Turkish EFL Learners' Readiness for and Satisfaction with E-Learning during COVID-19

Esra Çam[1], Mutlu Çam[2], and Levent Uzun[3]

[1, 2] The School of Foreign Languages, Yalova University, Turkey

[3] The Faculty of Education, Bursa Uludag University, Turkey

Abstract

With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, online learning is a new, and therefore, challenging experience for most university students in Turkey. Determining whether these students are ready for or satisfied with distance learning practices is essential for higher education stakeholders to design and implement these practices efficiently. This quantitative study investigated EFL learners' readiness for and satisfaction with web-based English courses in Turkey during the COVID-19 pandemic. It further aimed to examine the role of e-learning readiness on e-learning satisfaction. Data was collected through questionnaires from 169 EFL students taking online English courses at the A1 level in an intensive English program at a state university in Turkey during the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings revealed that the study sample had an above-average level of readiness for and satisfaction with the English courses they took in virtual environments. Furthermore, e-learning readiness was found to be associated with e-learning satisfaction, and readiness successfully predicted satisfaction. Important implications for school leaders and instructors were suggested based on the findings.

Keywords: e-learning, readiness, satisfaction, EFL

Author Note

Esra Çam https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7598-2606
Mutlu Çam https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9008-9472
Levent Uzun https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2321-391X
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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to: Esra Çam, Yalova Üniversitesi Merkez Yerleşkesi, Yalova, Turkey. Email: esra.cam@yalova.edu.tr

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The COVID-19 pandemic has forced higher education institutions in Turkey to make urgent decisions to continue education online. It is undeniable that this rapid transition to online education has provided instructors and students with a temporary solution to an urgent problem. However, it has brought many challenges with it. Unlike true online education that is purposefully planned from the beginning and deliberately designed to be online, the instruction provided at most universities in Turkey during this emergency lacked a careful design and planning process. The major problem was that this sudden transformation was carried out without in-depth research into students' readiness for and satisfaction with e-learning.

Previous research on online learning has mainly focused on the factors influencing learner achievement in virtual learning environments (Bolliger & Halupa, 2018; Wei & Chou, 2020; Yang et al., 2017). Other studies have explored the factors underlying students' satisfaction with web-based courses (Asoodar et al., 2016; Liaw & Huang, 2013; Paechter et al., 2010; Wei & Chou, 2020; Yilmaz, 2017). Online learning perceptions (Wei & Chou, 2020; Wei et al., 2015), online learning readiness (Hung et al., 2010; Keramati et al., 2011; Wei & Chou, 2020; Yilmaz, 2017), and expectations (Paechter et al., 2010) were the most researched factors affecting students' success in and satisfaction with online courses. However, minimal research has been directed towards how such a sudden shift to online teaching, as in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic in Turkey, has affected the quality of the courses at the tertiary level, especially the ones that require learner-to-learner and learner-to-instructor interactions. Furthermore, the case of foreign language teaching has been scarcely researched.

As Ilgaz and Gülbahar (2015) suggest, it is essential for educators, instructional designers, and other stakeholders to assess the extent to which students are ready for and satisfied with e-learning. The former is important for the design, delivery, and implementation of online instruction, while the latter is required to modify and revise it. In this regard, this quantitative study aims to examine the level of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' readiness for and satisfaction with web-based Basic English courses in an intensive English program at a state university in Turkey. It also aims to examine the impact of students' readiness for online English courses on their satisfaction with them to contribute to the depth of the research on this topic. The study further intends to provide the teachers and administrative staff with an understanding of the issue so that they may revise their previous practices and decisions and develop them by overcoming pre-existing deficiencies.

Literature Review

The widespread use of the internet encouraged web-based learning to become an emergent field of research. The number of online courses at universities worldwide has rapidly increased (Wei & Chou, 2020). With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, e-learning has ceased to become a choice or alternative to face-to-face education; it has turned into a must. There have been numerous studies investigating the factors that have considerable influence on the success or failure of e-learning, and e-learner readiness and e-learner satisfaction are considered among the most critical variables to successful e-learning environments.

E-Learning Readiness

E-Learning readiness is defined as learners' eagerness and ability to utilize the advantages of online learning resources, multimedia technologies, and the internet. Learners' e-learning readiness is an important indicator of their willingness to successfully participate and complete online classes (Demir, 2015). It has been reported in the literature that unless

students' readiness levels are sufficient, they are likely to fail in e-learning (Moftakhari, 2013).

Belonging to Generation Z, born after the millennium, today's university students have been called "digital natives" who have no idea what it would be like to live in a world without the internet. These students are believed to be ready for e-learning as they use technology well and have self-efficacy in using it (Hao, 2016). However, research shows that this is not the case for all learners because virtual learning environments are technically complex and self-efficacy in using technology is just one aspect of the e-learning readiness construct (Demir, 2015).

