353	100
Does your father work?	**Frq.**	**%**
Yes	239	67.7
No	114	32.3
Total	353	100

From the findings in Table 8, it can be seen that the answers of the students accumulated in the option *no* in relation to the employment status of their mothers (96%). Therefore, it can be concluded that most mothers were not employed. Furthermore, it can also be seen that most fathers were employed when considering the option *yes* (67.7%).

4.3. Findings from the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale

In this section, the findings regarding the frequency distribution of the answers given by the students to the items in the sub-dimensions of the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale are presented. These findings are given in Table 9 and Table 10.

Table 9.

Students' Responses to Attitude Expressions About English

	Items	Answers (%)				
1	What do you feel about learning English?	66 very good	25.2 good	4 no idea	2.5 bad	2.3 very bad
2	How much do you like English?	62.6 like very much	24.9 like	2.5 no idea	6.2 like a little	3.7 don't like
3	How difficult do you think English is?	30.8 very easy	46.4 easy	8.3 no idea	10 difficult	4.6 very difficult
12	How good are you at English?	44.1 very good	41.2 good	7.8 no idea	4.3 bad	2.6 very bad
14	How difficult do you think learning English is?	33.4 very easy	35.2 easy	7.6 no idea	18.3 difficult	5.5 very difficult

According to the findings in Table 9, items 1 and 2 come to the fore as the items with the highest level of participation. According to these items, it can be said that the number of students who had negative attitudes towards English was quite low. Hence, it can be inferred that a great majority of the students had positive attitudes towards English. On the other hand, the items with the lowest level of positive participation are items 3 and 14, respectively. Therefore, it can also be concluded that a total of 38.4% of the students agreed on the difficulty of English. Also, as item 14 indicates, 18.3% of the students agreed on the difficulty of learning English, which is another noticeable finding. Nevertheless, according to Table 9, the rate of positive participation of the students to the items asking their attitudes towards English is more predominant. For instance, 44.1% of the students stated that they were *very good* at English, and 41.2% of the students stated that they were *good* at English as indicated in item 12. Hence, it can be understood that most of the students felt confident about English. In conclusion, when all these findings are taken together, it can be said that the students' attitudes towards English were at a high level, but there were also students who thought that learning English was not easy.

Table 10.

Students' Responses to Attitude Expressions About Learning English

	Items	Answers (%)				
4	How much do you like learning new words?	64.5 like very much	21.3 like	4 no idea	6.5 like a little	3.7 don't like
5	How much do you like speaking English?	51.1 like very much	26.1 like	9.1 no idea	6.3 like a little	7.4 don't like
6	How much do you like listening to English?	56.1 like very much	27.9 like	4.6 no idea	7.4 like a little	4 don't like
7	What do you feel about singing in English?	47.9 very good	30.7 good	9.5 no idea	8.3 bad	3.7 very bad
8	What do you feel about the games you play in English?	70.5 very good	19.5 good	6.3 no idea	2.6 bad	1.1 very bad
9	What do you feel about doing English homework?	54.3 very good	31.9 no idea	5.5 no idea	3.4 bad	4.9 very bad
10	How much do you like reading in English?	45.5 like very much	35.2 like	6.9 no idea	3.7 like a little	8.6 don't like
11	How much do you like writing in English?	53.4 like very much	29.6 like	5.5 no idea	4.3 like a little	7.2 don't like
13	How much do you wonder about the new English words?	64.9 a lot	25 to some extent	3.2 no idea	4.6 a little	2.3 not at all
15	How enjoyable do you think English lessons are?	70.1 a lot	21.2 to some extent	3.2 no idea	2.9 a little	2.6 not at all
16	How necessary do you think learning English is?	75.1 a lot	15.5 to some extent	4.1 no idea	3.8 a little	1.5 not at all
17	How fun do you find the activities in the English textbook?	55.5 a lot	30.8 to some extent	3.2 no idea	5.8 a little	4.7 not at all
18	How attractive do you think the topics in English textbook are?	51.7 a lot	34.7 to some extent	4.8 no idea	6 a little	2.8 not at all
19	How comfortable do you feel while learning English in class?	61.4 a lot	26.6 to some extent	4.3 no idea	2.6 a little	5.1 not at all

Considering the findings in Table 10, item 16 comes to the forefront as the item with which the students participated at the highest level. Accordingly, the students highly agreed that learning English is necessary *a lot* (75.1%). After item 16, the following items are 8 and 15. In item 8, it is clear that the students felt *very good* (70.5) about the games they played in English lessons. Thus, it can be said that the students had a high level of positive attitudes towards playing games in English lessons. Also, according to item 15, the students thought that English lessons were enjoyable *a lot* (70.1%). Considering the expressions in items 8 and 15, it can be deduced that most of the students were fond of the fun side of English. Plus, item 13 indicates that the students were curious about learning new words in English *a lot* (64.9%). Likewise, item 4 shows that 64.5% of the students like learning new English words very much. Hence, it can be concluded that a great majority of the students had positive attitudes towards learning English. Next, item 19 reveals that 61.4% of the students felt very comfortable while learning English. To put it differently, it is obvious that most of the students had self-confidence in learning English. According to another finding presented in Table 10, it is clear that listening to English was one of the most favourite skills among the students.

Additionally, item 17 suggests that 55.5% of the students were satisfied with the activities in their English textbook. Also, item 18 shows that majority of the students thought that the topics in the English textbook were attractive *a lot* (51.7%). According to another finding displayed in item 9, more than half of the participants felt *very good* (54.3%) about doing English homework. In addition, item 5 shows that the students liked very much to speak English with the participation rate of 51.1%. Then, speaking skills were another of the most popular skills for the students. To be more specific, according to the responses of the students presented in Table 10, the four primary language skills could be put in order in accordance to their popularity as follows: listening, writing, speaking, and reading. Besides, according to item 7, 47.9% of the students liked singing in English very much. Hence, it can be said that singing was a favourite classroom activity of the students, and this finding is in line with the findings related to items 8 and 15.

Furthermore, according to the findings in Table 9, the item with the highest level of negative participation is item 10. To clarify, students showed the least participation in the statement that they liked very much to read in English. However, even though item 10 was the least preferred in terms of positivity, it can be understood that most of

the students had a positive attitude towards reading in English according to the rates. Additionally, this item is followed by item number 11 in relation to the highest level of negative participation. Thus, it can be said that the attitudes of the students towards writing were similar to their attitudes towards reading.

4.4. Findings Regarding Normality Test of Data

After the frequency analyses above, standard z scores of the mean scores obtained from the sub-dimensions of the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale were calculated. As a result, 12 survey data containing extreme values were excluded from the study. Therefore, the analyses continued with the remaining 341 survey data. Then, whether the attitude scores in question show a normal distribution or not was examined by using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test and taking the skewness-kurtosis values into account. The findings are as in Table 10 and Table 11.

Table 11.

Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test Results Regarding the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale Sub-Dimensions

Attitude Domain	Test Statistic	df	Sig.
Attitudes towards English	.14	341	.001
Attitudes towards learning English	.16	341	.001

Table 12.

Descriptive Statistics for the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale Sub-dimensions

Attitude Domain	N	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Min	Max
Attitudes towards English	341	4.22	.71	-1.03	.55	2.00	5.00
Attitudes towards learning English	341	4.40	.60	-1.06	.71	2.29	5.00

Firstly, according to the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test given in Table 11, it can be seen that the attitudes of the students towards English and towards learning English did not show a normal distribution ($p < 0.05$). However, it has been emphasized that the coefficient of skewness and kurtosis should be in the range of -1.5 to 1.5 as

another criterion accepted in the literature for testing the normality (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Accordingly, considering the skewness and kurtosis values in Table 12, it can be accepted that the attitude scores showed normal distribution. In this case, it was decided to use parametric statistical techniques to analyse whether the averages of students' attitudes towards English and their attitudes towards learning English differ according to the demographic variables of the students.

4.5. Findings Regarding the Analysis of Students' Attitudes According to Demographic Variables

In this section, findings regarding whether students' attitudes towards English and their attitudes towards learning English differed significantly according to demographic variables are presented. First of all, whether the students' average attitude scores towards English and the average attitude scores towards learning English differed significantly according to gender was analysed with the t-test. The results are as in Table 13.

Table 13.

T-Test Results Regarding Attitude Scores According to Gender

Attitude Domain	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
Attitudes towards English	Female	193	4.42	.51	5.89	.001
	Male	148	3.96	.84		
Attitudes towards learning English	Female	193	4.63	.35	8.24	.001
	Male	148	4.10	.72		

According to the t-test findings in Table 13, it can be said that the students' attitude scores towards English and their attitudes towards learning English differed significantly according to the gender of the students ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, considering the average attitude scores of female and male students, it can be seen that the attitude scores of female students towards English and attitude scores towards learning English were higher than that of male students.

