



R.T.

UFUK UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAMME

**CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS ENCOUNTERED IN ENGLISH
TEACHING AT A SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN AN
ENGLISH MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION STATE UNIVERSITY**

MASTER'S THESIS

FATMANUR ÜNKESEN GÜDÜK

SUPERVISOR

ASSOC. PROF. DR. CEYHUN KARABIYIK

ANKARA

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BİLDİRİM

Hazırladığım tezin tamamen kendi çalışmam olduğunu ve her alıntıya kaynak gösterdiğimi taahhüt eder, tezimin kâğıt ve elektronik kopyalarının Ufuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü arşivlerinde aşağıda belirttiğim koşullarda saklanmasına izin verdiğimi onaylarım:

- Tezimin tamamı her yerden erişime açılabilir.

26.06.2024

Fatmanur ÜNKESEN GÜDÜK

DEDICATION



To my lovely sons Arden & Uras

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ÖZ

ÜNKESEN GÜDÜK, Fatmanur. Türkiye’de İngilizce Eğitim Veren Bir Devlet Üniversitesindeki Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulunda İngilizce Öğretimi Sırasında Karşılaşılan Sorunlar ve Çözüm Önerileri, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2024.

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, Türkiye’de eğitim dili İngilizce olan bir devlet üniversitesinin Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulunda İngilizce öğretimi sırasında karşılaşılan sorunların incelenmesi ve çözüm önerilerinin sunulmasıdır. Yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme yönteminin kullanıldığı bu çalışmanın evrenini ve örneklem grubunu Türkiye’de İngilizce eğitim veren bir devlet üniversitesinin yabancı diller yüksekokulunun İngilizce hazırlık bölümünde görev yapan 10 öğretim görevlisi oluşturmaktadır. Toplam 9 sorunun yer aldığı bu çalışmada öğretim elemanlarından toplanan verilerin analizinde yüzde frekans analizi yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. Çalışma kapsamında yapılan analizler sonucunda; Öğretim elemanlarının %50’sinin bölgelerindeki metinle etkileşim eksikliğinden dolayı okumada sorun yaşadıkları, bölgedeki kelime öğrenme stratejilerine ilişkin bilgi eksikliğinden dolayı da zorluk yaşadıkları tespit edilmiştir. Tüm bunlara ek olarak öğretim üyelerinin çoğunluğu (%40) öğrenci motivasyonunun düşüklüğü nedeniyle İngilizce öğretiminde zorluk yaşamakta, ayrıca derslerde konuşma sürecinde karşılaştıkları en büyük zorluk olarak; öğrencilerin etkinliklerde yaşadıkları içsel ve dışsal kaygıları nedeniyle yetersizlik ve çekingenlik duydukları ifade edilmiştir. Öğretmenler, sınıfa yönelik konuşma etkinlikleriyle bu utangaçlığın üstesinden gelebilecek bir çözüm süreci geliştirmişlerdir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Yabancı Dil, İngilizce, Eğitimde Yaşanan Zorluklar

ABSTRACT

UNKESEN GUDUK, Fatmanur. Challenges and Solution Suggestions Encountered During English Teaching at the School of Foreign Languages at a State University in Turkey, Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2024.

The main purpose of this study is to see the analysis and solution suggestions you made while teaching English at the School of Foreign Languages of a state university in Turkey where the medium of instruction is English. The semi-interview interview method is generally and commonly used in this department. There are 10 lecturers working in the English preparatory department of the foreign languages school of a state university in Türkiye that provides English education. Percentage analysis methods were used in the analysis of the total data from these faculty members, which included 9 questions. As a result of the analyzes carried out within the scope of the study; 50% of the faculty members have challenges in reading due to the lack of communication with the text in their region, and difficulties are experienced due to the lack of knowledge about word learning methods in the region. In addition to all this, 40% of instructors experienced difficulties in teaching English due to low student motivation, also the biggest ones they encountered in the process of speaking in classes; expressions of inadequacy and timidity arise due to the internal and external concerns experienced by the events during the speech process. The instructors have developed a solution process that can overcome this shyness with classroom talk activities.

Keywords: Foreign Language, English, Difficulties in Education

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INTRODUCTION

This section provides the background of the study, statement of the challenge, the purpose and research questions of the study, the study's significance and the key concepts and terms employed in the study.

Background of the Study

In our country, foreign language teaching is an issue that is given great importance and meticulously emphasized. For years, various studies have been carried out to increase the effectiveness of foreign language teaching. Against this background, various changes in the education system have been proposed and implemented. For example, the introduction of foreign language teaching at the primary school level and the changes made in class hours are a result of these efforts (Çelebi & Narinalp, 2020). The aim of English teaching in our country is to serve Turkish citizens to use a common language effectively in order to enable them to communicate with citizens of other countries, and thus to facilitate our country to reach the advanced level it deserves in political, scientific, military, economic and social fields (MEB, 2006). Demirel (1999), language education systems in universities; he stated that the purpose of the university is determined gradually according to the purpose of the faculty, the purpose of the department and the purpose of the course.

In this context, according to Sağlam (2016), the importance of foreign language in higher education in our country leads to different practices in various universities. In some universities, the language of instruction is entirely English, while in others, education is given in English in certain departments. After student registration, various level exams are held in most universities to determine the English knowledge levels of newly registered students and students below a certain level are offered a preparatory class for 1 year. In this preparation process, students are intensively taught English speaking, writing, listening, reading and grammar skills. This practice allows students to start their university education more prepared and improves their foreign language skills. In a study conducted by Gökdemir (2005), it has been determined that some difficulties arise in the language learning of students due to the rapid continuation of the program they apply to train the curriculum of some universities.

Haznedar (2010) states that the main reasons that prevent effective teaching of a foreign language are language teaching approaches and policies implemented. In addition, challenges such as lack of qualified teachers, crowded classrooms and inadequate physical infrastructure negatively affect this process. Soner (2007), on the other hand, listed factors such as insufficient number of teachers, inadequacy of teachers in foreign language and teaching methods, big class sizes, lack of equipment, students' lack of understanding of the importance of foreign language and limited opportunities to practice as the reasons for failure. In addition to these, Özoğlu (2010) states that factors such as the physical and technological infrastructure of the educational environment, school management, and the active participation of the school-parent association directly or indirectly affect educational efficiency.

The challenges experienced in English teaching between countries are also valid for Türkiye. According to Demirpolat (2015), although some countries have shown moderate level of success, English education has been expressed as challengeatic. In Türkiye, on the other hand, there are a number of challenges in English language teaching. According to Paker (2006), these challenges are generally listed as lack of sufficient level and number of teachers, lack of materials and equipment, and student motivation. Again, according to Adalı (2018), teachers' background, lack of formation and lack of quality, lack of textbooks, materials, equipment and physical infrastructure used in schools are seen as important challenges. Many English teachers express the difficulty of applying new methods in crowded classrooms and take refuge in traditional methods, and in some cases, it is stated that students do not have sufficient speaking or writing skills (Soner, 2007). Although there is some truth in these findings, it would be a wrong and superficial approach to blame teachers directly. According to Haznedar (2010), teachers who are directly affected by the decisions but are not included in the decision-making processes of foreign language education have difficulties in integrating into the system. Another dimension of the challenge of foreign language teaching is the debate on why successful foreign language education systems in other countries do not work in Türkiye (Demirpolat, 2015). According to the literature reviews, there are various challenges in foreign language teaching, but it has been observed that there are almost no studies dealing with the challenges faced by instructors during English teaching. In this context, it is thought that the findings discussed in the current research will also contribute to the academic staff teaching in English, especially in universities.

Statement of the Challenge

Although time, effort and cost are spent intensively on foreign language teaching from preschool to higher education level in our country, inadequacies are observed in achieving the targeted results. These inadequacies are based on the lack of a holistic approach to foreign language teaching in our country, inadequate conditions for learning and the existence of negative factors affecting the foreign language acquisition process (Demirel, 2003).

When the studies in the literature on the difficulties encountered in foreign language learning and teaching are examined; in a study conducted by Evue (2013), it was found that the challenges encountered in foreign language teaching are; indiscipline among students, inadequacy of teachers in effective teaching and inadequacy of course content. In another study by Bozavlı (2015), inadequate level of students' readiness to learn a foreign language, material and technological deficiencies were stated as factors that negatively affect foreign language teaching. In a study conducted by Özmat and Senemoğlu (2020), it was concluded that learning materials and course books were ineffective. In addition, it was found that the inadequacy of materials made English language learning difficult. In a study conducted by Çelebi and Narinalp (2020), it was determined that factors such as exam-oriented training of students, insufficient repetition, inadequacy of textbooks, inadequacy of curriculum, high class sizes, lack of resources and insufficient in-service training opportunities make foreign language learning difficult. Language is taught through four basic language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Comprehension includes listening and reading skills; expression includes speaking and writing skills (Kavcar et al., 1999). Comprehension means grasping the meaning of speech and writing. Göçer (2016) emphasizes that listening and reading are actually a process of understanding. The expression of feelings, knowledge, thoughts and concrete objects in writing and/or words is called narrative (Tekin, 2023). Comprehension and expression are complementary skills. It is thought that a deficiency in one or more of these skills will bring along some challenges in the process of learning and teaching a foreign language.

Aim of the Study

The study aims to understand the challenges faced by instructors in teaching and learning a foreign language, identifying if these challenges are specific to skills or sub-skills, and to explore whether their approaches to addressing these challenges are similar. Additionally, this study aims to gain insight into instructor's perceptions regarding the causes of these challenges and potential solutions.

Significance of the Study

The need to know a foreign language and the traces of all research in this direction go back to the ancient periods of human history. In our age when interpersonal communication and communication are increasing, people have decided to learn different languages in order to find a common language. Language learning has brought with it many challenges that need to be discussed. Different theories have been developed to solve these challenges and different theories of language learning have emerged. Despite all these attempts, final solutions to the challenges in language learning have not yet been found. For these reasons, discussions about foreign language teaching continue (Tapan, 1995). Learning a foreign language is not only about memorizing the phrases, words, and rules of the language, but also about using the language effectively through the four basic skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening). It can be said that the school's English education is mainly focused on passing grades, completing courses according to the standards set at the beginning of the semester, and preparing students for exams. Foreign language education for out-of-school or private purposes is based on more common situations, such as developing communication skills in the target language and meeting employer expectations. Even if individuals do not have detailed information about their individual learning styles, they start their foreign language learning with beliefs about how they should learn from their previous education and daily lives.

There are important challenges that affect and hinder education and training in Türkiye. These challenges affect the success of different courses as well as foreign language teaching. Lack of equipment, lack of resources, teacher challenges, lack of curriculum and materials, lack of language classes in most schools, crowded class sizes, poor quality of textbooks and parents' indifference to the subject are among the main challenges. In addition to these, there are some challenges such as the rapidly increasing population rate,

migration, low number of schools, dual education and combined classroom practice (Erbaş, 2013). Although significant progress has been made on some of these issues, it seems that fundamental challenges remain. In this context, in the present study, the opinions of English teachers about the difficulties experienced in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language and their solution suggestions have been examined.

Research Questions

1. Are there any challenges encountered by instructors while teaching English in preparatory classes?
2. What are the causes of these challenges?
3. What are the solutions to overcome these challenges?

Definition of Key Terms and Concepts

This section offers a concise overview and elucidation of the key terms and concepts recurrently used within this study. The following definitions are presented with the aim of facilitating comprehension of the terminology used.

Foreign Language: All languages spoken by people other than their mother tongue are defined as foreign languages. (Çorlu, 2024).

English: English, which belongs to the Indo-European language family and was shaped by natural evolution in England, is also a widely used language in the United States, Canada, Australia and other countries under British influence. (Bozdağ, 2022).

Challenges: Learning a new language is a process in which the student must accept the difficulties they will face and the benefits they will gain. Difficulties in the language learning process are often associated with learning the phonetics, grammar, vocabulary, and culture of the language. Phonetic difficulties arise especially due to the fact that the sounds of a new language are unusual. Students may experience difficulties with correct pronunciation and production of sounds. Grammatical difficulties, on the other hand, arise especially for students who have to learn and apply the grammatical rules of a new language. Understanding and using the structural rules of language can be time-consuming and complex for students. Word learning difficulties are specifically related

to learning the meanings and uses of words of a new language. Comprehending the meaning of new words and using them correctly can be challenging for students. Finally, cultural difficulties are another obstacle encountered in the process of learning a new language. Understanding the cultural habits and contexts of a new language can be challenging for students, but it also allows them to dig deeper into the language and understand real-life scenarios in which the language is used. (NLP, 2023)



CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Introduction

Nowadays, speaking a foreign language has become a necessity, not a luxury. At a time when communications are easily provided from one end of the world to the other, an individual need to know at least one foreign language to be aware of developments, to be able to follow up on developing technology and to bring the society in which he lives to a more prosperous level (Saygin, 2023). In addition, a foreign language enables the individual to recognize, understand and broaden his or her horizons. The era in which we live is a time when technological advances are taking place very rapidly, and boundaries are disappearing. Capturing these developments is undoubtedly the goal of all societies. This goal can be achieved by learning foreign languages. (Su Bergil, 2010)

In the current century, especially in science and technology, rapid change and progress are taking place in all fields. Therefore, individuals need to have many characteristics in order to keep up with this change. In addition, it is a known fact that knowing a foreign language and being able to communicate in a foreign language are among the necessary skills. In this context, many articles and research studies have been conducted. However, it is thought that this thesis will guide the curriculum, universities and English teachers with the difficulties faced by the instructors in the preparatory schools and the solutions they offer.

Developing technology has brought with it the necessity of at least one foreign language proficiency and studies on foreign language teaching and learning have increased in line with this foreign language need. According to many studies, students and teachers learning foreign languages in Türkiye experience many challenges. At this point, the importance of foreign language teaching emerges. It has been confirmed by practices that it is not possible to adhere to a strict method in foreign language learning and teaching, and that single-method teaching practices are difficult and always the cause of failure (Doğan, 2012).

English is one of the most widely spoken and taught languages worldwide. This language is widely used in areas such as global communication, business, science and technology. Knowing English not only offers international opportunities to individuals, but also provides some advantages to their careers. Of course, every language has its own challenges. It can be said that grammar rules, wide vocabulary, pronunciation differences and cultural differences are at the top of these difficulties. In overcoming these difficulties faced by students, it is thought that it is very important to practice regularly, to use effective teaching methods and to benefit from motivating educational materials. Successful English learning allows individuals to communicate more effectively with the world and to be successful on a global level. It is thought that the difficulties encountered in this process can be overcome with the right strategies and support, thus making language learning more efficient and enjoyable.

Learning at least one foreign language is important at every stage of life. In recent years, factors such as the advancement of technology, the increase in international trade, tourism and education emphasize the necessity of foreign language knowledge. However, there are some difficulties in fulfilling this requirement, which Türkiye is also affected by. According to Arslan and Akbarov (2010), despite the importance Türkiye attaches to foreign language education, its success in foreign languages remains below the desired level. In the globalizing world, Türkiye also has goals such as keeping up with innovations and becoming a member of the European Union (EU). The role of foreign language in achieving these goals cannot be denied. While EU countries expect students to know at least two foreign languages, it is a minimum requirement for every university student in Türkiye to know at least one language. Students should start learning a foreign language from an early age and continue without language challenges when they come to university. However, many students start university without sufficient knowledge of a foreign language. The solution of this challenge is usually postponed to the higher education stage (YÖK, 2007). Failure to learn English at the high school level negatively affects language skills in higher education. This situation negatively affects the cost of teaching and the quality of education in higher education institutions that provide education in English (British Council, 2014).

Of course, studies have been carried out in our country for years in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness in foreign language teaching. Some of these are the

changes in the education system, the introduction of foreign language teaching from primary school and the changes in class hours. However, it is difficult to say that the expected result can be obtained despite the effort and studies made. It is not possible to attribute the reason for this failure to a single reason. Various reasons affecting the educational environment can be mentioned.

Işık (2008) thinks that the foreign language teacher training system, methodological errors and deficiencies in language planning are the main mistakes in foreign language teaching. The passivity of the student, the teacher-centered classes, little use of technological tools, the inability to assimilate the methods and approaches, and the fact that the exam system pushes foreign language teaching to the background are some of the reasons why it cannot reach the desired point in the foreign language teaching process (Kuşçu, 2017). In this context, the opinions of English teachers about the difficulties experienced in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language were examined.

