

EXPLORING AFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO LANGUAGE LEARNING THROUGH
DIARIES AT THE BILKENT UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

A THESIS PRESENTED BY
NURAN KILINÇARSLAN
TO THE INSTITUTE OF ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

BILKENT UNIVERSITY

JULY 1998

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ABSTRACT

Title: Exploring Affective Responses to Language Learning through Diaries at the Bilkent University School of English Language

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Like intellectual processes, affective processes are embedded in the educational milieu, and the two are not only parallel but interdependent: intelligence provides the structure for actions, and feelings express the value given to these actions. Without understanding their interaction, we may not be able to formulate ideas as to why each learner brings to the learning process a unique set of attributes even when provided with very similar learning experiences. One approach to understand this interrelationship is through the exploration of the harmonious coexistence of intellectual and affective processes.

The present study is an attempt to gain insights into the affective world of the learners, to explore their affective

responses and needs, and to view the affective dimension of language learning at the Bilkent University School of English Language from the perspective of the learners.

This study employed the diary study technique to collect data over a period of seven weeks. The subjects of the study were ten students who were keeping diaries of their own language learning experiences on a voluntary basis. Qualitative data collected through learner diaries were analyzed through the technique of coding.

The themes which emerged from the diary entries were classified into ten major groups as follows: Attitude toward the components of EFL at BUSEL, feelings of anxiety, accommodation problems, personal reactions to change, failure/repeated failure-oriented feelings, language learning activities, motivational factors, perceived language needs, perceptions of teacher, and relationships.

These findings suggest that the language learning process at BUSEL involves a variety of affective variables ranging between the personal variables and sociocultural variables. The learners affected by these variables experience positive or negative feelings throughout their study.

In brief, this longitudinal study revealed that learner diaries as an ethnographic technique in classroom research

enable the researchers and teachers to view the learning process from the 'inside' , plus to explore the concept of affect which has an elusive, therefore, complex nature.

BILKENT UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
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JULY 31, 1998

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and Social Sciences for
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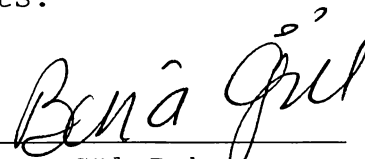
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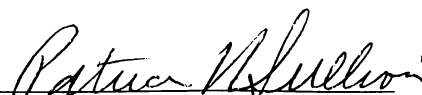
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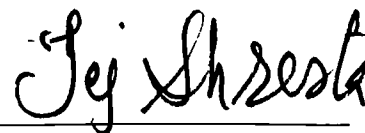
We certify that we have read this thesis and that in our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.




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CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

The growing realization that learners have needs in the affective domain which are as important as their needs in the cognitive domain has resulted in the emergence of a general movement toward recognition of the importance of universal human traits as they affect language learning (Tarone & Yule, 1989). Simon (1984) provides an important insight into the partnership of emotion and thought: "No thought is free of some affective experience and affect organizes and motivates all thoughts" (p.160).

In exploring the role of affectivity in second language learning, researchers have tended to promote the view that second language learning is a "multidimensional phenomenon" , and that "no single one of the variables involved is sufficiently powerful" to have a consistent relationship to achievement (Long, 1983, p. 28).

The difficulty of the measurement of affective variables has emerged as a common theme underlying various conceptions of the affective dimension. A reason for this difficulty is that the use of a static research instrument cannot capture the essence of an individuals' dynamic pattern of behavior, mood, and temperament.

In turning her attention to the relationship between affective variables and second language acquisition,

Bailey (1983) argued that "...research into affective variables in language learning poses numerous challenging problems at all levels - definition, description, measurement, and interpretation" (p. 70). According to Bailey, "...many studies have produced conflicting findings and varied terminology" (p. 68). The elusive nature of the affective concept is also captured by Brown (1994) who argues that the problem lies in "subdividing and categorizing" the factors of the affective domain:

The affective domain is difficult to describe within definable limits. A large number of variables are implied in considering the emotional side of human behavior in the second language learning process (p. 134).

An introspective tool, namely diary-study technique, which is part of naturalistic inquiry tradition is generally assumed to provide valuable insights, especially into affective variables in language learning. The terms 'diary' and 'journal' are used interchangeably (Bailey 1983; Nunan 1989; Bailey 1990).