Secondly, whether the average attitude scores of the students towards English and towards learning English differed significantly depending on whether they had

intensive English courses in their education was examined via t-test in independent groups. As a result, the findings seen in Table 14 were obtained.

Table 14.

T-Test Results Regarding Attitude Scores According to Class Status

Attitude Domain	Class Status	N	M	SD	t	Sig.
Attitudes towards English	English intensive	62	4.56	.47	5.59	.001
	Regular	279	4.15	.73		
Attitudes towards learning English	English intensive	62	4.55	.42	2.89	.005
	Regular	279	4.36	.63		

In line with the t-test results revealed in Table 14, it can be seen that both the attitude levels of the students towards English and their attitudes towards learning English show a significant difference according to whether the students had intensive English lessons or not ($p < 0.05$). It can be inferred from these findings that, considering the average attitude scores of the students who studied in English intensive classes and those who studied in regular classes, English intensive class students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English were higher, as expected (Table 14).

Moreover, in order to determine whether the students' average attitude scores towards English and the average attitude scores towards learning English differed significantly according to whether their parents were employed, the independent groups were examined via the t-test, and the findings in Table 15 were obtained.

Table 15.

T-Test Results Regarding Attitude Scores According to the Employment Status of Parents

Attitude Domain	Is mother working?	N	M	SD	t	Sig.
Attitudes towards English	Yes	13	4.08	.86	-.75	.45
	No	328	4.23	.76		
Attitudes towards learning English	Yes	13	4.32	.52	-.48	.63
	No	328	4.40	.60		
Attitude Domain	**Is father working?**	**N**	**M**	**SD**	**t**	**Sig.**
Attitudes towards English	Yes	232	4.25	.70	.97	.33
	No	109	4.17	.71		
Attitudes towards learning English	Yes	232	4.37	.61	-1.32	.19
	No	109	4.46	.57		

According to the t-test findings in Table 15, it can be concluded that the attitude levels of the students towards English and their attitude levels towards learning English did not differ significantly according to their mothers' employment status ($p > 0.05$). Similarly, the attitudes of the students towards English and towards learning English did not differ statistically according to their fathers' employment status ($p > 0.05$). In light of these findings, it can be said that whether the parents of the students were employed or not, had no determining influence on the attitudes of the students.

In addition, in order to find out whether the students' average attitude scores towards English and the average attitude scores towards learning English differed significantly according to the grade level of the students, the ANOVA test was used. The findings are presented in Table 16 and 17.

Table 16.

Descriptive Statistics According to Grade Level

Attitude Domain	Grade Level	N	Mean	SD
Attitudes towards English	5th	117	4.39	.63
	6th	114	4.29	.72
	7th	110	3.97	.71
	Total	341	4.22	.71
Attitudes towards learning English	5th	117	4.57	.50
	6th	114	4.44	.60
	7th	110	4.17	.64
	Total	341	4.40	.60

Table 17.

ANOVA Results Regarding Attitude Scores According to Grade Level

Attitude Domain	Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Attitudes towards English	Between groups	11.00	2	5.50	11.73	.001
	Within groups	158.49	338	.47		
	Total	169.49	340			
Attitudes towards learning English	Between groups	9.16	2	4.58	13.68	.001
	Within groups	113.14	338	.34		
	Total	122.30	340			

According to the ANOVA findings given in Table 17, the attitude scores towards English and their attitude scores towards learning English differed significantly depending on the grade level of the students ($p < 0.05$). In order to determine the classification of these differences according to the grade levels, Tukey Post-Hoc test was carried out, and the findings in Table 18 were obtained.

Table 18.

Tukey Post-Hoc Test Results According to Grade Level

Attitude Domain	Group I	Group II	Mean Difference	Sig.
Attitudes towards English	5th	6th	.10	.482
		7th	.42	.001
	6th	5th	-.10	.482
		7th	.32	.002
	7th	5th	-.42	.001
		6th	-.32	.002
Attitudes towards learning English	5th	6th	.13	.205
		7th	.40	.001
	6th	5th	-.13	.205
		7th	.27	.002
	7th	5th	-.40	.001
		6th	-.27	.002

According to the Tukey Post-Hoc test findings, seen in Table 18, the attitude levels of the students studying in the fifth grade towards English are significantly higher than those in both the sixth and seventh grades ($p < 0.05$). The same is true in the attitude scores towards learning English. It is seen that the attitude scores of the students studying in the fifth grade towards learning English are significantly higher than the students studying in the sixth and seventh grades ($p < 0.05$). In addition, it can be concluded that the attitude scores of the sixth grade students towards English and attitude scores towards learning English are higher than seventh grade students' attitude scores.

Moreover, whether the students' average attitude scores towards English and the average attitude scores towards learning English differed significantly according to the education level of mother was analysed with the ANOVA test. The findings are given in Table 19 and Table 20.

Table 19.

Descriptive Statistics According to the Education Level of Mother

Attitude Domain	**Educational level of mother**	**N**	**M**	**SD**
Attitudes towards English	Primary school	222	4.24	.70
	Secondary school	87	4.13	.75
	High school	24	4.36	.54
	University	8	4.18	.82
	Total	341	4.22	.71
Attitudes towards learning English	Primary school	222	4.41	.61
	Secondary school	87	4.32	.63
	High school	24	4.51	.43
	University	8	4.49	.56
	Total	341	4.40	.60

Table 20.

ANOVA Results Regarding Attitudes Towards English According to the Education Level of Mother

Attitude Domain	Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Attitudes towards English	Between groups	1.28	3	.43	.85	.47
	Within groups	168.22	337	.50		
	Total	169.49	340			
Attitudes towards learning English	Between groups	.93	3	.31	.86	.46
	Within groups	121.37	337	.36		
	Total	122.30	340			

According to the results in Table 20, students' attitude scores towards English and their attitude scores towards learning English did not differ significantly according to their mothers' education level ($p > 0.05$). Also, it can be understood from the results in Table 19 that the group averages were quite close to each other.

What is more, whether the students' average attitude scores towards English and the average attitude scores towards learning English differed significantly according to the education level of father was likewise analysed with the ANOVA test. The findings are as in Table 21 and Table 22.

Table 21.

Descriptive Statistics According to the Education Level of Father

Attitude Domain	Educational level of father	N	M	SD
Attitudes towards English	Primary school	96	4.39	.59
	Secondary school	120	3.99	.83
	High school	78	4.32	.61
	University	41	4.28	.60
	Postgraduate	6	4.60	.40
	Total	341	4.22	.71
Attitudes towards learning English	Primary school	96	4.48	.53
	Secondary school	120	4.26	.73
	High school	78	4.45	.50
	University	41	4.47	.46
	Postgraduate	6	4.60	.34
	Total	341	4.40	.60

Table 22.

ANOVA Results Regarding Attitudes Towards English According to the Education Level of Father

Attitude Domain	Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Attitudes towards English	Between groups	11.00	4	2.75	5.83	.001
	Within groups	158.49	336	.47		
	Total	169.49	340			
Attitudes towards learning English	Between groups	3.59	4	.90	2.54	.040
	Within groups	118.71	336	.35		
	Total	122.30	340			

According to the ANOVA findings given in Table 22, it can be seen that attitudes of the students towards English and towards learning English show a significant difference according to their fathers' education level ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, in order to determine the differences between which education level groups were the origin of these observed differences, Tamhane T2 test was conducted. The results of the Tamhane T2 test for both attitude domains are presented in Table 23 and Table 24.

Table 23.

Tamhane's T2 Post-Hoc Test Results Regarding Attitudes Towards English According to the Education Level of Father

Attitude Domain	Group I	Group II	Mean Difference	Sig.
Attitudes towards English	Primary school	Secondary school	.40	.001
		High school	.07	.997
		University	.10	.987
		Postgraduate	-.21	.954
	Secondary school	Primary school	-.40	.001
		High school	-.33	.015
		University	-.30	.143
		Postgraduate	-.61	.099
	High school	Primary school	-.07	.997
		Secondary school	.33	.015
		University	.03	1.000
		Postgraduate	-.28	.810
	University	Primary school	-.10	.987
		Secondary school	.30	.143
		High school	-,03	1.000
		Postgraduate	-.32	.744
	Postgraduate	Primary school	.21	.954
		Secondary school	.61	.099
		High school	.28	.810
		University	.32	.744

According to the findings revealed in Table 23, it can be said that the attitude levels of students whose fathers were primary school graduates and high school graduates were significantly higher than the students whose fathers were secondary school graduates ($p < 0.05$). However, the differences between other groups were not significant.

Table 24.