According to Demirel (1999), English has been seen as a tool to compete in the labor market and to access better educational opportunities, as well as being necessary to maintain economic, social and commercial relations (Kırkgöz, 2005). In this context, with the increasing international relations with European countries and the United States, Türkiye's accession to NATO and the impact of the European Union process, English has become increasingly important in Türkiye (Kırkgöz, 2009). The issue of English language teaching has been discussed in national education policies and arrangements have been made in the education system and it has been reflected in the curriculum (Demirel, 2021).

The importance of knowing a foreign language is emphasized in terms of Türkiye's ability to establish relations with the outside world (Demirel, 1999). English, which is an internationally accepted language, stands out as a feature that provides maximum advantage in the country, education and business life. Because in today's information age, it is possible to be aware of educational developments around the world and to have a prestigious job with a good level of English knowledge. For this reason, English is in a priority position compared to other languages (Kırkgöz, 2005). In a study conducted by Polat (2001) with university students, 70% of the participants stated that it is necessary to learn English.

English language education and teaching is a matter of great importance around the world. The Council of Europe has made efforts in this area by establishing common reference levels to define the communicative language skills that will shape English language learning. In this way, it is aimed to improve the characteristics of English education and cooperation, to measure objective criteria and to increase student mobility. In our country, as in the rest of the world, foreign language teaching is given importance and language teaching programs at the secondary education level are frequently updated. In addition to the cognitive field, affective characteristics such as motivation, attitude and self-efficacy also play an important role in the success of English education (Yanar & Bümen, 2012). These affective factors can affect students' participation and achievement in the language learning process. Therefore, it is important not only to focus on grammar and skills in English education, but also to increase students' motivation and self-efficacy. Taking these factors into account contributes to the creation of a more effective and efficient language learning environment.

Today, it is stated that it is not possible to determine the exact number of languages used by different societies around the world, but in general, this number is between three thousand and three thousand five hundred (Demirel, 2010). Some sources claim that this number is more than four thousand or even five thousand. Despite the fact that there are so many languages in the world, the fact that only the mother tongue is insufficient in communication in the developing world conditions makes individuals feel the need to learn a foreign language. The first language learned is called the mother tongue or the first language, while the languages learned later are called foreign languages (Özdemir, 2006). Today's people need to learn at least one foreign language in order to be able to communicate with people from other countries in their professional lives, to read and evaluate written documents in other languages, and to communicate with foreign countries (Ceyhan, 2007). However, the number of languages learned as a foreign language is limited. The political and economic situation of a country is one of the criteria that make it necessary for a language to be learned as a foreign language by individuals of other nations (Demirel, 1987). The languages of influential countries around the world are learned by individuals of other nations. In this way, access to the technologies and other issues of these countries can be provided. In this context, the importance of learning English, which is the most widely used language in the world, is increasing (Gedikoğlu, 2005).

With the proclamation of the Republic in 1923, Türkiye gained a democratic regime and aimed to reach the level of modern civilization. Our country is an economic and cultural bridge between Asia and Europe. In addition, it has become inevitable to use English, which is the official language of NATO, the UN and many international organizations, in Türkiye's economic, military, political and cultural relations (Demirel, 2010). For this reason, English has been the most widely preferred and taught foreign language in our country since the 1950s.

By carrying out many studies in the context of foreign language from the past to the present, it can be expressed that it is desired to contribute to the development of foreign language in every sense, especially in public and private institutions (Güzel, 2023). In this context, the contributions to foreign language learning, which started with pre-school education, still continue today.

The 1950s in Turkey can be described as a period of rapid expansion of schools providing education in foreign languages or offering foreign language education (Demirel, 1987). According to Şakiroğlu (2015), the following is expressed by programming in language education in higher education. According to Karabıyık (2016), English preparatory courses are an important part of the overall curriculum of universities in Türkiye. Most undergraduate programs require students to attend English preparatory classes for at least one year and to pass the end-of-year English achievement exam. An important factor that determines the success of these courses for educators is the level of participation of students in the course (Karabıyık, 2016).

The preparatory schools offering foreign language education at universities in Turkey differ structurally. These differences include the nature of proficiency exams, the organization of courses according to levels, material selection and usage, and class hours. According to the Social Sciences University of Ankara School of Foreign Languages' regulations (n.d.) the English Preparatory Program is a mandatory one-year education program where intensive English education, up to 30 hours per week, is provided, and the medium of instruction is 100% English for departments with English as the medium of instruction and 30% for other departments. Students enrolling in departments where the medium of instruction is English are required to attend the English preparatory program for one year if their English language proficiency is below the level

determined by the university. Students who score at least 70 points in Foreign Language Proficiency Level Determination Exams (YDS/YOKDİL) administered by ÖSYM (within the last five years) or an equivalent score in internationally recognized foreign language exams accepted by the Higher Education Council (CPE, CAE, TOEFL, IBT, PTE Academic taken within the last two years), or those who score a passing grade of 75 in the exemption exam conducted by the Preparatory School (YDYO) at the beginning of the academic year can be exempt from preparatory education and start their education directly in their faculties. The preparatory class program is an intensive English teaching program covering three language levels based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2013). Classes starting at the basic level cover levels A2, A2+, and B1, while classes starting at the intermediate level cover levels A2+, B1, and B2. Depending on their foreign language proficiency levels, students begin an 8 or 16-week foreign language education course.

In order to teach a foreign language well to learners, teachers need a variety of teaching methods and learning environments where they can use these teaching methods effectively. Perhaps the most important of these elements after the teacher and the most lacking of foreign language learning in our country is a productive learning environment. Several teaching methods commonly employed in language education are challenging to implement within our existing school systems. These methods may not be adequate for classroom use.

As known, 4 basic skills are required for learning in a foreign language. The basic skills required to use language as a communication tool are listed as follows (Demirel, 1999):

- a) Listening comprehension,
- b) Reading comprehension,
- c) Writing,
- d) Speaking skills.

According to Umagan (2007), listening skill is an effective communication process to receive, interpret and make sense of messages, not just passively listening. It

requires having good listening skills to understand correctly and get feedback. In communication, although the speaker seems to be more active, the listener must also participate and take an effective role; otherwise, communication cannot be fully established. Some linguists, on the other hand, have argued that listening and hearing are different concepts. According to them, listening is a spiritual process and requires paying attention and drawing conclusions from what is heard in order to understand what is heard (Gogus, 1978). According to Yılmaz (2010), reading skill, on the other hand, is a complex process of comprehending, understanding and perceiving thoughts and feelings in any writing. Reading is not just about making sense of letters and symbols. What really matters is the comprehension process, which is the main goal of the reading activity. Reading skill can also be defined as the effort to comprehend the meaning of these symbols along with the vocalization of the letters or symbols seen (Yıldız, 2010). In foreign language teaching, the focus is usually on reading and writing skills first, while speaking skills are handled at later stages. Writing skill can be developed through intensive reading and practice. This skill is effective in many areas such as increasing the ability to think in a foreign language, expressing emotions, organizing information in an orderly way, using language effectively, writing down what has been learned and communicating in writing. Oral expression, on the other hand, is the expression of mental contents through words. Sharing thoughts and generating new ideas in the process is important in terms of developing the ability to respond quickly by doing mental exercises. School-age children learn the structures and patterns of their mother tongue by listening to the conversations around them. By the time they reach the fourth grade of primary school, children begin the education of a second language in addition to their mother tongue. Foreign language skills should be developed by teaching the grammatical structure and patterns of the foreign language, along with regular error corrections. In the learning process, self-confidence plays a critical role in the development of the ability to communicate and speak with the speakers of a different language (Calp, 2010).

English is one of the most widely spoken and taught languages worldwide. This language is widely used in areas such as global communication, business, science and technology. Knowing English not only offers international opportunities to individuals, but also provides some advantages to their careers. Of course, every language has its own challenges. It can be said that grammar rules, wide vocabulary, pronunciation differences and cultural differences are at the top of these difficulties. In overcoming these difficulties

faced by students, it is thought that it is very important to practice regularly, to use effective teaching methods and to benefit from motivating educational materials. The difficulties encountered and the solutions offered in this context emphasize the importance of my research thesis.

1.2. Challenges Encountered During Reading Activities

Marzban and Barati (2016) emphasize that reading in a foreign language should not be considered as a passive process, stating that one of the most important skills taken into account in universities in recent years is the ability to read in a foreign language. Noor (2016) also identifies reading as one of the most important skills in modern society that can develop through teaching and learning. As can be understood from these views, reading has an important place in foreign language learning and teaching and has been accepted as one of the main ways to acquire knowledge for academic purposes.

It is emphasized that it is important to understand the text correctly in order for an effective reading to take place. Comprehension is a strategic process by learners making predictions following cues in the text and supporting those predictions with background knowledge (Paris & Hamilton, 2009). When the research on reading comprehension skills are examined, it is observed that there are remarkable changes in perspective. While previous studies have focused more on the identification and classification of reading comprehension strategies (Anderson, 1999), current research has focused on the methods learners use to understand text and the ways they use to achieve meaning (Gorsuch, Taguchi, & Umehara, 2015).

1.2.1. Solutions to Overcome These Challenges

Lee and Tsai (2017) emphasize the necessity of the learner to have various cognitive skills in order to understand what he reads, stating that comprehension is a constructivist process. In this process, it is important for the learner to make connections between what he reads and what he already knows, and to understand the ideas put forward in the text.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) aims to set out international criteria that can be adopted in foreign language teaching processes and specifies the acquisition of reading comprehension skills: (Council of Europe, 2013);

C2 Level: Able to understand and critically interpret almost any form of literary language, including literary and non-literary writing in abstract, structurally complex or highly colloquial language. Understand comprehensive, long and complex texts by evaluating subtle differences in style and implicit or explicit meanings.

C1 Level: Can understand in detail long complex texts that are not related to or related to their field of expertise, if they can re-read the parts that are difficult for them.

B2 Level: Can read independently to a high degree, adjusting the reading style and speed according to different texts and purposes, and selectively using appropriate reference sources. He has a vocabulary of extensive reading but may have some difficulty with a small number of repetitive words.

B1 Level: Can read clear realistic texts on topics related to his/her field and interest with a sufficient level of comprehension.

A2 Level: Can understand very short, simple texts containing frequently repetitive words, including some internationally shared common words. Can understand short, simple texts on familiar topics of a concrete type, consisting of a lot of repetitive every day or work-related language.

A1 Level: Can understand very short, simple texts by selecting phrases one at a time, selecting familiar names, words and basic phrases, and re-reading them when necessary (Council of Europe, 2013).

1.3. Challenges Encountered During Writing Activities

In the process of teaching writing skills, students are provided with the skills of developing ideas, planning, organizing thoughts and writing in accordance with the purpose. The teaching of these skills is usually carried out by having students do a variety of writing exercises. These studies provide students with the opportunity to write different types of essays such as paragraphs, articles, projects, reports, or blog posts. The assignments given to the students are evaluated in line with the determined "writing skill evaluation criteria". The evaluation process involves determining whether students' writing is fit for purpose, whether thoughts are expressed coherently, and whether they are written in a logical order and plan. At this stage, students' writing challenges and needs

should be identified, and in order to meet their writing needs, principles, cultural differences, writing difficulties and individual differences affecting academic writing acquisition should be taken into account (Silva, 1990).

In applied studies carried out by different authors, it has been stated that students often need paragraph-level training in order to improve their writing skills at an academic level (Dombek & Herndon, 2004). The realization of an academic writing at the text level reveals the necessity of a paragraph-level academic writing training program. For this reason, product-oriented writing, process-oriented writing, genre-oriented writing approaches have been developed in order to provide solutions to these challenges faced by students over the years, and textbooks and skill books that try to teach writing skills have been prepared based on the basic theories of these approaches.

1.3.1. Solutions to Overcome These Challenges

Ünsal (2008) summarizes the methods used in developing writing skills in foreign language teaching as follows:

- Research gap
- Relocation exercises
- Changing the place of the words and writing the sentence exactly
- Writing an essay in accordance with the sample
- Writing a given essay using keywords
- Writing paragraphs by responding to questions
- Creating a text by answering questions in integrity
- Completion exercises
- Completing an unfinished sentence or dialogue
- Creating text from words
- Completing an unfinished text

- Dictated essay writing
- Freelance writing
- Rewriting the names of words, numbers, days of the week, fruits, vegetables, and clothing items that are frequently used in daily life in foreign language learning for easy memorization of students
- Transcribing the images and narrations in the picture, card or video watched.

1.4. Challenges Encountered During Listening Activities

While the ability to listen has an important place in human life as it requires understanding, it is considered a skill that develops spontaneously and is generally characterized with adjectives such as "neglected, lost, and forgotten, orphaned, stepfather" (Aytan, 2011; Dogan, 2010). However, it is necessary to know how to listen in order to have effective communication skills (Dogan, 2010). The ability to correctly understand a word, phrase, or sentence that is heard is a basic requirement for effective listening. Gürel, Tat and Özşenler (2018) stated that one of the striking qualities of listening is that it is "an active and lively action". Being able to understand the spoken word correctly is the beginning of communication and is a skill that a person must develop with a certain effort. In this respect, listening skills have an important place among the four basic skills in language learning. Listening entails not only listening and understanding what the speakers are trying to say, but also responding to the interlocutor, sometimes simultaneously (during natural interaction) and sometimes immediately after listening to oral texts (during a class activity) (Sahin, 2015). According to Yuldashevna (2022), the contribution of four basic skills in acquiring language ability while communicating; It consists of 45% listening, 30% speaking, 15% writing and 10% reading.

Astriyanti et al. (2021) collected data with a 4-point Likert-Type closed-ended questionnaire using a descriptive qualitative method with the participation of 30 university students in their study written to investigate the causes of foreign language listening anxiety. There are 35 items in the questionnaire and they are three-factorial: non-material causes, material-related reasons, and the listener's cognitive process. In the survey, it was determined that 60% of the students had high listening anxiety and 40%

had moderate listening. The most common cause of anxiety was the inability of the listeners to manage the cognitive process correctly. It has been stated that factors such as not understanding what the speakers are saying, not having enough time to think about the information, and missing some information during listening negatively affect rapid comprehension and cause students to worry. In the research, it was emphasized that the mental process of the students should be well managed with the right strategies.

In his study, Chen (2007) examined the effect of English listening self-efficacy, listening anxiety, and perceived value of the English language and culture on English listening performance. 267 university students participated in the study. Among the scales used are English Listening Self-Efficacy Questionnaires, English Listening Self-efficacy Scale, and English Listening Anxiety Measure, Perceived Value of the English Language and Culture Measure, Source of English Listening Self-Efficacy Measure. The data were collected and analyzed with these tools. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the students' anxiety level, listening self-efficacy and perceived value of English language culture were at a moderate level. Students' listening self-efficacy ($r = .74$) and perceived value of English language ($r = .51$) and culture ($r = .42$) were found to positively affect English language performance achievement, but listening anxiety ($r = -.57$) was negatively affected. A negative relationship was found between English listening anxieties and listening performance, and it was observed that listening performance decreased where there was listening anxiety.

1.4.1. Solutions to Overcome These Challenges

Bloomfield et al. (2010) classified the factors that are effective in the development of listening skills in a foreign language under three main headings: listener characteristics, characteristics of the listening text and listening conditions. Listener characteristics include memory, cognitive strategies, foreign language proficiency level, experience and anxiety. The characteristics of the listening text include the length, complexity, layout and vocalization forms of the text. Listening conditions, on the other hand, include elements such as listening time, number of repetitions and the opportunity to take notes. In the literature, it has been stated that factors such as the speaker's accent, pronunciation, pause intervals and frequency, prosodic characteristics of speech and speech speed are important in the development of listening skills (Buck, 2001; Hasan,

2000). In addition, listener characteristics such as the listener's focusing skills, previous auditory experiences in the target language and grammar proficiency are also important in the development of listening skills. In addition, the harmony of the grammar structure of the listener's mother tongue and the foreign language learned is seen as an important factor affecting listening skills (Goh, 2000). Although there are different explanations about the factors that play a role in the development of listening skills in a foreign language, it is emphasized that there is a general consensus on factors such as cognitive, affective, and demographic and the quality of the learning environment (Anckar, 2011; Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). These factors are recognized as essential elements to consider for the effective development of listening skills.

