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## Investigating Competencies and Attitudes towards Online Education in Language Learning/Teaching after COVID-19

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## Investigating Competencies and Attitudes towards Online Education in Language Learning/Teaching after COVID-19

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### Abstract

With the COVID-19 pandemic that has affected the whole world, the digitalization process has accelerated and the importance of stakeholders having online learning competencies in the learning-teaching process has increased. At the same time, the functioning of education and training globally has been affected by this process and courses in language and literature departments have had to be moved to digital platforms during the COVID-19 process. In this study, the competencies and attitudes of academics, teachers and students in the field of language towards online education after COVID-19 are examined with a comparative approach. In this context, with a cross-sectional approach, the study was conducted on lecturers, teachers and students working in the field of language in different cities of Kazakhstan. In the study, online education competencies and attitudes were analyzed with t-test according to gender variable and F-test according to status factor. According to the findings of the study, it was found that the participants' attitudes towards online education after COVID-19 were positive, while their competencies were at a medium level. Language field participants' attitudes towards online education did not differ according to gender and status factors. However, significant differences were found in terms of online education competence according to the gender and status of the participants.

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### Introduction

At the end of 2019, the novel COVID-19 coronavirus, which spread worldwide from Wuhan, China, has severely affected the higher education system and schools in almost all countries have been closed to contain the spread of the pandemic. According to UNICEF, by the end of April 2020, 186 countries had closed schools nationwide and 8 countries had closed schools in some areas, affecting almost all of the world's student population. COVID-19 has deeply affected all sectors. But one of the most affected sectors has been educational institutions. Therefore, although it may seem like paranoia at first glance, the school closure decisions observed all over the world can be characterized as reasonable (Coughlan, 2020; Hartocollis, 2020). Post COVID-19, a number of changes are expected. As educators, the most important anticipated change is distance education and online education.

Distance education, which provides education to large masses of individuals with different physical, social and economic conditions, can be carried out with different tools. Increasingly developing technology has also developed and changed the tools used in distance education. Starting with printed texts, letters and extending from programmed texts to textbooks, printed materials can also be carried out through different media with the development of technology. Multimedia such as tape, radio, television, movies and presentations, computer and internet technologies can also be used in distance education (Al Lily et al., 2020; Berge & Mrozowski, 2001; Gunawardena & McIsaac, 2013; Williamson, Eynon & Potter, 2020). While the use and implementation of distance education varies according to the opportunities, conditions and needs, distance education in Kazakhstan during the pandemic was carried out using television and internet technologies. Especially offline education platforms and live course software such as Moddle Zoom and Ms Times for online education were used effectively (Bayetova & Karsakbayeva, 2020 Guncaga et al., 2022; Hajar & Manan, 2022; Seilkhan et al., 2022).

The most general and simple definition of distance education is the formal education process in which students and teachers are not physically in the same place (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008; Qayyum & Zawacki-Richter, 2019). Distance education is seen as one of the important applications in order to catch up with the age in today's world of rapid digitalization. In the distance education process, students and teachers connect with teaching resources and each other through interactive communication technologies in physically separate environments (Becker & Schad, 2022; Kibici & Sarıkaya, 2021; Simonson et al., 2012). Especially when compared to face-to-face education, distance education has significant advantages. Distance education offers access to information to large masses without time and space limitations. It adds richness and flexibility to educational processes, allowing learners to learn continuously and independently at their own pace. Distance education provides instant and easier access to information through information and communication technologies, reduces educational costs, and offers flexible and objective assessment and evaluation (Chang, Chung & Yang, 2022; Harrison, 2020; Kaleli, 2021; Perraton, 2020).