Tamhane's T2 Post-Hoc Test Results Regarding Attitudes Towards Learning English According to the Education Level of Father

Attitude Domain	Group I	Group II	Mean Difference	Sig.
Attitudes towards learning English	Primary school	Secondary school	.22	.008
		High school	.02	.786
		University	.01	.968
		Postgraduate	-.12	.641
	Secondary school	Primary school	-.22	.008
		High school	-.19	.026
		University	-.21	.048
		Postgraduate	-.33	.179
	High school	Primary school	-.02	.786
		Secondary school	.19	.026
		University	-.02	.860
		Post-graduate	-.14	.575
	University	Primary school	-.01	.968
		Secondary school	.21	.048
		High school	.02	.860
		Post-graduate	-.12	.641
	Postgraduate	Primary school	.12	.641
		Secondary school	.33	.179
		High school	.14	.575
		University	.12	.641

According to the Tamhane's T2 Post-Hoc test findings in Table 24, the attitude levels of students whose fathers were primary school graduates, high school graduates, and college graduates towards learning English were significantly higher than those whose fathers were secondary school graduates ($p < 0.05$).

4.6. Findings Regarding Students' Favourite Activities in English Lessons

Finally, in the last item of the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale, the students were asked about three of the favourite English lesson activities. The findings were analysed via the coding method since the item is an open-ended question. As stated previously, some students left the item unanswered, some statements were illegible, and some statements were not considered as an activity. Therefore, such statements were not analysed. Thus, as seen in Table 25, six activities remained.

Table 25.

Students' Favourite Activities in English Lessons

Activities	5th Graders	6th Graders	7th Graders	Total
Playing Games	156 46.15 %	98 29 %	84 24.85 %	338
Singing	63 43.15 %	44 30.14 %	39 26.71 %	146
Reading	17 25.37 %	26 38.8 %	24 35.83 %	67
Watching Videos	13 28.26 %	15 32.6 %	18 39.14 %	46
Painting	5 50 %	3 30 %	2 20 %	10

According to the findings given in Table 25, the activity of playing games in English lessons comes to the forefront. Accordingly, it can be deduced that the students enjoyed playing games in English lessons very much. In addition, it is seen that 29% of the sixth graders and 24.85% of the seventh graders stated that they liked playing games in English lessons.

Furthermore, singing ranks number two among the students' favourite English lesson activities. Again, the rate of fifth grade students is higher than sixth and seventh graders in terms of singing activity. In other words, as Table 25 indicates, 43.15% of the fifth graders, 30.14% of the sixth graders, and 26.71% of the seventh graders liked singing.

Also, it is obvious that 67 students liked reading in English. However, this time sixth graders come first as findings show that 38.8% of the sixth grade students liked

reading. Moreover, as Table 25 indicates, reading is one of the favourite English lesson activities of the seventh graders with the rate of 35.83%.

Another finding revealed in Table 25 is that watching videos in English is a popular activity. Accordingly, 39.14% of the seventh graders, 32.6% of the sixth graders, and 28.26% of the fifth graders enjoyed watching videos in English. As a matter of fact, watching videos in English is more popular among seventh grade students than fifth and sixth graders.

Finally, it can be seen from the findings revealed in Table 25 that painting is another favourite activity; yet, it is the least preferred one. Again, fifth graders come forward within the scope of the activity. To conclude, according to Table 25, playing games, singing, and reading are the most popular English lesson activities among the secondary school students. To be more specific about the findings presented in Table 25, it can be said that playing games, singing, and painting are the fifth graders' favourites, reading is the sixth graders' favourite, and finally watching videos is the seventh graders' favourite.

4.7. Summary of the Findings

In the study, quantitative data were used and presented as percentages so as to be more understandable. In this study, 353 secondary school students were asked to answer the demographic information form and the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale (Çelik, 2015). Then, the frequency distributions regarding their demographic characteristics were calculated. In addition, attitude scores towards English and towards learning English were calculated as percentages. At this point, the normality test was conducted to reveal whether the attitude scores of the students show a normal distribution. As a result, 12 survey data were excluded from the study as they included extreme values. According to the analyses of the remaining 341 survey data, reliable answers to the research questions were obtained.

In conclusion, according to the findings of the present study, it can be concluded that the students held positive attitudes towards English and towards learning English. However, some attitudinal differences were determined in terms of the demographic variables of the students. For example, the results indicated that female students had more positive attitudes towards both English and learning English than male students. Moreover, the attitudes of the English intensive class students towards English and

towards learning English were more positive than the attitudes of the regular class students. Additionally, no correlation was found between the employment status of parents and students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English. Furthermore, according to the findings, while fifth graders exhibited the most positive attitudes towards both English and learning English, seventh graders exhibited the most negative attitudes. Also, the attitude scores of the students whose fathers were secondary school graduates were less than those whose fathers were primary school, high school, and university graduates. Finally, according to the content analysis of the last item in the attitude scale, the three most popular activities of the students in English lessons were playing games, singing, and reading.

CHAPTER V

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

This study set out to investigate, first, secondary school students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English and then to describe secondary school students' attitudes according to their demographic variables. In addition, this study sought to analyse students' attitudes according to weekly English lesson hours, which has not been a much-discussed research object in Turkish context. In this chapter, we provide a detailed discussion of the findings in relation to the research questions of the study along with the conclusion, implications, limitations, and recommendations for further research.

5.1.1. Students' Attitudes Towards English and Learning English

In the first research question, the current study strived to describe secondary school students' attitudes towards both English and learning English. Within this frame, the findings obtained from the attitude scale showed that the secondary school students exhibited positive attitudes towards English and towards learning English. Even though there are studies that revealed opposite results (Bektaş-Çetinkaya, 2009), this finding is compatible with the conclusions of several studies investigating Turkish students' attitudes towards English (Çelik, 2015; Memduhoğlu & Kozikoğlu, 2015; Saka, 2018; Tokuç, 2014; Tüter, 2019). To give non-local examples, Noursi (2013) and Ahmed (2015) also found that students demonstrated positive attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language. In a similar vein, Alkaff (2013) concluded that university students' attitudes towards learning English as a second language were positive although they did not have much chance to practice. As mentioned before, Turkish students do not have much opportunity to practice English. In this respect, the current study concluded similar results with the relevant studies (Ahmed, 2015; Alkaff, 2013; Çelik, 2015; Memduhoğlu & Kozikoğlu, 2015; Noursi, 2013; Saka, 2018; Tokuç, 2014; Tüter, 2019) as this study found that even though the students did not have a chance to use English out of the classroom, they had positive attitudes towards English and towards learning English.

What is more, the findings derived from the attitude scale indicated that most of the students liked learning new English words very much. It should be noted that vocabulary knowledge is needed in order to improve language skills (Sarıoğlu & Yıldırım, 2018). Therefore, this can be considered as a positive finding given that Turkish students learn English as a foreign language. Besides, this finding is in line with the other studies concluding that Turkish students held positive attitudes towards vocabulary learning in English (Çelik, 2015; Kızıltan & Atlı, 2013).

In addition, according to the findings of this study, the students had positive attitudes towards improving the four main language skills. To elaborate, the current findings indicated that the students exhibited the highest attitude score towards *listening* skills among the four main language skills. Moreover, the results showed that *speaking* skills ranked number two in terms of popularity, and this finding is in line with the conclusion of Tokuç's (2014) as he revealed that students' desire to speak English influenced their attitudes positively. Also, Darancık (2018) found that while learning a foreign language, students paid attention to speaking skills the most among the four core language skills. Moreover, in comparison to listening and speaking skills, the positive attitudes of the students towards *writing* skills were lower, and the *reading* skills were the least preferred. Hence, it can be concluded that the students exhibited more positive attitudes towards experiencing the language through speaking and listening in order to communicate rather than writing and reading. On the other hand, according to the related literature, Turkish students cannot speak English effectively (Kızıldag, 2009) and regard English as one of the lessons taught at school, rather than a language that can be used to communicate (British Council & TEPAV, 2014). Based on these, it can be said that this finding is different from the general view. As a matter of fact, considering that the participants of this study were secondary school students, it can be thought that their enthusiasm for English was high due to their ages. Given this point of view, it is useful to take into account the view of Paker (2012) as he argues that young Turkish students are willing to learn English in the first years of their English education; however, they become disinterested over time due to ineffective teaching methods.

On the other hand, according to the findings of this study, the lowest positive response related to the attitudes towards learning English was related to reading skills. In this case, it can be concluded that the students might have had difficulty in writing and reading due to the different letters in the English alphabet than their mother tongue

(Turkish). Nevertheless, it can be inferred from the findings that most of the students had positive attitudes towards the four primary language skills, and these findings support the findings of Çelik (2015) as she found that students' favourite skills were listening, speaking, writing, and reading, respectively.

