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Creating Positive Attitudes towards English as a Foreign Language

Most members of the language teaching profession realize that their students' learning potential increases when attitudes are positive and motivation runs high. The research into the connection between positive attitudes and successfully learning a second language supports this simple observation, although it is important to understand that many variables are involved because we are dealing with complex social and psychological aspects of human behavior. For example, students' ability to learn a second language can be influenced by their attitudes towards the target language, the target language speakers and their culture, the social value of learning the second language, and also the students' attitudes towards themselves as members of their own culture (Ellis 1994). In addition, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers should recognize that all students possess positive and negative attitudes in varying degrees, and that the negative ones can be changed by thoughtful instructional methods, such as using materials and activities that help students achieve an "understanding and appreciation of the foreign culture" (Brown 2000, 181).

This article will describe some of the research about attitudes, motivation, and language learning; it will then discuss a project that examined educational factors that affect motivation and evaluated the effect of introducing special methods, materials, and activities to make attitudes more positive. The project utilized *classroom action research*, which is a useful method with clearly defined stages to allow teachers to identify, investigate, apply solutions to, and report on results and make recommendations about how to improve teaching strategies and educational policy.

Attitudes and language learning

As Brown (2000) points out, attitudes are cognitive and affective; that is, they are related to thoughts as well as to feelings and emotions. Attitudes govern how one approaches learning,

which in the case of language requires exposure to a different culture and also to the difficult task of mastering a second language. Attitudes begin developing early and are influenced by many things, including parents, peers, and interactions with people who have social and cultural differences. Therefore, attitudes "form a part of one's perception of self, of others, and of the culture in which one is living" (Brown 2000, 180).

It is well known that negative attitudes towards the foreign language and group, which often comes from stereotypes and superficial contact with the target culture, can impede the learning of that language. Conversely, positive attitudes towards the foreign language and group increase language learning success. Brown (2000) describes several studies about the effects of attitude on language learning and concludes that "positive attitudes towards the self, the native language group, and the target language group enhanced proficiency" (181). When students with positive attitudes experience success, the attitudes are reinforced, whereas students with negative attitudes may fail to progress and become even more negative in their language learning attitudes. Because attitudes can be modified by experience, effective language teaching strategies can encourage students to be more positive towards the language they are learning.

Attitudes and motivation

According to Gardner (1985, 10) attitudes are a component of motivation, which "refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language." Deci and Ryan (1985) identify motivation as *intrinsic* or *extrinsic*. Students are intrinsically motivated when they are interested in learning tasks and outcomes for their own sake, and that results in internal feelings of self-determination and competence. On the other hand, students are extrinsically motivated if they carry out some actions to achieve some instrumental end, such as earning a reward or avoiding a punishment. Whatever motivates students, it seems clear that a positive attitude towards the target language and group is important.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) identify two related types of motivation, which are called *instrumental* and *integrative*. Students with

instrumental motivation acquire a language for such reasons as to get a better job, to read technical material, or to study in the country where the language is spoken. Integrative motivation is held by students who want to join with "the culture of the second language group and become involved in social interchange in that group" (Brown 2000, 162).

Motivation is regarded "as a key component of a model of language learning" (Spolsky 2000, 158). Because of its importance to language learning, there is growing interest in the creation of a motivation model that can help develop methodological applications to improve the teaching and learning of a second language. In a recent contribution, Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) examine the effect of sociocultural changes in Hungary in the 1990s on students' attitudes and motivation towards language learning by collecting data from a population of 8,593 thirteen- and fourteen-year-old students.

In another contribution, Spolsky (2000, 164) presents several second language learner case histories that illustrate the "complex motivational and identity patterns" among different individuals. Because language knowledge is so dynamic and contextualized, Spolsky is distrustful of using questionnaires as the sole method to collect data on motivation, and he stresses how important it is to supplement them with observation, interviews, and focused conversations to obtain "hard sociolinguistic data and personal statements of second language learners" (Spolsky 2000, 157).