Providing learners with e-learning opportunities and environments may enhance the quality of learning. However, for this to happen, many researchers have highlighted the necessity of institutions', students', and teachers' readiness for e-learning (Akaslan & Law, 2011; Moftakhari, 2013). According to Guglielmino and Guglielmino (2003), sudden transformation of physical classes into virtual ones puts pressure on students who are not prepared to learn online and may cause them to be prejudiced against e-learning.

The concept of e-learning readiness was proposed for the first time by Warner et al. (1998). Several theories have been proposed to clarify the notion of being ready for online learning and identify its components (see Watkins et al., 2004; Valtonen et al., 2009; Hung et al., 2010; Dray et al., 2011; Yu & Richardson, 2015). All these studies have displayed that e-learning readiness is a multifaceted concept (Hung et al., 2010) and a number of related factors exist. Computer/internet self-efficacy, online-communication self-efficacy, learner control, self-directed learning, and motivation for e-learning have been proposed as the common components in the majority of theories related to the notion of e-learning readiness.

Computer self-efficacy is defined as learners' beliefs about themselves as computer users and about their skills in using basic computer programs (Demir, 2015), while internet

self-efficacy refers to learners' beliefs about their internet skills (Hung et al., 2010). Online communication self-efficacy is learners' beliefs pertaining to their competence in understanding language and culture unique to e-learning environments and their ability to communicate their thoughts in such environments (Demir, 2015). Previous studies have emphasized online communication self-efficacy as an essential facet to successful online learning (Gülbahar, 2009; Hung et al., 2010). Self-directed learning is a process in which learners take responsibility for their own learning with or without the support of an external source such as a teacher (Demir, 2015). Learner control, a significant component of e-learning readiness, is defined as learners' ability to control and manage their own learning process and act upon their own desires and goals. Finally, motivation towards e-learning refers to the desire to learn things online (Demir, 2015).

Previous research shows that the most consistent correlations of e-learning readiness are motivation towards e-learning and self-directed learning readiness. E-learning procedure requires one to become aware of oneself as an autonomous, independent learner. Some students fail in online learning because they lack the motivation to attend online classes, and they are deprived of skills and strategies to control and manage their learning process (Yilmaz, 2016).

Hao's (2016) study is especially important for the present study because it is one of the few numbers of studies conducted with EFL students. By investigating 7th grade students' readiness for flipped learning in foreign language classrooms, Hao (2016) showed that the five readiness dimensions (from the highest readiness level to the lowest) were technology self-efficacy, motivation for learning, learner control and self-directed learning, in-class communication self-efficacy, and doing previews. The results also revealed that students' characteristics, including their language beliefs and their perceptions regarding their teachers, impacted their flipped learning readiness to different extents. In a different study, Keramati et

al. (2011) identified three readiness factors influential on e-learning outcomes: technical factors, organizational factors, and social factors. They found that the organizational readiness factor was the most crucial variable for the outcomes.

Prior research, some of which have been above-mentioned, has mainly aimed to explore and explain the relations between learners' readiness for online courses and course outcomes (see Keramati et al., 2011). Several studies, on the other hand, have shown that e-learning readiness could influence learners' satisfaction with online learning.

E-Learning Satisfaction

As students are the primary 'customers' of universities, their satisfaction is considered obviously crucial for higher education institutions (Douglas et al., 2006). Weerasinghe and Fernando (2017) define learner satisfaction as "a short-term attitude resulting from an evaluation of students' educational experience, services and facilities" (p.533). Existing research has provided evidence for several factors that are deemed to be decisive on learner satisfaction, such as learning environment, course structure and content, interaction, teaching resources, teacher knowledge, style, support and feedback, individual differences, technological features, and so forth (Eichelberger & Ngo, 2018).

According to Sun et al. (2008), identifying critical factors that are influential on students' satisfaction with e-learning may contribute to the design and operation of successful e-learning from a holistic viewpoint and may offer guidelines for e-learning management. Research has provided evidence for certain factors that play a crucial role in e-learners' satisfaction, such as internet self-efficacy, self-regulated learning, and interactive learning environments (Kuo et al., 2014; Liaw & Huang, 2013; Paechter et al., 2010). Given that e-learning satisfaction is complex and multidimensional, recent studies have revealed additional factors influencing it, such as discussion forums and examinations (Wei & Chou, 2020),

students' perceptions regarding online learning and motivation (Chow & Shi, 2014), and students' perceptions regarding their teacher and classmates (Lee et al., 2011).

Similarly, in their study, Sun et al. (2008) investigated the critical factors affecting learners' satisfaction with e-learning. The researchers found seven variables associated with e-learner satisfaction: learner computer anxiety, instructor attitude towards e-learning, e-learning course flexibility, course quality, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and diversity in the assessment. They mentioned that these seven factors could explain 66.1% of the variance of user satisfaction, and course quality was the most critical variable.