When the results obtained from the attitude scale are examined, it is seen that although some students thought that learning English was difficult, a great majority of the students stated that they enjoyed English lessons. Moreover, most of the students considered that learning English was necessary. In addition, the students were fond of both the exercises in their textbooks and in-class activities. Hence, it can be assumed that not only academic gains but also the fun side of English are influential determinants on the attitudes of the students.

All in all, it is concluded that the great majority of the students had positive attitudes towards English and towards learning English. Hence, the results related to the first research question are parallel with related studies concluding that Turkish students had positive attitudes towards English. For example, Tokuç (2014) concluded in his study that Turkish university students had positive attitudes towards English and towards learning English. In parallel, Çelik (2015) found that third and fifth grade students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English were positive. Similarly, in his study aiming to find out fifth graders' attitudes towards English, Fırat (2009) concluded that students exhibited positive attitudes towards learning English. Thus, the present study is in harmony with the mentioned studies in regard to the current findings.

5.1.2. Gender and Student Attitudes

Thus far, the relationship between the gender variable and attitude has been addressed many times both in global and in local contexts. On the one hand, there are studies finding a relationship between the gender variable and the attitude concept (Çelik, 2015; Genc & Aydin, 2017; Ghazvini & Khajehpour, 2011; Kazazoğlu, 2013; Yılmaz, 2010). On the other hand, there are studies not finding a relationship between the gender variable and the attitude concept (Çakıcı, 2007; Kızıltan & Atlı, 2013; Memduhoğlu & Kozikoğlu, 2015). Moreover, these contradictions are not limited to the mentioned results since the studies founding a relationship between gender and attitude either found females' attitudes were more positive than males' attitudes (Çelik, 2015;

Genc & Aydin, 2017; Ghazvini & Khajehpour, 2011; Yılmaz, 2010) or found males' attitudes were more positive than females' attitudes (Genç & Kaya, 2011; Gökyer & Bakcak, 2014; Kazazoğlu, 2013). To put it differently, there is no consensus in the relevant studies claiming a relationship between gender and attitude. Thus, these situations in question awakened a discussion for the current study.

According to the findings of the current study, a relationship was determined between gender and the attitudes of the secondary school students, and the results indicated that the attitudes of female students towards English and towards learning English were more positive than male students' attitudes. Hence, the findings are not parallel with the studies concluding no correlation between the gender variable and students' attitudes towards English (Çakıcı, 2007; Kızıltan & Atlı, 2013; Memduhoğlu & Kozikoğlu, 2015). In other words, considering the studies that found a relationship between gender and attitude, it is obvious that the findings of the current study support this group. However, the relevant studies that found a relationship between the gender variable and attitude should be divided into two groups: those that claim a relationship in favour of females and those in favour of males.

Given that this study examined the relationship between gender and attitude, it can be said that the current result is in line with the study of Ghazvini and Khajehpour (2011), which concluded that female students exhibited more positive attitudes towards English than male students. In the context of Turkey, there are studies that concluded similar results with this study as these studies found that female students had more positive attitudes towards English than male students (Çelik, 2015; Genc & Aydin, 2017; Yılmaz, 2010). On the other hand, there are also studies with contradictory results. For example, Kazazoğlu (2013) concluded that male students' attitudes towards English course were more positive than female students' attitudes. Similarly, Genç and Kaya (2011) detected that the attitudes of male students were more favourable than the attitudes of female students.

As a consequence, it can be interpreted that gender is one of the independent variables that might have an impact on students' attitudes. Nevertheless, according to the different results of the mentioned studies, it cannot be claimed that positive attitudes are clearly in favour of females or males. Besides, even though the attitudes of male students were found to be less positive than female students' attitudes in the current study, it can be deduced from the findings that the attitudes of male students were also favourable.

5.1.3. Employment Status of Parents and Student Attitudes

Studies in the fields of pedagogy and psychology have examined the impacts of parents' employment status on their children's academic success. For instance, Dinçer and Uysal-Kolaşin (2009) argued that students whose parents are educated and employed are more successful academically. In this sense, it can be claimed that there is a positive relationship between both the education level and employment status of parents and their children's academic success. Given that the attitudes of children are shaped primarily in their families, analyses were made due to the idea that the education level and employment status of parents might have influenced secondary school students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English within the scope of this study. Nevertheless, according to the findings, even though the education level of father was found to be related to the attitudes of the students, it was concluded that neither the education level of mother nor the employment status of parents had an impact on students' attitudes. This might be because very few of the students' mothers were employed compared to the total number of participants. Besides, given that the school was a public neighbourhood school, the students may have had similar backgrounds in general.

5.1.4. Education Level of Parents and Student Attitudes

One of the aims of the current study was to determine whether there was a relationship between parents' level of education and secondary school students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English. According to the findings, there was not a correlation between the education level of mother and the attitudes of the students towards both English and learning English. Therefore, the finding related to the education level of mothers contradicts with the findings of the study conducted by Yılmaz (2010) as her study revealed a relationship between students' attitudes towards English and their mothers' education levels. Furthermore, İnal, Evin, and Saracaloğlu (2005) also found that students' attitudes towards English were in relation to their mothers' level of education. They further found that students whose mothers were university graduates had higher attitude scores. These studies indicate that mothers influenced their children's attitudes positively since they would like their children to be successful; however, this study did not find a correlation between the education level of mother and the attitudes of the students.

On the other hand, a significant relationship was determined between the education level of father and students' attitudes towards both English and learning English. Moreover, findings revealed that the attitude levels of students whose fathers were primary school graduates and high school graduates towards English were significantly higher than those whose fathers were secondary school graduates. Also, findings revealed that the attitude levels of students whose fathers were primary school graduates, high school graduates, and university graduates towards learning English were significantly higher than those whose fathers were secondary school graduates. These findings, related to the education level of father, support the findings of various studies that revealed a relationship between students' attitudes towards English and their parents' level of education (Ardıç-Ekiz, 2012; Kaya, 2019; Saka, 2018). However, there are also studies that did not find a relationship between students' attitudes towards English and their fathers' level of education (İnal, Evin, & Saracaloğlu, 2005; Yılmaz, 2010).

In conclusion, it is obvious that student attitudes have been examined many times in terms of parents' educational background. In accordance with the related literature, it can be interpreted that parents' level of education may have an impact on students' attitudes in spite of studies that came to the opposite results. Nevertheless, the current study inferred that not mother's, but father's level of education influenced the attitudes of the students. This situation might be derived from that according to demographic findings, the education level of the students' fathers was higher. Besides, while most of the students' mothers were not employed, most of the students' fathers were employed. Hence, the education level of father, therefore, was found to be a determinant variable on the students' attitudes since a higher education level might mean a better job and a better economic situation. In addition, patriarchal social attitudes might have led to the conclusion that mere the education level of father had an impact on the attitudes of the students.

5.1.5. English Lesson Hours and Student Attitudes

As stated previously, this study consisted of two types of classes in terms of English lesson hours as English intensive and regular. It is apparent that students studying in English intensive classes had a higher chance of exposure to the target

language. Therefore, class status was one of the independent variables analysed regarding students' attitudes towards both English and learning English.

In line with the findings, it was concluded that the students studying in English intensive classes showed more positive attitudes towards English and towards learning English than the students studying in regular classes. In other words, students who had nine hours of English lessons per week exhibited more favourable attitudes towards both English and learning English than students who had three or four hours of English lessons per week.

Excluding biological factors, it is incontestable that exposure is of great importance in improving both first language acquisition and second/foreign language learning. In parallel, Al-Zoubi (2018) suggests that exposure to the target language is crucial. Therefore, as students learn the target language, it can be suggested that their attitudes towards the language are also positively influenced, and this might be the reason why the English intensive class students who were more exposed to the target language had more positive attitudes. Hence, the current finding is an expected result since the time spent on the target language allows students to learn better the language. Another explanation for this finding is that there might be a positive correlation between the duration of English education and students' attitudes. For example, Yu (2010) concluded that students who had taken English classes for a longer period showed more positive attitudes towards English. In a similar vein, Gökyer and Bakcak (2014) found that students who had previously taken English courses exhibited more positive attitudes towards English.

