

**A STUDY ON THE CHANGING EDUCATION MODELS AND
DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BY TEACHERS TEACHING
ENGLISH TO PRESCHOOLERS IN TURKEY DURING THE
PANDEMIC PERIOD**

ILGAZ TUNCEL
201113103

MASTER OF ARTS THESIS

Department of Foreign Language Teaching
English Language Teaching Programme with Thesis
Advisor: Prof. Dr. Aysu Aryel Erden

İstanbul
T.C. Maltepe University
Graduate School
September, 2023

**A STUDY ON THE CHANGING EDUCATION MODELS AND
DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BY TEACHERS TEACHING
ENGLISH TO PRESCHOOLERS IN TURKEY DURING THE
PANDEMIC PERIOD**

ILGAZ TUNCEL

201113103

ORCID: 0000-0002-0988-6691

MASTER OR ARTS THESIS

Department of Foreign Language Teaching
English Language Teaching Programme with Thesis
Advisor: Prof. Dr. Aysu Aryel Erden

İstanbul
T.C. Maltepe University
Graduate School
September, 2023



JÜRİ VE ENSTİTÜ ONAYI

Bu belge, Yükseköğretim Kurulu tarafından 19.01.2021 tarihli “*Lisansüstü Tezlerin Elektronik Ortamda Toplanması, Düzenlenmesi ve Erişime Açılmasına İlişkin Yönerge*” ile bildirilen 6689 Sayılı Kişisel Verilerin Korunması Kanunu kapsamında gizlenmiştir.



ETİK İLKE VE KURALLARA UYUM BEYANI

Bu belge, Yükseköğretim Kurulu tarafından 19.01.2021 tarihli “*Lisansüstü Tezlerin Elektronik Ortamda Toplanması, Düzenlenmesi ve Erişime Açılmasına İlişkin Yönerge*” ile bildirilen 6689 Sayılı Kişisel Verilerin Korunması Kanunu kapsamında gizlenmiştir.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

There are some people I would like to thank for their contributions to me during this study and my graduate education.

Firstly, I am grateful to my thesis advisor Dr. Aysu Erden for her contributions and patience throughout the whole process.

On the other hand, I would like to thank all my teachers who contributed to my knowledge about English language education in the first year of my education.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends, who believe in me more than I do.

Ilgaz Tuncel

September, 2023

ÖZET

PANDEMİ DÖNEMİNDE OKUL ÖNCESİ İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN DEĞİŞEN EĞİTİM METOTLARI VE SÜREÇ BOYUNCA KARŞILAŞTIKLARI ZORLUKLAR

İlgaz Tuncel

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı

İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı

Danışman: Prof. Dr. Aysu Aryel Erden

Maltepe Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü, 2023

Covid-19 pandemisi hem global hem de ulusal ölçekte neredeyse tüm meslek gruplarının iş akışlarında zorunlu değişiklikler yapmasına sebebiyet vermiştir. Türkiye’de de bakanlıkların aldıkları kararlar ve yönetmelikler doğrultusunda eğitim kurumlarının işleyiş şekillerinde ciddi değişiklikler yaşanmıştır.

Bu çalışmada, özel okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarında çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin literatüre uzaktan eğitim diye geçen teknolojik aletler ve altyapı ile uzaktan eğitim vermeyi amaçlayan modele zorunlu geçişte değişen aktivite ve materyal kullanımları, yaşadıkları zorluklar ve böyle bir sürecin tekrarlanması durumunda nelerin farklı yapılmasını istedikleri incelenmiştir.

Çalışmanın literatür taramasında uzaktan eğitimin yıllar boyunca gelişimi, Covid-19 pandemisi süresince Türkiye’de uzaktan eğitimin nasıl yapıldığını, okul öncesi eğitimin globalde ve Türkiye’deki durumu, okul öncesi yaş grubu ile uzaktan eğitim ve uzaktan eğitim sürecinde öğretmenlerin, öğrencilerin ve velilerin yaşadıkları zorluklardan bahsedilmiştir.

Çalışma bir vaka analizi olarak tasarlanmıştır. Örneklem grubu için İstanbul’da 2020-2021 yılında uzaktan eğitim ile okul öncesi yaş grubundaki çocuklara İngilizce dersi

vermiş 15 öğretmen seçilmiştir. Öğretmenlere, araştırmacının danışmanı ile beraber hazırladığı yarı açık anket GoogleForms aracılığı ile dağıtılmış ve verdikleri cevaplar araştırma sorularına göre açıklanmıştır.

Çalışmaya, 15 katılımcı katılmış olup verdikleri cevaplara göre geleneksel eğitime göre materyal kullanımında en büyük değişimin video, çizgi film ve şarkıları içeren görsel kullanımındaki artış olduğunu belirtirken, çocuklara uygun online eğitici oyun siteleri de katılımcıların eğitim süreçlerine ekledikleri yeniliklerden olmuştur. Katılımcıların bu yaş grubu ile yaşadıkları en büyük zorluklar arasında sınıf içi disiplini sağlamak ve çekingen öğrencileri derse teşvik etmek olmuştur. Katılımcıların büyük bir kısmı, kendi internet altyapılarının, teknolojik aletlerinin ve ev ortamlarının uzaktan eğitime uygun olduğunu belirtmiştir. Bir daha böyle beklenmedik bir sürecin tekrarlanması durumunda ise katılımcılar öğrencilerin de internet altyapılarının ve ebeveyn-öğretmen-okul iş birliğinin gelişmesi gerektiğini belirtmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: uzaktan eğitim, okul öncesi uzaktan eğitim, Covid-19 döneminde eğitim, okul öncesi dil eğitimi,

ABSTRACT

A STUDY ON THE CHANGING EDUCATION MODELS AND DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BY TEACHERS TEACHING ENGLISH TO PRESCHOOLERS IN TURKEY DURING THE PANDEMIC PERIOD

Ilgaz Tuncel

Master Thesis

Department of Foreign Languages Education

English Language Teaching Program with Thesis

Thesis Advisor: Prof. Dr. Aysu Aryel Erden

Maltepe University Graduate School, 2023

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused almost all professional groups to make mandatory changes in their workflows, both globally and nationally. In Turkey, there have been serious changes in the way educational institutions operate in line with the decisions and regulations taken by ministries.

In this study, the changing use of activities and materials of English teachers working in private pre-school education institutions during the mandatory transition to distance education, the difficulties they experienced and what they would like to do differently in case such a process is repeated were examined.

In the literature review of the study, the development of distance education over the years, how distance education was carried out in Turkey during the Covid-19 pandemic, the situation of pre-school education globally and in Turkey, distance education with the pre-school age group and the difficulties experienced by teachers, students, and parents during the distance education process. has been mentioned.

The study was designed as a case study. For the sample group, 15 teachers who taught English to preschool age children via online education in Istanbul in 2020-2021 were selected. The semi-open survey prepared by the researcher with her advisor was

distributed to the teachers via GoogleForms, and their answers were explained according to the research questions.

15 participants participated in the study, and according to their answers, they stated that the biggest change in material use compared to traditional education was the increase in the use of visuals including videos, cartoons, and songs, while online educational game sites suitable for children were among the innovations that the participants added to their education processes. Among the biggest difficulties experienced by the participants with this age group were ensuring discipline in the classroom and encouraging shy students to study. Most participants stated that their internet infrastructure, technological devices, and home environments were suitable for distance education. In case such an unexpected process happens again, the participants stated that the students' internet infrastructure and parent-teacher-school cooperation should be improved.

Key Words: distance education, preschool distance education, education in the Covid-19 period, preschool language education

GENİŞLETİLMİŞ TÜRKÇE ÖZET

PANDEMİ DÖNEMİNDE OKUL ÖNCESİ İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN DEĞİŞEN EĞİTİM METOTLARI VE SÜREÇ BOYUNCA KARŞILAŞTIKLARI ZORLUKLAR

Korona pandemisi tüm dünya ile beraber Türkiye’de de hayatın neredeyse her alanında beklenmedik ve ciddi değişikliklere sebebiyet vermiştir. Eğitim öğretim süreçleri de pandemi ile çok ani değişimler yaşamıştır. Türkiye’de Covid-19 virüsüne dair ilk vakanın 11 Mart 2020 tarihinden sonra görülmesi ile neredeyse tüm okullarda eğitim uzaktan eğitim ile sürdürülmüş ve ayrıca devlet otoriteleri tarafından 0-20 yaş arası çocuklara sokağa çıkma kısıtlaması getirilmiştir.

Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından altyapısı daha önceden oluşturulduğu için süreç başlar başlamaz aktive olan EBA TV, halihazırda bulunan içeriğinin ilk öğretim derecesinden başlamasından dolayı kullanılmaya ilk başlandığı 2019-2020 bahar döneminde, ilkökul derecesinden itibaren kullanılabilmiştir. Özel eğitim kurumları ise kimi zaman kendi altyapılarında mevcut olan sistemleri ya da EBA TV’yi kullanarak uzaktan eğitimi sağlamışlardır. EBA TV’de okul öncesi yaş grubu için sadece Türkçe içerikler ise ancak 2020-2021 yılında uygulamaya konulabilmiştir.

Türkiye’de hem okul öncesi eğitimin zorunlu olmaması hem de zorunlu yabancı dil eğitiminin ilkökul 2. Sınıf seviyesinden başlamasından dolayı ise okul öncesi seviyesinde yabancı dil eğitimi veren öğretmenlerin, okur-yazarlık ve teknolojik okuryazarlık oranı düşük olan bu yaş grubu ile bu süreci ortak bir müfredat olmamasından dolayı nasıl yönettiği belirsizdir.

Bu araştırmanın amacı da bu süreçte okul öncesi seviyesinde eğitim veren yabancı dil öğretmenlerinin eğitim süreçlerinde kullandıkları aktiviteler ve materyallerde ne gibi değişiklikler yapmak zorunda kaldıklarını, uzaktan eğitim sürecinde sınıf yönetimi ve fiziksel koşullarda nerelerde zorlandıklarını anlamaktır. Ayrıca araştırma zorunlu uzaktan

eğitimin olası bir koşulda tekrarlanması durumunda, öğretmenlerin süreçte nelerin farklı olmasını istediklerini de anlamayı amaçlamaktadır.

Araştırma için İstanbul’da Covid-19 pandemisi uzaktan eğitim sürecinde uzaktan yabancı dil eğitimi veren iki özel anaokulu seçilmiştir ve burada Corona pandemisinde uzaktan çalışan 15 öğretmen araştırmanın örneklem grubunu oluşturmuştur. Öğretmenlerden, araştırmacı tarafından hazırlanan ve tez danışmanının onay verdiği, bu tezin en sonunda bulunan literatür taraması sonucunda oluşturulmuş veri toplama formu ile veriler toplanmıştır.

Öğretmenlerden 9 (%60) tanesi daha önce uzaktan eğitim deneyimi olmadığını belirtmiştir. Öğretmenlerden 9 (%40 +%20) tanesi sınıf içi materyalleri kendi hazırladığını belirtirken, yalnız 2 (%13,3) tanesi sınıfta kullandığı materyalleri uzaktan eğitime dahil etmekte zorlandığını belirtmiştir. Öğretmenlerden bir tanesi zorluğun bilgisayarların altyapı farklılığından kaynaklandığını belirtirken diğeri fiziksel bir materyalinin, uzaktan eğitim de aynı etkiyi yaratmadığını ve zorlandığını belirtmiştir. Katılımcılar 6sı (%40), sınıf ortamından farklı olarak uzaktan eğitimde video, şarkı ve çizgi film gibi eğitici materyallerin daha sık kullanıldığını bahsetmiştir. İkinci olarak ise öğretmenlerden 4 (%26,6) tanesi fiziksel aktivitelerin online eğitimde öne çıktığından bahsetmiştir.

Araştırmanın ikinci kısmında öğretmenlerin, sınıf ve öğrenci yönetiminde yaşadıkları zorluklar anlaşılmaya çalışılmıştır. Öğretmenlerden 8 (%33,3 +%20) tanesi öğrencilerin bilgisayar okuryazarlıklarının yetersiz olduğunu belirtmiştir. Öğretmenlerin 8 (%46,6 +%6,6) tanesi öğrencilerin aktif sınıf içi katılımında zorluklar yaşadığını belirtirken, 11 (%33,3 + %40) öğretmen de öğrencilerin ev ortamının derse uygun olmadığını belirtmiştir.

Araştırmanın üçüncü kısmında, öğretmenlere kendi uzaktan eğitim deneyimlerinde fiziksel olarak yaşadıkları zorluklar ile ilgili sorular yöneltilmiştir. Öğretmenlerden 11 (%13,3 + %60) tanesi kendi teknolojik aletlerinin uzaktan eğitim süreci için yeterli olduğunu söylemiştir. Öğretmenlere kurumlarından destek görüp görmedikleri ile ilgili başka bir soru yöneltilmiştir. 7 öğretmen (%40 + %6,6) yeterli destek görmediğini belirtmiştir.

Araştırmanın en son kısmında ise öğretmenlere Covid-19 pandemisinde yaşadığımız gibi uzaktan eğitimin tekrarlanması durumunda nelerin farklı olmasını istedikleri sorulmuştur. Öğretmenlerin 6 kişi (%40) ile en çok belirttiği farklılık, öğretmen, okul yönetimi ve ebeveyn iş birliğinin artması olmuştur. 4 öğretmen (%26,6) ise, ders saatlerinin kısaltılması gerektiğini belirtmiştir.

Bu araştırmanın sonucunda, Covid-19 pandemisinde uzaktan eğitim yolu ile ders işleyen İngilizce öğretmenlerinin en çok video, şarkı ve çizgi film materyallerini ders planlarına ekledikleri ortaya çıkmıştır. Öğretmenlerin, büyük bir çoğunluğu ise öğrencilerin yaşlarının gerektirdikleri sebeplerden dolayı sınıf içi disiplini sağlamakta, öğrencileri derse dahil etmekte zorlanmıştır. Öğretmenlerin kendilerinin ise, uzaktan eğitim sürecinde yaşanan fiziksel zorluklar ile örtüşmeyen bir deneyimleri olmuştur. Öğretmenlerin çoğunluğu, kendi ortamlarının ve aletlerinin online eğitim süreci için yeterli olduğunu belirtmiştir.