As with the research that finds a correlation between positive attitudes and successful language learning, studies like Yashima (2002) find that motivated students have greater self-confidence in their second language, resulting in a greater willingness to communicate; Noels et al. (2000) also find a strong correlation between instrumental motivation and *Self-Determination Theory*, which deals with students' need for competence, satisfactory social connections, and autonomy. Although there is contrasting evidence as to whether instrumental or integrative orientation is better, both types have been shown to lead to successful language learning (Brown 2000; Ellis 1994). What is clear, according to Brown (2000, 181), is "that second language learners benefit from positive attitudes and that negative attitudes may lead to decreased motivation and, in all likelihood,

because of decreased input and interaction, to unsuccessful attainment of proficiency."

A classroom action research project

Classroom action research occurs when teachers reflect critically about the teaching situation, identify learning or instructional problems, and institute methods to solve them. The basic steps include exploring and identifying a problem in the classroom, collecting data and reflecting on the problem, thinking about something that will possibly fix the problem, developing and instituting a plan of intervention, and reporting on the final results (Nunan 1993). Classroom action research is productive "because teachers are so close to students on a daily basis, their own inquiry from their unique perspectives can make an important contribution to knowledge about teaching and learning" (Johnson and Chen 1992, 212). In addition to improving the current teaching situation, action research can boost teachers' professional development, can be used for teacher training, and can present to an institution evidence of the need for change.

Context of classroom action research project

Profile of students and educational institution

The 95[1] students involved in this project were from two preparatory speaking classes in the Department of English at Atatürk University in Turkey. Most of these students graduated from a teacher preparatory high school[2] and are expected to become English teachers after completion of a five-year course of study. The students had an intermediate level of English, as determined by their university entrance exam. The students had a reasonable knowledge of English grammar but were reticent to speak or produce the target language.

As a result of departmental restructuring, these two speaking classes got a new teacher at the beginning of November. The new teacher had the initial impression that many students were undisciplined and disorderly, particularly some of the male students, and most students did not appear to be working up to their potential. They arrived to class late and did not bring lesson materials. Many of the female students exhibited the pretence of being engaged with lessons but frequently did not complete homework or respond to questions.

Data collection: Informal interview and survey

In preliminary "getting-to-know-you" speaking tasks with the new teacher, the students were asked to explain why they wished to become English teachers. The new teacher took notes during these talks and recorded the responses and emotions expressed during each separate class session. Thus, the preliminary speaking task was carried out with two different groups, a daytime class of 43 students and an evening class of 52 students. This task was completed in the second week of November 2004. The action research study, data collection, and teaching period lasted for a total of twenty weeks.

The students' reasons for studying English revealed a wide array of attitudes and motivations, including the belief that teaching English was an easy, comfortable, and well-paid job, and that a teacher has more respect and advantages than persons with other jobs. Some students revealed that their parents had insisted on this choice of profession for them; another expressed not liking English or the teaching profession, even to the degree of disliking reading and writing, considering them an unnecessary waste of time. One student claimed to have no reason at all for choosing to become an English teacher, while several others admitted that they had chosen English teaching by default because they were not successful in mathematics or physics. Surprisingly, almost a third of the students exhibited negative attitudes towards learning English and entering the teaching profession.

Other students demonstrated more positive attitudes by stating that they enjoyed learning about new people, cultures, and languages such as English. They believed that teaching was a sacred profession and that English was an important international language. Some students felt that their English language skills would give them the means to travel and communicate with others. Some female students stated that becoming a teacher was a suitable job, as teaching incorporated their love and nurturing of children.

All of these attitudes exhibited a range of extrinsic and intrinsic motivations for learning English and becoming an English teacher, as well as some negative attitudes that could impede students' progress and interfere with classroom harmony. Based upon this initial

group interview, a survey was prepared and administered to the students in the third week of December, 2004. The survey included the following three open-ended items to elicit attitudes and motivations:

1. Why do you want to learn English?

2. Describe an interesting experience you have had in which you needed to understand or use English.

3. What experiences have you had with learning English in the past? How do you feel about these experiences? What did you like or dislike about these experiences?

