

THE PERCEPTIONS OF TURKISH EFL PREP-SCHOOL TEACHERS ON
QUEERING THEIR ELT PRACTICES: A CASE STUDY

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

GAYE ŐEVVAL ETİN

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

AUGUST 2023

Approval of the thesis:

**THE PERCEPTIONS OF TURKISH EFL PREP-SCHOOL TEACHERS ON
QUEERING THEIR PRACTICES: A CASE STUDY**

submitted by **GAYE ŞEVVAL ÇETİN** in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of **Master of Arts in English Language Teaching, the Graduate
School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University** by,

Prof. Dr. Sadettin KİRAZCI
Dean
Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Nurten BİRLİK
Head of Department
Department of Foreign Language Education

Prof. Dr. Çiler HATİPOĞLU
Supervisor
Department of Foreign Language Education

Dr. Yasemin TEZGİDEN CAKCAK
Co-Supervisor
Department of Foreign Language Education

Examining Committee Members:

Assist. Prof. Dr. Muhittin ŞAHİN (Head of the Examining Committee)
Ufuk University
Department of Foreign Language Education

Prof. Dr. Çiler HATİPOĞLU (Supervisor)
Middle East Technical University
Department of Foreign Language Education

Assist. Prof. Dr. Müge GÜNDÜZ
Middle East Technical University
Department of Foreign Language Education



I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last Name: Gaye Şevval ÇETİN

Signature:

ABSTRACT

THE PERCEPTIONS OF TURKISH EFL PREP-SCHOOL TEACHERS ON QUEERING THEIR ELT PRACTICES: A CASE STUDY

ÇETİN, Gaye Şevval

M.A., The Department of English Language Teaching

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Çiler HATİPOĞLU

Co-supervisor: Dr. Yasemin TEZGİDEN CAKCAK

August 2023, 163 pages

Queering ELT has gained popularity internationally, but research on this topic in the context of Turkey is exceedingly limited (Güney, 2018; Kocaman & Selvi, 2021). Earlier research (Merse, 2015; Güney, 2018; Brochin, 2019) has shown queering ELT practices has been affirming and inclusive for both queer and non-queer students. This qualitative case study sought to investigate the perspectives of four Turkish tertiary EFL preparatory school teachers on queering their ELT practices. The study was conducted in a foundation university's English language preparatory program in Turkey, and the participants were Turkish instructors with diverse personal, educational, and professional backgrounds. Individual semi-structured interviews, qualitative surveys, and researcher notes about the participants served as data collection instruments. The data was analyzed using the Creswell (2014) and Braun & Clarke (2013) thematic analysis guidelines. While the instructors showed a positive interest in queering ELT, the findings revealed that they were not actively queering their practices. The participants found queering ELT practices essential for

creating a safe and thriving language learning environment. However, they were also fearful of socio-political pressures, backlash from the institution they work for, and their students' parents. In addition, they were apprehensive due to a lack of training and non-heteronormative materials and curriculum. Thus, it was found that higher education EFL instructors in Turkey require training on queer pedagogy and that the institution's administration should prioritize inclusive policies.

Keywords: queering ELT, inclusive education, qualitative case study, preparatory school, teacher perceptions



ÖZ

İNGİLİZCE HAZIRLIK PROGRAMINDA ÇALIŞAN ÖĞRETMENLERİN ÖĞRETİM UYGULAMALARINI KUİRLEŞTİRMEK HAKKINDA ALGILARI: BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

ÇETİN, Gaye Şevval

Yüksek Lisans, İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. Çiler HATİPOĞLU

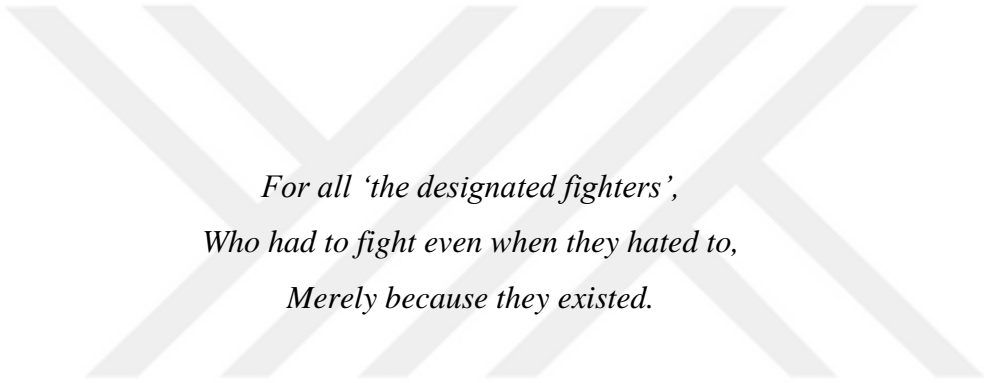
Ortak Tez Yöneticisi: Dr. Yasemin TEZGİDEN ÇAKÇAK

Ağustos 2023, 163 sayfa

Kuir sorunlarını Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğretimi'ne (EFL) dahil etmek uluslararası alanda popülerlik kazanmış olsa da bu konuda Türkiye yüksek öğrenimi bağlamında yapılan araştırmalar son derece sınırlıdır (Güney; 2018, Selvi & Kocaman, 2021). Kritik Pedagoji ve Kuir Pedagojisine dayanarak oluşan Queering ELT uygulamalarının çalışmaları bunun hem kuir hem de kuir olmayan öğrenciler için olumlu ve kapsayıcı olduğunu bulmuştur (Merse, 2015; Güney, 2018; Brochin, 2019). Bu nitel vaka çalışması, Türk üniversite (EFL) hazırlık okulu öğretmenlerinin ELT uygulamalarını kuirleştirme konusundaki bakış açılarını araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Çalışma, bir vakıf üniversitesinin İngilizce hazırlık programında gerçekleştirilmiştir Katılımcılar farklı kişisel, eğitimsel ve mesleki geçmişlere sahip dört Türk EFL öğretmeninden oluşmaktadır. Veri toplama aracı olarak, katılımcılar hakkında bireysel yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler, nitel anketler ve araştırmacı notları sunulmuştur. Veriler, Creswell (2014) ve Braun & Clarke (2013) tematik

analiz kılavuzları kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular, katılımcıların öğretim uygulamalarını kuirleştirme konusunda son derece olumlu olsalar da, aktif olarak bunu yapmadıklarını ortaya koymuştur. Katılımcılar, güvenli ve gelişen bir dil öğrenme ortamı oluşturmak için kuiring ELT uygulamalarını oldukça gerekli bulmuşlardır. Bununla birlikte, sosyal ve siyasi baskılardan, çalıştıkları kurumdan ve öğrencilerinin ebeveynlerinden gelebilecek negatif tepkilerden korktukları anlaşılmıştır. Ayrıca, eğitim eksikliği ve heteronormatif olmayan materyaller ve müfredat eksikliği nedeniyle İngilizce öğretim uygulamalarını kuirleştirmekte tereddüt etmektedirler. Bu nedenlerle, katılımcıların eğitime ihtiyaç duydukları ve kurum yönetiminin kapsayıcı politikalara öncelik vermesi gerektiği sonuçlarına ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kapsayıcı eğitim, öğretmen algıları, nitel vaka çalışması, kuir çalışma, kuir pedagoji



*For all 'the designated fighters',
Who had to fight even when they hated to,
Merely because they existed.*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Çiler Hatipođlu for providing invaluable guidance while dealing with my ever-changing ideas and general chaotic state of mind. I feel endlessly lucky to have such a knowledgeable and patient supervisor.

My co-supervisor Dr. Yasemin Tezgiden Cakcak is the reason why I managed to finish this thesis. She did not let me succumb to insecurities or fears and always kept me scientific. She has been the Dumbledore to my Harry, the Haymitch to my Katniss, the Giles to my Buffy. Thank you for helping me slay some dragons.

I would like to thank my committee members. Assist. Prof. Dr. Mge Gndz has helped me ground my work with her valuable suggestions. Assist. Prof. Dr. Muhittin Őahin significantly and awesomely helped me with my theoretical framework. He is a majestic person and researcher, and I am inspired by him.

I would also like to thank Assist. Prof. Dr. Sevgi Őahin. She went above and beyond with her incredibly useful feedback on my thesis. She made me feel talented as a writer.

I would like to thank my METU NCC instructors. They taught me, prepared me, and guided me in a plethora of ways that I did not know possible. The general subject matter of this thesis came to me in the Sociolinguistics class of Assist. Prof. Dr. Ali Fuad Selvi, he probably did not even know this. I am so very grateful that I have had his and my other METU NCC family's influences on me.

If I did not have the strength and support of my dearest friend Melahat Sandı, I would not have started writing this thesis, let alone finish it. She has kept me safe

and sane while undertaking a master's degree. She has been the Catra to my Adora. She has been my rock through so much. Most importantly, she did not murder me when I was writing 25 hours a day and doing nothing else. I thank heavens you are my friend.

I also would like to thank the rest of my beloved friends, Onur (AKA my person), Servet, Münevver, Omar, Batuhan, Begüm, Sarim and Çisem for putting up with cancelled plans and having long conversations about abstract academical concepts. You all shaped me, supported me, and helped me grow in your unique ways. I hope to do the same for you throughout our friendship.

The context institution that this research takes place in, thank you very much for allowing me to conduct my study. My lovely participants (who I cannot name here), it was an honor to include you in my study, I am very grateful. I worked at the context institution with so many fascinating people. The 'most organic part-timers' are also the most marvelous of friends.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you my dear father and my mother for teaching me to stand up for what I believe in. My kind-hearted father Gürsel taught me Marxist Theory, being a gentleman and how to be an advocate for yourself and for the oppressed. I am incredibly lucky to have such a father who guided and made me feel safe and respected. My mother Mesude taught me to build strong relationships with people, how to turn on 'the charm' and how to demand respect.

Finally, a big, heartfelt thank you to every queer person that made it possible for me to write and publish this thesis. I can only hope to do the same for the next queer kid.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ELT	English Language Teaching
ELL	English Language and Literature
ACL	American Literature and Culture
ESL	English as a Second Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TESL	Teaching English as a Second Language
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
PREP-SCHOOL	University Preparatory Program
L2	Second Language
TL	Target Language
EPP	English Preparatory School
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, and other sexual identities, and orientations

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0. Presentation

This chapter consists of three parts. Background information about the study is provided in the first part. In the second part, the objectives of the study are explained, and research questions are presented. In the final part, the importance of the study is discussed.

1.1. Background to the Study

1.1.1. Queering the English Language Classroom

Sexual orientation is a person's sexual and romantic attraction to others based on their sex. It is essential to recognize that sexual orientation can exist on a continuum rather than in fixed categories, even though it is frequently categorized into distinct classifications (American Psychological Association, 2012). Originally, the term "queer" referred to anything peculiar, odd, aberrant, or even derogatory toward homosexuality (Halperin, 2003, as cited in McDonald, 2017, p. 1). In contrast to the more separatist connotations associated with homosexual and lesbian identities, the LGBTQI+ community reclaimed "queer" in the 1980s as an inclusive term to describe non-normative and resistant sexualities. The reclaiming of the term "queer" maintained a connection to its original meaning by accepting difference without apology (McDonald, 2017, p. 2). In my personal experience growing up in Türkiye, the acronyms LGBTQI+ and the words they stand for were always used in pornographic or offensive sentences. Until I learned the term queer, I identified with

the classifications of bisexual and pansexual. For me, queer signifies the fluidity of my identity and orientation, which allows me to query societal conventions. Therefore, the study at hand will use the term queer to refer to all non-heterosexual orientations and non-cisgender identities. Unless I am paraphrasing the work of other researchers who use different terms, I will consistently use the term queer. However, the term "queer" is frequently used in academic settings as an all-encompassing language to examine and convey the challenges peculiar to this group of learners (Miller & Mikulec, 2014).

Queer theory, which emerged in the late 1980s, analyzes gender, sexuality, and subjectivities from the perspective of gay and lesbian scholarship in various disciplines (Bernini, 2020). It challenges the heterosexual norm and views sexuality as a social and historical construction. (Butler, 1990) Queer theory is not fixed but is continuously applied and reapplied to address pressing issues under scrutiny (Raja et al., 2023, p. 3). Queer theory is a vast, multidisciplinary collection of thoughts that challenges commonly held assumptions about the world by questioning existing knowledge in social life. Although queer theory does not adhere to a systematic set of assumptions, queer theorists are committed to destabilizing binaries, dismantling labels, and criticizing normalizing processes that limit individuality and repress diversity. Centrally, queer theory celebrates the difference and fluidity of identity. Queer theory denounces the performativity of gender and sexual roles (McDonald, 2017, p. 3). Queer theory emerged in academia during the "postmodern turn," highlighting the importance of language, deconstruction, difference, fragmentation, multiple perspectives, discourse, and reevaluating established narratives and power structures (Walton, 2012, p. 186–187, as cited in McDonald, 2017, p. 23). In essence, queer theory, like postmodernism, challenges our traditional techniques of discussing and interpreting diverse areas of existence (Britzman, 1995).

The relationship between language learning and queering one's identity is related in various aspects. Numerous studies have shown that learning a second language (L2) includes linguistic and social aspects (De Vincenti et al., 2007; Miller, 2015; Nelson,

2010; Nguyen & Kellog, 2005, as cited in Grant, 2022, p. 8). The desire to explore the world from new perspectives and viewpoints drives one of the main motivations of obtaining an L2. This is especially important for queer students, who can see themselves as queer language users and express their queer identity through their newly acquired language skills (Merse, 2015; Paiz, 2020). However, it is critical to recognize that students may hesitate to engage in language learning if they do not perceive the content, materials, or language as relevant (Grant, 2022, p. 8). Thus, it can be said that having content, materials, or language that is related to the students' realities can prove to have a positive impact on increasing their classroom engagement. Because even though it is debatable whether there are queer students in every classroom, if not, they may have friends or family members who are members of the queer community (Coulter et al., 2021; Sunderland, 2021).

English language instruction is globally significant and intricately linked to social identities. However, non-heterosexual sexual identities are consistently ignored in EFL and ESL instruction, which primarily emphasize heterosexual perspectives (Thornbury, 1999; Nelson, 2009). One way of remedying this is through queering teaching practices. Queering can be defined as the creation of inclusive spaces where open dialogue and critical discussions about all identities, including sexual identities, can occur in a manner that respects and acknowledges diverse subjectivities (Nelson, 2006, 2007; Paiz, 2015, 2017). Tarrayo & Salonga (2022) explain queering ELT practices as incorporating a gender and sexuality perspective into instruction in order to create inclusive and queer-inclusive learning spaces that challenge traditional and gendered language use and disrupt binary thought patterns. This is accomplished through the creation and implementation of texts, course materials, discussions, and general English language use that acknowledge and affirm LGBTQI+ issues and experiences. Pennycook (2001) depicts this as "restive problematizing," i.e., challenging complacent, established roles resistantly (p. 16). The provided definition of queering assumes that sexual identities are integral components of human social identity, extending beyond sexual attraction and behavior to influence a variety of facets of individuals' lived experiences. This implies that sexual identities may become relevant in the classroom and influence language learning and acquisition processes (Paiz, 2019, p. 267–268).

Typically, the L2 (second language) instructor should be responsible for incorporating queer content into the language-learning classroom to create a safe space and an inclusive environment where the students can negotiate their identities using the target language. Personal apprehension (Curran, 2006; Page, 2016), potential institutional or organizational resistance (Rhodes & Coda, 2017), or feelings of being unprepared or disinclined to address these topics (Evrpidou & Çavuşoğlu, 2015; Rhodes, 2019) influence the teacher's decision to include or exclude queer perspectives and voices. Even when teachers observe students expressing curiosity or interest in discussing queer topics, they may choose to avoid doing so due to a lack of perceived relevance to the language learning context (Ferfoljia & Robinson, 2004; Paiz, 2017). This avoidance results in students missing out on learning about diverse cultures, communities, and perspectives (Rhodes & Coda, 2017), in addition to perpetuating existing heteronormative stereotypes about gender and sexual identities, which marginalize queer or questioning students (Pakuła et al., 2015; Page, 2017). Tarrayo & Salonga (2022) demonstrated that queering ELT involves building a sanctuary or a safe, inclusive classroom for all students and incorporating queer perspectives that can help normalize the experiences of frequently othered individuals. Queer discourse significantly enhances the relevance of what is being taught in the classroom by opening up more critical avenues for navigating the limits of ELT by examining how identity and language are inextricably intertwined (p. 23).

Despite growing scholarly interest in queer inquiry in the field of English language teaching (Paiz, 2020), discussions and representations of sexual identities and queerness remain largely absent and invisible. EFL (English as a Foreign Language) textbooks feature prominently heteronormative and heterosexual content that is openly discussed and accepted from social and pedagogical perspectives. In contrast, queerness is frequently regarded as culturally inappropriate and taboo in many countries and cultures (Trinh & Tinker Sachs, 2023). Paiz (2017) discovered that most EFL materials adhere to heteronormative norms, accepting a worldview where the norm is binary gender categories and traditional gender roles while everything else is abnormal (Warner, 1991) due to publishers' economic considerations.

As the researcher for this study, my experiences were the main motivation behind exploring the perceptions of EFL instructors as to queering their classrooms. As an English learner, I recognized the heterosexism and heteronormativity of my coursebooks, my assignment topics, and even the situational questions that were in my university exam. Therefore, instead of making non-heteronormativity unfathomable, I have been queering my ELT practices even before I learned about the literature behind them. All I did was point out what was axiomatic and ask my students questions about them, like, 'Why do you think the burglar in the crime unit is divorced but his lawyer is married?' or I added more authentic information, like different types of families in the family units. I felt the obligation to challenge sexist, homophobic, and xenophobic remarks in the classroom. For every student who showed hate, there were three more who were simply curious. It has been my experience that queering my ELT practices has made my students feel safe and respected, increased their proficiency, ignited their higher thinking skills inside the classroom, and made me an approachable teacher in their eyes.

1.1.2. Dynamics of the Turkish Context for Queer People and EFL Teachers

Türkiye is an institutionally secular, largely conservative country. Under the ruling party and the presidential system, authoritarianism has increased. Türkiye's democratic downfall affects residents' everyday lives. Critical voices were targeted as government policies tightened, limiting free speech and association (Apaydin & Çoban, 2022; Tuncer, 2023). Turkish queer people are also increasingly marginalized. Despite Türkiye's professed secularism, numerous citizens continue to hold that these sexual practices are unethical. In Türkiye's traditional society, patriarchy is also acknowledged and expected. A man must choose a woman for companionship and to start a family. The country recognizes no other family hierarchy (Kuzulugil, 2010, as cited in Ince Yenilmez, 2020). Due to their sexual orientation, families and neighbors typically shun individuals who form other types of partnerships or friendships (Cunningham, 2016). In Türkiye, LGBTQI+ relationships are strongly discouraged because they do not conform to societal norms. In addition, homosexuality is considered antithetical to Turkish culture

(Engin, 2015). The moral values of the majority in Türkiye discriminate against LGBTQI+ people on the basis of their gender identity. Sadly, the homophobic culture in which they exist offers no viable employment opportunities. Many LGBTQI+ employees opt not to reveal their sexual orientation in the workplace for fear of suffering discriminatory practices such as termination or career setbacks. (Ince Yenilmez, 2020, p. 442). Furthermore, LGBTQI+ people confront several impediments to good healthcare, including mental and physical health services. They often face unfavorable attitudes from medical professionals, a scarcity of competent and accepting healthcare providers, service rejection, or disproportionately expensive expenses for LGBTQI+-specific treatment (Ince Yenilmez, 2020, p. 447). Yılmaz and Gocmen (2015) also state that LGBTQI+ people face structural, physical, mental, and social assault, which frequently prevents them from openly expressing their sexual orientation in public. Because of these reasons, some queer people decide not to disclose their true identities, actively hiding them for survival. This results in more mental illnesses amongst queer people who are not out to their families and friends than non-queer people in Türkiye. However, Ozturk and Kozacioglu (1996) found that Turkish queers who had come out and received positive reactions and support were less anxious and depressed than those who had not.

The Turkish lira has fallen more than some countries in war due to government focus on corruption, income disparity, and a decline in social security coverage for workers, ranking among the worst nations for worker rights (Apaydin & Çoban, 2022; Tuncer, 2023). The conditions of job security, stability, just pay, adequate benefits, and just working hours are also lacking for language instructors, even more so in private institutions. Private language instructors typically labor under challenging circumstances without contracts. When their services are no longer needed, they may be fired. They have longer work hours, high professional demands, job instability, and few professional growth chances, which affects their well-being. Private language instructors also earn less, have no health insurance, and have no paid sick leave (Arda, 2023). A 2018 legislation in Türkiye affected English language graduates who wanted to teach in university foreign language departments,

especially preparatory schools. This regulation prohibits graduate language teachers without a master's degree from teaching in preparatory schools or universities permanently. Since preparatory schools may now recruit part-time English teachers without master's degrees, instructors are caught in precarity (Schwaller, 2019). Precarity can be explained as individuals or groups feeling vulnerable, insecure, and uncertain of their employment, housing, income, or social support due to precarious working conditions (Näsström & Kalm, 2015, p. 556–558). Part-time instructors complement full-time instructors to meet department staffing needs. Part-time instructors sometimes labor under insecure circumstances as "backup" teachers. They work under conditions like uncertainty about their semester hours, lower compensation than full-time teachers, temporary job status, lack of sick leave, holiday pay, social benefits, and professional development chances. They face job insecurity and temporary work (Arda, 2023, p. 7).

Having thus situated the study in context, it is important to recognize the impact of these insecure circumstances on part-time instructors' overall job satisfaction and morale. This was deemed to be important since the thesis at hand aims to explore language teachers' perceptions of queering ELT practices.

1.2. The Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

This case study examined the perceptions of tertiary EFL prep-school teachers about queering their ELT practices. The participants have been teaching at the same foundation (private) university in the capital city of Türkiye, Ankara, for at least one semester. Four EFL teachers with varying levels of experience and backgrounds participated in the study. The data was gathered using qualitative surveys, semi-structured interviews, providing mini training on queering ELT and the researcher's noted about the participants' profiles. The purpose of this study was to contribute to the very limited literature of queer-informed educational studies in the Turkish context. In order to accurately portray the perceptions of the participants on queering their ELT practices, the following research questions were presented:

- 1) To what extent are Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers aware of queer identities and issues at national and global levels?
- 2) To what extent are Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers knowledgeable about queer pedagogy and queering ELT?
- 3) Do Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers queer their ELT practices? If yes, how? If not, why not?
- 4) How do Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers conceptualize queering ELT in their own classrooms?

1.3. The Significance of the Study

Case studies differ from other qualitative research types because they intensively analyze, describe, assess, and appraise individuals, events, or groups. Case studies help researchers comprehensively comprehend the situations and context of the actors involved. Deficiency in generalizability has been a perceived drawback of case studies; however, it is argued that insights from a case study can determine or change future research, procedures, and policies (Hancock et al., 2021). This work used a case study approach to portray the situation. There is an exceptionally significant gap in queering the classrooms in the Turkish education system that centers teachers on literature. Only two studies (Güney, 2018; Güney, 2021) focus on what Turkish teachers think about queering their EFL classes. The researcher hopes to contribute to the literature by providing a detailed picture of the case of the four EFL prep-school teachers who work at the same private university about queering their ELT practices.

Higa et al. (2012) found that school was one of the most damaging aspects of being queer, according to queer youth. The study also showed that queer students acknowledged suffering the most from school officials or teachers who did nothing to stop homophobic bullying, or who engaged in anti-gay behavior. Moreover, this

type of negativity profoundly burdens non-queer students too. In *Homophobia: How We All Pay the Price*, Blumenfeld (1992) illustrates that in a classroom where queer students are treated negatively, non-queer students also struggle with identity issues. Rigid gender roles force them to act in specific ways (e.g., macho, ladylike), potential friendships between them and queer students are harmed, and being 'normal' is a performance. Hence, there is a lack of appreciation for diversity and multiculturalism. Blumenfeld (1992) goes on to explain that a classroom like this cannot be expected to cultivate English language speakers who are acculturated, globally competent, and highly proficient.

Türkiye is widely known as one of the most dangerous places for a queer person to live (Hürriyet Daily News, 2019). Gocmen and Yılmaz (2016) discovered that LGBTQI+ people in Türkiye experienced discrimination in a variety of areas, including education. Multiple studies (Güney, 2018; Ördem & Ulum, 2020; Tekin, 2011) indicate that LGBTQI+ students are further ostracized in the classroom because non-straight identities are not discussed. This is because teachers are afraid that acknowledging them will upset some students in Türkiye's relatively conservative environment, and they will face repercussions from the Ministry of Education. This is corroborated by Erdoğan & Köten (2014), who explain that in 2019, the Council of Higher Education (CHE) in Türkiye prohibited universities from discussing gender diversity on the grounds that doing so could pose a threat to Turkish culture and family culture as a result of those in power. Nearly 95 percent of Türkiye's population is commonly categorized as Muslim by the rulers of the country. Hence, it can be said that Islamic values are frequently perpetuated within the Turkish educational system (p. 34).

In addition to furthering human rights and creating safe spaces for non-conforming individuals in society, there is another reason why Turkish EFL contexts would heavily benefit from queering teaching practices. There is a nation-wide low level of English proficiency despite the high volume of English lessons Turkish students take. According to the EF English Proficiency Index 2022, Türkiye is the 64th of 111 countries in terms of English proficiency. Türkiye is categorized as having low

proficiency by EF. Also, Türkiye is Europe's second lowest proficiency country, followed by Azerbaijan ("EF EPI 2022—EF English Proficiency Index," n.d.). For the improvement of all countries, EF makes some suggestions. These suggestions include having students discuss more in English, using social media for English exposure, and having the teachers teach with communication-based techniques ("EF EPI 2022—EF English Proficiency Index," n.d.). Ulum & Uzun (2020) demonstrate that the grammar-translation method is the predominant and most widely used approach in Türkiye. As a result, there has been little progress in teaching and acquiring English. Additionally, they propose suggestions like eliminating receptive questions in exams and underscoring the importance of acquiring and refining productive skills through communicative methods. They recommend that curriculum and syllabus development, as well as the creation of tasks, involve both instructors and students (p. 457–458). These studies indicate that current EFL education practices may be ineffective, and policymakers, curriculum and material developers, and EFL teachers might benefit from more communicative approaches and creating strategies for renewed interest and increased attention from students. Queering ELT practices can be one of the most significant ways of achieving this.

In the Turkish EFL higher education context, there is a scarcity of queerness and queer-informed research. Therefore, this work's significance is threefold: empowering queer and questioning students in their English language learning spaces, highlighting the need for training in diversity and inclusion for ELT teachers, and contributing to the literature with a queer-informed study in the Turkish context. Data extrapolated from this research gives insights into the viewpoints of EFL teachers. This study endeavors to be a reference, an inspiration, and a call to action for further research on Turkish EFL teachers' training, queer pedagogy in EFL acquisition, and the professional development of in-service (and pre-service) English teachers.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Presentation

This chapter consists of six parts, all of which refer to the existing literature and prior research. Since this thesis centers on Queering ELT rooted in Queer Pedagogy, this chapter will explore Critical Theory, Queer Theory and Critical Pedagogy briefly. Afterwards, related literature regarding Queering ELT is discussed. The relationship between the thesis at hand and these concepts are discussed in conclusion. In reviewing the related literature, studies regarding Queering ELT practices are presented and discussed. Finally, information about the Turkish context is provided.

2.1. Theoretical Framework

2.1.1. Critical Theory

The thesis at hand hopes to understand teachers' perspectives regarding queering ELT practices. The theoretical concepts that laid the foundation for queering ELT can be traced back to Critical Theory along with other concepts that will be discussed in this chapter. Therefore, to understand how queering ELT practices came to life, discussing Critical Theory is required.

According to Watson (2012), Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels are responsible for developing one of the most innovative and contentious theoretical interpretations of social existence. According to their viewpoints, the foundation of capitalism is the struggle between two classes: the class of capitalists, who are the owners of the

means of production, and the class of workers, known as the proletariat, who are forced to sell their labor power. According to Ollman (1987), the core of Marxism is examining the relationships between these two social groups. Marx believed that a society's method of production and the connections between producers formed the "base" of that society. This was what characterized society for Marx. A superstructure, consisting of various secondary dimensions of life such as political, legal, cultural, literary, philosophical, or religious components, rises atop this economic basis or substructure (Ferretter, 2006). This superstructure is comprised of other parts of existence. According to this point of view, the judicial system, educational system, artistic output, and philosophical production in a particular society are all ultimately determined by the forces and relations of production (Small, 2005). The superstructure may also have an impact on the foundation. Still, in comparison to the enormous influence that the substructure has on the superstructure (Ollman, 2009), the effect of the superstructure on the base may be minimal.

Marxist scholar Althusser (1918–1990) explained ideology by stating that it is a mechanism for individuals to make sense of reality. (Althusser, 1994, page 52) He elaborated that human beings are inside it, so they do not appreciate it. People do not acquire this corpus of ideas by critical thinking; instead, they take certain phenomena for granted or as common sense without investigating their inner or deeper meaning (Ferretter, 2006). Ferreter (2006) uses the example of those who work in business to illustrate his point. As individuals embrace the prevailing ideology of the period, they may experience labor as one of competitiveness, hard effort, and intellect without ever thinking of it in terms of exploitation, alienation, and domination. According to Althusser (1994), this is a deliberate distortion of reality on the part of the ruling classes, intending to fool the working class (p. 52–53). In addition, even the bourgeoisie has bought into the narrative it has manufactured (Ferretter, 2006).

Althusser (1994) devised the concept of the "Ideological State Apparatus" to explain how the governing classes maintain their preserved privileges and perpetuate labor relationships. He goes on to explain that in Marxist theory's State apparatus,

repressive state institutions such as the government, armed forces, police, courts, and prisons enforce the rules of the dominant classes. Althusser (1994) added that the state also employs an "ideological state apparatus." In contrast to the "repressive state apparatus, the ideological state apparatus uses ideology rather than violence through various institutions, such as religious, educational, family, the legal system, politics, labor unions, and culture, which utilize it. While the repressive state apparatus employs force to maintain the status quo, the ideological state apparatus justifies using power. In addition, the ideological state apparatus attempts to fabricate public assent so that force becomes unnecessary (Althusser, 1994, p. 32-46).

Intended initially to advance Marxist studies in Germany, the Frankfurt School arose as a profound philosophical and sociological movement, acquiring prominence in various universities. In 1923, Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany, established the Institute for Social Research (Institut für Sozialforschung). The Institute was forced to close in 1933 by the Nazis, resulting in its relocation to Columbia University in New York City, United States (Corradetti, n.d.).

The Frankfurt School delved into various fundamental issues and philosophical preoccupations, including the critical examination of modernity and capitalist societies, the pursuit of social emancipation, and the identification of societal pathologies. Critical Theory provided a unique interpretation of Marxist philosophy, concentrating on economic and political concepts such as commodification, reification, fetishization, and a critical analysis of mass culture (Howard, 2000, p. 272-273).

Max Horkheimer (1895–1973), Theodor Adorno (1903–1969), Herbert Marcuse (1898–1979), Walter Benjamin (1892–1940), Friedrich Pollock (1894–1971), Leo Lowenthal (1900–1993), and Eric Fromm (1900–1988) were among the most prominent members of the first generation of Critical Theorists. Since the 1970s, a second generation began with Jürgen Habermas, who, among other contributions, helped to establish a dialogue between the so-called continental and analytic traditions. With Habermas, the Frankfurt School went global, influencing the

methodologies of European academic contexts and disciplines. Therefore, the third generation of critical theorists comprised either Habermas' research students in the United States or an impromptu union of independently educated scholars (Corradetti, n.d.).