Araştırma İstanbul'da yaşayan 15 öğretmenin katılımı ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu yüzden kısıtlılıklar içermektedir. Araştırmayı ileriye taşımak isteyen araştırmacılara eğitim sürecine katkı sağlayan diğer katılımcılar (veli, öğrenci, okul yönetimi...) ile karşılaştırmalı bir araştırma, diğer eğitim seviyelerinde ders veren öğretmenlerle karşılaştırmalı bir araştırma, kontrol grubu oluşturulup araştırmacının kendi gözlemleri ile yaptığı daha detaylı bir araştırma yapması önerilmektedir.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

JÜRİ VE ENSTİTÜ ONAYI	ii
ETİK İLKE VE KURALLARA UYUM BEYANI.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
ÖZET	v
ABSTRACT.....	vii
GENİŞLETİLMİŞ TÜRKÇE ÖZET	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	xii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xv
LIST OF FIGURES	xvi
ABBREVIATIONS	xvii
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Statement of the Problem	1
1.2 The Research Questions	2
1.3 The Significance of the Research.....	3
1.4 Statement of Assumptions.....	4
1.5 Limitations	4
1.6 Definitions.....	4
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.1 Online Learning	6
2.1.1 Online learning until 2019	6
2.1.2 Online learning during and after Covid-19	7
2.1.3 Application and infrastructure of online learning in Turkey during pandemic	9
2.1.4 Pre-school online learning during Covid-19 in Turkey	9

2.2	Pre-School Education	10
2.2.1	Worldwide understanding of pre-school education	11
2.2.2	Pre-school education in Turkey	12
2.2.3	Foreign language education to pre-schoolers.....	12
2.3	Online Education with Pre-schoolers	14
2.3.1	Online Education with pre-schoolers during Covid-19	14
2.3.2	Online education with pre-schoolers during Covid-19 in Turkey	16
2.4	Difficulties During Online Education.....	17
2.4.1	Difficulties experienced by teachers during online education	17
2.4.2	Difficulties experienced by students	19
2.4.3	Difficulties experienced by parents.....	20
CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY		22
3.1	Research Questions.....	22
3.2	Research Participants	22
3.3	Data Collecting Tools	23
3.3.1	Ethical consent form	23
3.3.2	The study model.....	23
3.4	Data Collection Process	24
3.5	Data Analysis and Interpretations.....	24
CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION		26
4.1	Information About Participants	26
4.2	The Socio-demographic Features of Participant.....	27
4.3	The Changing Educational Materials, Activities of Teachers	28
4.3.1	Online education experience	28
4.3.2	Preparation of materials used in online education	29
4.3.3	Transfer of classroom materials to the online platform	30
4.3.4	Difficulties in transferring classroom materials to the online platform.....	31
4.3.5	Materials used in online education.....	32
4.3.6	Change in active lesson durations	35

4.4	Difficulties in Student and Lesson Management in Online Education	36
4.4.1	Technological literacy of students	36
4.4.2	Active student participation in the lesson	37
4.4.3	Students' online lesson environment	38
4.4.4	Involving students in the online lesson	39
4.4.5	In-class discipline in online lessons	40
4.5	Physical Difficulties in Online Education	40
4.5.1	Internet infrastructure.....	41
4.5.2	Technological tools	42
4.5.3	Institutional support	43
4.5.4	Physical environment.....	44
4.6	Return to Compulsory Online Education	45
4.7	Discussion for the Research Questions	48
4.7.1	The changing educational methods of teachers	48
4.7.2	Difficulties in student and class management.....	49
4.7.3	Physical difficulties in online lessons	49
4.7.4	Return to compulsory online education	49
CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS		50
REFERENCES		53
APPENDICES		62
Appendix I: Ethics Committee Approval		62
Appendix II: Ministry of Education Approval		63
Appendix III: Survey Questions		64
CURRICULUM VITAE.....		65

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Socio-demographic features of participants.....	27
Table 2. New materials and activity that participants started to use with online education	32
Table 3. Changes in online education	45



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Participants online education experience	28
Figure 2. Preparation of materials used in online education.....	29
Figure 3. Transfer of classroom materials to the online platform.....	30
Figure 4. Change in active lesson durations	35
Figure 5. Technological literacy of students.....	36
Figure 6. Active student participation in the lesson.....	37
Figure 7. Students' online lesson environment.....	38
Figure 8. Involving students in the online lesson	39
Figure 9. In-class discipline in online lessons	40
Figure 10. Internet infrastructure	41
Figure 11. Technological tools	42
Figure 12. Institutional support.....	43
Figure 13. Physical environment	44

ABBREVIATIONS

COHE	: Council of Higher Education
EBA TV	: Education Information Network
MONE	: Ministry of National Education
TRT	: Turkish Radio and Television Cooperation



CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This study tries to seek an answer on the change of educational practices and the challenges faced by English teachers of preschoolers during the Covid-19 pandemic. The statement of problem, the research questions, the significance of the study, the study's assumptions, limitations, and definitions are all included in this chapter of the research.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Since the first case was announced in March 2020 in Turkey, the Covid-19 pandemic has had an array of impacts on every individual and every profession. The rapid shutdown of schools and the conversion of the entire educational system to online learning made teachers one of the occupational groups most impacted by this pandemic.

Like other nations, Turkey looked for a solution to the schooling issue as soon as the corona pandemic began. While EBA TV was being introduced by MONE, state schools already had the necessary infrastructure in place. Private schools developed their own platforms or used various teleconferencing tools to conduct live classes. It is unknown; however, what kind of path pre-school foreign language teachers took during this time, as obligatory education in the national education curriculum begins at the primary school level and compulsory foreign language instruction is starting from the second grade.

Considering the age group in which the teachers at the target of the research work, first, it is a question mark whether the students are competent enough to use computers or other technological devices during online education period in which technological literacy gains vital importance. It is also well-known that a wide range of educational resources (coloring books, games, posters, props, etc.) and approaches stand out when the target age group for teachers is considered. In this age group where there is no common curriculum or online education platform, it is still unknown how teachers revised their traditional education activities and materials for online education. Additionally, one of the biggest difficulties of teachers working with the preschool age group is that the concentration span of this group is very limited. In online education, which is already a

challenging process for everyone, how teachers provide this discipline is an important point to be examined.

On the other hand, one of the biggest difficulties encountered in the online education process is the lack of infrastructure and technological tools. Since the process is completely dependent on technology, the inadequacies of both teachers and students contribute very negatively to the process.

Therefore, the goal of this study is to understand how English teachers of the preschool age group have changed their methods of teaching in response to the Covid-19 pandemic as well as the difficulties they have encountered due to problems with discipline in the classroom, academic performance, and physical conditions.

1.2 The Research Questions

The goal of this research is to gain insight into the changing educational materials and activities that Turkish preschool English teachers adopted as well as the obstacles they encountered during the Covid-19 pandemic. As a consequence of the research, it is aimed to gain precise knowledge regarding how teachers' instructional materials and activities changed throughout the Covid-19 outbreak and to understand the challenges teachers came across at the time. The difficulties teachers encountered during the Covid-19 pandemic were broken down into three categories: classroom management, student performance, and physical challenges.

Considering the difficulties brought by online education, which is a sudden transformation for teachers working with all age groups, the research will examine three main topics with sub-questions for teachers who the target of the research is. These topics are the changing education materials and activities in this process, the difficulties experienced in the classroom management of teachers and student performance, and the physical difficulties experienced by teachers.

Therefore, these three main research questions will shape the research.

- **RQ 1:** What kind of changes did the teachers make in the education materials or activities during Covid-19 period?

- **RQ 2:** What challenges did teachers face in classroom management and student performance in online education?
- **RQ 3:** What physical difficulties did teachers encounter during the online education process?

In addition to the research questions, to understand the demographic structure of the participants, some questions will be asked about their age, professional experience and educational status in a way that will not harm their personal rights.

This study tries to figure out the changes and challenges encountered by a specific group of teachers in their professional experience in a specific situation. For this reason, both the common difficulties experienced by all teachers in the online education process during the Covid-19 period and the experiences of teachers working with the specified age group (preschoolers) will be discussed and examined.

1.3 The Significance of the Research

The world underwent a tremendous transformation shortly after the first Covid-19 case surfaced. It was clear that educational institutions were among the institutions most impacted by this transition. Educational institutions at different levels in different geographies of the world have undergone unpredictable changes and the first steps have been taken for the education system of the future.

Turkish educational institutions were able to successfully handle this process using both the state-created mechanisms and technological assistance. Potential issues were reduced by the employment of a uniform curriculum throughout the nation beginning in primary schools. However, since pre-school education is not compulsory and a common curriculum is not used in Turkey, it is not known exactly how pre-school education is maintained in the Corona pandemic.

With this study, it is aimed to better understand the approaches preschool English teachers take in adjusting to online instruction for the age group they work with as well as the challenges they face. This research aims to ascertain the situation for a specific group and hopes to form an idea to avoid the same issues in a possible transition to online education

in the future because there isn't a lot of information available on this change process and the problems experienced during the Covid-19 period for this specific target group.

1.4 Statement of Assumptions

It is believed that the participants in this study will provide accurate and consistent responses to the survey's questions as well as to its demographic questions. In addition, the survey prepared by the researcher in line with the literature review is expected to present accurate information in a way that will answer the research questions. It is also considered that the data collection tool can collect appropriate information.

Preschool foreign language teaching materials and activities vary due to the difference in mental development of the age group and the characteristics of the age group. The transition to online education has been challenging for this age group, which is currently demanding and requires different methods in the learning process. The unpreparedness of teachers and children for this transition, and physical inadequacies negatively affected the learning process.

1.5 Limitations

The results of this study are only relevant to the survey utilized for gathering the data. The research was further constrained by the socio demographic makeup of the participants and their responses. Additionally, the research's data spans the school year 2020–2021, which falls during the corona epidemic.

1.6 Definitions

Preschoolers are defined as children between the ages of 36 and 72 months who have received pre-school instruction, according to a regulation created by the MONE's basic education directorate in 2013. The main goals of this education, according to this rule created by the MONE, are to give children in this age range essential life skills, teach them how to use Turkish appropriately, and get them ready physically and psychologically for primary school using a game-based approach.

The literature on online education is vast and there are many definitions with the exact definition of online education. According to the article written by Singh and Thurman (2019), online education is a learning experience that can be accessed through various technological devices in a synchronized or asynchronous manner via the Internet.

And finally, to briefly summarize the corona pandemic and its effects on education, the WHO describes the corona virus as a moderate to severe respiratory disease brought on by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Due to this disease, which suddenly turned into an international pandemic, and the sudden closures, UNESCO says that the education life of more than 1.5 billion students has been affected, and that this effect will continue until 2030 for some disadvantaged groups.



CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Online Learning

In the following part of the study, it will be stated how online education was perceived and developed by researchers until the Covid-19 pandemic, how it developed with the Covid-19 pandemic, and what kind of process was followed in online education during the corona pandemic in Turkey.

2.1.1 Online learning until 2019

Examining the articles written on online education up until 2019 reveals that it was seen significantly differently than it is today.

Starting with the definitions made by scholars, in 1996 McIsaac and Gunawardena defined distance education as “(..) *ideas and practices taken from traditional classroom settings and imposed on learners who just happen to be separated physically from an instructor*” (p.356). Moore and Kearsley (2012) defined that “*distance education is teaching and planned learning in which teaching normally occurs in a different place from learning, requiring communication through technologies as well as special institutional organization*” (P.17). When the timing of online education examined, according to most researchers it consists of 3 different types consisting of courses attended by the trainer and the student simultaneously (synchronously), courses attended by the trainer and the student at different times (asynchronous), and a combination of these two (Sun & Chen, 2016).

Although some sources consider the distribution of educational materials by mail as the beginning of distance education, the meeting of online education with the first technology is based on educational broadcasts made on radio and television (Palvia et.al, 2018). However, the greatest contribution to it to take its present form comes as a result of the establishment of the internet and the advancement of mail technology (Harasim, 2000).

Except for exceptional circumstances like the teacher shortage at the K–12 level in the United States in 2012, academic research conducted up to 2019 have primarily focused on the problem of online education at the university level (Sun & Chen, 2016). Although it is stated in the researches that online education is more time-consuming for both educators and students who do not have a certain technological literacy level, its benefits for students, especially undergraduate and graduate students, providing this opportunity to students who have to work but want to complete their undergraduate degree, people who cannot make the university their priority due to reasons such as family, community problems or that they want to get a bachelor's degree even though they are older than other students (Mayadas, Bourne, & Bacsich, 2009). Also, when the work of Moore and Kearsley (2012) which is about the reasons of why online education is needed, it is understood that even if there are some justified reasons, no one has even thought of an event like the Covid-19 pandemic and that online education can work for this reason.

- Expand educational and training opportunities for equity's sake.
- Give workers the chance to update their abilities.
- Increasing the financial efficiency of educational resources.
- Boost the standard of the current educational systems.
- Increase the educational system's capacity.
- Equalize age-related disparities
- Distribute instructional messages to definite target markets.
- Train key target areas in emergency procedures.
- Increase the availability of education in new fields.
- Provide options for balancing job, family, and education
- Increase the educational experience's global component (p.182).

Even if research done prior to 2019 suggests that online education will expand and become more significant in the future, the vast majority of academics don't think this system can replace the current educational system (Palvia et. al, 2018).

2.1.2 Online learning during and after Covid-19

Online education was a choice up until the pandemic, and it wouldn't be inaccurate to state that it was a process that most of the time evolved in accordance with the preferences

of the user. But with the pandemic, at a time when nearly no one was ready, this became more of a necessity than a choice (Qiao et al., 2021). Except for applied sciences, usually medicine, almost everyone had to continue their education from home. During the Covid-19 epidemic, more over 1.5 billion students from primary school to university had to do their coursework from home, heavily depending on digital learning platforms, according to UNESCO data (UNESCO 2020). Instead of calling this sudden change process online education, academicians prefer to express it with other names. While Virtic et al. (2020) naming this situation as Forced Online Distance Learning (FODL) application, Almusharraf and Khahro (2020) consider this process as Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT).

Although there are differences in naming, most of the academicians almost agree that online education will not be easily removed from our lives from now on. Additionally, this abrupt adjustment revealed issues that nobody anticipated. The most common problem stated by most of the academicians was the lack of internet infrastructure and technological equality due to income inequality (Almusharraf & Khahro, 2020). Apart from this, other problems such as the lack of appropriate materials due to the sudden transition, teacher inexperience, low motivation, and cyber bullying were emerged along the process. On the other hand, the process is aided by several advancements. Technologies including big data, artificial intelligence, 5G, and cloud-based platforms, among others, began to improve education in many kinds of ways. (Zhu & Liu, 2020). However, academics argue that although infrastructure and technology are vital to this process and contribute significantly, they will not make any sense without educators who are well-versed in this subject. Zhu & Liu (2020) in their work, they argue that online education will no longer eliminate from our lives, and they suggest that the following 4 steps should be taken in the future.

- Open educational platforms that enable access to top-notch learning resources must continue to be developed.
- We must review present models of online teaching and learning using quantitative and qualitative research, paying close attention to their long-term viability.

- We must increase the ability of staff members to teach online and the ability of professionals to help instructors and online systems.
- To promote high-quality online learning throughout society, we need to strengthen collaboration between universities, international organizations, the commercial sector, civil society, and other stakeholders (p.697).

2.1.3 Application and infrastructure of online learning in Turkey during pandemic

The first corona case in Turkey was seen on March 11, 2020, and as of this date, various institutions of the state started to implement numerous measures. While the first step taken by the MONE was the closure of schools until April 3, 2020, it was decided to implement the closure until the end of the year (Yaycı & Kendirici, 2021). During this process, the MONE activated the online platform called EBA (educational informatics network), which was founded in 2011-2012, and distance education began on March 23, 2020, in Turkey (Özer, 2020; Yaycı & Kendirici, 2021). EBA broadcasts on TRT and education was given to the primary and middle school between 09.00-14.00 and for the secondary school level between 09.00-16.00 (Özer, 2020). While this was going on, some private schools developed their own platforms, offered online instruction using Zoom or Blackboard, and teachers communicated with both students and parents using YouTube, WhatsApp, or Google Docs (Canlı & Canlı, 2020). On the other hand, EBA did not offer anything for pre-school education and because of that teachers and parents created suitable digital learning environments for pre-school education with their own efforts (Yıldırım, 2021). Although COHE (Council of Higher Education) canceled face-to-face education in line with the decisions taken by the state, it was decided that each university's own senate would decide on the type of online education (Tümen, 2020).

2.1.4 Pre-school online learning during Covid-19 in Turkey

With the decision taken in March 2020, pre-school institutions along with all education levels switched to distance education. But unlike other education levels, the system of the MONE, which is called EBA Tv started from primary school level and did not have an infrastructure for lower age groups (Alan, 2021; Yıldırım, 2021). For this reason, since the transition to distance education in the 2019-2020 academic year in pre-school schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education, a TV broadcast could not be offered, and the education has progressed through the materials in the system with the cooperation of

teachers and parents (Duran & Ömeroğlu, 2022). MONE released an activity book called Elif and Alp in May 2020 with the goal of educating children about the pandemic conditions through activities and ensuring their mental health (Alan, 2021). In the 2020-2021 education period, with a decision made jointly by Ministry of Health and the Ministry of National Education, schools providing pre-school education started to be opened gradually, one day a week for a short time. Since the disease still maintains its severity, MONE made a much more serious preparation for the preschool for the year 2020-2021. The teachers were informed about keeping in touch with the families, preparing 6 activities consisting of 20-minute activities per day, informing the family and the school administration about the daily schedule, communicating with the students in different platforms and checking that the students are active on EBA TV (Alan, 2021). In December 2020, MONE prepared the pre-school part of EBA Tv and started the pre-school broadcast consisting of 3 parts. These 3 sections were named calendar, activity time and as a family (Alan, 2021). The 2020-2021 academic year has been handled in a more professional way compared to 2019-2020, although sometimes it is a complete return to online education, and sometimes it is done in face to face.