In the last 20 years, as the internet has become more and more present in daily life, in addition to face-to-face language teaching, internet-based blended language teaching and distance language teaching practices that are fully online have emerged (Blake, 2011; Chenoweth, Ushida & Murday, 2006; Hampel & Stickler, 2005). Hartnett, 2016) draws attention to the abundance of concepts for the use of digital technologies in education today, such as distance, online, open, flexible, blended, flipped and massive open online courses (Moocs) and states that the term 'e-learning' covers all these concepts that integrate digital technologies into the learning process. In this sense, online learning, which is within the scope of e-learning, is a learning method in which the learner uses the Internet to access learning materials, interact with the teacher and other learners, and thus receive support throughout the learning process in order to acquire knowledge, create individual meaning and grow through the learning experience (Ally, 2004).

Within the framework of the responses received by the International Association of Universities (IAU) from a total of 424 higher education institutions in 109 countries between March 25 and April 17, 2020, it was determined that almost all educational institutions were affected by COVID-19, but two-thirds (67%) of these institutions switched to the online education model. According to the research, the transition from the face-to-face education

model to the distance education teaching model has brought some challenges. One of the main challenges is access to the technical infrastructure, skills and pedagogy to deliver distance education (Marinoni, Land & Jensen, 2020). This is also true for lecturers and teachers. A lecturer who is competent in physical education may fail in distance education. Age factor and competence on technological equipment stand out as determining factors for lecturers in the distance education process. When the results caused by the coronavirus are evaluated, it is understood that beyond a health disease that affects the whole world, it is a great obstacle that humanity and education must overcome (Bozkurt, 2020). It is evaluated that the experience gained at the end of the process will guide and inspire education when face-to-face education is introduced (Sendogdu & Koyuncuoglu, 2020, Yildirim, 2020). In the process, online education applications such as Google Meet, Google Hangout, Zoom, Cisco Webex have gained an important place in the world (Kibici, 2022a; Yamamoto & Altun, 2020).

It is stated that the rapid developments in information and communication technologies affected all sectors, especially the education sector, in the periods before COVID-19. With the COVID-19 process, it is thought that the importance of this impact has been understood much more clearly in the whole education world. With the break given for face-to-face education, state educational institutions, universities and some private schools started to carry out their courses in digital environment by commissioning online course infrastructures, which accelerated the digitalization process of education. There are expert opinions that the "digitalization in education" movement, which accelerated due to a necessity, should be supported after the COVID-19 Pandemic (Altunel, 2020; Guppy et al., 2022; Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021).

Digitalization in the field of education brings with it various opportunities. It is stated that these opportunities can only contribute positively to the higher education system if the lecturers have a good command of the digital education system. It is noteworthy that with the various trainings and investments made recently, there have been positive developments in the technological infrastructure of classrooms and schools and in the skills and knowledge of teaching staff in the field of technology. It will be possible to ensure an increase in the quality of language education in the following processes as well as the process we are in due to COVID-19 by spreading these positive developments to all education processes and supporting the system through digital tools (Li, 2022; Sathyan et al., 2022; Tamah, Triwidayati & Utami, 2020; Yu, 2022). In this context, the development of software systems after COVID-19, the provision of sufficient and necessary hardware, the realization of harmonization towards policies, ensuring the spread of digitalization and technology, and keeping good reports of the impressions of these processes are among the first issues to be completed (Mulenga & Marbán, 2020; Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020; Zhu & Liu, 2020).

It is a striking fact that technological developments have recently brought some innovations that we are accustomed to seeing in the field of science fiction such as 'voice command search', internet and smart phones to the center of our lives (Kenning, 2007, 23). The use of desktop computers and the internet, which has become a habit and necessity for individuals due to the rapid development of technology, has gained a different dimension with the emergence of mobile technologies. The age we are in has brought its own standards and most people of all ages are trying to comply with these standards in some way. Within this wide range of technologies, mobile learning tools have gained significant popularity in and out of the classroom in recent years, but there are not

many studies in the literature in terms of language teaching (Ally, 2013; Farley et al., 2015; Kuama, 2006). A significant portion of the research has focused on students' attitudes and satisfaction with the use of online technology (Ally, 2014; Kılınçer, 2021). In addition, most of the research has focused on a single activity or a single aspect of online learning-supported language teaching (Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2022; Milutinovic et al., 2015; Murday, Ushida, & Ann Chenoweth, 2008). Burston (2013) reported that 60% of the applied studies on online learning-based language teaching were published outside professional journals. Multimedia content also contributes to language teaching, but the delivery methods and storage need to be appropriate to the cognitive capacities of the instructor and learners to learn in an online context and to the competencies of the relevant tools (Gacs, Goertler & Spasova, 2020; Lin, Zhang & Zheng, 2017; Milutinovic et al., 2015).