These survey items were developed to elaborate on the students' reasons for learning English, to discover the circumstances when they used English, and to reveal the effect of positive and negative experiences on learning the language. Thirty-eight daytime students and twenty-four evening class students[3] responded to these questions. The results of the survey are presented in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

Results obtained from the survey

For data reporting purposes, the survey responses were grouped according to categories. Because the survey required open responses, students often provided multiple answers for each question or statement, which explains why the total number of responses exceeds the number of survey participants, which was 62 in total. Students gave extended answers, which led them to note several points related to the questions.

Table 1 depicts the numerous reasons students had for learning English, and shows a mixture of instrumental motivations (get

Table 1: "Why do you want to learn English?"

Response Category	Number of Responses
I like English	25
Because English is an international language	24
Going to or want to be an English teacher	24
To learn something about the target culture	17
Get a good job	14
Interested in tourism/travel	10
Communicate with foreign people easily	7
Speaking a second language has prestige	7
Have to learn	5

a job, have prestige) and integrative motivations (like English, learn about target culture, communicate with foreigners). The "tourism/travel" category may represent both types of motivation because tourism can be a source of employment for EFL students, while travel suggests wanting to meet foreigners.

Students related both positive and negative experiences about when they needed to understand or use English, as shown in Table 2. Most responses reveal a desire to communicate with foreigners. Either students were satisfied that they were able to communicate and help foreign people, or they felt bad because they were not able to assist them and communicate with them properly. This is interesting as it shows the importance of integrative motivation. It is also notable that so many students reported their problems communicating in English, which points out the difficulty of the speaking skill, especially in an EFL context. This suggests an urgent need for teachers to focus on this skill because if the lack of success continues, it could decrease the motivation to improve, and eventually make students feel that learning English is futile.

Table 2: "Describe an interesting experience you have had in which you needed to understand or use English."

Response Category	Number of Responses
Not being able to help and communicate with foreign people, tourists	28
Spoke with tourists/became friends	22
Assisted foreign people, tourists with English	10
Not using the language correctly	4
Difficulty in listening, speaking	3

The responses in Table 3 represent what students liked or disliked about their past English learning experiences. While many students reported simply that they enjoyed learning English, many also recounted specific negative aspects about the teachers, the lessons, and being laughed at for their English. Additionally, several students disliked the overall difficulty of English, mainly the speaking and listening skills.

Some students noted the inspirational and positive effect teachers had had on their goal of learning to speak and teach English. However, other students noted that their teachers

were not good and could not teach English properly. This is important because a positive attitude towards the teacher may make students more at ease and relaxed, in which case they will "seek out intake by volunteering and may be more accepting of the teacher as a source of intake" (Krashen 1981, 23). A few students displayed negative attitudes concerning English, such as "I don't like learning new words," "Homework is a waste of time," and "I have difficulty writing."

Table 3: "What do you like or dislike about past English learning experiences?"

Response Categories	Number of Responses
Enjoyed learning English	21
Lessons too hard in English	9
Teachers were not very good at English	7
Secondary school teacher gave courage and inspiration	6
Being unsuccessful in the target language	5
The English education is not good	4
Not learning English properly/getting inadequate input	4
Pronunciation problems	4
People laughed at my English	4
The negative effect of the tasks (difficult questions)	3
Having difficulty in understanding English	2
Difficulty in listening and speaking	2

Overall, the three open-ended survey items showed that motivation was present among the students, who with some exceptions had the desire to learn the language. However, a threat to motivation also existed because of difficulty with tasks, lessons, and especially with the speaking and listening skills.

Achievement Exam 1

Several weeks after taking over the class, the teacher administered an achievement exam to assess students' understanding of what had been covered in class. This exam assessed English through true/false questions, multiple choice questions, short response questions, one complex reasoning question, and a number of TOEFL-style English grammar questions. All 95 students from both classes took the exam. The percentage of students who obtained a passing score of 60 and above is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Percentage of students who passed Achievement Exam 1

	Exam 1
Daytime Students	27
Evening Students	75

The score distribution in Table 5 shows specifically that the evening students obtained higher scores than the daytime students. On this exam, a disappointing 73% of the daytime class failed and 25% of the evening class failed.