Improving students' listening skills in a foreign language not only increases their academic achievement, but also enables them to effectively understand the language they are learning in real-life situations. In this context, the materials used in the development of listening skills are of great importance (Kim, 2015). In order to enable students to understand the use of language in real life, it is necessary to present the teaching materials used in a meaningful integrity that is relevant to real life (Saeedi & Biri, 2016; Woottipong, 2014). McGrath (2014) emphasizes that the content presented to students should be carefully selected to reflect the natural use of the target language and convey accurate information. However, Mendhelson (2006) states that many listening materials used in foreign language teaching are based on audio recordings of written texts, rather than presenting the learned language in a natural spoken form. This causes the characteristics of natural spoken language to be lacking compared to written text language. Neglecting features specific to natural spoken language, such as subtractive sentences, sound similarities, voice drops, and pauses, can negatively affect the development of listening skills. For this reason, it can be said that the fact that the listening materials are closer to the natural spoken language and reflect real-life situations may allow students to develop their listening skills more effectively.

1.5. Challenges Encountered During Vocabulary Activities

The word can be defined as "a sound or a unity of sound with a meaning, a word". Harris and Spay divided the words into "expressive" and "received" (Akyol, 1997). In this context, words are acquired through reading and listening, while expressive words

are used in speaking and writing skills. Language exists within certain rules and systems. As individuals learn their native language, they make sense of words and concepts by interacting with their environment. In this process, unconscious learning can also take place. However, after a certain age, children begin to question the objects they see around them and enter a conscious learning process. In foreign language learning, it is more difficult to talk about this type of natural learning; because individuals usually learn words in a foreign language in a formal and structured way.

Ingebretsen (2009) argues that starting foreign language teaching with vocabulary teaching will increase students' motivation and provide a more efficient learning process. However, Ingebretsen also found grammar teaching important and stated that grammar should be consulted in understanding the subjects. Words are the basic building blocks of language. It allows us to express our thoughts and needs. Therefore, it is necessary to find and apply the most effective methods and techniques in order to keep words in memory and be able to use them when needed. Otherwise, when we do not have enough vocabulary, we hesitate to speak, and when we have to express ourselves, we may have to use dictionaries all the time.

1.5.1. Solutions to Overcome These Challenges

According to Ghazal (2007), words are the pillars of a language's building; because they label objects, events, and ideas. Without words, people cannot express the meaning they mean. According to Ekmekçi (1999), while grammatical rules form the skeleton of the language, words constitute the most vital organs of this skeleton, and it is useless to know only the rules of grammar without the use of words. Harmer and Khan (1991), on the other hand, emphasized that it is not enough to teach words alone, but also to show how word groups are used, and said: "Words do not live alone, they must be based on each other."

Lai (2005) drew attention to the biological aspect of word learning and stated that memorizing words through repetition in short-term memory and placing them in long-term memory through various methods is the most effective word learning method. In addition, many studies have shown that gender is also effective on word learning. Banich (2004) approaches this issue from a biological point of view, arguing that men

and women differ in terms of their cognitive skills and learning styles. These differences are due to physiological characteristics and cognitive developments in the brain.

Vocabulary refers to the amount of vocabulary a foreign language learner has. According to Antonacci and Callaghan (2012), vocabulary is a strong predictor of a child's future success. They state that children who have a strong vocabulary in the first years will increase their academic success in the following years. Ekmekçi (1999) suggested that there is a loop between vocabulary and reading. Increased vocabulary allows reading comprehension; this, in turn, increases students' knowledge. Increasing knowledge also helps to strengthen vocabulary.

1.6. Challenges Encountered During Pronunciation Activities

Pronunciation is the correct creation of the sounds in the spoken language in the mouth, intonation, emphasis, timing, rhythm, sound quality and the use of gestures and facial expressions, which have an important place in communication, in harmony. Articulation, on the other hand, is the process of creating sounds by the oral organs involved in speech. In other words, articulation; it is the process of shaping the air coming from the vocal cords by the tongue, jaw, teeth, lips and palate in the formation of sounds, syllables and words. Research has contributed to the determination of the factors affecting the pronunciation skills of the individual.

Studies conducted by Celce-Murcia (1991), Gillette (1994), Graham (1994) have revealed that age, individual's previous pronunciation learning history, individual's pronunciation skill ability, motivation and mother tongue factors affect an individual's pronunciation skills.

1.6.1. Solutions to Overcome These Challenges

Individuals who learn a foreign language may face various difficulties in the learning process. There are several solutions to overcome these challenges. Students' difficulties in learning pronunciation are often caused by reasons that affect motivation, such as the mother tongue factor, age, environment and attitude. However, there are several methods to deal with these challenges. For example, students can practice regularly for correct pronunciation. In addition, it can be helpful for students to listen to speakers in the target language and imitate their pronunciation. As a result, various

methods can be used to improve pronunciation skills, such as regular practice, learning grammar rules, and listening to speakers in the target language.

1.7. Challenges Encountered During Punctuation Activities

İnal (2006) states that writing has an organic connection with basic skills such as listening, reading and speaking. It emphasizes that the writing process includes many parameters such as punctuation marks, meaningful integrity, consistency, spelling rules, handwriting, word selection and usage, and grammar rules. While difficulties in writing skill arise from this comprehensiveness, they can also be affected by the practical dimension of the course. Onur (2023), on the other hand, states that the comma has functions such as separating the elements in the sentence, indicating the relationship between the sentences, emphasizing and giving information in the interludes. It means that the apostrophe is used to indicate possessive suffixes and abbreviated auxiliary verbs. However, there has not been enough research on English punctuation challenges.

1.7.1. Solutions to Overcome These Challenges

According to Onur (2023), in the literature review of the use of English punctuation marks and the difficulties encountered and solution suggestions, it was seen that there was no clear study by the researchers on this subject. However, regarding the use of commas in general, it is thought that students have some challenges in not knowing whether to use commas or semicolons when connecting two independent sentences. In addition, it can be stated that students have some challenges with the use of commas before and after conjunctions. In this context, it is thought that teachers should do some exercises on the use of commas. As a solution to this situation, tables and diagrams showing the use of commas can be used by teachers.

According to Onur (2023), the use of semicolons when connecting independent sentences or in complex lists can also cause some difficulties. Similarly, the correct use of colons when explaining or starting a list can also be said to be a challenge by students. In this context, it can be said that detailed explanations and comparative examples of the use of these signs should be presented to their students by teachers. Sentence completion and correction exercises, which include the use of semicolons and colons, can also be done by teachers.

1.8. Challenges Encountered During Grammar Activities

Grammar is defined as the systematic analysis of the structure of a language (Crystal, 1998). In a broader sense, grammar studies how a language combines and processes words to express longer and more meaningful units (Ur, 2001). There are various approaches and opinions on teaching English grammar. Regarding the need to teach grammar rules, Ur (2001) states: "There is no doubt that knowledge of rules – explicit or implicit – is necessary for mastery of the language. You can't use words unless you know how to put them together." According to Cross (1995), grammar can be taught through "deductive, inductive, and elective" approaches. According to Günday (2018), grammar can be taught with active or passive methods, but the active method, which tries to teach grammar using language skills, is more useful. Thornbury (1999) also proposes "induction and deduction" methods. According to Nunan (2001), grammar should be taught in context. Celce-Murcia (2015), on the other hand, proposes explicit teaching (deduction, induction) and implicit teaching methods (qtd. in; Dilber, 2015). Other suggestions include task-based grammar teaching (Richards, 2002), consciousness-raising method (Ellis, 2002), contextual grammar (Thornbury, 1999), and inclusive framework (Dilber, 2015). These various methods offer different perspectives and enrich the teaching processes so that grammar can be taught effectively.

1.8.1. Solutions to Overcome These Challenges

Topics such as English grammar rules, especially verb tenses, modals, and passive sentence structures, are thought to appear complex for students. The large number of these rules and the fact that each of them has its own exceptions can make it difficult for students to fully understand the rules. In this context, it is considered very important that grammar rules are taught by teachers only and in an understandable way. In order to overcome the difficulties faced by students in terms of grammar, it can be said that explanations supported by examples will provide students with a better understanding of the rules. In addition, it is thought that practical exercises and applied studies should be done where students can reinforce what they have learned.

1.9. Other Challenges Encountered in Foreign Language Teaching

A lot of research has been done on the process of foreign language teaching in our country. These studies reveal various factors that affect the process of learning a foreign language. These factors include the physical conditions of the classroom, teaching methods, techniques and approaches, motivation, materials and factors originating from the teacher or administrator. In some studies, the challenges that arise in terms of teachers and students are also examined. In this section, the studies on the challenges discussed are mentioned and the challenges are examined in detail under the headings.

1.9.1. Motivation Challenges

During foreign language learning, the individual's self-preparation and willingness to the language learning process facilitates language teaching. That is why motivation is an important factor in language learning. In other words, motivation plays a key role in the language learning process as it sets goals and provides direction to the learner (Alizadeh, 2016). Therefore, the individual should feel ready for the process of learning a foreign language. One of the most influential factors in preparing for this process is the teacher. Teachers should strive to increase students' willingness to learn. Teachers should adopt a holistic approach by using activities that increase students' motivation to learn by improving their intrinsic motivation (Al Othman & Shuqair, 2013). For this reason, lack of motivation can negatively affect the language learning process.

In a study conducted by Acat and Demiral (2002); it was concluded that the most important source of motivation in the language learning process of the participants was the beliefs that a foreign language would help them find a job or rise in a career in the future.

Anxiety is one of the causes that reduce the motivation of the student in the foreign language learning process. This is true not only in the process of learning a foreign language, but also in the process of learning it as a second language, such as English. For example, in a study conducted by Macintyre (2007), one of the studies on the relationship between anxiety and motivation and the language learning process; It has been stated that anxiety and motivation play a critical role in the language teaching process.

In the study titled "Validity and Reliability Study of the Difficulties in English Language Learning Scale" carried out by Mehdiyev, Uğurlu and Usta (2017), a scale related to foreign language learning was developed. In this study, attention was drawn to the existence of motivation-related challenges in the language learning process and therefore a scale related to motivation was developed. It was felt necessary to create a valid and reliable "foreign language difficulties" scale to describe the challenges faced by university students in the English learning process. Initially, there were 23 items, but these items were removed due to the low values of some items. At the end of the study, the language learning disability scale was determined as having a four-component structure consisting of 15 items and the reliability value of the scale was calculated as 89%. When all the findings were evaluated, it was stated that this scale can be used to determine the perception of language learning difficulties in teaching English as a foreign language as a result of validity and reliability studies.

1.9.2. Challenges with Students, Teachers and Materials

Another factor that is effective in the foreign language teaching process is teachers. Teachers guide the process of learning a foreign language by guiding students. Therefore, it is important for teachers to constantly improve themselves and keep up with innovations. In addition to their expertise in the field, it is also important for teachers to be able to effectively use materials that students can benefit from. Teachers' deficiencies or inadequacies in materials are one of the factors that can negatively affect the foreign language teaching process. For this reason, teachers need to improve their pedagogical skills and be careful in the selection of materials.

In Demirel's (1991) study titled "Difficulties Encountered in training Foreign Language Teachers in Turkey", the teacher training process is discussed within the framework of a system approach. In this study, three dimensions were examined: input, process and output. In the input dimension, pre-service teachers' cognitive input behaviors and affective characteristics were emphasized. It is emphasized that these characteristics of teacher candidates should be determined and evaluated at the initial stage. In the process dimension, the models used in the teacher training process and pre-service training programs are discussed. The focus is on which model to choose and what kind of training program to implement. In the output dimension, orientation to the teaching

profession, internship and in-service programs were evaluated. At this stage, it is focused on how to evaluate the results of the training process and what the steps required to train qualified teachers can be. Various suggestions have been made in order to eliminate the difficulties encountered in these dimensions and to train qualified teachers. These suggestions are a valuable guide to overcome the difficulties in the teacher training process and to create a more effective education system.

In a study conducted by Evue (2013); challenges encountered in foreign language teaching, it was determined that there was indiscipline among students, inadequacy of teachers in effective teaching and inadequacy of course content.

In another study by Bozavlı (2015), the inadequacy of students' readiness to learn a foreign language, material and technological deficiencies were stated as factors that negatively affect foreign language teaching. However, when the literature is examined, it is stated that, unlike other studies, starting foreign language teaching at an early age facilitates the process. In the article, it was stated that teachers who advocated foreign language teaching at an early age stated that students were more curious and willing at this age. Teachers emphasized that students learn more easily if appropriate methods are used.

In another study conducted by Erdem (2016), it was determined that secondary school students experienced challenges such as the way teachers reacted to student errors, the inadequacy of course materials and the lack of reading comprehension skills in the language learning process, while the way teachers reacted to students in case of errors came to the fore as the most important challenge for high school students. In terms of teachers, the lack of laboratories and libraries in schools, lack of technology and resources were seen as important challenges for secondary school teachers.

In the study titled "Factors Affecting Student Success in Foreign Language Teaching" carried out by Özer and Korkmaz (2016), they aimed to determine the factors affecting foreign language learning and to discuss the causes, types and solutions of these factors. This phenomenology study was conducted in 2014-2015 with 62 English teachers. Data were collected using a semi-structured interview form. The researchers developed an interview form called "Factors Affecting Student Success in Foreign Language Teaching" to be applied to teachers. In the study, the factors affecting foreign

language teaching are discussed in terms of both teacher and student. Among the negative factors related to the teacher, there are factors such as the teacher's negative approach to the students, the teacher-centered nature of the teaching, the inadequacy of classroom management and field knowledge, the lack of feedback and the lack of gestures. Among the negative factors related to the student, factors such as indifference to foreign language, prejudice against English, lack of repetition, weak student-teacher relations, individual differences, and lack of preparation were stated. In addition to these, elements related to the environment and the education system are also mentioned.

In another study conducted by Güçlü and Uçar (2019); challenges in English learning and teaching are generally explained as teacher competence, parent-environment factors, students' interests and attitudes towards language learning, educational policies and curricula, and challenges arising from class size. By examining the challenges in these various fields, the researchers aimed to raise awareness for the effective development of English language learning and teaching processes in Türkiye.

In a study conducted by Özmat and Senemoğlu (2020); it was concluded that the learning materials and textbooks were ineffective. In addition, it has been determined that the insufficiency of materials makes it difficult to learn English.

In the research conducted by Çelebi and Yıldız Narinalp (2020), it was determined that factors such as exam-oriented students, insufficient repetition of students, inadequacy of textbooks, inadequacy of curriculum, high class sizes, lack of resources and insufficient in-service training opportunities make foreign language learning difficult.

In another study conducted by Özmen (2020), it was determined that although students understood the importance of English, they did not make enough effort and did not repeat it. These findings obtained within the scope of the research show the students' awareness of their own English learning processes and their self-criticism skills.

1.9.3. Managerial, Environmental, Methodological and Technical Issues

Another factor that negatively affects foreign language teaching is the inadequate use of teaching techniques and methods. With the rapidly developing technological opportunities, teachers need to be open to change and update their teaching methods and strategies accordingly. It is emphasized that teachers should constantly

improve themselves professionally in order to use effective teaching methods. This can enable students to learn more effectively and positively impact the language learning process.

In a study conducted by Engin (2006), it was revealed that the majority of teachers think that they do not have the knowledge and skills to meet the expectations of students. It has been stated that the question-answer technique is widely used among teachers, but some teachers try different techniques. In addition, in the study, it was stated that the English lesson hours were sufficient, but did not include all the subjects required in the language acquisition process. It has been stated that although teachers prepare teaching plans, they do not have the opportunity to implement them effectively.

In addition to the effective use of methods and techniques by teachers, the influence of school administrators on foreign language teaching is very important. School administrators should eliminate the lack of materials to meet the needs of teachers and prepare the classrooms in accordance with foreign language teaching. Because the teaching process is successfully carried out with the cooperation of teachers, students, administrators and families. Therefore, school administrators must help the teaching process proceed efficiently and effectively by providing resources to meet the needs of teachers.

In the study titled "Where Do the Mistakes in Foreign Language Education Come From?" carried out by Işık (2008), traditional language teaching habits, deficiencies in foreign language education planning, weaknesses in methods and activities, and deficiencies in assessment and evaluation processes expressed in other studies were emphasized. However, the study focused specifically on methods and planning issues and offered solutions to these challenges.