Beqiri et al. (2009) carried out a similar study to determine what factors contributed to learners' satisfaction with e-learning. They found out that when students had positive attitudes towards online technologies and had technological self-efficacy, they were more likely to be satisfied with the instruction they had. In another study, Palmer and Holt (2009) found that learners' satisfaction was closely related to fulfilling their expectations regarding what was required to succeed in the unit. The other two factors that they found to positively affect learner satisfaction were self-confidence about their ability to communicate and learn online, and their teachers' feedback on how well they were performing in the unit.

E-Learning Readiness and E-Learning Satisfaction

Over time, extensive literature has developed on determining the effect of e-learning readiness on e-learning satisfaction. In a recent study, Yilmaz (2017) investigated the impact of e-learning readiness on learner satisfaction in the flipped classroom model of instruction. He found that learning readiness and its five components, namely computer/internet self-efficacy, self-directed learning, learner control, motivation for learning, and online communication self-efficacy, were significant predictors of course satisfaction.

In a similar study, Wei and Chou (2020) investigated whether college students' e-learning readiness and its five above-mentioned components impacted their online learning

satisfaction. Contrary to the findings of prior studies, self-directed learning was not a significant predictor of learner satisfaction. However, in line with prior research (see Kuo et al., 2013; Yilmaz, 2017; Wei & Chou, 2020), they reported that computer/internet self-efficacy and motivation for learning were critical variables to learner satisfaction.

The Present Study

The literature review reveals that studies of e-learning readiness and e-learning satisfaction are well documented. It is also well acknowledged that students' satisfaction with e-learning is related to their readiness for it. However, the two emerging fields of study seem to be under-researched in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). Therefore, the major aim of the present study is to address these issues by using a quantitative design to investigate the following research questions:

1. What is the level of university students' readiness for web-based English courses they take as part of an intensive English program at a state university in Turkey?
2. What is the level of university students' satisfaction with web-based English courses they take as part of an intensive English program at a state university in Turkey?
3. What is the correlation between tertiary level EFL students' e-learning readiness and e-learning satisfaction?
4. What is the role of e-learning readiness in e-learning satisfaction?

Methodology

This study was designed as a survey study to measure tertiary-level EFL students' levels of e-learning readiness and e-learning satisfaction and to identify the role of the former on the latter.

Participants and Setting

The study sample consisted of EFL students taking online English courses at the A1 level in an intensive English program at a state university in Turkey during the 2020-2021

academic year. Of the 460 enrolled students from 31 classes, 169 students completed the online survey with a return rate of 36%. Of the participants, 87 (51.5%) were male, and 82 (48.5%) were female, with an age range of 17 to 52 (M=20.17).

Educational Setting and Design

During the 2020-2021 academic year, physical classes were turned into online ones within the scope of COVID-19 measures at the preparatory school where the study was conducted. In line with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), a modular system was being used during the implementation of the current study. For the A1 module, 18 hours for General English classes and six hours for Writing Skills classes were allocated.

General English classes were synchronous, so the instructors and students got online at the same time, studied the course content together, and interacted with each other in various activities. The course content was mainly based on the A1 level descriptors in the CEFR. The students and instructors studied a coursebook through its online platform.

Writing Skills course was designed in a blended model. First, the students watched the lecture videos recorded by their instructors. For this course, a written course material prepared by the instructors in the institution was utilized. Each video was based on a chapter in the writing syllabus and explained how to write sentences and paragraphs. After watching the videos, the students attended synchronous writing classes to review the subject with their instructor and have discussions on the weekly topic. In the synchronous writing classes, the students were also asked to practice activities and to write sentences and paragraphs on the topics presented. The activities were arranged according to their level and mainly focused on sentence structure and basic paragraph structure.

Both courses were carried out using Microsoft Teams as the primary videoconferencing system. For the online examinations, assignments, and submissions of them, Google Classroom was utilized. Students' achievements for the courses in the A1

module were measured through the two online writing tasks and the exercises they completed online on the digital platform.

Data Collection Tools

The data was collected through an online survey. The survey included questions on demographics and two scales developed by Gülbahar (2012): the e-Readiness Scale and the e-Satisfaction Scale. Both scales were 5-point Likert scales from 1 "almost never" to 5 "almost always". There are several important reasons for choosing these scales to measure students' e-readiness and e-satisfaction in the study. First, the scales in question were developed by the same researcher to measure the two variables that were specifically investigated in this study. Therefore, they were compatible with the main purpose of the study. Second, the scales were originally developed in Turkish, the mother tongue of the current study sample. Finally, Gülbahar (2012) conducted both explanatory and confirmatory factor analyses, and the items and structures were rearranged according to the results to ensure the validity of the scales.

The e-Readiness Scale

The e-Readiness scale was used in this study to examine the degree of participants' readiness for online English courses. By reviewing the related literature and examining previous scales, Gülbahar (2012) developed 26 items in five different constructs: *individual properties, access to technology, ICT competencies, motivation and attitude,* and *factors that affect success*. Since factor analyses were conducted by Gülbahar (2012) previously, and the original scale was used without any change, no validity measure was implemented in the current study. In terms of reliability, Cronbach's alpha (α) internal consistency reliability coefficient for the scale was calculated as 0.87; thus, the scale was found to be reliable for the present study.