Although evening students entered the department with lower scores than daytime students, their exam results were more successful than the daytime students. This difference may be related to the size of the class, their eagerness to learn or possibly the larger number of male students in the evening class compared with a majority of female students in the morning class. The evening students also knew if they gained one of the top three positions in the class, they would pay the daytime tuition fee, which is lower than tuition for evening classes.

From the perspective of the teacher, the combination of negative attitudes, poor student behavior, and diminished student learning was of concern. The exam results were placed on the board for discussion, and students and the teacher brainstormed about methods to improve the results. Students were counseled about the importance of their chosen profession, the advantages of teacher training, and the meaning of their future as a teacher.

An intervention strategy was devised to create more positive attitudes, reverse the substandard performances, and create a more learner-centered and motivated classroom. Some new teaching methods and activities were proposed to increase students' motivation and were integrated into the syllabus. The following section discusses these strategies and activities and explains the rationale for choosing them.

Interventions to increase student motivation and achievement

The classes under discussion revealed several problems with English, particularly with the speaking skill, and also some poor attitudes and motivation, in spite of the fact that

there were indications of instrumental and integrative motivation. The next step was to plan interventions based on sound theoretical foundations to deal with the problems associated with the issues of course difficulty, poor attitudes, and a lack of motivation.

Rigorous learning

Strong, Silver, and Perini (2001) advocate *rigorous learning*, where the curriculum is developed through complexity, provocativeness, and emotional involvement. Rather than simplifying or "dumbing down" curriculum standards, teachers are encouraged to use complex texts, themes, and ideas. Recent research indicates that students respond to the challenge of a rigorous curriculum, especially when it contains effective teaching techniques and a supportive classroom environment.

Three texts were used to apply rigorous learning to the syllabus. Use of the first text, *Cambridge Preparation for the TOEFL Test*, was requested by the department head to prepare the students for the TOEFL exam. Emphasis was placed on content-based learning, reading strategies, comprehension questions, pronunciation, stress and intonation, and English grammar. Regular homework exercises set the expectations that students would come to class with their materials and would be prepared to discuss these exercises.

The second text, *Speaking English Book 2: Drills and Dialogues*, was included to combine speaking practice with pronunciation exercises on those features that present the greatest difficulty to EFL students. Role-plays, pair dialogues, and dramatizations activated kinesthetic learning and was an anticipated and enjoyable activity.

The third text, which provided a strong basis for connecting rigorous learning with classroom activities, was a collection of advanced level short stories called *Configurations: American Short Stories for the EFL Classroom*.

Content-based literary instruction

The use of literature has a natural connection with rigorous learning. Students get involved because the interesting, dramatic content of literature provides many opportunities to develop higher level thinking skills. According to Richard-Amato (1996, 232), providing students with a literature-based curriculum utilizes "the power of language to heighten awareness and fully engage the mind." Literature is full of challenging dialogues and gives "optimal input for language acquisition," and the stories expose "students to a wide variety of cultures and subcultures within a given society," often completely absorbing them "in the things they really care about," both cognitively and emotionally (Richard-Amato 1996, 207).

Additionally, the settings, themes, and characters in literature provide the opportunity for a variety of motivating activities based on the development of the four skills. Pre-reading exercises help students build schemata and heighten the recognition of what are common themes, even across cultures. Students develop cognitive reading skills through the application of bottom-up, top-down, and interactive processing strategies using vocabulary, meaning from context, and inferencing.

To organize the teaching of literature, the teacher incorporated Durrant and Green's (2000) *three-dimensional* (3-D) *literacy model* that includes the *operational* (how to make the language system work); the *cultural* (acknowledgement of the role of culture and history); and the *critical* (acknowledgement of the power of literacy). These operational, cultural, and critical components of 3-D learning emphasize teaching in a more connected and explicit manner.