However, the opinion of most teachers is that despite EBA Tv or other platforms, online education is not enough for this age group (Yıldız et al., 2022). Although the majority of the teachers claimed that this process improved their relationship with parents, they declared that during the pandemic they were seen as parents' go-to people for activities and handouts rather than as professionals working in education (Yıldız et al., 2022; Yıldırım, 2021). However, teachers claim that online learning is less effective than classroom instruction, they also assert that when a situation like this arises again, advanced computer literacy, user-friendly pre-school education platforms, and support for both teachers and families are essential (Alan, 2021).

2.2 Pre-School Education

In this section, after mentioning how preschool education is perceived in the world, the development of preschool education in Turkey will be mentioned. Finally, the literature review on foreign language education in this age group will be mentioned.

2.2.1 Worldwide understanding of pre-school education

It has been proven that the development of a very large part of the brain is completed between the ages of 0-6, and that individuals who pass this process in a healthy and productive way are more successful in future processes (Morgan, 2019). Despite this proven knowledge, according to UNESCO data, very few children in the world can still benefit from pre-school education and the disadvantaged groups who should attend pre-school education often cannot benefit from this right (Unesco,2020). According to the works of Nobel Prize winner James Heckman, he emphasizes that the education of this age group is so important that an individual who has a successful pre-school education process will be successful in the next part of his life, as well as contribute to the society and the country in which he lives in the long run (Ulferts et al, 2019). Although pre-school education is appreciated in very few countries today, according to the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) in America, quality preschool education in the 21st century should provide the following 10 points:

- Early learning standards across multiple domains
- A well-implemented curriculum that supports learning and development
- A bachelor's degree for lead teachers
- Specialized preparation for lead teachers on learning, development, and pedagogy at the preschool level.
- A Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or equivalent preparation for assistant teachers
- Teacher participation in a substantial number of hours of professional development
- Class size maximum of 20 children
- Staff-to-child ratio of 1:10 or less
- Screening and support services for hearing, vision, dental, and other health areas
- Continuous monitoring to ensure improvement in practice (Friedman-Krauss, 2023).

2.2.2 Pre-school education in Turkey

Preschool, which is not compulsory even in most European Union members or developed countries, is not compulsory in Turkey, it depends on the family's request. However, a certain age range is required in order to take use of the state-provided pre-school services. The age limit for attending the institutions of pre-schooling; in this respect, kindergartens and practical nursery classes is 36-72 months, and nursery classes accepted children between 60-72 months (Başaran & Ulubey, 2018).

It can be said that Turkish preschool education dates back to the latter years of the Ottoman Empire. The first concrete step taken in the Turkish Republic was the law approved in 1952 regarding pre-school education (Kılıç et al, 2010). Decisions on pre-school education were renewed after 20 years and adapted to the conditions of the day, and after 1980, the overall number of pre-school institutions has greatly risen. (Er-Sabuncuoğlu & Diken, 2010). Between 2009-2010 MONE launched a pilot study on compulsory education of 60–72-month-old children to be recruited in pre-school education in 32 cities and this number increased to 57 in 2010-2011 education years (Kayhan & Pistav-Akmeşe, 2012). Currently, the Ministry of National Education (MONE), the Prime Ministry of Social Services and Child Welfare of the Republic of Turkey, as well as non-governmental or other private/state institutions working in partnership with these two governmental organizations, provide early childhood education services in Turkey (Er-Sabuncuoğlu & Diken, 2010).

2.2.3 Foreign language education to pre-schoolers

One of the most important unwritten rules of the increasingly globalized society is the proficiency in a second language. English is the most significant language in the globalizing world, and most people think that being able to speak it well will improve every part of their lives. Up until 1980, learning English was a concern for both adults and school-age children, but beliefs and academic research on preschoolers' English acquisition gained traction following this time (Ansari et.al, 2019). The two main drivers of this interest are the growing idea among families that teaching their children English will help them succeed in life and the growing significance of the "earlier the better" perspective, which is still a point of controversy among academics (Çakıcı, 2016). Age is

a significant element in language learning, and the majority of research have shown that youngsters can speak two, and sometimes more, languages at once, despite the fact that academics are still in debate. In addition, according to some studies, people who learn a second language at an early age speak more accurately and fluently than people who learn a language at an older age (Deneme & Ada, 2010).

There are numerous different differences between how adults and young children learn languages. First, preschoolers are almost always illiterate and perceive language only verbally (Demircioğlu, 2010). Adults, however, have a certain level of ability in their mother tongue, and they are also proficient in its grammatical structure. This distinction inevitably influences the variety of techniques employed by the two groups. On the other hand, when we look at the reasons why adults learn languages, we can list many reasons. Being successful at work, living in a different geography, etc. might be reasons and these create a motivation for learning for themselves. However, since preschoolers do not have such a consciousness, learning takes place in its natural course (Kaarina Ghosn, 2014). Lastly, when we compare it with all other age groups, the preschool age group is the age group with the shortest concentration span. Another important consideration is the need of appropriately choosing the learning environment and materials for the classroom.

One of the most important points when working with preschool children is methods and materials. Elkind (1991) mentioned the importance of methods and materials as following quotation.

Young children learn in a different manner from that of older children and adults, yet we can teach them many things if we adapt our materials and mode of instruction to their level of ability. But we miseducate young children when we assume that their learning abilities are comparable to those of older children and that they can be taught with materials and with the same instructional procedures appropriate to school-age children. (p. 59).

The use of games and toys is the most important method to apply when teaching a foreign language to the preschool age group. While children learn daily activities through play, Piaget argues that play increases cognitive development. On the other hand, another name

emphasizing the importance of play, Vygotsky mentions that language development is positively affected when children play together and interact socially (Mart, 2012).

As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, the use of songs, storytelling and music is another point that should not be overlooked, since preschool children can only perceive language through spoken language. In storytelling, keywords are repeated many times with emphasis, intonation, so children will be able to perceive them easily (Malkina, 2014).

Learning processes that include physical activities are another preferred method for preschool children. Total physical response (TPR) method invented by James Asher is to physically respond to verbal commands. “Simon Says” and similar games, which are among the most well-known games using this technique, ensure that preschool children are not distracted while learning and, they are physically involved in the learning process (Demircioğlu, 2010).

When all these points are taken into consideration, preschoolers learn differently from adults due to both their concentration time and their perception of language. Since preschoolers do not have literacy proficiency, it is important to use verbal materials in this process, and to include games and toys in the learning process due to their cognitive levels.

2.3 Online Education with Pre-schoolers

2.3.1 Online education with pre-schoolers during Covid-19

Everyone was affected differently by the COVID-19 epidemic and the rapid conversion of the entire system to remote communication. One of the most impacted groups, according to UNESCO, was students. Despite the fact that this literature review will address the ongoing online education in the corona epidemic, it should be emphasized that 2/3 of the pre-school population in the United States has stopped attending school as a result of financial insufficiencies.

When educators who work with preschoolers consider what they encounter during the online learning process, distraction and short attention spans come to mind as the main issues. Although it varies by age group, the majority of the students in this procedure had

trouble paying attention to the lesson because of both their physical surroundings and technology issues (Canlı & Canlı,2020). Preschool teachers also brought up the inverse relationship between class size and focus time. Students found it challenging to participate in the online course when the class number grew.

The second point that teachers working with this age group emphasized was the participation of the family in the lesson. Family members became an essential part of the process because this age group lacks computer proficiency or is unable to print out the materials supplied by the school, etc. (Foti, 2020). Although the workload of the families increased in this process, teachers stated that reluctant parents and working parents could not establish the work-preschool child balance and the online education process was difficult (Duran & Ömeroğlu, 2022).

The last point that the teachers mentioned is, because the abstract-concrete perceptions of children in this age group do not fit well, they cannot perceive the pandemic or why they are doing online education. It is another point that teachers have difficulty with the education process (Kuset et al., 2021).

Even while academicians and teachers concur that technology should be used in pre-school education, they believe that it ought to be implemented in a balanced manner in a traditional classroom setting.

Even if online education is implemented under compulsory conditions, it is thought that classical classroom education is a more efficient model in the preschool age group due to the inexperience of both the age group and all the people involved in online education process (Fidan, 2021).

Considering the entire online education process, the main reasons for the difficulties experienced by teachers can be stated as teachers' inexperience, being unplanned throughout the process, financial and technological inadequacy, and lack of school, family, and student cooperation.

2.3.2 Online education with pre-schoolers during Covid-19 in Turkey

Although the studies are not particular to teaching a foreign language to preschoolers, it is possible to find studies done with instructors working with the preschool age group in Turkey during the pandemic time or with parents included in this group in Turkey.

First of all, to address the opinions of the teachers about this process, most teachers realized that they were insufficient in terms of using computers in online education (Alan, 2021). On the other hand, while simultaneous lessons or screen sharing are more possible in other age groups, it is believed that it is not very productive for this age group to move education environments where they can be physically active or learn through games (Sak et al., 2017). In addition, in this sudden change, it is seen that teachers have difficulties in creating resources due to their inadequacy in computer literacy and the inadequacy of the number of interactive materials in both Turkish and English (Alan, 2020).

Since the preschool age group is more dependent on the family because literacy and computer use are more limited, teachers were in contact with families a lot in this process. In a study conducted with teachers working with this age group in Turkey, it is seen that almost all of them talk about miscommunication or lack of communication between the family and the teacher. When the answers given by the teachers are examined, it is seen that if there are too many students and insufficient technological equipment at home, and if there is a sibling in the older age group, the priority is always given to that child, and the child in the preschool age group is left in the background (Alan, 2020).

In addition, as mentioned before, the preschool group includes a more interactive lesson environment, reasons like the high number of needed prints, the varied materials required for the activities are not available at home, etc. both affect the communication between teachers and parents and cause the student to be more inefficient in the classroom and education process. In addition, preschool teachers also mention that the scope of teacher roles has changed in this process (Yıldız et al., 2022). Teachers mention that they see themselves as supporters of both parents and students in addition to their role as educators.

When the studies in which the parents of the children studying at the pre-school level are examined, it is seen that the parents mentioned a few points in this process. First of all, although most of the parents are happy to spend more time with their children due to this

mandatory lock-down, they also mention a few troublesome points in family communication (Toran et al., 2021). In a study comparing parents of Chinese preschool children and Turkish parents, parents talk about the loss of discipline in domestic rules such as screen time and bedtime due to both the return of education to online education and this unexpected change, and they stated that the parent-child balance is confused even though they spend more time together. In another study conducted among 20 Turkish parents, it was mentioned that children in this age group showed a tendency to get bored, angry, violent or have cry attacks during online education (Duran & Ömeroğlu, 2022). In addition, most of the parents mentioned that they have difficulty in finding balance in their own behaviors due to various reasons and they are aware that this is reflected on their child. While some stated that the reason for this was anxieties arising from the uncertainty of the process, others stated that they had difficulty in conducting remote work and online education at the same time.

2.4 Difficulties During Online Education

The sudden emergence of the virus and the uncontrolled spread of cases affected each business group and people belonging to different units of each business group in different ways. The main reason for this was that the job descriptions of the person changed due to the necessity of not leaving the house unless it was necessary. There is no doubt that this proposition is true in the educational process. Due to the transition to compulsory online education among teachers, parents, and students, who are normally an element of the education process, there have been changes in their predefined job descriptions. This caused the parties to experience certain difficulties in this transition. In this section, the current research on the difficulties experienced by the three sides will be discussed.

2.4.1 Difficulties experienced by teachers during online education

With the Corona pandemic, the transition of almost all working branches to the remote working model has affected all occupational groups in different degrees both in Turkey and in the world. Teachers were affected by the online education process in different ways according to both their branches and the age groups they work in, and they encountered many problems.

Prior to the Corona pandemic, research on online education demonstrates that up to the middle of 2020, it served as a viable model for some universities' undergraduate, master's,

and doctoral programs as well as for some certificate programs (Canlı & Canlı, 2020). However, a review of the literature following the corona pandemic, which necessitated a global emergency shutdown, reveals that online learning has unexpectedly emerged as an inescapable model for all educational levels.

When the studies with teachers both in Turkey and in the world are examined, the first difficulty encountered is the inexperience of the teachers. The fact that almost none of the teachers have online education experience both during their undergraduate education and throughout their teaching life and they have not worked with distance education programs appear as the most difficult point during the process (Aytaç, 2021). In addition, the fact that school administrators and government departments responsible for education do not have sudden transformation plans that have been studied until the pandemic is one of the factors that make the process more difficult.

The lack of adequate technology and infrastructure is the second challenge. While teachers, mainly those working in rural areas, indicated that they frequently experienced problems with infrastructure during their lessons, teachers in more developed regions claim that students come up with excuses like "teacher, my microphone is broken," "teacher, my screen is gone," etc., which negatively affect online learning processes and rise absenteeism rates (Karakaya et.al, 2020). In addition, teachers emphasize that during this process, parents could not prepare the ideal working environment for students both physically and technologically. This situation arises because of another problem that teachers encounter during the online education process. Teachers state that in this process, economic inequality among students is felt much more and it causes problems during the lesson. They tried to prepare budget-friendly activities for parents, and they avoided using certain materials. Of course, the fact that the materials are not suitable for the online environment also creates other problems.

As Hakan Dilman (2022) mentioned in his article called "*Teachers' assessment of foreign language teaching done during the COVID-19 outbreak with the distance education*", another problem appeared with the online teaching is that teachers' extended working hours and their increased workload outside their job descriptions. Dilman (2022) summarizes the dissatisfaction of teachers who have to teach online during 2019-Covid pandemic;

The most important reason why teachers feel worthless during the COVID-19 epidemic is they constantly teach lessons and the situation where they try to meet the demands of students, parents and school administrators, and the demands on them are constantly increasing or diversify rather than decreasing (p.1456).

The quotes of the participants in the article of Dilman's (2022) give an idea about the weight of the burden experienced by teachers; they define the harsh conditions with such sentences; *"the school administration's extra homework and compulsory studies put pressure on teachers."* or *"the complete disappearance of the concept of the beginning and end of the shift was an intervention in private life"* (p. 1447).

2.4.2 Difficulties experienced by students

Unexpected online education caused all students to encounter very different problems in their education life. This process, in which inequality of opportunity in education was felt even more harshly, revealed both the common problems brought by online education and specific problems for this age group among pre-school children. In the literature review, only articles that were thought to be a problem by teachers and parents of preschool students were encountered.

The first problem mentioned in almost all articles is the problem of not being able to learn independently. The fact that the student needs someone for both computer use and simple commands (cutting paper, holding a pen, sitting still on a chair, etc.) has made the process difficult for the students (Munastiwi, 2020). As mentioned above, children whose parents or caregivers cannot spare this time are at a disadvantage in the process. In addition, the fact that children are sometimes alone in front of the computer has created a very serious security problem (Diningrat & Salwa, 2020). It should be a priority for the programs used by children to have minimum security vulnerabilities and to code the computers in a way that the child cannot access any other online environment outside the classroom for a healthy online education process.

Children's unfamiliarity with online education and the resulting reluctance, timidity and distraction problems emerges as a second problem (Hsu et. al, 2019 & Lavidas et. al, 2022). While some of the children found the classroom environment familiar and did not

adapt to the new environment, some were surprised to experience the classroom environment for the first time.

Another issue mentioned in the research conducted with teachers was that it was more difficult to improve creativity in online education. While it is easier to create a creative atmosphere in the classroom with the variety of objects and the strength of the social bonds they establish with each other, it becomes more difficult to achieve this creativity behind the screen, on a platform where peer communication is at a lower level (Dhiman et. al, 2023).