According to Schulze and Scholz (2018), there is a trend towards more language courses being delivered online. The reasons for this are that online environments can provide students with new social and learning interactions, expand students' access to education, and offer an individualized learning experience in larger classes. However, due to the complex nature of the skills and knowledge required for language proficiency, it is thought that language courses may pose some problems in terms of learning through online teaching (Hurd, 2006; Lee, 2016; Shaw, 2012; Şengül & Sünbül, 2015). However, the learning environment should be motivating and reduce language learning anxiety, positively affect attitudes towards language learning, provide materials that facilitate learning, and enable student-student, student-teacher and student-learning material interaction. It is understood that the main factors such as developing the four basic language learning skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), being suitable for the use of various learning strategies and encouraging student autonomy have many positive effects in the field of language and literature (Balci & Sünbül, 2016; Cacheiro-Gonzalez & Medina-Rivilla, 2019; Gütl et al, 2013; Huang, 2019; Hurd, 2006; Liang-Yi & Chin-Chung, 2017; Lin, Zhang, & Zheng (2017).

According to Ng and Cumming (2016), the purpose of informal technology use by individuals is to access social media where they keep in touch with family and friends, make new friends and explore the world rather than exploring educational technologies. He also stated that it is the duty of educators to teach learning with technology and to raise awareness about the types of applications that can be used for learning and their flexible aspects. At this point, one of the biggest obstacles for educators is to transform the inappropriate literacy habits that learners informally develop on their own. Some cognitive and social competencies need to be developed beyond technical skills, such as the ability to evaluate web-based search results and use digital content ethically for academic purposes. For this reason, it will not be sufficient to evaluate mobile learning literacy skills only in the context of basic skills-advanced skills (Compton, 2009; Harrison & Thomas, 2009; Sun, 2014; Yang, 2011). In this context, online learning attitudes and competencies of both lecturers and students need to be addressed with a holistic approach (Lamy & Hampel, 2007; Russell & Murphy-Judy, 2020; Agung, Surtikanti & Quinones, 2020). In this context, it can be considered as an opportunity to review the classical methods and total education systems that exist in education and whose validity is discussed. It will help to determine alternative education and training approaches in terms of the quality of learning-teaching processes that exist in established educational approaches and in evaluations that can be made by considering possible similar scenarios. For this reason, while conducting the problem research, the post-COVID-19 criterion was set and the analyzes were handled by taking into account the factors of gender and status (lecturer, student and teacher). In this context, the problem of this research is to

describe the level of attitudes and competencies of academics, students and teachers in the language field towards online education and training practices after the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Thus, it is aimed to reveal more clearly the attitudes and skills of the participants in the field of language about online education they experienced in schools after COVID-19, the adaptation of students to distance education, the attitudes of teachers and their efforts to provide a suitable environment for distance education. In this context, the opinions of academics, teachers and students in the field of language can be useful for developing more effective policies. Within the framework of this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought in the study:

- 1) What are the attitudes of language academics, teachers and students towards online education after COVID-19?
- 2) What is the level of competencies of academicians, teachers and students in the field of language towards online education after COVID-19?
- 3) Do the attitudes and competencies of academicians, teachers and students in the language field towards online education after COVID-19 differ according to their gender?
- 4) Do the attitudes and competencies of academicians, teachers and students in the language field towards online education after COVID-19 differ according to their status (academician-teacher-student)?