Critical Theorists have long sought to distinguish their goals, methods, theories, and forms of explanation from standard understandings in both the natural and social sciences. They argue that the poles of philosophy and the social sciences should be combined rather than separated: explanation and understanding, structure and agency, regularity and normativity. Critical Theorists contend that such an approach allows their effort to be morally (rather than instrumentally) viable. They do not only strive to give a means to an end but rather pursue "human emancipation" (Horkheimer, 1972, p. 227) in the face of dominance and tyranny (Bohman, 2021).

Critical Theory holds that science and the world under study are products of social praxis, meaning that both the subject and the object of cognition are socially produced. The object is not just present in front of us, ready to be captured, nor is the subject only a recorder of reality. Because both subject and object are the result of highly complex social processes, the primary task of Critical Theory is to reflect on the structures that underpin social reality and the theories that seek to explain it, including, of course, Critical Theory itself (Castro-Gomez et al., 2001, p. 139).

To analyze the current state of capitalism, Zygmunt Bauman (1925-2017) an influential critic of modernism, held that modernism was going through a metamorphosis of unprecedented unlikeness and haste; aberrations were the rule, thus we must treat all plans lightly (Green & Gary, 2015, p. 49). He perceived the modern age as being in its second act, the first being a 'solid modernity' and the second being a 'liquid modernity'. He came up with the word "liquid modernity" to describe our time, which is different from the "solid modernity" that came before (Gane, 2001, p. 268). Bauman (2000) defined "liquidity" as the way in which our society treats its components as obsolete and disentangles them before they can be replaced (Şahin, 2019, p. 33).

What makes modernity 'liquid' ... is its self-propelling, self-intensifying, compulsive and obsessive 'modernisation'. As a result of which, like liquid, none of the consecutive forms of social life is able to maintain its shape for long. (Bauman, 2011, p. 11)

In order to comprehend the liquidity of today's modernity, it is essential to discuss the precursor of liquidity, solid modernity. Bauman (2000) characterizes this as a country's government managing the country like a garden. The gardener, which is the government, uses pseudo-scientific methods to create the best conditions for the "plants," which are the people. Not for every plant, though. The gardener decides what plants are useful and ensures that only those plants do well in his care. "Wild growth," "weeds," etc., are not allowed in his "garden." "Useless" plants seen as dangerous competitors to the useful plants are either pulled out or "domesticated" to fit into the garden's order. By putting things in the best order based on scientific knowledge, the "garden" gives the "gardener" the highest returns and the best conditions for the "cultivars" chosen. Because the "gardener," led by rational-scientific insights, is sure to know best what is good or bad for his subjects and wants to run his "garden" without interference from simpletons and amateurs, he has a strong tendency to limit democracy using a technocratic judgment system. This is valid in most modern states, to varying degrees, because reason, rational order, and the belief in scientific solutions are common features of modernity (Şahin, 2019, p. 33).

Society is truly independent when it understands that there are no guaranteed meanings and that it exists in a chaotic state. It is constantly seeking a shape, but that shape is never permanent. The lack of definite meanings, absolute truths, predetermined rules of behavior, and clear distinctions between right and wrong is essential for both a truly independent society and individuals who are truly free. These two things depend on each other (Bauman, 2000, p. 213).

Liquid modernity can be summarized as a flexible and fluid society where the emphasis is on individual choices of consumption and the uncertainty brought on by globalization due to technological advancements in communication and transportation (Bauman, 2011). Traditional understandings of political power and decision making are fluid and ever-changing (Gane, 2001). While this may mean

isolation and erasure of solidarity (Maylor, 2012) it also presents chances for individual freedom and creativity, especially in education (Green & Gary, 2015).

2.1.2. Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy is a state of becoming, a way of being in the world and with the world -- a never ending process that involves struggle and pain but also hope and joy shaped and maintained by a humanizing pedagogy. (Macedo, 2006, p. 394)

Burbules and Berk (1999) characterize Critical Pedagogy as posing the question, 'Who benefits?' (p.3). Accordingly, they explain that Critical Pedagogy assumes that most of the population lacks the skills or dispositions that would enable them to recognize certain types of inaccuracies, distortions, and even lies. Critical Pedagogy is explicitly concerned with how these inaccuracies, distortions, and lies restrict freedom in the school and in society at large, as it views society as inherently divided by unequal power relationships (p. 2). Critical pedagogues are mainly concerned with the effects of educational knowledge and cultural formations that perpetuate or legitimize an unjust status quo; cultivating a critical capacity in citizens is a means of equipping them to resist such power effects. Therefore, critical pedagogues take a stance in favor of those groups who lack access to social, economic, and political opportunities (p. 3).

Kirylo et al. (2010) define critical pedagogy as an active effort to address the needs of oppressed and exploited communities in and beyond the school setting. Kirylo et al. (2010) also state that critical pedagogy questions the societal, ecological, and financial systems and human interactions that shape the way people live and learn (p. 332). They argue that critical pedagogy requires people to repeatedly challenge their roles in society, either as agents of social and economic transformation or as participants in the perpetuation of neoliberal ideology (p. 333).

Paulo Freire (1921–1997), the leading scholar of Critical Pedagogy, was influenced by Critical Theory. Instead of continuing with the established cultural patterns of responding to people through a power hierarchy, Freire's starting point in the

classroom is to undermine the power dynamics that place some people above others. Freire stresses the importance of a democratic relationship between the instructor and the students for the conscientization process (Corradetti, n.d.). Students in this form of education critically analyze the given material, identify and personalize issues, ask questions, and debate problems and their options. According to Shih (2018), both instructors and students are active in listening, recognizing reality, and reforming, resulting in a heightened level of critical awareness and empowerment. This implies they are more critically aware of their realities, attitudes, and beliefs and have a higher power to change them. Conscientization is what Freire uses to describe this critical knowledge of reality and the ability to modify it (Abdul Razzak, 2020, p. 1003-1004-1005).

Freire's critical pedagogy, also known as problem-posing education, aims to achieve the democratic ideal by using a democratic approach that maintains consistency between the objective and the procedure. He famously criticizes the colonizer understanding of education, where the colonizing culture (the teacher) thinks of itself as the correct and valuable culture and the colonized culture is inferior and in need of the colonizing culture for its own betterment. He calls this 'the banking method' of education.

Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiques and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize and repeat.... In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing.... The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world. (Freire, 1970, p. 58-60)

The Banking Concept of Education (Freire, 2005) is characterized as dehumanizing for students (the oppressed), as they are usually afraid of the teacher (the oppressor) (Abdul Razzak, 2020, p. 1003). In this concept, even though the students desire an authentic existence and to have choices, they become more familiar with following prescriptions and conforming (Freire, 2005, p. 55). Similarly, teachers are in constant

dread, as they fear losing the freedom and power to control and oppress (Abdul Razzak, 2020, p. 1004). Freire (2005) argues that the only way for students to be liberated from such an oppressive state is to emerge from it and turn upon it through praxis. Praxis entails a critical awareness and confrontation of the surrounding reality, coupled with objectifying (i.e., taking an objective view of, rather than being immersed in, the oppressor's perspective) and acting upon that reality in a way that reflects one's subjectivity (Leonard & McLaren, 2002, p. 14–17). According to Freire (2005), education, as a valuable and meaningful activity, should cultivate this critical consciousness.

Teachers transmit knowledge as part of the "banking" process in education, which is justifiable given the belief that students' knowledge and understanding are lacking. This perception is reinforced by students themselves, who accept their marginalized position and view their lack of knowledge as a means of validating the teacher's role in the educational system (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011, p. 77–78). Paradoxically, in contrast to the subordinate position of the slave, Freire argues that students fail to realize their potential to educate the teacher (Freire, 1970, p. 54). The inherent paradox in the field of education is the coexistence of teachers in the dual roles of educators and learners (Maylor, 2012, p. 25). According to Freire (1970), the perpetuation of this educational contradiction is upheld by a set of 'banking' attitudes that reflect the oppressive nature of society as a whole (Maylor, 2012, p. 24).

- the teacher instructs, and the students learn
- the teacher possesses all knowledge, and the students possess none
- the teacher thinks, and the students are thought about
- the teacher speaks, and the students listen - meekly
- the teacher disciplines the students, and the students are reprimanded for disobedience
- the teacher makes a decision, and the students accept it because the teacher made it
- the teacher acts, and the students are tricked into thinking they are also acting

- the teacher chooses the content, and the students adapt to it even though they were not consulted
- the teacher pits their own professional authority against the students' autonomy
- the educator is the focus of the classroom, while the students are relegated to the role of passive bystanders (Maylor, 2012, p. 24).

Freire (2013) expounds that education can cultivate between instructors and students in a classroom setting through dialogue (Shih, 2018a; p. 231) and specifically through what he termed "problem-posing education" (Freire, 2013, p. 71). In Paulo Freire: A Critical Encounter (2002), Leonard and McLaren describe a Freirean critical teacher as a problem-poser who presents thought-provoking questions and encourages students to pose their own. Through problem-posing, students learn to question answers instead of simply providing them. In this pedagogy, students experience education as something they do, as opposed to something done to them. They are not empty vessels to be filled with facts, sponges to be soaked in official information, or empty bank accounts to be deposited with the required curriculum (p. 25).

Importantly, 'problem-posing' 'strives for the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality' and the more students experience problem-posing, the more they will feel challenged 'and obliged to respond to that challenge' (Freire, 1970, p. 62).

In a demanding dialogue, the teacher poses problems and asks questions while encouraging students to do the same at the same time. However, a teacher who teaches for democracy and against inequality also has the right and responsibility to express their opinions. The teacher who poses problems is not silent, value-free, or permissive. In this pedagogy, the democratic teacher extends the critique of dominance beyond teacher-student relations and the education system to the system at the source of social conditions (Leonard and McLaren, 2002, p. 29).

"In problem-posing education, people develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find

themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation. Although the dialectical relations of women and men with the world exist independently of how these relations are perceived (or whether or not they are perceived at all), it is also true that the form of action they adopt is to a large extent a function of how they perceive themselves in the world. Hence, the teacher-student and the students-teachers reflect simultaneously on themselves and the world without dichotomizing this reflection from action, and thus establish an authentic form of thought and action" (Freire, 2018, p. 49)

Because of the mythification approach in banking education, students' ability to engage in imaginative thinking about alternative realities and to develop an awareness of power structures within society is hindered. However, problem-posing education serves to demythologize reality, thereby facilitating critical analysis and the investigation of alternative societal structures that extend beyond the prevailing conventions (Segalerba, 2023, p. 2). By encouraging students to question and challenge the existing mythification, problem-posing education empowers them to become active participants in shaping their own realities. This approach fosters a sense of agency and promotes social transformation by equipping students with the tools to critically analyze and challenge oppressive systems (Freire, 2018; Segalerba, 2023).

The current state of Turkish education also reflects the banking of education described by Freire (2005). Especially in the higher education contexts that the thesis at hand investigates, it is understood that they are not democratic institutions (Tekeli, 2012, as cited in Tezgiden Cakcak, 2019, p. 115). Şahin (2019) remarks that a familiar and mundanely recognizable state of order is created within solid modernity where the predictability of consequences for actions (Bauman, 2018) engenders a sense of security (p. 34). Tezgiden Cakcak (2015) revealed that English language teacher candidates in Turkey are educated as passive technicians rather than as transformative intellectuals who would use their agency to challenge and transform the school and society. This study, however, seeks to examine if English language teachers are willing to use their agentive potential to queer their classrooms in the sense of a transformative intellectual (Giroux & McLaren, 1986).

2.1.3. Teacher Identity and Agency

Barkhuizen (2016) provides an in-depth explanation of language teacher identity. The identities of language teachers encompass cognitive, social, emotional, ideological, and historical dimensions. These dimensions are internal to the teacher and extend beyond them into broader social, material, and technological contexts. Language teacher identities encompass various cognitive processes, including being and doing, feeling and imagining, and storying (Barkhuizen, 2016, p. 4). Although people and their social environment embrace, recognize, and appreciate these ideas, they are also subject to internal and external contestation and resistance. They exhibit characteristics that can be categorized as rooted and tangential, pertaining to personal and professional domains (Ichikawa, 2020). Moreover, they possess qualities that are fluid, numerous, and hybrid in nature. Additionally, they can be observed to be either foregrounded or backgrounded in various contexts. Language teacher identities undergo changes both in the interim and continually. Barkhuizen (2016) also mentions changes occurring through discourse in social interactions involving teacher-educators, learners, teachers, administrators, and the broader community and through material interactions with physical spaces, locations, and objects found in classrooms, institutions, and online platforms (p. 4).

Fairley (2020) explains the significance of language teachers' identities in the classroom by noting the growing consensus that such an identity is the result of a process of "ethical self-formation" (Miller et al., 2017, p. 91), that effective language instruction fosters social equality (De Costa & Norton, 2017a, p. 4), and that it is a crucial source of agency for social change (Morgan, 2016b, p. 205). Language teachers often work with students from marginalized communities (Varghese et al., 2016), and language itself plays a central role in the process of empowerment and marginalization (Guerrettaz & Zahler, 2017; Varghese et al., 2016), so this recognition has emerged in part because of the social justice and critical turns in the education field in general, as Fairley (2020) elaborates (p.1040). Fairley (2020) states that for educators to actively participate in ethical self-formation and advocate for

social fairness and change, they must acquire a transformational, agentive, and advocacy-oriented language teacher identity (Varghese et al., 2016).

According to Priestley et al. (2015), dominant discourses lately influencing global education policy have highlighted the critical role of teachers as the most major within-school effect on school development. There is an emerging trend in curriculum policy to explicitly construct teachers as change agents, and education policies have strongly emphasized the need to improve teacher quality through programs of continuous professional formation, such as the development of teacher professional learning communities. In their book *Language Teacher Agency*, Tao & Gao (2021) discuss language teacher agency in four dimensions: as individual purposeful acts (p. 4), as socio-culturally mediated (p. 6), as temporal and situated (p. 8), and as a discursive act in the post-structuralist view (p. 10). For the purposes of the thesis at hand, dimensions of individuality and discursivity are discussed.

Tao & Gao (2021) describe language teacher agency as individuals' intentional acts. They maintain that language teacher agency is often regarded as an activity in response to specific conditions, such as school culture and policy regulations. Teachers may be required to study and practice in accordance with certain directives, but they may also autonomously express opposition to a particular policy; both may be demonstrations of agency. In other words, autonomy may be seen as a kind of agency or a phenomenon linked with agency, and it is dependent on the exercise of agency; without agency, language learners cannot learn autonomously, and teachers cannot act autonomously in teaching (p. 4-5).

According to post-structuralists who view agency as a discursive activity, Tao & Gao (2021) contend that individuals can only take agentic action if they are granted the authority to do so. Therefore, individuals do not act as agents because they are not naturally inclined to do so. People belong to a variety of collectives, each of which engages in its own type of discourse, and they can only speak from the positions afforded to them within those groups. People must express their wants and needs in accordance with the discursive practices they can use and that their communities

understand. Moreover, each job comes with its own set of responsibilities. A person is deemed to have agency when they speak for themselves, present themselves as having a recognizable identity, and accept responsibility for their actions (p. 10).

Tezgiden Cakcak (2019) examines the current state of teacher agency in Turkish higher education. To summarize, Tezgiden Cakcak (2019) asserts that teaching is viewed as a profession in which teachers make decisions, but they have limited influence over the decisions that affect their work. As school employees, they must adhere to the conditions and terms imposed by public or private schools. They are expected to work toward a specific objective set by their institutions using the tools and resources available, typically by adhering to directives from superiors. Unlike standard American or British English, they have little control over their goals. Teachers have limited control over their tasks in terms of their work. They cannot develop curricula or choose materials; they cannot decide on a testing system; and they cannot even choose their teaching methods and techniques at some institutions. Teachers' ability to plan effectively is being eroded. Planning and teaching are separate tasks. They are supposed to carry out the previously devised plans. Teachers are limited in their ability to use their important curriculum planning skills (p. 64).

2.1.4. Queer Theory

It is crucial to analyze the meaning of 'Queer' before discussing Queer Theory. The Oxford English Dictionary showcases a controversial history of the word. There are pejorative meanings for describing something negative and non-normative sexuality and gender. Since the LGBTQI+ community has reclaimed the word, it has gained ameliorative meanings for non-normative sexuality and gender (OED, 2016c).

Moreover, the word's inception starting in the 16th century demonstrates that as an adjective, it was used to refer to someone as 'odd, peculiar, or eccentric.' Documented from the 18th century, it was also used as a verb meaning 'to swindle, to baffle, to spoil, to question.' It should be underscored that queer as a verb has the power to inquire, unsettle, and bring into question—a semantic impulse mirrored in

Queer Theory's pivotal urge to put heteronormativity into question (Merse, 2017, p. 198). Therefore, the term "queer" may also be used to refer to individuals who, in either their outward appearance or their conduct, defy the expectations of their assigned gender in modern society. It is not simply about one's sexual orientation; it is also about one's identification and identity, what one does, and who one is (Kumashiro, 2002, p. 10).

In the 1990s, Queer Theory emerged as an influential academic and activist movement. It explored power dynamics, privilege, and the relationships between LGBT identities and other socially constructed aspects of existence (Gulley, 2022, p. 25). Engaging queer views entails pursuing the disruptive goal of unsettling normality discourses and the behaviors that support them, including the silences they produce (de Lauretis, 1991). According to Britzman (1995), queer theory is about questioning categories like masculinity, femininity, sexuality, citizenship, nation, culture, and literacy (p. 152). It calls into question the very foundations of identity and theory (Britzman, 1995, p. 153). In essence, conceptions of identity, especially but not only those associated with gender and sexuality, are challenged. The objective of a queer investigation is fundamental concepts of identity (Bryson & de Castell, 1993, as cited in Staley & Blackburn, 2023, p. 3).

Butler (1990) and Sedgwick (1990) helped establish queer theory after de Lauretis (1991) created the term. The performativity and flexibility of identity, rejection of strict classification, and political attitude that celebrates diversity and opposes conventions have developed queer theory (McDonald, 2017, p. 6).

Butler (1990) emphasizes identity performance. Her theory of gender performativity states that although gender categories like "woman" and "man" look stable and unchanging, gender identities are reliant on the performative (re)enactment of activities connected with these categories via discourse. Repeated and ritualized gendered behaviors and practices make people gendered, according to Butler (1990). Subversive performances may challenge gender, which she sees as flexible and

adaptable. Drag performers subvert gender classifications by performing gendered activities. These performances break the gender binary (McDonald, 2017, p. 6).

Sedgwick (1990) contributed to queer theory's flexible and anti-categorical identity idea. She claims that many identities affect political views and experiences. Traditional identity politics posits that political activity requires a cohesive group identity. Therefore, Sedgwick (1990) argues for an anti-categorical approach to identity and difference, deconstructing rather than strengthening identification categories since they fail to account for the variety and range of experiences within them.

Gay and lesbian activism discourses tend to reinforce the categorization of sexual identities and orientations (Güney, 2018, p. 18). Plummer (2005, p. 366) notes that queer theory challenges the dominant and commercialized form of homosexuality. The objective is to problematize all sexual identities, as opposed to merely validating subordinate ones, because this enables a broader range of experiences and perspectives to be acknowledged and considered (Nelson, 2002, p. 48). Nelson (2002) expounds that lesbian and gay activism has been focused on ensuring that those who do not identify as heterosexual are not denied the same rights and benefits as heterosexual individuals. This activism is based on the belief that categorizing individuals based on their sexual identities is both possible and desirable. While sexual identities can be liberating, they can also be limiting, according to queer theorists. They are dependent on both inclusion and exclusion. Affirming subordinate sexual identities, according to queer theory, unwittingly reinforces a hierarchical system that solidifies and divides sexualities into socially permissible and objectionable categories. Contrarily, queer theory questions the necessity of sexual identity categories in general. Instead of legitimizing the sexual identities of minorities, queer theory questions all sexual identities. It queries the necessity of these categories, given that they can perpetuate limitations and the hierarchical system. Queer theory seeks to examine and comprehend the intricacies of human sexuality by problematizing all sexual identities rather than depending on fixed categories that may reject or incorporate specific experiences (p. 48).

One of the most well-known aspects of queer theory is criticizing heteronormativity. This is also a central element of queer politics. Warner (1991) coined this term to characterize how heterosexuality favors ubiquitous and frequently unnoticed social norms that benefit it. An example of heteronormativity is the representation of 'normal' family units as consisting of a 'mother' and a 'father', while alternative family arrangements are either absent or portrayed as deviations from this norm (McCann & Monaghan, 2019, p.11). Cohen (1997) explains further that heteronormativity is maintained by localized practices and centralized institutions which continue to legitimize heterosexuality. In this context, homosexuals are aberrant and inferior, resulting in their exclusion from public discourse.

Critical queer scholars use the verb form 'queer' to disrupt and challenge the heteronormative assumptions imposed on the queer community, highlighting the unpredictability and fluidity of identities (Trinh & Tinker Sachs, 2023, p.4). Heteronormativity's primary mechanism is normalization, which perpetuates violence. For instance, the obligatory nature of heteronormativity often causes women to disregard the oppressive and subordinate relationships imposed by patriarchal institutions (Yep, 2014, p. 20). It also puts men under pressure to conform to the detrimental ideals of 'real manhood' causing hurt for those who deviate from these standards (Yep, 2014, p. 21).

The influence of poststructuralism, particularly Michel Foucault's work on discourse, power, and knowledge, is another essential component of the foundation of queer theory. Foucault's perspective emphasizes the relationship between truth, power, and discourse, arguing that what is considered true is inherently linked to power dynamics and constructed through language and communication (Borjeson & Rehn, 2009, p. 50, as cited in Bertilsson & Stimjanin, 2020, p. 4). According to Foucault's poststructuralist perspective, understanding reality requires a comprehension of power structures and the discourses that influence our society (Bromseth, 2010, p. 40, as cited in Bertilsson & Stimjanin, 2020, p. 4). When power is institutionalized, it is normalized, and our perception of reality and social order is constructed through discourses, which affect individual actions, attitudes, and emotions (Bjorkman &

Bromseth, 2019, p. 48, as cited in Bertilsson & Stimjanin, 2020, p. 4). Some individuals are viewed as privileged, while others are marginalized (Bertilsson & Stimjanin, 2020). Oppression is another example of how power operates through discourse (Merse, 2017). The repetition of dominant discourse shapes and maintains oppression. As discourses can influence people's thoughts, emotions, actions, and interactions, the constant circulation of harmful discourses can lead to oppression (Kumashiro, 2000, p. 40). According to Foucault, inflexible sexual identities are imposed on individuals to reinforce existing power relations (Nelson, 2009). As a consequence, sexuality is positioned within a binary system in which heterosexuality is considered normal and homosexuality is regarded as abnormal. This emphasizes the cultural nature of sexuality and the duality of sexual identity definitions. Queer theory's main goal is to question the cultural and language patterns that create set sexual identities (Bertilsson & Stimjanin, 2020). This is because categorizing homosexuality and heterosexuality into two groups is a result of discursive and cultural production (Merse, 2017). It focuses on destabilizing the clear distinction between homosexual and heterosexual identities and exposing the normalization of heterosexual monogamy (Nelson, 2009, p. 21).

According to Plummer (2005, p. 366), queer theory encompasses the following themes:

- a. Refuting the heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy and the sex/gender divide.
- b. Decentering identity and challenging the concept of immutable identities.
- c. Regarding all sexual categories (lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, transgender, and heterosexual) as open, fluid, and indeterminate.
- d. Critiquing mainstream homosexuality and interrogating its prevailing narratives and norms.
- e. Recognizing that power is manifested and exercised via discourse.
- f. Rejecting all attempts to define and classify sexuality through normalization and categorization.

These concepts form the basis of queer theory and guide its critique of prevalent social and cultural constructs pertaining to sexuality and gender.

2.1.5. Queer Pedagogy

Queer pedagogy is an educational approach that emerges from the integration of Queer Theory and progressive pedagogy with the goal of fostering social change through the dynamic interactions between teachers, students, and knowledge in the classroom (Franck, 2005, p. 680). Due to the prevalent silence surrounding non-heterosexuality in schools and curricula, one aspect of queer pedagogy acknowledges the potential knowledge deficit that exists among students regarding LGBT identities. The emphasis is placed on increasing the visibility of sexual and gender diversity in educational contexts (Nelson, 1999) to challenge students' presumptions and naturalized understanding that everyone is heterosexual and neatly falls into conventional gender categories. This strand of queer pedagogy falls short of fully realizing the transformative potential inherent in the concept of queer, according to Merse (2017, p. 208). Kumashiro (2000) argues that while providing a more accurate representation of societal diversity is necessary, this strategy may inadvertently reinforce the normative authority and privileges of dominant groups. Consequently, queer pedagogy attempts to leverage the critical and interrogative impulse central to queer theory in order to disrupt and challenge traditional models of thought and students' taken-for-granted assumptions regarding sexuality and gender (Meyer, 2007, p. 26).

Nelson (2006) urges language educators, materials designers, and researchers to employ a critical method known as queer inquiry. Queer inquiry entails actively interrogating and challenging the performance, understanding, and maintenance of sexual identities and practices across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. This approach is not limited to queer identities alone; it also examines discourses traditionally considered non-queer or heterosexual (p. 6-7) Language teachers are encouraged to move away from facilitating debates on same-sex marriage and soliciting personal responses to lesbian coming-out narratives in the classroom

through queer inquiry. Teachers are encouraged to guide students in analyzing the assumptions underlying the multiple interpretations of an image depicting two males grasping hands. They may also prompt students to consider the media's portrayal of transgender or heterosexual characters and investigate various responses to such reports. Teachers promote critical thinking and challenge societal assumptions regarding sexual identities by engaging in these activities (Nelson, 2006; Moore, 2014, p. 89). Nelson's (2006) queer inquiry refutes the notion that gender is a fixed biological trait and instead recognizes it as a discursively constructed and performed identity that varies over time. It challenges and dismantles the social hierarchy that privileges heterosexuality while stigmatizing and marginalizing non-heterosexual identities as "other" (Browne & Nash, 2010).

According to Merse (2017), queer is conceptualized as a dynamic "zone of possibilities" and a "mobile field" that can significantly improve TEFL in a variety of ways.

- (1) Affirmation of non-heteronormative identities: aims to bring non-heteronormative identities into conscious awareness and visibility. It also seeks to validate their existence.
- (2) Deconstruction of heteronormativity attempts to combat and undermine the dominant heteronormative ideologies and behaviors that influence cultural norms, institutions, social dynamics, and knowledge production.
- (3) Recognition of the cultural integration of sexual identities: underscores the profound cultural influence on the formation and comprehension of sexual identities, particularly in relation to the binary categorization of homo/heterosexual definitions.
- (4) Interrogation of discursive production of sexual identities: critically examines how discourses shape and construct sexual identities, including how they are portrayed as deviant or conforming to societal norms.
- (5) Skepticism toward fixed identity markers: challenges the idea of rigid, fixed sexual and gender identities and affirms the possibility of their fluidity, changeability, and indeterminacy.

- (6) Encouraging inclusivity, critical thinking, and a nuanced understanding of sexual and gender identities, these principles assist queer pedagogy significantly in advancing TEFL (Merse, 2017, p. 209).

2.1.6. The Lack of Representation in ELT Materials

The importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in foreign/second language (L2) education is growing, as is the need for challenging content and curriculum that embrace and cultivate diverse perspectives and experiences (Cahnmann-Taylor et al., 2021, p. 3). Coursebooks play a role in presenting particular constructions of reality; however, queer references are conspicuously absent from ELT materials (Gray, 2013), and homosexual characters or themes remain concealed in the "closet" of coursebooks (Thornbury, 1999, p. 15). For example, Trinh & Tinker Sachs (2023) investigated Vietnamese EFL textbooks and found that there were no queer characters, images, terms, dialogs or any other kind of queer representation. Therefore, they concluded that Vietnamese EFL textbooks were highly heteronormative (p. 20). Learners are therefore presented with a limited number of ideal selves that adhere to heteronormative standards. In light of this, it is crucial to investigate the influence of representation in ELT materials on individuals (Bollas, 2020, p. 144).

Moita-Lopes (2006) conducted a study on the necessity of incorporating queer perspectives into literacy instruction in Brazilian institutions. The author observed fifth-grade classes for four months and found that students were anxious to discuss sexual identity issues. However, instructors aggressively discouraged LGBT-related class discussions. During interviews with students outside of class, LGBT-related topics were occasionally discussed in a hetero-centric or even homophobic manner (p. 35-40). Despite relatively progressive attitudes toward non-heterosexual identities in Brazil, resistance from instructors and a paucity of support materials made it difficult to discuss non-heterosexual identities in classroom discussions. This allowed the heteronormative discourse to remain uncontested (Moita-Lopes, 2006, p. 35-42). Moita-Lopes (2006) suggested that one method for queering literacy

practices would be to problematize a news report about a homosexual military officer in Brazil (p. 42).

Gray (2013) discovered an absence of representation of queer identities in nine ELT textbooks published in the UK. Few textbooks aimed at immigrant students included LGBT-related material to aid cultural adaptation. However, according to Gray (2013), the queer content was presented in the supplementary materials of these textbooks with a warning that instructors should exercise judgment and discretion when choosing appropriate activities for particular learner groups (p. 54). In the context of the United Kingdom, Gray concluded that discussions about sexual identity in migrant education are nuanced and sensitive. Similarly, Pakuła et al. (2015) analyzed five commonly used Polish EFL textbooks at different grade levels. These textbooks were selected due to their popularity in Polish classrooms. The research focused on a variety of tasks and exercises, including listening, reading, speaking, and grammatical and lexical exercises. No textbooks, regardless of subgenre, were discovered to contain LGBT or ambiguous sexual identity characters. In Paiz's (2015) study, the presence of heteronormativity in 45 reading texts and textbooks was evaluated. The researcher emphasized that these reading materials are not neutral, as they primarily promote heteronormative discourse and reflect certain ideological, political, and societal viewpoints. Despite the expectation that ELT textbooks should introduce students to the diverse identities found in the target culture, published materials have not kept pace with social changes. The study found that the majority of the forty-five texts and textbooks published between 1995 and 2012 were heteronormative, with minimal variations based on publisher, text type, proficiency level, and publication year. Paiz (2015) concluded that challenging heteronormativity through queering teaching practices is essential not only because many students are ready, willing, and able to address LGBT concerns but also because it gives queer students access to a validated sexual identity when heteronormative beliefs are questioned. Evaluating how the texts and textbooks utilized in the classroom influence the educational environment is essential. Therefore, the teacher must present heteronormative materials in a non-heteronormative manner, thereby challenging and supplying alternative perspectives in the classroom (p. 91-94).

Paiz's (2015) results corroborate Goldstein's (2015) findings. Goldstein (2015) carried out a case study in which the authors sought to integrate LGBT topics into textbooks. The publisher, who expressed concerns about sales potential in all upcoming markets, rejected the plan (p. 37). Moreover, Shardakova and Pavlenko (2004) emphasized the significance of textbooks in influencing cultural norms and fostering particular patterns of behavior and ways of life among students (p. 41). They demonstrate that textbooks can inadvertently reinforce heteronormative discourses by implicitly indicating which identity options are regarded as permissible or unacceptable (p. 42). According to Paiz (2019, p. 353), heteronormative discourse enters the ESL classroom via textbooks by limiting the identity options presented to students. This underrepresentation of LGBTQ identities and perpetuation of stereotypical depictions of non-heterosexual identities suppress LGBTQ voices in language materials.