In another study conducted by Altunöz (2017), it was determined that the challenges that negatively affect foreign language teaching by school administrators are the education system, teacher shortage, lack of materials and regional differences. Insufficient time allocated to practice was expressed as teacher training challenges, and lack of development of teachers was expressed as challenges arising from the education system. The lack of a sufficient number of teachers, the lack of self-development of teachers, and teacher-centered education are stated under the heading of teacher shortage.

Lack of visual materials and lack of materials required for foreign language lessons at school/grade level are also among the challenges that negatively affect language teaching.

In another study by Zengin and Ulaş (2020), it was stated that branch teachers should give English lessons instead of classroom teachers. In addition, challenges such as the fact that the textbooks are not suitable for the level of the students and the lack of suitable environments for learning a foreign language have been identified.

The influence of the environment is important in the educational process, and the cooperation of the family, teacher and administrator has a critical role in language teaching. In addition, the environment in which the education is provided, class size and curriculum are among the important factors. In her doctoral dissertation, Ergüder (2005) worked with 10 Anatolian High School and 17 Super High School students with different socio-economic levels in Izmir province and districts. In the study, the "Opinion Scale for Learning English" was developed to obtain data. The results show that the environmental and personal challenges of the students studying in the super high school are more than the students in the Anatolian high school. However, it has been determined that the challenges of the students in the Anatolian high school are more than those in the super high school. On the basis of gender, it was stated that female students were more affected by environmental factors and male students were more affected by personal and teacher-related challenges. However, it has also been emphasized that regional differences negatively affect the foreign language teaching process. It has been observed that the environmental and personal challenges of students born in the Eastern Anatolia region are more than in other regions. In addition, it has been stated that the challenges experienced by the students increase with the increase in the number of children in the family, and the decrease in the education level of the parents and the family income negatively affect the language learning process of the students.

Izquierdo, Zúñiga, and Martínez's (2021) study "Foreign language education in rural schools: Struggles and initiatives among generalist teachers teaching English in Mexico" involves a survey of secondary school teachers teaching English in a rural area in southeastern Mexico. Through this questionnaire, quantitative data were collected about the educational status of teachers and the teaching process. As part of the study, data were collected from 115 teachers from 17 rural secondary schools in southern

Mexico. According to the data obtained, it was determined that among the difficulties teachers faced are professionalization, socio-cultural and educational issues.

1.9.4. Program Challenges, Evaluation and Other Challenges

In the education process, which is subject to a specific program, teachers, administrators, environment, students, materials and families act in cooperation and manage this process. However, the difficulties encountered in foreign language education are not always caused only by teachers, administrators or the environment. These challenges arise from a complex interplay of numerous factors that often influence each other. Factors such as student motivation, students' attitudes towards language learning, support from families, quality of materials used, classroom layout and number of students also play an important role. Therefore, the source of challenges in foreign language education is not limited to a specific stakeholder or factor.

Foreign language education is a process that involves the transformation of theoretical knowledge into practice, and the active participation of students in this process is important. However, studies show that students' reluctance or tendency not to actively participate in the foreign language learning process can negatively affect this process. In the study conducted by Gökdemir (2005), the challenges faced by the students attending English courses in the preparatory departments of universities in Türkiye were examined and solutions to these challenges were presented. In the study conducted with 460 preparatory students studying at Dokuz Eylül University, Ege University, Izmir Institute of Advanced Technology, Istanbul University and Haliç University, the challenges in foreign language education were determined as factors such as theoretical courses, teacher-centered education approach, lack of appropriate classroom conditions, school administration's insufficient importance to language learning and insufficient materials. Steps have been taken to increase the quality of foreign language education by offering solutions to these challenges.

In the thesis study titled "Challenges Encountered in Foreign Language Teaching in Turkey and the Opinions of Teachers and Instructors Towards Foreign Language Schools as a Solution Proposal" carried out by Akdoğan (2010), a research was conducted to determine the challenges in foreign language teaching and to offer solutions. The researcher developed a scale consisting of Likert-type items and open-ended questions to

collect data. Based on the study data, it has been stated that the main challenge in foreign language teaching is the lack of a suitable teaching environment. Other important challenges such as crowded classrooms, low levels of interest and desire of students, lack of materials and challenges with the method were also identified. However, unlike other similar studies, it has been emphasized that students' deficiencies in the Turkish language have emerged as a challenge in foreign language teaching. This finding reflects the importance of the mother tongue in the development of language skills and one of the main challenges in foreign language teaching.

Another study in this field, in a study conducted by Akunova (2018), the challenges encountered in English teaching in Türkiye; inadequate materials, inadequacy of practical applications and incomplete comprehensive programs. In the research, issues such as the education system, students, physical facilities, technology, materials and professional development of teachers in both countries were emphasized. However, it has been observed that the challenges based on "textbooks" and "education system" are more pronounced in both countries.

In the study titled "Learning English in Türkiye: Challenges and Opportunities" conducted by Yaman (2018), the challenges and opportunities of the English learning process were discussed. Among the prominent difficulties in the study, factors such as the qualifications of teachers, the fact that language learning is a time-consuming process, the existing prejudices of the learners, the lack of local books and the ineffective use of assessment and evaluation tools were mentioned. However, unlike other studies, a positive perspective on the foreign language learning process is also presented in the study. As one of the positive aspects, the implementation of up-to-date and effective programs is shown. In addition, elements such as English education starting from the 2nd grade, access to resources provided by technological advances, and opportunities to travel abroad through programs such as Erasmus+, one of the international projects, are also highlighted.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

2.1. Research Design

The research design that was used in this study is phenomenological research design. According to Oral and Çoban (2020), this method, known as phenomenology, allows researchers to examine a specific topic in depth and detail. This study was conducted to identify and describe crucial aspects of the participants' experiences in order to understand how instructors encountered these experiences while teaching English. As Giorgi (1985), Van Manen (1990), Moustakas (1994), and other phenomenologists have noted, the fundamental source that phenomenological study relies on to comprehend the phenomenon is interviewing persons who encounter distinct phenomena based on their own personal experiences. In light of this, the following are some of the characteristics that are essential to the interviews: (1) the general characteristics of the interviews that were carried out, (2) the selection criteria for possible participants, (3) the ethical considerations that are involved in dealing with human participants, and (4) the interviewing processes and some examples. Finlay (2006, 2008) argues that it is crucial to investigate and comprehend the fundamental framework and themes of the real-life encounters of humans.

The primary objective of qualitative research is to uncover the perceptions and experiences of participants. There has been an increase in the prevalence of qualitative studies employing diverse methodologies. Researchers employ a qualitative research design that adopts a phenomenological approach. This framework serves as a guiding principle, offering valuable insights and practical information. The interview method was frequently employed as the primary means of data collection within these perceptions (Koç & Durak, 2020). By conducting interviews, researchers have the opportunity to collect in-depth qualitative data directly from participants, allowing them to capture the participants' real-life experiences and unique viewpoints.

2.2. Setting

The population and sample group of this study, which was carried out in order to present the challenges encountered during English Language Teaching in the School of Foreign Languages in a State University in Turkey, consisted of the lecturers in the English Preparatory Department of the School of Foreign Languages in a state university in Türkiye. In Türkiye, schools of foreign languages are educational institutions located in various universities that provide foreign language education to students. The main purpose of these schools is to provide students with foreign language knowledge, improve their language skills and enable them to communicate in these languages at a professional level. In these schools, a number of trainings are offered in languages such as English, German, French and Russian. These schools, which include a four-year undergraduate education, offer one-year preparatory programs for students who do not have sufficient language skills. The main purpose of these programs is to ensure that students acquire the necessary language skills before starting their education in the department of their choice.

2.3. Participants

The participants of this study are English language instructors at a state university in Türkiye. Based on all these, this qualitative study, which was conducted in the fall semester of the 2023-2024 academic year, included 10 students between the ages of 28-47. The main criterion for selecting these participants was that the researcher worked as a lecturer in this department and the participants were easily accessible. Therefore, convenience sampling method was used as the sample selection method.

In this qualitative study, which was carried out in the fall semester of the 2023–2024 academic year, 10 instructors between the ages of 28 and 47 were included. All of the participants teach English at different levels; A1, A2, B1, B1+ CEFR grade levels. Almost all of the participants have more than 10 years of experience, and each participant has an MA and some have a PHD degree to prove their competence in their field. It is recommended that the number of participants for qualitative research start at 5 (Dworkin, 2012). For this study, the aim was to include 15 participants to ensure sufficient data collection. However, after interviewing the 10 participants, the researcher noticed that similar answers were being repeated and decided to stop the data collection process.

To ensure the confidentiality of the research participants, each individual was assigned a random identification number by the researcher. The assigned numbers range from 1 to 10, and participants are referred to as P1, P2, and so forth. Table 1 below provides the demographic information of the research participants.

Table 1.
Participants' Demographic Information

Participants	Age	Educational Background	Professional Experience
P1	28	PHD	8 years
P2	42	MA	15 years
P3	43	PHD	18 years
P4	46	MA	23 years
P5	40	PHD	17 years
P6	39	PHD	16 years
P7	47	MA	23 years
P8	37	PHD	12 years
P9	43	PHD	22 years
P10	46	PHD	28 years

2.4. Data Collection Instruments

Within the scope of the research, a semi-structured interview form was used as a data collection tool. In studies using this approach, there is a list of questions prepared in advance by the researchers. According to Uluç and Duman (2020), the semi-structured interview method is used to collect some information from different groups of people. According to Ekiz (2020), researchers can both prepare questions in advance and review them during the interview. In this context, within the scope of the current research, three academicians who are experts in their fields were asked to examine the comprehension levels of the questions. After the necessary examinations were made by individuals who are experts in their fields, some changes were made to the questions. Based on their feedback, the questions underwent multiple revisions and the interview was redesigned. The semi-structured interview comprises nine fundamental questions, such as whether any difficulties are encountered during "reading" activities in your classes. What are the

reasons/causes of these challenges? What are your solutions to overcome these challenges? or are there challenges encountered during "punctuation" studies in your classes? What are the reasons/causes of these challenges? What are your solutions to overcome these challenges? (Refer to Appendix 2 for the remaining questions and the form.)

2.5. Data Collection Procedure

Upon receiving approval from the Ufuk University Social Sciences and Humanities Research and Publication Ethics Committee (refer to Appendix 1), the data collection process commenced with participant recruitment. The researcher reached out to the participants. The researcher compiled a list of 15 potential participants, and 15 of them agreed to participate in the study. Academics working at a state university were interviewed face-to-face within the scope of the study. However, after the 10th interview, we achieved data saturation, which prompted us to cancel the final interview and inform the prospective participant accordingly. The researcher scheduled the interviews based on the interviewees' availability and all participants were informed that interviews would be conducted face-to-face, but only one participant chose to use the Zoom platform due to a busy school program, so it was recorded both audio and video. The researcher explicitly reminded them of the confidentiality of their identities and assured them that they could withdraw from the study at any stage, either during or after the interview. Once the participants gave their consent to the interview terms, we requested them to choose a mutually convenient time for the interviews, which we then conducted as scheduled. On average, interviews lasted approximately one hour. The data collection interviews were conducted between January 8, 2024, and February 9, 2024.

2.6. Data Analysis

A theoretical thematic analysis was chosen for this study. Not every statement or line of text is coded in theoretical theme analysis; rather, codes are purposefully developed for sections that are thought to be pertinent to the study issue (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that there is no singular correct approach to conducting research. During the process of analysis, various methods and approaches can be employed. They assert that there is a six-step structure to demonstrate the procedure.

During the data analysis process, the researcher has the freedom to transition between different phases as required or they can simply progress from one phase to another.

The six-phase structure begins by acquainting oneself with the data. The initial and fundamental stage in delving into the data more comprehensively is to engage oneself with it. The researcher begins this process by transcribing all video recordings or carefully listening to each one individually in order to undertake thematic analysis. After transcribing the interviews, the recordings are cross-referenced with the interview notes by simultaneously listening to the interviews and reading the notes. Since there are multiple approaches to conducting theme analysis, there is no one set of guidelines to adhere to when creating a script.

The second part of the six-phase framework involves creating an initial list of ideas. This is an additional stage in data analysis since it allows for easy grouping and organization of the data. Prior to this stage, the transcriptions of the interviews, along with the researcher's notes taken throughout the familiarization process, were printed out. Coding was then carried out manually using colored markers on physical copies to identify potential patterns. The codes are identified and then paired with corresponding data.

The third phase of the framework involves the process of "searching for themes". The process begins once all data have been encoded and all distinct codes have been discovered. This technique involves shifting the study to a more comprehensive level of themes. It incorporates various codes into prospective themes and brings together all the appropriate coded data inside these discovered themes. (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Visual representations aid researchers in categorizing various codes into themes.

The fourth stage is to examine the possible topics that could be discussed. From what Braun and Clarke (2006) have said, this stage is extremely important for refining the themes that have been produced by determining whether or not they are supported by sufficient data or whether or not they require adjustment. After it has been shown that the themes adequately encapsulate the data, a prospective theme map is constructed for the purpose of cross-checking against each and every data set, such as each and every interview. At the conclusion of the third stage, the researcher went back and reread the potential themes together with the codes that were connected with them. The purpose was

to determine whether or not the codes were consistent with the themes and to look for any inconsistencies. We reexamined the data extracts to make sure that they were consistent with the themes that were selected. During this process, certain themes were addressed with a researcher who was working with us to refine their language. This was done to ensure that the themes were more consistent with the facts that they represented. Once the researcher had established that the themes served as general representations of the codes and that they were consistent, the next step was to determine whether or not these themes could be applied to the complete data set that was gathered. This was ensured by doing a thorough examination of each interview on its own to determine whether or not the topics were appropriate for the full data set.

Defining and naming themes is the fifth step in this framework. Braun and Clarke (2006) stress that a topic should not be overly complicated or overloaded with work, nor should it be overly diversified. To accomplish this, researchers go over the accumulated data extracts for each theme again and organize them into a report that makes sense internally and has a narrative that goes with it. Instead of just restating the contents of the given data extracts, the researcher should identify their most compelling features and provide an explanation for their importance. Each theme is given a thorough investigation by the researcher. It is crucial to evaluate how it integrates into the wider narrative that the researcher presents about the data, in connection with the research question or questions, to avoid excessive overlap across topics. The researcher must carefully analyze the themes individually, as well as their interrelationships with one another.

The final stage of the framework involves generating a comprehensive report summarizing the discovered findings. To clarify, the last step is to offer the narrative of the data analysis in a logical and organized manner (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Upon successfully completing the preceding five procedures in the prescribed sequence, the researcher proceeded to the final step of documenting the data analysis.

2.7. Trustworthiness

Qualitative studies concentrate on data that is mainly related to human experience. Therefore, the method that stories about human experience are expressed and given is vital, given that it helps to maintain trust throughout the process of narrating "the

story" (Stahl & King, 2020). There are four essential criteria for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative inquiries: credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. Credibility is to the degrees of coherence and harmony between the responses provided by the respondents and how they are expressed by the researcher. One method employed to enhance trustworthiness is prolonged involvement (Connelly, 2016). The researcher employed this methodology by gathering extensive information regarding the participants' workplaces and histories through a series of questions posed during the initial phase of the interview. The participants were further prompted with follow-up questions to provide further elaboration and clarification on their comments. The researcher additionally rephrased certain participant responses to determine if their statements aligned with the researcher's comprehension. This served as a means to clarify and ensure that there were no misinterpretations between the interviewer and the interviewees. Investigator triangulation was employed as a technique in the study to enhance credibility. The gathered data was examined by a different researcher and thereafter subjected to comparative analysis through talks in order to identify any disparities in their views. Transferability is another crucial criterion in determining the reliability of a study. It pertains to the inquiry of whether the identical investigation can be implemented in diverse circumstances and environments. In order to ensure the generalizability of the study, this research provided a comprehensive elucidation and depiction of the sample size, methodologies and instruments employed, participants involved, and the discoveries made. Hence, the primary purpose was to facilitate comprehension of the study for other researchers aiming to reproduce it in a distinct setting. Reliability and confirmability are two more qualities necessary for upholding trustworthiness. Dependability can be ensured by offering explicit documentation of the research process to the readers. An approach to accomplish this is to establish a verification process, which documents the decisions taken during the study. Confirmability, in the context of a study, pertains to the impartiality of the findings or the degree of consistency in the findings (Connelly, 2016). To meet both of these requirements, the rationales for both analytical and methodological choices were explained as recommended.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

In this part of the study, the analysis of the answers given by the lecturers to the questions within the scope of the study is given.