## **Method**

This study, which has a comparative relational survey model, aims to determine the attitudes of academics and undergraduate students in the language and literature departments of universities in Kazakhstan and teachers of this branch towards online and distance education after COVID-19. The population of the study consists of undergraduate students of language and literature faculties, academicians and teachers of this branch in Kazakhstan. Within the scope of the research, convenience sampling method was used (Winton & Sabol, 2022). This sampling method is a method that facilitates the limitations in terms of time, money and labor force in research and accelerates the research by selecting accessible and applicable units. In this direction, a questionnaire form was sent to language academics working in different universities in Kazakhstan, students receiving education and teachers of related branches and the participants were asked to participate in this web-based questionnaire. In addition, the survey form was also sent to the participants via reminder e-mails to their e-mail addresses. Of the 650 questionnaires sent, 326 were returned, 19 of which were eliminated because they were not filled in properly. The data used in the research were evaluated over 305 questionnaires.

The return rate of the questionnaires was 46.92%. It is seen that this rate is sufficient to represent the population (Florey, 1993). When the frequency values related to the demographic data of the research population are examined. When the participants were analyzed in terms of gender, it was seen that 55.4% were female and 46.6% were male. In order to measure the participants' attitudes and competencies towards online education after COVID-19, scales developed by () and ( ) were used. The scales in the questionnaire form were designed in 5-point Likert type. The responses to the statements are "1 - Strongly disagree", "3 - Neutral" and "5 - Strongly agree". In the questionnaire form, the purpose of the study was first explained to the participants and then they were asked to fill in the questionnaire form. Five scale statements that were reverse coded (negatively directed) in the questionnaire form were converted to positive during the analysis and it was seen that the averages of the

statements were close to each other. This result reveals that the participants answered the statements in the scales by reading them and increases the reliability of the findings.

### **Data Tools**

#### *Attitude Scale towards E-Learning*

In addition, the original scale developed by Kisanga (2016) was translated into Kazakh by the researchers, necessary corrections were made and applied to the participants as a data collection tool. As a first step in the process of adapting the scale of attitudes towards e-learning, a literature review was conducted, the purposes of using e-learning, places of use, usage situations were examined, studies on e-learning were analyzed, and a detailed research was conducted by examining the advantages and disadvantages. The translation of the single-factor, 36-item, 4-point Likert-type scale developed by Kisanga (2016) by working with 258 participants into Kazakh was started. The scale translated into Kazakh was examined and checked by English language experts, Kazakh language experts, experts in the field of measurement and evaluation, and the language validity was ensured by correcting incomprehensible or incorrect statements and applied to the study group students.

The data obtained were transferred to the computer environment and the necessary confirmatory and exploratory factor analyses were applied to the data. As a result of the analyses, items with overlapping loadings and low item loadings were discarded. The final version of the 25-item, single-factor attitude towards e-learning scale, which was obtained as a result of the discarding of these items and the necessary analyzes, was applied to the participants and the collected data were transferred to the computer environment again, and the validity and reliability of the scale were calculated using SPSS 26 and AMOS programs in order to test its validity and reliability. The factor loadings of the unidimensional scale are above 0.42. Again, the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of this scale in the research sample was calculated as .86. The Kazakh form of the scale consists of a total of 25 questions on a Likert-type 5-point scale.

#### *Efficacy Scale for Online Education*

In this study, the Online Learning Self-efficacy Scale (OLSS) originally developed by Sun and Rogers (2021) was adapted into Kazakh. The scale consists of 4 dimensions and 31 items, namely "Technology Use Self-efficacy (TKÖ)", "Online Learning Self-efficacy (OLSS)", "Tutor and Peer Interaction and Communication Self-efficacy (TPEIC)", and "Self-control and motivation (SCM)". The Kazakh version of the scale is in a 5-point form and the first dimension of the scale, TCC, contains 7 items. The CLC dimension consists of 4 items, the SCM dimension consists of 7 items, and the SCM dimension consists of 13 items. Although there were no items requiring reverse coding, the answers to the items in the scale were scored as "Strongly Disagree - 1" and "Strongly Agree - 5". Thus, a result between 31 and 155 points can be obtained from the overall scale. The average proficiency scores were obtained by dividing the scores obtained from the scale by the number of questions. The completion time of the scale by a participant was approximately 10 to 15 minutes. The scale was translated into Kazakh by two independent linguists and a translation expert who are fluent in English and Kazakh. The scales translated into Kazakh by the linguists were brought together and examined comparatively, consistency was examined, necessary

adjustments were made, and the scales were again presented to the experts who have knowledge of language and online learning terminology.