Lastly, as the age group where screen time is very harmful if not managed correctly, children were exposed to screen hours much higher than the screen hours recommended by experts (Dreifuss & Herrero, 2020).

2.4.3 Difficulties experienced by parents

With the transition to online education in 2020, parents participated in education as assistant teachers rather than parent. According to studies, as in traditional education, parental intervention decreases as the level of education increases in online education (Lau et al., 2021). When the aspects that parents have difficulty in this process are roughly examined, financial problems, technological and educational deficiencies and difficulty in stress management come to the fore.

Considering the financial difficulties, the first reason is that parents suddenly spend a lot of money on technological devices, as all households, including themselves, need a certain level and number of technological devices at the same time (Han et al., 2022). Things get harder for parents with more than one child at home. In addition, unexpectedly increasing bills due to everyone spending more time at home, and the loss of income / additional income of some parents due to the pandemic are the points that push them financially.

Another difficult process for parents is that they do not know how education will take place. While most parents state that they do not know how to teach their children academically, they also state that they are insufficient in computer literacy (Mohamad et al., 2022; Erlina et al., 2020).

Parents stated that they are worried about their children's mental and physical health and that they are afraid of their children's health problems if this process is prolonged. Parents, who stated that children could not interact socially enough in this process, stated that they were not satisfied with the fact that online education was handled only on an academic basis and that lessons such as music, art and physical education were skipped (Mısırlı & Ergüleç, 2021). In addition, most parents stated that sometimes compulsory or involuntarily their children's screen time went out of their control. They stated that they were afraid that this would affect their children's psychological and physical health. Although some parents said that communication with their children increased during this process, parents who had to work from home stated that the home-work balance was very deteriorated, they had difficulty in stress management as school and work moved home at once, and this had a bad effect on their communication with their children (Lau et al., 2021).

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research is to understand the changing teaching methods and difficulties of preschool English teachers during the corona pandemic. Specifically, this section aims to introduce research questions, research participants, and data collection materials. Information about data collection processes and data analysis will also be provided later in this section.

3.1 Research Questions

The aim of this study is to understand the adaptation of teachers to the process and to have information about the difficulties they experience in the rapidly developing online education process. Therefore, this study tries to find answers to these following three questions:

1. What kind of changes did pre-school English teachers make in the education materials and activities during Covid-19 period?
2. What challenges did pre-school English teachers face in classroom management and student performance in online education?
3. What physical difficulties did pre-school English teachers encounter during the online education process?

3.2 Research Participants

The research was conducted at two different private English-language preschools in Istanbul, Turkey. 15 English teachers who teach English languages at pre-school level were accepted as the participants of the study. The purposive sampling method was used to select participants suitable for the characteristics of the study. As stated in the literature review, since the state does not have a foreign language policy in pre-school institutions, teachers who teach English in 2 private education institution were preferred as participants. The characteristics of the preferred participants for the research should provide are that they have foreign language teaching experience in pre-school institutions and that they have given English lessons online during the corona pandemic period.

3.3 Data Collecting Tools

The data collecting tools include a sociodemographic form and a semi-structured questionnaire. The sociodemographic form aims to provide information about the age, gender, educational status, and professional experience of the participants.

The semi-structured questionnaire aimed to make inferences about the changing teaching methods and coursework of the participants in the online education process and to understand the difficulties they experienced in this process.

In total, 16 questions were asked to the participants. A semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect data. While some of the questions were shaped with the Likert scaling model to understand the views of the participants towards the situation examined, some of them were asked as open-ended questions and the opinions and experiences of the participants were consulted.

3.3.1 Ethical consent form

When starting the research, the data collection material was first presented to the ethical committee of the Maltepe University and approved. Then, the national education directorate of the province where the selected schools are located, was informed about the data collection tools and the process, and the necessary permissions for the research were obtained. After the permission process was completed, an ethical consent form was presented to the participants stating the purpose of the research, its confidentiality and that their personal rights will be protected under all circumstances.

3.3.2 The study model

Peshkin (1993) states that the purpose of qualitative research is to describe, interpret and evaluate certain situations. He argues that with this research method, problems in certain situations can be discovered and new perspectives can be gained. On the other hand, other scholars' states that in a case study, the researcher tries to find answers to "how" and "why" questions about a specific event or time (Nije & Asimiran, 2014).

In this study, the certain online education process of a certain group of preschool English teachers was examined by the descriptive qualitative research design, which is under the qualitative research. With the descriptive qualitative research approach, the research aims

to understand the experience of a certain group of people in a certain period (Akarsu & Akarsu, 2019).

Since this study aimed to collect data on the experiences of a specific group in a specific time, the method of the case study was also integrated with the implementation of the qualitative research method. With the case study model, it is aimed to provide a deeper knowledge about how the education methods of preschool English teachers changed during the corona pandemic and the difficulties they experienced during the process.

In terms of data collection tool, this study contains a short form about the sociodemographic characteristics of the participants and a semi-structured questionnaire directed to the participants. As the research is designed as a case study, it does not aim to reach a general result. The data obtained from the research are valid only for groups belonging to similar participants. On the other hand, since the research does not test any hypothesis as it is a case study. The results of the research were analyzed and discussed according to the research questions.

3.4 Data Collection Process

The research was conducted at two different private preschool institutions in Istanbul. These institutions were specifically selected from institutions that provided online foreign language education during the corona pandemic period. All candidates were informed through their institutions, and then a data collection form was sent via Google Forms to the participants, who had a positive view of the process. A total of 15 preschool English teachers participated in the research and all of them were informed about the purpose of the study.

3.5 Data Analysis and Interpretations

The data collected for the research were analyzed under two different forms. These forms are the form containing the demographic structure of the participants and a semi-structured questionnaire form directed to the participants. The data collected from these forms were analyzed according to the purpose of the research and the research questions.

First, the sociodemographic characteristics of the participants were summarized in figures and tables. The features of the participants were qualitatively categorized and brief

information about the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants was presented.

In the second part of the data analysis, the answers of the participants to the semi-structured questionnaire were analyzed. While some of the data were evaluated in graphs according to the Likert scale, open-ended questions were analyzed with the help of the common words that participants stated. The data presented in the study were presented according to the similar answers given by the participants. Content and descriptive analysis method were used while interpreting the data.



CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this part of the research, findings from the analysis of the data collected from the participants will be discussed. These data will be analyzed from the perspective of the socio-demographic features of the participants, their changing education methods during the corona period, the hardships they experience in classroom and student management in online education, and finally the physical difficulties they experience during online education process.

4.1 Information About Participants

This research was designed to explore what kind of changes preschool English teachers made in their teaching materials, activities, and the difficulties they faced during the corona pandemic. In this regard, data were collected with a questionnaire sent to a total of 15 pre-school English teachers working in 2 different private pre-school institutions in Istanbul.

To protect the personal rights of the participants and to ensure confidentiality, the participants were labeled as T-1/T-2... in numbers from 1 to 15. These abbreviations will be used when describing a specific participant in the findings and discussion part of the research.

During the data collection process, the participants were asked to answer the questionnaire sent to them in detail. The first five questions of the research were asked to understand the socio-demographic characteristics of the participant. With the next 6 questions, it is aimed to get information about the online education experiences of the participants and the methods they use in online education. After that 5 questions created with the Likert measurement model were directed to the participant to collect data about the difficulties experienced by the participant in classroom and student management. With the following four questions of the survey, the physical difficulties experienced by the participants throughout the online education process were tried to be determined, and with the last question, the participants were asked what they would do differently if they returned to online education in case of a possible pandemic.

4.2 The Socio-demographic Features of Participant

Participants were asked about their age range, gender, educational background, professional experience and working experience with the preschool age group. In order to protect the personal rights of the participants, no phrases to describe themselves were used and a statistical table was prepared below to include the socio-demographic structure of all participants.

Table 1. Socio-demographic features of participants

Sociodemographic feature	Class	N	%
Gender	Female	15	100
Age	20-29	10	66,6
	30-39	3	20
	40-49	2	13,3
Level of Education	Undergraduate	15	100
Years of experience in total	0-5 years	10	66,6
	6-9 years	3	20
	10-15 years	2	13,3
Years of experience with pre-school age group	0-5 years	10	66,6
	6-9 years	3	20
	10-15 years	2	13,3

As can be seen from the table above, all the participants are female teachers (%100). While none of the participants had a second or third cycle education, majority which makes 10 (%66,6) for this group of participants were between the 20-30 age group. The 3(%20) others are between 30-39 years and just 2 (%13,3) people are between 40-49 years old. While five of the participants (%13,3+%20) have more than 5 years of experience, only 2 (13,3) of them have more than 10 years of experience with the preschool age group.

4.3 The Changing Educational Materials, Activities of Teachers

Six questions were asked to the participants in this part of the questionnaire. While four of the questions are trying to understand the general online education process of the participants with the Likert measurement method, one of them is an open-ended question answered by the participants who gave a specific answer to third question. In addition, another question of the research was designed as open-ended and based on the individual responses of the participants.

4.3.1 Online education experience

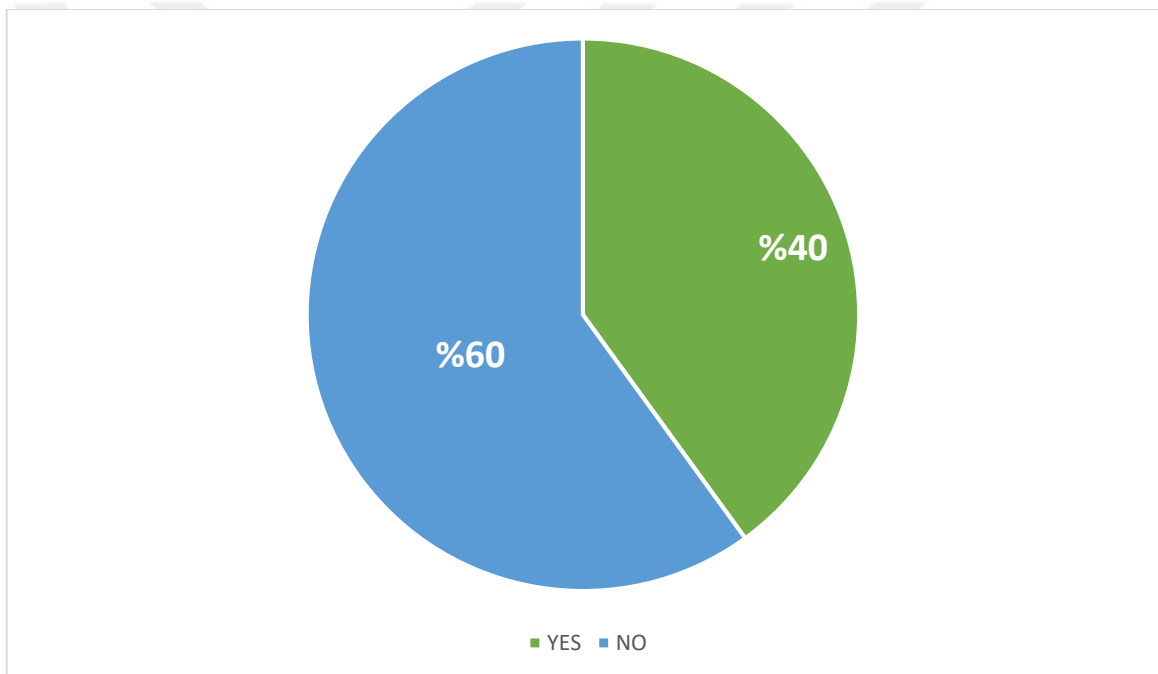


Figure 1. Participants online education experience

In the first question, participants were asked whether they had previous online education experience or not. As can be seen in the graphic above, 9 (%60) of the participants have no previous online education experience. On the other hand, 6 (%40) of the participants had previously experienced online education.

4.3.2 Preparation of materials used in online education

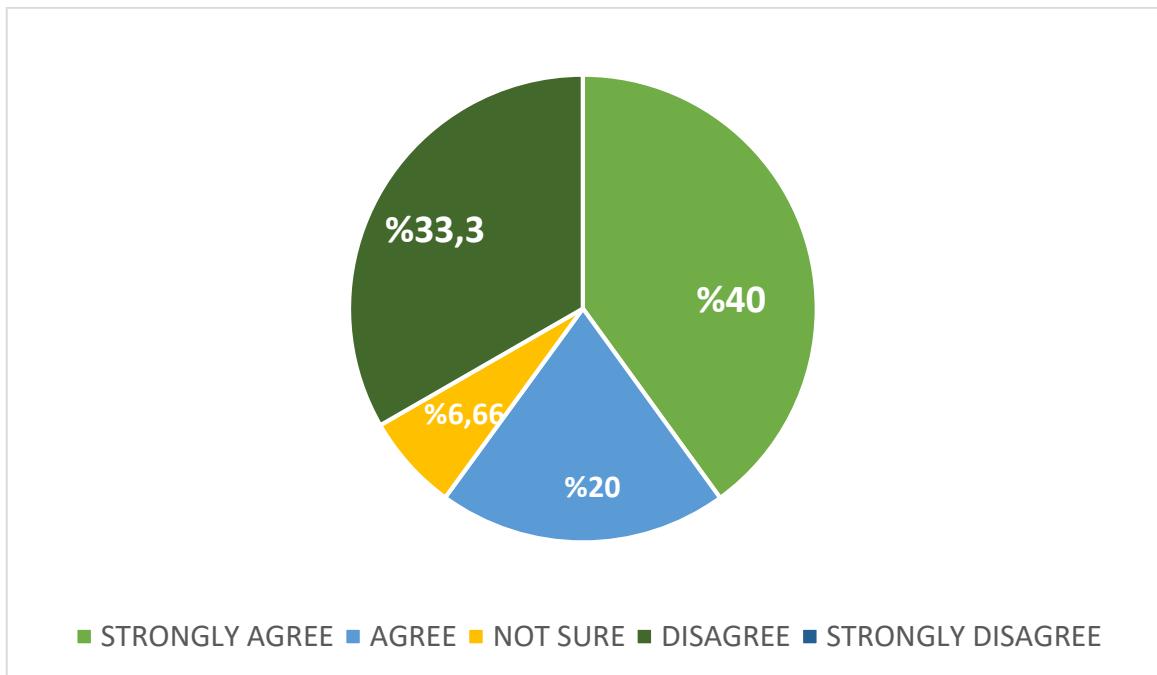


Figure 2. Preparation of materials used in online education

In the second question of this part of the questionnaire, participants were asked whether they prepared the materials used for online education themselves or were they provided by their institutions. 9 (%40+%20) of the participants stated that they prepared the materials themselves during this process. While 1 participant (%6,66) abstained from the process, 5 participants (%33,3) stated that they used previously prepared materials.