3.1. Challenges Faced by The Instructors

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that 100% (f=10) of the faculty members who participated in the research experienced some challenges in terms of listening, speaking and writing skills, while 10% (f=1) of the faculty members did not experience any challenges only in the development of reading skills. In addition, it is seen that 100% (f=10) of the faculty members who participated in the research experienced some challenges in terms of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and punctuation. When the other section in the sub-skills section in Table 2 is examined, it was determined that 100% (f=10) of the lecturers had difficulties in teaching English in general.

Table 2.
Challenges Faced by the Instructors

Skills	Existence of Challenges	Yes/ No	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
	Listening	Yes	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	10	100
	Speaking	Yes	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	10	100
	Reading	Yes	P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	9	90
		No	P4	1	10
	Writing	Yes	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	10	100

	Existence of Challenges	Yes/ No	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Sub-skills	Vocabulary	Yes	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	10	100
	Grammar	Yes	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	10	100
	Pronunciation	Yes	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	10	100
	Punctuation	Yes	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	10	100
Others		Yes	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	10	100

Some of the responses given by the participants with respect to the existence of challenges are provided below.

3.1.1. Skills-based Challenges

The answers given by the faculty members to the difficulties they encountered while doing reading, listening, speaking and writing studies are listed as follows;

P3: *“I think the most common difficulty when doing reading activities is that reading is seen as a passive activity and students read passively. Students not using their note-taking skills. This becomes especially difficult with long texts. Thus, the student may get lost in the text and may not read beyond a part of the text, or may not understand it even if he reads it. The main reason for this situation, I repeat, is that the student sees reading as a passive activity. So, if the student interacted with the text, most of this challenge would be solved.”*

P8: *"Especially this semester, I am teaching repeat elementary classes. A challenge I hear a lot from beginner students is that students have trouble*

understanding what they read and cannot write. The reason for this is that students do not have reading habits. If the student has acquired the habit of reading, there will also be success in his writing studies. The basis of writing work is based on reading.

P6: *"If the text listened to is a little above the level of the student, students may have difficulty, so they may have difficulty listening to this text, and in order to prevent this, I may have listened to the text twice, sometimes the text can be read very quickly, in such a case, we try to make this process easier by stopping at some points and asking questions to make the text understandable. Before listening to the listening text, I try to provide a little background on the subject, I try to find out what they know about that subject. If there are difficult words and therefore they have difficulty understanding, I try to teach them a few words beforehand, so I try to avoid this challenge by pre-teaching some words in the pre-listening section."*

P3: *"Of course, the most common difficulty in speaking skills is that students do not feel ready and feel embarrassed. Especially because they are embarrassed, we encounter situations such as not responding, not wanting to talk and not knowing what to say. The way to overcome these difficulties is to practice speaking more. The more speaking activities are carried out, the less students will have such uneasiness in class. I am constantly organizing speaking activities in my class. It is also very important that the student feels ready. Instead of asking questions directly of students and expecting answers right away, I get them to talk to their friends first. Then, I encourage them to have a conversation in a group when necessary. Finally, I try to reduce such uneasiness of students by having them present their speeches to the whole class. These steps help students improve their speaking skills and make them feel more comfortable."*

3.1.2. Sub-skills-based Challenges

The following is a list of the responses that the faculty members provided in response to the challenges that they faced when conducting vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and pronunciation studies:

P3: *"The difficulties experienced by students in the vocabulary learning process are often interrelated. For example, situations such as encountering letter mistakes in writing lessons, trying to learn the word only by reading and underlining it, reveal deficiencies in their word writing skills. Therefore, it is important to give students the habit of keeping a vocabulary notebook. The vocabulary notebook allows them to learn the word not only by seeing it, but also by writing it. My suggestion is to encourage students to keep a vocabulary notebook and to classify words according to their functions and write them together with example sentences. Thus, we make the vocabulary learning process more effective and reinforce it with systematic repetition methods. Also, when I explain vocabulary learning strategies to students, I have them practice and repeat these strategies regularly. In this way, we enable them to be more successful in the vocabulary learning process and to make their vocabulary permanent."*

P1: *"Students have vocabulary-oriented study habits, but sometimes I think they don't do enough to make up for their shortcomings. I have to keep repeating the words. However, they are more motivated when they listen to a word that a friend has successfully pronounced. Also, instead of learning complex sounds like schwa, students avoid exerting themselves in pronunciation to avoid being ridiculed. I have some difficulties when teaching subjects such as minimal pairs or diphthongs, it seems to require some time, especially for low-level students."*

P1: *"Students do not give due importance to punctuation marks in their lessons, I try to reduce students' mistakes by emphasizing the punctuation rules and the importance of these marks in the lessons."*

P2: *"The topic of grammar is a really important topic and I am surprised by the interest of students in this field because they often think that learning English is limited to just grammar. However, they are faced with the fact that their weakest subject is grammar. In this case, it still amazes me how they can fail so much at something they care so much about. I think that they do*

not practice enough in this regard, they are only satisfied with what is explained in class. Although we recommend them to do extra practice, I observe that they do not spare enough time for this. They try to put some concepts on a logical basis, but this is not always possible. When they try to get a job by looking for Turkish equivalents, this can have a negative effect on them. Therefore, I try to emphasize that they need to accept and learn some things instead of questioning everything. Another challenge is the habit of thinking entirely in Turkish. For example, when they think of an expression in Turkish and try to translate it directly word by word, sometimes a meaningless expression can emerge. Lack of knowledge of the English language makes this even more difficult, and as a result, meaningless expressions can result. Deficiencies in vocabulary can lead to grammatical errors, and students find it difficult to understand that learning English by focusing only on grammar and vocabulary memorization is inadequate. The speech and writing challenges our students experience are often rooted in grammar, but I wish they would become aware that they need to work more on this."

3.1.3. Others

Some of the answers given by the instructors who participated in the research stated that they had difficulties due to intensity of the program, lack of language of the students, lack of exam resources and lack of students's motivation.

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P2: *"Of course, there is challenge that I face. One of these difficulties is that I think it would be very different if our students had to study the preparatory school compulsorily, if they were studying it of their own free will. So let's get down to even more basic. When students choose their departments, I think that the prepared motivation of the student who wants to study English willingly will be higher. In summary, I can say that there is a great lack of motivation in our preparatory students due to this situation."*

P1: *"If I talk about the challenges I encountered during the lesson, the biggest challenge in general, especially for this module, is that the program is very intense, so I always enter the elementary groups, I only enter the pre-intermediate class for 2 hours, and the most common challenge I encounter is that I am constantly rushing and teaching so that there is nothing missing in the curriculum, something they see missing in the exam, something they do not see, etc. Unfortunately, I'm missing the contact with my students."*

P6: *"At basic levels, that is, at levels such as elementary (beginner) and pre-intermediate (above-beginner), students' fundamentals can be very weak. We have to take it from scratch because there are not many language skills that students bring from high school. That's why students need more words. Students have limited vocabulary and grammar that they can use in class, as well as in terms of understanding us. That's why I think we should expose them to reading and listening text as much as possible. I think the more they are exposed to the language, the more confidence they can get. I think I can definitely say that I have challenges with this question due to the lack of grammar of the students."*

P5: *"I think there are a lot of challenges that we face. First, you have the big question of placing students at the right level. More precisely, I should say that we make thoughtless decisions. For example, students who took an intermediate level course last year do not need to take a placement test and can immediately move to intermediate or upper-intermediate classes, which I think does not make sense. Because, students don't have the opportunity to use the language. If they don't work on English for three months, they may obviously lose their knowledge of the language. So we definitely need this kind of placement test to know what level they're at."*

3.2. Reasons Behind the Challenges Faced

The instructors who participated in the research identified several of the factors that contribute to the challenges associated with teaching English.

3.2.1. Reasons Behind Skills-based Challenges

The faculty members provided the following list of reasons for the challenges they encountered during their listening, speaking, reading and writing studies:

3.2.1.1. Listening-based Challenges

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that 90% (f=9) of the instructors who participated in the research were doing listening studies in the lessons. It has been determined that students face some difficulties due to lack of note-taking. In addition, it is seen that 10% (f=1) of the lecturers participating in the research have the opinions that the students have difficulty in understanding the texts listened to from the upper levels.

Table 3.
Listening-based Challenges

Causes of Challenges Encountered	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Challenges caused by lack of note-taking	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, P10	9	90
Students' difficulty in understanding texts listened to at higher levels	P6	1	10

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P8: *"I also have challenges doing listening exercises. Students have trouble remembering what they are listening to because their note-taking skills are not developed. Students need to know some strategies for the development of their listening skills."*

P6: *"If the text listened to is a little above the level of the student, students may have difficulty, so they may have difficulty listening to this text, and in order to prevent this, I may have listened to the text twice, sometimes the text can be read very quickly, in such a case, we try to make this process easier by stopping at some points and asking questions to make the text understandable. Before listening to the listening text, I try to provide a little background on the subject, I try to find out what they know about that subject. If there are difficult words and therefore they have difficulty understanding, I try*

to teach them a few words beforehand, so I try to avoid this challenge by pre-teaching some words in the pre-listening section."

3.2.1.2. Speaking-based Challenges

When Table 4 is examined, 100% (f=10) of the instructors participating in the research stated that the biggest difficulty they faced while doing speaking studies; they stated that there was a lack of self-confidence and shyness caused by internal and external concerns that the students experienced during the speaking process.

Table 4.
Speaking-based Challenges

Causes of Challenges Encountered	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Internal and external concerns, lack of self-confidence and shyness experienced by students in the speaking process	P1, P2, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	10	100

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P3: *"Of course, the most common difficulty in speaking skills is that students do not feel ready and feel embarrassed. Especially because they are embarrassed, we encounter situations such as not responding, not wanting to talk and not knowing what to say. The way to overcome these difficulties is to practice speaking more. The more speaking activities are carried out, the less students will have such uneasiness in class. I am constantly organizing speaking activities in my class. It is also very important that the student feels ready. Instead of asking questions directly to students and expecting answers right away, I get them to talk to their friends first. Then, I encourage them to have a conversation in a group when necessary. Finally, I try to reduce such uneasiness of students by having them present their speeches to the whole class. These steps help students improve their speaking skills and make them feel more comfortable."*

3.2.1.3. Reading-based Challenges

When Table 5 is examined, it is stated that 50% (f=5) of the instructors have to do reading work due to the passivity caused by the students' inability to interact with the text. In addition, 30% (f=3) of the instructors who participated in the study stated that they had difficulties due to student concentration and comprehension skills. In addition, 10% (f=1) of the instructors who participated in the research stated that they had challenges due to the lack of suitable materials for students at different levels, while 10% (f=1) stated that they did not encounter any difficulties while doing reading studies.

Table 5.
Reading-based Challenges

Causes of Challenges Encountered	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Passivity in interacting with text	P3, P5, P6, P7, P9	5	50
Difficulties with student concentration and reading comprehension skills	P1, P2, P8,	3	30
Challenges arising from finding appropriate materials for students of different levels	P10	1	10
None	P4,	1	10

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P3: *"I think the most common difficulty in reading is that reading is seen as a passive activity and students read passively. Students not using their note-taking skills. This becomes especially difficult with long texts. In this way, the student can get lost in the text and may not read beyond a part of the text, or even if he does, he may not be able to understand it. The main reason for this situation, I repeat, is that the student sees reading studies as a passive activity. So if the student interacts with the text, a lot of that challenge will be solved."*

P1: *"If I have already read the reading text, I give the unknown words to the students. Sometimes, even if the student does not read the text, it can be the kind that he*

will respond to directly. However, due to the reading texts, the concentration levels of the students are quite low. I'm having a hard time with this. Although I give the meanings of the words in the text, the students have difficulty in terms of understanding what they read."

P10: *"I am having a challenge due to the incompatibility of the level and the material used. "*

P4: *Frankly, I don't have any challenges when I do the reading exercises"*

3.2.1.4. Writing-based Challenges

When Table 6 is examined, it is stated that 40% (f=4) of the instructors have some challenges due to reading habits and lack of reading while doing their writing studies. In addition, 30% (f=3) of the instructors stated that in addition to not using correct grammar and spelling, student writing was bad and students had difficulties in terms of generating ideas.

Table 6.
Writing-based Challenges

Causes of Challenges Encountered	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Emergence of writing challenges due to lack of reading habit	P7, P8, P9, P10	4	40
Failure to use correct grammar and spelling, and poor handwriting of students	P1, P3, P6,	3	30
Idea generation challenge	P2, P4, P5	3	30

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P8: *"Especially this semester, I am taking repeat elementary classes. A challenge I hear a lot from beginner students is that students have trouble understanding what they read and cannot write. The reason for this is that students do not have reading habits. If the student has acquired the habit of reading, there will also be success in his writing studies. The basis of writing work is based on reading in me.*

P6: *"The students' handwriting is very bad and they do not apply the correct grammar rules in their writing."*

P2: *"I think the biggest challenge I face with students is idea generation. I see that students have a lot of challenges in terms of generating ideas when they are doing their writing work. So students can't come up with ideas."*

3.2.2. Reasons Behind Sub-skills-based Challenges

The faculty members supplied the following list of reasons for the challenges they encountered during their vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and punctuation studies:

3.2.2.1. Vocabulary-based Challenges

When Table 7 is examined, it is stated that 90% (f=9) of the instructors have difficulties in their lessons due to the fact that they do not know the vocabulary learning strategies of the students. In addition, 10% (f=1) of the lecturers who participated in the research stated that they had difficulties with comprehending the meaning of the word and the need for context.

Table 7.
Vocabulary-based Challenges

Causes of Challenges Encountered	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Challenges with word learning strategies	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, P10	9	90
Difficulties with comprehension of the meaning of the word and the need for context	P6	1	10

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P3: *"The difficulties experienced by students in the vocabulary learning process are often interrelated. For example, situations such as encountering letter errors in writing lessons, trying to learn the word only by reading and underlining it, reveal deficiencies in their word writing skills. Therefore, it is important to give students the*

habit of keeping a vocabulary notebook. The vocabulary notebook allows them to learn the word not only by seeing it, but also by writing it. My suggestion is to encourage students to keep a vocabulary notebook and to classify words according to their functions and write them together with example sentences. Thus, we make the vocabulary learning process more effective and reinforce it with systematic repetition methods. Also, when I explain vocabulary learning strategies to students, I have them practice and repeat these strategies regularly. In this way, we enable them to be more successful in the vocabulary learning process and to make their vocabulary permanent."

P6: *"Although there are some difficulties that I face in the process of teaching vocabulary, I notice that students find it difficult for them to grasp certain words. In this case, I think it's important to offer more context and support it with example sentences. I explain to students that when teaching a word, not only its meaning, but also its pronunciation and different uses should be emphasized. I also encourage them to personalize the word and learn by relating it to other words. So, I'm trying to overcome this challenge by getting students to learn the word more effectively."*

3.2.2.2. Grammar-based Challenges

When Table 8 is examined, 60% (f=6) of the instructors stated that students had some difficulties in comprehending abstract concepts. In addition, 30% (f=3) of the instructors who participated in the study stated that they had some difficulties due to the students' attempts to memorize the grammar rules, and 10% (f=1) stated that they had some difficulties due to the fact that the students did not repeat the subject.