Textbooks that contribute to heteronormative classrooms can be problematic because teachers frequently lack the time to review and update instructional materials for inclusivity (Paiz, 2018, p. 352). To address this issue, the author suggests developing classroom activities that encourage students to query the depiction of sexual identity in commercially available textbooks (Paiz, 2018, p. 360). This method employs a queer reading, analyzing the text through the lens of queer inquiry (Nelson, 2009). Instead of using the text solely for information and language acquisition, it becomes a tool for addressing heteronormative discourse and fostering a more inclusive learning environment. Paiz (2018, 2019) argues that textbooks play a vital role in supporting inexperienced teachers and providing structure for lesson planning. Due to the scaffolding role that textbooks played in the early stages of their careers, teachers may still use them as a basis for developing lesson plans even when they are ready to move away from commercial textbooks (Paiz, 2019, p. 270). Representations of sexualities in educational materials play an essential role in fostering sexual literacy and the capacity to communicate about sexual diversity (Paiz, 2017; Sunderland, 2000b; Nelson, 2009). While published coursebooks frequently have limitations in terms of adaptability and inclusivity, teacher-created

materials serve as valuable resources for addressing misogyny and heteronormativity in the language classroom (Merse, 2015; Pakuła et al., 2015).

Kocaman & Selvi (2020) examined ELT materials in the Turkish context and it consistently yielded similar results. The researchers evaluated locally produced supplemental materials for a Turkish public school's Intensive English Program curriculum. Their investigation revealed that the materials lacked any LGBTQ+ characters, whether explicit or implied. There were no topics or themes pertaining to sexual diversity. Multiple times, topics of marriage, family, and gender performative roles are addressed in a highly heteronormative manner. Overall, the materials portray a monosexual society and presume that the classroom is not a place for multisexual identities (Nelson, 2009). In a follow-up study Kocaman and Selvi (2021) recommended that educators be mindful of the materials they select and how they alter and utilize those materials. They may 'speak around a gendered text' (Pakuła et al., 2015, p. 21) or use it as a 'queer teaching moment' (Sunderland, 2021, p. 43). The researchers conclude that there is an imperative need for research and discussion on queer pedagogies in order to combat the marginalization and suppression of queer identities resulting from heteronormativity. To give each pupil a voice, a more inclusive approach is required (Merse, 2015). Failure to address this dearth of diversity in classroom resources or procedures can hinder student learning, engagement, and motivation in a variety of ways (Shardakova and Pavlenko, p. 43).

According to Nelson (2010), queer references should be included in ELT materials, among other reasons, to enable learners to participate in all social interactions in English-speaking settings, to promote voice equality in the classroom, to assist learners in exploring their identities, and to contribute to the fight against heteronormativity.

Bollas (2016) discussed the lack of queer references in ELT materials in relation to Ushioda and Dornyei's (2009) Ideal Self theory of motivation. As proposed by Dornyei (2009), the L2 Motivational Self System consists of three components: the ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self, and the L2 learning experience. The ideal and

ought-to selves pertain to the characteristics that language learners aspire to or believe they must possess in order to be effective language users. The L2 learning experience incorporates the influence of instructors, curriculum, peer groups, and language learning success (Dornyei, 2009, p. 29). Researchers have conducted extensive research to determine the origins and development of the ideal L2 self. Dornyei (2009) suggests that, during adolescence, people investigate multiple potential ideal selves, which may be influenced by their parents, peers, and fictional or real role models. The process continues until the individual reaches his or her selected ideal self (Bollas, 2021, p. 143). In order to examine the formation of the ideal self, researchers have examined the relationship between coursebook characters, and the ideal selves chosen by students. However, these activities presume that students have been exposed to multiple potential future versions of their ideal selves and have the language skills to name and describe their own idealized variation of their future adult selves (Bollas, 2016, p. 8). Thus, learners are provided with a heteronormative set of potential ideal selves from which to choose. Therefore, it is essential that we focus on representation in ELT materials and investigate its influence on individuals (Bollas, 2021, p. 144). Bollas (2021) discusses, in addition to the L2 Motivational Self System (Ushioda and Dornyei, 2009), the effects of gender performativity (Butler, 2006) on language acquisition. As individuals conform to the constraints imposed by society, Butler (2006) suggests that one's identity is constructed through the performance of gender. In other words, societal expectations shape and define individuals as they conform to gender norms. If one's gender identity is deemed deviant, it must be because of their gender identity. (Bollas, 2021, p. 145) Performance does not conform to the heteronormative performative conventions of being either male or female. By combining Butler's (2006) gender performativity theory with Ushioda and Dornyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System, it is clear that when one is learning English as a foreign or second language, their learning experience is strictly heteronormative, presenting them with only heterosexual ideal and ought-to L2 selves. A learner of English cannot be anything but heterosexual in an English-speaking environment, not because they chose to be, but because they had no choice to begin with. Through

English language learning materials (Bollas, 2021, p. 146), the English-speaking culture prescribes only heterosexuality as a requirement (Rich, 1980).

2.2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.2.1. Queering English Language Teaching Practices

Queering teaching is the act of designing a course so that students engage with and interrogate identities, not just sexual ones, in a critical manner and come to understand how social discourses are structured and police those identity options (Nelson, 2006; Paiz, 2017; Paiz & Zhu, 2018, p. 2).

In the field of language education, the traditional emphasis has been on developing students' communicative competence, with less emphasis on language, culture, and power dynamics (Coda, 2018, pp. 72–87). While a growing corpus of research underscores the importance of identity in language learning (Bollas, 2021, pp. 134–135), heteronormativity continues to be the standard assumption in research, curriculum design, pedagogy, and learning materials (Paiz, 2017, p. 352; Gray, 2021, p. 142). Nelson (2020) observed that a lack of attention to gender and sexual identities, as well as LGBTQ+ teachers and students, is frequently the norm. Additionally, as Knisely (2022) described, trans, gender non-conforming, non-binary, and queer issues receive limited attention. Hence, although progress has been made in relation to LGBTQ+ issues, equity, access, and representation remain critical (Paiz, 2019, p. 267).

On the basis of Nelson's (2002) advocacy for queer inquiry, numerous scholarly and pedagogical endeavors have sought to broaden the application of this methodology in language education. De Vicenti et al. (2007) shared their experiences in university-level language classes (French, Italian, and Japanese) in which sexual identity discussions were included. They emphasized the difficulties they encountered in terms of linguistic structures, cultural differences, and available materials, highlighting the need for additional empirical research in this field.

More recently, Brochin (2019) examined queering bilingual teaching in elementary schools and in teacher education programs (p. 81). Brochin (2019) argued that teachers in multicultural environments are already employing inclusive practices and should add 'gender expression, sexuality, and family diversity' as well (p. 86). She concluded that queering teacher education can help create allies for queer students in the form of teachers who queer their teaching practices. In a similar vein, Baynham (2021) discussed approaching the ESOL classroom as part of the lives of students from the outside through queer migrations because queer life story narratives in ELT materials are silenced and unseen (p. 154). Baynham recommended that not only queer teachers, but also non-queer teachers make it a project to 'bring the outside in' by queering their practices (p. 152).

Furthermore, Observations of adults acquiring languages through the Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) method by Cahnmann-Taylor and Coda (2019) demonstrated how TPRS can be used for queer language acquisition. They demonstrated that this approach not only challenges existing norms but also fosters more inclusive learning environments by redefining both content and instructional methods.

The majority of ELT teaching approaches presume "a monosexualized version of the world within and beyond the classroom" (Nelson, 2009, p. 44). However, this does not mean sexuality is entirely absent (Merse, 2017, p. 189); rather, it is extremely heterosexualized (Gray, 2013; Nelson, 2006; Paiz, 2017; Coda, 2023). Nelson (2006) contends that this is highly visible in the heteronormativity of coursebooks, the blatant presumption of heterosexuality in teaching materials, the way students are perceived as heterosexual and cisgendered, and in classroom discourse through gendered questions and statements (p. 7, as cited in Merse, 2017, p. 190). Therefore, queering ELT practices are needed because representation may increase students' motivation (Bollas, 2021, p. 134), queered classrooms can create a space for engaging students in pluralistic and multi-voiced diversity (Lütge & Merse, 2019, p. 192), and students from non-traditional backgrounds and non-traditional identities can relate to queer inquiry into normativity (Motschenbacher, 2021, p. 79).

2.2.2. Teacher Perceptions of Queering ELT

The impact of teacher's choice, their approaches and perceptions of their own teaching methodology on teaching practices in the classroom are underscored in several studies. Longoria (2021) highlighted the interdisciplinary nature of language education through interviews and observations of a high school teacher working with English language learners to shed light on the complex interplay of race, power, and privilege within the teacher's practices, revealing the significance of these factors in shaping the teacher's work. Moreover, Evripidou & Çavuşoğlu (2014) encapsulated the teacher's role in deciding whether or not to incorporate queer narratives, themes, and questions into their teaching practices. They explained that the teacher has the authority to acknowledge and utilize the diverse backgrounds and identities of individual students, or to reduce them to a homogeneous group solely focused on language acquisition (Evripidou & Çavuşoğlu, 2014, p. 1).

Studies also mention that the teacher has the option of conforming to the prevalent social and academic norms in the classroom or critically examining and challenging these norms (Formato, 2021, p. 3-4). This decision may have been influenced by personal convictions, apathy, or a reluctance to take risks (Hermann-Wilmarth & Ryan). In contrast, a teacher may choose to query these norms and encourage students to draw from their personal experiences, analyze their context critically, and assess their validity (Paiz, 2020). It is imperative that education continues to defy the status quo and provide opportunities for critical engagement in light of the global emergence of laws and policies that target LGBTQ+ individuals and impose restrictions on discussions related to gender and sexuality in educational settings. (Diaz-Fernandez, 2022; Coda, 2023).

Nelson (2004) conducted interviews with three ESL teachers who discussed their experiences of coming out as gay in their English classes with refugees, immigrants, and international students. Nelson (2004) concluded that students' perceptions and attitudes toward sexual identity are influenced by cultural context, and teachers should avoid making assumptions about the comfort level of immigrant students or their conservative views on sexual diversity issues. The teachers' assumptions about

students not being ready is a significantly contrary result to the study at hand's findings. The teachers in the study at hand assume that their students are mostly ready. This contrast might result from the fact these two studies are 19 years apart.

Greek Cypriot English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' perspectives on discussing homosexual and lesbian issues in the classroom were investigated in a study by Evripidou & Çavuşoğlu (2014). The results showed that, on the whole, teachers had neutral or favorable views rather than negative ones and the teachers who typically felt unprepared to engage in such debates said they would be more likely to cover them if they were in the textbook (Evripidou & Çavuşoğlu, 2014). Another notable result was that teachers with less experience, female teachers and teachers with higher education degrees showed more positive attitudes toward inclusion of gay and lesbian issues (Evripidou & Çavuşoğlu, 2014, p. 8-9). This research is quite similar to the research at hand since the teachers in the study also show positive attitudes towards queering ELT and they also stated that they would like to have queer visibility in their coursebooks so that they would feel less prepared.

Rhodes and Coda (2017) examined a web-based survey to learn how 26 Adult English Language Teachers felt about incorporating LGBTQ subjects and resources into their activities. They discovered that, while teachers expressed an interest in including LGBTQ issues and resources, they were unable to do so due to factors such as institutional sanction, a shortage of materials, conservative student culture, and perceived irrelevance (p. 4). Furthermore, Rhodes and Coda (2017) stated that the professors were uneasy and uninformed about LGBT issues, and hence did not know how to handle impromptu queer dialogues. This is highly similar to the concerns the teacher of the study at hand raised with regards to why they are hesitant about queering their lessons. To remedy this issue, Rhodes and Coda (2017) suggest a professional development program for teachers focusing on increasing their knowledge and awareness of queer concerns and queering techniques (p. 6). Such a professional development program for teachers is recommended in the study at hand as well.

Mayo's (2020) study, which consisted of interviews with both in-service and pre-service educators who identified as LGBTQ+, revealed that some teachers were reluctant to share their identities openly, while others assumed an advocacy role within their profession. The study illuminated the complex dynamics that LGBTQ+ educators must navigate, as they frequently find themselves in contexts that are not completely tolerant or supportive of their identities. These obstacles are especially pronounced in heteronormative, cisnormative, and colonial educational contexts, where societal norms and power structures can create obstacles for LGBTQ+ individuals. The intersectionality of professional and personal experiences for LGBTQ+ educators was emphasized, along with the political dimensions of their work in Mayo's (2020) study. As a queer teacher, the narratives in Mayo (2020) ring true for my experiences as well. However, to my knowledge, the perspectives of queer teachers in the Turkish educational context have not been studied yet. Thus, there is a need for further research in this area.

Tran-Thanh (2020) analyzed the attitudes of eight Vietnamese EFL instructors toward the inclusion of LGBTQ+ content in their classrooms. Almost identical to the study at hand's findings, they discovered that although the participants held a positive and sympathetic view of the queer community and recognized the importance of creating a safe environment where all students have the opportunity to identify themselves, they lacked sufficient knowledge and held stereotypical beliefs regarding the LGBTQ+ community and queer issues (Tran- Thanh, 2020, p. 11-13). In terms of perceiving homophobic situations and developing an interest in learning more, they also lacked awareness. Tran-Thanh (2020) noted that all participants consented to include LGBTQ+ teaching content in their classrooms for moral and educational reasons, despite having never done so before and requiring training (p. 13).

Tarrayo & Salonga's (2022) study sought to elicit the viewpoints of English language instructors at a Philippine public institution on incorporating queer problems and concerns into their teaching methods. The findings revealed that the teachers had little awareness and comprehension of queer issues and concerns, which they

ascribed to a lack of exposure to these themes in their pre-service coursework. This was also emphasized in the study at hand by the teachers who have graduated from English Language Teaching departments of Turkish universities. However, Tarrayo & Salonga (2022) also found that teachers were willing to learn more about these challenges and incorporate them into their teaching techniques. Also, the fear of backlash and resistance from conservative students and the strong heteronormativity of the curriculum were found to be impediments to queering ELT (p. 18–19). The study at hand underscores these issues as reasons for teachers' hesitations as well. Tarrayo and Salonga (2022) emphasized the need to include queer topics and concerns in English language instruction and the market for teacher education programs to give more in-depth training in this area. Correspondingly, not only the need for professional development programs for experienced teachers but also the need for undergraduate classes that teach diversity is highlighted as a potential pedagogical implication for the study at hand.

Similar to Nelson (2004) and Mayo (2020), Coda (2023) also analyzed the narratives of ten K–12 Spanish-language who identified as lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, or queer using interviews to investigate their school/classroom experiences and approaches to gender and sexual diversity in the classroom. Coda (2023) discovered that participants used the Spanish language and culture to challenge heteronormativity. Since these teachers are employed in what they have described as conservative and heteronormative contexts (Coda, 2021), their reflections provide a window into what queer thinking (Nelson, 2020, as cited in Coda, 2023), in contexts that are not always receptive to issues of gender and sexual diversity (Coda, 2023), might look like. In the study at hand, Participant 4 identifies as bisexual and teaches at a conservative and heteronormative context, hence, her perspectives can also be considered as queer thinking (Nelson, 2020).

Evripidou (2021) investigated the opinions of eight Greek Cypriot EFL instructors on deheteronormalizing their EFL classes in an investigation involving eight Greek Cypriot EFL teachers. According to the findings, five of the eight instructors were positive about the notion of exploring sexual identities in their teaching as a form of

deheteronormalization. Three instructors, however, remained suspicious owing to issues such as a lack of training, a conservative and heteronormative environment, and a sense of irrelevance. Several major conclusions were drawn from the study:

- (1) Teachers had not received sexual identity education or training, despite the prevalence of heteronormativity in the classroom.
- (2) Teachers underestimated the importance of sexual identity exploration for the development of students' linguistic and communication abilities.
- (3) Teachers questioned the need of deheteronormalization, pointing out that minority sexual identities were not reflected in official assessments.
- (4) Teachers had a better understanding of a civil-rights framework than of queer theory and its implications in ELT. They tended to think of sexual and gender identities in terms of strict categories or gender binaries.
- (5) Teachers concentrated on specific depictions of minority sexual identities that supported heteronormativity or stereotypes. Some people were unsure which representations to prioritize.
- (6) Teachers reported being unfamiliar with the terminology, acronyms, vocabulary, expressions, and concepts required for examining all identities in the EFL classroom.

Previous research (Nelson, 1993; Curran, 2006; Dumas, 2010; Güney, 2018) has revealed similar obstacles and limitations faced by the teachers in addressing sexual identities in language instruction. Some of these obstacles are also reflected in the study at hand.

2.2.3. Queering ELT Studies in the Turkish Context

'In the context of Türkiye, recent historical, political, and social problems are also excluded in national English books. Thus, it can be said that foreign language learners in Türkiye are rendered disadvantageous at both global and national levels.' (Ördem & Ulum, 2019, p. 680)

Sakallı & Ugurlu (2002) investigated the impact of social interaction with homosexuals on heterosexual Turkish university students' opinions toward

homosexuality. The researchers used a quantitative strategy to collect data using a survey questionnaire. The pool of participants included 159 undergraduate students from diverse disciplines at a Turkish university. This study provided essential insights into tackling the stigma associated with homosexuality. The study's findings demonstrated that individuals who had social encounters with gays had more favorable opinions regarding homosexuality than those who did not (Sakallı & Ugurlu, 2002). This pioneering study in the Turkish educational context showcased that having openly queer Turkish students in the classroom can bring about more empathy and more kindness because the non-queer students can be familiar with once they thought to be strange. The study at hand has the same foundational notion which becomes increasingly important in today's Turkey where volatility and violence towards queer people is accelerating.

Tekin (2011a) performed a study in which a speaking class in an ELT preparatory program at a Turkish public university concentrated on addressing homosexuality using various resources such as films, songs, cartoons, and reading texts about gay individuals and associated terminology. The study used a quantitative methodology, and the results showcased a spike in participants' attitudes about homosexuality, with 70.6% of participants saying they felt comfortable addressing the issue in class, compared to 39.7% in the pre-survey. Despite the conservative nature of Turkish culture, virtually all participants loved the class material and reported learning a lot from it (Tekin, 2011a). The interest from students to discuss queer existence in the Turkish educational context is also corroborated by the findings of the study at hand as the teachers believe students would be interested in discussions and topics about queer individuals.

Tekin (2011b) carried out similar research with two speaking groups that tackled taboo themes, one on homosexuality and the other on premarital sex. The study used questionnaires in two speaking classrooms within the same department and institution. The findings indicated that students were highly motivated when confronted with taboo themes and complex problems in speaking lessons. Based on the favorable responses from learners in the surveys, the researcher proposed that

textbooks that contain taboo themes as speaking topics should be embraced for classroom discussion (Tekin, 2011b). Tekin's (2011b) proposal about inclusion of taboo themes like queer individuals in classroom discussions are reiterated in the pedagogical implications of the study at hand.

Güney (2018) conducted the study that served as an inspiration and guide for the current study. Her research sought to investigate the attitudes of senior pre-service English language instructors in undergraduate teacher education programs at three different institutions in Türkiye regarding discussions of queer themes in the EFL environment. Her study employed an integrated mixed-methods research approach. It investigated participants' attitudes using pre- and post-questionnaires, audio-recorded queer sessions, and individual interviews performed following the sessions. The data from 127 pre-service instructors was examined. The findings are summarized.

- (1) Queer identities are mainly missing from classroom discourse, although pre-service teachers report having some real-life interaction with queer people.
- (2) Compared to English language classrooms in the National Ministry of Education schools, queer topics and themes are more regularly covered in teacher education classes in education departments.
- (3) Most participants believe integrating queer subjects into classroom instruction should be included in undergraduate teacher education classes.
- (4) Pre-service teachers feel more competent addressing queer themes when students bring them up or as learners age.
- (5) The majority of pre-service instructors say they are willing to intervene and warn students who make homophobic statements in class.
- (6) Pre-service teachers are concerned about potential adverse reactions from students, administration, parents, and religious/cultural sensitivity while discussing queer subjects.
- (7) Some university teachers address concerns regarding the diversity of sexuality in their classrooms and have a supportive attitude toward students from varied sociosexual backgrounds.

- (8) However, certain educators engage in undesirable behaviors such as making sarcastic remarks about queer students or making homophobic statements.
- (9) Given pre-service teachers' enthusiasm for queer-inclusive pedagogies, academics should be even more enthusiastic, given their intellectual credentials and professional expertise.
- (10) University lecturers should use caution in their rhetoric and attitudes to avoid further burdening queer people.

In conclusion, this chapter introduced the theoretical framework this study is based on and reviewed related literature both globally and nationally. It can be understood that critical theory and critical pedagogy, queer theory and queer pedagogy are the bedrocks of queering English language teaching practices. While there is significant interest in queer-informed studies in ESL and EFL settings, the literature review reveals that there is a dearth of research specifically focusing on Turkish higher education context. All of the studies addressed and mentioned in this section have aided in designing and conducting of the study at hand.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

The methodology used in the study at hand is presented and discussed in detail in this chapter. The research design and the rationale for choosing it are outlined. Then, detailed contextual information about the study and its participants is given. Next, data collection procedures and the measures taken by the researcher to ensure the study's trustworthiness are discussed. Finally, the role of the researcher and some important ethical considerations are addressed.

3.1 Research Design

The study at hand was conducted for the purpose of understanding the perceptions of Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers regarding queering their ELT practices. To that end, the research questions are as follows:

1. To what extent Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers are aware of queer identities and issues at national and global levels?
2. To what extent Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers are knowledgeable about queer pedagogy and queering ELT?
3. Do Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers queer their ELT practices? If yes, how? If not, why not?
4. How do Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers conceptualize queering ELT in their own classrooms?

To provide answers to these questions the research was designed as a qualitative instrumental case study. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews, qualitative surveys, and mini-training provided to the participants before their second and final qualitative survey. This study was designed in this way because it investigates the narratives of a certain small group of participants in a specific context and it seeks to serve as exploratory research that can provide practical implications without generalizations in its detailed accounting of the case. The data analysis method of Clarke & Braun (2014) was employed for thematic analysis. The positionality of the researcher as a queer Turkish EFL teacher who worked with the participants is thoroughly explored. Steps like member checking and achieving inter-coder reliability have been taken to ensure validity and reliability.

3.1.1. Qualitative Research

Qualitative research methods are employed in studies that seek a comprehensive inquiry of a particular setting or phenomenon (Mertens, 2005). Mertens (2005) defines qualitative research as a deliberate activity that immerses the researcher in the world they wish to investigate. This methodology employs interpretive practices and tangible methods to reveal and comprehend the world from the perspective of the researcher (Polkinghorne, 2005). According to Mertens (2005) and Terre Blanche et al. (2006), qualitative researchers investigate phenomena within their natural contexts, attempting to make sense of them by interpreting the meaning that people ascribe to them.

Denzin and Lincoln (2017) define qualitative research in the fifth edition of the SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research as a situated activity that positions the researcher within the environment they are studying. They stress that qualitative research is distinguished by interpretive and material practices that permit the exploration and representation of the world. These practices, which include taking field notes, conducting interviews, capturing dialogues, utilizing photographs, recordings, and personal reflections, contribute to the transformation of the world's visibility. Qualitative research takes a naturalistic and interpretive approach to comprehending the world and its phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017, p. 43).

The study at hand is designed as a qualitative study because studies examining sexualities and queer themes are frequently aligned with qualitative research paradigms and associated methodologies, including ethnography, participant observation, in-depth interviews, and narrative approaches (Plummer, 2005; Browne and Nash, 2010), which have emphasized the close relationship between qualitative research practices and research in these fields. These qualitative methods permit a comprehensive examination of the experiences, perspectives, and lived realities of individuals in relation to their sexualities and queer identities (Güney, 2017, p. 44).

3.1.2. Case Study in Education

According to Yin (2009), a case study is an empirical inquiry that analyzes a current phenomenon in its real-life environment, mainly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its setting are unclear. A case study's purpose is to fully describe a specific situation or phenomenon, capturing reality through detailed accounts. The experiences, emotions, and feelings of the individuals in the circumstance are significant in this process. However, there are opposing viewpoints on case studies. According to Stake (1995), a case study is not only a methodological option but an object of research in and of itself. A case, from this perspective, can be viewed as a bounded system determined by the researcher's objectives. Individuals, organizations, procedures, projects, communities, institutions, and even events are everyday case study objects (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2009).

It is necessary to identify a specific case, a contemporary occurrence, within a certain time and area by gathering data from a variety of sources (Creswell, 2013), and then examine it in depth (Yin, 2018). Choosing a case to use as a lens through which to investigate a phenomenon is an essential part of an instrumental case study (Stake, 1995; Creswell, 2013; Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). The purpose of a case study is not to establish a thesis or draw broad conclusions. On the contrary, it seeks to probe the issue and convey the findings solely via the participants' narratives without drawing broad generalizations. Moreover, this type of study is highly descriptive, as it draws on extensive data from multiple sources (Hancock &

Algozzine, 2006; Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2018). The study at hand is defined as a case study because it is a small-scale study that explores a rare phenomenon in a specific context that is richly described about a research area that is not fully understood so it serves as an exploratory study.

3.1.3. Researcher's Identity, Positionality and Reflexivity

Qualitative research is distinguished from other types of research by its emphasis on reflexivity. Researchers express their background (such as their work experiences, cultural experiences, and history), how their background and interest in the research study influence their interpretation of the data, and what they intend to get from the study (Creswell, 2013). Researchers also explain what they hope to acquire from the study. In this sense, qualitative researchers are considered to be the most important figures in the study (Anderson, 2010; Creswell, 2013). This is because the qualitative researchers' own personal and professional histories add to the study. According to Attia and Edge (2017), conducting qualitative research requires researchers to have sensitivity and empathy for the social challenges and realities of the moment in which they are conducting their research. They contribute to the study not just with their intellectual capacity but also with their perspectives, feelings, values, and needs as a whole (p. 35–37).

Since, the researcher's identity and positionality are an important part of this study, now I will describe my background. I was raised in a town in Türkiye's Aegean Region. My mom is a child development teacher, and because I never fit in, she let me switch schools every year until high school. I figured out I was queer when I was 16 years old. My family would never fully understand or accept who I was, so I hid myself. Only in my English classes have I ever felt safe and relaxed. We could talk about identities and learn more about them because we did so in English and used celebrities who spoke English as models. During those lessons, I was introduced to a discussion on sexual and gender identities that was respectful, positive, and grounded in scientific facts. It was the first time I had encountered such a conversation. When I learned words like "bisexual" and "pansexual," I realized I was not inherently wrong

because others were like me. In my English classes, I learned to think more critically, and I became more interested in knowing other people's points of view because I wanted to be understood. I became obsessed with English queer media, which helped me significantly improve my productive skills. I will always be grateful to my English teacher and those calm, regular conversations. I went on to study TEFL at a state university. There, I found out that my experience was the exception to the rule, which was that sexual orientation and gender identity were not supposed to be talked about in English lessons. During our time as college students, I saw how accepting and welcoming these identities and not making a big deal out of them helped my gay and straight friends. I started my master's degree right after graduating because I knew what to study. I believe, it is only human to want to ensure the next queer kid has a better experience than you.

My professional experience has also taught me the significance of diversity, multiculturalism, and queerness in the EFL classroom. I have worked for three distinct organizations, two of them were higher education institutions and one was a private language course that taught English for Specific Purposes to adult learners. I have instructed over 100 students overall. Thanks to my master's degree coursework, I was able to incorporate diversity and inclusion into my teachings. Being myself, I queered my classes as much as I could without upsetting the administration. Unsurprisingly, it always resulted in greater critical thinking abilities and more ardent target language use. In addition, regardless of their identities, my high school, university and adult learners felt at ease in my classroom. Even before I was aware of the term, I made it a habit to inform my colleagues of my sexual orientation. My colleagues have been respectful and accepting of queer identities more often than not, but they have not queered their practices. Almost always, the rationale was "I don't want to get fired" or "I don't want to get sued." This may have been one reason why finding participants at the institution in question was challenging. During data gathering and analysis I was working at the context institution as an EFL instructor. I sent an email request for participation to the academic personnel. This resulted in a few conversations with instructors who did not wish to participate in my research but wanted to explain why. One of them stated that queerness was irrelevant in the

language classroom. Another scoffed at the notion that queering ELT would be too much unpaid labor for our already overburdened schedules so the teacher who queered their lessons would be a sucker. I found their views highly valuable as data but they still did not want to participate. The four participants that did are colleagues and friends with whom I have previously discussed queer issues. On multiple occasions, I informed them of a queered activity or discussion I led (without mentioning the terminology), and my students also informed them of our teachings while they were chatting. Therefore, it can be understood that I am not detached and objective in the study at hand. I feel nervous due to the risk I am taking by outing myself. However, I also feel freer. It is crucial to highlight that this study is not intended to pass along any judgment at all. The objective here is to deeply understand the case of the participants' perceptions about queering their lessons. I am also a part of the study, and I am involved in conclusion just like a participant. I find it highly unethical to misrepresent or alternate my findings or my participants' positionality for personal reasons. Thus, I have taken steps like having my participants double-check my findings and having other researchers independently code some of my data to ensure there is high validity in my work. This will be explained in detail in the later sections.

In the same way that the researcher's reflexivity played a part in this study, the participants also had an active part by expressing their own ideas on sexual identity and their sociocultural background in connection to the study (Guney, 2017, p.48). This allowed the participants to actively contribute to the study. In addition, when other people read the study, they will interpret the content, methods, and conclusions according to their own perspectives. Patton (2002) used the term "triangulated inquiry" to describe this process. The term "triangulated inquiry" refers to a kind of research in which the researcher molds the study via interactions with both the participants and the audience. According to Patton (2002), the researcher should begin by taking into account the subjective points of view of both the participants and the audience while also taking into account the local environment of each group. In the wake of this, the researcher is obligated to adjust their study properly (Guney,

2017, page 49). Therefore, this study presents detailed profiles of the participants, ample excerpts, and in-depth information about the context.

3.2. The Context of the Study

3.2.1. The University, the English Preparatory Program (EPP), and the ELT Instructors

This study is conducted within the English Preparatory Program of a Turkish foundation university located in central Anatolia. The university will remain anonymous throughout the thesis and will be referred to as the context institution. According to Urap Vakıf Üniversiteleri (2022), the context institution is one of the highest-ranking universities in Türkiye. This foundation university operates identically to a private institution and has connections to the Turkish government. International students and students from numerous regions of Türkiye make up the university's student body. Each year, this university enrolls hundreds of students from predominantly upper- and middle-class backgrounds. Scholarships are awarded to students based on their performance on the university's entrance exam. The medium of instruction is English.

The global significance of English has resulted in an increase in the number of institutions around the world, including Türkiye, that use English as their primary language of instruction (Kirkpatrick, 2011 as cited in Bayram & Canaran, 2019, p. 49). Both foundation and state universities in Türkiye now offer intensive one-year English Preparatory Programs (EPPs) to meet the language requirements of students. These programs aim to equip students with the skills necessary to communicate effectively in English in both academic and everyday settings. Notably, the vast majority of students enrolling in Turkish universities have a low level of English proficiency and commence their EPPs at the novice or elementary level Bayram & Canaran, 2019, p. 49).

In the EPP, there will be about 550 students in 2023. The medium of instruction is also English here. The EPP offers classes to students at three levels: A (Beginner-

A1), B (Elementary-A2), and C (Pre-Intermediate-B1). It is a flexible 9-month curriculum. All new students entering take the English Proficiency Test (EPE), and depending on their results, they are either put in one of the three levels of the EPP or begin their degree programs. Beyond the curriculum, there are also after-school lessons in which students voluntarily participate. They practice their grammar, speaking, and learning skills in these lessons.