4.3.3 Transfer of classroom materials to the online platform

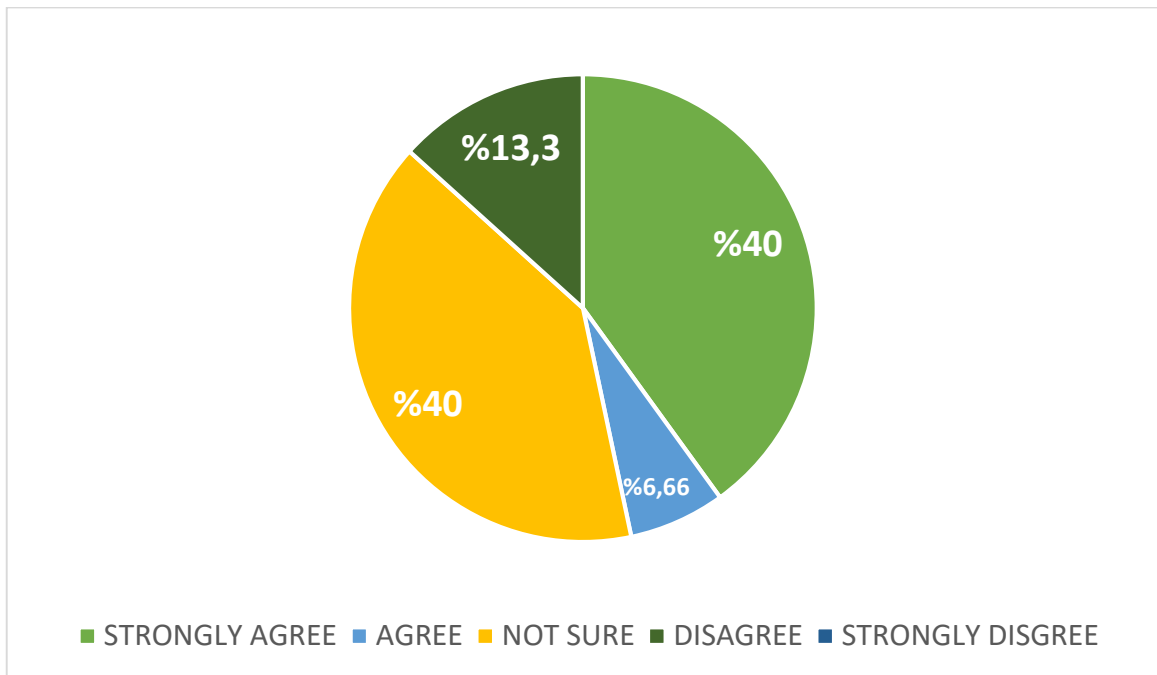


Figure 3. Transfer of classroom materials to the online platform

In this part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked whether the materials used in the classroom were transferred to online platforms without any problems. In addition, another open-ended question was asked to the participants who answered that they did not agree or strongly disagree, and they were asked what problems they encountered. While 7 (%40+ %6,66) of the participants stated that they went through the process without any problems, 6 (%40) participants abstained from the problems they experienced during the process. 2 (%13,3) participants stated that they had problems in the process. The problems they experienced are mentioned in the next heading.

4.3.4 Difficulties in transferring classroom materials to the online platform

In the form of an open-ended question, the participants who stated that they encountered a problem in the previous question were asked to indicate what kind of difficulties they encountered. T-7 and T-12 stated the difficulties they experienced in this process as follows:

In class, we usually had a mascot or toy of our choosing. Mostly, we continued the lesson by touching, showing, and doing this with the children. I had a hard time doing this unilaterally in front of the screen. I don't think it has the same effect. (T-7)

I had a technological difficulty while transferring the materials I used in the classroom online. Even though I prepared the materials in the program I used and sent them to the children 1 week in advance, various shifts, technical problems, not opening files... occurred because the tools and software they used were different. (T-12)

4.3.5 Materials used in online education

Table 2. New materials and activity that participants started to use with online education

Materials/Activity	Frequency	%	Teacher
Video Song Cartoon	6	40	T-2, T-4, T-5, T-9, T-12, T-14
Physical Activity Games include Physical Power	4	26,66	T-10, T-11 T-13, T-15
Flashcards/ Pop Quiz/ Toys	3	20	T-1, T-6, T-14
Different Games (not the games played in the classroom)	2	13,33	T-8, T-10
Party (Monthly Birthday Party/Dance Party)	2	13,33	T-11, T-12
Online Game Webpages	1	6,66	T-3
Collabs with colleagues	1	6,66	T-7

As can be seen from the table, the participants were asked about new materials and activities that they did not need in the normal classroom environment but used during the online education. Participants indicated new materials and activities in the online education process under seven different criteria. 6 of the participants (%40) stated that they applied to videos, songs, and cartoons during the online training. Teachers explain

the increasing tendency towards songs and visual materials including cartons and short videos as follows:

“Since we are in an electronic environment, I used visual video materials like cartoons etc. to catch attention of whole group.” (T-2)

“In class we do group works with printouts, crayons etc. but in this case, it was not successful as traditional environment. So, I use short animations in the class.” (T-4)

“Even we have proper scheduled timetables the effective lesson time is too short. I used educational videos to catch all their attention.” (T-5)

“We can use many materials in classroom environment. Paints, posters, toys... But videos are the most powerful teaching tool that can gather the whole class together in online education. I benefited a lot from videos and cartoons.” (T-9)

“I use short videos with educational songs. After a while, they wait for the song of the day.” (T-12)

“Videos and cartoons are saver for online education. I can share my screen with whole class. Otherwise, it is hard to collect whole group.” (T-14)

4 of the participants (26,6) state that they use more physical activity or physical activity-based games than they use in the classroom. Some say that they dance with English songs at the end of the lesson to motivate children, while others say that they play games that can be played online such as Simon Says or Let's Freeze.

“Since the children were stuck at home, I used very old game which is Simon Says. Both they enjoyed and learn.” (T-10)

“I found some online games integrated with simple physical activities like touching or showing some place/part. Even some students' internet was not okay we worked well.” (T-11)

“I finish my class with group dance related to topic of the day. They waited patiently for the dance of the day.” (T-13)

“Except the materials that the school provide or we create I add some music and physical activity time. Although some students disturbed quickly, for majority it worked well.”
(T-15)

3 of the teachers (%20) say that they benefit from the picture flashcards they prepared online.

“Frankly, I had never prepared a flashcard since there were posters on almost all the walls in the classroom environment, but I prepared a lot in the online education process.”
(T-1)

“While playing games such as guessing in class, I made pop quizzes with flashcards to both motivate them and measure what they learned in this process.” (T-6)

“In school, I do not use a lot of toys because it distracts their concentration but for online education, I allow them to bring 1 soft toys. They do activities through their toy.” (T-14)

2 of the participants (%13,3) state that they organize parties to motivate children.

“Although they celebrate their birthdays with their class teachers, we sang a happy birthday song as a class to the children whose birthdays were on that month. It increased their motivation for this process.” (T-11)

“When we work on months/days/week etc. we celebrate the birthday. They sang happy birthday song also I believe it strengthen their bonds with their friends because they didn’t spend a lot of time with each other.” (T-12)

Two of the participants (%13,3) mention that they used other games different than classroom environment. But they did not mention exactly what game they chose.

“I found different games for online learning process. It helped me a lot.” (T-8)

“I used games more online than in class due to their short attention spans. I couldn't use coloring materials or props in online, but the games still had a positive impact on their engagement and learning experience.” (T-10)

And two teacher mention different methods than other teacher state. One (%6,66) of them mention online webpages and the other (%6,66) explains her collaboration with her colleagues.

“Even their age is low, I found some online games and sent them to their parents. They prepared games before class and for some point we use those games but unfortunately sometimes it is hard to finish the game part.” (T-3)

“They have their own class teacher in the school, we have separate lessons. But during online education, sometimes she also joined my class, and I did the same for her. Psychologically, seeing both of us online create difference for them.” (T-7)

4.3.6 Change in active lesson durations

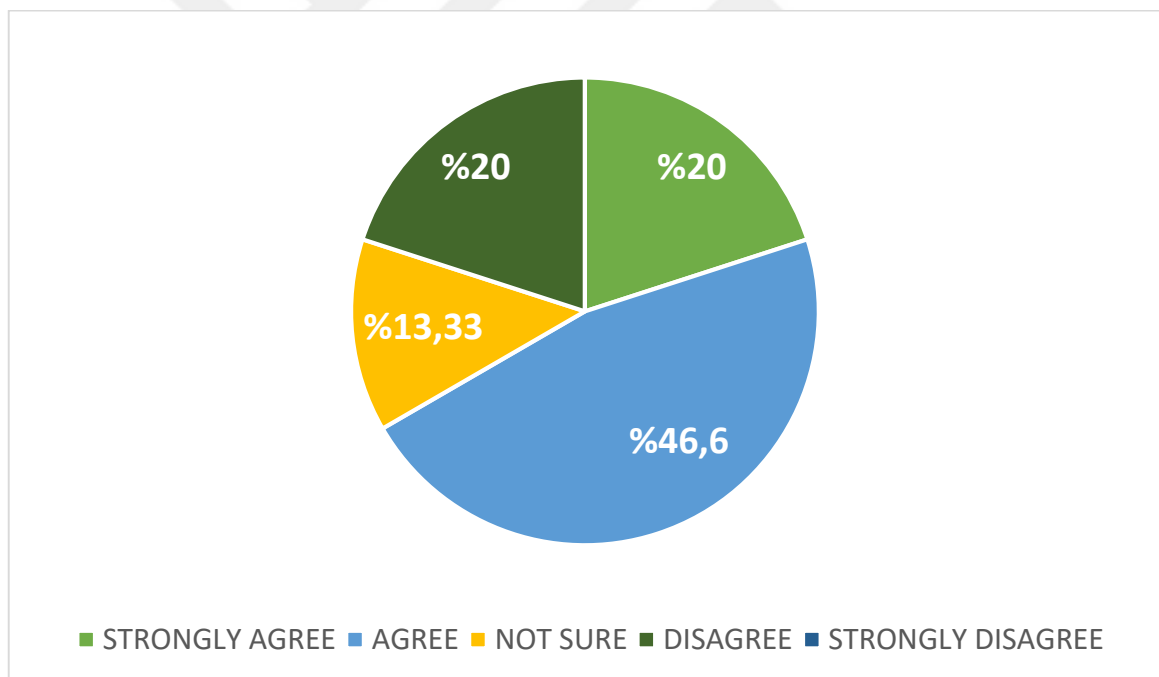


Figure 4. Change in active lesson durations

As the last question of this part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked whether their active lesson durations have changed. Most of the participants stated that there was a change in the active lesson durations. 10 of the participants (%46,6+%20) stated that

active lesson times have changed. While 2 people (%20) remained neutral about this question, 3 (%13,3) participants stated that they did not agree with this item and that there was no change in active lesson time.

4.4 Difficulties in Student and Lesson Management in Online Education

In this part of the questionnaire, five questions were asked to the participants. With these questions, it was tried to understand the difficulties experienced by the participants in this process as a teacher and the difficulties arising from the age group in which they work. This part consists of five questions created by the Likert scale method and will be presented in graphs like the previous data.

4.4.1 Technological literacy of students

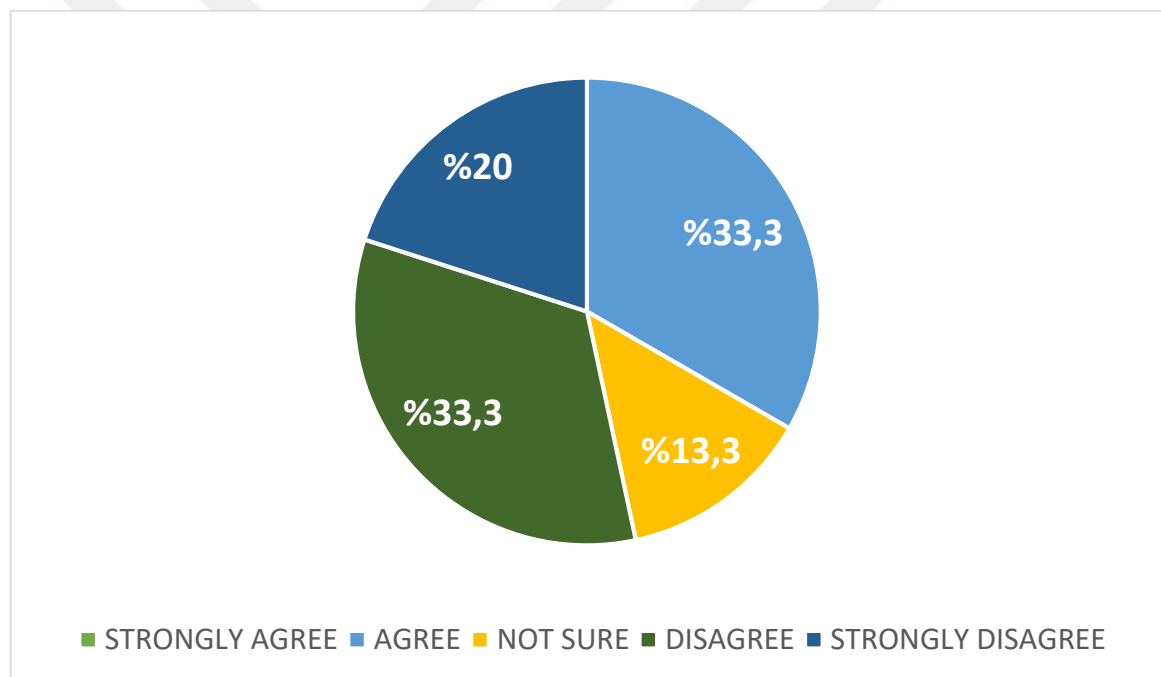


Figure 5. Technological literacy of students

In this question of the questionnaire, the participants were asked whether their students had computer literacy to participate in online education without any problems. 5 (%33,3) of the participants stated that their students' computer literacy was sufficient. While 2 (%13,3) of the participants abstained from this issue, 8 (%33,3+ %20) participants agreed that the students were insufficient in computer literacy.

4.4.2 Active student participation in the lesson

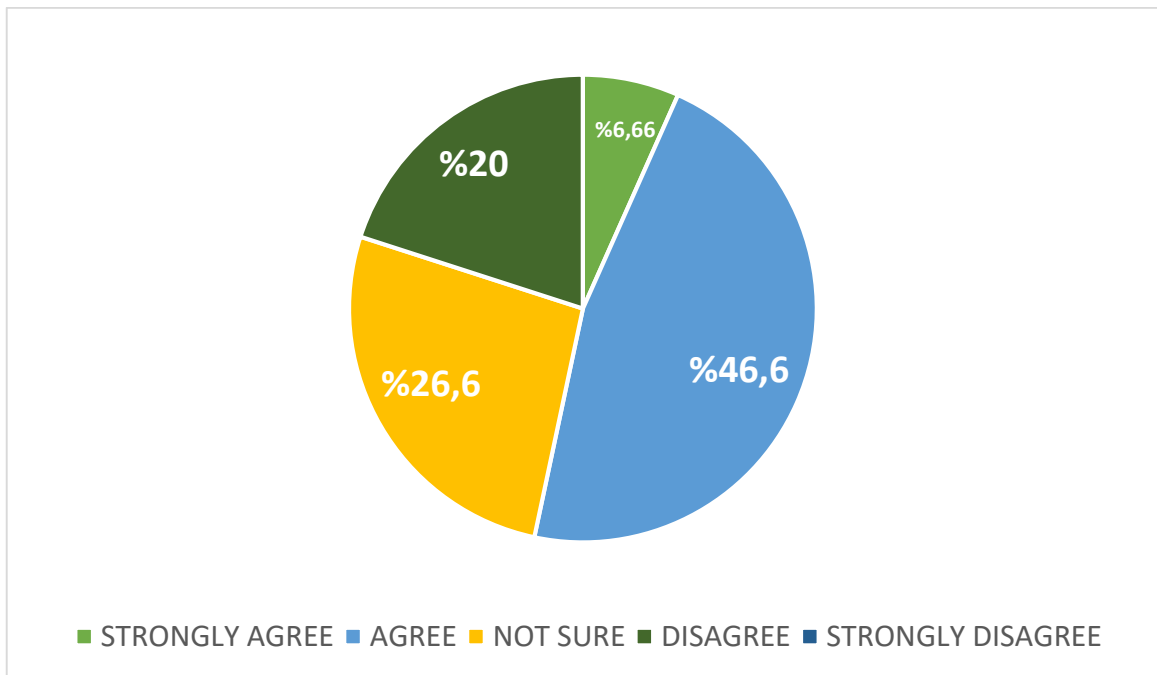


Figure 6. Active student participation in the lesson

In this part of the research, the participants were asked whether their students had any difficulties in attending online classes. Many of the participants stated that their students had difficulty in participating actively at the online course. While 1 (%6,6) person completely agreed with this statement, 7 (%46,6) participants stated that they found the statement correct. While 4 (%26,6) participants stated that they were not completely sure about this proposition, 3 (%20) people did not agree with it.