Table 8.
Grammar- based Challenges

Causes of Challenges Encountered	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Challenges in comprehending abstract concepts	P1, P4, P6, P7, P9, P10	6	60
Building grammar on memorization	P2, P3, P5	3	30
Students' repetition	P8	1	10

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P1: *"Students generally love learning grammar because they listen carefully about grammar issues, but they sometimes encounter challenges with their mother tongue. Difficulties in determining the function of a word in a sentence can also pose a challenge in English learning. Some grammar issues, abstract concepts such as the present perfect tense, can be difficult for students to understand because they do not find a similar response in their own language. This situation is challenging for us.*

P2: *"The topic of grammar is a really important topic and I am surprised by the interest of students in this field because they often think that learning English is limited to just grammar. However, they are faced with the fact that their weakest subject is grammar. In this case, it still amazes me how they can fail so much at something they care so much about. I think that they do not practice enough in this regard, they are only satisfied with what is explained in class. Although we recommend them to do extra practice, I observe that they do not spare enough time for this. They try to put some concepts on a logical basis, but this is not always possible. When they try to get a job by looking for Turkish equivalents or rote approaches, this can have a negative effect on them. Therefore, I try to emphasize that they need to accept and learn some things instead of questioning everything. Another challenge is the habit of thinking entirely in Turkish. For example, when they think of an expression in Turkish and try to translate it directly word by word, sometimes a meaningless expression can emerge. Lack of knowledge of the English language makes this even more difficult, and as a result, meaningless expressions can result. Deficiencies in vocabulary can lead to grammatical errors, and students find it difficult to understand that learning English by focusing only on grammar and vocabulary memorization is inadequate. The speech and writing challenges our students experience are often rooted in grammar, but I wish they would become aware that they need to work more on this."*

P8: *"The students I encounter while doing grammar studies come to class unprepared, they do not examine the topics beforehand and do not repeat them after the lesson."*

3.2.2.3 Pronunciation-based Challenges

When Table 9 is examined, 50% (f=5) of the instructors who participated in the research stated that they had some difficulties in pronunciation studies due to differences in the phonetic structure of Turkish and English. In addition, 40% (f=4) of the instructors within the scope of the study stated that they had some difficulties in ensuring that the students were motivated in word pronunciation and in guiding the students effectively while teaching grammar subjects, and 10% (f=1) of the instructors who participated in the study stated that they had some difficulties in pronunciation studies due to the exam-oriented behavior of the students.

Table 9.
Pronunciation-based Challenges

Causes of Challenges Encountered	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Challenges arising from differences in the phonetic structure of Turkish and English	P3, P4, P6, P8, P10	5	50
Difficulties in keeping students motivated in word pronunciation and guiding students effectively in teaching grammar topics	P1, P5, P7, P9,	4	40
Ignoring word pronunciation and focusing only on the exam	P2	1	10

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P3: " *Most of the difficulties in students' word pronunciation are caused by differences in the phonetic structure of different languages such as Turkish and English. Therefore, when learning new words, it is important to explain these differences to students step by step and provide them with strategies for pronouncing correctly. In addition, listening and repetition exercises are also important in improving pronunciation skills. However,*

the most critical point for me is teaching students the phonetic alphabet, as this helps them understand the correct pronunciation of words."

P1: *"Students have vocabulary-oriented study habits, but sometimes I think they don't do enough to make up for their shortcomings. I have to keep repeating the words. However, they are more motivated when they listen to a word that a friend has successfully pronounced. Also, instead of learning complex sounds like schwa, students avoid exerting themselves in pronunciation to avoid being ridiculed. I have some difficulties when teaching subjects such as minimal doubles or diphthongs, it seems to require some time, especially for low-level students."*

P2: *"Lack of listening habits causes students to have difficulties in pronunciation. When students encounter a new word, they may not have self-confidence challenges due to not knowing the correct pronunciation. All this can be taken care of somehow. However, I think the biggest challenge is that students are exam- oriented. Students literally don't care about pronunciation."*

3.2.2.4 Punctuation-based Challenges

When Table 10 is examined, 60% (f=6) of the instructors who participated in the research stated that they had some difficulties in performing their studies in punctuation marks due to the differences between the students' mother tongue and the target language, and 20% (f=20) stated that they did not have any difficulties because they did not do any work on punctuation marks. In addition to all these, 20% (f=20) of the instructors stated that they had some difficulties due to the fact that the students did not give the necessary importance to punctuation marks.

Table 10.
Punctuation-based Challenges

Causes of Challenges Encountered	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Challenges arising from the differences between students' mother tongue and the target language	P2, P3, P4, P7, P8, P10	6	60
There are no challenges.	P6, P9	2	20
Challenges arising from students' lack of importance to punctuation marks	P1, P5	2	20

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P8: *"There are challenges I face when teaching punctuation. It is especially difficult to teach punctuation. I attribute this to the lack of exposure from students. It's not a challenge that stems from the English language, but it also affects their English because they are not exposed to it in their mother tongue or because they lack knowledge about it. In other words, the differences between the mother tongue and the target language create difficulties for us. Students use ridiculous punctuation where they shouldn't, or they don't use punctuation at all where they should. In my opinion, they do not have a good grasp of the functions of punctuation marks, and they do not take this into account when reading. As a solution, I think that students' awareness should be increased and they should be encouraged to read more. As teachers, we are limited in what we can do. This is something that students should be aware of themselves. Especially when reading text, I think they will have challenges if they don't know the correct punctuation. So I think they need to understand the differences between their own grammatical system and the English grammar system and use their rhetorical influence."*

P6: *"I don't have any challenges in terms of punctuation in my classes."*

P1: *"Students do not give due importance to punctuation marks in their lessons, I try to reduce students' mistakes by emphasizing the punctuation rules and the importance of these marks in the lessons."*

3.2.3. Reasons Behind Other Challenges

The majority of the faculty members (40%; f=4) who participated in the research stated that the difficulties they encountered while teaching English were due to lack of student motivation. In addition, 30% (f=3) of the faculty members who participated in the research stated that they experienced difficulties due to the intensity of the program, 20% (f=2) stated that they experienced difficulties due to the student's language deficiency, and 10% (f=1) stated that they experienced difficulties due to the exam administered to the students.

Table 11.
Reasons Behind Other Challenges

Causes of Challenges Encountered	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Lack of student motivation	P2, P3, P8, P10	4	40
Intensity of the program	P1, P4, P7	3	30
Lack of student knowledge of the language	P6, P9	2	20
Lack of exams	P5,	1	10

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P2: *"Of course, there is the challenge that I face. One of these difficulties is that I think it would be very different if our students had to study the preparatory school compulsorily, if they were studying it of their own free will. So let's get down to even more basic. When students choose their departments, I think that the prepared motivation of the student who wants to study English willingly will be higher. In summary, I can say that there is a great lack of motivation in our preparatory students due to this situation."*

P1: *"If I talk about the challenges I encountered during the lesson, the biggest challenge in general, especially for this module in this year, is that the program is very intense, so I always enter the elementary groups, I only enter the pre-intermediate class for 2 hours, and the most common challenge I encounter is that I am constantly running and teaching so that there is nothing missing in the curriculum, something they see*

missing in the exam, something they do not see, etc. Unfortunately, I'm missing the contact with students."

P6: *At basic levels, that is, at levels such as elementary (beginner) and pre-intermediate (above-beginner), students' fundamentals can be very weak. We have to take it from scratch because there are not many language skills that students bring from high school. That's why students need more words. Students have limited vocabulary and grammar that they can use in class, as well as in terms of understanding us. That's why I think we should expose them to reading and listening text as much as possible. I think the more they are exposed to the language, the more confidence they can get. I think I can definitely say that I have challenges with this question due to the lack of grammar of the students.*

P5: *"I think there are a lot of challenges that we face. First, you have the big question of placing students at the right level. More precisely, I should say that we make thoughtless decisions. For example, students who took an intermediate level course last year do not need to take a placement test and can immediately move to intermediate or upper-intermediate classes, which I think does not make sense. Because, students don't have the opportunity to use the language. If they don't work on English for three months, they may obviously lose their knowledge of the language. So we definitely need this kind of placement test to know what level they're at."*

3.3. Proposed Solutions to Overcome the Challenges Faced

The instructors who participated in the research identified solutions to overcome some of the challenges associated with teaching English.

3.3.1. Suggested Solutions to Skills-based Challenges

The faculty members provided a list of solutions to overcome the challenges they faced in their studies of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

3.3.1.1. Suggested Solutions to Listening-based Challenges

When Table 12 is examined, it is seen that the opinions of the lecturers participating in the research on the solution of the challenge they encountered while doing listening studies are included. Accordingly, it is seen that 50% (f=5) of the instructors who participated in the study offered a solution suggestion that the students should be reminded that they should read the questions and instructions carefully before starting the listening activity. In addition, it is seen that 50% (f=5) of the instructors offer solutions that strategy training should be given to improve students' listening skills.

Table 12.
Suggested Solutions to Listening-based Challenges

Solutions	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Preparation for the listening activity (pre-listening and post-listening)	P1, P2, P3, P9, P10	5	50
Strategy trainings to improve listening skills	P4, P5, P6, P7, P8,	5	50

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P4: “Although there is sufficient technological infrastructure in our classes for listening activities, I observe that students have difficulty in keeping their attention and applying listening strategies correctly. Despite my constant encouragement to take notes, students quickly lose focus and stop taking notes when they miss something. This shows that listening strategies are not taught well enough. I divide and structure activities to keep them interesting and keep their attention. For example, we stop the first part of the text they are listening to, get their answers, and then continue listening. However, I question the accuracy of this approach because in a real listening test, students need to constantly listen and take notes. So I think we need to provide more strategy training. Another challenge I have is determining what needs to be integrated during the private lesson planning phase.”

3.3.1.2. Suggested Solutions to Speaking-based Challenges

When table 13 is examined, it is seen that 60% (f=6) of the instructors stated that the challenges they experienced about speaking in their lessons could be solved with speaking activities for the class, while 30% (f=3) of them developed a solution proposal to eliminate the students' fear of making mistakes by creating rules of behavior in the classroom. In addition, it was determined that 10% (f=1) of the lecturers who participated in the research expressed their opinion that the difficulties encountered in speaking could be eliminated by providing technological materials related to the course.

Table 13.
Suggested Solutions to Speaking-based Challenges

Solutions	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Performing in-class speaking activities	P3, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9,	6	60
Establishing a classroom code of conduct and eliminating the fear of making mistakes	P1, P2, P10	3	30
Provision of technological materials for the course	P4,	1	10

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P8: *"The most common difficulty encountered in speaking skills is that students do not feel ready and experience shyness. This can occur especially when doing speaking activities in a group. Students may tend to speak in their native language, or they don't want to speak because they don't feel prepared enough. In addition, factors such as fear of making mistakes and a focus on continuous evaluation can also affect students' speaking skills. To overcome these challenges, I emphasize to students that they need to practice speaking more and learn different speaking strategies. In fact, in the classroom, I organize speaking activities in groups to improve students' speaking skills, and I give students various speaking tasks. I also emphasize that it is normal to make mistakes by providing a positive environment to increase students' motivation and to make mistakes."*

P2: *"By setting the rules of conduct in the classroom with the students, we ensure that our classroom is a safe and supportive environment. In addition, by understanding that making mistakes is a natural process, I try to increase students' self-confidence and enable them to learn more comfortably."*

P4: *"As a teacher, I sometimes want to plan different activities to enrich the course content, but I may encounter technical deficiencies in the classroom or different dynamics of student groups. For example, some of the students' silence may show more active participation, while others may take a back seat, and I find it difficult to balance these imbalances. In addition, the limited variety of course materials can challenge me from time to time, and I think I should overcome this situation by making more detailed preparations beforehand. I can also encounter student apathy when it comes to technology and social media, so I try to motivate students more by addressing these topics more creatively."*

3.3.1.3 Suggested Solutions to Reading-based Challenges

When Table 14 is examined, it is seen that solutions for the difficulties encountered by the instructors while doing reading studies are included. Accordingly, it was determined that 40% (f=4) of the instructors who participated in the research developed solutions for the development of students' reading habits and 40% (f=4) of them developed solutions to make reading activities interactive. In addition, it was determined that 20% (f=2) of the lecturers participating in the research developed solutions to improve students' inference skills and increase their attention spans.

Table 14.
Suggested Solutions to Reading-based Challenges

Solutions	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Developing the habit of reading	P1, P2, P9, P10	4	40
Making reading activities interactive	P3, P4, P5, P8,	4	40
Improve inference skills and increase attention span	P6, P7	2	20

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P1: *I think students should definitely develop reading habits. For example, the student knows the word "happy". However, when he sees the word "Unhappy" in the text, he cannot answer the question correctly. This is due to the fact that students do not develop their reading habits. They need to do a lot of reading so that they can become familiar with the words in the text."*

P3: *Before I start reading, I really make a lot of effort to attract the attention of the students to the lesson, whether it is pictures or speeches, once they are already interested, it is easier afterwards, but the main thing I do; in order to make reading activities more interactive, I use different activity styles, such as "dictogloss", where students read the text in parts and explain it to each other by changing among themselves, or I try to make it funnier in the form of questions and answers, one of them asking a question and the other finding the answer; and then the class does not sleep, the students are more active and I observe that they learn more. In this way, I make the reading activities in the classroom more interactive."*

P6: *"I don't have difficulty teaching some subjects, for example, when teaching to find the main idea, or when teaching the purpose of the text, or in what kind of attitude the text is written. As we work on this, we can make the students grasp very easily, but the part we have difficulty with is the issue of inferring, that is, making inferences. Yes, they can find the existing information in the text, they can understand the text, but they may have difficulty in making inferences in line with the information given, you know, how can they do it better, or what am I doing to solve this, in the book, if they have difficulty in making inferences, how can they do this? By giving a concept at a simpler level with simpler examples, I first try to teach how to make inferences and then go over it again, I try to overcome it that way, but of course I think they need much, much more practice in this regard."*

3.3.1.4. Suggested Solutions to Writing-based Challenges

When Table 15 is examined, it is seen that the opinions of the instructors on the solution of the difficulties they encountered while writing the courses are included. Accordingly, it was determined that 60% (f=6) of the lecturers who participated in the research expressed their opinions about providing extra support and correction to the students in terms of grammar and sentence structures, while 40% (f=4) of the lecturers who participated in the research expressed their opinion that more time should be allocated to materials suitable for the students' levels.

Table 15.
Suggested Solutions to Writing-based Challenges

Solutions	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Extra support and correction time for grammar and sentence structures	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5 P6	6	60
Spending more time on materials that are appropriate for student levels	P7, P8, P9, P10	4	40

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P1: *"When students are working on writing, I give extra support on grammar and sentence structures. This allows me to improve students' writing a little bit."*

P7: *"I think more time should be devoted to materials that are appropriate for students' levels. In this way, students can be more successful in their writing studies."*

3.3.2. Suggested Solutions to Sub-skills-based Challenges

The faculty members provided a list of solutions to overcome the challenges they faced in their studies of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and punctuation.

3.3.2.1. Suggested Solutions to Vocabulary-based Challenges

When Table 16 is examined, it is determined that 70% (f=7) of the lecturers who participated in the research developed a solution proposal for motivation and vocabulary learning, and 10% (f=1) of them developed a solution proposal for language structure.

Table 16.
Suggested Solutions to Vocabulary-based Challenges

Solutions	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Solution proposal developed for motivation and vocabulary learning	P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P9, P8,	7	70
Approaches to language structure	P4, P7, P10	1	10

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P1: *"From what I've observed, students focus on the word, but I don't think they put enough effort into it. I have a hard time getting them to repeat words over and over again, and sometimes they're more motivated when they listen to a friend pronounce a word well. They don't challenge themselves with pronunciation, they may have difficulty with sounds like schwa, and I can have a hard time at times when teaching topics like minimal pairs or diphthongs, which can require more time and effort, especially at low levels. But in general, I don't have any major difficulties with vocabulary teaching."*

P10: *"Vocabulary learning generally takes place faster in contexts such as listening and reading and can be grasped more easily. However, sometimes we come across words that do not have context in the book, and it can be a challenge to learn them. The images may not be directly related to the targeted word, so it is important to check that the student understands correctly. If students learn a word incorrectly and we can't correct it later, we should correct it immediately. In addition, there is a tendency for students to feel inadequate in the process of learning vocabulary. They ask for a word and get stuck, feeling like they can't speak without it. Students often tend to give Turkish equivalents, which makes it difficult to learn new words. Instead of learning words from the text, it can also be difficult for them to try to learn by looking in the dictionary and writing the equivalent. I try to teach students about the origin of the word, its uses, and*

how it is used in conjunction with other words so that they are more exposed to the language, so they can continue that habit as well."

3.3.2.2. Suggested Solutions to Grammar-based Challenges

When Table 17 is examined, 70% (f=7) of the instructors who participated in the research regarding the difficulties they encountered in grammar studies; it was determined that they developed solutions for grammar teaching strategies, and 30% (f=3) of them developed solutions to increase student motivation and practice.