The e-Satisfaction Scale

The e-Satisfaction scale was used to examine the degree of participants' satisfaction with the online English courses they took in the A1 module. Gülbahar (2012) developed this scale by reviewing the literature and examining other scales used by other researchers or institutions. As a result of explanatory and confirmatory factor analyses of the preliminary items, some items were deleted. Finally, the scale included 29 items in four different constructs: *communication and usability, teaching process, instructional content*, and *interaction and evaluation*. The items were originally created in Turkish, and no change was made on the items for the current study. Therefore, the validity of the scale was not assessed in the current study. The Cronbach's alpha (α) internal consistency reliability coefficient for the scale was calculated as 0.90. Therefore, this scale was also reliable for the study.

Data Collection Procedure

During the data collection phase, a consent form, questions on demographic information, and the two scales were uploaded to the internet using an online questionnaire tool. Then the link was sent to all students at the school with the help of the other instructors. The link was accessible for the students for two weeks in December 2020. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the content of the questionnaires, and ethical considerations. After giving their consent to join the study, the participants could fill in the demographic information part and the questionnaires. It approximately took 20 minutes for a student to complete all the parts.

Data Analysis

The statistical analysis of the quantitative data was conducted with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software (SPSS), version 25.0. Descriptive analyses were conducted to present basic information about the sample and address the first and second research questions. The Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was performed to

answer the third research question. Pearson's correlation is used to measure the strength and direction of the association which exists between two variables (Kornbrot, 2005). Therefore, it was conducted to examine the association between e-learner readiness and e-learner satisfaction. Finally, simple linear regression analysis, which is used to estimate the impact of an independent variable on the dependent variable, was employed to address the fourth research question. In the current study, it was used to investigate whether e-learning readiness predicted e-learning satisfaction or not.

Results

The following sections present the key findings of the current study obtained from the two scales.

The Level of Readiness for E-Learning

This section presents the data gathered through the e-Readiness Scale regarding the first research question. The descriptive statistics for the scale are presented in Table 1 below. As the table shows, *ICT competencies*, which included items about the participants' ICT competencies, such as using a computer, the internet, and some other online learning tools, had the highest mean score (M=4.32, SD=.645). The subscale *motivation and attitude*, on the other hand, had the lowest mean score (M=3.46, SD=.797).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for the e-Readiness Scale

Subscale	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Individual properties	169	1.75	5.00	3.61	.645
Access to technology	169	1.25	5.00	4.00	.945
ICT competencies	169	1.63	5.00	4.32	.689
Motivation and attitude	169	1.00	5.00	3.46	.797
Factors affecting success	169	1,67	5.00	4.17	.603

The first factor involved in the e-Readiness Scale was the students' *individual properties*. As shown in Table 2, item 4 had the highest mean score (M=4.33, SD=.94), indicating that most students were willing to allocate three to four hours a week for each

course of study. In the same factor, item 3 had the lowest mean score (M=3.13, SD=1.12). Compared to item 2 (M=3.69, SD=1.09), which was about the students' preferences for synchronous classes, the relatively lower mean score of item 3 revealed that the students preferred synchronous classes to asynchronous classes.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for the e-Readiness Scale Items

Factor	Items	M	SD	Min.	Max.	Total f / %
Individual properties	1	3.30	1.45	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	2	3.69	1.09	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	3	3.13	1.12	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	4	4.33	.94	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
Access to technology	5	4.37	.93	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	6	4.35	1.17	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	7	3.59	1.42	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	8	3.70	1.29	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
ICT competencies	9	4.17	.94	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	10	4.15	.97	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	11	4.24	1.01	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	12	3.92	.99	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	13	4.56	.80	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	14	4.52	.79	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	15	4.51	.86	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	16	4.52	.66	2.00	5.00	169 / 100
Motivation and attitude	17	3.44	1.14	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	18	3.82	1.03	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	19	3.64	1.01	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	20	2.94	1.19	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
Factors affecting success	21	4.42	.89	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	22	4.56	.72	2.00	5.00	169 / 100
	23	4.36	.92	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	24	4.07	.96	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	25	4.18	.89	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	26	3.43	1.18	1.00	5.00	169 / 100

The descriptive statistics for the second factor, *access to technology,* showed that most participants had unrestricted access to technology. Item 5 had the highest mean score (M=4.37, SD=.93), and item 6 had the second highest mean score (M=4.35, SD=1.17). These

results showed that most students had internet access and could join online classes at home without problems.

The third factor in the e-Readiness Scale was *ICT competencies*. The mean scores of the items in this subscale ranged between 3.92 and 4.56. Item 13, with the highest mean score (M=4.56; SD=.80), showed that almost all the students had basic computer skills for online learning. The results of the other items also indicated that the participants were capable of using search engines and social networking sites. Besides, they stated that they had self-confidence in both using the computer and the internet and reaching the information online. In this factor, item 12, which was about using office programs for content presentation, had the relatively lowest mean score (M=3.92, SD=.99).