5.1.6. Grade Level and Student Attitudes

In the related literature, student attitudes in terms of grade level have been examined several times. Although the relevant findings differ from the findings of Memduhoğlu and Koziköğlu (2015) and Kavgacı (2017) as their studies revealed that there was not a correlation between grade level and student attitudes, there are also studies that revealed a correlation between grade level and students' attitudes towards English (Anbarlı-Kırkız, 2010; Çelik, 2015; Gümüş, 2018; Kaya, 2019). In parallel with these studies, a relationship was found between grade level and student attitudes in the present study, as well. As stated previously, according to the obtained results of this study, fifth grade students had more positive attitudes towards both English and

learning English than sixth and seventh grade students. That is to say, according to the results of the current study, younger students' attitudes towards both English and learning English were found to be relatively more positive than the older students' attitudes. This finding is accordant with the findings of Çelik (2015) as she found that third grade students had more positive attitudes towards English than fifth grade students. Similarly, Anbarlı-Kırkız (2010) revealed that eighth graders exhibited more positive attitudes towards English than 11th graders. Likewise, in her study conducted with the participation of fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students, Kaya (2019) concluded that fifth graders had more favourable attitudes towards English. In a similar vein, Gümüş (2018) carried out a study with secondary school students and revealed that fifth and sixth grade students' attitudes towards English were more positive than seventh and eighth grade students' attitudes. Hence, it is obvious that this study is in line with the studies revealing that younger students held more positive attitudes towards English (Anbarlı-Kırkız, 2010; Çelik, 2015; Gümüş, 2018; Kaya, 2019). On the other hand, the current finding contradicts with the findings of Tüter (2019) as he found that seventh graders' attitudes were more positive than sixth graders' attitudes towards English.

As a matter of fact, it can be claimed that older students might have a broader worldview since most teenagers use social media, listen to foreign music, and admire foreign singers. However, as this study revealed, even though almost all the students indicated positive attitudes, an adverse change in attitudes was observed as the students' age grew. As mentioned earlier, attitudes are influenced by external factors (e.g. family, teachers, friends, academic concerns). In Turkey, students take a high school entrance exam at the end of the eighth grade, and English is one of the lessons that students are responsible for. Therefore, seventh grade students might have considered English as one of the compulsory school subjects rather than the language of the modern world, due to exam anxiety. Hence, this finding might be derived from such reasons. Besides, the current finding is in harmony with the argument of Paker (2012) as he maintains that older Turkish students are not willing to learn English as much as younger students.

In addition to the points mentioned thus far, it can also be said that the English curriculum in fifth grade includes less deductive teaching of grammar. Instead, it includes activities that learners enjoy (e.g. songs, role plays, painting, and so on). Hence, fifth graders might consider English lessons more enjoyable than sixth and seventh graders. In addition, considering that deductive teaching of grammar intensifies

in subsequent grade levels, older students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English might change negatively as they might have difficulty in learning grammatical structures.

Moreover, in light of the findings obtained from the last item of the attitude scale (Item 20) in our study, it was determined that playing games in English lessons came first among the favourite activities of the students. Hence, it can be inferred that students enjoy in the English lessons when they play games, and they develop positive attitudes towards English and towards learning English thanks to the classroom activities. Besides, findings derived from the last item of the attitude scale indicated that the favourite activities in English lessons of the fifth grade students were playing games, singing, and painting. However, playing games, singing, and painting were less popular for the seventh and sixth graders. In this case, given that the activities play a more important role in the attitudes of younger students, it can be said that there is an age factor. In addition, another finding obtained from the last item of the attitude scale revealed that compared to the fifth grade students, more students from the sixth and seventh grades preferred reading as one of the activities in English lessons. As mentioned above, considering that the attitudes of the fifth grade students towards both English and learning English were more favourable compared to the sixth and seventh grade students, this is a remarkable finding in terms of the grade level variable. As a result, given that the English curriculum in fifth grade is less intense, it can be suggested that as students grow, academic achievement becomes more important. Such a situation may cause anxiety in older students and therefore cause the attitudes of older students to change adversely.

5.2. Conclusion

As indicated earlier, English is the language of the globalised world, and communicating in English is crucial to keep up with the times. Turkey is a country where English is taught as a foreign language, and English is, therefore, in the position of being a challenging lesson that is taught at school. Since attitudes are affective factors in the second/foreign language learning process, students' attitudes towards English should be noticed and taken into account. Moreover, related literature indicates the existence of various variables that might influence attitudes. Accordingly, this study attempted to explore the attitudes of secondary school students towards both English

and learning English in the context of Turkey in terms of different variables. The results of this study showed that secondary school students held positive attitudes towards both English and learning English. Even though the employment status of parents and education level of mother were not found to be as influential variables, the present study revealed that some of the demographic variables had an influence on the attitudes of the students. To specify, it was concluded that the attitudes of the secondary school students towards English and towards learning English were in relation to gender, the education level of father, English lesson hours, and grade level.

5.3. Implications of the Study

The conclusions of the present study are intended to contribute to the fields of teaching English as a second/foreign language and teaching English to young learners. As noted earlier, English is the foremost foreign language for the Turkish education policy. Moreover, as attitudes are associated with academic achievement (Anbarlı-Kırkız, 2010; Kazazoğlu, 2013; Selçuk, 1997; Ushida, 2003), students' attitudes should be taken into account as they could be one of the reasons behind the failure in English education in Turkey. According to the findings of this study, secondary school students' attitudes towards English and towards learning English were found to be highly positive; yet, fifth graders' attitudes were found to be more positive than sixth and seventh graders' attitudes. Thus, when the failure in English education is considered, it can be claimed that students' dispositions towards English might change adversely during the next years of their education life. Starting from this point of view, it might be profitable to instil in students that English is not only a lesson, it is also a language used in real life. To put it differently, it is important to sustain the thought that learning English is necessary, and it is crucial to reinforce students' positive attitudes.

The findings of this study are notable as they contribute to the related research in the literature. In addition, the competent authorities can pedagogically evaluate the findings of this study, review the English curriculum, and take necessary steps such as increasing lesson hours and rearranging the curriculum in order to encourage students to learn and to speak English. Especially, the perception can be created that students need English not only as a school subject but also as an important foreign language that can be used throughout their lives. Furthermore, English teachers should consider that English education for young learners should be provided not only for academic

purposes (e.g. the high school entrance exam) but also enriched with activities to make students enjoy learning English. In addition, according to the findings of this study, the students liked speaking English. To put it differently, the students wanted to practice what they had learned, and they wanted to communicate in English. However, in the English curriculum, students are held responsible for ten units a year, including more than one grammar subject in each unit. Thus, students feel anxious as they have to memorize both vocabulary and grammatical structures for the exams. On the other hand, teaching enough grammar to use in daily life would be good both in terms of keeping students' attitudes positive and increasing their motivation. Besides, targeting to teach one step further from what they already know rather than intensifying the grammar teaching at each grade level would be useful in order to keep their attitudes positive. In addition, it would be beneficial to set goals that students can achieve to sustain their motivation. Hence, the curriculum would be updated accordingly, and the teaching of grammatical structures would be renewed as a tool rather than a goal. For example, teachers of English can add to lessons more activities in which students can be active language learners and learn grammatical structures inductively. More importantly, English teachers should be able to shape their lessons according to their students' attitudes and needs, and they should be able to use eclectic methods in their lessons.

In addition, it has been claimed that the limited English lesson hours is one of the reasons leading to failure in English education in Turkey (Özer & Korkmaz, 2016). In parallel, as the findings of this study indicated that English intensive class students' attitudes were more positive than regular class students' attitudes, increasing English lesson hours can help students' attitudes stay positive. However, it would not be enough just to increase lesson hours. Therefore, the content of the lessons should be enriched, and students should be provided fun activities to make them enjoy English lessons. In line with these, steps would be taken to increase the English lesson hours, and weights for grammar teaching and language skills in the curriculum would be regulated in line with students' attitudes and needs.

5.4. Limitations of the Study

It is a fact that there is no study without limitations. The first limitation of the current study is that this study was limited to the second semester of the 2019-2020

academic year. As the second limitation of the study, this study was limited to Diyarbakır province and the secondary school students in a public school. Another limitation is that the study was conducted with 353 secondary school students who were the fifth, sixth, and seventh grade students. Due to the fact that the eighth graders were concentrated on the high school entrance exam, they were not included in the study. In addition, the study lacked qualitative data. In fact, it had been planned to interview students with the highest and the lowest attitude scores in order to ensure a deeper understanding; however, since the schools closed early due to the coronavirus pandemic, there was no time to collect qualitative data. Moreover, given that the study was conducted in a public school, the findings of the present study cannot be generalized to all secondary school students in Turkey. In addition, the final limitation of the study is that no attempts were made to change the (negative) attitudes (if any) of students.

5.5. Recommendations for Further Research

As stated previously, the present study revealed that the attitudes of Turkish secondary school students towards English and towards learning English were highly positive. Moreover, it was determined that there were several demographic variables that influenced the attitudes of the students; however, it was also revealed that there were also variables that did not have an influence.