4.4.3 Students' online lesson environment

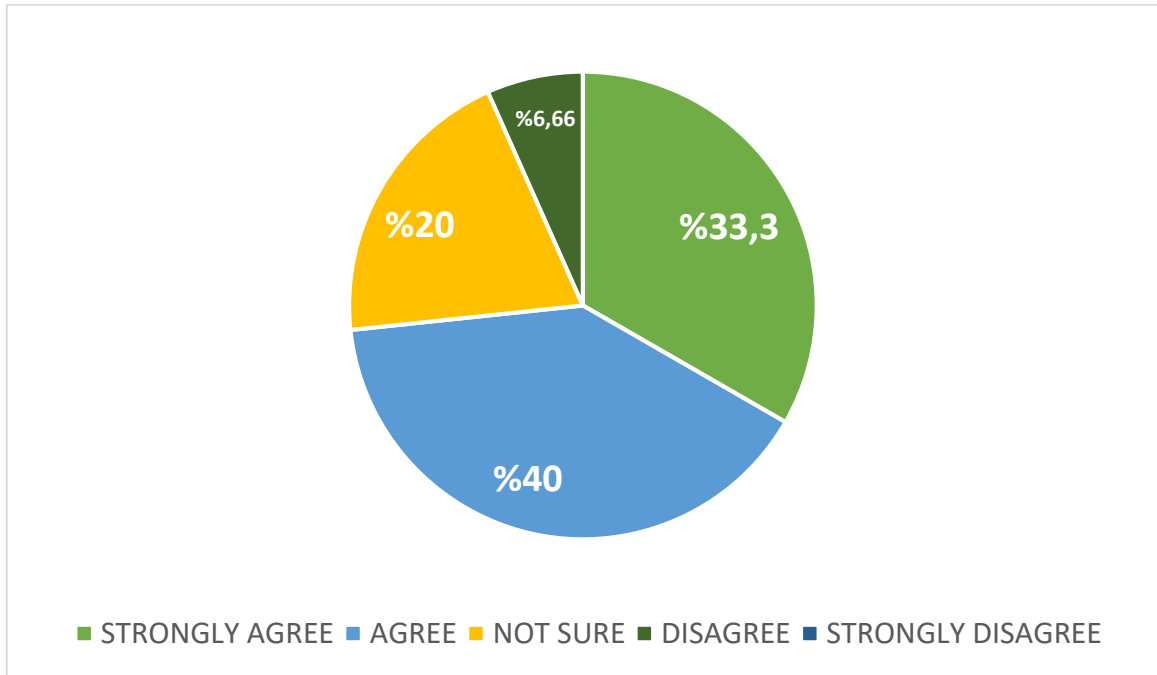


Figure 7. Students' online lesson environment

In this question, participants were asked whether their students had difficulty concentrating while attending the lesson at home or in another environment. Majority of the participants stated that being in another place instead of the school negatively affects the concentration of the students. While 5 (33,3) participants completely agreed with this proposition, 6 (%40) stated that they agreed. 3 (%20) participants stated that they were not completely sure about the proposition, 1 (%6,6) participant stated that she did not agree.

4.4.4 Involving students in the online lesson

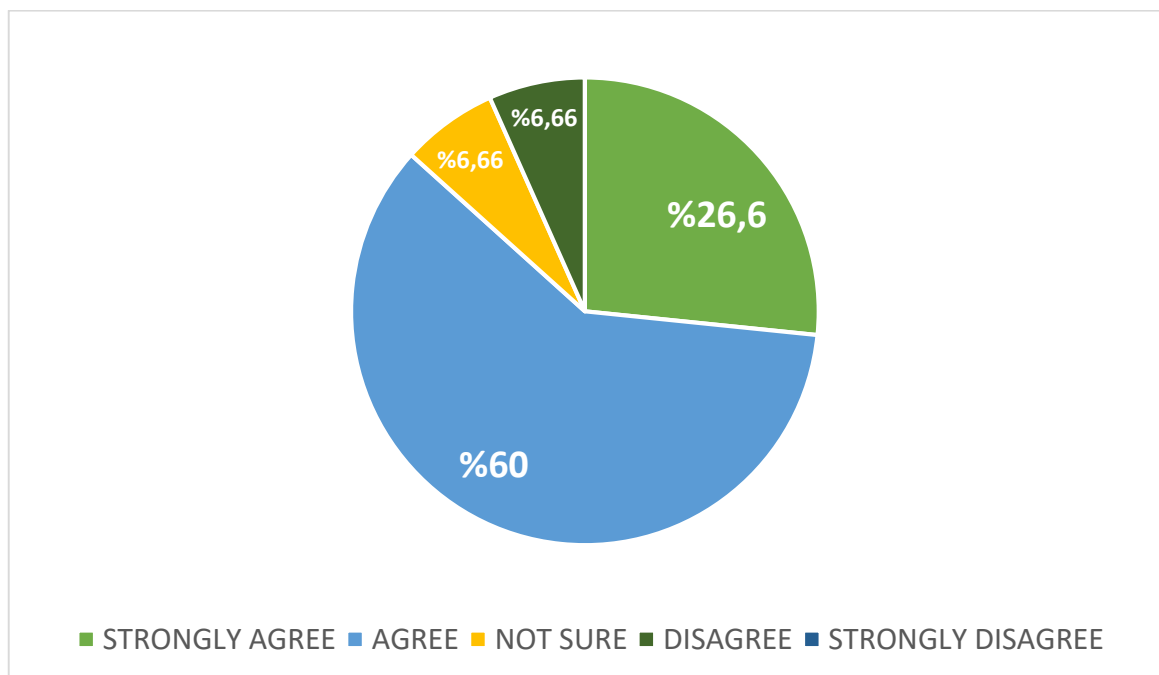


Figure 8. Involving students in the online lesson

In this question, participants were asked whether they had difficulty in engaging students, especially shy students. 13 (%60+ 26,6) of the participants stated that they had difficulties in this regard. While 4 (%26,6) participants stated that they had complete difficulty in incorporating students into the lesson, 9 (%60) participants confirmed that they had difficulties throughout the process. While 1(%6,66) participant abstains, another participant (%6,66) states that they do not agree with this motion.

4.4.5 In-class discipline in online lessons

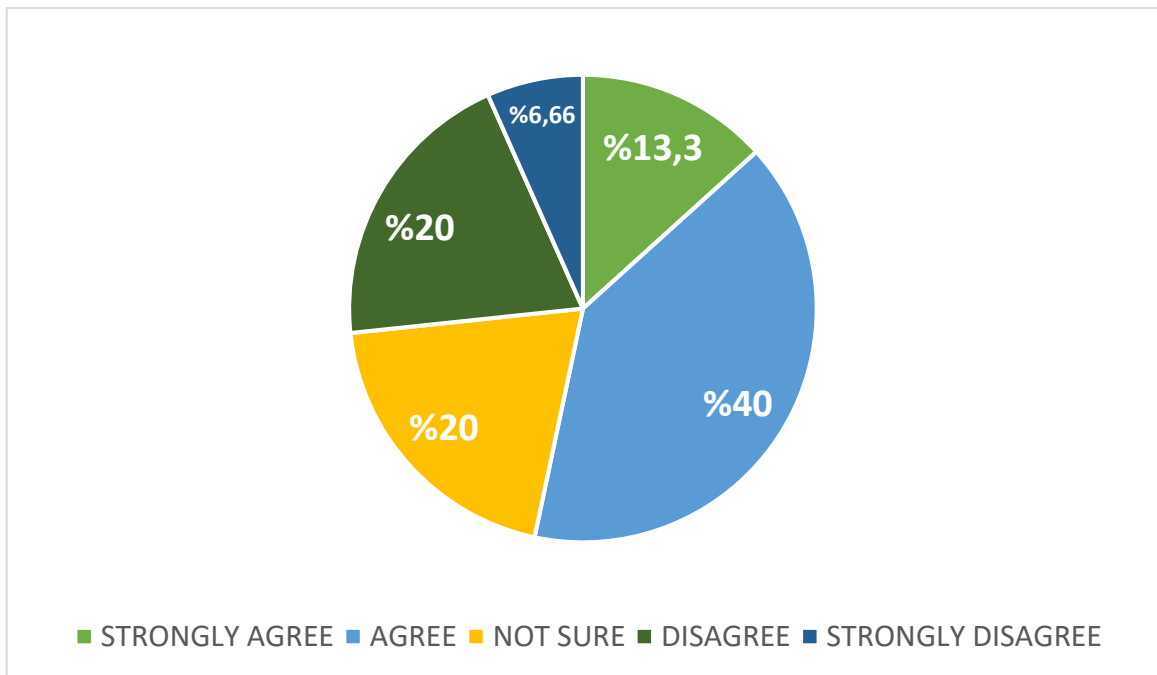


Figure 9. In-class discipline in online lessons

In this part of the questionnaire, participants were asked whether they had difficulty in maintaining classroom discipline in online education. 8 (13,3+ %40) participants stated that they had difficulty in maintaining discipline. While 2 (% 13,3) participants fully agreed with this proposition, 6 (%40) participants agreed that they had difficulty maintaining discipline. While 3 (%20) of the participants abstained, 3 (%20) stated that they did not agree with this proposition. 1 (%6,66) of the participants stated that she did not completely agree, and she did not have any problems in maintaining classroom discipline.

4.5 Physical Difficulties in Online Education

This part of the research consists of questions asked to understand the physical difficulties experienced by teachers during online education. This time, various questions were asked to the participants about their technological infrastructure, working atmosphere and the support of their institutions and they were schematized according to the Likert measurement model.

4.5.1 Internet infrastructure

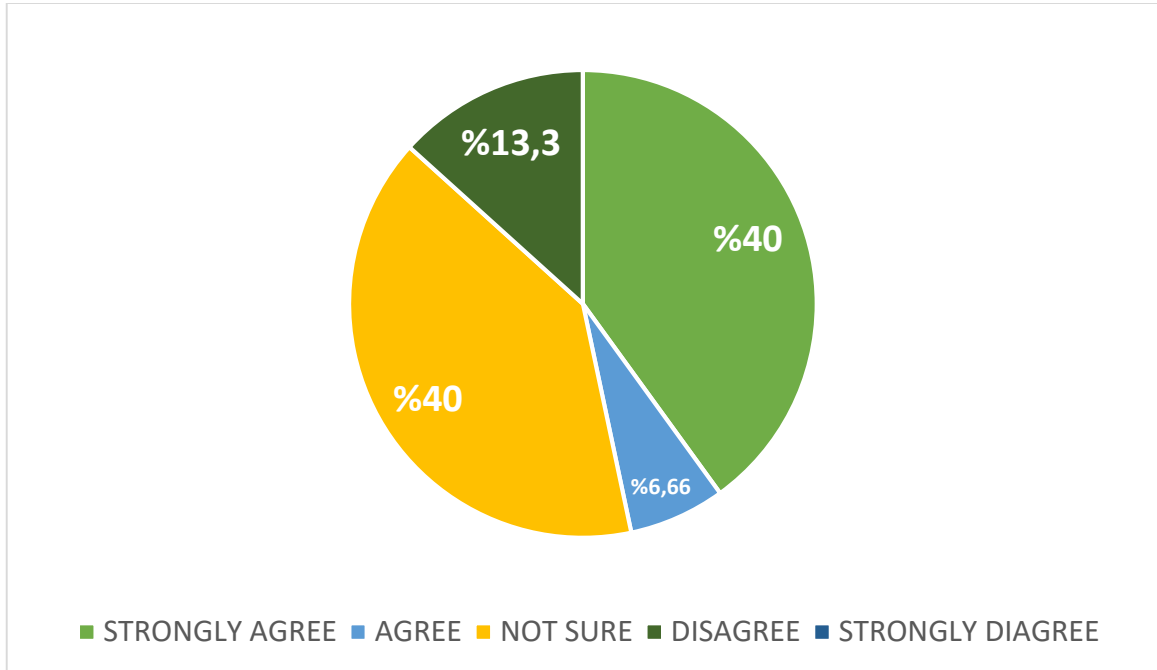


Figure 10. Internet infrastructure

Since this part of the questionnaire was aimed to collect data about the problems experienced by the participants regarding their physical environment, first a question was asked about the internet connection and infrastructure, which are indispensable for online education. The participants were asked whether they found their internet infrastructure sufficient during the online education. 7 of the participants (40% + 6.66%) found the internet infrastructure to be completely adequate, while 6 of participants (40%) stated that they were neutral. 2 (13.3) of the participants stated that their internet infrastructure was insufficient.

4.5.2 Technological tools

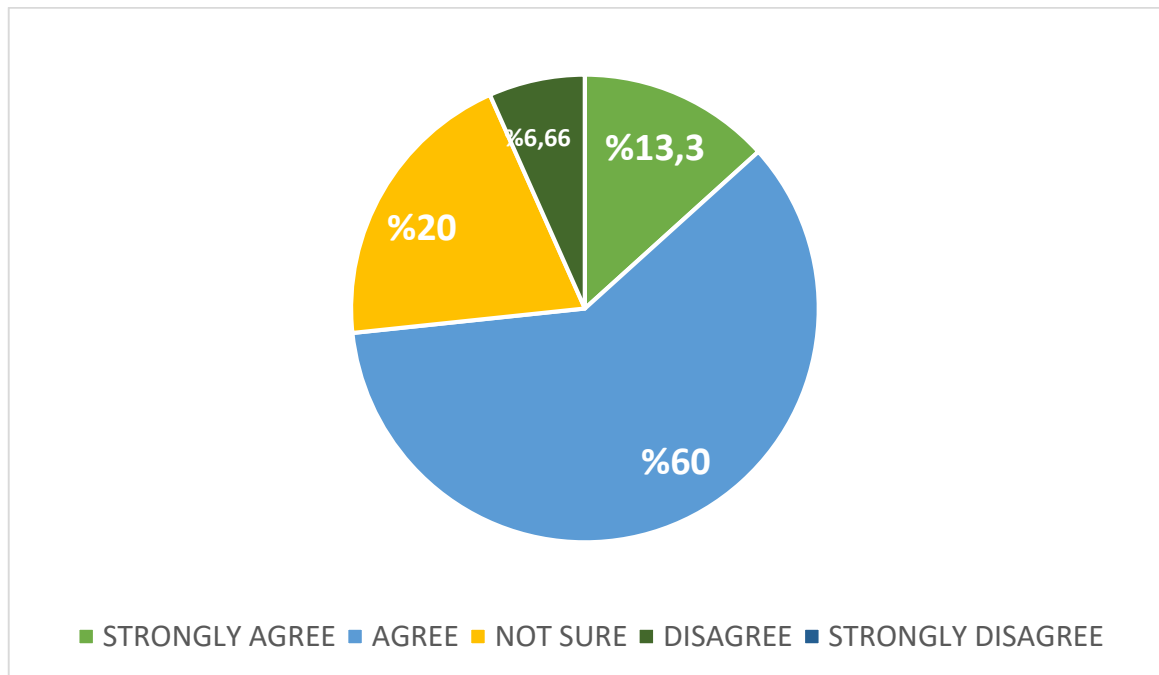


Figure 11. Technological tools

In this part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked whether the technological tools they used during the online training were sufficient. While 11 of the participants (%60 + +13,3) found the tools they used sufficient, 3 (%20) participants remained neutral. Only one participant (%6,66) stated that the tools she used were insufficient.