At each level, the students have one main teacher, one supporting teacher, and two speaking-skill instructors. Every week, the students have 25 contact hours with their instructors, but only the main teacher has office hours with the students. These office hours are scheduled one hour a week; however, due to the circumstances brought on by the Covid-19 Pandemic and the devastating earthquakes that affected more than ten major cities in Southern Anatolia in early 2023, the students are readily informed that they can reach their instructors anytime.

According to the institution's website, the mission of the university's English Preparatory Program (EPP) is to prepare students for success in their departments at the university where the instruction is given in English. It is anticipated that they will be thoroughly exposed to the language during their time in EPP. In addition, an integrated curriculum supports this ethos by fostering the creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills of students. Therefore, this profile describes the ideal graduate of this program.

The school's faculty consists of 34 EFL instructors. There are 8 males and 26 females. 16 of them are full-time educators, whereas 18 are part-time instructors. The number of part-time instructors is not insignificant, indicating that the department's requirements have been met by hiring more part-time instructors rather than more full-time instructors (Arda, 2023, p. 58). There are significant differences in hiring procedures, responsibilities, salaries, employment privileges, and benefits between full-time and part-time EFL instructors. The hiring requirements for both categories of EFL instructors are comparable. They must have a bachelor's degree in the relevant discipline, a score of at least 70 on the Academic Personnel and

Postgraduate Education Entrance Exam (ALES in Turkish), a score of at least 90 on the Foreign Language Exam (YDS in Turkish), and a resume. There is only one significant distinction. Due to a 2018 regulation by the Council of Higher Education (CoHE), English language instructors at the tertiary level must possess a master's degree. Therefore, only those with a master's degree can apply for full-time positions at universities; others can only be hired for temporary positions with fewer privileges (Arda, 2023, p. 59).

In the EPP, full-time instructors often teach 15 to 20 hours per week as supporting instructors or speaking-skills instructors. They can also decide to give departmental students lessons in Engineering English and Academic English and to give tests. They also work in teams' units and occasionally they must attend university functions. They are routinely paid a certain salary each month. If they teach more than their regular workload, they get paid extra for the extra classes they teach. They have a lot more benefits than part-time instructors. They are obliged to take part in the Continuing Professional Development program as both mentees and mentors. To further their professional growth, they might take part in Erasmus+ projects, visit academic conferences, and other activities. They are paid even when they are not in class, such as during vacations, public holidays, or proctoring exams, and they receive complete insurance coverage.

Main instructors who teach a certain number of hours per week in one class that is explicitly assigned to them are considered part-time instructors. They are unable to work more hours or assume more paid duties. Their pay only covers those specific hours per week. They are not paid if there is a public holiday or other unanticipated event. Adminstrating exams, providing detailed feedback on writing and speaking (video) assignments, office hours with students, and staff meetings are all unpaid. They are required to participate in CPD as mentees, and their insurance coverage is minimal. Instructors who work part-time are only employed for the semester.

In the early Republic of Türkiye, teaching was a prestigious and high-status profession (Üstün, 2011). The characteristics that made teaching enticing have shifted over time. In the 2000s, job security decreased for graduates. Obtaining

employment at a public school or university became more difficult in Türkiye, particularly for language instructors. Thus, many instructors entered the private sector (Arda, 2023). Health issues are more prevalent among private school teachers than among public school teachers. They confront more difficult working conditions, fewer opportunities for professional development, and student disdain (Masum et al., 2015). These issues reduce the desirability of private-sector teaching in Türkiye (Arda, 2023). According to research, the instructors' work environment influences their productivity and job satisfaction. Adverse socioeconomic conditions frequently impact teachers' well-being (Nel et al., 2016, as cited in Arda, 2023). Arda (2023) cites Cardoso-Pulido et al. (2022) as saying that multiple responsibilities, low wages, unanticipated schedules, residence adjustments, and occupational adaptations result in tension and decreased well-being. Teachers have higher rates of mental health issues than other occupations due to stress (Richards et al., 2016, as cited in Arda, 2023). Financial constraints, lack of relevant opportunities, insufficient assistance, and time constraints increase tension and impede professional development. Most importantly, the precarity of their livelihoods has a big impact on decisions teachers make inside their classrooms. (Broadley, 2010; Kwakman, 2003; OECD, 2009, as cited by Arda, 2023, p. 58-61).

3.2.2. The Profiles of the Participants

As sample techniques, criteria sampling and convenience sampling were used to choose the participants (Creswell, 2013). The selection criteria for participants included having taught or currently teaching as a part-time or full-time English language instructor at the relevant university for at least one semester. As for the recruitment of participants, the researcher issued an email to the entire department outlining the goals, the procedures, and the open-ended interview questions (Appendix A, B). This was done in order to account for the sensitive nature of the subject in the Turkish community and any potential resistance it might engender (Patton, 2002). The four participants enthusiastically agreed to participate in the study. As a result, convenience sampling conditions were satisfied because the four participants were chosen based on their willingness and availability (Cresswell, 2013).

Given Türkiye’s current political climate, the participants’ personal and professional lives may suffer as a consequence of their participation in a study about queer issues. For their ardent participation, the researcher views the participants as heroes. While conducting qualitative studies, it is ethical to preserve the privacy of the participants (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2015). Therefore, the researcher has assigned superhero comic book pseudonyms for anonymity. Table 1 below provides a summary of the participants’ profiles based on their responses to interview questions in addition to researcher’s reflection notes as their close friend. Following Table 1, detailed profiles of the participants based on their responses to the qualitative surveys, and interviews are presented. The profiles of the participants are an accumulation of the information they gave during their interviews and the researcher’s knowledge of their lives that they talked to me about as friends. It is critical to remind here that everything that is presented in this thesis about the participants are done so with their explicit consent that was obtained both orally and written before and after the completion of the thesis.

Table 1
Overview of the Research Participants

Name/Number	Age/Experience	Gender/ Sexual Identity	Education	Employment	General Attitude Towards Queering ELT
Barbara Gordon (Participant 1)	39/10 years of experience in ELT	F/Straight	B.A-ACL M.A- ACL (in progress)	Full-Time	Positive
Oliver Queen (Participant 2)	26/3 years of experience in ELT	M/Straight	B.A-ELL M.A-ELL	Full-Time	Positive
Kamala Khan (Participant 3)	23/2 years of experience in ELT	F/Straight	B.A-ELT M.A-ELT (in progress)	Part-Time	Positive
Rachel Roth (Participant 4)	23/ First year in ELT	F/Bisexual	B.A-ELT M.A-ELT (in progress)	Part-Time	Positive

3.2.3. Barbara Gordon (Participant 1)

Barbara is a 39-year-old full-time EFL instructor from Ankara. She has been working at the institution in question for the last 10 years. She worked in the vocational school of the same university for three years before moving on to the foreign languages department. She holds a bachelor's in American Culture and Literature (ACL) from one of the highest-ranking universities in Türkiye. She had started her master's degree education before, but she dropped out. Currently, she is writing her master's thesis about feminism in the same department at a different university in Ankara. Barbara grew up in a matriarchal home. She comes from an upper-class socioeconomic background. She has questioned her sexuality before and decided she is a heterosexual and cisgender woman. She has been an atheist since her teen years. She is a proud feminist and a leftist. She holds Turkish Republic Founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in the highest regard. She is single, but she has a cat she considers a son. Her profound knowledge of American culture and literature allows her to deliberate on similarities and differences between American and Turkish culture and lifestyles in her classes. She deeply relates to and encourages criticism of traditional gender roles. She has many queer friends, and she is knowledgeable about queer issues in Türkiye. However, her perspective is centered on problematic gender roles in binary stereotypes, therefore, Barbara believes understanding and examining gender stereotypes is a prerequisite to discussions around queer identities in her classroom.

3.2.4. Oliver Queen (Participant 2)

Oliver is a 26-year-old EFL instructor residing in Ankara. He considers himself to be heterosexual and cisgender. He possesses a bachelor's and a master's degree in English Language and Literature (ELL) from prestigious universities. He has been an English teacher for three years. He was raised in a patriarchal household. He comes from a low to middle socioeconomic background. He shares a home with a woman with whom he is in a relationship and plans to get married. He leans left politically. He is not religious. He worked as a Research Assistant at his alma mater. Then he

spent a year as an English instructor at a private university. During the data collection phase, Oliver was a full-time instructor at the institution in question. He has taught students at the beginner and intermediate levels. He has experience instructing both online and in-person classes. He has taught both international and Turkish students. He employs his knowledge of the literature and culture of the target audience to attract and maintain students' interest in his lessons. He has a few queer friends, and he rarely consumes gay-themed media. His awareness of queer issues is high, but he lacks deep knowledge of queer identities and relationships. He is concerned with being approachable and transparent with his students. He prioritizes communicative and meaningful activities in his lessons.

3.2.5. Kamala Khan (Participant 3)

Kamala is a 23-year-old EFL instructor from a mid-sized city in central Anatolia. This city is thought to be quite conservative and affluent. Her family is conservative and wealthy. She describes herself as a heterosexual, cisgender Muslim woman. Her sister is bisexual and has only come out to Kamala in their family. She is a centrist, politically. She is in a relationship with a man. She graduated in the top three of her English Language Teaching (ELT) program at one of Türkiye's highest-ranked universities. She is currently pursuing her master's degree at the same university in Ankara, in the same department. She has been in Ankara since she was 18 years old. She worked as an intern teacher at a private language course without a mentor for two semesters before graduating. She began working at the institution where this study took place immediately after graduation. She works part-time as an EFL instructor. She has only taught beginner level English to Turkish or foreign students. She delivers both online and in-person classes. Kamala incorporates role-playing, characterization, and improvisation into her lessons on a daily basis, and she is pursuing certifications in melodrama in the classroom. She wears a hijab as part of her religious beliefs, and she has previously faced stereotyping from her students as a result. She won her students over, though, by being approachable and open to moments of discussion about her support for women and queer people. In her interactions with her students, she emphasizes respect.

3.2.6. Rachel Roth (Participant 4)

Rachel is a 23-year-old EFL instructor from a small village in Türkiye's second-richest region. She graduated first in her class from one of Türkiye's highest ranking universities' ELT programs and immediately began working as a part-time EFL lecturer at the context institution. She is also pursuing a master's degree at the same department and university. Rachel grew up in a regular, middle-class family where the significance of having a job and being self-sufficient was frequently emphasized. She considers herself to be a bisexual, cisgender, feminist woman. She feared something was wrong with her until she started studying English and consuming queer media. She is now proud of herself and the Turkish queer community. She is a leftist who is not religious. She's never had a romantic relationship. She suffers from anxiety and finds it difficult to react to unexpected situations. She is exceedingly knowledgeable about queer issues and challenges, and she chooses to speak out about these more than queer identities and relationships. For the past two semesters, she has been teaching English to zero beginners from Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Rwanda, and the UAE. She teaches both online and in-person classes. She is well-versed in common English media in addition to queer content, so she incorporates numerous pop-culture references into her lessons.

3.3. Data Collection Tools and Procedures

The qualitative data collection tools are presented in Table 2 and the rationale behind their design and information about the procedures are discussed in detail in this section.

Table 2

Overview of the Data Collection Steps

1) Reaching out to the Participants
2) First Qualitative Survey (GSRF 1)
3) Conducting the Semi-Structured Interviews
4) Mini training on Queering ELT
5) Second Qualitative Survey (GSRF 2)

The first step in the data gathering process was to secure participants. The entire academic faculty of the EPP was emailed with details about the study's objectives and methods of data collection. Two thank-you lunches were emphasized to entice participants. The four participants contacted the researcher via phone and asked for more information about the process. Finally, they signed the informed consent forms (Appendix G). As established, the participants and the researcher had a close bond, therefore the participants were informed that they could ask questions or stop participating throughout the data collection process.

The second step involved having the participants fill out the first qualitative survey (Guided Self-Reflection Form 1) (Appendix C). This form is comprised of two questions aiming to gauge the level of knowledge the participants have about queer existence in Türkiye, and queering ELT practices. This form was created to have the participants actively think about what they know and how much they know about these issues before discussing them during their interviews. Thus, this form served as a pre-interview qualitative survey.

The third step was conducting semi-structured interviews (Appendix B). A 13-item interview question list was shared with the participants in order to ensure they would feel comfortable answering them. These items were adapted from Güney (2018) who adapted them from Dumas (2010). Two language experts reviewed the items and suggested minor corrections. The adaptations were done to correctly accommodate the specific context of the study. The participants saw the interview questions before the interviews. Three of the interviews were conducted in English, Participant 3's interview was conducted in Turkish per her request. The interviews were intended to occur two days after the first qualitative survey to make sure the topic of queering ELT was fresh on the participants' minds, but one of them took place six days later because Participant 1 was ill. The timeline of all data collection is shown in Table 3 below. Rest of the participants' data's collection processes occurred within the previously mentioned timeline. The data gathering process and its timeline are presented in Table 3.

Table 3*The Timeline of the Data Collection Process*

Participants	First Qualitative Survey	Semi-Structured Interviews	Mini Training on Queering ELT	Second Qualitative Survey
Barbara	17.04.2023	23.04.2023	26.04.2023	27.04.2023
Oliver	18.04.2023	20.04.2023	21.04.2023	22.04.2023
Kamala	11.04.2023	13.04.2023	14.04.2023	15.04.2023
Rachel	10.04.2023	12.04.2023	13.04.2023	14.04.2023

The fourth step included providing participants with an info-presentation upon request from them. After their interviews, 3 of the participants had a private talk with the researcher. They wanted to have general information about queering ELT and asked for references and recommendations regarding literature. Therefore, the researcher prepared a PowerPoint (Appendix D) presentation and emailed it to every participant a day before the agreed upon deadline for the second qualitative survey. This mini training provided general information about queer identities and the purpose and implementation of queering ELT practices. Even though the participants kindly requested the researcher to send the mini training to them right before their second qualitative survey so that they would not forget about it, they also mentioned that they did not have time for skimming the mini training because they were swamped in their marking and giving feedback duties after the data collection process ended.

The fifth step included having the participants create a queered lesson plan for their second qualitative surveys (Appendix C). This was done to understand how the participants would exemplify what they have thought about and learned about during the data collection process. Their conceptualizing of queering their ELT practices was showcased in their lesson plans. They were fully free in their presentation of the plans, and they were encouraged to demonstrate any strategies they could come up with in them.

3.3.1. Guided Self-Reflection Forms as Qualitative Surveys

According to Braun et al. (2020), qualitative surveys are an essential form of research that seeks to capture nuanced, in-depth, and novel understandings of social

issues. These surveys comprise open-ended questions crafted by the researcher with a particular topic in mind (p. 642). Braun & Clarke (2013) state that good qualitative survey questions are brief, open-ended, and conveyed as plainly and directly as possible. In contrast to surveys with predetermined response options, qualitative surveys permit the participants to respond using their own terms, resulting in rich and complex accounts. This data is valuable to qualitative researchers because it provides insight into participants' subjective experiences, narratives, practices, positionings, and discourses (Braun et al., 2020, p. 643).

Qualitative surveys align with qualitative research objectives by capturing what is significant to participants and gaining access to their language and jargon. These questionnaires enable researchers to investigate topics of interest within their research framework while documenting participants' unique perspectives and comprehension (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Qualitative survey data offers the benefits of qualitative research, such as the ability to delve into the subjective experiences of participants and obtain a deeper understanding of their perspectives. Researchers can analyze qualitative survey responses to identify themes, patterns, and novel insights, thereby enhancing their understanding of the research topic (Frith, 2000).

In the study at hand, a version of a qualitative survey was used to supplement the data from the semi-structured interviews. The researcher dubbed these qualitative surveys Guided Self-Reflection Forms (GSRF) because their goal was to reveal the participants' attitudes, knowledge, and assumptions about queer identities, queer issues, and queering ELT practices before and after the semi-structured interviews to themselves and to the researcher. Even though qualitative survey datasets can provide richness and depth when looked at as a whole, even when individual responses are short (Braun et al., 2020, p. 642), they were used as supplementary data collection tools that add to the data gathered from the interviews by making the participants more aware of their positionalities, level of information, and stance on queering ELT practices before and after the interviews.

GSRF 1 (Appendix C) included two questions that aimed to have the participants start thinking about how much they knew about queer identities, issues queer people

face in the world and in Türkiye, and queering ELT practices, and how they perceived these issues in general and as Turkish EFL prep-school teachers. There were two open-ended questions that guided the teachers to write about anything they might know regarding queer identities and issues in the Turkish context and abroad and queering ELT practices. The participants were encouraged to be as detailed as possible, and they could write freely. The participants received the GSRF 1 via email 2 days before their interviews—except for Barbara, who was too ill to have the interview in 2 days, so her interview was conducted 6 days after filling out the GSRF 1. The participants sent their responses on the same day.

After the semi-structured interviews, three of the participants asked the researcher for reading materials on queering ELT practices so that they could readily develop a queer lesson plan for GSRF 2. The researcher created a concise presentation (Appendix C) and emailed it to the participants. The participants denied the researcher's request to present the information herself, citing their hectic work and school schedules.

GSRF 2 (Appendix C) consisted of a single open-ended question: how to develop a queered lesson plan? The participants were instructed not to stress about the lesson plan structure, but rather to consider how to incorporate queer themes, individuals, and stories. The questionnaires were emailed to participants two days after their semi-structured interview. Barbara (Participant 1) received the report four days after her semi-structured interviews, per her request because she was still unwell. The participants sent their responses the next day.

3.3.2. Semi-Structured Interviews

According to Richards (2003), interviews can be considered "conversations with a purpose." They are distinct from casual conversations, as the focus is on obtaining the most comprehensive and detailed account possible from the interviewee without imposing the interviewer's own opinions or perspectives. Conducting interviews is considered one of the most valuable aspects of data collection in qualitative research,

particularly in the context of case study research (Yin, 2018). Interviews provide researchers with personalized and individualized information directly from the participants, allowing for a deeper understanding of their experiences (Mason, 2002). These interviews offer researchers the opportunity to grasp the lived experiences of participants and the meanings they attribute to those experiences, as conveyed through their chosen words (Heron, 1996).

A semi-structured interview, as defined by Heigham and Croker (2009), involves the interviewer having a clear understanding of the topics that need to be covered. However, the interviewer remains open to unexpected directions that may arise during the interview, particularly if they lead to significant and new areas of exploration. Semi-structured interviews consist of asking participants specific questions while maintaining interview process flexibility (Seidman, 2006). Incorporating follow-up inquiries based on participants' responses, this method allows for further exploration and a more in-depth understanding of participants' narratives. Consequently, semi-structured interviews are regarded as particularly suited to case study research (Braun and Clarke, 2013). One of the reasons why semi-structured interviews are appropriate for case study research is that they give participants the freedom and openness to freely discuss their opinions and experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This has a positive effect on the obtained data because it reflects the perspectives of the participants rather than being influenced by the researcher's preconceived notions or biases. Semi-structured interviews enable researchers to collect rich and detailed information directly from participants by combining specific inquiries with the flexibility to investigate unexpected avenues. This strategy promotes a deeper understanding of the perspectives and experiences of participants, making semi-structured interviews a valuable tool for qualitative case study research (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006).

The study at hand employed semi-structured interviews in order to portray the narratives of the participants as richly as possible (Appendix A). Thirteen items were adapted from Dumas (2010) to fit the context of the research setting. The thirteen items were then sent to expert language teachers on Turkish and English to ensure

clarity and understandability of the questions to the respondents. To conduct the interviews, the researcher met with participants individually to agree on dates to start the process. The participants' needs for privacy and anonymity, as well as their availability, were prioritized. Therefore, the participants decided the time and place for each interview, the recording method, and the level of information to be revealed about their identity. All the participants opted to be audio-recorded for anonymity concerns. Two of the interviews were conducted online using Zoom. Three of the interviews were in English, and one was conducted in Turkish per the participant's request. This interview was translated by the researcher. After all the recordings were compiled, they were transcribed with help from the online transcription tool Otter.ai.

3.4. Data Analysis

In qualitative research, thematic analysis is a common technique for studying textual data. According to Braun and Clarke (2013), the methodology includes finding, examining, and presenting patterns within the data. Researchers frequently use thematic analysis because of its flexibility to look into a variety of study issues and subjects. The 6 phase of the data analysis process is used in this study (Clarke & Braun, 2014). The phases of thematic analysis followed are demonstrated in Table 4. A detailed explanation of each phase is provided below.

Table 4

Six Phases of Data Analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2014)

Phase 1: Studying the data

Phase 2: Producing preliminary codes

Phase 3: Establishing themes

Phase 4: Reviewing themes

Phase 5: Identifying and categorizing themes

Phase 6: Creating the report

Phase 1: Studying the data

Phase 1 means getting familiar with the data gathered for analysis. This phase's major purpose is to gain a more profound knowledge of the data, including context, content, and significance. In this procedure, researchers do several rounds of reading,

taking notes, and annotating. Researchers use numerous approaches to get acquainted with the data during this phase, like summarizing the data, highlighting relevant phrases or parts, and generating first codes. Creating codes aims to gain a fundamental insight into the data's patterns and themes. Researchers aim to establish a preliminary knowledge of the patterns and themes that may be present in the data by generating a sense of the overall content and structure (Clarke & Braun, 2014).

The researcher read the data several times and transcribed the interviews for the study. Transcribing the data is another way of becoming familiar with all data as the researcher acts as an interpreter and creates meaning while staying true to verbal data's original nature (Bird, 2005). Therefore, a rigorous process of transcription and multiple re-readings of the data was done in this phase.

Phase 2: Producing preliminary codes

Clarke and Braun (2014) explain that it is crucial to identify and label important concepts or patterns that originate from the data. Researchers divide the data into smaller components as part of this process, giving every component a descriptive code. The codes are frequently linked to certain words or phrases representing content. There are multiple techniques to form the codes. Focused coding is choosing and underscoring the most pertinent codes that most accurately reflect the substance of the data, as opposed to axial coding, which includes classifying the initial codes into larger groups and subcategories. Open coding involves individually evaluating and constructing codes representing each component's significance.

For the analysis of the data at hand, open coding was found appropriate. Initial coding started immediately after the first thorough familiarization of the data. The process evolved with every re-reading. Coding was done manually and systematically using a color system. Full attention was given to each piece of data, and potential patterns were identified. Occasionally, an extract was coded several times as it fits into many themes. Finally, a plethora of potential patterns were identified, and an overall conceptualization map was created and demonstrated in Table 5.

Table 5
Example Preliminary Codes

Example excerpt	Preliminary codes
<p>I never encountered sexual inequity in my classes, so not sure what to do if I experience one. Assuming that it would be affecting the female students, I would take whatever action is necessary, ranging from making the student wishing he was never born to just verbally warning him. One activity that I plan on doing is making the different sex and gender identity students to solve their specific and distinct problems together via perhaps a roundtable discussion. This I believe could raise awareness for both parties and give a platform for them to make their voice heard, even if its only in a classroom. (Interview With Oliver, p. 5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of proper training • Gender binary worldview • Relating to traditional gender roles • Problem solving activity • Empathizing • Narrow assumptions

Phase 3: Establishing initial themes

Using the codes acquired in Phase 2, researchers compare to create a map of themes accurately representing the data. This phase is highly systematic and iterative as it is crucial not to misinterpret the data but to capture its essence. The themes should be created methodically. They should be consistent with each other, based on a rationale and definite. After creating themes, researchers must inspect them for improvement. They may construct and alter the codes from Phase 2. It is imperative to construct themes that are relevant to the research questions (Clarke & Braun 2014). In this Phase, the researcher employed deductive and inductive approaches to designing an initial themes map (Guest et al., 2012). Themes from other similar research (Türkmenoğlu, 2019; Güney, 2021) were adapted as a start, and novel themes were identified during reiterations. The first theme map created by the researcher is shared as an example of this process in Table 6.

Table 6*Part of the Initial Theme Map*

Knowledge of queer terminology and existing issues	Beliefs about the relationship between language learning and queer content	Ideal teacher characteristics for queering ELT lessons	Common mentions
Theoretical knowledge from culture and literature education	Morality (Right and Wrong)	Being Knowledgeable and Aware	Heteronormative discourse
Negative expressions for queer people's lives in Türkiye (taboo, marginalized, etc)	Never tried to queer ELT/ Never thought about it	Being open and approachable	Feminism/ Patriarchy

Phase 4: Reviewing themes

This phase focuses on cross-checking the initial codes and themes created to ensure they fit the study's overall goals. It is vital to characterize and establish the data. Therefore, researchers reread and reexamine codes and themes to negotiate meanings to ensure the most accurate theme map is constructed. This Phase is similar to Phase 2 in that it involves rereading the entire data set but differs in purpose. At this point in the analysis, researchers are checking coherence and meaningfulness. Moreover, the researchers must identify the leftover data, i.e., the data that is incoherent with the current themes. If this is the case, the researchers must rework their themes or create new ones with the excess data. This refining process should allow the researchers to follow a straightforward path within the theme map and analyze the data (Clarke & Braun, 2014).

Knowing that data analysis is an organic process, the researcher reiterates this phase of the analysis. Some redundant themes overlapped, and some sub-themes emerged after eliminating the redundant themes. The researcher revised the analysis process when there were discrepancies between codes. At last, looking at the themes as a whole provided answers to the research questions.

Phase 5: Identifying and categorizing themes

Clarke & Braun (2014) advise that researchers would be prone to inconsistencies in their analysis without identifying each theme's essence. To produce labels for the data, researchers must carefully scrutinize it to ensure they have thoroughly comprehended it. It is critical to describe the themes in a way that represents the data correctly. In categorizing the data, researchers define the themes succinctly and understandably while capturing their essence. After writing definitive and summarized descriptions for each theme, the researchers must assign succinct, impactful names that give the reader an idea about what they may entail.

The study is designed to be a foundation for future literature research, so the researcher has profoundly examined and reexamined the themes. Considerations of overlapping or redundant themes and the coherence and consistency of the existing themes were carefully done. Each theme was based on capturing the essence of the data under the most general label. These labels were defined vividly and concisely to ensure that readers and future researchers can comprehend the data.

Phase 6: Creating the report

The primary goal of the write-up of the thematic analysis is to present the totality of the story of the data in such a way that its rationale and validity are understood. Researchers include a summary of the key findings, detailed descriptions of the themes, and data extracts that underscore the findings in the write-up. In addition to the themes, this write-up must also center on the context of the study and narratives of the participants. Furthermore, a section about limitations is needed to comprehensively analyze the data. Finally, implications for future research sections must be added and deeply explored. This final Phase establishes the research to readers with all backgrounds by displaying relevant and valuable information to the literature (Clarke & Braun, 2014).

Phase 6 is showcased in its entirety in the Results and Discussion Chapter (Chapter IV). The data is presented with relative excerpts and definitions, and the interpretations of it are discussed. Firstly, a detailed description of each theme is

provided, along with relevant extracts from the dataset. Then, the relationship between the research questions and the themes is investigated using examples. Possible alternative explanations for the findings are discussed. Finally, the researcher's arguments are presented clearly and concisely.

3.5. Trustworthiness and Validity of the Study

According to Creswell & Creswell (2018), qualitative validity refers to the researcher employing specific procedures to ensure the accuracy of the findings. In contrast, qualitative reliability indicates that the method used by the researcher is consistent across researchers and projects (p. 314). They continue to suggest various ways to achieve high validity and reliability.

Another way to achieve high validity includes member checking (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). Member checking is returning the final report or specific descriptions or themes to the participants to determine if they agree that the qualitative findings are accurate (Grauer, 2012). This does not involve returning the raw transcripts to verify their accuracy; instead, the researcher returns portions of the refined or nearly refined product, such as the main findings or the themes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 314-315). The study at hand implemented this. The participants were provided with the initial findings and discussion and they were asked to give feedback. This was done in a limited time frame and with the researcher in the room with the participant to make sure the participants were not *self-editing* (Creswell, 2014).

Another way that improves the reliability of a study involves using rich and thick descriptions extensively convey the findings (Lincoln, 2005). This type of description brings readers to the setting and add an element of shared experiences to the discussion. Creswell & Creswell (2018) adds that qualitative researchers offer detailed descriptions of the setting or multiple perspectives on a theme, the results become more realistic and comprehensive (p. 315). The study at hand described the Turkish context on queer people and on EFL teachers; the context institution, the

demographics of students, the working conditions of the participants, and their personal, educational, and professional profiles densely to make sure readers have an expansive understanding of the context.

To enhance qualitative reliability, the method of intercoder agreement (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) was implemented in the study at hand. The sole researcher works with other researchers who can cross-check the completed coding. The sole researcher and the supporting researchers determine whether the codes are appropriate, and if there is a high level of consistency, the qualitative reliability is considered to be high (Grauer, 2012; Creswell, 2014). The study at hand's main and sub-themes were cross-checked by two different researchers and 95% agreement was reached.

Most importantly, Creswell & Creswell recommends clarifying the researcher's bias in the study (p. 314). They add that this self-reflection generates an open and sincere narrative that will resonate strongly with the audience. As established earlier, researcher reflexivity is an essential element of qualitative research (Attia & Edge, 2017). Good qualitative research includes researchers' reflections on how their gender, culture, history, and socioeconomic background influenced their interpretation of the findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The study at hand extensively and thoroughly discusses the researcher's identity, viewpoint and her relationship with the participants and her positionality in the context institution to ensure this study has high trustworthiness.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

The Human Research Ethics Committee of Middle East Technical University has approved this study. After receiving this approval, the institution's necessary approval has also been obtained. The call for participation, interview questions, and informed consent forms were shared with the entire faculty of the EPP to ensure that potential volunteers had full knowledge about the study. Volunteers were met privately, and oral explanations of the study and the explanations in the consent

forms were provided. Some volunteers then decided not to participate in the study for various reasons, like time commitment issues, apprehension about potential fallout with employers, outing themselves, or talking about their religious and political beliefs. After only enthusiastic volunteers remained, they were again told they could withdraw from the study at any time. The participants were also verbally informed that their voice recordings will be kept until after the publication of the thesis, only on the researcher's computer and will not be uploaded to or shared with anywhere else. After publication, all recordings will be deleted. To achieve complete anonymity, no identifying information about the university or the participants can be found in the study. The participants are given pseudonyms; only the researcher knows about their identities.



CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS and DISCUSSION

4.0. Presentation

This chapter presents the results of the thematic data analysis and presents a discussion using critical theory, critical pedagogy, queering pedagogy, and queering ELT frameworks. It starts with an introduction to reintroduce the case and explain how it will be presented. The next four sections demonstrate and discuss the findings.

4.1. Introduction

This study set out to understand the perspectives of Turkish tertiary level EFL teachers on queering their English Language Teaching practices. By examining the beliefs, viewpoints, knowledge, awareness, and attitudes of four Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers at a specific institution, this research seeks to contribute to the understanding of how queering ELT can be implemented in Turkish classrooms. Queer-informed educational studies in the Turkish context are extremely limited; therefore, this study serves as an exploratory case study that can inform further queer-informed studies in the Turkish context.

To have an in-depth comprehension of the participants' perceptions of queering their ELT practices, the following research questions were raised:

- 1) To what extent are Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers aware of queer identities and issues at national and global levels?

- 2) To what extent are Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers knowledgeable about queer pedagogy and queering ELT?
- 3) Do Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers queer their ELT practices? If yes, how? If not, why not?
- 4) How do Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers conceptualize queering ELT in their own classrooms?

The first research question aimed to find out the participants' familiarity with queer existence and to understand how informed they are regarding queer identities and the challenges queer people face globally and in Türkiye. The second question had a similar goal as it gauged what these teachers know about queer-informed teaching methodologies. The third question was about the central issue, their rationale behind queering or not queering their ELT practices were explored. The final question addressed how the teachers would go about queering their lessons.