The scale was finalized after the online learning experts evaluated whether the items in the scale were theoretically appropriate. As a result of this process, it is possible to say that the original and the Kazakh form of the scale are linguistically equivalent and the translated scale provides language validity. Then, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses and Cronbac Alpha reliability analyses of the Kazakh form of the scale were conducted. As a result of the analyzes, it was seen that the Kazakh form had 4 sub-dimensions. As a result of Cronbach's alpha analysis, it was calculated that the reliability coefficients for the sub-dimensions of the scale were between .84 and .96. The reliability coefficient for the whole scale was calculated as .92.

#### *Data Analysis Techniques*

The data obtained in the study were analyzed using SPSS 26.0 analysis program. As a result of the normality test, parametric tests were utilized since the data of the study met the assumptions of normal distribution. During the analysis, product moment correlation analysis was used for the relationships between variables, independent groups t test was used for two-group comparisons, one-way variance analysis Anova test was used to evaluate binary variables, post-hoc tests were used to see whether there was a significant difference between groups, and simple linear regression analysis was applied for predictive effects.

### **Findings**

Table 1 shows the results of the descriptive analysis conducted on the attitude scores of the participants in the language field towards online learning. The mean score of the participants' attitudes towards online learning was calculated as 3.63. According to this value, it is seen that the participants' attitudes towards online education are generally positive (Mean=3.83).

Table 1. Descriptive Analyses of Language Field Participants' Attitudes towards Online Education

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitude towards online education	305	1	5	3.63	1.02

Table 2 shows the results of the descriptive analysis conducted on the scores of the participants in the language field on the self-efficacy scale for online education. According to the analysis, it is seen that the mean scores of the participants in the 4 sub-dimensions of the self-efficacy scale for online education vary between 3.29 and 4.25. According to this value, the dimension they agreed with the highest mean was "self-control and motivation", while the dimension they agreed with the lowest mean was "technological use self-efficacy". The participants' perceived Technology Use Self-Efficacy and Online Learning Self-Efficacy after COVID-19 are at a medium level. On the other hand, the language field participants' perceptions of Tutorial and Peer Interaction and Communication Self-efficacy, Self-control and motivation, and general efficacy perceptions of online education were found to be high.



Table 2. Language Field Participants' Competencies Regarding Online Education

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Technology Use Self-Efficacy	305	1	5	3.29	1.24
Online Learning Self-Efficacy	305	1	5	3.44	1.23
Self-efficacy in Tutorial and Peer Interaction and Communication	305	1	5	3.81	1.03
Self-control and motivation	305	1	5	4.15	1.04
Total self-efficacy	305	1	5	3.67	0.80

In Table 3, the attitudes of the research participants towards online education after COVID-19 were analyzed comparatively according to gender variable. According to the analysis, a t value of 1.57 was calculated between the attitude scores of female and male participants towards online education. According to this finding, no significant difference was found in the language field participants' scores towards online learning in terms of their gender.