Table 17.
Suggested Solutions to Grammar-based Challenges

Solutions	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Solution suggestions for grammar teaching strategies	P1, P2, P3, P4, P7, P9, P10	7	70
Solution suggestions developed to increase student motivation and practice	P5, P6, P8,	3	30

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P3: *"One of the first challenges encountered is that students try to translate directly between English and Turkish. However, it is normal that these translations are not successful due to the differences in the grammatical structures of the language. It is important to understand that understanding the differences and fine details between the two languages is not possible with a mathematical grammar study alone. Therefore, it is necessary to provide students with work in a semantic and communicative environment. This should be supported by interactive activities that will help students understand structures while also improving their communication skills."*

P6: *"The tendency of students at lower levels to compare grammar topics with their mother tongue is manifested by the fact that they look for Turkish equivalents, especially in some grammar subjects such as tenses."*

Therefore, students do not understand the differences in grammar. Due to this challenge, students' motivation is negatively affected. I try to get students to practice as much as I can during the lesson."

3.3.2.3 Suggested Solutions to Pronunciation-based Challenges

When Table 18 is examined, 50% (f=5) of the instructors who participated in the research stated that they had some difficulties in pronunciation studies due to differences in the phonetic structure of Turkish and English. In addition, 40%(f=4) of the instructors within the scope of the study stated that they had some difficulties in ensuring that the students were motivated in word pronunciation and in guiding the students effectively while teaching grammar subjects, and 10% (f=1) of the instructors who participated in the study stated that they had some difficulties in pronunciation studies due to the exam-oriented behavior of the students.

Table 18.
Suggested Solutions to Pronunciation-based Challenges

Solutions	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Teaching students to create awareness and matching sounds with fun activities	P3, P4, P6, P8, P10	5	50
Reminding students that correct pronunciation is critical to intelligibility	P1, P5, P7, P9,	4	40
Improving pronunciation by watching TV series and movies	P2	1	10

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P3: *" Most of the difficulties in students' word pronunciation are caused by differences in the phonetic structure of different languages such as Turkish and English. Therefore, when learning new words, it is important to explain these differences to students step by step and provide them with strategies for pronouncing correctly. In addition, listening and repetition exercises are also important in improving pronunciation skills. However, the most critical*

point for me is teaching students the phonetic alphabet, as this helps them understand the correct pronunciation of words."

P1: *"Students have vocabulary-oriented study habits, but sometimes I think they don't do enough to make up for their shortcomings. I have to keep repeating the words. However, they are more motivated when they listen to a word that a friend has successfully pronounced. Also, instead of learning complex sounds like schwa, students avoid exerting themselves in pronunciation to avoid being ridiculed. I have some difficulties when teaching subjects such as minimal pairs or diphthongs, it seems to require some time, especially for low-level students."*

P2: *"Lack of listening habits causes students to have difficulties in pronunciation. When students encounter a new word, they may not have self-confidence challenges due to not knowing the correct pronunciation. All this can be taken care of somehow. However, I think the biggest challenge is that students are exam-oriented. Students literally don't care about pronunciation."*

3.3.2.4. Suggested Solutions to Punctuation-based Challenges

When Table 19 is examined, it is determined that 40% (f=4) of the instructors who participated in the research expressed their opinion that the students' awareness of punctuation marks should be increased and they should read more and thus master the punctuation marks. In addition, it was determined that 20% (f=2) of the lecturers who participated in the research emphasized the importance of punctuation marks to the students and developed solutions that different strategies should be applied regarding the correct use of these marks. In addition, it was determined that 20% (f=2) of the instructors who participated in the research did not express their opinions due to the fact that they did not have any difficulties in punctuation studies, while 20% (f=2) of the instructors expressed their opinions on minimizing student errors by emphasizing the punctuation rules in the course.

Table 19.
Suggested Solutions to Punctuation-based Challenges

Solutions	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Raising students' awareness and encouraging them to read more	P2, P7, P8, P10	4	40
Emphasizing the importance of punctuation marks to students and using different strategies to ensure their correct use	P3, P4,	2	20
There are no challenges.	P6, P9	2	20
Minimizing students' mistakes by emphasizing punctuation rules in the lesson	P1, P5	2	20

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P2: *" Differences in their mother tongue, especially thinking habits such as Turkish, are the biggest challenges for students. For example, they have a hard time understanding that starting a new sentence with conjunctions like because after finishing a sentence should be capitalized because they carry their Turkish habits into English. Despite our explanations on this subject, students sometimes don't care about it because they have difficulty accepting that similar rules may differ. This difference between their mother tongue and their target language can be perceived as an issue that is ignored. As a solution, I think it is necessary to encourage students to read and write more. In this way, we can help them better grasp the grammar rules of the target language and support them in changing their habits."*

P4: *"If it's not mentioned in the book, I don't think we teach punctuation. However, it is important to highlight the basic punctuation marks that should be used when teaching conjunctions. I teach basic rules such as the use of commas, especially when starting sentences with beginnings such as if. I don't think I have a lot of difficulty with this because I focus on teaching these basics. However, I find that sometimes students make mistakes in their writing by using informal expressions and writing personal*

pronouns such as I in lowercase. In this case, I give feedback, raise awareness and get them to fix it."

P6: *"I don't have any challenges in terms of punctuation in my classes."*

P1: *"Students do not give due importance to punctuation marks in their lessons, I try to reduce students' mistakes by emphasizing the punctuation rules and the importance of these marks in the lessons."*

3.3.3. Suggested Solutions to Other Challenges

When Table 20 is examined, it is seen that 30% (f=3) of the instructors participating in the research offer solutions to the difficulties encountered while teaching English, physical conditions and the use of technology in lessons and intensive curriculum and study plan. In addition, it is seen that 20% (f=2) of the lecturers participating in the research have developed solutions for language education and related activities as well as student communication and activities.

Table 20.
Suggested Solutions to Other Challenges

Solutions	Instructor	Frequency	(%)
Physical conditions and use of technology in lessons	P3, P8, P10	3	30
Intensive curriculum and study plan	P4, P5, P9	3	30
Activities for student communication	P1, P6,	2	20
Language education and activities for language education	P2, P7	2	20

Some of the answers given by the instructors to the questions within the scope of the study are as follows;

P3: *"Actually, there are things that schools can do institutionally, now that digital equipment is much more accessible today, I think the school can buy it, so that more interactive books can be selected in the lessons, there are book applications that students can connect to with their phones, maybe they can be done. In addition, fun games can be done in my studies, perhaps*

similar to exams. Because I observe that the types of questions to be applied in the exam are really motivating to the students to be similar in the classroom. The basis of this is the use of technology in the classroom. I also think that there are challenges that arise from physical challenges. Because students come very early in the morning and without eating. Physical needs are very important if we think about Maslow's hierarchy, and especially when I come to class in the morning, which is my third lesson, but I'm talking about the first lesson of the students. I see students who still haven't eaten breakfast or still haven't gotten enough sleep, and they're naturally very unmotivated."

P4: *" Actually, in general, I think it is enjoyable to teach in preparation, why it is enjoyable, I think there is a familiarity that we have developed over the years, what goes well in the flow of the lesson, we ask what goes first, we get reactions from the students, for example, sometimes we only need to process one page for a 50-minute lesson, and I know that I can make the students speak a little more and keep the intro wide and use that hour better. For me, what I think is maybe a deficiency is that the course load is really high, how this makes people tired. For example, today and tomorrow I normally have 7 hours of class, 3 hours in the morning for upper-class students, then 2 hours in the afternoon for pre-intermediate students. So I have a 24-hour course load a week and it's exhausting to me."*

P1: *"Especially at a level such as elementary, when I am a foreign student and very few people do not know Turkish at all, and if their level of English is low, this situation is difficult for me. For example, when an international student in the classroom says that it means this in Turkish, we solve the challenge in a shorter time. Thus, there is no challenge at the upper levels. However, when this happens at the lower levels, I feel sad. I inevitably use Turkish in the lessons, but since I don't want to ignore the student, I briefly summarize what we talked about to the student so that the student does not feel bad. In this case, instead of asking direct questions about Turkish culture, I try to ask questions about his nation and talk more generally. In*

this way, I communicate with the student. In other words, activities can be carried out for the communication of the students."

P2: *"Every individual living in Turkey should definitely start English education at an early age. Because when I look at the student profile in general, I think that the age at which these students start their language education is quite late. Therefore, we may experience some challenges in our lessons due to grammar and pronunciation. Of course, these challenges can be overcome. It's not insurmountable. I think the real solution here is for students to start their language education at a younger age."*



CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

In this part of the study, the research on the challenges encountered during English teaching, which is the subject of the study, are included. This section is designed to reflect, critique, and synthesize research findings.

Even if individuals do not have detailed knowledge of individual ways to learn a foreign language, they start with beliefs about how they should learn from their previous educational life and daily life. These beliefs, rightly or wrongly, guide the learning process. (Lightbown & Spada, 2000). Students' beliefs in the target language and learning it, the importance of foreign language education, the characteristics of the community that uses the language as their mother tongue, the way classroom activities are carried out, teachers' methods of correcting mistakes and feedback, and their beliefs about how they should learn a foreign language are among the factors affecting the learning process. (Ellis, 2001).

The process of language acquisition begins at birth and continues. First, the sounds heard are imitated, then the words are learned, and the vocabulary gradually expands. Initially, the ability to understand is developed, while the capacity to speak is more limited. He learns new words from the positive feedback he receives from his environment. He then makes short sentences with these words. Learning a foreign language involves a similar process (Hancı-Yanar, 2008).

4.1. Existence of Challenges

In this research carried out with the lecturers; it has been determined that while teaching English in preparatory classes, instructors have difficulties in terms of listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, pronunciation and punctuation marks.

Demirel (2004) argues that the four basic skills of language consist of the functional integrity of listening, speaking, reading and writing. In foreign language teaching, for example, when learning the mother tongue, the view of following the natural order in the development of basic language skills is widespread. A person who learns a

second language first hears, then speaks, and then learns to read and write. Although in the past there were approaches that focused on each of these skills individually, modern foreign language learning requires the development of these four skills together. These skills include reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills. Basic skills are required in foreign language teaching. A certain method should be followed in the acquisition of these skills. Teaching a foreign language without a method will be a waste of time and effort (Küzeci, 2007). It is a common view that there is a natural order in the development of basic skills in foreign language teaching, as in mother tongue learning. A person who learns a second language will first hear, then speak, and then learn to read and write. Since these skills will be difficult to develop separately, they are used together in classroom practices (Demirel, 2021).

Pirinçcioğlu (2023), who examines the difficulties faced by the instructors in pronunciation education, has determined that the instructors have challenges due to their inability to devote enough time to pronunciation activities due to their intense workload. Serdar (2016), who examines the difficulties faced by English teachers during English teaching, found that students experience some challenges due to the fact that they do not use English in daily life. According to Erdem (2016), although approaches, methods and techniques courses are presented to students theoretically and practically in universities, especially in foreign language teaching programs, they cause challenges to emerge in real learning and teaching experiences.

In another study conducted by Şahin (2013), it was determined that teachers' negative attitudes towards the lesson and the student revealed some challenges in students' language learning. Similarly, in another study conducted by Akdoğan (2010), the challenge in foreign language teaching in Türkiye is basically; it has been stated that it is due to a lack of material. Based on all these, the findings obtained in the studies conducted by the researchers show that although the content of the findings is different, there are many factors encountered during English teaching. In a study conducted by Evue (2013), it was concluded that the challenges encountered in foreign language teaching are indiscipline among students, inadequacy of teachers in effective teaching and inadequacy of course content. In another study by Bozavlı (2015), it was determined that the insufficient level of readiness of students to learn a foreign language, material and technological deficiencies were among the factors that negatively affect foreign language

teaching. In another study conducted by Erdem (2016), it was determined that secondary school students experienced challenges such as the way teachers reacted to student errors, the inadequacy of course materials and the lack of reading comprehension skills in the language learning process. In another study conducted by Özer and Korkmaz (2016), it was determined that teachers had some challenges during the English teaching phase due to students' lack of interest in foreign language, prejudice and lack of repetition against English, and weak student-teacher relations.

4.2. Causes of Challenges

10 faculty members participated in this study, which was carried out using the semi-structured interview method in order to reveal the challenges encountered during English teaching in the school of foreign languages in an English-medium state university in Türkiye and the solution suggestions. Within the scope of the research, 40% of the instructors stated that they had difficulty in teaching English due to the lack of motivation of the students.

According to Gardner (1985), an individual's attitude is an evaluative response that includes their own beliefs and thoughts about the situation in question, which also influences motivation and achievement in the context of language learning. Similarly, Sturgeon (2006) states that individuals' motivation and attitudes in the language learning process will affect foreign language learning. In the current research; it is seen that the observations of the instructors are compatible with the results in the literature and the lack of motivation of the students may adversely affect the language learning process.

Areas of expertise in individuals who are aware of language proficiency and appropriate environmental conditions for language learning; have listening, speaking, writing and reading skills (Alyılmaz & Şengül, 2017). As Baştuğ et al. (2019) emphasize, reading involves translating text into sound and spoken words.

According to Tekin (2023), it is a common view that language learners should set a specific goal before starting the process of reading in the language because reading is an activity around a specific purpose. Once the individual has determined their purpose, they should carefully examine the text, check the visuals, and try to understand the content of the text. With this approach, the focus should be on understanding the important parts

of the text being checked. In other words, he should try to understand the text being read. Improving the reader's goals and expectations about the text is considered a step to increase reading motivation. It is thought that this will contribute to the reader's clear understanding of the text and creating a higher motivation by drawing conclusions from the text (Baştuğ et al., 2019).

In this research carried out with lecturers; they stated that 50% of the instructors had to do reading work due to the passivity caused by the students' inability to interact with the text. This research conclusion indicates that students' lack of active participation in the language learning process poses challenges for instructors in the teaching process. It is thought that this passivity caused by students may be related to factors such as lack of motivation in the language learning process or communication anxiety. Communication anxiety, which plays an important role in interpersonal communication, is closely related to foreign language anxiety (McCroskey, 1977). The shyness felt when communicating with other people is defined as communication anxiety. Difficulty in speaking with someone else or in front of a public, or in the process of listening to and making sense of information expressed verbally, is also part of communication anxiety. Since performance evaluation is an important element of foreign language courses, exam anxiety is also included in foreign language anxiety.

According to Şeker (2024), the act of writing involves the written expression of thoughts, ideas, information, or feelings through a language in a specific environment. This action aims to convey meaning and communicate by organizing words into sentences. Hedge (2015) states that writing skill is an important component in the language learning process and is the ability of individuals to express their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and knowledge in writing. In other words, it states that the written expression of language gives students the ability to convey their ideas, thoughts, feelings, and information in texts. He also emphasizes that writing skill gives students the ability to create various types of texts, organize thoughts, and be effective in written communication. They stated that 40% of the lecturers working in a state university had some challenges due to the habit and lack of reading while doing their writing studies. As known, the habit and lack of reading play an important role in the development of writing skills. On the other hand, reading is thought to be beneficial in many ways, such as developing ideas in the writing process, expanding grammar and vocabulary. Therefore,

it can be said that it is possible for students to experience deficiencies in reading habits, to have difficulties in the writing process by affecting their writing studies. Within the scope of the current research, it has been determined that 40% of the lecturers have some challenges due to reading habit and lack of reading while doing their writing studies.

Within the scope of the research, it was determined that 90% of the instructors had some difficulties due to the fact that the students did not take notes while doing listening exercises in the lessons. This shows that the note-taking techniques necessary for the development of students' listening skills should be learned by the students. Listening skill is the ability to perceive information and make inferences from this information (Gülkaya, 2023). In the language learning process, the ability to listen is the most important focus, from beginner to the highest level (A1-C1). According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, listening skills are considered in the category of perceptual activities and are defined as "listening carefully to what is said and having special awareness in order to reduce the risk of misunderstanding in intercultural communication." This definition emphasizes that listening skills are among the receptive language skills. Listening skills are important for an individual to communicate effectively, solve challenges, and achieve their goals in both their social and academic lives. It also feeds on other language skills, such as speaking and writing skills, and plays a critical role alongside reading skills.