4.5.3 Institutional support

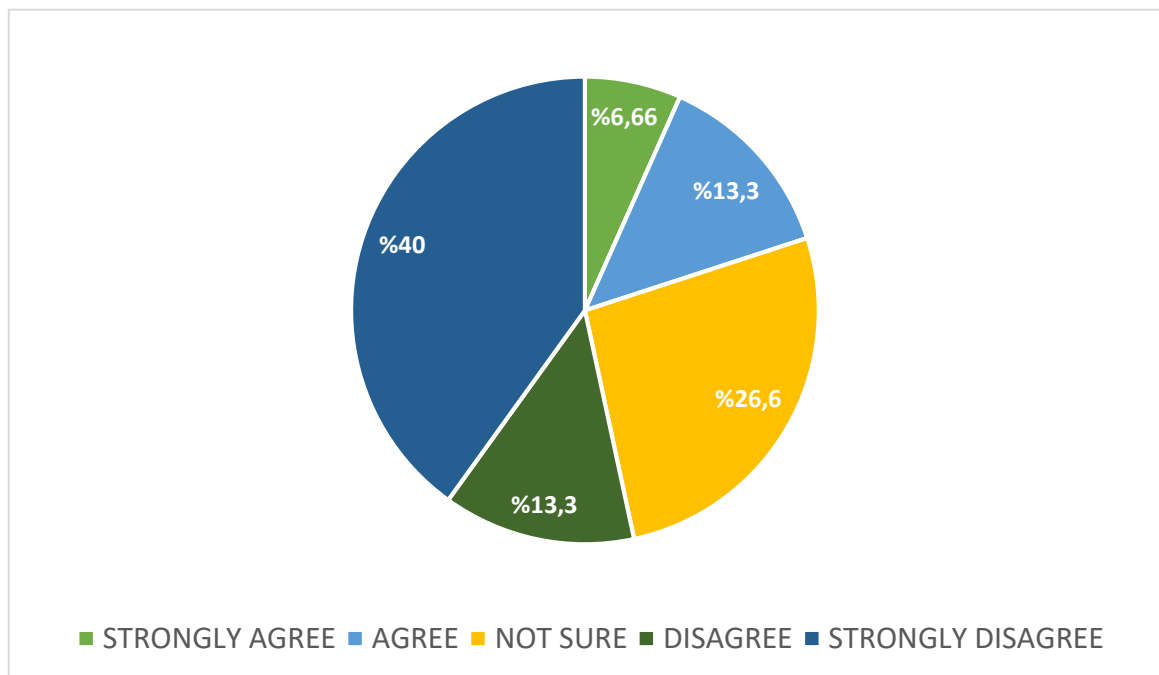


Figure 12. Institutional support

In this question, participants were asked whether financial support, extra courses related to technological literacy, or support for technological tools were provided from their institutions during the online education process. 8 (%40+ %13,3) of the participants do not agree with this proposition and 4 (26,6) of the participants remain neutral. While only 1 (%6,66) of the participants stated that their institution was very supportive in this regard, 2 (13,3) participants approached this proposition positively.

4.5.4 Physical environment

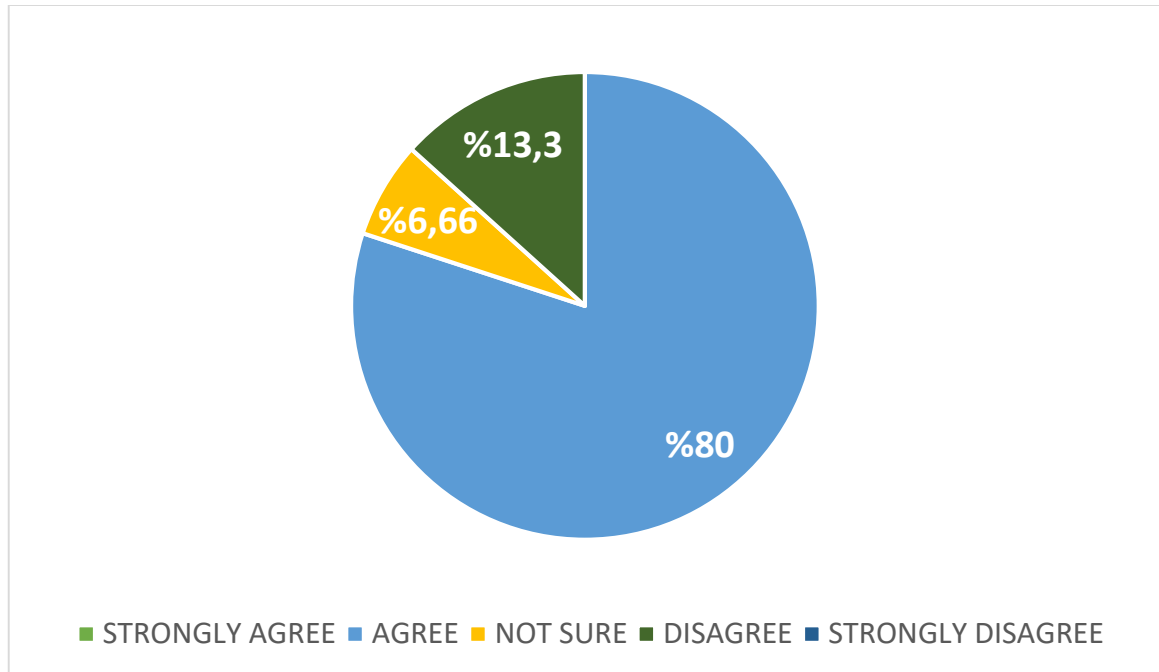


Figure 13. Physical environment

The last question of the section about participants physical difficulties in online education was whether the environment of the participants while teaching online was physically suitable or not. 12 (%80) of the participants stated that the environment in which they conduct online education is comfortable and they do not experience any problems arising from the environment. Although one participant (6,66) is not completely sure about this proposition, the other 2 participants (13,3) do not agree with it.

4.6 Return to Compulsory Online Education

Table 3. Changes in online education

Change	Frequency	%	Teacher
Parent Cooperation	6	40	T2 T3 T4 T9 T13 T15
Short Lesson Durations	4	26,6	T1 T5 T10 T15
Proper Internet Infrastructure	4	26,6	T1 T4 T8 T12
Advance Technological Tools	3	20	T4 T8 T13
Institutional Support	3	20	T3 T9 T11
Readiness for Class	3	20	T2 T11 T14
Equality of Opportunity in Education	2	13,3	T6 T10
Decent Learning Environment	2	13,3	T3 T7

In the last question of the survey, the participants were asked in the form of an open-ended question, what they wanted to be different or better in their experience this time if they needed to return to online education again. Participants stated what needs to be changed in case of a possible return to online education under 8 different headings. 6 of the participants (%40) argue that parent-teacher collaboration should be more positive

and productive in the next online education experience. Some of the participants stated this situation as follows:

“Establishing parent-teacher cooperation in our new environment was challenging for everyone, especially parents with multiple children in different age groups who found it tiring.” (T-2)

“It would have been more productive if the parents had cooperated with us and prepared the appropriate environment.” (T-3)

“Parent could help children more because they are not competent enough.” (T-4)

“Especially working parents found it very difficult to establish school-teacher-parent cooperation. I hope there will be no such thing as online education again, but if it does, I would like the bond between these three to be stronger.” (T-9)

“I wish everyone could provide proper environment for their children or spend more time with us about the process.” (T-13)

“I think next time there should be strong parent-school-administration cooperation” (T-15)

On the other hand, proper internet infrastructure and shortening of class hours are other things that the participants want to change. While the participants expressed their problems with the internet infrastructure in this way:

“I personally didn’t have a problem with my internet infrastructure, but some of the students had. Because of their age, a glitch in one student was enough to distract everyone. I believe, certain time should be set about lessons.” (T-1)

“Sometimes internet did not work well. I had hard times.” (T-4)

“Although our institution did its best in terms of technological infrastructure, the technical infrastructure was insufficient from time to time.” (T-8)

“Technological infrastructure should be developed.” (T-12)

The participants also gave such answers about the changes related to the course durations:

“(….)And I believe, certain time should be set about lessons.” (T-1)

“Concentration periods are certain due to their age; too long lecture leads to inefficiency.” (T-5)

“Lessons should have been shorter.” (T-10)

“With the help of parents, children should be ready before class. Otherwise, the lesson is too long, and time is wasted.” (T-15)

Other things that participants would like to change in the next online training stand out as equal institutional support, readiness to come to the lesson and advanced technological tools. Participants express their thoughts as follows:

“Children should come to class ready.” (T-2)

“Institutions could help with internet bills or might organize proper gadgets.” (T-3)

“It would be better if there were more advanced technological tools.” (T-4)

“I would like some faster tech gadgets.” (T-8)

“Seminars on online education should be organized because it is new to everyone.” (T-9)

“Institution can provide technological tool support and it would also be better if the parents prepared what the institution or the teacher sent before the lesson.” (T-11)

“Sometimes my computer was not enough to handle this process.” (T-13)

“I hope parents help more children and prepare the handouts, webpages before class.” (T-14)

The last two points that the participants mentioned were the issues of decent learning environment and equality in education. While one of the participants discussed equality in education from a more social dimension, another one touched on this issue in terms of comparison from her own class.

“I hope that in the next online education, common programs that every child can easily access will be used.” (T-6)

“Students or the whole class including teacher should be connected with similar or even the same tools if possible. Especially because of the age group and literacy, different systems challenged us.” (T-10)

Finally, some of the participants drew attention to the inconvenience of the home environment and stated that it should be improved.

“Parents should create more positive learning environments for children.” (T-3)

“I know it is not possible for everyone but if there is more than one child in the house or parents are working remotely, the rooms must be separate during the online education.” (T-7)

4.7 Discussion for the Research Questions

In this part of the research, the data obtained will be briefly discussed in the light of the research questions.

4.7.1 The changing educational methods of teachers

9 (%60) of the participants in the study did not have any online education experience. 9 of the participants (%20 +%40) stated that they prepared most of the materials in the transition process to online education. 1/3 (%33,3) of them stated that they used previously prepared materials. Although 7 (%40 + %6,66) of the teachers stated that they did not have any difficulties while transferring the materials in online education to the platforms, 2 (%13,3) of them stated that they had difficulties in this process. While 1 (%6,66) of the participants mentioned that she had difficulty in carrying physical materials online, another participant (%6,66) mentioned that she had difficulty due to technological changes.

When the participants were asked what has changed, different from the education in the classroom environment, it is seen that the most used material with the help of the internet is videos, cartoons and songs. After that, another activity that is most popular among teachers is physical activities or games with physical activities.

When looking at the active lesson hours, 10 (%20 + %46,6) out of 15 teachers state that there was a change in their active lesson duration.

4.7.2 Difficulties in student and class management

Considering the age group of the students, the computer literacy of the students is low compared to the other education levels, so it was asked whether the teachers had any problems with the use of technology. 8 (%53,3) participants stated that children's computer literacy was insufficient in this process. 9 (%53,3 + %6,66) of the teachers also stated that active student participation is low in online lessons, 11 (%40 + %33,3) of them mentioned that the environment they are in is not suitable for online lessons. In addition, participants were asked whether they had difficulty in engaging students, especially shy students. 13 (%60+ 26,6) of the participants stated that they had difficulties in this regard. Lastly, participants were asked whether they had difficulty in maintaining classroom discipline in online education. 8 (13,3+ %40) participants stated that they had difficulty in maintaining discipline.

4.7.3 Physical difficulties in online lessons

7 (%40 + %6,66) of the participants stated that they did not have any problems with the internet infrastructure in online courses, majority of the participants which is 10 people (%60+ %13,3) also stated that their technological tools were sufficient. However, when the data about institutional support examined, 8 (%40 + %13,3) of the participants are not satisfied with the support that their institute provide. And lastly, 12 (%80) of the participants are happy with their physical environment. They find it suitable for doing online lessons.

4.7.4 Return to compulsory online education

When the participants are asked what they would like to be different in a possible return to online education, we see that the most prominent answer is parent partnership. 6 (%40) out of 15 participants mentioned parental cooperation in several ways. In addition, 4 (%26,6) of the participants state that shortening the course hours and better internet infrastructure can also contribute positively to the process. Being ready to attend the course, quality technological tools and institutional contribution are also other points that participants mentioned.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research was created as a case study to learn about the experiences of teachers who provided online English instruction to preschoolers during the Covid-19 outbreak. The information was gathered from 15 English teachers in Turkey who were engaged in preschool online instruction at the time.

The first part of the semi-structured questionnaire applied to the participants was prepared to collect data on the changing education materials and activities of the participants during online education process. While 9 (%60) of the participants have no previous online education experience, 6 (%40) have previous online education experience. Participants were asked whether they had difficulty transferring the materials to the online platform during the online training. 2 people (%13,3) had problems in this process. The reasons for these problems are the inability to transfer physical materials to the online platform and the difference in software programs. In another question of the survey, participants were asked about material and activity changes along with online education. 6 (%40) of the participants gave responses that drew attention to the increase in the use of videos, songs, and cartoons. Online gaming platforms, physical activities, and joint lessons with other teachers were also among the responses from the participants. In the last part of the data collection material, 2/3 of the participants stated that there was a change in their active lesson hours.

In the second part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked about the problems they had with classroom and student management. According to the questions asked in this section, most of the participants experienced most of the problems that encountered in the literature review. 8 (%33+ %20) out of 15 people stated that their students' computer literacy was insufficient. Again, 8 (%33+ %20) participants stated that active class participation was low, while 11 (%40 + %33,3) participants stated that their students did not have a proper educational atmosphere for online education. 8 (%40 +%13,3) participants also stated that they had difficulty maintaining discipline in the classroom.

In the last part of the survey, teachers were asked questions about the effects of their physical atmosphere on online lessons. While 7(40 + 6,6) people stated that their internet was sufficient for this process, 11 (9+ 2) people said that the devices they used worked well during the process. 8 (40 + 13,3) of the teachers stated that the institutional support was insufficient.

Finally, when asked what teachers would want to change if such a process was renewed, 6 (40) of the teachers stated that parental cooperation should be stronger. The fact that students had better internet infrastructure and technological devices were also points that teachers wanted to change.

As a result of this study, it is seen that online education with the preschool group has many variables that need to be taken into consideration when planning lessons. While preparing materials for online platforms, teachers should keep in mind that some materials will not be as effective as in the traditional classroom environment. It should also be taken into consideration that if the participants have different tools, the materials they prepare will not reach every student with the same clarity, and one should be prepared for unexpected situations. Videos, cartoons, and songs that appeal to children visually and audibly are among the first things that should come to mind when choosing materials and activities. The main reasons for this are that almost all children in the age group are illiterate and they do not have full command of the rules of regular speaking. On the other hand, since their concentration time is limited, these materials will help them focus their attention on a common material. As mentioned, when working with this group, whose concentration time is limited, adding physical-based activities that can relieve their energy to the lesson program will make the process more successful.

In cases where extraordinary conditions (curfew, mask obligation, etc.) as happened during Covid-19 pandemic and children are socially isolated, creating an environment where they can share a social moment together will have a positive impact on children's learning processes.

Another issue that teachers who will work with this age group should pay attention to is cooperation with the family. One of the first reasons for this is that the child is almost 100% dependent on the family in using the computer. To prevent any negativities that

will affect the course during this process, the teacher can deliver the materials she/he has prepared to the family a certain time before the lesson and negativities caused by the software or lack of materials can be prevented. On the other hand, if the teacher specifies a standard for all parents to use similar technological devices or up-to-date software at the same level, the technology-related problem part of the lessons can be overcome more easily. In addition, parents creating a regular working environment where there are fewer stimuli since their children's age is prone to disturb easily, will make the job of the teacher easier, whose communication with the child is more difficult than in the traditional classroom environment. Also, while preparing the lesson schedule, the teacher should not forget that the student is highly dependent on the caregiver or parent and should consider that there may be changes in lesson hours due to a disruption in this regard. Parents or caregivers should also pay attention to the hours specified by the teacher and the material preparation for the sake of the process.

On the other hand, since the process is based on technology, teachers should make sure of their computer proficiency, whether their infrastructure and equipment are working correctly, and whether the physical environment they are in is suitable for online education with this age group. Additionally, if institutions want this process to run smoothly and fairly, they should support their teachers with the problems they experience throughout the process.

Considering the knowledge gained as an outcome of this study, these suggestions might be made to researchers who wish to further investigate this subject in-depth in the future.

- Parents and students can also provide data.
- By adding more participants to the research, the research questions can be expanded to include additional perspectives.
- Comparisons with other educational levels can be made since the research is centered on a certain age and educational level.
- The researcher herself can investigate the procedure by carrying out observational studies with control groups.