Regarding students' *motivation and attitude*, item 18, in which participants responded that they could complete their assignments on time despite the distractions in online learning, had the highest mean score (M=3.82, SD=1.03). As a striking result, item 20 had the lowest score (M=2.94, SD=1.19). This item was about the students' beliefs in the efficacy of online learning, and it had the lowest score of all the items on the scale. This finding showed that most of the participants had some concerns about the efficacy of e-learning.

The final subscale of the e-Readiness Scale was *factors affecting success*. Item 22, with the highest mean score (M=4.56, SD=.72), showed that the participants attached great importance to support in technical and administrative matters for their success. Item 21, with the second highest score (M=4.42, SD=.89), indicated that according to the participants, continuous and easy communication with their instructor was a key factor affecting their success. Item 26, which was related to discussing issues online with other individuals, had the lowest score in this subscale (M=3.43, SD=1.18). The relatively low score of the item showed that most participants were not very comfortable in online discussions.

The Level of Satisfaction with E-Learning

In this section, the participants' data regarding the second research question, which was collected through the e-Satisfaction Scale, are presented. For the descriptive statistics of the subscales, see Table 3. In this scale, two subscales, *communication and usability* (M=4.24, SD=.603) and *instructional content* (M=4.24, SD=.795), had the highest mean score, and the subscale *interaction and evaluation factor* had the lowest one (M=3.77, SD=.876) (see Table 4 for the descriptive statistics of the items in each subscale).

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for e-Satisfaction Scale

Subscale	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Communication and usability	169	1.86	5.00	4.24	.603
Teaching process	169	1.75	5.00	3.97	.764
Instructional content	169	1.0	5.0	4.24	.795
Interaction and evaluation	169	1.0	5.0	3.77	.876

The first dimension of the e-Satisfaction Scale, *communication and usability*, included items regarding the communication during the online learning and usability of the online tools. Items 2 (M=4.45, SD=.73) and 4 (M=4.40, SD=.79), which were related to the online learning platforms used during online classes, had the highest mean score. These results showed that the participants found the online learning platform Microsoft Teams user-friendly. In this subscale, item 7, which was about whether different ICT tools were used to support the classroom activities and assignments during web-based distance education, had the lowest mean score (M=3.83, SD=1.12).

The second dimension, *teaching process*, was related to the teaching process and the instructors. Item 13 had the highest mean score (M=4.39, SD=.81), showing that the participants received timely and explanatory feedback from their instructors on their assignments and classroom activities. The items with the lowest mean scores were 8 (M=3.48, SD=1.25) and 10 (M=3.50, SD=1.28) respectively. The findings of these items revealed that

students needed more explanation of how to study for online courses and more asynchronous learning opportunities if they could not participate in synchronous courses.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for E-Satisfaction Scale

Factor	Items	M	SD	Min.	Max.	Total f / %
Communication and usability	1	4.30	.80	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	2	4.45	.73	2.00	5.00	169 / 100
	3	4.30	.76	2.00	5.00	169 / 100
	4	4.40	.79	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	5	4.05	.94	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	6	4.38	.77	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	7	3.83	1.12	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
Teaching process	8	3.48	1.25	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	9	4.00	1.07	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	10	3.50	1.28	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	11	4.08	1.09	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	12	3.78	1.23	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	13	4.39	.81	2.00	5.00	169 / 100
	14	4.26	.94	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	15	4.23	.90	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
Instructional content	16	4.19	.86	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	17	4.21	.93	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	18	4.32	.89	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	19	4.25	.93	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
Interaction and evaluation	20	3.97	1.09	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	21	3.42	1.31	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	22	3.21	1.38	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	23	3.30	1.27	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	24	3.71	1.22	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	25	3.79	1.08	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	26	3.64	1.18	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	27	4.06	1.13	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	28	4.36	.90	1.00	5.00	169 / 100
	29	4.23	1.00	1.00	5.00	169 / 100

In the *instructional content* dimension, all the mean scores for subscales were higher than 4.00. These results provided evidence for the participants' satisfaction with the content of the online courses. As shown in Table 4, item 18 had the highest mean score (M=4.32, SD=.89), showing that course contents were presented clearly and comprehensibly. Also, the

result of item 19 (M=4.25, SD=.93) revealed similar findings and indicated that the course materials were sufficient, updated, and appropriate.

The final subscale in the e-Satisfaction Scale was *interaction and evaluation.* The highest mean score (M=4.36, SD=.90) belonged to item 28, which demonstrated that the time limitations for completing assignments and tasks were appropriate. Items 29 (M=4.23, SD=1.00) and 27 (M=4.06, SD=1.13) were about the evaluation criteria. The relatively high mean scores of these items revealed that the evaluation criteria were clear and fair for the participants. On the other hand, item 22 with the lowest mean score (M=3.21, SD=1.38) showed that some participants were not satisfied with the opportunities provided to create interaction among students in virtual learning environments.