Previous sections have established that critical pedagogy and queer pedagogy inform queering ELT practices. Thus, the researcher interpreted the data through the lenses of critical pedagogy and queer pedagogy. The data was collected by deploying qualitative surveys (pre- and post-interviews) (Appendices B1, B2), semi-structured interviews (Appendix A), and providing mini-training to participants (Appendix C). Clarke & Braun's (2014) six phases of data analysis were employed to create a thematic analysis of the data on MAXQDA. Four main themes emerged from the analysis.

Before presenting the findings and their discussion, it is essential to briefly review the context and participants in order to contextualize them. This research focuses on a foundational university that is administered like a private university and has ties to the current Turkish governing administration. For the purposes of this study, this institution is referred to as the context institution. In the English Preparatory Program (EPP), first-year students spend one year learning only English in order to prepare for their remaining four years in English-taught departments. On the EPP's or the institution's primary website, there are no statements about diversity and inclusion

(neither for queer students nor for international students), despite the presence of students from multiple Turkish cities and students from numerous African and Asian developing or underdeveloped countries. In order to begin their respective departments, EPP students must pass the English Proficiency Exam (EPE). Students earn the opportunity to take the EPE by earning high marks on their skills examinations, academic writing and speaking assignments, and projects. They are assigned to classrooms based on their performance on the beginning-of-year placement exams, and the majority of EPP classrooms contain students at the beginner level. The EPP puts an emphasis on success in the EPE, and the occasional additional events or seminars are limited to English skills.

The EPP has 34 full-time and part-time instructors and administrators who also teach lessons. The 16 full-time instructors hold master's degrees and receive a higher salary, full health insurance, and a variety of other benefits, including opportunities for professional growth. The majority of the 18 part-time instructors are graduate students, and they receive a fixed hourly wage (with a weekly maximum of 19 hours to teach), minimal health insurance, daily lunches, and few opportunities for professional development. The participants of this study are 2 full-time and 2 part-time instructors who have worked at the context institution at least for a semester.

The 4 participants were Barbara (39), Kamala (23), Oliver (26) and Rachel (23) who have all been teaching in the English Preparatory Program (EPP) at the context institution (a foundation university that runs like a private university in the nation's capital, Ankara) for at least one semester. Barbara and Oliver were educated in English culture and literature, whereas Kamala and Rachel were educated in English language teaching. Barbara had been teaching for ten years, Oliver for three, Kamala for two, and Rachel was in her first year. Furthermore, Barbara and Oliver were full-time teachers with a higher salary and full insurance coverage, whereas Rachel and Kamala were part-time teachers with a lower salary and limited insurance coverage. During the time of the study, Oliver held a master's degree, while the other participants were studying in master's programs. Rachel identified as a bisexual woman, and the other participants identified as straight and cisgender.

Having provided a brief recap of the study, the context and the participants, the findings and discussion will be presented and analyzed in the next sections.

4.2. Exposition of the Findings

This section will use the research questions as a structure for reporting the findings. Four themes that emerged from the data will be discussed in accordance with the research questions. The four main themes are presented in **Table 7**.

Table 7

Illustrations of the Main Themes

MT1: Knowledge and Awareness of Queer Issues

MT2: Reservations about Queering ELT

MT3: Motivations for Queering ELT

MT4: Queering ELT Strategies

The findings will be presented in a description, analysis, and synthesis structure. This means that they will be presented, exemplified, contextualized, and discussed with related literature.

4.2.1. RQ1: Extent of Awareness of Queer Identities and Issues

The first research question was, 'To what extent are Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers aware of queer identities and issues at national and global levels?' The goal of this question was to determine whether the participants were aware of queer existence, queer identities, terminology, and the issues they face in Turkey and around the world. Because the participants were also educated in Turkish schools, this was an important question to ask. Sex education is not covered in Turkey's national curriculum and is only occasionally mentioned in school and university curricula (Çuhadaroğlu, 2016). The first main theme, Knowledge and Awareness of Queer Issues, addressed this question. The analysis of data from semi-structured interviews and qualitative surveys informed this theme. It is about the participants' knowledge of queer identities, the challenges they face around the world, particularly in Turkey, and their personal experiences with queer people, students, or their

identities. It also addressed the participants' assumptions or knowledge about queer identities. As a result, key phrases for this theme included 'I think..., I believe..., ' etc.

4.2.1.1. Nodding Acquaintance with Queer Identities and Terminology

Participants made assumptions about their extent of familiarity with queer identities and terminology that were based on their education, personal identity, and having or not having queer people in their lives.

'As a teacher holding a bachelor's degree in American Culture and Literature and an MA thesis student at the same department, I can definitely say that I am quite familiar with the issue.' (First Qualitative Survey of Barbara Gordon, p. 1)

Barbara's (Participant 1) assumption that she was highly familiar with the issues of queer existence was noteworthy, as she based her knowledge on her education. Later on, she also mentioned having many queer friends. However, she did not discuss queer identity terms or queer relationships, and she did not elaborate on her friendships or relate to queer issues in any way.

As opposed to Barbara, Kamala (Participant 3) assumed that she lacked knowledge related to queer identities and issues. This is interesting considering the fact that she has a bisexual sister and many queer friends.

I can say that I am not very knowledgeable about this specific topic. I know the meanings of different sexual identities, like male, female, trans, etc. Also, I know the terms that are used to define sexual orientation, such as straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and pansexual. (First Qualitative Survey of Kamala Khan, p. 1, trans.)

Also, while Kamala is the only participant to have touched upon queer terms of identity and attraction, she still did not provide explanations for them or discuss queer relationships or queer love, which was similar to the other participants except for Participant 4.

Historically used as a derogatory term to mean “strange”, queer is now used to refer to people whose sexual and gender identities are not straight, heterosexual, or cisgender. As can be inferred from the negative meaning it was charged with in the past, queer is a term for people who do not conform to sexual and gender binaries (First Qualitative Survey of Rachel Roth, p. 1).

This concise etymology of the word 'queer' that Rachel mentioned is the only academic or theoretical knowledge she brought up. This was interesting because Rachel (Participant 4) identified as a bisexual woman, and she sometimes related to her own experiences as a queer language learner and even briefly discussed how she came to realize her own identity and her first crush.

What really comforts me about being a part of this community is how unique each of us is, but at the heart, all of us are the same. Even if we might not feel comfortable restricting ourselves with labels, there is still a place for us in this community. There is so much to learn from everybody’s personal story. (First Qualitative Survey of Rachel Roth, p. 1)

Similar to the other participants, Rachel also generalized the majority of her ideas and did not provide any other academic or theoretical knowledge, despite being a bisexual language learner who was admittedly highly interested in learning about queer identities using the English language.

Oliver (Participant 2) stated that he had theoretical knowledge about queer existence similar to that of the other literature graduate, Barbara. His general approach to the discussion was through an academic, objective lens rather than relating to it in some way throughout the dataset, just like the other participants.

My knowledge of queer people is only a theoretical one. I had the opportunity to study literary theory during my undergraduate and graduate years, which included topics like gender, feminism, and a little bit of queer theory. I believe the concept of gender to be a social and cultural construct that hinges on performativity rather than sex. (First Qualitative Survey of Oliver Queen, p. 1)

Similar to Barbara (Participant 1), Oliver also revealed that his admittedly limited knowledge comes from his educational background in literature. He assumed that he had little knowledge regarding queer existence. While he did not expand on what he

actually knows about queer theory in detail, he mentioned one specific piece of information that he acquired from his brief study of queer theory.

I think everybody should know that nothing is compulsory in life, including heterosexuality—shout outs to Adrienne Rich. (First Qualitative Survey of Oliver Queen, p. 2)

Oliver's mention of Adrienne Rich and Rachel's brief mention of the etymology of 'queer' are the only two explicit mentions of 'theoretical knowledge' that the participants revealed that are directly related to queer studies. The combination of the lack of mention of queer-informed academic knowledge and not relating discussions about queer existence to personal levels but keeping them general suggested that the participants possess surface-level information and are somewhat aware of queer identities, terminology, and relationships. However, it is important to note that the absence of explicit mention does not necessarily indicate a complete lack of theoretical knowledge. It is possible that participants may have chosen not to disclose their deeper understanding or experiences for fear of socio-political pressures or backlash from the context institution, or for wanting to protect people in their lives or being found out about their responses.

Notably, there were no specific mentions of trans issues (only that it was a queer term mentioned by Kamala, in passing). Many mentions of gender equality issues were related to women only. It can be said that the participants' perceptions of trans identities and their perspectives remain cisgendered. These findings are very similar to the findings of Tarrayo et al. (2021), in which many Filipino college teachers of English understand gender equality and equity in a cisgender sense; promoting women's rights and eliminating men's fears about gender issues. This interpretation is comparable to how the Philippine government frames these phrases. The responses of the teachers who took part in the study revealed that just a minority of them had discussed actual non-heteronormative topics, such as homosexual romance or transgenderism (p. 16). According to Paiz (2019), the continued absence of attention given to transgender issues in the ELT field serves to further marginalize and suppress individuals who are already stigmatized by society. This omission occurs

frequently in LGBTQ studies. It is essential for ESL teachers to address transgender issues comprehensively and actively work toward creating inclusive classroom environments that embrace and support transgender students (Paiz, 2019, p. 269).

4.2.1.2. Profound Awareness of Queer Issues in Türkiye

In contrast to presenting limited ideas about queer identities, terminology, or relationships, the participants exhibited ample awareness regarding the many challenges and issues queer people suffer through in Türkiye. The participants show a deep awareness of this while they are describing how queer people in Türkiye are marginalized in multiple aspects of life. Table 8 presents some of the most common negative expressions the participants used to describe how Turkish queers are positioned in Turkish society.

Table 8

Frequency Table of Negative Expressions the Participants Used for Describing Queer Issues in Türkiye

Negative expressions	How many times it was used by all participants?
1) Unfortunately	6
2) Danger	4
3) Marginalized	4
4) Lonely	3
5) Struggle	3
6) Discrimination	2
7) Neglected	2
8) Rejected	2
9) Taboo	2
10) Violence	2

Rachel discussed how the very existence of queer people in Turkey is under threat. She emphasized the impact of discrimination in the workplace and social interactions, as well as the neglect of queer people's health. Rachel expressed her frustration with the lack of recognition of queer people's rights in Turkey, as well as the restrictions on openly and freely expressing one's identity. She stated that the challenges that queer people face in Turkey are significant, and that there is still a

long way to go in overcoming them. She made no mention of any personal experiences with marginalization.

Like Rachel, Oliver also remarked on the barriers queer people are forced to face in Türkiye. He added that "queer people's position in society is often defined as a danger; in our country, for example, they were even regarded as terrorists because of some protests (First Qualitative Survey of Oliver Queen, p. 1). He also noted that 'the heteronormative hegemony' queer people face causes them to suffer from many issues, including mental health.

Barbara's understanding of the marginalization of queer people in Turkey mirrored Kamala's. Both participants showed empathy and compassion towards queer people in Türkiye.

Unfortunately, first of all, queer people might struggle to find a supportive environment for themselves in our country since it is a big taboo in our culture and most of the old people do not even accept the issue. This might be one of the biggest challenges that they face in daily life. The coming out process might be really difficult for some of them since they have the idea of being rejected by their loved ones. They might have some huge problems with their family because their family might not be knowledgeable and open to learning. Until university, most people are like their family and do not have their own ideas in school. Thus, queer students might feel lonely and experience bad things like bullying in school. They might have problems in the workplace if they do not have a respectful environment. They might be exposed to mobbing. Even so, they may not be hired because of their sexual identity. (First Qualitative Survey of Kamala Khan, p. 1)

However, while Kamala explored the various aspects of life where queer people are marginalized in Turkish culture, Barbara explored the marginalization of women and discussed the dominance of patriarchy in Turkish culture. For Barbara, sidelining queer issues to problematize traditional gender binary roles in answering questions directly related to queer identities was a recurrent occurrence.

As for their positions in society, I am more inclined to think that lesbians are even more marginalized by society, as there is no opportunity for a man to be "in charge" in that relationship. For male homosexuals, it is easier as they have a 'chance' to be viewed as at least "originally" men who may somehow

have the potential to get the power that stays within. In a female homosexual relationship, on the other hand, this is rendered impossible, and from the vantage point of the society that is ruled by “the patriarch”, it is much more threatening after all. (First Qualitative Survey of Barbara Gordon, p. 1)

Barbara and Oliver consistently refer to traditional gender binary oppression to answer specifically queer questions. This may be a result of not being able to personally relate to and not having enough knowledge to professionally discuss queer issues. This might make them try to avoid discussing the complexities of queer experiences.

Overall, the participants showed high awareness for the current standing of Turkish queer people in today's Turkish political and cultural climate. The participants explained that Turkish queer people are faced with many harsh challenges, ranging from unemployment to fearing for their lives. This situation can be observed from the limited related literature as well. According to data on equality, human rights, legal gender recognition, freedom of speech, and asylum rights of LGBTQ+ individuals (ILGA-Europe, 2021, as cited in Karabacak, 2022), Türkiye ranks 48th out of 49 nations. Over a third of all transgender people murdered in Europe are sex workers (Transgender Europe, 2019, as cited in Karabacak, 2022). This marginalization of queer identities is observed in the English classroom as well. Sexuality-related discussions continue to be considered a strict prohibition in the English classroom (Tekin, 2011). The presence of this sexuality-related taboo in language education is not surprising, given that comprehensive sex education is not widely implemented in Turkish schools and that Turkish adolescents typically receive no sexuality-related information from their parents due to conservative cultural and religious norms (Duyan & Duyan, 2005).

The study's participants exhibited highly positive attitudes toward queer existence. However, asymmetrical assumptions were made regarding their level of knowledge regarding queer identities and terminology. Some participants claimed to have extensive knowledge of the topic, whereas others admitted to having little or no knowledge. In spite of this, it was observed that participants had comparable levels of surface-level understanding of queer identities, terminology, and relationships.

Although the participants showed a significant amount of empathy toward queer people in Turkey, their discussions occasionally included generalizations. Rachel, who identified as bisexual, displayed a greater degree of relatability to the issues that were being examined, and this is highly similar to other studies where queer teachers act as models for change (Brochin, 2019; Mayo, 2020; Halliday, 2021). However, even she had a tendency to avoid going into these subjects in an excessively in-depth manner. In addition, the responses of two other participants were connected to issues pertaining to the traditional gender roles that exist within Turkish society. This association was so prevalent that when addressing specific questions about queer students, they responded with examples related to sexism, patriarchy, and feminism, which shows how taboo queer identities are considered to be in Türkiye and are missing from the classrooms (Bariş & Esra, 2014).

On the other hand, the participants showed greater openness and readiness to discuss the significant difficulties queer people face in various facets of their lives within Turkish society. This can be related to the overwhelming visibility of harmful discourses surrounding queer people on Turkish media outlets (Özbay & Öktem, 2021; "After Erdogan's attacks, fear spreads among L.G.B.T.Q. people in Turkey," 2023) However, the fact that the participants have limited knowledge about queer identities and terms, in addition to the fact that they have a tendency to only relate to issues that they have personally experienced, such as sexism, may be an indication of the level of oppression they have faced in their own education. In a potential teacher training program on queering ELT, it would be a good idea to start from how queer people are born to various identities and their meanings because the lack of sex education in Türkiye would result in students asking about these.

4.2.2. RQ2: Knowing About Queer Pedagogy and Queering ELT

The second research question was, 'To what extent are Turkish tertiary EFL pre-school teachers knowledgeable about queer pedagogy and queering ELT?'. The rationale behind asking this question was to understand whether the teachers had any prior education and interest in queer pedagogy and queering ELT practices. The

second main theme, Motivations for Queering ELT, addressed this question. This question explored the participants' theoretical and personal reasons for queering a class, like the potential positive impact on the students' learning and empowering queer students through visibility and respect. Therefore, some key terms or phrases that emerged were 'awareness, inclusivity in the classroom, the perspective of people with different backgrounds, safety in the learning environment,' etc. In addition to the data from the interviews and the qualitative surveys, providing the participants with mini training also informed this theme and helped answer this research question. The participants' familiarity with queer pedagogy and queering ELT frameworks was limited. However, they strongly suggested queering ELT practices. In the following sections, their reasons for strongly recommending queering ELT are presented and discussed, beginning with the most frequent reason.

4.2.2.1 Surface Level Knowledge of Queer Pedagogy and Queering ELT

While the participants had some ideas about queer theory, globalized English, and queer contemporary media, it was clear that they had very low levels of knowledge regarding queer pedagogy and queering ELT practices. This was evident in their answers about their misconceptions about the safety of queer students, their mix-up of sexual equity and sexual equality, and their prioritizing of gender issues over queer issues.

If we are talking about being safe in terms of queer issues or the psychological situations of those students, I am not sure about their safety. I don't think that our queer students might have problems with their teachers in terms of their feelings of safety, but they may have some problems with their friends. However, when they want to share their feelings and ideas and go to their teachers, I think they can find a safe space with their teachers because most of them are aware of queer issues and they are respectful to the people around them (Interview with Kamala Khan, trans., p. 2).

Kamala's ideas about queer students being safe with their teachers were almost identical to those of the other participants. However, while Barbara stated that her queer students would feel very safe with her, she also noted that not every ELT teacher holds positive attitudes towards queer people. Barbara's notion is

corroborated in Güney's (2018) study, where it was found that some professors would openly make homophobic or sarcastic remarks to queer people. This shows that teachers' personal values also play a big part in how they shape their teaching practices (Hall, 2010).

Oliver assumed that queer students were safe in the context institution and the EPP on account of the fact that it provided a social environment that was safe. However, the EPP and the context did not recognize or prioritize diversity and inclusivity in any way, shape, or form. The context institution notably did not utilize any safe zones. Safe zone programs seek to improve the campus climate, raise awareness, enhance dialogues about LGBT issues, provide a safe space, and educate and equip members to combat homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, and heterosexism (Poynter & Tubbs, 2008, p. 122). To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no Turkish university has officially designated safe zones for queer students, but there are a few queer student clubs and societies in some of Türkiye's highest-ranking universities. At the context institute however, there are no such gathering places for queer students. Critical pedagogy emphasizes how important it is to point out the problems with the most common heteronormative practices. This is because heteronormative practices keep queer student identities on the margins because they don't recognize them. This creates an unfair power relationship between "legitimized" students and "the others" (Freire, 1970). Therefore, Oliver's lack of realization can be changed with teacher training on queer pedagogy and queering ELT.

Another telltale sign of inadequate queer pedagogical knowledge was that Participants 1, 2, and 3 mixed sexual equity in the classroom with sexual equality. Sexual equity refers to the creation of conditions and opportunities that ensure individuals have equal access to resources, support, and opportunities, taking into account the specific needs and circumstances of individuals with diverse sexual identities. Sexual equality, on the other hand, is the principle of considering all people equally and without discrimination based on their sexual orientation, identity, or expression (Koch & Irby, 2002).

I never encountered sexual inequity in my classes, so I am not sure what to do if I experience one. Assuming that it would be affecting the female students, I would take whatever action is necessary, ranging from making the student wish he was never born to just verbally warning him (Interview with Oliver Queen, p. 5).

It is crucial for a teacher to understand that sexual inequity is the status quo in Turkish classes due to the various ways female students, queer students, and non-conforming students are already oppressed (Ördem & Ulum, 2019; Kocaman & Selvi, 2021; Özbay & Öktem, 2021). A teacher has to learn about critical theory and critical pedagogy to effectively problematize the current heteronormative and gender binary ways of thinking so that they can create a just learning environment for each student (Kirylo et al., 2010).

I don't discuss queer issues in my classroom in detail. I only say homosexuals are also people in general. They always prefer to skirt the issue; the plan is to spread it throughout the term. So I start with women's issues first, and then I also refer to the problems that men have—socially constructed burdens. After I get some reactions—you know, grid wires—and I get some clues that they understand, then I move on to homosexual people. I say that everyone can choose whatever religion or sexual orientation they want, as long as they don't press upon other people. So I respect everyone. I respect Hindus, for example. I mean, everyone's free. So, you know, I use religion for such things as well. It's a matter of individual choice. So for homosexuals, I also say the same things (Interview with Barbara Gordon, Pos. 55).

In spite of the fact that all of the participants discussed traditional gender norms while providing examples for queer-specific questions occasionally, Barbara's prioritization of other issues over queer issues is so pervasive that it merits discussion. Her stance on the issue can be attributed to a number of factors stemming from her academic and professional background. Ördem & Ulum (2019) determined that Turkish females hold generally positive attitudes toward queer individuals, which may be due to the fact that Turkish females feel marginalized alongside Turkish queers. However, Evripidou and Çavuşoğlu (2014) discovered that more experienced teachers were less receptive to incorporating queer elements into their practices. Consequently, Barbara may be reluctant to alter her 10-plus years of experience as an EFL instructor, despite her respect and compassion for queer individuals.

As a devoted supporter of a gender-free society myself, unfortunately, I generally feel that I need to be really careful with what I say about such issues as well as religious and political ones. So, when there is a chance to talk about a similar issue or to give an example, I “mildly” say that everyone is free to choose their religion and sexual orientation. To exemplify the issues many people suffer from, not only LGBTQI+ individuals, concepts such as sex, gender, and patriarchy, patriarch, mad woman in the attic, angelic and innocent princess waiting to be saved, psychoanalysis, biological essentialism, and a general view of the political and social rights of LGBTQI+ individuals as well as their position in the world, the religious basis of sexism are some of the crucial points. (First Qualitative Survey of Barbara Gordon, p. 2)

This quote perfectly captures Barbara's general outlook on bringing queer elements to the classroom. Throughout the dataset, Barbara consistently stated that while it is extremely important to queer ELT practices, this can only happen at a much later stage. To work towards queer-related discussions, Barbara argued that the teacher should comprehensively problematize traditional gender binary roles, religious norms, and lifestyle choices that may be perceived as ostracized (like being a vegan) with her students. Only after these stages can teachers introduce problematizing heteronormative ideas and incorporate queer elements into their teaching. However, Pakuła et al. (2015) suggested a different perspective by stating that "gender cannot properly be explored without looking at sexuality" (p. 95). This speaks to the fact that the interconnectedness of these issues requires addressing them collectively, which can be best learned through proper teacher training on queer pedagogy and queering ELT.

Participant 4, Rachel, demonstrated the highest level of knowledge of queer pedagogy and queering ELT, as she did not assume students were feeling safe in their school environment, understood what sexual equity is correctly, and highlighted the interconnectedness and relativity of problematizing queer issues and gender binary issues in modern ELT practices.

Making queer issues acknowledged and open to discussion may help them get to know themselves better or be more insightful and understanding as people in the big bad 21st century. We have this huge responsibility as EFL teachers to help our learners become the global citizens that this century needs them

to be, and one way to do it is to get them to learn about these issues, as they are still prominent today (Interview with Rachel Roth, p. 4).

This might result from the fact that Rachel is part of the queer community. However, it would be wrong to overgeneralize that only queer educators are knowledgeable about these issues. In reality, individuals from diverse backgrounds and experiences can possess a deep understanding of social justice and global issues. It is important for educators of all identities to actively engage in promoting inclusivity and fostering discussions on these topics in the classroom (Meyer, 2007; Merse, 2017).

4.2.2.2. Advocates of Queering ELT

The participants adamantly advocated for queering ELT practices. They have provided several reasons for why teachers should queer their ELT practices. The most important reason why the participants were motivated to queer their ELT lessons was the positive impact this would have on queer and questioning students.

Speaking from experience, my own foreign language learning process helped me in so many ways when I was searching for answers about myself. I also found myself immersed in any type of queer literature I could find online (I couldn't afford a hard copy), queer movies, and even following queer artists. Overall, I think English as my L2 helped me better keep in touch with what is happening around the world and provided me with a lot of information on the LGBTQ+ community and media. (Interview with Rachel Roth, p. 5)

Kamala explained that queer and questioning students might feel alienated in their culture and look for representation in the target culture. She added that this representation could come in movies, series, programs, or literature with queer elements. Queer or questioning students can learn and connect with the target culture more easily by being exposed to the target language and culture through these forms of media. Interestingly, this was reportedly Rachel's learning experience. As mentioned in her profile, Rachel comes from a family where she could not express herself fully. This was also the case in her school life until she started following queer content in the media using her English. Her questions about her identity led her

to find answers in the target language's cultural content, as her own culture did not contain any.

I think the presence of a queer classroom would constitute learning that is free of binary oppositions, which would go against the grain of a heteronormative discourse. (First Qualitative Survey of Oliver Queen, p. 2)

The participants also touched upon empowering queering students by validating and showing respect for their experiences (Shih, 2018). They argued that incorporating diverse perspectives into the curriculum would empower queer and questioning students. Research has also supported this. Language instructors frequently deal with students from disadvantaged populations (Varghese et al., 2016), and language itself plays an important part in the process of empowerment and marginalization (Guerrettaz & Zahler, 2017; Varghese et al., 2016). Incorporating queer literature, history, and relevant topics into teachings, according to the participants, would not only validate the experiences of queer students but also educate all students about the struggles of the queer community. Nelson (2010) also noted that non-queer students may need to consider the social ramifications of speaking or writing in a manner that unconsciously defines other people as necessarily heterosexual. This finding aligns with related research. Similarly, Dumas (2010) stated that everyone in the classroom can benefit from an open discussion of LGBT issues and identities, not just those who belong to a group with a minority gender or sexual identity.

The participants discussed another reason why they believed queering ELT practices to be highly necessary. They all asserted that there was a significant relationship between learning English as a foreign language and queer identity formation.

In my opinion, language learning and understanding queer issues are related. Since, in our culture, it is not taught, people who see different cultures and learn about them tend to understand themselves and explore their identity more easily because they start questioning their identity and come out of the closet maybe more easily (Interview with Kamala Khan, trans., p. 2).

They revealed that language learning encompasses a wide range of activities, including the acquisition of new vocabulary, the development of students'

communication skills, and the exploration of queer themes that can contribute to the strengthening of students' sense of self. As a result, they agreed that the processes of forming an identity and learning a language are intrinsically linked. Related research demonstrates that learning English can be extremely beneficial, particularly for queer students, for a variety of reasons, including moving to countries that are more accepting of queer people, securing better employment, and increasing one's chances of societal acceptance along with an increase in income (Suebkinnon & Sukying, 2021).

Overall, I think English as my L2 helped me better keep in touch with what is happening around the world and provided me with a lot of information on the LGBTQ+ community and media. It goes without saying that queer students might also be weirded out if they are not provided with a safe learning environment. (Interview with Rachel Roth, p. 5)

Rachel related her personal experience as a queer language learner and discussed that having the target language to use in response to queer content on various social media platforms not only helped her have a higher level of English proficiency but also allowed her to negotiate her identity in a relatively safe space. This is in line with the literature as well, as Butler (1995) expounds that identities are established through social interactions to a considerable degree. Tarrayo & Salonga (2022) also emphasize the recognition that gender identity is an essential component of an individual's identity and lived experiences. Language plays a crucial role in constructing and negotiating gender identity, making it necessary to address these issues in the language classroom (p. 2). By incorporating gender-related discussions, activities, and materials, ELT educators can highlight humans' central role and interpersonal relationships (Pakuła et al., 2015; Tarrayo & Salonga, 2022, p. 2). This approach recognizes the interdependence of language, gender, and human experiences, contributing to a more comprehensive and inclusive learning environment.

Another reason why the participants were highly supportive of queering ELT practices was because they all asserted that students were ready to talk about queer issues. In fact, the participants argued that their students would participate more with rigor and renewed interest, and this would help them increase their proficiency.

Kamala mentioned one incident where her students thought she would harbor homophobic feelings towards their trans classmate who was having issues with another teacher when she was in her first year. She wanted to set the record straight, so she brought the subject up in class. Her students were highly motivated to participate in the discussion in that lesson and in lessons after that.

In fact, conducting my lessons with this class was very difficult before we talked about this issue. That day, my students got the opportunity to learn about my point of view on life and the people around us. After that lesson, that classroom became one of my favorites because their attitude towards me completely changed (Interview with Kamala Khan, trans., p. 2).

The participants stated that although some students might react negatively to the introduction of queer elements into the classroom, the majority would want to voice their opinions and would use the target language to do so. The willingness of students to discuss queer-related topics is consistent with relevant literature. Complementing the findings here, Evripidou and Çavuşoğlu (2014) discovered that instructors believed a 'controversial' topic such as sexual orientation would attract students' attention (p. 7). Moreover, multiple studies found that students of both younger and older ages are willing to talk about and engage in discussions about queer identities because they or a member of their family are queer or because they have encountered queer individuals or content on social media (Merse, 2014; Moita-Lopes, 2006; Paiz, 2019).

The participants mentioned the importance of cultivating global English learners (Yacob et al., 2022) as the final reason why they believe queering ELT is necessary. They explained that as students interact with individuals from various parts of the globe, they encounter a variety of gender and sexual identity expressions (Yacob et al., 2022). In order to foster an inclusive and tolerant learning environment, it is essential to recognize and respect queer identities. By queering ELT, educators can ensure that these identities are acknowledged and celebrated in the classroom. This not only promotes acceptance and understanding among students but also prepares them to navigate a diverse and interconnected world outside of the classroom. These findings emphasize the importance of equipping ELT teachers with the necessary

knowledge and skills to create inclusive and safe learning environments for queer students.

Making queer issues acknowledged and open to discussion may help the students get to know themselves better or be more insightful and understanding as people in the big bad 21st century. We have this huge responsibility as EFL teachers to help our learners become the global citizens that this century needs them to be, and one way to do it is to get them to learn about these issues, as they are still prominent today. (Interview with Rachel Roth, p. 4)

Overall, it is understood that the participants were strong advocates for queering ELT practices because they believed that it would significantly empower queer and questioning students as they would be represented and visible in the classroom. Moreover, it was found that the participants recognize the relationship between language learning and identity formation, and they supported queering ELT because they believed the students would be negotiating their identities in a safe environment in their class. They also asserted that queering ELT would help queer and non-queer students in their academic success. They agreed that students would be much more intrigued by taboo topics like queer issues. Also, as teachers who want to cultivate global students, the participants revealed that queering ELT would help them produce global learners because it would expose students to diverse perspectives and foster a greater understanding of different cultures and identities, which would increase both queer and non-queer students' levels of proficiency. Additionally, the participants believed that queering ELT would encourage critical thinking and empathy among students, as they would be challenged to question societal norms and develop a more inclusive mindset. However, despite wanting to queer their ELT practices, the participants seemed to only have surface level knowledge of queer pedagogy and queering ELT. Thus, they require proper training on queering ELT in order to effectively implement these practices in their classrooms. This training should include a deep understanding of critical theory, critical pedagogy, queer theory, queer pedagogy, and queering ELT practice frameworks. The experiences and needs of queer students, and strategies for creating inclusive and affirming learning environments can be discussed in a forum created for teachers.

4.2.3. RQ3: Queering ELT Practices in Actuality

The third research question was, 'Do Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers queer their ELT practices? If yes, how? If not, why not?'. The theme Reservations about Queering ELT helped answer this question. This topic developed when participants discussed their reservations, fears, and obstacles they were frightened to confront while queering their lessons. As a result, the keywords and phrases used to create this theme were "sadly, concerns, anxieties," etc. Despite their high support for queering ELT, the participants are not queering their lessons and have never done so previously. There are four widely reported problems that participants saw as significant roadblocks to actually queer their ELT practices. These difficulties are listed in order of frequency, beginning with the most commonly stated.