REFERENCES

- Adrijana, V. J., Varga-Nagy, A., Öztürk, G., Şahin, İ.T., Paz-Albo, J., Toran, M., et al. (2021). Policies and practices of early childhood education and care during the COVID-19 pandemic: Perspectives from five countries. *Journal of Childhood, Education & Society*, 2(2), 200-216. <https://doi.org/10.37291/2717638X.202122114>
- Akarsu, B., Akarsu, B. (2019.)*Bilimsel Arastırma Tasarımı: Nicel, Nitel ve Karma Araştırma Yöntemleri. İstanbul: Cinius Yayınları.*
- Alan, Ü. (2021). Distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic in Turkey: Identifying the needs of early childhood educators. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 49, 987-994. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-021-01197-y>
- Almusharraf, N. M., & Khahro, S. H. (2020). students' satisfaction with online learning experiences during the covid-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, 15(21),246-267. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v15i21.15647>
- Ansari, A., Pianta, R. C., Whittaker, J. V., Vitiello, V. E., & Ruzek, E. A. (2019). Starting Early: The Benefits of Attending Early Childhood Education Programs at Age 3. *American Educational Research Journal*, 56(4), 1495–1523. Retrieved 3 January, 2022 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45237729>
- Aytaç, T. (2021). The problems faced by teachers in Turkey during Covid-19 pandemic and their opinions. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 17(1), 404– 420. <https://doi.org/10.29329/ijpe.2020.329.26>
- Barnett, S., W., & Jung, K. (2020). Understanding and responding to the pandemic's impact on preschool education: What can we learn from last spring? *National Institute for Early Childhood Research*, 1-9.

- Başaran, S. T., & Ulubey, Ö. (2018). 2013 Okul öncesi eğitim programının değerlendirilmesi. *Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Fakültesi Dergisi*, 51(2), 1-38. [http://dx.doi.org/ 10.1501/Egifak.0000000](http://dx.doi.org/10.1501/Egifak.0000000)
- Canlı, Z., & Canlı, B. (2020) Distance education and young learners of English during curfew period due to coronavirus pandemic. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Education Research*, 6(2), 241-251. Retrieved 5 January, 2022 from <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/ijsser/issue/55748/768947>
- Çakıcı, D. (2016). Parents' and English language teachers' views about early foreign language education in Turkey. *Participatory Educational Research*, 33-42. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17275/per.16.spi.1.4>
- Demircioğlu, Ş. (2010). Teaching English vocabulary to young learners via drama. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2. 439-443. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.03.039>
- Deneme, S. & Ada, S. (2010). Teaching English as a foreign language to very young learners: A case from Turkey. *Language in India*, 10(3), 47-58.
- Dilman, H. (2022). Covid-19 salgını döneminde uzaktan eğitimle yapılan yabancı dil öğretiminin öğretmenlerce değerlendirilmesi. *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, (31), 1434-1461. <http://doi.org/doi:10.29000/rumelide.1222302>
- Diningrat, S., Nindya, M., & Salwa, S. (2020). Emergency online teaching: Early childhood education lecturers' perception of barrier and pedagogical competency. *Jurnal Cakrawala Pendidikan*, 39(3), 705-719. <http://doi.org/doi:10.21831/cp.v39i3.32304>
- Dreifuss-Serrano, C., & Herrera, P., C. (2020). Early childhood online education in the COVID-19 context. Behavioral patterns for user interface design. *IEEE Explore*, <http://doi.org/10.1109/LWMOOCS50143.2020.9234385>

- Duran, A., & Ömeroğlu, E. (2022). How parents spent time at home with their preschool-aged children during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 20(1), 13-26. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1476718x211059906>
- Duran, M. (2021). The effects of Covid-19 pandemic on preschool education. *International Journal of Education Methodology*, 7(2), 249-260. <https://doi.org/10.12973/ijem.7.2.249>
- Elkind, D. (1991). development in early childhood. *Elementary School Guidance & Counseling*, 26(1), 12–21. Retrieved 5 January, 2022 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42868988>
- Er-Sabuncuoğlu, M., & Diken, İ., H. (2010). Early childhood intervention in Turkey: Current situation, challenges and suggestions. *International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education*, 2(2), 149-160. <https://doi.org/10.20489/intjecse.107966>
- Erlangga, D.T (2022). Student problems in online learning: Solutions to keep education going on. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, 3(1), 21-26. <https://doi.org/10.33365/jeltl.v3i1.1694>
- Erlina, I., A., H., Santoso. D., & Apriyanto, S. (2020). Perspectives of parents of online learning in pandemic Covid-19. *Journal of Research in Business, Economics, and Education*, 2(6), 1347-1351.
- Fidan, M. (2021). COVID-19 and primary school 1st grade in Turkey: Starting primary school in the pandemic based on teachers' views. *Journal of Primary Education*, 3(1), 15-24. <https://doi.org/10.52105/temelegitim.3.1.2>
- Foti, P. (2020). Research in distance learning in Greek kindergarten schools during the pandemic of covid-19: Possibilities, dilemmas, limitations. *European Journal of Open Education and E-learning Studies*. 5(1), 20-40.. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3839063>

- Friedman-Krauss, A. H., Barnett, W. S., Hodges, K. S., Garver, K. A., Weisenfeld, G., Gardiner, B. A., Jost, T. M. (2023). *The State of Preschool 2022: State Preschool Yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.
- Han, C., Liu. L., & Chen. S. (2022). Factors influencing parents' intention on primary school students' choices of online learning during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in China. *Sustainability* 2022, 14(14), 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14148269>
- Harasim, L. (2000). Shift happens online education as a new paradigm in learning. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 3, 41-61. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1096-7516\(00\)00032-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1096-7516(00)00032-4)
- Hsu P-C, Chang I-H, Chen R-S. Online learning communities and mental health literacy for preschool teachers: The moderating role of enthusiasm for Engagement. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 2019; 16(22):4448. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16224448>
- Jie, C., Y., & Mat Ali, N. (2021). COVID-19: What are the challenges of online learning? A literature review. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Future Ready Learning and Education*, 23(1), 23-29. Retrieved 5 January, 2022 from <https://www.akademiabaru.com/submit/index.php/frle/article/view/3960>.
- Kaarina Ghosn, I. (2014). Teaching to very young learners: An alternative to kindergarten textbooks. In J. Enever & E. Lindgren & S. Ivanov (Eds.) *Early Language Learning: Theory and Practice* (16-144). Print & Media.
- Karakaya, F., Adıgüzel, M., Üçüncü, G., Çimen, O., & Yilmaz, M. (2020). Teachers' views towards the effects of COVID-19 pandemic in the education process in Turkey. *Participatory Educational Research*, 8(2), 17-30. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17275/per.21.27.8.2>
- Kayhan, N., & Pistav-Akmese, P. (2012). Examining the preschool educational institutions in European Union countries and in Turkey. *Procedia Social and*

Behavioral Sciences, 46, 1517-1521.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.05.332>

Kılıç, D., Atanur -Başkan, G., & Sağlam, N. (2010). Preschool education in Turkey in the European Union process. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 9, 555-559.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.12.196>

Koçoğlu, E., & Tekdal, D. (2020). Analysis of distance education activities conducted during Covid-19 pandemic. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 15(9), 536-543.
<https://doi.org/10.5897/ERR2020.4033>

Kraft, M. A., Nicole S.S., and Lyon, M. A. (2020). Sustaining a sense of success: The importance of teacher working conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. (EdWorkingPaper: 20-279). <https://doi.org/10.26300/35nj-v890>

Kuset, Ş., Özgem, K., Şaşmancıoğlu, & Kan Ş., G. (2021). Evaluation of the impact of distance education on children in preschool period: Teachers' opinions. *Near East University Journal of Education Faculty*, 4(1), 78-87. <https://doi.org/10.32955/neuje.v3i2.252>

Lau, E., Y., H., Li, J-B., & Lee, K. (2021). Online learning and parent satisfaction during COVID-19: Child competence in independent learning as a moderator. *Early Education and Development*, 32(6), 830-841.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2021.1950451>

Lavidas K, Apostolou Z, Papadakis S. Challenges and opportunities of mathematics in digital times: Preschool teachers' views. *Education Sciences*. 2022; 12(7):459.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12070459>

Malkina, N. (2014). Words, sounds and movements: Storytelling for the very young. In J. Enever & E. Lindgren & S. Ivanov (Eds.) *Early Language Learning: Theory and Practice* (16-144). Print & Media.

Mart, Ç. T. (2012). Encouraging young learners to learn English through stories. *Canadian Center of Science and Education*, 5(5), 101-106.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n5p101>

- Mayadas, A., Bourne, J., & Bacsish, P. (2009). Online education today. *Science*, 323(5910), 85-89. [http://dx.doi.org/ 10.1126/science.1168874](http://dx.doi.org/10.1126/science.1168874)
- Mclsaac, M. S., & Gunawardena, C. N. (1996). Distance education. In D. H. Jonassen (Ed.), *Handbook of research for educational communication and technology: A project of the Association for Educational Communication and Technology* (pp.403-437). New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan.
- Mısırlı, O., & Ergüleç, F. (2021). Emergency remote teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic: Parents experiences and perspective. *Education and Information Technologies*, 26, 6699-6718. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-021-10520-4>
- Mohamad, A. I., Rahmatullah, B., MD Ibharim, L. F., Saari, E., M., & Downing, K. J. (2022). Exploring parents perception of online learning through a systematic literature review. *Borneo International Journal*, 5(1), 08-15. Retrieved 5 January, 2022 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/360561204_Exploring_Parents_Perception_Of_Online_Learning_Through_A_Systematic_Literature_Review
- Moore, M., & Kearsley, G. (2012). *Distance education: A systems view of online learning* (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Morgan, H. (2019). Does high-quality preschool benefit children? What the research shows. *Education Sciences*, 9(1), 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci9010019>
- Muhammad, A., & Anwar, K. (2020). Online learning amid the COVID-19 Pandemic: Students' perspectives. *Journal of Pedagogical Sociology and Psychology*, 2(1), 45-51. <http://www.doi.org/10.33902/JPSP.2020261309>
- Munastiwi, E. (2020). Colorful online learning problem of early childhood education during the Covid-19. pandemic. *Al-Talim Journal*, 27(3), 227-235. <https://doi.org/10.15548/jt.v27i3.663>

- Njie, B. and Asimiran, S. (2014). Case study as a choice in qualitative methodology. *Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 4, 35-40. <http://dx.doi.org/10.9790/7388-04313540>
- Ocak, G., & Karakuş, G. (2021). Undergraduate students' views of and difficulties in online exams during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Themes in eLearning*, 14(14), 13-30. <https://doi.org/10.52911/ital.1193910>
- Özer, M., (2020). Educational Policy Actions by the Ministry of National Education in the times of COVID-19. *Kastamonu Educational Journal*, 28(3), 1124-1129. <http://dx.doi.org/10.24106/kefdergi.722280>
- Palvia, S., Aeron, P., Gupta, P., Mahapatra, D., Parida, R., Rosner, R., & Sindhi, S. (2018). Online education: worldwide status, challenges, trends, and implications. *Journal of Global Information Technology Management*, 21(4), 233-241. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1097198X.2018.1542262>
- Qiao, P., Zhu, X., Guo, Y., Sun, Y., & Qin, C. (2021). The development and adoption of online learning in pre- and post-COVID-19: Combination of technological system evolution theory and unified theory of acceptance and use of technology. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 14(4), 162-179. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm14040162>
- Sak, R., Tantekin Erden, F., & S. Morrison, G. (2017). Preschool teachers' beliefs and practices related to child-centred education in Turkey. *International Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years Education*, 46(5), 563-577. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2017.1322995>
- Şevik, M. (2011). Teacher views about using songs in teaching English to young learners. *Educational Research and Review*, 6(21), 1027-1035. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5897/ERR11.250>
- Singh, V. & Thurman, A. (2019) How many ways can we define online learning? A systematic literature review of definitions of online learning (1988-

- 2018), American Journal of Distance Education, 33:4, 289-306, <https://doi.org/10.1080/08923647.2019.1663082>
- Sun, A., & Chen, X. (2016). Online education and its effective practice: A research review. *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research*, 15, 157-190. <https://doi.org/10.28945/3502>
- T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Temel Eğitim Müdürlüğü. (2013). Okul öncesi eğitim programı. Retrieved 8 January, 2022 from <https://tegm.meb.gov.tr/dosya/okuloncesi/ooproram.pdf>
- Toran, M., Sak, R., Xu, Y., Şahin-Sak, İ. T., & Yu, Y. (2021). Parents and children during the COVID-19 quarantine process: Experiences from Turkey and China. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 19(1) 21-39. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476718X2097758>
- Ulferts, H., M-Wolf, K., & Anders, Y. (2019). Impact of process quality in early childhood education and care on academic outcomes: Longitudinal meta-analysis. *Child Development*, 90(5), 1474-1489. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13296>
- UNESCO. (2020, April 29). 1.3 Billion Learners Are Still Affected by School or University Closures, as Educational Institutions Start Reopening around the World, Says UNESCO. Retrieved 9 January, 2022 from <https://en.unesco.org/news/13-billion-learners-are-still-affected-school-university-closures-educational-institutions>
- Virtic, M. P., Dolenc, K., & Sorgo, A. (2020). Changes in online distance learning behaviour of university students during the coronavirus disease 2019 outbreak, and development of the model of forced distance online learning preferences. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 10(1), 393-411. <https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.10.1.393>
- World Health Organization. (2019). Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Retrieved 7 January 2022 from. https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1

- Yaycı, L., & Kendirci, A. (2021). Determination of educational/academic and some social behavioral trends of elementary school students in turkey during coronavirus (covid-19) pandemic days. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching*, 8(1).358-380. Retrieved 7 February 2022 from. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1286440>
- Yıldırım, B. (2021). Preschool education in Turkey during the Covid-19 pandemic: A phenomenological study. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 49, 947-963. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10643-021-01153-w>
- Yildiz, S., Kilic, G.N. & Acar, I.H. (2022). Early childhood education during the COVID-19 outbreak: the perceived changing roles of preschool administrators, teachers, and parents. *Early Childhood Education Journal*.[https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-022-01339-)022-01339-
- Zhu, X., & Liu, J. (2020). Education in and after Covid-19: Immediate responses and long-term visions. *Postdigital Science and Education*, 2, 695-699. [https://doi: 10.1007/s42438-020-00126-3](https://doi.org/10.1007/s42438-020-00126-3)

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Ethics Committee Approval

Bu belge, Yükseköğretim Kurulu tarafından 19.01.2021 tarihli “Lisansüstü Tezlerin Elektronik Ortamda Toplanması, Düzenlenmesi ve Erişime Açılmasına İlişkin Yönerge” ile bildirilen 6689 Sayılı Kişisel Verilerin Korunması Kanunu kapsamında gizlenmiştir.



Appendix II: Ministry of Education Approval

Bu belge, Yükseköğretim Kurulu tarafından 19.01.2021 tarihli “Lisansüstü Tezlerin Elektronik Ortamda Toplanması, Düzenlenmesi ve Erişime Açılmasına İlişkin Yönerge” ile bildirilen 6689 Sayılı Kişisel Verilerin Korunması Kanunu kapsamında gizlenmiştir.



Appendix III: Survey Questions

Bu belge, Yükseköğretim Kurulu tarafından 19.01.2021 tarihli “Lisansüstü Tezlerin Elektronik Ortamda Toplanması, Düzenlenmesi ve Erişime Açılmasına İlişkin Yönerge” ile bildirilen 6689 Sayılı Kişisel Verilerin Korunması Kanunu kapsamında gizlenmiştir.



CURRICULUM VITAE

ILGAZ TUNCEL

EDUCATION

<i>Degree</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Institution</i>
M.A.	2020-2023	Maltepe University, ELT
B.A.	2015-2020	Bilkent University, ELIT
High School	2010-2015	American Collegiate Institute Izmir