The Correlation between University Students' E-Learning Readiness and Satisfaction

In order to examine the relationship between the participants' e-learning readiness and e-learning satisfaction, the Pearson product-moment correlation test was utilized. The results revealed that students' e-learning readiness had a moderately significant correlation (r=.557, p< .01) with their e-learning satisfaction (see Table 5). Students who reported to be more ready for e-learning were more satisfied with it.

Table 5

The Correlation Analysis between E-Readiness and Satisfaction

		E-Readiness	E-Satisfaction
E-readiness	Pearson Correlation	1	.557**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	169	169
E-satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.557**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	169	169

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Role of E-Learning Readiness on E-Learning Satisfaction

To answer research question 4 and examine whether e-learning readiness predicts e-learning satisfaction, a simple linear regression was calculated. A significant regression

equation was found (F [1, 167]=75,193, p< .000) with an R^2 of .310 (see Table 6). The results of the regression analysis revealed that students' e-readiness predicted their satisfaction with e-learning successfully. More clearly, e-readiness explained 31% of the variance regarding the students' satisfaction with e-learning.

Table 6

Regression Analysis Summary for e-Readiness Predicting e-Satisfaction

Variable	B	β	t	P
Constant	1.001		2.865	.005
E-readiness	.752	.557	8.671	.000

Note: R^2adjusted = 0.31

Discussion

The present study investigated EFL learners' readiness for and satisfaction with online English courses and examined the role of e-learning readiness on e-learning satisfaction. Regarding e-learning readiness, our results demonstrated that although the means of the factors differed somewhat, the students held an above average level of readiness in general for web-based distance English courses. The group-wise comparisons indicated that the highest level of readiness was in *ICT competencies*, followed by *access to technology.*

According to Wei and Chou (2020), technology-related self-efficacy has a direct influence on course satisfaction. Together, the present findings confirm the findings of prior studies in that today's university students are highly competent in using ICT tools (Hao, 2016; Hung et al., 2010; Valtonen et al., 2009). The study participants were found to have basic computer skills and technology self-efficacy, which in turn facilitated their adaptation to the e-learning process and seemed to increase their satisfaction with it. It was seen that most participants were willing to devote sufficient time to online learning, and they had no problem with access to technology.

The lowest readiness level, on the other hand, was in *motivation and attitudes* dimension. This result ties nicely with the findings of Huo's (2016) study wherein participants' motivation and positive attitudes towards online learning were relatively low. In the present study, some students were uncomfortable with engaging in online discussions. Besides that, they were concerned about the efficacy of virtual learning environments when compared to traditional classroom environments. This is consistent with what Forsey et al. (2013) and Wilson (2013) found in their studies. One possible explanation for this finding may be that as digital natives, these students can use online technologies for exploring, communicating, and socializing in their daily lives. However, using these technologies for academic life during online learning is still quite a new area for them in which they had no or minimal experience. Therefore, as Asoodar et al. (2016) proposed, the technical and administrative support they receive and their positive relationship with their instructors are essential to success in online teaching.

Considering e-learning satisfaction, the mean scores of the four factors showed slight differences, but the participants had an above average level of satisfaction with online English courses. The group-wise comparisons revealed that students had the highest satisfaction with *communication and usability* and *instructional content* dimensions and lowest satisfaction with *interaction and evaluation* dimension. The participants found the learning platform, Microsoft Teams, user-friendly, received timely and explanatory feedback from their instructors, and felt satisfied with the course content and the way it was presented. Course materials were sufficient, updated, and appropriate for e-learning, and evaluation criteria were clear and fair. On the other hand, students were relatively less satisfied with the insufficient use of various ICT tools in virtual learning environments. Furthermore, compatible with Valtonen et al. (2009), lack of interaction with peers was a limitation of online education in the present study. Many other studies have shown that interaction with their instructor, peers,

and content is essential to satisfaction (Asoodar et al., 2016; Kuo et al., 2014; Liaw & Huang, 2013). Our results lead to a similar conclusion, which is that students were satisfied with interactions with their instructors and the course content. However, from the results, it was also clear that they needed more interaction opportunities with their peers. Overall, these findings are in accordance with the findings reported by Yukselturk and Yildirim (2008). They found that interaction among learners decreased throughout the online learning process, while the interaction between the learner and the instructor remained the same.

Also, our results provide evidence for the claims of Asoodar et al. (2016) and Lee et al. (2011) that perceived instructional and technical support was significantly related to students' overall satisfaction with online courses. As previously mentioned, participants seemed to benefit from their instructors' feedback on assignments and activities; however, it was also seen that they needed helpful guidance on how to study for online courses. They asked for asynchronous learning opportunities in case they could not participate in synchronous classes.