4.2.3.1. Lack of Proper Training

The participants self-proclaimed that they lacked proper training on how to include queer themes in their lessons. They also added that they would not know what to do in a sudden, homophobic moment. This was perceived as the biggest obstacle for them with regards to queering ELT.

I would like to know more about queer issues because I find myself insufficient on this topic as a teacher. I might have some students who are queer, and I do not want to offend them with my lack of information since they already assume that I am homophobic because I wear hijab. Thus, I would like to talk about it if I feel more confident about my knowledge. (Interview with Kamala Khan, trans., p. 2)

The other participants also brought up points similar to Kamala's about not feeling knowledgeable enough to incorporate queer elements into lessons throughout the dataset. They emphasized that they would incorporate queer issues into the classroom if they felt like they had sufficient knowledge of how. This bears a striking resemblance to the findings of Evripidou and Çavuşoğlu (2014), in which the teachers also self-report having insufficient training regarding queer pedagogy in ELT as an obstacle to their attempts at queering their lessons.

Moreover, all the participants claimed that there was a really high possibility that they had queer students in their classroom, and they could not be sure, but they still wanted to cater to their needs and avoid alienating them further due to their inadequate queer pedagogical knowledge. In line with this, all the participants also admitted to being grateful for not having a homophobic incident in the classroom because they would not know how to handle it. 'I never had a homophobic incident in the classroom, and hopefully never will.' (Interview with Oliver Queen, p. 4). It can be emphasized that the participants are aware of their inadequate knowledge of queer pedagogy and queering ELT. 'Thankfully, I have never had a homophobic incident in my classroom. I hope it stays that way (Interview with Rachel Roth, p. 7). Studies indicate that teachers encounter a common obstacle when attempting to address homophobic incidents, and their efforts are frequently ineffective due to a lack of comprehension of the LGBTQ community (Rhodes, 2019; Macdonald et al., 2014).

The participants' beliefs that some of their students or the students' families and friends are most likely queer (Pakuła et al., 2015; Evripidou, 2021) and their lack of official training on queer pedagogy is an insurmountable obstacle on their way to queer their ELT practices because they might accidentally offend students or fail to properly address sudden homophobic remarks are increasingly echoed in other research as well. In addition, teachers may be inclined to prioritize cultural sensitivity to their students' home-country values, which can hinder their ability to address such issues effectively (Liddicoat, 2009; Macdonald et al., 2014; Nelson, 2009; Rhodes & Coda, 2017). While teachers desired to be inclusive, Nelson (2006) discovered that certain factors prevented them. In particular, they battled with supporting students who are coming out, responding to discriminatory remarks in the classroom, and teaching issues related to sexual identity, which they deemed outside their expertise. These findings from Nelson's (2006) study are consistent with those that were discovered in the current study.

In addition to these factors, it was also found that teachers' reluctance to confront homophobic statements directly or comprehensively has been linked to the topic's perceived lack of relevance to their students' lives (Nelson, 2009; Rhodes & Coda,

2017). However, this finding was not supported in the study at hand. The participants clearly stated that queer issues had a clear place in their ELT classrooms. This may suggest that having personal experiences with queer individuals may have increased the participants' awareness of the relatedness of the notion in the EFL classroom (Sakallı & Ugurlu, 2002).

The fact that sexual diversity training was omitted from teacher training programs (Ferfolja & Hopkins, 2013; Rudoe, 2010) is a studied fact. Robinson and Ferfolja (2001) argued that instructors need training to combat the homophobic culture that exists in schools. Dykes & Delpont (2017) discovered that nine of the ten participants in their study stated that they had never received training in interacting with sexually diverse individuals during their pre-service education (p. 141). Paiz (2019) maintained that because the field of ELT has not adequately addressed how we prepare educators to queer their practice—to create spaces where all identities are problematized in relation to dominant social discourses—LGBT+ individuals continue to be invisible in many settings. This circumstance reinforces dominant heteronormative discourse. "Therefore, queering ESL/EFL teaching must begin with teacher preparation." (Paiz, 2019, p. 270). The reported lack of training contributes to a need for training for the teachers.

4.2.3.2. Anxiety Over Socio-Political Pressures and Job Insecurity

The participants admitted to being highly apprehensive about queering ELT because of the socio-political pressures they feel evident in their society, which might result in being fined, sued, or charged or ostracized in other ways (Ördem & Ulum, 2019; Özbay & Öktem, 2021).

Two adults of any gender can choose to have a relationship as long as both parties are willing. This does not concern anyone at all." To be honest, I cannot go beyond that; I have to think about the political constraint that we have all been under for a long time now (First Qualitative Survey of Barbara Gordon, p. 2).

As an experienced EFL instructor, Barbara was concerned about her safety and security and the potential consequences she would face if she started to queer her lessons in Türkiye due to the current political climate. She added that she should approach queering with caution to avoid stiff consequences. The other participants mentioned similar fears.

These are not unfounded fears, as Tuncer (2023) and Apaydin & Çoban (2022) posited that free speech is no longer free in Türkiye. This is also not a unique case. Schools, ministries of education, and other educational policymaking institutions are conservative and uphold and maintain gender binary norms and heteronormative thinking due to political, cultural, and economic forces (Bragg et al., 2018; Coda, 2017). Rich (1980) explains this as 'compulsory heterosexuality' (p. 631). Rich (1980) posited that heteronormativity is dictatorial in its influence over people's preferences, affiliations, and character. This pervasive social constraint oppresses people's desires, orientations, and individuality (Althusser, 1994).

One negative outcome of all of this would be us facing homophobia from our students, no matter how hard we tried to convey appropriate messages. Depending on the institution, we might also face resistance to cooperation or even rejection from the administration. (First Qualitative Survey of Rachel Roth, p. 3)

Rachel stated her fears about running into problems with her administration, even being fired as punishment for queering her ELT practices. Kamala and Barbara also expressed these worries, but Oliver didn't mention them. Most likely, this is because Oliver had already lined up another job during the data collection process.

The other three participants revealed that the precarity of their work was an obstacle that kept them from queering their ELT practices, as they did not want to have issues with administration or get fired. There is a widespread fear that introducing sexual diversity to the curriculum would result in an adverse reaction from the administrators of the educational institution, as well as the possibility that their jobs would be jeopardized (Curran, 2002; Thein, 2013; Paiz, 2021). Very similar to the findings at hand, Güney (2018) also demonstrated that pre-service teachers at

relatively conservative schools were less likely to discuss queer issues because they feared receiving negative feedback from conservative students, parents, and ultimately the administration with the possibility of being fired.

4.2.3.3. The Burden of Heteronormative Materials and Curriculum

The participants raised the issue of having heteronormative coursebooks and curriculum. This was perceived as a major obstacle because the heteronormative curriculum was packed and did not leave room for teachers to be more independent. Instead, they had a tight schedule to help the students pass the EPE. Moreover, heteronormative coursebooks were described as a big problem because the coursebooks were supposed to guide the teachers. The heteronormative content needing adaptation and editing (queering) is depicted as another problem because the adapting would be done on the teacher's own time, unpaid, with their already busy schedule.

Our coursebook often includes stories or examples from a male-dominated perspective, and the characters are almost always able-bodied, straight, and of British origin. There are some examples of women in the workforce, though those examples fall short of encouraging gender equity, in my opinion. When it comes to sexual equity, the book is totally heteronormative. There is neither acknowledgement nor inclusivity in this aspect (Interview with Rachel Roth, p. 8).

This is parallel to the research regarding heteronormative EFL textbooks. Heteronormativity dominates ELT materials, especially coursebooks, for commercial reasons (Goldstein, 2015; Gray, 2013; Merse, 2015; Pakula et al., 2015). Furthermore, Paiz (2015) found heteronormativity in all proficiency levels, extended reading works, and textbooks. Unless the teacher queers the classroom, students of all competence levels will encounter educational materials that reify conventional worldviews. Rachel also suggests ways of queering a heteronormative text.

For example, if there is a listening text in which two characters are talking about their boyfriends and their resolutions for the new year, maybe in the follow up discussions we can also discuss how different the situation might be for LGBTQ+ couples. If we are making second conditionals, we can give

examples such as “If the world were a safer place for everyone... /... if gay marriage was legal in my country, ...” etc. (Interview with Rachel Roth, p. 8).

Rachel suggested problematizing the current materials with methods like 'talking around the text' (Pakuła et al., 2015) by asking students to think about a queer couple instead of the straight couple or by treating grammar example sentences as 'queer teaching moments' (Merse, 2015).

The participants' awareness of the heteronormative coursebooks is echoed in other research, both domestically and globally. Mainstream publishers are conservative and don't want to alienate their domestic and foreign markets (Motschenbacher, 2010; Paiz, 2015). In the Turkish context, Kocaman and Selvi (2021) found that in-house materials depict a heteronormative world in an explicitly biased manner, just like global materials. The absence of LGBTQ+ lives and experiences contribute to the institutionalized suppression of LGBTQ+ individuals and their experiences (p. 79). Mainstream ESL textbook publishers will likely stay conservative for the foreseeable future, according to Paiz (2017), and this is mostly due to economic concerns. That is, in an effort to maximize profits by tapping into a larger pool of possible customers, publishers are not inclined to queer the content they make commercially accessible (p. 15).

The participants also mentioned jam-packed heteronormative curricula as a problem due to their heteronormative content and inflexibility. The participants argued that a heteronormative curriculum could hinder students' capacity to completely engage with the curriculum, participate in class discussions, and experience a sense of belonging within the educational community (Coda, 2017). The current literature on this concurs with the need for a queered curriculum. Nodin (2022) highlights the positive effects of a queered curriculum on students, arguing that the inclusion of sexual minority representation in the curriculum fosters a sense of historical context and advancement in the struggle for LGBT+ rights among LGBT+ students. Similarly, exposure to these concepts, historical contexts, and influential figures provides non-LGBT+ students with a "breath of fresh air" by introducing them to

representations they may be less acclimated to in academic settings (Nodin, 2022, p. 24).

So, ideally, it would be my job to make sure that my students come across examples that do not disregard the diversity that we have. This once again comes down to me having to do better to supplement, adapt, replace, or substitute the activities or examples for more inclusive and safer options (Interview with Rachel Roth, p. 8).

Since published coursebooks aren't very flexible, teacher-made materials stand out as valuable tools for pushing outside gender bias and heteronormativity in the language classroom (Merse, 2015; Pakuła et al., 2015, as cited in Kocaman & Selvi, 2021, p. 80), especially in places like Türkiye where oppressive policies are still common. This study found, however, that this could be potentially discouraging for teachers because they do not feel competent or confident enough to exercise their agency and create queer-inclusive materials. Moreover, the additional unpaid work was found to be another reason for the reluctance of the participants. They cited the fact that they would have to review, adapt, and modify the curriculum and materials on their own time. This extra work would be burdensome for them. Similarly, Paiz (2017) explained that, due to teaching and institutional service, EFL teachers have limited time. Thus, reviewing and updating teaching materials may be difficult. To reflect on LGBT identities and experiences, educators must critically analyze the content, language, and views in the materials. Research, curriculum development, and collaboration with colleagues or external resources take time and effort. Language educators may need to prioritize other duties. Thus, EFL materials may remain obsolete, missing inclusive representations, and failing to accommodate queer students' needs (p. 352). The need for queered materials and queered curricula is therefore highlighted in the study.

4.2.4. RQ4: Conceptualizing Queering ELT in a Lesson Plan

The fourth research question was, 'How do Turkish tertiary EFL prep-school teachers conceptualize queering ELT in their own classrooms?' This question was answered using the theme Strategies for Queering ELT. This theme emerged from an analysis

of the participants' queered lesson plans (Appendices D1, D2, D3, and D4). In Table 9, a summary of the participants' queered lesson plans' characteristics is provided to enhance the reader's understanding of the lesson plans. This summary was created through an in-depth analysis of each lesson plan, followed by summarizing and paraphrasing. The table has been paraphrased for legibility, but the words in italic are taken directly from the lesson plans to draw the reader's attention to the language that will be discussed.

Table 9

Summary of the Characteristics of the Queered Lesson Plans

Characteristics	Barbara	Oliver	Kamala	Rachel
Lesson Plan Type	Freeform	Traditional	Freeform	Traditional
Class Profile	20 Upper-Intermediate	25 Beginner or Elementary	Not Mentioned	Intermediate or Upper
Materials	Not Mentioned	T-prepared handouts	T-prepared reading text	Current coursebook (queered) and T-prepared handouts
Theme & Topic	Not Mentioned	1)Adverbs of frequency 2)Daily routines 3)Family members 4)Present simple tense	Learning queer jargon/queer terms and raising awareness	Family & Relationships
Objectives	1)To understand the perspectives of 'others' 2)Expressing opinions for the sake of others in a casual way	1)Identifying adverbs of frequency 2)Integrating queer families into regular discussions about families	1)Being able to use queer jargon in the target language 2)Assessing and criticizing stereotypes of Turkish culture 3)Using inclusive language in casual conversations	1)Categorizing family members and relationships 2)Deconstructing familial gender stereotypes in Türkiye 3)Showcasing the validity of queer families

Table 9. (continued)

Anticipated Problems	Some stds may not want to relate to perspectives of other genders	Stds may be uncomfortable to read and talk about a queer household	1)Some stds might disrupt the lesson with homophobic remarks 2)Queer stds might feel offended	1)Their parents might complain to the administration 2)The administration might not support T
Anticipated Solutions	Stds might be assigned to be celebrities from the opposite gender	T can explain the importance of these issues, being approachable	Not Mentioned	T should explicitly intervene and stop homophobic remarks
Suggested Queering Practices	Role-playing, problem-solving activity where groups are presented with a problem, and they try to solve it while <i>impersonating</i> someone from the opposite gender or a different religion or a lifestyle choice (like a vegan) (queer characters can come at a later date)	1)Integration of queer content in a reading text about two families (one queer) 2)Use of inclusive language 3)Showing the normalcy of the existence of queer families through use of language	1)Integration of queer content in a pre-reading vocabulary and in a reading text about ‘queer jargon’ 2)Problematizing stereotypes in the Turkish culture in a problem-solving activity about the problems of minorities in Türkiye	1)Problematizing the text in the heteronormative coursebook 2)Editing and adapting the text 3)Use of inclusive language 4)Problematizing the stereotypical gender roles in a traditional family to discuss queer families 5)Integration of queer content 6)Showing the <i>normalcy</i> of the existence of queer families
Interaction	T-Stds Stds-Stds (Group Work)	T-Stds Stds-Stds (Group and Pair Work)	T-Stds Stds-Stds (Group Work)	T-Stds Stds-Stds (Group Work)

Overall, the participants came up with four queering ELT strategies, which they mentioned in their activities and tasks. These are: using inclusive language; incorporating queer elements and themes in activities and tasks; problematizing heteronormative notions; and *usualizing* (Bollas, 2021) queer existence. These recommendations were not methodical; they were generalized.

Making sure that the language to be modeled does not only address men and women and that gender-neutral terms are used instead of stereotypical examples. Instead of, for example, "What are some of the communication problems girlfriends/boyfriends face in a relationship?" -> the use of the word partners (Second Qualitative Survey (Lesson Plan) of Rachel Roth, p. 3).

Except for Barbara, all the participants recommended using and teaching inclusive language as a way to queer ELT. The participants acknowledged that inclusive language honors everyone and fosters a welcoming, accepting, and discrimination-free learning atmosphere in their interviews. Also, they revealed that inclusive language prepares students for real-world English-speaking interactions, which they need to strengthen their language skills through diverse language and cultural views. Similar to this study, Rhodes (2019) discusses inclusive language strategies for educators. Rhodes (2019) suggests that educators investigate their curricula exhaustively to identify instances in which non-normative gender and sexual identities may be neglected or omitted. Particularly, instructors should consider how classroom language may reinforce binary identities. For example, do they use "ladies and gentlemen" instead of more inclusive and non-gender-specific terms such as "folks" or "people"? In addition, teachers should evaluate whether any personal activities could potentially cause distress for LGBTQ students and, if so, investigate methods to reframe those activities to support students at various phases of identity development. Teachers must also facilitate students' comprehension of the gendered nature of language and introduce alternative vocabulary to prevent the reinforcement of normative gender and sexual identities (Rhodes, 2019, p. 5).

The lesson can be an extended version of a role play activity. Say, there are five groups of four students. The estimated gender of the students in each group had better be even; two female and two male students preferably. Also,

I assume that I do not know the sexual orientation of the students if there are any who identify themselves as LGBTQI+. Different situations/ contexts are given to each group. For instance, in one group students are asked to make an outline of a group of old friends who are trying to decide on an event/ activity to take part in for the weekend. They take notes of what things to discuss. They are expected to impersonate a character determined and defined by themselves, so they need to write their notes accordingly. After they discuss the main ideas, students are asked to work on a dialogue. It is expected to be a realistic one. After they perform their dialogue, they are told to divert the gender of their character. What is different now? Do you want to change the activities/ events that you have wholeheartedly supported as your own gender? The teacher at this point asks the students not to change the activities/ background they have chosen, but still support them in a determined way – despite the fact that they have to change their genders. (Second Qualitative Survey (Lesson Plan) of Barbara Gordon, p. 1)

Just like her belief of prioritizing gender binary issues over queer issues that can be found all throughout the data, in this role play activity, students 'impersonate' the other gender.

Additionally, if the class has a sufficient number of high achievers, the teacher may also ask two of the students to impersonate LGBTQI+ individuals. Frankly, I need to state that my aim is not to marginalize queers, but even without it, this may be a good step towards paving the way to queer one of the following lessons later on (Second Qualitative Survey (Lesson Plan) of Barbara Gordon, p. 1).

Barbara admitted that the problematization of gender binary roles is pre-requisite for the eventual bringing of queer elements to the classroom. As established earlier, queer pedagogy problematizes interconnected issues together; therefore, there is no need to prioritize one issue over another. Furthermore, looking at the activity through the lens of critical pedagogy and queer pedagogy shows that the activity may be a surface level attempt at Freire's (2005) Praxis, where learners are encouraged to apply their knowledge to real-world scenarios and take action to combat social injustices and inequities to be empowered as they reflect on their actions. The rest of the participants' activities revealed that they found queered activities to be useful in making language learning more relevant, interesting, and engaging for students. This was significantly supported in the related literature. Coda (2017) found that many respondents featured discussion exercises on same-sex marriage and adoption rights

based on newspaper stories, broadcasts, and student research in their lessons. Debates were often employed in spoken activities with advanced English language competence students. The consensus was that these courses would be based on class discussions supplemented by appropriate print and broadcast media sources; furthermore, talks needed to be held culturally relevant, respectfully, and nonjudgmentally. Coda (2017) claims that, with language skills, teaching LGBTQ+ concerns may engender substantially constructive results. Teachers who have used these materials have seen an uptick in students' critical thinking, an expansion of their understanding of other cultures, and decreased prejudice towards the LGBTQ+ community.

“What are the roles of members of a family?” -> Making students aware that we often stereotype people and assign roles to them based solely on their genders helping them realize that this type of attitude reduces people into stereotypes and robs them of any non-normativity they might be embracing. Not addressing the members of a family as only consisting of a father, mother, and children, but including LBGTQ+ family structures into the discussion as well (Second Qualitative Survey (Lesson Plan) of Rachel Roth, p. 2).

The other participants also tried problematizing heteronormative notions, like Rachel. These findings indicate that the participants might employ the Controversies Approach and Discourse Inquiry Approach in bringing sexual-identity content to their classrooms (Nelson, 2006, p. 360-361). Sexual identities are seen as socially constructed throughout history in the Controversies Approach. Heterosexism, or the institutionalized discrimination of those who are seen to be LGBT, is the focus of this theory. Focusing on social concerns such as same-sex marriage and banning anti-LGBT statements, the course encourages students to become more invested in social justice and human rights issues (p. 360). The discourse inquiry approach, which was proven to be the most successful, conceptualizes sexual identities as performative and is concerned with heteronormative discourses. By participating in activities that include deconstructing socio-sexual identities and disparities in daily discourses and public life, students will be better able to analyze linguistic and cultural actions of sexual identity (p. 361). Given the perceptions of the findings and

their problematizing of the traditional gender roles in their lesson plans, it can be inferred that they would use a combination of these two approaches.

The queer text depicts the daily routine of a lesbian or gay couple with a child without a dominant figure (in contrast to say a patriarchal one). Both texts will use positive adjectives to describe these households in order to emphasize that both can be considered 'normal' or 'good'. The students will be asked to answer T/F questions regarding the state of these families. Instead of contrasting these families through positive and negative adjectives, they will be asked questions that show the normality of both. (Second Qualitative Survey (Lesson Plan) of Oliver Queen, p. 2).

The participants also recommended incorporating queer elements into classroom discussions and materials. The participants' integration of queer people into texts and activities and lesson objectives in their lesson plans demonstrate how including queer narratives, perspectives, and topics in EFL classes promotes diversity, challenges stereotypes, and fosters empathy. It validates and includes queer students while preparing all students for intercultural communication in the real world and cultivating global citizenship. Notably, they repeatedly referred to not calling attention to the queer identity, acting as if the queer identity's presence in the lesson was normal and routine. The participants' perceptions of the lesson's normalization of queer identities align with the idea of *usualization* as an approach to inclusive education (Bollas, 2021). This strategy entails acquainting students with the presence of what must be normalized, such as queer or LGBTQIA+ identities, in various sociocultural contexts and over time. By queering ELT, a secure space can be created for both students and instructors, allowing for the exploration of previously problematic ideas through critical engagement. This process acknowledges the existence of LGBTQIA+ individuals and emphasizes the non-threatening nature of their differences (Bollas, 2021, p. 137). Similar to the findings, Gray (2021) argues that integrating queered literary texts can effectively combat the erasure of LGBTQIA+ individuals by providing LGBTQIA+ students with opportunities for self-recognition and affirmation. In addition, it allows non-LGBTQIA+ students to diversify their perspectives and cultivate empathy. Page's (2017a) research demonstrates that incorporating literature with LGBTQIA+ themes and characters into English language arts supports this idea. Instruction can cultivate an

understanding of homophobia and heteronormativity and an appropriate response to them.

In conclusion, the four Turkish EFL preparatory school instructors from the context institution want to queer their ELT practices because they believe queer students will be empowered through representation and non-queer students will be ready and interested in more participation, so both queer and non-queer students will enhance their proficiency while negotiating their identities in a safe learning environment. However, they need extensive training in critical theory, critical pedagogy, queer theory, and queer pedagogy to be able to effectively queer their ELT practices. Even without extensive training on queering ELT, the participants were able to recommend strategies to queer their ELT lessons. Using inclusive language and incorporating queered activities and tasks, problematizing heteronormative understanding, and normalizing the existence of queer relationships were recommended. However, they are hesitant to implement these and other strategies because they are aware of the blatant and lethal queerphobia in their community, and they lack the knowledge and resources necessary for queering ELT practices alone. They are in a predicament because they are aware of queer issues and wish to help, but they must also protect their livelihoods. They require governmental and institutional support for changes in heteronormative policies.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS

5.0. Presentation

In the final chapter, conclusions from the study, recommendations for future research and limitations of the study are presented and discussed.

5.1. Conclusion

This qualitative case study set out to explore the perceptions of Turkish EFL preparatory school teachers regarding the queering of their English Language Teaching practices. The theoretical framework this study was based on included Critical Theory, Critical Pedagogy, Queer Theory, Queer Pedagogy and Queering ELT practices. These concepts and related studies informed the design and implementation of the study at hand. This study addresses the serious lack of queer-informed studies in the Turkish education contexts.

To collect data for answering these questions, qualitative surveys, semi-structured in-depth interviews and mini-training on queering ELT were employed. The research was conducted at an English language preparatory program at a foundation university in Ankara, Türkiye. Participating in the study were four instructors with diverse personal, educational, and professional backgrounds. The findings were analyzed using inductive and deductive thematic analysis (hybrid perspective). The study's findings were derived from the data, the existing literature, and the theoretical framework in response to the posed research questions. As a result of the data analysis, the following conclusions have been drawn:

Firstly, the participants showcased different levels of knowledge regarding queer identities, terminology, and issues that queer people face, especially in Türkiye. All participants agreed that queer individuals in Türkiye are not safe, and queer students in Türkiye might not feel safe in their educational contexts either. The lack of safety, inclusivity, and representation might negatively affect queer students. Notably, the participants scarcely mentioned queer terminology, and they did not provide details of queer identities. Moreover, when asked about achieving sexual equity in the classroom, the participants answered with strategies for achieving sexual equality, and from their answers, it was understood that they discussed sexual equality instead of equity. They kept referring to their lack of specific knowledge systematically and effectively queering their English language lessons. In fact, some of them suggested that teachers get special training on how to deal with homophobic outbursts in the classroom, promote inclusivity and representation in class discussions, and effectively queer ELT materials and curriculum. The participants demonstrated that they are somewhat knowledgeable about queer people and issues. They argued that ideally, queering ELT should be done systematically and with support from the administration. However, they require training on queer issues as they keep mentioning issues of gender roles and others because they either lack the knowledge or the experience to relate to queer issues in their classrooms. Consequently, they did not know about queering ELT and have not done so, but they were very open to the idea. Even though they mixed up sexual equity with sexual equality, their answers suggested that they wanted to create a safe and inclusive environment for their students. Overall, it can be concluded that the participants ought to receive formal, systematic training to learn about diversity, equity, inclusion, and queering English Language Teaching practices.

Secondly, according to the participants, the current Turkish political and cultural climate views queer individuals extremely negatively. Therefore, one of the participants stated that queering ELT might end in unemployment or litigation. This is one of several reasons why the participants have reservations about queering ELT. The overarching one is related to how Turkish queer community is persecuted in social, financial, and political ways in the Turkish society. The other ones are a

subset of this big hesitancy. The participants discussed that they lack the necessary knowledge on how to effectively queer their lessons and that they need training. They fear backlash from their administration; they are hesitant to teach queered ELT lessons because there might be classroom management issues; and they feel that they are not equipped to deal with homophobic remarks. Furthermore, the participants explain that the current heteronormative materials and curriculum would have to be adapted, which would result in extra unpaid work for the teachers. The related literature also mentions challenges due to heteronormative materials and curriculum, a lack of administrative support, and discouragement stemming from socio-political pressures. Notably, other studies have revealed that some teachers find that there is no relationship between clear identities and language learning; however, in this study, the participants draw clear lines between language learning and queer identities. It is understood that the participants have hesitations as a direct result of their teaching country's political and cultural relationship with queer people. An acknowledgement of the existence and struggles of queer students and steps taken to remedy this by the institution's administration might significantly alleviate the participants' reservations.

Thirdly, it was discovered that, despite their reservations, the participants were motivated to queer ELT lessons for multiple reasons. The participants acknowledge a direct link between identity formation and language acquisition. Students can discuss and negotiate their identities through the lens of a new culture and language in the language classroom. Therefore, they argued that if a student feels safe, comfortable, and respected when discussing their identities, they will be more attentive, interested, and make greater efforts to use the target language. In addition, the participants agreed that promoting a safe and inclusive learning environment was conducive to enhancing the well-being and success of all students. Moreover, some participants stated unequivocally that queer students would attend and participate more in the lessons if they were accorded the acknowledgement and respect that would result from queering ELT. Also, the participants agreed that while some students may react negatively to queering ELT, the majority may react positively. The participant with more than ten years of teaching experience exemplified this by explaining that most

students are interested in queer-themed discussion topics, so they participate more in class and attempt to express their ideas in the target language. These results indicate that participants are aware of the relationship between students' mental health and academic achievement, as well as the relationship between students' mental health and their gender and sexual identity safety.

Fourthly, the data revealed that the participants proposed numerous ideas and suggestions for queering ELT in the context of Turkish preparatory schools. These ideas and recommendations were gathered through the participants' queered lesson plans and their responses in interviews. In order to achieve queering ELT effectively, they asserted that teachers must possess qualities such as openness, respect, fairness, and integrity. They emphasized the importance of using inclusive language in all classroom discussions and materials. They affirmed that inclusive language usage will encourage students to think critically about social and cultural stereotypes. In addition, three of the participants suggested in their lesson plans that queer individuals and elements should not draw attention to themselves and should be as normalized as possible. According to one participant, this meant that when answering questions about two families, one queer and one straight, only differences in their daily routines, and not their identities or relationships, should be mentioned. However, according to another participant, this meant that tasks and activities based on gender roles and religious roles should serve as prerequisites, and the teacher should only introduce queer elements if the students respond positively to these tasks. The participants also noted that queer activities in which students question and criticize stereotypes or other values they have accepted as a given would be extremely beneficial for them. Collectively, these results suggest that although teachers have ideas about how to queer ELT, these ideas are extremely generalized and not at all systematic. Therefore, in addition to comprehensive training on queering ELT, exposure to queered ELT lessons and a forum for discussion of ideas are needed for the teachers to learn about how to systematically and effectively queer ELT.

5.2. Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

Based on the findings and the related literature, the following pedagogical implications are suggested for the stakeholders in the Turkish educational system regarding representation and visibility of queer individuals. It is of utmost significance to note that these recommendations are not a criticism of or trying to change overarching political dynamics of the Turkish context, but they are about keeping queer and questioning students alive, well, and academically successful while enriching non-queer students about kindness, compassion and globalized academic success.

Suggestions for policymakers

1. Policymakers might develop and encourage the development of curriculums that are inclusive, diverse, and representative of queer narratives, experiences, issues, and history. The information and awareness this can cultivate might help decrease fallacies about existence of queer people, harmful stereotypes, volatile discourse regarding their issues and perpetuation of violence towards them.
2. Policymakers may also mandate that every higher education context prioritizes safe school policies that explicitly prohibits students, teachers, and other staff from discriminating against queer students. Moreover, this can involve offering counselling and support services by counsellors who are educated in providing guidance to queer students.
3. Policymakers might fund and encourage queer-informed studies in the Turkish higher educational contexts. Abundant queer-informed studies in Türkiye might create individual policies that are evidence-based and scientific. These steps that policymakers may take might greatly help teachers to effectively queer their ELT practices.

Suggestions for material developers

1. Incorporating storylines that feature queer individuals may guide students to form and negotiate their identities in the classroom. Moreover, this would aid

teachers in queering their ELT practices as they would not need to spend extra time adapting the materials.

2. If the coursebooks are embedded with inclusive language, then students would learn the appropriate language items and would avoid being inappropriate in global contexts where the use inclusive language is becoming more and more dominant.
3. As also highlighted by the teachers in the study at hand, existing materials tend to be heteronormative and traditional. If material developers that cater to Turkish higher education institutions avoid stereotypes and making gender binary norms the default and not mentioning diverse individuals, families and relationships both the students and the teachers might relate to their materials more. This may lead to renowned interest and higher proficiency for the students while fixing one of the biggest obstacles for teachers to queer their ELT practices.

Suggestions for administrations in higher education contexts

1. Administrations can offer inclusive housing options, gender-neutral restrooms, fund queer resource centers and keep counsellors who are trained in queer issues on-campus and make inclusive policies an official part of their charters. They can also demonstrate these on their websites.
2. They can also provide safe zones in the EPP building. Providing these safe zones for queer students and teachers could increase their willingness to come to school and non-queer students and teachers' awareness and kindness towards them.
3. Alternative policies in attendance and in-class participation can be presented for queer and questioning students who might be having social issues. In addition, queer student societies can be formed in both EPP programs and on-campus.
4. Administrations can make decisions about curriculum, materials and exam items that reinforces embracing of diversity and visibility of queer identities. Most importantly, administrations can officially show support for teachers who want to queer their ELT practices by providing training on the subject.

Also, by prioritizing and protecting teachers who might receive complaints from parents because of their queering of their practices.

5. Administrations can also ease the workload and stress of part-time EFL instructors so that they can spare time and energy for queering their practices.