Connectedness

Anstey (2003) discusses *connectedness* as a necessary factor in literacy pedagogy, which is created by a supportive classroom atmosphere where students are motivated to participate and take some responsibility for their learning. To achieve this, efforts were made to introduce communicative activities around relevant topics. Students received praise for their contributions to class discussions, and a sense of humor added pleasure to learning and

Table 5: Distribution of Scores for Exam 1

	100-90	89-80	79-70	69-60	59-50	49-40	39-30	29-20
Daytime Students	0	0	6	21	33	26	12	2
Evening Students	0	19	23	33	21	2	2	0

reduced tension. Limitations, such as shyness or inability, were "desuggested" (Larsen-Freeman 2000, 81) by positive encouragement. As a result, students began to respond with more positive attitudes and a sense of anticipation toward their speaking lessons.

Cognitive and affective skill development with literature

The following short stories that were used in the new syllabus exemplify some productive uses of short stories for the development of cognitive and affective skills.

- *Contents of the Dead Man's Pockets* by Jack Finney offers the chance to explore and discuss literary techniques, such as plots, themes, point of view, and how the writer slowly creates tension.

- *Going Home* by William Saroyan has interesting characters and dialogue, which leads to discussions of colloquial expressions and provides further interaction in relation to stories. Relating such story content and characters to their own lives encourages discussion and active involvement among students.

- *Horseman in the Sky* by Ambrose Bierce offers a good opportunity to teach culture along with reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. The story takes place during the American Civil War, and students can discuss the differences between the industrial North and the agricultural South, as well as the history of slavery and civil rights while using maps, pictures, and diagrams to assist their understanding about the role of culture and history.

- *Ta-Na-E-Ka* by Mary Whitebird reinforces the idea that for second language learners, cultural knowledge can be considered as a fifth skill (Larsen-Freeman 2000). This story can inspire students to conduct research and present reports on Native Americans as part of their classroom learning experiences. It can also stimulate students to compare and contrast their own traditions with Native American traditions.

- *Hearts and Hands* by O. Henry and *The Catbird Seat* by James Thurber develop critical thinking skills in students as they search for clues in the text to answer complex questions. Such detective work requires students to follow a train of thought and identify evidence and implication in the text.

As students worked with the short stories, they became engaged with role plays, dramatizations, and other communicative activities such as *literature circles*—discussion groups composed of students reading the same story. Literature circles promote language production in enjoyable ways and support cooperative learning skills. Overall, students began to develop autonomy by choosing what activities or story they would like to complete next. A more student-centered atmosphere in the classroom encouraged students to participate more effectively and engendered a more positive attitude and greater motivation to learn English.

End-of-semester survey

Finally, the students participated in an end-of-semester survey to determine the degree to which the new syllabus resulted in a change to their attitudes and motivation toward learning English. This survey took place in the third week of May after a 20-week timeline. Again, as it was the end of semester, 65 students were present to give their responses. The survey, designed in a Likert scale adapted from Graves (2000, 295), was designed to determine the strength of student agreement or disagreement with certain statements on a scale of 1 (disagree) to 5 (agree). The two-part survey contained statements related to student feelings towards (1) learning and using English, and (2) the course content (including instructions, materials, activities, assessment, the teacher, and the class atmosphere). As is typical in analyzing this type of questionnaire, responses on the high end (4 and 5) and low end (1 and 2) of the scale were combined to report on the strength or weakness of the responses. (See the Appendix for the survey instrument and results.)

Students' attitudes towards learning and using English

Part I of the end-of-semester survey results generally indicate students' positive attitudes towards learning and using English, which is a definite improvement from what was observed before the establishment of the new syllabus.

For example, in their responses to Statement 1 Part I of the survey, 98% of the students indicated agreement with liking English and learning the language, with 84% strongly agreeing with this statement. Three statements showed a high level of integrative motivation: in Statement 2, 91% of the students believed that English was necessary for communicating with other people; in Statement 3, 93% indicated above-average agreement that learning English would help them explore different cultures; and in Statement 4, 82% indicated that learning English was important because English is an international language.