Based on the results of this study, it would be useful to conduct more extensive research to investigate the influence of students' demographic variables on their attitudes in order to contribute to the fields of teaching English as a foreign language and teaching English to young learners. In addition, it is suggested that qualitative data collection tools such as interviews would be employed in order to enrich the study. For instance, in a future study, students with the highest and lowest attitude scores would be interviewed to find out the reason for the difference between their attitudes. Moreover, in order to lay the groundwork for raising English lesson hours, more research would be carried out on English intensive class students. In addition, in order to determine whether the education level and employment status of parents have an impact on students' attitudes, further research would be administered with a high number of participants.

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7. APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Ethics Committee Approval

YAPILMAK İSTENEN ÇALIŞMANIN İZİN ALINMAK İSTENEN KURUMUN HANGİ İLÇELERİNE/ HANGİ KURUMUNA/ HANGİ BÖLÜMÜNDE/ HANGİ ALANINA/ HANGİ KONULARDA/ HANGİ GRUBA/ KİMLERE/ NE UYGULANACAĞI GİBİ AYRINTILI BİLGİLER	Diyarbakır Ergani'de bir okulda ortaokul öğrencilerinin İngilizceye yönelik tutumlarının ve tutumları üzerindeki diğer faktörlerin demografik bilgi formuyla, tutum ölçeğiyle incelenmesi ve tutum ölçeği sonucunda en yüksek ve en düşük puan alan öğrencilerle görüşme yapılması
UYGULANACAK OLAN ÇALIŞMAYA AİT ANKETLERİN/ ÖLÇEKLERİN BAŞLIKLARI/ HANGİ ANKETLERİN - ÖLÇELERİN UYGULANACAĞI	Demografik bilgi formu ve Gülen Yüz Dil Tutum Ölçeği öğrenciler tarafından doldurulacak ve sonucunda en yüksek ve en düşük puan alan öğrencilerle görüşme yapılacak
EKLER (ANKETLER, ÖLÇEKLER, FORMLAR, ... V.B. GİBİ EVRAKLARIN İSİMLERİYLE BİRLİKTE KAÇ ADET/SAYFA OLDUKLARINA AİT BİLGİLER İLE AYRINTILI YAZILACAKTIR)	1) 1 Sayfa Rıza Formu 2) 2 sayfa Demografik Bilgi Formu 3) 6 Sayfa Gülen Yüz Dil Tutum Ölçeği 4) 1 Sayfa Öğrencilerle Yapılacak Görüşme Soruları

ÖĞRENCİNİN ADI - SOYADI: Hülya Seren AKDAMAR			**ÖĞRENCİNİN İMZASI: (Enstitüde Kalan Asıl Sureti İmzalıdır.) TARİH: 22 /01/ 2020**	
TEZ/ ARAŞTIRMA/ANKET/ÇALIŞMA TALEBİ İLE İLGİLİ DEĞERLENDİRME SONUCU				
1. Seçilen konu Bilim ve İş Dünyasına katkı sağlayabilecektir.				
2. Anılan konu İngiliz Dili Egitimi faliyet alanı içerisine girmektedir				
1.TEZ DANIŞMANININ ONAYI	**2.TEZ DANIŞMANININ ONAYI (VARSA)**	SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRÜNÜN ONAYI	**A.B.D. BAŞKANININ ONAYI**	
Adı - Soyadı: Neşe CABAROĞLU	Adı - Soyadı:	Adı - Soyadı: Murat KOÇ	Adı - Soyadı: Şehnaz ŞAHİNKARAKAŞ	
Unvanı : Doç. Dr.	Unvanı:	Unvanı: Doç. Dr.	Unvanı: Prof. Dr.	
İmzası : (Enstitüde Kalan Asıl Sureti İmzalıdır.)	İmzası:	İmzası:(Enstitüde Kalan Asıl Sureti İmzalıdır.)	İmzası:(Enstitüde Kalan Asıl Sureti İmzalıdır.)	
.../ ...../ 20....	.../ .../ 20....	...../ ...../ 20.....	.../ .../ 20....	
ETİK KURULU ASIL ÜYELERİNE AİT BİLGİLER				
Adı - Soyadı: **Mustafa BAŞARAN**	Adı - Soyadı: **Yücel ERTEKİN**	Adı - Soyadı: **Deniz Aynur GÜLER**	Adı - Soyadı: **Ali Engin OBA**	Adı - Soyadı: **Mustafa Tevfik ODMAN**
Unvanı : Prof. Dr.	Unvanı : Prof. Dr.	Unvanı: Prof. Dr.	Unvanı : Prof. Dr.	Unvanı: Prof. Dr.
İmzası : (Enstitüde Kalan Asıl Sureti İmzalıdır.)	İmzası : (Enstitüde Kalan Asıl Sureti İmzalıdır.)	İmzası : (Enstitüde Kalan Asıl Sureti İmzalıdır.)	İmzası :	İmzası : .....
...../ ...../ 20.....	...../ ...../ 20.....	.../ ...../ 20.....	...../ ...../ 20.....	.../ ...../ 20.....
Etik Kurulu Jüri Başkanı - Asıl Üye	**Etik Kurulu Jüri Asıl Üyesi**	**Etik Kurulu Jüri Asıl Üyesi**	**Etik Kurulu Jüri Asıl Üyesi**	**Etik Kurulu Jüri Asıl Üyesi**
OY BİRLİĞİ İLE	( )			
OY ÇOKLUĞU İLE	(x)	**Çalışma yapılacak olan tez için uygulayacak olduğu Anketleri/Formları/Ölçekleri Çağ Üniversitesi Etik Kurulu Asıl Jüri Üyelerince İncelenmiş olup, 22/01/2020 - 29 /05/2020. tarihleri arasında uygulanmak üzere gerekli iznin verilmesi taraflarımızca uygundur.**		

AÇIKLAMA: BU FORM ÖĞRENCİLER TARAFINDAN HAZIRLANDIKTAN SONRA ENSTİTÜ MÜDÜRÜNE ONAYLATILARAK ENSTİTÜ SEKRETERLİĞİNE TESLİM EDİLECEKTİR. AYRICA YAZININ PUNTOSU İSE 12 (ON İKİ) PUNTO OLACAK ŞEKİLDE YAZILARAK ÇIKTI ALINACAKTIR.

Appendix 2. Demographic Information Form (English)

Demographic Information Form

Name-Surname:

Class:

1. Gender

Female ☐

Male ☐

2. Is your mother alive?

3. Is your father alive?

4. Does your mother work?

Yes ☐

No ☐

5. Does your father work?

Yes ☐

No ☐

6. Mother's level of education

Primary school ☐

Secondary school ☐

High school ☐

University ☐

Postgraduate ☐

7. Father's level of education

Primary school ☐

Secondary school ☐

High school ☐

University ☐

Postgraduate ☐

Appendix 3. The Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale (English)

Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale (English Version)

***Please tick the box of the answer you find yourself on each question.**

1. What do you feel about learning English?

Very good ☐ Good ☐ No idea ☐ Bad ☐ Very bad ☐

2. How much do you like English?

Like very much ☐ Like ☐ No idea ☐ Like a little ☐ Don't like at all ☐

3. How difficult do you think English is?

Very easy ☐ Easy ☐ No idea ☐ Difficult ☐ Very Difficult ☐

4. How much do you like learning new words in English?

Like very much ☐ Like ☐ No idea ☐ Like a little ☐ Don't like at all ☐

5. How much do you like speaking English?

Like very much ☐ Like ☐ No idea ☐ Like a little ☐ Don't like at all ☐

6. How much do you like listening in English?

Like very much ☐ Like ☐ No idea ☐ Like a little ☐ Don't like at all ☐

7. What do you feel about singing in English?

Very good ☐ Good ☐ No idea ☐ Bad ☐ Very bad ☐

8. What do you feel about the games you play in English?

Very good ☐ Good ☐ No idea ☐ Bad ☐ Very bad ☐

9. What do you feel about doing English homework?

Very good ☐ Good ☐ No idea ☐ Bad ☐ Very bad ☐

10. How much do you like reading in English?

Like very much ☐ Like ☐ No idea ☐ Like a little ☐ Don't like at all ☐

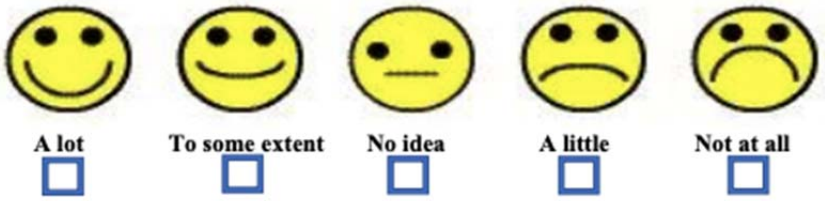
11. How much do you like writing in English?