Suggestions for teacher educators

1. Teacher educators that train Turkish EFL teachers can provide undergraduate, graduate classes for pre-service teachers and professional development training for in-service teachers about how to queer their ELT lessons. These classes and training can explore Critical Theory, Critical Pedagogy, Queer Theory and Queer Pedagogy in depth. They can also discuss pedagogical implications of queering ELT practices.
2. Teacher educators actively encourage, observe and mentor in-service and pre-service teachers while they are queering their ELT practices.
3. Teacher educators can create a platform for teachers who are actively queering their ELT lessons where everyone can share their experiences, questions and ideas.

Suggestions for teachers

1. Teachers can start queering their ELT practices by teaching and promoting the use of inclusive language in their classrooms.
2. Teachers can problematize their current curricula and materials by asking students to provide examples from their own diverse lives and highlight how this does not match the heteronormative, binary thinking presented in the materials and in the curriculum.
3. Teachers can incorporate queer individuals, relationships, families, and stories to the materials and normalize their existence. Furthermore, they can guide students to critically think about what is considered 'normal' in the Turkish society.
4. As the Lingua Franca, English is heavily used in global discussions regarding laws, corporate mandates, educational policies and in the entertainment industry with regards to queer identities and issues. Teachers can show real-

life examples of these discussions to both increase the students' level of knowledge and awareness about queer existence and also to introduce them to the current globalized English.

5. As additional materials, teachers can recommend materials and content with queer elements to the students for them to study with outside of class.
6. Teachers can familiarize themselves with queering ELT research to increase their pedagogical knowledge.

To summarize, there are various ways to promote diversity and inclusion in educational settings. Policymakers adopting policies that protect queer students and teachers and increase education on queer existence would be momentous for teachers who queer their ELT practices. Moreover, material developers and teacher educators in the Turkish context can also focus on representation and visibility of queer elements. Providing teachers with training, adapting materials, creating safe zones, and incorporating queer identities into the curriculum are all potential solutions. Also, teachers can mention queer content media and literature as additional sources for student self-study. Finally, the administration might try to cater to individual challenges of queer students with laxer policies that might decrease their anxieties.

5.3. Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research Directions

1. This study investigated the perspectives of four EFL preparatory school instructors from the same institution on the queering of their ELT practices. In addition, the institution was a foundation university that operated similarly to a private university and was situated in the capital of Türkiye, Ankara. The purpose of the study was to present their narratives in their richness and contribute to the scant existing literature. Consequently, this study may be limited by the number of participants and the institution. Due to the fact that the contexts may differ, a study involving only public universities and one involving only private universities may both yield insightful results.
2. Only the perspectives of English Language Teaching instructors were examined. Perceptions of learners, administrators and teacher educators could

have been gathered. There is a significant need for studies that focus on all the stakeholders' perspectives on including queer pedagogy in the Turkish educational context.

3. This study examines the perceptions of only Turkish EFL preparatory school teachers. However, Türkiye accommodates a large number of foreign EFL teachers (in prep schools and other settings). Therefore, non-Turkish EFL instructors working in Turkish contexts should also be examined in order to draw conclusions regarding the impact of culture on the decision to queer ELT practices.
4. This study is conducted with introducing a mini queering ELT training to the participants. This has restricted their responses due to a lack of awareness and in-depth knowledge. A new study can be conducted before, during, and after queering ELT training for participants. This can demonstrate the impact of training on the perceptions and ideas of instructors and may yield vastly different results.
5. Participants in this study only report their own narratives independently. This could be a limitation. Queering ELT practices in these contexts may be better understood if studies include both participant self-reports and researcher observations of the participants' lessons. In addition to instructors' self-reports and researchers' observations of their lessons, the narratives of students in their classrooms can be analyzed to demonstrate the effects of queering ELT on both instructors and students.
6. The fear of backlash from the administration and the students/parents, the chosen heteronormative materials, and the lack of visibility and representation in the curriculum are discussed by the participants as reasons for why they have not queered their ELT lessons or why they hesitate to start. To address these findings, it may be useful to examine the perspectives of the administrations of Turkish preparatory school administrations on queering ELT practices, as participants cite administration backlash as their greatest concern regarding queering ELT.

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APPENDICES

A. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions

1. Please give me some personal background information, like your age, socioeconomic background, education, religion, political affiliation, marital status, etc.
2. How do you identify yourself in terms of gender and sexual orientation?
3. Do you think you have queer students in your classes? How do you know?
4. Have you ever discussed queer issues in your foreign language classes?
5. Would you want to discuss queer issues in your foreign language classes?
6. Do you think your institution (e.g., classes/department/campus) is safe for queer students?
7. In your opinion, does a queer student's identity affect their (foreign language) learning process? If yes, in what ways? If not, why not?
8. Do you think your answer would be different if the cultural environment you live in were different?
9. Let's accept values as a combination of beliefs, attitudes, perspectives, opinions, principles, and standards. Ideally, what values should a teacher have about queer students and discussing queer identities in the classroom?
10. Do you think teachers' personal values reflect their teaching practices? How so?
11. Which values are reflected in teaching practices? Please give me some examples.
12. Have you ever had a homophobic incident in your classroom? Please give some details. How did you handle it?
13. What can you do to achieve sexual equity in your classes?

B. FIRST and SECOND QUALITATIVE SURVEY

GUIDED REFLECTION FORM 1

Teacher's Name:

Date:

Question 1: What do you know about Queer people (an umbrella term for LGBTQI+) and their issues? You can talk about the meanings of their identity, their positions in society, the challenges they might face, the positive aspects of their lives etc.

Answer 1:

Question 2: What do you think about bringing/talking about queer issues into your classroom? In your opinion, what type of information must a teacher have to queer a lesson successfully? What might be the positive and negative outcomes of such a lesson?

Answer 2:

GUIDED REFLECTION FORM 2

Teacher's Name:

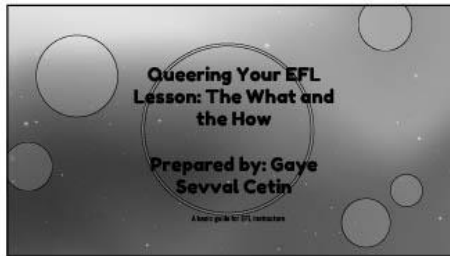
Date:

Question 1: Imagine you will **queer one of your lessons**. Create a general lesson plan and discuss your objectives, the most prominent activities, anticipated problems, solutions, etc. Would this be a successful lesson?

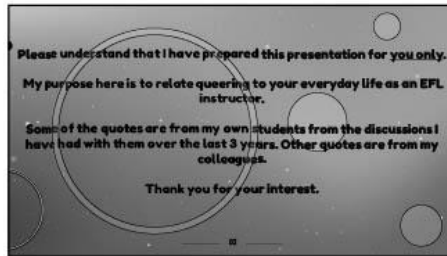
Answer 1:

C. MINI-TRAINING

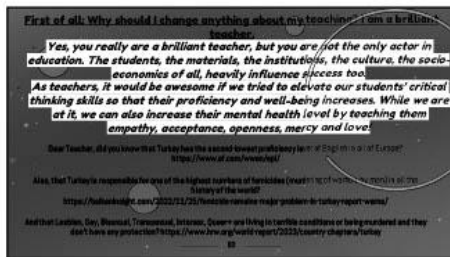
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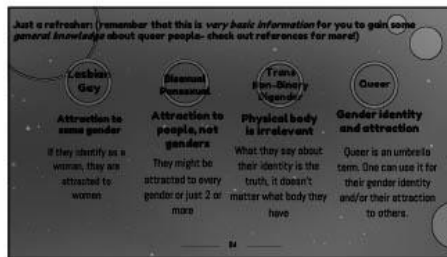
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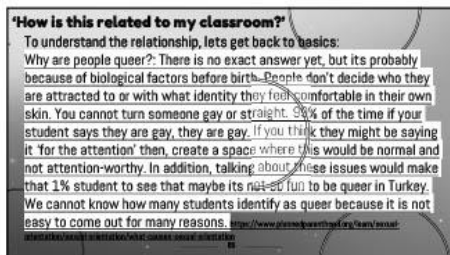
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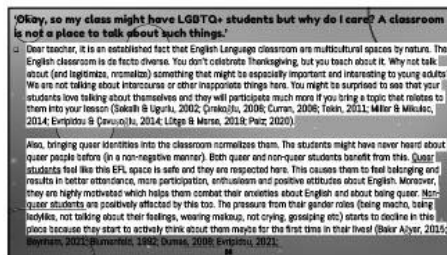
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5



6

1

Why do I need to queer my EFL lessons?

Heteronormativity means that in your classroom you and your students automatically assume and insist that there are two genders, and a woman can only love a man – a man can only love a woman.

These assumptions bring other assumptions about gender roles with them: 'Women, women are always gossiping', 'Can boys move these chairs for me?', 'Girls are better at cooking', 'Boys can't cry' etc.

Moreover, if the students are allowed this type of talk, they don't stop there. Other assumptions about different identities follow: 'British English is the best English', 'Indians are dirty, and their accent is terrible hooon!', 'Learning English is stupid because I am Turkish, I already know Turkish and that should be enough', 'Americans are (the H word)'.

Funlily enough, these automated assumptions interrupt our own and our students' critical thinking skills in other areas too: 'Vegan people are stupid because they don't eat meat', 'Without religion people would kill other people immediately', 'If my baby was disabled, I would kill them, so they don't suffer', 'I don't study hard because I am a cool guy, girls should study hard, not me'.

7

What is achieved through queering an EFL lesson?

Critical Inquiry as a Pedagogical Approach

What we assume to be right is problematized in Critical Inquiry. High-level critical thinking skills is activated in our students by creating awareness, identifying and assessing what is normal.

Towards a Safer Future

It is completely understandable to be wary of implementing queering due to your institution's and/or your country's policies on you. However, you don't have to anything extreme. You can mitigate what you can safely do in your classes. The next generation of teachers will be better off thanks to you.

Achieving Social Justice

Queering EFL requires us to create pedagogies that challenge our students to ask questions about why our social world is the way that it is, who benefits from its current configuration, who is marginalized by the status quo, and what, if anything, can be done to create a more inclusive and equitable world' (Paiz, 2019).

Higher Proficiency

Engaging students in critical readings and discussions, makes them more motivated and active in participating. Queer students attend more while non queer students participate more. Overall, the class grades are higher and a more positive attitude towards English is achieved.

8

How can I queer my lessons? I've never learned about this at university. Here are some ideas that might be useful:

By using and normalizing inclusive language in casual conversation and classroom discussions-debates

By picking and adapting material that portrays the authentic world (minorities, disabilities, queer relationships, unorthodox families etc.)

By examining your own values and gaining more information and insight into the lives of non-normative people

By creating in-class opportunities where students can identify, analyze and criticize the stereotypes of their culture

9

According to Paiz (2019) you should remember:

Queering is about respectful engagement. Model respectful disagreement and make disagreement OK. Our students do not need to see the world exactly as we do, but they do need to know how to respectfully engage with LGBTQ+ issues as they come up in their daily lives. It is not about changing hearts and minds; it is about moving the needle of understanding and acceptance.

The attitudes and experiences of LGBTQ+ issues and lives vary across the globe. Be willing to learn about this variability alongside your students as you come to interrogate the different ways that we shape, perform, and understand identities through languages.

10

YOU ARE SO AWESOME

THANK YOU for being open and being kind!

If you have any further questions about anything at all, please contact me.

11

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12

D. LESSON PLANS OF PARTICIPANTS

Participant 1 (Barbara Gordon)

GUIDED REFLECTION FORM 2

Teacher's Name: Barbara Gordon

Date: 22.03.2023

Question 1: Imagine you will **queer one of your lessons**. Create a general lesson plan and discuss your objectives, the most prominent activities, anticipated problems, solutions, etc. Would this be a successful lesson?

Since online education has partially killed my imagination as a teacher, I need to state that I feel somehow rusty. Anyway, I am trying to imagine a face-to-face setting as I want to create an interactive class environment. My plan will be a really casual one – as I almost always prefer.

The lesson can be an extended version of a role play activity. Say, there are five groups of four students. The estimated gender of the students in each group had better be even; two female and two male students preferably. Also, I assume that I do not know the sexual orientation of the students if there are any who identify themselves as LGBTQI+. Different situations/ contexts are given to each group. For instance, in one group students are asked to make an outline of a group of old friends who are trying to decide on an event/ activity to take part in for the weekend. They take notes of what things to discuss. They are expected to impersonate a character determined and defined by themselves, so they need to write their notes accordingly. After they discuss the main ideas, students are asked to work on a dialogue. It is expected to be a realistic one. After they perform their dialogue, they are told to divert the gender of their character. What is different now? Do you want to change the activities/ events that you have wholeheartedly supported as your own gender? The teacher at this point asks the students not to change the activities/ background they have chosen, but still support them in a determined way – despite the fact that they have to change their genders.

By the way, the other groups can be given situations like choosing a profession, sport, clothing style, and the like.

Additionally, if the class has a sufficient number of high achievers, the teacher may also ask two of the students to impersonate LGBTQI+ individuals. Frankly, I need to state that my aim is not to marginalize queers, but even without it, this may be a good step towards paving the way to queer one of the following lessons later on.

Probably the problems would be mostly about the point where students are asked to divert the genders of their characters. Some would just take it, some would resist, and some may not understand at all. Still, it is worth trying as it may be an opportunity to lead students to see the things through other genders' perspective.

Addition: As it may be hard to give these somehow loose roles, the students can be given roles as some celebrities of their own gender first. Then they divert their genders, and they will be asked to perform the new gender's roles and background as in the previous plan.

There is actually another way to implement these activities; however, more lesson time will be necessary. In this scenario, each group will be given different roles with different basics. For instance, one group will be of two German and two Jewish people. Then they change their roles in the second part. Other groups can be given genders – just like in the first example of the lesson plan. Another group may consist of eat lovers and vegans. Some other group can be tea addicts and coffee addicts. After they perform their own roles and then divert them, each group can be given roles based on their gender (the first plan).

The objective in all possibilities is to stimulate students to get the perspective of people with different backgrounds and values. This way they may start considering what and in what ways and what kinds of motivations/ reasons “the others” think the way they do. Moreover, they can even start expressing opinions for the sake of others in a casual way. This is more than just a beginning if it works for the class.

GUIDED REFLECTION FORM 2

Teacher's Name: ██████████

Date: 15.04.2023

Question 1: Imagine you will queer one of your lessons. Create a general lesson plan and discuss your objectives, the most prominent activities, anticipated problems, solutions, etc. Would this be a successful lesson?

████████████████████

2. Class Profile:

- Age: 18-24
- Proficiency: A1-A2
- Class size: 20-25

3. Estimated time of the lesson: 40 mins

4. Textbook and supplementary materials used: Handouts will be provided.

5. Topic of the lesson: Adverbs of frequency, daily routines, family members, present simple tense

6. Objectives: This lesson aims to introduce adverbs of frequency in the context of daily routines and vocabulary items related to family, basic verbs and adjectives using a text for reading and comprehension. The "queering of the lesson" will take place through the introduction of a happy lesbian or gay couple with their child. This will suggest the possibility of something being acceptable in the microcosmic classroom, therefore, in a macrocosmic society as well.

The lesson plan will provide and teach the grammar and vocabulary skills that are mentioned. The queering process itself is also made possible by accepting the existence of queer couples which plays an important role to create a discourse that does not marginalize these people. There might be minor problems where some students might feel uncomfortable to read and talk about a 'queer' household. This can, perhaps, cause students to lose some motivation but it can also have no affect at all. Theoretically, no one should be offended and feel nervous about, but some might consider this as a transgression of what they accept as 'immoral'.

Stage	Procedure	Interaction (e.g. Ss→T, T→Ss, Ss→Ss)	Time (Duration)
Pre-reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher will introduce the topic of the lesson through his/her daily life. Through the introduction the teacher will use vocabulary items related to everyday life. While doing so the teacher will also use adverbs of frequency. While describing his/her routines, vocabulary items related to family life will be provided. Then the teacher will random students (1-3 students) to briefly talk about their routines. The teacher will ask students to talk about their daily routines that also features their family with their pairs. 	<p>T-S</p> <p>S-T</p> <p>S-S</p>	10mins
While-reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher will provide students with a text that has two families and their daily routines. One of the families being heteronormative and one being queer. The queer text depicts the daily routine of a lesbian or a gay couple with a child without a dominant figure (in contrast to say a patriarchal one). Both texts will use positive adjective to describe these households in order to emphasize both can be considered 'normal' or 'good'. 	<p>T-S</p> <p>S-S</p>	10mins
Post-reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The students will be asked to answer T/F questions regarding the state of these families. Instead of contrasting these families through positive/negative adjectives, they will be asked questions that show the normality of both. The students will also be asked fill in the blank questions using adverbs of frequency. The students will also be asked to draw a family tree for both families to study vocabulary items related to family members. 	<p>T-S</p> <p>S-S</p> <p>S-T</p>	15-20 mins

Participant 3 (Kamala Khan)

GUIDED REFLECTION FORM 2

Teacher's Name: Kamala Khan

Date: 08.04.2023

Question 1: Imagine you will **queer one of your lessons**. Create a general lesson plan and discuss your objectives, the most prominent activities, anticipated problems, solutions, etc. Would this be a successful lesson?

General Lesson Plan

I can queer my lesson basically by conducting a pre-while-post lesson. In the pre part, there might be a speaking session to raise awareness and make the students feel familiar with the topic. In the while part, I can make use of a reading passage in which there are queer elements and things that my students can see for the first time and learn. I can elicit the meanings of queer terms in that part of the lesson from the students. In the post part, I can make use of a speaking activity. I can give some situations to the students in which the minorities are exposed to inappropriate behavior in the society and try to make them speak about these situations. In this way, they can have the opportunity to think critically, they can share their ideas, learn new things as well as perspectives from each other.

Objectives of the Lesson

The students will be able to use the unknown words/queer jargon in the target language.

The students will be able to identify, analyze and criticize the stereotypes of their culture in the target language.

The students will be able to use inclusive language in their casual conversation and in classroom discussions in the target language.

Anticipated Problems

Some of the students might act in a disrespectful manner.

The queer students might feel bad when their friends say something not appropriate without any intention to hurt their feelings.

The learning might not occur since the students behave inappropriately.

Solutions

The teacher may make an explanation of being respectful to others that are not like us when it is needed.

The teacher may show that she is available and she is open to talk about these issues in lessons and outside.

Participant 4 (Rachel Roth)

GUIDED REFLECTION FORM 2

Teacher's Name: Rachel

Date: 21.04.2023

Question 1: Imagine you will **queer one of your lessons**. Create a general lesson plan and discuss your objectives, the most prominent activities, anticipated problems, solutions, etc. Would this be a successful lesson?

Class Profile

Age: 17-24

Level: Prep school students – B1/B1+

Institution: Private

Time: 40 mins

Theme: Relationships & Family

Lesson Stages

Warm-up: Students are shown pictures of nuclear to big families and are asked to predict the theme of the lesson. Without drawing too much attention to it, simply

adding pictures of LGBTQ+ families in this step might be solid beginning. If students do have questions about these pictures, the teacher simply explains how it is now possible and valid in some countries for queer people to get married, have and adopt children.

Pre-reading: Students engage with pre-reading discussion questions. Coursebook are always heteronormative, and the questions will be based on those relationships. In this step, the teacher should make sure that these discussions are not only on heteronormative examples. So, when the teacher is asking the questions in the exercise, they might change them to be more inclusive:

- Instead of, for example, “What are some of the communication problems *girlfriends/boyfriends* face in a relationship?” -> the use of the word *partners*
- “What are the roles of members of a family?” -> Making students aware that we often stereotype people and assign roles to them based solely on their genders. Helping them realize that this type of attitude reduces people into stereotypes and robs them off any non-normativity they might be embracing. Not addressing the members of a family as only consisting of a father, mother and children, but including LGBTQ+ family structures into the discussion as well.

Reading: Let’s say the text focuses on how to build more positive familial relationships through understanding and communication. Because this text includes the perspectives and examples only of straight couples, the teacher might have to get students to include queer people into the discussion. If there isn’t any copyright issues, though, the text might also be adapted and edited in a

way that has a non-discriminating language, and non-heteronormative content. This is demanding on part of the teacher because they have to check and arrange the materials before the lesson. The outcomes will be worth it, though, as a language material that is specifically designed to be inclusive will make queer students feel seen and less alone. Non-queer students will also realize how diverse relationships actually are and will perhaps be inspired to appreciate that diversity. A little goes a long way.

Language Analysis: Making sure that the language to be modeled does not only address men and women, and gender-neutral terms are used instead of stereotypical examples.

Possible Problems: Although some students might feel like they are finally being provided with a safe place to look at things from an all-inclusive perspective, some students might resist such ideas. They might refuse to change their minds on LGBTQ+ and may even show challenging behavior. They might obsessively try to dispute with the teacher and other students, arguing “these can’t be normalized”. It’s crucial to cut such behavior out right away so that queer students do not feel threatened. If they decide to go far, these students or their families might reach out to the administration of the institution. Since private institutions tend to cater to the families of their students, it might not always be certain that they’ll have the teachers’ back. Though, no matter what our job titles require, as educators of the 21st century, it is our utmost responsibility to educate not only students, but also their families on these topics and issues.

E. SAMPLE CODING IN MAXQDA

The screenshot displays the MAXQDA software interface. The top menu bar includes Home, Import, Codes, Memos, Variables, Analysis, Mixed Methods, Visual Tools, Reports, MAXDictio, and TeamCloud. Below the menu is a toolbar with various icons for document management and coding. The main workspace is divided into three panes:

- Document System:** A tree view on the left showing a hierarchy of documents. The selected document is "Guided Reflection Forms of Barbara" (28 lines).
- Code System:** A list of codes on the left. The selected code is "KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS OF QUEER ISSUES" (43 lines).
- Document Browser:** The main text area on the right, showing the content of the selected document. The text is as follows:

Question 1: What do you know about Queer people (an umbrella term for LGBTQ+) and their issues? You can talk about the meanings of their identity, their positions in society, the challenges they might face, the positive aspects of their lives etc.

Answer 1:

As a teacher holding a bachelor degree in American Culture and Literature and an MA thesis student at the same department, I can definitely say that I am quiet familiar with the issue. My main study area is also gender roles, so I consider these issues as a whole doctrine, i.e. gender roles cannot be thoroughly examined ignoring individuals who identify themselves as "queer". Unfortunately, even women – one of the two "straight and mainstream" genders – have not fully achieved their rights in many areas, such as career, education, social life, etc. Therefore, since one of the two "main genders" are not completely accepted by the society (all around the world), it is apparent that this makes it even more difficult for queers to achieve their goals and rights as even more marginalized individuals. I have met several LGBTQ+ individuals so far, and as far as I have observed, they all feel oppressed and ostracized in a patriarchal society, which is almost the whole world although it may not seem so. To make it clearer at this point, most of the developed countries are also patriarchal despite some of them giving a few more rights to LGBTQ+ individuals. As for their positions in society, I am more inclined to think that lesbians are even more marginalized by society as there is no opportunity for a man to be "in charge" in that relationship. For male homosexuals, it is easier as they have a 'chance' to be viewed as at least "originally" men who may somehow have the potential to get the power that stays within. In a female homosexual relationship, on the other hand, this is rendered impossible, and from the vantage point of the society that is ruled by "the patriarch", it is much more threatening after all. The whole situation is self-contradictory, though – as lesbians are reflected to be the sexualized ones who enrich male fantasies. Still, "lacking" the phallus makes them more grotesque in the patriarchal eye. As a last general point to touch upon, LGBTQ+ individuals are mostly invisible to society, and when they are visible, they are not fully accepted as they are alienated. They defy the gender roles constructed by the society, and this shakes the patriarchal throne. It is such a

G. METU ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

DUMLUPINAR BULVARI 06800
ÇANKAYA ANKARA/TURKEY
T: +90 312 210 22 91
F: +90 312 210 79 59
ueam@metu.edu.tr
www.ueam.metu.edu.tr

07 NİSAN 2023

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Prof. Dr. Çiler Hatipoğlu

Danışmanlığınızı yürüttüğünüz Gaye Şevval Çetin'in "**The Role of EFL Teachers' Personal Values in Queering the English Language Classroom: A Case Study**" başlıklı araştırmanız İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek **0179-ODTÜİAEK-2023** protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Prof. Dr. Ş. Halil TURAN
Başkan

Prof. Dr. İ. Semih AKÇOMAK
Üye

Doç. Dr. Ali Emre Turgut
Üye

Doç. Dr. Şerife SEVINÇ
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Murat Perit ÇAKIR
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Süreyya ÖZCAN KABASAKAL
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ
Üye

H. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

This study is conducted by, Gaye Şevval Çetin, an MA student at Middle East Technical University, English Language Teaching Department. The thesis advisor Prof. Dr. Çiler Hatipoğlu oversees this study. This form is presented to inform you about the study.

What is the purpose of this study?

This study aims to identify and thoroughly analyze the values of EFL teachers in queering their classes. The teachers are teaching in a preparatory program at a foundation university in Turkey.

How will I ask for your help?

If you choose to participate in the study, I will ask you to fill out Guided Reflection forms before and after conducting individual semi-structured interviews that will last one to two hours. The questions will be asked in English. You can answer them in Turkish or in English. Your voice will be recorded.

How will I use the data I gathered from you?

Your participation is strictly on a volunteer basis. You will NOT be asked to reveal your identity and institution information. You will be completely anonymous, and you will be assigned a code name. Your data will only be used in scientific research.

What should you know about your participation?

You will not be asked questions that might cause you distress. However, you can withdraw your participation at any time. Also, you can access your data anytime if you ask for it.

For further information about the study:

You can contact the researcher at [REDACTED] or the thesis advisor at [REDACTED].

I have read and understood every piece of information I was given and volunteer to participate in this study.

<u>NAME-SURNAME:</u>	<u>DATE:</u>	<u>SIGNATURE:</u>

I. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKE ÖZET

İNGİLİZCE HAZIRLIK PROGRAMINDA ÇALIŞAN ÖĞRETMENLERİN ÖĞRETİM UYGULAMALARINI KUIRLEŞTİRMEK HAKKINDA ALGILARI: BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

GİRİŞ

Homoseksüel ve lezbiyen kimliklerle ilişkilendirilen daha ayrılkçı çağrışımların aksine, LGBTQI+ (lezbiyen, gay, biseksüel, trans, kuir, interseks ve daha fazlası) topluluğu 1980'lerde "kuir "i normatif olmayan ve dirençli cinsellikleri tanımlamak için kapsayıcı bir terim olarak geri kazanmıştır. "Kuir" teriminin geri kazanılması, farklılığı özür dilemeden kabul ederek orijinal anlamıyla bağlantısını sürdürmüştür (McDonald, 2017, s. 2). Ayrıca, "kuir" terimi akademik ortamlarda, bu öğrenci grubuna özgü zorlukları incelemek ve aktarmak için her şeyi kapsayan bir dil olarak sıklıkla kullanılmaktadır (Miller & Mikulec, 2014).

Cinsel yönelim, bir kişinin cinsiyetine bağlı olarak başkalarına karşı duyduğu cinsel ve romantik çekimdir. Sıklıkla farklı sınıflandırmalara tabi tutulsa da, cinsel yönelimin sabit kategorilerden ziyade bir süreklilik içinde var olabileceğini kabul etmek önemlidir (American Psychological Association, 2012). 1980'lerin sonlarında ortaya çıkan kuir teori, toplumsal cinsiyet, cinsellik ve öznellikleri çeşitli disiplinlerdeki gey ve lezbiyen akademisyenlerin bakış açısından analiz eder (Bernini, 2020). Heteroseksüel normlara meydan okur ve cinselliği sosyal ve tarihsel bir yapı olarak görür. (Butler, 1990) Kuir teori sabit değildir, ancak incelenen acil konuları ele almak için sürekli olarak uygulanır ve yeniden uygulanır (Raja vd., 2023, s. 3). Kuir teori, sosyal yaşamdaki mevcut bilgiyi sorgulayarak dünya hakkında yaygın olarak kabul edilen varsayımlara meydan okuyan geniş, multidisipliner bir düşünce koleksiyonudur. Kuir teori sistematik bir dizi varsayıma bağlı kalmazsa da,

kuir teorisyenler ikilikleri istikrarsızlaştırmaya, etiketleri sökmeye ve bireyselliği sınırlayan ve çeşitliliği bastıran normalleştirici süreçleri eleştirmeye kararlıdır. Kuir teori, merkezi olarak, kimliğin farklılığını ve akışkanlığını kutlar. Kuir teori, toplumsal cinsiyet ve cinsel rollerin performatifliğini reddeder (McDonald, 2017, s. 3). Kuir teori akademide "postmodern dönüş" sırasında ortaya çıkmış ve dilin, yapıbozumu, farklılığın, parçalanmanın, çoklu bakış açılarının, söylemin ve yerleşik anlatıların ve iktidar yapılarının yeniden değerlendirilmesinin önemini vurgulamıştır (Walton, 2012, s. 186-187, aktaran McDonald, 2017, s. 23). Özünde kuir teori, postmodernizm gibi, varoluşun farklı alanlarını tartışmaya ve yorumlamaya yönelik geleneksel tekniklerimize meydan okumaktadır (Britzman, 1995).

Dil öğrenimi ve kuir kimlik arasındaki ilişki çeşitli açılardan birbiriyle ilişkilidir. Çok sayıda çalışma, ikinci bir dil (L2) öğrenmenin dilsel ve sosyal yönleri olduğunu göstermiştir (De Vincenti vd., 2007; Miller, 2015; Nelson, 2010; Nguyen ve Kellog, 2005, aktaran Grant, 2022, s. 8). Dünyayı yeni perspektiflerden ve bakış açılarından keşfetme arzusu, bir L2 edinmenin ana motivasyonlarından birini yönlendirir. Bu, kendilerini kuir dil kullanıcıları olarak görebilen ve kuir kimliklerini yeni edindikleri dil becerileri aracılığıyla ifade edebilen kuir öğrenciler için özellikle önemlidir (Merse, 2015; Paiz, 2020). Bununla birlikte, öğrencilerin içeriği, materyalleri veya dili ilgili olarak algılamadıkları takdirde dil öğrenimine katılmakta tereddüt edebileceklerini kabul etmek kritik önem taşır (Grant, 2022, s. 8). Bu nedenle, öğrencilerin gerçekleriyle ilgili içerik, materyal veya dile sahip olmanın, sınıf içi katılımlarını artırmada olumlu bir etkiye sahip olabileceği söylenebilir. Çünkü her sınıfta kuir öğrenci olup olmadığı tartışmalı olsa da, yoksa bile kuir topluluğun üyesi olan arkadaşları veya aile üyeleri olabilir (Coulter vd., 2021; Sunderland, 2021).