Three other statements indicated positive self-assessment regarding learning English. For example, in Statement 5, 91% of the students believed they should be good at understanding English; in Statement 6, 80% believed that they should be good at producing English; and in Statement 7, 85% believed that they were improving their English daily.

The greatest disagreement in Part I of the survey was elicited by Statement 10—"I feel at ease while speaking in the classroom"—for which 36% were in disagreement, 27% in agreement, and 33% neutral or neither agreeing nor disagreeing. In informal follow-up discussions to determine reasons for such a response, students reported that in high school there were no English speaking courses and the focus was on grammatical forms. Thus, students lacked confidence and feared that classmates would make fun of them if they made mistakes or spoke incorrectly. Students also indicated that they could not remember the words to say in order to express themselves properly.

Students' attitudes towards the course content

In Part II of the survey, Statements 3, 7, and 9 related to classroom management issues, and students were in agreement that instructions were clear (67%), time was used effectively (67%), and content was presented in an orderly fashion (74%). Likewise, a majority of students agreed with assessment policy during the course, and in Statements 8, 10, and 12, most agreed that errors were corrected and feedback was appropriate (69%), that assessment was related to class content (70%), and that grading was accurate (69%).

Results concerning other aspects of the course content were mixed. Statement 4 said that the materials and activities were appropriate and stimulating, to which only 50% of the students agreed, 21% disagreed, and 29% were neutral. The reason for this response is related to the fact that a substantial number of students viewed the time spent on TOEFL structure studies from the textbook very negatively. They did not wish to spend their lesson time studying grammatical structures, and they preferred to have more speaking activities.

Statement 2 showed a high level of agreement (74%) that the skills taught in the course were useful. However, in Statement 1, only 49% of students agreed with the statement that "The content of the course was interesting and full of variety" (34% were neutral and 17% disagreed). Perhaps the slight contradiction derives from the fact that Statement 1 included two variables, "interesting" and "variety," which may have caused confusion among students and prohibited them from giving one response to two ideas.

A similar reason may explain the responses to Statement 5 about cultural background being given before activities, to which only 50% of students were in agreement. This statement sought students' responses to two other things: (1) whether the background was related to the content, and (2) whether differences between cultures were given. The fact that three specific issues were being considered might also explain why 29% of the students were neutral in their response.

The highest percentage of disagreement related to Statement 6—"There is a positive classroom atmosphere"—which had 23% in disagreement, 51% in agreement, and 26% neutral. When discussing this response in the follow-up session, students reported that the class was too crowded and made them uncomfortable, a factor they blamed on the education system in Turkey. The large size of the class and the students' impatience waiting for their turn resulted in some dissatisfaction. This is a common problem in EFL classrooms, and in this case there were more than fifty students in the class.

Achievement Exam 2

To assess whether the results of the course changes had an effect on student success over

the semester, a second achievement exam was administered at the end of the course. The content was related to the classroom lessons, similar to the first exam, and the total number of items on the second exam was the same as on the first one, administered before the interventions. All 95 students were present for the second exam. The results of the exam showed an improved learning of English. On this final exam, only 3% failed in the daytime class, and 0% failed in the evening class. Table 6 compares the passing percentages for both Exam 1 and Exam 2, and shows the increased passing rate.

Table 6: Percentage of students who passed Exam 1 and Exam 2

	Exam 1	Exam 2
Day time students	27	97
Evening class students	75	100

The score distribution demonstrates the degree to which the evening class students obtained higher scores than the daytime students and the degree to which both daytime and evening groups improved. Table 7 shows that 75% of the evening students received a score of 80 or above, which is a significant increase from the first exam, when only 19% were in this range. For the daytime students, 58% received a score of 80 or above, which is also a significant increase from the first exam, when 0% were in this range.

In the end, it was apparent that students had not only raised their achievement levels, but they had also improved their attitudes and motivation. They were on time to class, and they participated in more effective ways. Lessons with a quicker, more intellectual pace became routine. Cooperative learning teams created more language production and communication, and critical peer feedback was increasingly given and valued. Most importantly, students began to take more responsibility for their learning experiences. These improvements may have been the result of a number of factors, including intensive instruction in English through rigorous learning and

the change to a more communicative and student-centered teaching style designed to raise self-confidence and encourage autonomous learning.