Table 3. Comparison of Language Field Participants' Attitudes towards Online Education by Gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	P
Attitude towards online education	Male	125	3.74	0.98	1.57	0.12
	Female	180	3.55	1.04		

In Table 4, the self-efficacy of the research participants regarding online education after COVID-19 was analyzed comparatively according to gender variable. According to the analysis, t values of 2.04 in Technology Use Self-Efficacy, 0.29 in Online Learning Self-Efficacy, 0.38 in Tutor and Peer Interaction and Communication Self-Efficacy, 0.50 in Self-Control and Motivation, 0.37 in Online Self-Efficacy, and 1.40 in total scores were calculated in terms of subscale mean scores of female and male participants. According to these findings, a significant difference was found only in Technology Use Self-Efficacy scores in terms of participants' gender. When the averages of the groups were analyzed, it was seen that male participants had a higher level of Technology Use Self-Efficacy compared to females. However, no significant difference was found in other dimensions of online education self-efficacy and total mean scores according to gender variable ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Table 4. Comparison of Language Field Participants' Competencies Regarding Online Education According to Gender Variable

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Technology Use Self-Efficacy	Male	125	3.10	1.22	-2.04	0.04
	Female	180	3.45	1.26		
Online Learning Self-Efficacy	Male	125	3.46	1.16	0.29	0.77
	Female	180	3.42	1.28		
Self-efficacy in Tutorial and Peer Interaction and	Male	125	3.84	1.01	0.38	0.70
	Female	180	3.79	1.04		

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Communication						
Self-control and motivation	Male	125	4.11	1.09	-0.50	0.62
	Female	180	4.17	1.01		
Total Self-efficacy for Online Education	Male	125	3.65	0.74	-0.37	0.71
	Female	180	3.68	0.84		

In Table 5, the attitudes of the research participants towards online education after COVID-19 are analyzed comparatively according to their status (teacher, instructor and student). According to the analysis, an F value of 0.56 was calculated between the attitudes towards online education scores of teacher, instructor and student participants in the language field. According to this finding, no significant difference was found in the language field participants' scores towards online learning in terms of their status.

Table 5. Comparison of Language Field Participants' Attitudes towards Online Education According to Their Status

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	P
Attitude towards online education	Lecturer	37	3.73	1.12	0.564	0.570
	Teacher	79	3.53	1.07		
	Student	189	3.65	0.98		
	Total	305	3.63	1.02		

In Table 6, the self-efficacy of the research participants in the language field regarding online education after COVID-19 was analyzed comparatively according to the status variable (instructor, student, teacher). According to the analyses, in terms of the mean subscale scores of the instructor, teacher and student participants, F values of 5.78 in Technology Use Self-Efficacy, 11.28 in Online Learning Self-Efficacy, 7.12 in Tutor and Peer Interaction and Communication Self-Efficacy, 5.37 in Self-Control and Motivation, and 14.83 in Total Self-Efficacy scores for online education were calculated. According to these findings, a significant difference was found in the participants' self-efficacy scores for online education in terms of their status. According to further analysis with Sheffe's test, it was seen that university lecturers and students had higher levels of Technology Use Self-Efficacy compared to teachers.

Table 6. A Comparison of Language Field Participants' Competencies Regarding Online Education According to Their Status

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	p
Technology Use Self-Efficacy	Lecturer	37	3.81	1.13	5.78	0.003
	Teacher	79	2.99	1.21		
	Student	189	3.31	1.25		
	Total	305	3.29	1.24		
Online Learning Self-	Lecturer	37	4.05	0.97	11.28	0.000

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	p
Efficacy	Teacher	79	2.97	1.11		
	Student	189	3.51	1.26		
	Total	305	3.44	1.23		
Self-efficacy in Tutorial and Peer Interaction and Communication	Lecturer	37	4.08	1.04	7.12	0.001
	Teacher	79	3.46	1.01		
	Student	189	3.91	1.00		
	Total	305	3.81	1.03		
Self-control and motivation	Lecturer	37	4.59	0.69	5.37	0.005
	Teacher	79	3.92	1.12		
	Student	189	4.15	1.04		
	Total	305	4.15	1.04		
Total self-efficacy towards online education	Lecturer	37	4.14	0.59	14.83	0.000
	Teacher	79	3.34	0.71		
	Student	189	3.72	0.81		
	Total	305	3.67	0.80		