İngilizce eğitimi küresel olarak önemlidir ve sosyal kimliklerle karmaşık bir şekilde bağlantılıdır. Bununla birlikte, heteroseksüel olmayan cinsel kimlikler, öncelikle heteroseksüel perspektifleri vurgulayan EFL ve ESL eğitiminde sürekli olarak göz ardı edilmektedir (Thornbury, 1999; Nelson, 2009). Bu durum Türkiye'deki mevcut eğitim ortamına benzemektedir. Türkiye'nin geleneksel toplumunda da ataerkillik kabul edilmekte ve beklenmektedir. Bir erkek, arkadaşlık etmek ve aile kurmak için

bir kadın seçmelidir. Ülke başka hiçbir aile hiyerarşisi tanımamaktadır (Kuzulugil, 2010, aktaran İnce Yenilmez, 2020). Cinsel yönelimleri nedeniyle, aileler ve komşular genellikle diğer türden birliktelikler veya arkadaşlıklar kuran bireylerden uzak durmaktadır (Cunningham, 2016). Türkiye'de LGBTQI+ ilişkileri, toplumsal normlara uymadıkları için kesinlikle tasvip edilmemektedir. Buna ek olarak, eşcinsellik Türk kültürüne aykırı görülmektedir (Engin, 2015). Türkiye, kuir bir kişinin yaşaması için en tehlikeli yerlerden biri olarak bilinmektedir (Hürriyet Daily News, 2019). Göçmen ve Yılmaz (2016), Türkiye'deki LGBTQI+ kişilerin eğitim de dâhil olmak üzere çeşitli alanlarda ayrımcılığa maruz kaldığını ortaya koymuştur. Birçok çalışma (Güney, 2018; Ördem ve Ulum, 2020; Tekin, 2011), LGBTQI+ öğrencilerin heteroseksüel olmayan kimlikleri tartışılmadığı için sınıfta daha da dışlandıklarını göstermektedir. Bunun nedeni, öğretmenlerin, Türkiye'nin görece muhafazakâr ortamında bu kimliklerin tanınmasının bazı öğrencileri üzeceğinden ve Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın tepkisiyle karşılaşacaklarından korkmalarıdır. Erdoğan & Köten (2014), 2019 yılında Türkiye'de Yükseköğretim Kurulu'nun (YÖK), iktidardakilerin Türk kültürüne ve aile kültürüne tehdit oluşturabileceği gerekçesiyle üniversitelerin toplumsal cinsiyet çeşitliliğini tartışmasını yasakladığını açıklayarak bu durumu desteklemektedir. Türkiye nüfusunun yaklaşık yüzde 95'i ülkeyi yönetenler tarafından genel olarak Müslüman olarak sınıflandırılmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, İslami değerlerin Türk eğitim sistemi içinde sıklıkla sürdürüldüğü söylenebilir (s. 34).

Türkiye'nin mevcut sosyolojik ve politik durumu, üniversite hazırlık okulu düzeyinde çalışan İngilizce Dil Öğretmenlerini de etkilemektedir. Türk lirası, hükümetin yolsuzluğa odaklanması, gelir eşitsizliği ve işçiler için sosyal güvenlik kapsamındaki düşüş nedeniyle savaştaki bazı ülkelere daha fazla düşmüş ve işçi hakları açısından en kötü ülkeler arasında yer almıştır (Apaydın ve Çoban, 2022; Tuncer, 2023). İş güvencesi, istikrar, adil ücret, yeterli sosyal haklar ve adil çalışma saatleri gibi koşullar dil öğretmenleri için de, hatta özel kurumlarda daha da eksiktir. Özel dil öğretmenleri genellikle sözleşmesiz olarak zorlu koşullar altında çalışmaktadır. Hizmetlerine artık ihtiyaç duyulmadığında işten çıkarılabilirler. Daha uzun çalışma saatlerine, yüksek mesleki taleplere, iş istikrarsızlığına ve refahlarını

etkileyen az sayıda mesleki gelişim şansına sahiptirler. Özel dil öğretmenleri ayrıca daha az kazanmakta, sağlık sigortaları ve ücretli hastalık izinleri bulunmamaktadır (Arda, 2023). Türkiye'de 2018 yılında yapılan bir düzenleme, üniversitelerin yabancı dil bölümlerinde, özellikle de hazırlık okullarında öğretmenlik yapmak isteyen İngilizce mezunlarını etkilemiştir. Bu düzenleme, yüksek lisans derecesi olmayan lisansüstü dil öğretmenlerinin hazırlık okullarında veya üniversitelerde kalıcı olarak ders vermesini yasaklamaktadır. Hazırlık okulları artık yüksek lisans derecesi olmayan yarı zamanlı İngilizce öğretmenlerini işe alabildiğinden, öğretmenler güvencesizliğe yakalanmıştır (Schwaller, 2019). Güvencesizlik, güvencesiz çalışma koşulları nedeniyle bireylerin veya grupların kendilerini savunmasız, güvensiz ve istihdam, barınma, gelir veya sosyal destek konusunda belirsiz hissetmeleri olarak açıklanabilir (Näsström ve Kalm, 2015, s. 556-558). Yarı zamanlı öğretmenler, bölümün personel ihtiyacını karşılamak için tam zamanlı öğretmenleri tamamlamaktadır. Yarı zamanlı öğretmenler bazen "yedek" öğretmenler olarak güvencesiz koşullar altında çalışmaktadır. Dönem saatleri konusunda belirsizlik, tam zamanlı öğretmenlere göre daha düşük ücret, geçici iş statüsü, hastalık izni, tatil ücreti, sosyal yardımlar ve mesleki gelişim şanslarının olmaması gibi koşullar altında çalışmaktadırlar. İş güvencesizliği ve geçici çalışma ile karşı karşıyadırlar (Arda, 2023, s. 7).

İnsan haklarını ilerletmenin ve toplumdaki uyumsuz bireyler için güvenli alanlar yaratmanın yanı sıra, Türk EFL bağlamlarının kuir öğretim uygulamalarından büyük ölçüde yararlanmasının bir başka nedeni daha vardır. Türk öğrencilerin aldığı yüksek hacimli İngilizce derslerine rağmen ülke genelinde İngilizce yeterlilik seviyesi düşüktür. EF İngilizce Yeterlilik Endeksi 2022'ye göre Türkiye, İngilizce yeterliliği açısından 111 ülke arasında 64. sırada yer almaktadır. Türkiye, EF tarafından düşük yeterliliğe sahip olarak kategorize edilmektedir. Ayrıca Türkiye, Azerbaycan'ın ardından Avrupa'nın en düşük yeterliliğe sahip ikinci ülkesidir ("EF EPI 2022-EF English Proficiency Index," t.y.). EF, tüm ülkelerin gelişimi için bazı önerilerde bulunmaktadır. Bu öneriler arasında öğrencilerin daha fazla İngilizce tartışması, sosyal medyanın İngilizceye maruz kalmak için kullanılması ve öğretmenlerin iletişim temelli tekniklerle ders vermesi yer almaktadır ("EF EPI 2022-EF English

Proficiency Index," t.y.). Ulum & Uzun (2020), dil bilgisi-çeviri yönteminin Türkiye'de baskın ve en yaygın kullanılan yaklaşım olduğunu göstermektedir. Sonuç olarak, İngilizce öğretimi ve ediniminde çok az ilerleme kaydedilmiştir. Ayrıca, sınavlarda alıcı soruların kaldırılması ve iletişimsel yöntemlerle üretken becerilerin edinilmesi ve geliştirilmesinin öneminin vurgulanması gibi önerilerde bulunmaktadır. Müfredat ve ders programı geliştirmenin yanı sıra görevlerin oluşturulmasında hem öğretmenlerin hem de öğrencilerin yer almasını tavsiye etmektedirler (s. 457-458). Bu çalışmalar, mevcut EFL eğitim uygulamalarının etkisiz olabileceğini ve politika yapımcıların, müfredat ve materyal geliştiricilerin ve EFL öğretmenlerinin daha iletişimsel yaklaşımlardan ve öğrencilerin ilgisini yenilemek ve dikkatlerini artırmak için stratejiler oluşturmaktan yararlanabileceğini göstermektedir. ELT uygulamalarını kuirleştirmek, bunu başarmanın en önemli yollarından biri olabilir.

Türkiye'deki EFL yükseköğretim bağlamında, kuirlik ve kuir-bilgilendirilmiş araştırma azlığı söz konusudur. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın önemi üç yönlüdür: kuir ve sorgulayan öğrencileri İngilizce öğrenme alanlarında güçlendirmek, İngilizce öğretmenleri için çeşitlilik ve kapsayıcılık konusunda eğitim ihtiyacını vurgulamak ve Türkiye bağlamında kuir bilgilendirmeli bir çalışma ile literatüre katkıda bulunmak. Bu araştırmadan elde edilen veriler, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin bakış açıları hakkında fikir vermektedir. Bu çalışma, Türk EFL öğretmenlerinin eğitimi, EFL ediniminde kuir pedagoji ve hizmet içi (ve hizmet öncesi) İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişimi üzerine daha fazla araştırma için bir referans, ilham kaynağı ve eylem çağrısı olmaya çalışmaktadır.

Bu vaka çalışması, üçüncü sınıf EFL hazırlık okulu öğretmenlerinin ELT uygulamalarını kuirleştirmeye ilişkin algılarını incelemiştir. Katılımcılar, Türkiye'nin başkenti Ankara'daki aynı vakıf (özel) üniversitesinde en az bir dönemdir ders vermektedir. Çalışmaya farklı deneyim seviyelerine ve geçmişlere sahip dört İngilizce öğretmeni katılmıştır. Veriler, nitel anketler, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler, kuiring ELT üzerine mini eğitim verilmesi ve araştırmacının katılımcıların profilleri hakkındaki notları kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Bu çalışmanın

amacı, Türkiye bağlamında kuir farkındalıklı eğitim çalışmalarlarıyla ilgili çok sınırlı literatüre katkıda bulunmaktır. Katılımcıların ELT uygulamalarını kuirleştirmeye ilişkin algılarını doğru bir şekilde tasvir etmek için aşağıdaki araştırma soruları sunulmuştur:

- 1) Türkiye'deki İngilizce hazırlık öğretmenleri ulusal ve küresel düzeyde kuir kimliklerin ve konuların ne ölçüde farkındalar?
- 2) Türkiye'deki İngilizce hazırlık öğretmenleri kuir pedagoji ve kuir ELT hakkında ne ölçüde bilgi sahibidir?
- 3) Türk EFL hazırlık okulu öğretmenleri ELT uygulamalarını kuirleştiriyor mu? Eğer evet ise, nasıl? Değilse, neden değil?
- 4) Türkiye'deki yükseköğretim EFL hazırlık öğretmenleri kendi sınıflarında kuir ELT'yi nasıl kavramsallaştırıyorlar?

YÖNTEM

Bu sorulara yanıt bulmak için araştırma nitel bir araçsal vaka çalışması olarak tasarlanmıştır. Veriler, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler, nitel anketler ve katılımcılara ikinci ve son nitel anketlerinden önce verilen mini eğitim aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Bu çalışma bu şekilde tasarlanmıştır çünkü belirli bir bağlamda belirli bir küçük katılımcı grubunun anlatılarını araştırmakta ve vakanın ayrıntılı muhasebesinde genellemeler yapmadan pratik çıkarımlar sağlayabilecek keşifsel bir araştırma olarak hizmet etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Tematik analiz için Clarke & Braun'un (2014) veri analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Katılımcılarla birlikte çalışan kuir bir Türkçe EFL öğretmeni olarak araştırmacının konumsallığı derinlemesine incelenmiştir. Geçerlilik ve güvenilirliği sağlamak için üye kontrolü ve kodlayıcılar arası güvenilirliğin sağlanması gibi adımlar atılmıştır.

Nitel araştırma, düşünömselliğe yaptığı vurguyla diğer araştırma türlerinden ayrılır. Araştırmacılar geçmişlerini (iş deneyimleri, kültürel deneyimleri ve geçmişleri gibi), geçmişlerinin ve araştırma çalışmasına olan ilgilerinin verileri yorumlamalarını nasıl etkilediğini ve çalışmadan ne elde etmeyi amaçladıklarını ifade ederler (Creswell,

2013). Arařtırmacılar ayrıca alıřmadan ne elde etmeyi umduklarını da aıklarlar. Bu anlamda nitel arařtırmacılar alıřmanın en nemli figrleri olarak kabul edilir (Anderson, 2010; Creswell, 2013). Bunun nedeni, nitel arařtırmacıların kendi kiřisel ve mesleki gemiřlerinin alıřmaya katkı saėlamasıdır. Attia ve Edge'e (2017) gre, nitel arařtırma yrtmek, arařtırmacıların arařtırmalarını yrttkleri anın sosyal zorlukları ve gerekleri konusunda hassasiyet ve empati sahibi olmalarını gerektirir. Arařtırmacılar alıřmaya yalnızca entelektel kapasiteleriyle deėil, aynı zamanda bakıř aıları, duyguları, deėerleri ve ihtiyalarıyla bir btn olarak katkıda bulunurlar (s. 35-37).

Arařtırmacının kimliėi ve konumu bu alıřmanın nemli bir parası olduėu iin řimdi kendi gemiřimi anlatacaėım. Kuir-dostu olmayan bir toplumda, kuir kimliėi nedeniyle dil ėrenmeye motive olmuş bir İngilizce ėrencisi olarak bydm. Benim iin dil ėrenmek kendimi anlamama, kabul etmeme, kutlamama ve dnyanın drt bir yanındaki kuir topluluklar hakkında bilgi edinmeme yardımcı oldu. Bir İngilizce ėretmeni olarak, sınıfımda her zaman farklı kimlikleri normalleřtirmeye, kucaklamaya ve kutlamaya zen gsterdim. Bu deneyim bana ėrencilerimin saygı grdklerini hissettikleri iin daha bařarılı olduklarını gsterdi. Ayrıca, hedef dili kullanarak ok daha fazla katılım gsterdiler nk fikirlerini sunmaya daha fazla ilgi duyuyorlardı. Verilerimi toplarken bu alıřmanın gerekleřtiėi kurumda alıřıyordum ve katılımcılar benim arkadařlarımdı.

Bu alıřma, Orta Anadolu'da yer alan bir Trk vakıf (zel) niversitesinin İngilizce Hazırlık Programı kapsamında yrtlmřtr. niversitenin ėrenci kitlesini uluslararası ėrenciler ve Trkiye'nin eřitli blgelerinden gelen ėrenciler oluřtırmaktadır. Bu niversite, her yıl aėırlıklı olarak st ve orta sınıf gemiře sahip yzlerce ėrenciyi kayıt altına almaktadır. ėrencilere, niversitenin giriř sınavındaki performanslarına gre burs verilmektedir. Eėitim dili İngilizcedir. EPP'de 2023 yılında yaklaşık 550 ėrenci olacaktır. Burada da eėitim dili İngilizcedir. EPP, ėrencilere c seviyede dersler sunmaktadır: A (Beginner-A1), B (Elementary-A2) ve C (Pre-Intermediate-B1). Esnek 9 aylık bir mfredattır. Yeni

gelen tüm öğrenciler İngilizce Yeterlilik Sınavına (EPE) girerler ve sonuçlarına göre EPP'nin üç seviyesinden birine yerleştirilirler ya da lisans programlarına başlarlar.

Okulun öğretim kadrosu 34 EFL eğitmeninden oluşmaktadır. Bunların 8'i erkek, 26'sı kadındır. Bunların 16'sı tam zamanlı, 18'i ise yarı zamanlı eğitmendir. Yarı zamanlı eğitmenlerin sayısı önemsiz değildir ve bu da bölümün ihtiyaçlarının daha fazla tam zamanlı eğitmen yerine daha fazla yarı zamanlı eğitmen işe alınarak karşılandığını göstermektedir (Arda, 2023, s. 58). Tam zamanlı ve yarı zamanlı EFL eğitmenleri arasında işe alım prosedürleri, sorumluluklar, maaşlar, istihdam ayrıcalıkları ve sosyal haklar açısından önemli farklılıklar bulunmaktadır. Tam zamanlı eğitmenlere aylık maaş ve tam sigorta kapsamı sağlanırken, yarı zamanlı eğitmenlere sınıfta ders verdikleri saat başına ödeme yapılır ve sınav gözetmenliği, not verme veya ofis saatleri sağlama gibi diğer görevler için ödeme yapılmaz ve yarı zamanlı eğitmenler asgari sigorta kapsamına alınır.

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin erken dönemlerinde öğretmenlik prestijli ve yüksek statülü bir meslekti (Üstün, 2011). Öğretmenliği cazip kılan özellikler zaman içinde değişmiştir. 2000'li yıllarda mezunlar için iş güvencesi azalmıştır. Türkiye'de bir devlet okulunda ya da üniversitede iş bulmak, özellikle de dil eğitmenleri için daha zor hale gelmiştir. Böylece birçok eğitmen özel sektöre girmiştir (Arda, 2023). Sağlık sorunları, özel okul öğretmenleri arasında devlet okulu öğretmenlerine kıyasla daha yaygındır. Daha zor çalışma koşulları, mesleki gelişim için daha az fırsat ve öğrencilerin küçümsemesiyle karşı karşıyadırlar (Masum vd., 2015). Bu sorunlar, Türkiye'de özel sektör öğretmenliğinin cazibesini azaltmaktadır (Arda, 2023). Araştırmalara göre, eğitmenlerin çalışma ortamı üretkenliklerini ve iş memnuniyetlerini etkilemektedir. Olumsuz sosyoekonomik koşullar, öğretmenlerin refahını sıklıkla etkilemektedir (Nel vd., 2016, aktaran Arda, 2023). Arda'nın (2023) Cardoso-Pulido ve diğerlerinden (2022) aktardığına göre, çoklu sorumluluklar, düşük ücretler, beklenmedik programlar, ikamet ayarlamaları ve mesleki adaptasyonlar gerginliğe ve iyi olma halinin azalmasına neden olmaktadır. Öğretmenler, stres nedeniyle diğer mesleklere kıyasla daha yüksek oranda ruh sağlığı sorunlarına sahiptir (Richards vd., 2016, aktaran Arda, 2023). Mali kısıtlamalar, ilgili fırsatların eksikliği, yetersiz yardım ve zaman kısıtlamaları gerilimi artırmakta ve mesleki

gelişimi engellemektedir. En önemlisi, geçim kaynaklarının güvencesizliği, öğretmenlerin sınıflarında aldıkları kararlar üzerinde büyük bir etkiye sahiptir (Broadley, 2010; Kwakman, 2003; OECD, 2009, aktaran Arda, 2023, s. 58-61).

Katılımcı seçim kriterleri, ilgili üniversitede en az bir dönem yarı zamanlı ya da tam zamanlı İngilizce okutmanı olarak ders vermiş ya da halen vermekte olmayı içeriyordu. Katılımcıların işe alınmasına gelince, araştırmacı tüm departmana hedefleri, prosedürleri ve açık uçlu görüşme sorularını özetleyen bir e-posta göndermiştir (Ek A, B). Bu, konunun Türk toplumundaki hassas doğasını ve yaratabileceği olası direnci hesaba katmak için yapıldı (Patton, 2002). Dört katılımcı çalışmaya katılmayı hevesle kabul etmiştir. Sonuç olarak, dört katılımcı istekliliklerine ve uygunluklarına göre seçildiği için kolayda örnekleme koşulları yerine getirilmiştir (Cresswell, 2013).

Barbara, söz konusu kurumda son 10 yıldır çalışmakta olan 39 yaşında tam zamanlı bir EFL eğitmenidir. Oliver ise 26 yaşında, 3 yıldır İngilizce öğreten bir EFL eğitmenidir. Oliver ve Barbara, Edebiyat ve Kültür bölümlerinden mezundur. Kamala 23 yaşında, 2 yıldır İngilizce öğreten yarı zamanlı bir eğitmendir. Rachel 23 yaşında, öğretmenliğinin ilk yılında olan bir eğitmendir. Kamala ve Rachel İngilizce dil bölümlerinden mezundur. Oliver yüksek lisans derecesine sahiptir ve diğer katılımcılar yüksek lisans programlarında öğrencidir. Rachel kendini biseksüel bir kadın olarak tanımlarken diğer katılımcılar heteroseksüel olarak tanımlamaktadır.

Veri toplama sürecinin ilk adımı katılımcıların temin edilmesiydi. EPP'nin tüm akademik kadrosuna, çalışmanın hedefleri ve veri toplama yöntemleri hakkında ayrıntılı bilgi içeren bir e-posta gönderilmiştir. İkinci adım, katılımcıların ilk nitel anketi (Güdümlü Öz-Yansıtma Formu 1) doldurmalarını sağlamaktı (Ek C). Bu form, katılımcıların Türkiye'deki kuir varoluş ve kuir ELT uygulamaları hakkında sahip oldukları bilgi düzeyini ölçmeyi amaçlayan iki sorudan oluşmaktadır. Üçüncü adım, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapmaktı (Ek B). Katılımcılarla 13 maddelik bir mülakat soru listesi paylaşılarak, bu soruları yanıtlarken kendilerini rahat hissedeceklerinden emin olunmuştur. Dördüncü adım, katılımcılardan gelen talep üzerine onlara bir bilgilendirme sunumu yapılmasını içeriyordu. Kuiring ELT

hakkında genel bilgi sahibi olmak istediler ve literatürle ilgili referanslar ve öneriler istediler. Beşinci ve son adım, katılımcıların ikinci nitel anketleri için kuir bir ders planı oluşturmalarını içermektedir (Ek C). Bu, katılımcıların veri toplama sürecinde düşündüklerini ve öğrendiklerini nasıl örneklendireceklerini anlamak için yapılmıştır. ELT uygulamalarını kuirleştirmeye yönelik kavramsallaştırmaları ders planlarında sergilenmiştir.

Nitel araştırmada tematik analiz, metinsel verileri incelemek için kullanılan yaygın bir tekniktir. Braun ve Clarke'a (2013) göre bu metodoloji, veriler içindeki örüntüleri bulmayı, incelemeyi ve sunmayı içerir. Araştırmacılar, çeşitli çalışma konularını ve sorunlarını inceleme esnekliği nedeniyle tematik analizi sıklıkla kullanmaktadır. Bu çalışmada veri analizi sürecinin 6 aşaması kullanılmıştır (Clarke ve Braun, 2014).

BULGULAR TARTIŞMA VE SONUÇ

Bulgular tümevarımsal ve tümdengelimsel tematik analiz (hibrit perspektif) kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmanın bulguları, ortaya konan araştırma sorularına yanıt olarak verilerden, mevcut literatürden ve teorik çerçeveden elde edilmiştir. Veri analizi sonucunda aşağıdaki bulgular ve sonuçlar sunulmuştur:

İlk olarak, katılımcılar kuir kimlikler, terminoloji ve kuir bireylerin özellikle Türkiye'de karşılaştıkları sorunlara ilişkin farklı bilgi düzeyleri sergilediler. Tüm katılımcılar, Türkiye'deki kuir bireylerin güvende olmadıkları ve Türkiye'deki kuir öğrencilerin de eğitim bağlamlarında kendilerini güvende hissetmeyebilecekleri konusunda hemfikirdi. Güvenlik, kapsayıcılık ve temsil eksikliği kuir öğrencileri olumsuz etkileyebilir. Özellikle, katılımcılar kuir terminolojisinden nadiren bahsetti ve kuir kimliklerinin ayrıntılarını vermediler. Dahası, sınıfta cinsel eşitliğin sağlanması sorulduğunda, katılımcılar cinsel eşitliğin sağlanmasına yönelik stratejilerle cevap vermiş ve cevaplarından eşitlik yerine cinsel eşitliği tartıştıkları anlaşılmıştır. İngilizce derslerini sistematik ve etkili bir şekilde kuirleştiren özel bilgi eksikliklerine atıfta bulunmaya devam ettiler. Hatta bazıları, öğretmenlerin sınıfta homofobik patlamalarla nasıl başa çıkacakları, sınıf tartışmalarında kapsayıcılığı ve

temsiliyeti nasıl teşvik edecekleri ve ELT materyallerini ve müfredatını etkili bir şekilde kuirleştirecekleri konusunda özel eğitim almalarını önermiştir. Katılımcılar, kuir bireyler ve meseleleri hakkında kısmen bilgili olduklarını göstermişlerdir. İdeal olarak, kuir ELT'nin sistematik bir şekilde ve idarenin desteğiyle yapılması gerektiğini savundular. Ancak, toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri ve diğer konulardan bahsetmeye devam ettikleri için kuir meseleleri hakkında eğitime ihtiyaç duyuyorlar çünkü sınıflarında kuir meseleleriyle ilişki kuracak bilgi ya da deneyime sahip değiller. Sonuç olarak, ELT'nin kuirleştirilmesi hakkında bilgileri yoktu ve bunu yapmadılar, ancak bu fikre çok açıklardı. Cinsel eşitlik ile cinsel eşitliği karıştırırsalar da, cevapları öğrencileri için güvenli ve kapsayıcı bir ortam yaratmak istediklerini göstermiştir. Genel olarak, katılımcıların çeşitlilik, eşitlik, kapsayıcılık ve kuiring İngilizce öğretimi uygulamaları hakkında bilgi edinmek için resmi ve sistematik bir eğitim almaları gerektiği sonucuna varılabilir.

İkinci olarak, katılımcılara göre, Türkiye'deki mevcut siyasi ve kültürel iklim kuir bireylere son derece olumsuz bakmaktadır. Bu nedenle, katılımcılardan biri ELT'yi kuirleştirmenin işsizlik veya davayla sonuçlanabileceğini belirtmiştir. Bu, katılımcıların ELT'yi kuirleştirmekle ilgili çekincelerinin birkaç nedeninden biridir. Bunlardan en önemlisi, Türk kuir topluluğunun Türk toplumunda sosyal, finansal ve politik yollarla nasıl zulüm gördüğüyle ilgilidir. Diğerleri ise bu büyük çekincenin bir alt kümesidir. Katılımcılar, derslerini etkili bir şekilde nasıl kuirleştirecekleri konusunda gerekli bilgiye sahip olmadıklarını ve eğitime ihtiyaç duyduklarını tartıştılar. İdarenin tepkisinden korkuyorlar; sınıf yönetimi sorunları olabileceği için kuirleştirilmiş ELT dersleri vermekte tereddüt ediyorlar ve homofobik ifadelerle başa çıkmak için donanımlı olmadıklarını düşünüyorlar. Ayrıca katılımcılar, mevcut heteronormatif materyallerin ve müfredatın uyarlanması gerekeceğini, bunun da öğretmenler için ekstra ücretsiz iş anlamına geleceğini belirtmektedir. İlgili literatürde de heteronormatif materyaller ve müfredattan kaynaklanan zorluklar, idari destek eksikliği ve sosyo-politik baskılardan kaynaklanan cesaretsizlikten bahsedilmektedir. Özellikle, diğer çalışmalar bazı öğretmenlerin açık kimlikler ile dil öğrenimi arasında bir ilişki olmadığını düşündüklerini ortaya koymuştur; ancak bu çalışmada katılımcılar dil öğrenimi ile kuir kimlikler arasında net çizgiler

çizmektedir. Katılımcıların, öğrettikleri ülkenin kuir bireylerle olan politik ve kültürel ilişkisinin doğrudan bir sonucu olarak tereddütler yaşadıkları anlaşılmaktadır. Kurum yönetiminin kuir öğrencilerin varlığını ve mücadelelerini kabul etmesi ve bunu düzeltmek için adımlar atması, katılımcıların çekincelerini önemli ölçüde hafifletebilir.

Üçüncü olarak, çekincelerine rağmen, katılımcıların birçok nedenden ötürü kuir ELT derslerine motive oldukları keşfedilmiştir. Katılımcılar, kimlik oluşumu ile dil edinimi arasında doğrudan bir bağlantı olduğunu kabul etmektedir. Öğrenciler, dil sınıfında yeni bir kültür ve dil merceğinden kimliklerini tartışabilir ve müzakere edebilirler. Bu nedenle, öğrenciler kimliklerini tartışırken kendilerini güvende, rahat ve saygıdeğer hissedersen daha dikkatli, ilgili olacaklarını ve hedef dili kullanmak için daha fazla çaba göstereceklerini savunmuşlardır. Buna ek olarak, katılımcılar güvenli ve kapsayıcı bir öğrenme ortamının teşvik edilmesinin tüm öğrencilerin refahını ve başarısını artırmaya yardımcı olduğu konusunda hemfikirdir. Dahası, bazı katılımcılar, kuir öğrencilerin, ELT'nin kuirleştirilmesinden kaynaklanacak kabul ve saygı görmeleri halinde derslere daha fazla katılacaklarını ve katılacaklarını açıkça belirtmişlerdir. Ayrıca katılımcılar, bazı öğrencilerin ELT'nin kuirleştirilmesine olumsuz tepki verebileceği, ancak çoğunluğun olumlu tepki verebileceği konusunda hemfikirdir. On yıldan fazla öğretmenlik deneyimi olan katılımcı, çoğu öğrencinin kuir temalı tartışma konularına ilgi duyduğunu, bu nedenle derse daha fazla katıldıklarını ve fikirlerini hedef dilde ifade etmeye çalıştıklarını açıklayarak bunu örneklendirmiştir. Bu sonuçlar, katılımcıların öğrencilerin ruh sağlığı ve akademik başarıları arasındaki ilişkinin yanı sıra öğrencilerin ruh sağlığı ile cinsiyet ve cinsel kimlik güvenlikleri arasındaki ilişkinin de farkında olduklarını göstermektedir.

Son olarak, veriler katılımcıların Türkiye'deki hazırlık okulları bağlamında ELT'nin kuirleştirilmesi için çok sayıda fikir ve öneri sunduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bu fikir ve öneriler, katılımcıların kuirleştirilmiş ders planları ve görüşmelerdeki yanıtları aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Katılımcılar, ELT'yi etkili bir şekilde kuirleştirmek için öğretmenlerin açıklık, saygı, adalet ve dürüstlük gibi niteliklere sahip olması gerektiğini ileri sürmüşlerdir. Tüm sınıf içi tartışmalarda ve materyallerde kapsayıcı

bir dil kullanmanın önemini vurgulamışlardır. Kapsayıcı dil kullanımının öğrencileri sosyal ve kültürel stereotipler hakkında eleştirel düşünmeye teşvik edeceğini belirtmişlerdir. Buna ek olarak, katılımcılardan üçü ders planlarında kuir bireylerin ve unsurların dikkat çekmemesi ve mümkün olduğunca normalleştirilmesi gerektiğini öne sürmüştür. Bir katılımcıya göre bu, biri kuir diğeri heteroseksüel iki aile hakkındaki soruları yanıtlarken, kimliklerinden veya ilişkilerinden değil, yalnızca günlük rutinlerindeki farklılıklardan bahsedilmesi gerektiği anlamına geliyordu. Bir başka katılımcıya göre ise bu, toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri ve dini rollere dayalı görev ve etkinliklerin ön koşul olarak sunulması ve öğretmenin kuir unsurları ancak öğrenciler bu görevlere olumlu yanıt verirse sunması gerektiği anlamına geliyordu. Katılımcılar ayrıca, öğrencilerin kalıp yargıları veya verili olarak kabul ettikleri diğereğerleri sorguladıkları ve eleştirdikleri kuir etkinliklerin kendileri için son derece faydalı olacağını belirtmişlerdir. Toplu olarak bu sonuçlar, öğretmenlerin ELT'nin nasıl kuirleştirileceğine dair fikirleri olmasına rağmen, bu fikirlerin son derece genelleştirilmiş olduğunu ve hiç de sistematik olmadığını göstermektedir. Bu nedenle, öğretmenlerin ELT'yi sistematik ve etkili bir şekilde nasıl kuirleştireceklerini öğrenmeleri için, ELT'nin kuirleştirilmesi konusunda kapsamlı bir eğitime ek olarak, kuirleştirilmiş ELT derslerine maruz kalma ve fikirlerin tartışılması için bir forum gereklidir.

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YAZARIN / AUTHOR

Soyadı / Surname : Çetin

Adı / Name : Gaye Şevval

Bölümü / Department : İngiliz Dili Öğretimi / English Language Teaching

TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (İngilizce / English): THE PERCEPTIONS OF TURKISH EFL PREP-SCHOOL TEACHERS ON QUEERING THEIR ELT PRACTICES: A CASE STUDY

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE: **Yüksek Lisans / Master** **Doktora / PhD**

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