Like very much ☐ Like ☐ No idea ☐ Like a little ☐ Don't like at all ☐

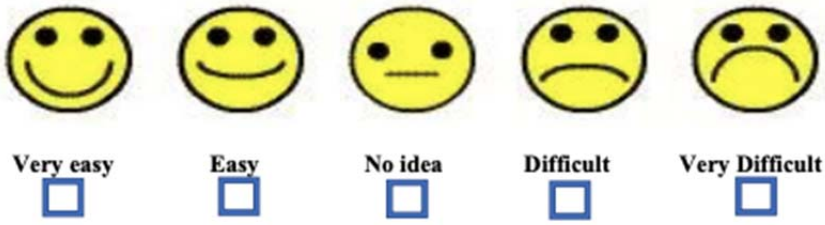
12. How good are you at English?

Very good ☐ Good ☐ No idea ☐ Bad ☐ Very bad ☐

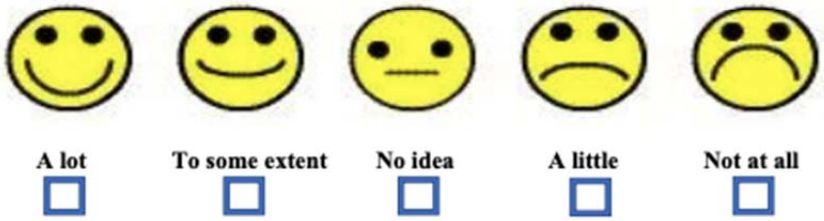
13. How much do you wonder about the new English words?



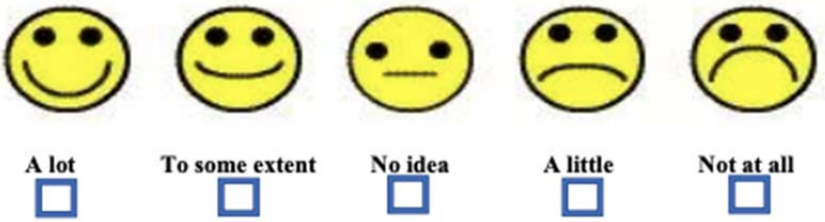
14. How difficult do you think learning English is?



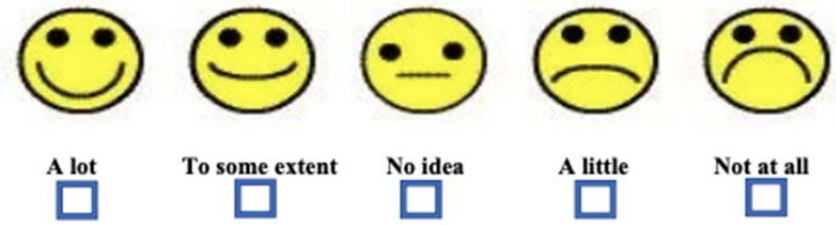
15. How enjoyable do you think English classes are?



16. How necessary do you think learning English is?



17. How enjoyable do you think the activities in English textbook are?



A lot ☐ To some extent ☐ No idea ☐ A little ☐ Not at all ☐

18. How attractive do you think the topics in English textbook are?

A lot ☐ To some extent ☐ No idea ☐ A little ☐ Not at all ☐

19. How comfortable do you feel while learning English in class?

A lot ☐ To some extent ☐ No idea ☐ A little ☐ Not at all ☐

20. What are three of your favourite activities in English lessons?

1.....

2.....

3.....

Appendix 4. Demographic Information Form (Turkish)

Demografik Bilgi Formu

Adınız-Soyadınız:

Sınıfınız:

1. Cinsiyetiniz

Kız ☐

Erkek ☐

2. Anneniz sağ mı:

3. Babanız sağ mı:

4. Anneniz çalışıyor mu?

Evet ☐

Hayır ☐

5. Babanız çalışıyor mu?

Evet ☐

Hayır ☐

6. Annenizin eğitim durumu

İlkokul ☐

Ortaokul ☐

Lise ☐

Üniversite ☐

Yüksek Lisans/Doktora ☐

7. Babanızın eğitim durumu

İlkokul ☐

Ortaokul ☐

Lise ☐

Üniversite ☐

Yüksek Lisans/Doktora ☐

Appendix 5. The Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale (Turkish)

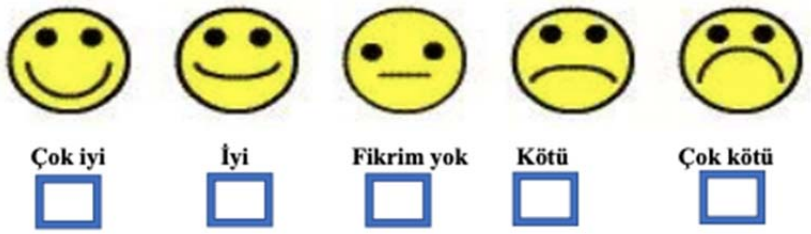
Gülen Yüz Dil Tutum Ölçeği

Adı Soyadı:

Sınıf:

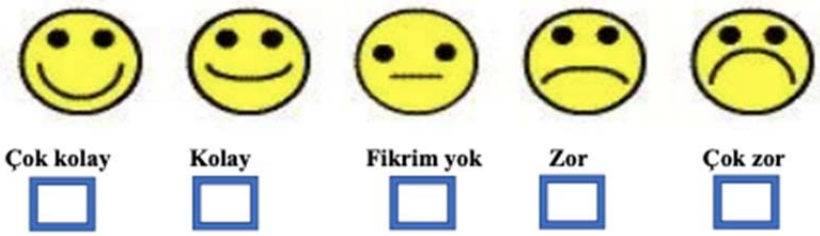
***Lütfen her soruda kendinize en yakın bulduğunuz cevabın kutucuğunu işaretleyiniz.**

1. İngilizce öğrenmenle ilgili kendini nasıl hissediyorsun?



2. İngilizceyi ne kadar seviyorsun?

3. Sence İngilizce ne kadar kolay?



4. İngilizcede yeni kelimeler öğrenmeyi ne kadar seviyorsun?

Çok seviyorum ☐ Seviyorum ☐ Fikrim yok ☐ Az Seviyorum ☐ Hiç sevmiyorum ☐

5. İngilizce konuşmayı ne kadar seviyorsun?

Çok seviyorum ☐ Seviyorum ☐ Fikrim yok ☐ Az Seviyorum ☐ Hiç sevmiyorum ☐

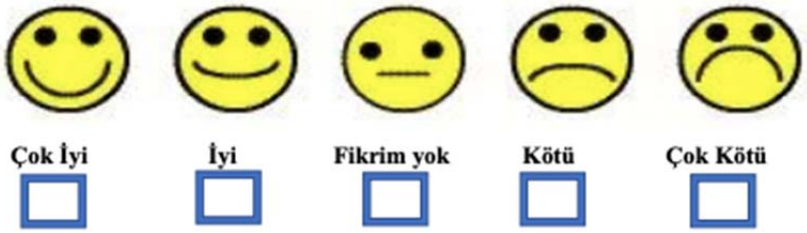
6. İngilizce dinlemeyi ne kadar seviyorsun?

Çok seviyorum ☐ Seviyorum ☐ Fikrim yok ☐ Az Seviyorum ☐ Hiç sevmiyorum ☐

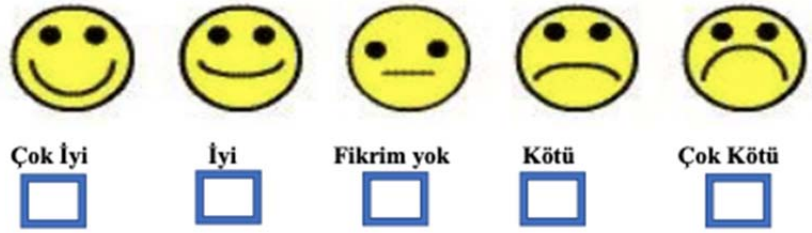
7. İngilizce şarkı söylemeyle ilgili kendini nasıl hissediyorsun?

Çok İyi ☐ İyi ☐ Fikrim yok ☐ Kötü ☐ Çok Kötü ☐

8. Oynadığınız İngilizce oyunlarla ilgili kendini nasıl hissediyorsun?

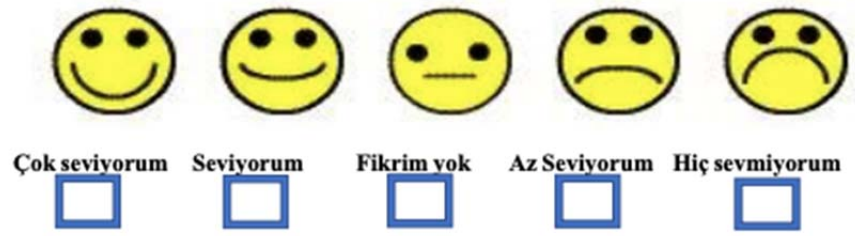


9. İngilizce ödev yapmayla ilgili kendini nasıl hissediyorsun?