In this study, 90% of the instructors stated that students had difficulty in their lessons because they did not know vocabulary learning strategies. This suggests that students lack vocabulary learning strategies, which are important for improving their vocabulary and strengthening their language skills. There is a close connection between language skills and vocabulary. An individual with a poor vocabulary has difficulty understanding what he reads, listens to or watches in the target language and has difficulty expressing himself in writing and orally. According to Göçer (2015), vocabulary plays a fundamental role in effectively demonstrating an individual's comprehension and expression skills. Therefore, a developed vocabulary is important to understand what is being said and to express oneself correctly (Acat, 2008). Much attention should be paid to the development of vocabulary in mother tongue and foreign language teaching. The basis of skills training in a foreign language usually begins with vocabulary teaching exercises. From the first lessons, students are subjected to a conscious process of

vocabulary building in order to prepare for the next stages. This process proceeds from the part to the whole, similar to other learning processes in a foreign language (Memiş, 2018). Especially in recent years, it has been revealed that vocabulary has a very important place in studies on foreign language acquisition. To know a word is to understand its forms, its meanings, and what it is in the context in which it is used as a generator and perceiver. According to Ahmed (2017), a student who has a deep and richly based vocabulary can convey the message he wants to convey much more easily. Word studies, which have been neglected for years due to applied linguists who talk about the importance of grammar education and put it in the background, have fortunately gained importance with the studies carried out in recent years.

The ability to speak, which enables individuals to verbally express their experiences, designs and wishes, serving as a natural means of communication between people and societies, has played an important role in the organization of human societies throughout the ages (Dilaçar, 1968; Evliyaoglu, 1973; Sever, 2004). This skill, which enables communication by creating verbal texts with muffled voices, includes a mental dimension as well as a communication tool. It also involves the process of meaning-making, which involves the ingestion, production, and processing of information (Florez, 1999). In this study, 100% of the instructors stated that the biggest difficulty they encountered while doing speaking exercises was the lack of self-confidence and shyness caused by the internal and external concerns experienced by the students during the speaking process.

According to Yavuz (2023), it is suggested that the skill that triggers anxiety the most in foreign language learning is the ability to speak. Many students have high anxiety about participating in speaking activities. However, students' concerns can be ignored by teachers. Students' fear of being negatively evaluated by their peers and the perception that their ability is low in the face of their peers are among the reasons that trigger English speaking anxiety. It has been observed that students are more involved when they speak only on behalf of their teachers and when their peers are not in the environment. Students are afraid of losing their social image and worry about how their peers will receive it. In addition to these reasons, students' focus on grammar rather than context when speaking in the target language and comparing their own speaking performance with their peers are also reasons that increase their anxiety levels.

Of course, the most basic indicator of learning a foreign language is seen as the ability to speak that language. From the studies conducted in the literature, it has been concluded that pronunciation challenges are one of the obstacles to the student's communication in the target language (Şenyiğit & Okur, 2019). The self-confidence of a student with good pronunciation will reduce the tension of time pressure and fear that may occur during verbal communication. It is stated that 50% of the instructors participating in the study had some difficulties in pronunciation studies due to the differences in the phonetic structure of Turkish and English. In this study, it is thought that the main factor in the difficulties experienced by the instructors in their pronunciation studies is that Turkish and English are quite different languages in terms of phonetic structures.

Associating thoughts and words with each other is of great importance in the writing process. Appropriate words should be chosen for each idea and written in accordance with grammar and spelling rules (Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001). Writing is organically related to the four combined skills (listening, reading, speaking) that form the basis of learning. It also includes parameters such as punctuation, meaningful integrity, consistency, spelling rules, proper handwriting, word choice and usage, adjectives, grammar and proper use of conjunctions, paper layout. The writing process is a complex process that includes elements such as writing style, composition layout (introduction-development-conclusion), ideas and details that support the main idea, theme, point of view, thinking and expression (İnal, 2006). 60% of the instructors participating in the research stated that they had difficulty in working on punctuation marks due to the differences between the students' mother tongue and the target language. Within the scope of the research, it is thought that the difficulties experienced by the instructors in punctuation marks are mainly due to the fact that the two languages contain different rules.

In the process of learning a language, students should not just focus on learning the basic concepts and rules of a particular subject. It is expected that what is learned in order to fulfill the functional features of the language will increase the usefulness of the language (Baysal & January, 2021). In addition to focusing on the structures of the language, a student learning a foreign language should also pay attention to the environment in which the target language is used and its communication competence. In

this context, the process of learning a foreign language is a cognitive process. The important thing is the development of basic grammar and vocabulary, as well as four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing as a whole. According to Karagedik (2013), one of the most discussed issues in foreign language teaching is grammar teaching. It is a topic that has been frequently discussed in this field in recent years, where students spend long hours trying to memorize grammatical structures and learn these topics with various formulas or symbols. At this point, what is intended to be emphasized is that students gain speaking skills rather than grammar. They stated that 60% of the instructors participating in the study had some difficulties in understanding abstract concepts in students' grammar studies. As it is known, abstract concepts include thoughts that cannot be easily observed and defined, such as concrete objects or situations. In this sense, it can be said that students have some difficulties in comprehending abstract concepts by instructors.

4.3. Suggestions to Overcome the Challenges Faced

It was determined that 40% of the instructors participating in the research developed solutions for students to make their reading activities interactive. As known, interactive reading activities enable students to understand and internalize texts more effectively. It is thought that in-class discussions, group work, discussion forums or interactive reading activities in the virtual environment will help students to actively participate in the lesson and make this process more enjoyable. In the field of language teaching, digital tools and digital content used inside and outside the classroom are actively used and the language learning process is enriched without depending on traditional learning environments (Bećirović et al., 2021). In the review of 34 articles published between 2011 and 2022 on technology-supported language teaching, it is stated that many 21st century skills such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, culture interaction, creativity, and challenge solving, as well as language learning skills, grammar, and vocabulary, are of interest (Shadiev & Wang, 2022). According to recent research; in addition to tools such as video, audio files, presentations, images; it is seen that technology-supported tools such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and mixed reality are used (Parong, 2021). Aiming to meet today's student needs, these immersive technologies offer many opportunities for students to experience in virtual environments. The use of virtual reality in foreign language teaching allows students to use the language

practically in realistic virtual environments, improve their language skills, practice, and improve their language learning outcomes (Yao et al., 2023).

60% of the instructors suggested solutions that would provide extra support and correction to students in terms of grammar and sentence structures. One of the main elements that can affect students' writing skills is the habit and lack thereof. It might be argued that students who lack the habit of reading or have insufficient capabilities may exhibit poor writing abilities. It was determined that the instructors participating in the research expressed their opinions that extra support should be provided to the students in the lessons in order to improve the writing skills of the students. It can be said that this support, which should be given by the instructors, can help students improve their skills in grammar and sentence structures and increase their writing skills. Writing is a complex process that requires conscious mental effort, often over a long period of time and through slow development. It is a process in which the writer puts linguistic patterns from their linguistic repository to work in order to convey the message clearly, fluently, and accurately. In this process, it is necessary to develop questioning, critical thinking, higher-order thinking and communication skills. Students should be aware of the limits of their current knowledge and skills (Johari, 2018).

In addition, in the study; it is seen that 50% of the instructors offer solutions that they should remind students to read the questions and instructions carefully before starting the listening activity. It is thought that this suggestion, which was voiced by the instructors, will enable students to start the listening activity more prepared and focus more effectively. In this way, students' understanding of the questions and directions will increase the efficiency of listening exercises and prevent misunderstandings. Students can effectively process information before, during, and after listening by using different comprehension strategies in the listening process. Listening comprehension strategies include the steps of acquiring, storing, retrieving, and using information (Vandergrift & Goh, 2009). According to Goh (2000), there are three main listening strategies that learners can benefit from: cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-emotional strategies. Each of these strategies consists of different tactics or mental techniques. Cognitive tactics focus on making the listened content meaningful, while metacognitive tactics address the challenges in the listening process by managing cognitive processes. Social tactics

involve interacting with people to increase comprehension, while emotional tactics aim to manage emotions while listening.

It is stated that 70% of the lecturers participating in the research have developed solutions for motivation and vocabulary learning. Especially in recent years, it has been revealed that vocabulary has a very important place in studies on foreign language acquisition. To know a word is to understand its forms, its meanings, and what it is in the context in which it is used as a generator and perceiver. According to Ahmed (2017), a student who has a deep and richly based vocabulary can convey the message he wants to convey much more easily. Word studies, which have been neglected for years due to applied linguists who talk about the importance of grammar education and put it in the background, have fortunately gained importance with the studies carried out in recent years.

It has been determined that 50% of the instructors have developed a solution to raise students' awareness in their pronunciation studies and to match sounds with fun activities. In this study, it is thought that the main factor in the difficulties experienced by the instructors in their pronunciation studies is that Turkish and English are quite different languages in terms of phonetic structures.

Furthermore, this study revealed that 40% of the educators believed that students should enhance their knowledge of punctuation marks, thereby enabling them to read more and master it. However, 70% of the instructors acknowledged their struggles with grammar studies, despite having devised effective strategies for teaching grammar.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this thesis brings together key findings and discussions regarding the barriers English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors face in both face-to-face and online education. The conclusion synthesizes the insights gained, reaffirms the significance of the research, and reflects on the implications of the findings for the field of foreign language teaching. This section also includes ongoing discourse on improving foreign language teaching in various educational settings, offering suggestions for future research and practice.

5.1. Overview of the Study

This study aimed to investigate the current barriers to teaching English from the instructors' perspectives and try to find solutions to the barriers in the process of teaching. The study first explored the challenges at the university level, then focused on the solutions for teaching and foreign languages from the instructors' perspective. The study utilized a qualitative research design, collecting data through semi-structured interviews. From the state university, 10 instructors who had experience in face-to-face education settings at the university level participated and shared their views on the barriers they encountered in the classrooms. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis. Two themes were derived from the data:

1. Challenges in teaching English.
2. Suggestions to overcome these challenges.

These themes consist of sub-themes and codes supporting the main argument. This study showed several challenges, including issues related to student motivation, instructor motivation, learning environment, course materials, curriculum and education system, student profile, and approach to language. The majority of the lecturers who participated in the study (40%) stated that lack of student motivation was among the difficulties they encountered while teaching English. It was found that 30% of the lecturers who participated in the study suggested solutions to the difficulties encountered

in teaching English, physical conditions and the use of technology in lessons and intensive lesson program and study plan.

In addition to all these, when the reasons for the difficulties encountered by the instructors who participated in the study and the solution suggestions offered by the instructors were examined; it was found that 50% of the instructors had difficulties due to passivity caused by the students' inability to interact with the text while doing reading activities. It was determined that 40% of the instructors who participated in the research developed solution suggestions for making reading activities interactive. In addition, it was determined that 90% of the instructors faced some difficulties while doing listening activities in the lessons, mostly due to the students' lack of note-taking. Accordingly, 50% of the lecturers who participated in the study suggested that students should be reminded that they should read the questions and instructions carefully before starting the listening activity. 100% of the lecturers stated that the biggest difficulty they encountered while doing speaking activities was the lack of self-confidence and shyness caused by internal and external anxieties experienced by the students during the speaking process. Based on this challenge, 60% of the lecturers stated that the challenges they experienced with speaking in their lessons could be overcome with speaking activities for the class.

5.2. Limitations of the Research and Implications for Practise

While conducting the study, several limitations were identified. Firstly, this study focus on higher education settings. It may limit applicability of the findings to other educational contexts. Secondly, the research is limited to instructors and semi-structured interview forms working in the 2023-2024 education semester in the English preparatory department of a Turkish state university that teaches in English. Lastly, time constraints restricted the amount of data collected.

These findings can be based on the following proposals:

Firstly, interactive reading activities can be organized to enable students to interact with text. Secondly, students should be informed about effective vocabulary learning strategies and practical activities can be organized to implement these strategies. Thirdly, to ensure that students are motivated to learn English, methods can be used, such as teaching materials that are interesting and relevant to students' interests, reward

systems or providing students with the opportunity to track their own progress. Lastly, speaking activities in class should be carefully planned and positive feedback should be given to students. Additional resources or training may also be provided to support students in improving their speech skills.

The results obtained from this research, which was conducted to identify the difficulties encountered during teaching English, include common challenges encountered in teaching English and suggestions for these challenges. In this context, it is thought to be very valuable for education experts who design educational policies and curricula to be developed regarding English teaching, and for teachers who directly try to improve classroom practices.

5.3. Suggestions for Further Research

When we look at the challenges faced during English language teaching, we find that there is a considerable number of researches on this subject. However, the researchers found that the universe and sample groups consisted mostly of teachers in secondary schools. In this context, researchers suggest that instructor teaching English in higher education institutions should study to identify the challenges they encounter. It is known that the study was conducted at a state university that teaches in English. In this context, the challenges faced by instructors studying at different universities during language teaching can be examined. Again, when the subject is examined, it has been found that there are few scales developed by researchers on the challenges encountered during language teaching in higher education institutions. In this context, it may be suggested that researchers should scale up higher education institutions so that they can identify the challenges they face in the course of language education. Researcher can thus examine the difficulties faced by academics and students working in higher education institutions in the course of language learning.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX-1. Ethical Committee Approval Form



T.C.

UFUK ÜNİVERSİTESİ

Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Bilimsel Araştırma Etik Kurulu Başkanlığı

Sayı : E-81182178-605.99-42338

14.02.2024

Konu : Etik Kurul Onayı (Fatmanur ÜNKESER
GÜDÜK)

DAĞITIM YERLERİNE

İlgi : Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müdürlüğünün 27.12.2023 tarihli ve E-96064710-5014.10-40787 sayılı yazısı.

Üniversitemiz Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi **Fatmanur ÜNKESER GÜDÜK**'ün, **Doç. Dr. Ceyhan KARABIYIK**'ın tez danışmanlığında devam ettirdiği “Türkiye’de İngilizce Eğitim Veren Bir Devlet Üniversitesindeki Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulunda İngilizce Öğretimi Sırasında Karşılaşılan Sorunlar Ve Çözüm Önerileri (Challenges And Solutions Encountered in English Teaching at a school of Foreign Languages in an English Medium of Instruction State University)” konu başlıklı tez çalışması, Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Bilimsel Araştırma Etik Kurulumuzun 29.12.2023 tarih ve 2023/07 sayılı toplantısında Yükseköğretim Kurumları Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Yönergesi ve Ufuk Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Bilimsel Araştırma Etik Kurulu Yönergesi çerçevesinde değerlendirilmiş olup, etik açıdan uygun olduğuna karar verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinizi ve gereğini saygılarımla arz/rica ederim.

Prof. Dr. Mustafa KILIÇ
Kurul Başkanı

DAĞITIM:

Gereği:
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müdürlüğüne

Bilgi:
Rektörlük Makamına

APPENDIX-2. Interview Questions

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

PART A: Demographic Information Questions

- Age:
- Gender:
- Education: BA MA PHD
- Total years of:
 - o Teaching experience:
- Certificates you have obtained in the last 2 years:
- Professional development activities you participate in:

PART B: Content Questions

1. Teaching English in Preparatory Classes:

1.1 *Are there challenges encountered when teaching English in preparatory classes?*

- *What are the reasons/causes of these challenges?*
- *What are your solutions to overcome these challenges?*

2. Reading Activities in Your Classes:

2.1 *Are there challenges encountered during "reading" activities in your classes?*

- *What are the reasons/causes of these challenges?*
- *What are your solutions to overcome these challenges?*

3. Writing Activities in Your Classes:

3.1 *Are there challenges encountered during "writing" activities in your classes?*

- *What are the reasons/causes of these challenges?*
- *What are your solutions to overcome these challenges?*

4. Listening Activities in Your Classes:

4.1 Are there challenges encountered during "listening" activities in your classes?

- *What are the reasons/causes of these challenges?*
- *What are your solutions to overcome these challenges?*

5. Speaking Activities in Your Classes:

5.1 Are there challenges encountered during "speaking" activities in your classes?

- *What are the reasons/causes of these challenges?*
- *What are your solutions to overcome these challenges?*

6. Vocabulary Activities in Your Classes:

6.1 Are there challenges encountered during "vocabulary" activities in your classes?

- *What are the reasons/causes of these challenges?*
- *What are your solutions to overcome these challenges?*

7. Pronunciation Activities in Your Classes:

7.1 Are there challenges encountered during "pronunciation" activities in your classes?

- *What are the reasons/causes of these challenges?*
- *What are your solutions to overcome these challenges?*

8. Punctuation Studies in Your Classes:

8.1 Are there challenges encountered during "punctuation" studies in your classes?

- *What are the reasons/causes of these challenges?*
- *What are your solutions to overcome these challenges?*

9. Grammar Studies in Your Classes:

9.1 Are there challenges encountered during "grammar" studies in your classes?

- *What are the reasons/causes of these challenges?*
- *What are your solutions to overcome these challenges?*