## Discussion and Conclusion

This study aims to determine the attitudes and competencies of academicians and undergraduate students in the language and literature departments of universities in Kazakhstan and teachers from this branch towards online education after COVID-19. According to the research findings, the participants' attitudes towards online education after COVID-19 were found to be positive. On the other hand, the technological competencies of the language field participants within the scope of online education were found to be at a medium level, while their competencies in other dimensions of online education were found to be at a high level. These findings were found in the studies conducted by Ironsi (2022), Kara (2021), Kılınçer (2022), Kibici & Sarıkaya (2021), Patricia (2020), Qazi et al. (2020), Ushida (2005). Studies supporting the findings obtained from the research are found when the literature is examined. Distance education applications provide flexibility in terms of time and space (Altun Ekiz, 2020; Solak, Ütebay, & Yalçın, 2020), making course records and materials accessible remotely both supports students to progress at their own learning pace and increases retention (Arbour, Kaspar, & Teall, 2015; Keskin & Özer Kaya, 2020), being economical (Tesar, 2020), being oriented towards individual learning (Devran & Elitaş, 2016), technological competencies of lecturers (Doğru, 2020), ease of access to information (Ustati & Hassan, 2013), and causing positive attitudes towards online education. Mohammadi (2015) examined the satisfaction of students in Iran towards distance education and the usefulness of distance education and found that students' intention to use distance education and student satisfaction have a positive effect on the use of distance education, and that system quality and information quality are the primary factors for students to see distance education as a successful environment.

In order to increase the usability and effectiveness of online education, students' motivation and satisfaction levels should be maximized and their needs should be met as much as possible. Indeed, Patricia (2020) states that

motivation, self-efficacy and technology use play an important role in students' academic performance. The competence of the teacher to use technologies, students' access to information tools, and in-service training of teachers are among the most important factors in the success of the distance education process (Colpaert, 2006; König, Jäger-Biela, & Glutsch, 2020). According to Nuland, Mandzuk, Petrick, and Cooper (2020), teacher training is necessary and important in using distance education software and managing the process successfully. In the globalized and digitalized new world order, this importance increases exponentially. Therefore, it is necessary to provide language and literature education in accordance with the needs of the age with the most appropriate and efficient methods. It is necessary to ensure that the information given at almost every stage of language education is integrated with each other and that this information is reinforced and made permanent through practical training. This situation shows that theory and practice cannot be considered separately from each other in language and literature education. During the COVID-19 pandemic process, which brought all life to a standstill a few years ago, all universities switched to distance education and started to continue their education and training activities through distance education. In this direction, in order to carry out language and literature courses with distance education in the most efficient way, academics and teachers also started training by using all their facilities. According to the findings of the research, the positive attitudes and competencies of academics, teachers and students regarding the conduct of language courses through distance education in this process are important in terms of determining future education models.

The learning content that lecturers, teachers and students interact with in online language courses is not just concepts, facts and simple verbal expressions. In online learning situations, participants are confronted with an enormous amount and variety of visual, auditory and other stimuli. Therefore, the combination of strategies that include very rich stimuli, involve students' language use in daily social media applications, and are effective in the realization of learning tasks may have been effective in students' attitudes towards online education.

Another finding of the study is the attitudes and competencies towards online learning according to the gender of the participants in the language field. In general, no significant difference was found in the attitudes and competencies towards online learning according to gender in both the instructor and teacher group and the students. However, it was observed that male participants obtained higher averages in terms of technological competencies. Similar to these findings, Teo (2008), who examined the relationship between some demographic characteristics of pre-service teachers studying at a university in Singapore and their attitudes towards online learning, found that age and gender variables did not make a significant difference on pre-service teachers' attitudes towards online learning. Sang et al. (2010), who examined whether pre-service teachers in China will use information technologies in their teaching life in the future according to various variables, stated that there was no significant relationship between gender variable and pre-service teachers' future use of information technologies, but there was a significant relationship between variables such as constructivist teaching beliefs, teaching self-efficacy, computer self-efficacy and computer attitudes and pre-service teachers' future use of information technologies in their classrooms. In addition, the literature findings that men are more competent in technical issues in online learning (Ibrahim, Silong, & Samah, 2002), have higher computer and internet self-efficacy (Alsancak Sırakaya & Yurdugül, 2016; Doğru, 2020; Kibici, 2022b; Koyuncuoğlu, 2022; Yurt, Kurnaz & Sahin, 2014) and that men prefer online learning more (Muilenburg & Berge, 2005) support the study results.