10. İngilizcede okumayı ne kadar seviyorsun?

11. İngilizcede yazmayı ne kadar seviyorsun?



12. İngilizce öğrenmede ne kadar iyi olduğunu düşünüyorsun?

Çok İyi ☐ İyi ☐ Fikrim yok ☐ Kötü ☐ Çok Kötü ☐

13. Karşılaştığın yeni İngilizce kelimelerin anlamlarını ne kadar merak ediyorsun?

Çok ☐ Orta ☐ Fikrim yok ☐ Az ☐ Hiç ☐

14. Sence İngilizce öğrenmek kolay mı?

Çok kolay ☐ Kolay ☐ Fikrim yok ☐ Zor ☐ Çok zor ☐

15. İngilizce derslerini ne kadar eğlenceli buluyorsun?

Çok ☐ Orta ☐ Fikrim yok ☐ Çok az ☐ Hiç ☐

16. İngilizce öğrenmenin ne kadar gerekli olduğunu düşünüyorsun?

Çok ☐ Orta ☐ Fikrim yok ☐ Az ☐ Hiç ☐

17. İngilizce ders kitabındaki aktiviteleri ne kadar eğlenceli buluyorsun?

Çok ☐ Orta ☐ Fikrim yok ☐ Az ☐ Hiç ☐

18. İngilizce ders kitabındaki konular ne kadar ilgini çekiyor?

Çok	Orta	Fikrim yok	Az	Hiç
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

19. Sınıfta İngilizce öğrenirken kendini ne kadar rahat hissediyorsun?

Çok	Orta	Fikrim yok	Az	Hiç
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

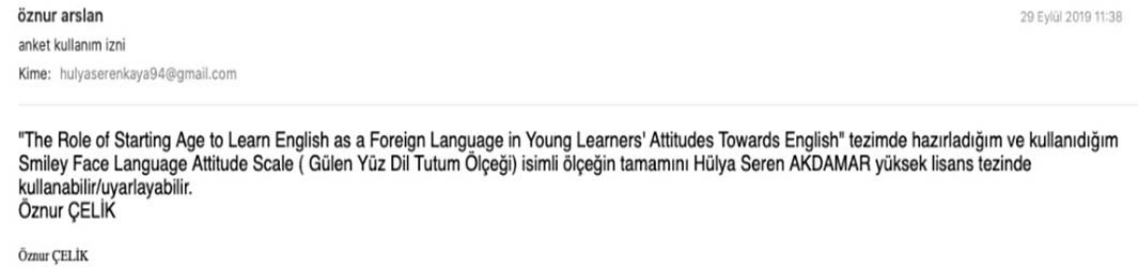
20. İngilizce derslerinde en sevdiğin üç (3) aktivite nelerdir?

1.....

2.....

3.....

Appendix 6. Permission to Use the Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale



öznur arslan 29 Eylül 2019 11:38

anket kullanım izni

Kime: hulyaserenkaya94@gmail.com

"The Role of Starting Age to Learn English as a Foreign Language in Young Learners' Attitudes Towards English" tezimde hazırladığım ve kullanıdığım Smiley Face Language Attitude Scale (Gülen Yüz Dil Tutum Ölçeği) isimli ölçeğin tamamını Hülya Seren AKDAMAR yüksek lisans tezinde kullanabilir/uyarlayabilir.
Öznur ÇELİK

Öznur ÇELİK

Appendix 7. Approval from Çağ University

T.C.
ÇAĞ ÜNİVERSİTESİ
ÇAĞ UNIVERSITY

SAYI : 23867972/ 138-93
KONU: Tez Anket İzni Hakkında

27.01.2020

DİYARBAKIR VALİLİĞİNE
(Diyarbakır İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü Dikkatine)

İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi olan (20178027 numaralı) **Hülya Seren AKDAMAR, "Ortaokul Öğrencilerinin İngilizceye Yönelik Tutumlarının ve Tutumlarını Etkileyen Faktörlerin İncelenmesi"** konulu tez çalışmasını Çukurova Üniversitesi öğretim elemanı Doç. Dr. Neşe CABAROĞLU Tez Danışmanı olarak atanmış ve halen tez yürütülmektedir. Adı geçen öğrencinin tez çalışması kapsamında **Diyarbakır İli Ergani İlçesine bağlı Namık Kemal İmam Hatip Ortaokulunda eğitim gören öğrencileri kapsamak üzere** kopyası Ek'lerde sunulan bir anket uygulaması yapmayı planlamaktadır. Tez çalışması kapsamında yukarıda belirtilen anketin uygulayabilmesi için gerekli iznin verilmesi hususunu bilgilerinize sunarım.

Enstitüde Kalan Aslı İmzalıdır

Prof. Dr. Ünal AY

Rektör

EKLERİ: On Sayfa tez anket formları ile Üç sayfa tez etik kurul izin formunun fotokopileri.

DAĞITIM:
Gereği:
Namık Kemal İmam Hatip Ortaokulu Müdürlüğüne

Bilgi:
Diyarbakır Valiliğine
Diyarbakır İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğüne

A.Yaşar Bayboğan Kampüsü, Adana - Mersin Karayolu 33800 Yenice-Mersin/Türkiye T. +90 (0324) 651 48 00 Fax:+90 (0324) 651 48 11
www.cag.edu.tr

Appendix 8. Permission from the Provincial Directorate of National Education

T.C.
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İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğü

Sayı : 30769799-44-E.3787291 20.02.2020
Konu : Araştırma İzni (Hülya Seren AKDAMAR)

ÇAĞ ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜNE
MERSİN

İlgi : 27/01/2020 tarih ve 97 sayılı yazınız.

Üniversiteniz İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bilim Dalı Tezli Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi Hülya Seren AKDAMAR'ın **"Ortaokul Öğrencilerinin İngilizceye Yönelik Tutumlarının ve Tutumlarını Etkileyen Faktörlerin İncelenmesi** "konulu araştırma çalışması ile ilgili 20/02/2020 tarih ve 3767225 sayılı Müdürlük onayı ekte gönderilmiştir.

Süleyman İLGE
Müdür a.
İl Milli Eğitim Müdür Yardımcısı

EKİ:
1- Onay Yazısı (1 Sayfa)

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e-posta: arge21@meb.gov.tr

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İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğü

Sayı : 30769799-44-E.3787251 20.02.2020
Konu : Araştırma İzni (Hülya Seren AKDAMAR)

ERGANİ KAYMAKAMLIĞINA
(İlçe Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü)

Çağ Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bilim Dalı Tezli Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi Hülya Seren AKDAMAR'ın **"Ortaokul Öğrencilerinin İngilizceye Yönelik Tutumlarının ve Tutumlarını Etkileyen Faktörlerin İncelenmesi "** konulu araştırma çalışmasını İlçenize bağlı Namık Kemal İmam Hatip Ortaokulunda eğitim gören öğrencilere yönelik uygulama isteği ile ilgili 20/02/2020 tarih ve 3767225 sayılı Müdürlük onayı ekte gönderilmiştir.

Süleyman İLGE
Vali a.
İl Milli Eğitim Müdür Yardımcısı

EK:
1- Müdürlük Onayı
2- Anket Çalışması

Adres: ŞEHİTLİK MAHALLESİ ESKİ EĞİTİM FAKÜLTESİ
BİNASI YENİŞEHİR/DİYARBAKIR
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e-posta: arge21@meb.gov.tr

Bilgi için: HATİP YAVUZ /MEMUR
Tel:

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8. CURRICULUM VITAE

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Date of Birth : 21/09/1994

Place of Birth : Adana

Marital Status : Married

E-mail : hulyaserenkaya94@gmail.com

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2017-2020: Çağ University, Institute of Social Sciences, Department of English Language Education, Mersin, Turkey (MA).

2014-2015: Stockholm University, Erasmus+ Student Exchange Programme, Faculty of Education, Department of Language Education, Stockholm, Sweden (BA).

2012-2016: Çukurova University, Faculty of Education, Department of English Language Education, Adana, Turkey (BA).

2008-2012: Yüreğir Halıcılar Anatolian High School, Adana, Turkey.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

2018-…: English Language Teacher, Ministry of National Education, Diyarbakır

2017-2018: English Language Teacher, Private Mektebim Bilfen Anatolian High School, Adana

CERTIFICATES

- Creative Drama Instructor / Leadership Course Program (Adnan Menderes University Continuing Education Centre, January 2018-February 2019)
- Effective Classroom Practices (13th GKV ELT Conference, 2018)
- Effective Communication with Adolescent and Risk Management (Mektebim Academy, 2018)
- Language Teaching and Learning Strategies (Çukurova University, Faculty of Education, English Language Education Department, 2014)