Conclusion

Attitudes and motivation are complex social, cultural, and psychological factors that influence how a student approaches many situations in life, including second language learning. As experienced teachers know, students with positive attitudes usually progress more rapidly in second language learning. When students have a positive attitude, it acts as a motivational impetus to enable a greater effort to achieve the goal of learning the language.

This project used classroom action research principles to determine attitudes, implement changes, gauge the effectiveness of those changes, and report on the results. After implementing rigorous learning in the new syllabus, the teacher noted a number of positive results. It is hoped this project may encourage other teachers to try similar interventions in classes where negative attitudes interfere with learning or motivation. All EFL teachers can conduct this type of research in the classroom and can take advantage of the large and growing body of research about attitudes and motivation to obtain information about practical interventions to turn around negative attitudes in the classroom.

Notes

1. There were 95 students involved in the project, but the survey was administered in late December near the beginning of the students' holiday break, so many had already left to go to their hometowns. Only 62 out of 95 students participated in this part of the data collection. However, all 95 students were present for both exams.
2. A teacher preparatory high school accepts students according to the results of a national exam; candidates who obtain the required score on the exam can attend such a school. There students are offered a preparatory course focusing on English in the first year of their education, and when they graduate from the school, they obtain extra points if they choose a faculty or department that trains teachers.

Table 7: Distribution of Scores for Exam 2

	100-90	89-80	79-70	69-60	59-50	49-40	39-30	29-20
Daytime students	12	46	25	14	0	3	0	0
Evening students	33	42	25	0	0	0	0	0

3. The students are divided into two groups based on their scores on the University Entrance Exam, a national exam taken by students who want to attend a university. Students who meet the requirements can select and go to Atatürk University. However, if their scores are lower than the required exam score, they can only attend the evening classes at the university. Tuition for evening classes is higher than for daytime classes. In our study, the daytime students' scores on the University Entrance Exam ranged from 352 to 380, while the evening students' scores ranged from 348 to 352.

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Instructions: Read the following statements concerning the English language and the speaking course and mark each statement on a scale from disagree (1) to agree (5).

	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree
Part I: Learning and Using English		%	%	%	%	%	
1. I like the English language and learning it.		1		1	14	84	
2. I think the English language is necessary for communicating with other people.		2	1	5	18	74	
3. Learning English will help me to explore more things about different cultures.		1	1	6	17	75	
4. English should be known since it is an international language.		2	5	11	17	65	
5. I should be good at comprehending this language.		1		8	22	69	
6. I should be good at producing this language.		6	6	8	32	48	
7. I think I am improving my English knowledge day by day.		2	2	11	32	53	
8. It is true that the content of the course is effective in learning (e.g., having interesting and contemporary issues).		3	3	17	36	41	
9. The influence of the teacher is undeniable in learning.		8	2	12	19	59	
10. I feel myself at ease while speaking in the classroom.		19	17	37	16	11	
Part II: The Course Content							
1. The content of the course was interesting and full of variety.		8	9	34	25	24	
2. The skills taught in the course are useful.		1	10	15	32	42	
3. The instructions given in the course were clear and included examples.		3	7	23	32	35	
4. Materials and learning activities were appropriate and stimulating.		10	11	29	27	23	
5. Cultural background was given before the activities (i.e., the explanations related to the content and also the differences between cultures are given).		11	10	29	25	25	
6. There is a positive class atmosphere.		14	9	26	23	28	
7. The use of classroom time is effective.		9	9	15	28	39	
8. Error correction is made and appropriate feedback is given.		2	6	23	29	40	
9. The presentation of the content is in order.		2	7	17	34	40	
10. The assessment covered all the things that have been done in the classroom.		2	4	24	36	34	
11. Having many sections in the exam was good as it helped us to understand the level of our knowledge.		8	9	16	25	42	
12. I received the grades that I deserved.		11	7	13	22	47	