Finally, this study revealed a moderately significant relationship between students' e-learning readiness and e-learning satisfaction, which showed that e-readiness was associated with e-learning satisfaction. The findings also confirmed the findings of past studies about this association and further showed that students' overall readiness for e-learning was a significant predictor of their satisfaction with web-based English courses (see Yilmaz, 2017; Kuo et al., 2014).

Conclusion

The present study investigated EFL learners' readiness for and satisfaction with web-based English courses in the Turkish context during the COVID-19 pandemic. It further examined whether e-learning readiness was associated with e-learning satisfaction. From the analysis, several key findings emerged. First of all, study participants had an above average

level of readiness for and satisfaction with English courses in virtual environments. Secondly, our findings were consistent with research showing that e-learning readiness was associated with e-learning satisfaction, and readiness for e-learning successfully predicted satisfaction with e-learning. The main conclusion drawn from these findings is that the more prepared students are to learn online, the more they get from the instruction they receive in virtual environments. Although students' readiness is not the only criterion or predictor of satisfaction, it is a prerequisite for satisfaction, which is in turn essential to achievement. However, future investigations are necessary to validate the kinds of conclusions that can be drawn from this study.

Considering that online teaching has turned into a reality and a necessity rather than a choice for today and for the future, our findings have important implications for school administrators and instructors working with tertiary-level learners. In order to increase learners' efficacy in and satisfaction with web-based learning, first of all, it is necessary to determine their readiness for it. Although today's university students are skilled and interested in using technology in their daily lives, they seem to need guidance and training on how to use it for academic purposes. In addition, they have some concerns about the efficacy of web-based programs. Instead of adapting existing curricula and materials, designing them from scratch for online teaching and offering more web-based tools and applications to students can be useful steps for educators and school administrators to take in order to turn these concerns into positive experiences. Finally, there has been a significant decrease in students' interaction with their peers in web-based distance education. However, this can also be turned into an important opportunity by teachers to encourage their students to use the technological tools which they currently use to communicate in their daily lives for academic purposes.

Like any research, the present study has some limitations. First, only quantitative data was collected from a limited number of EFL students, making it difficult to make broad

generalizations of the results within Turkey and beyond. Future research can reach a larger sample size and apply mixed methods designs to better understand the nature of e-learner readiness and satisfaction. Furthermore, the findings discussed depend on the data collected from only one school context. Future studies may extend and vary their sample by collecting data from students studying at different school contexts to arrive at broader generalizations.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: The e-Readiness Scale Items (Turkish Version)

Kişisel Özellikler	1. e-Öğrenme sürecinde derslere işyerimden katılabilirim.
	2. e-Öğrenme sürecinde daha çok eş-zamanlı (sanal sınıf, sohbet vb.) etkinlikleri tercih ederim.
	3. e-Öğrenme sürecinde daha çok farklı-zamanlı (video kayıtları, forum vb.) etkinlikleri tercih ederim.
	4. Haftada en az 3-4 saat her bir derse sanal ortamda katılmak için zaman ayırabilirim.
Teknolojiye Erişim	5. e-Öğrenme sürecinde derslere evden katılabilirim.
	6. İnternet bağlantısı bulunan bir bilgisayara erişimim var.
	7. Erişim sağladığım bilgisayar oldukça yeni bir teknolojiye sahiptir (kulaklık, mikrofon, kamera vb.).
	8. Erişim sağladığım bilgisayarda gerekli tüm yazılımlar rahatlıkla çalışır (Ofis, Acrobat Reader, Flash vb.).
Teknik Beceriler	9. e-Öğrenme yöntemi ile öğrenebilecek düzeyde bilgi ve iletişim teknolojilerini kullanmayı biliyorum.
	10. Bilgisayar ve İnternet kullanımı konusunda kendime güvenirim.
	11. Bilgisayara ilişkin temel işlemler (dosya oluşturma, kaydetme, kopyalama, dizin oluşturma vb.) için gerekli becerilere sahibim.
	12. İçerik iletimi ve sunumu için ofis programlarını rahatlıkla kullanabilirim.
	13. İnternet kullanımına ilişkin (arama yapma, siteye kayıt olma vb.) temel becerilere sahibim.
	14. İnternet üzerindeki iletişim araçlarını (e-posta, sohbet, forum vb.) rahatlıkla kullanabilirim.
	15. Sosyal paylaşım ortamlarını (Facebook, Twitter, Blog, Wiki vb.) rahatlıkla kullanabilirim.
	16. İnternet servislerini bilgiye erişim için rahatlıkla kullanabilirim.
Motivasyon ve Tutum	17. Eğitmenle eş-zamanlı etkileşim kuramasam bile tek başıma rahatlıkla çalışabileceğimi düşünüyorum.
	18. İnternet ortamında çok fazla dikkat dağıtıcı olmasına rağmen çalışmalarımı zamanında tamamlayacağımı düşünüyorum.
	19. Ders çalıştığım ortamda çok fazla dikkat dağıtıcı olmasına rağmen çalışmalarımı zamanında tamamlayacağımı düşünüyorum.
	20. e-Öğrenme yöntemi ile çok iyi öğrenebileceğimi düşünüyorum.
Başarıyı Etkileyen Faktörler	21. Eğitmenle sürekli etkileşim içinde olmak başarım açısından önemlidir.
	22. Teknik ve idari konularda hızlı destek alabilmek başarım açısından çok önemlidir.
	23. e-Öğrenme sürecine sık katılım başarılı olmam açısından önemlidir.
	24. e-Öğrenme sürecinde İnternet teknolojilerine ilişkin deneyimin başarımı etkileyeceğini düşünüyorum.
	25. Görsel-işitsel materyalleri kullanarak öğrenmem gereken bilgi ve becerileri kazanacağımı düşünüyorum.
	26. İnternet ortamında diğer bireylerle rahatlıkla tartışabileceğimi düşünüyorum.