The last finding of the study is the comparison of language field participants' attitudes and competencies towards online learning after COVID-19 according to the status variable. According to the findings of the study, university lecturers and students obtained higher averages in both attitudes towards online education and competencies in this subject compared to teachers. Related to this finding, Wilson et al. (2007) investigated lecturers' experiences in adapting to online teaching in a new interdisciplinary master's program. They conducted semi-structured interviews with eight lecturers and subjected the data to qualitative analysis. As a result of the analysis, several factor contents were identified, including the quality of online discussions, changes in teaching styles, time issues, attitudes towards online teaching, and effects on classroom teaching. In all these dimensions, it was noted that teachers in particular had problems and expressed negative views about adapting to online education. The reality of the pandemic has shown that especially teachers (Ali, 2020; Chang, 2007) do not fully possess the digital competencies and skills (Deshmukh, 2020) needed during the crisis (Bozkurt, 2019). During the pandemic, it was observed how fast misinformation spreads and what kind of consequences it can have (Depoux et al., 2020), which showed that being able to connect to the right sources and filter the right information (Rahayu & Wirza, 2020; Siemens, 2005) is an important skill for teachers in the digital information age. Considering the problems experienced by educators, the importance of preparing educators according to the requirements of digital transformation has emerged by linking the technology, pedagogy and content knowledge model (TPACK) (Koehler, & Mishra, 2009) with the curricula of language departments.

In the field of education, the need for the support of technology or online devices is increasing day by day. Technology has become the basic building block of education today. In this way, it has become inevitable to achieve equality of opportunity and friendship in education. When we consider the opportunities such as communication between student and instructor, obtaining information in an easy way, expressing ideas in a flexible environment, and delivering information and communication to those who we cannot reach physically or spatially with traditional methods; m-learning should be an indispensable element of our educational life. Especially in the field of online learning in our country, it is thought that not only students but also academicians and other relevant people will make a great contribution to education. After COVID-19, it is a necessity for schools and universities to reposition themselves in the education system and recognize their new roles in the new normal, as well as the roles of teachers and learners in all dimensions of education in general, especially in the field of language. In language departments, a primary goal should be to ensure effective learning and teaching by equipping learners and teachers with new skills and competencies in the context of online learning, adapting to change and controlling the process of change. Digital skills, digital competences and digital literacy knowledge in relation to online learning are requirements of the digital information age and should be a priority focus. In the new normal where digital learning and online distance education will be on the agenda frequently, not only learners and teachers, but also all education stakeholders with an inclusive perspective should acquire these skills in order to overcome the crisis caused by the pandemic as well as to survive in the global competitive environment. In general, it can be said that the perspectives of academics, teachers and students in the field of language are positive towards online education. At this point, it is recommended that blended education methods that adopt both traditional methods and online education methods together should be employed in language teaching. Because nowadays, it is obvious that it will be very difficult to carry out educational activities without using information technology products. In addition, since the addressed students are more familiar with the digital world,

the use of appropriate technological tools and materials in educational processes can increase students' interest and motivation towards the lessons. In order to increase the generalizability of the findings obtained in this study, it is recommended that similar studies be repeated on students and teachers taking language courses at different levels of education. Future studies can investigate the effects of online learning on the teaching skills of language academics and lecturers in the field of language as well as on the academic achievement of language learners. When selecting the tools and applications to be used in the online learning environment, it is recommended to take into account the characteristics of the language field, the needs of teachers, lecturers and students as much as possible. In this study, data were collected by quantitative method. In future studies, the data collected by quantitative method can be supported by qualitative data collection methods or in-depth information can be obtained.

## Notes

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