Appendix 2: The e-Satisfaction Scale Items (Turkish Version)

İletişim ve Kullanışlılık	1. Dersin yönetimi için kullanılan "Öğretim Yönetim Sistemi" (Microsoft Teams& Google Classroom) öğrenci ihtiyaçlarını karşılamaktaydı.
	2. Ders işlemek için kullanılan sanal sınıf ortamı (Microsoft Teams) kolayca kullanılabilmekteydi.
	3. ÖYS (Microsoft Teams& Google Classroom) içerisindeki bağlantılar, site içi gezintiyi kolaylaştıracak biçimde tasarlanmıştı.
	4. ÖYS (Microsoft Teams& Google Classroom) kolay kullanılabilir bir arayüze sahipti.
	5. Ders içeriği kapsamında aradığım tüm bilgilere hızlıca ulaşabildim.
	6. Öğretim içeriği haftalık veya modüler şekilde organize edilmişti.
	7. Ders etkinlikleri ve ödevleri desteklemek için farklı bilgi ve iletişim teknolojileri (sohbet, forum, blog, wiki vb.) kullanıldı.
Öğretim Süreci	8. Derse nasıl çalışılması gerektiğine dair açıklayıcı ve detaylı bilgiler bir "Çalışma Rehberi" olarak sunulmuştu.
	9. Aşırmacılık, yanlış referans, ödevlerin geç teslimi gibi konuların sonuçlarına ilişkin bilgiler verildi.
	10. Eş-zamanlı etkinliklere katılamayanlar için farklı-zamanlı etkinlik fırsatları sunulmuştu.
	11. Dersin başında dersle ilgili genel bilgiler içeren ve dersin izlencesine yönlendiren bir karşılama mesajı/duyuru/video ilettiler.
	12. Olumlu bir çevrimiçi öğrenme atmosferi oluşturmak amacıyla öğrencilere kapsamlı bir giriş ve tanışma etkinlikleri planlamışlardı.
	13. Ödev ve etkinlikler hakkında zamanında ve açıklayıcı dönütler verdiler.
	14. Öğretim sürecini yönlendirme ve rehberlik etme konusunda başarılıydılar.
	15. e-Öğrenme konusunda deneyimli ve yeterliydiler.
Öğretim İçeriği	16. İçerik mantıklı ve etkili bir şekilde organize edilmiştir.
	17. Ders içeriği öğrenmeyi kolaylaştıracak şekilde yapılandırılmıştı.
	18. Ders içeriği anlaşılır ve açık bir şekilde sunuldu
	19. Öğretim materyalleri yeterli, güncel ve bilgi düzeyi açısından uygundu.
Etkileşim ve Değerlendirme	20. Etkileşim amacıyla farklı araçlar (sohbet, forum, blog, wiki, eposta vb.) kullanıldı.
	21. Sosyal öğrenme ve etkileşimi arttırmak amacıyla işbirliğine dayalı grup etkinlikleri gerçekleştirildi.
	22. Öğrenciler arasındaki etkileşimi güçlendirmek amacıyla farklı etkinlikler ve fırsatlar sunuldu.
	23. Öğrenci-öğretim elemanı arasındaki etkileşimi güçlendirmek amacıyla farklı etkinlikler ve fırsatlar sunuldu.
	24. Eş-zamanlı ve farklı-zamanlı yürütülmesi gereken etkinlikler ayrı ayrı belirtilmişti.
	25. Derste çeşitli klasik ve alternatif değerlendirme yöntemleri bir arada kullanıldı.
	26. Kullanılan değerlendirme yöntemleri öğrenci başarısını belirleme açısından yeterliydi.
	27. Etkinlikler için kullanılacak değerlendirme ölçütleri her farklı etkinlik için açıkça belirtildi.
	28. Verilen etkinliklerin ve ödevlerin tamamlanması için öngörülen süreler yeterliydi.
	29. Farklı etkinlikler için değerlendirme yüzdeleri, değerlendirme ölçütleri ve notlandırmaya ilişin bilgiler sunulmuştu.