Chaudron (1988) offers evidence for the "depth of insight available" from research that has employed diary studies, and suggests that "...to the extent that the researcher brings independent theory and research to bear on interpretation, or elicits judgements on the recorded events from other experts and participants, the data and

interpretations can fulfill most of the requirements of valid research" (p. 46). Taking a similar view, Allwright and Bailey (1991) comment that "a learner's diary may reveal aspects of the classroom experience that observation could never have captured, and that no one would have thought of including as questions on a questionnaire" (p. 4).

Background of the Study

Language learning is a complex process within which learners need to be viewed as human beings having affective resources as well as intellectual resources. These affective resources of the learners can be exploited in a learning environment where a particular value is placed on an understanding of the affective aspects of language learning. This involves an understanding that each language learner confronts affective variables that interact with each other as they have a dynamic nature. A positive level of self-esteem can enhance motivation for learning, for example, whereas a negative self-image as a language learner can lead up to a feeling of anxiety. Further, teachers themselves need to have a positive self-concept to develop positive self-esteem among their students.

At BUSEL, learning a language seems to be a very confusing experience, especially at the initial stages of

the study, in that the students may experience feelings of fear and anxiety resulting from their concern about end-of-course assessments and particularly ISC (Independent Study Component) assignments as they are new to this type of task. The students, therefore, may need both cognitive and affective support to cope with these negative emotions, and to develop self-confidence in their ability.

Given the complexity of the issue under discussion, the present study argues that an affective emphasis in language learning can help the learners at BUSEL develop their full potential for learning.

Statement of the Problem

Anecdotal evidence suggests that, in the EFL context at BUSEL, the learning process needs to be viewed as a whole, with as much emphasis being placed on the affective domain as on the cognitive. This emphasis will provide an affective support to learning which, in turn, can enhance learner involvement and motivation, plus will increase BUSEL teachers' awareness of the affective needs of their students.

An understanding of learners' perspectives on their perceived strengths, weaknesses, and needs in language learning may help teachers find ways to address these needs, and provide a real guidance to their students. In

other words, it is of great value to view the learning process from the inside, through the eyes of the learners. A simplistic linear perspective that underestimates the interactive nature of the variables involved may not be adequate to explain this process.

Given that BUSEL teachers need better insights into the language learning process through the eyes of the learners, it is appropriate to try alternative ways to get learners' emic interpretations.

One technique to understand the insiders' views is the use of learner diaries in which learners reflect and communicate their feelings, ideas, concerns, thoughts, frustrations and reactions.

Purpose of the Study

The chief motivation for this study originates from the view that affectivity is a crucial aspect of language learning. That is, the affective domain involves a wide range of variables. These variables may function as an impediment to the goals of language learners or they may have a positive influence on their intellectual and personal growth.

With this in mind, this thesis intends to gain insights into the affective variables that can influence the language learners at the Bilkent University, School

of English Language from the perspectives of the participants of a diary study.

Significance of the Study

This diary study can benefit BUSEL teachers by increasing their understanding of the critical importance of affectivity in language learning, and of learner diaries as a tool for exploring the affective resources of their students. A second benefit of this study is that it can sensitize BUSEL teacher trainers to the use of diaries in teacher education programs.

In addition, this diary study can inspire other interested teachers in other contexts who may wish to investigate their students' language learning experiences.

Research Question

This study will address the following research question:

What insights into the affective aspect of language learning at the Bilkent University School of English Language (BUSEL) are provided by the learner diaries?

CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

One very important dimension of language learning concerns the affective needs of learners, a dimension which has been the focus of a significant amount of recent research in learning English as a foreign language. Needless to say, more is needed to comprehend the affective aspect of language learning.

Becoming aware of learners' self perceived needs in the affective domain can help teachers take steps toward improving learning. This study attempts to view and understand affective responses to language learning from the inside following guidelines suggested by the generally accepted diary-study technique.

In this chapter, first, the affective domain will be presented. Second, four affective variables namely, motivation, empathy, self-concept, and anxiety will be explored. Third, the historical background to the diary-study tradition will be discussed. Fourth, the advantages and drawbacks of conducting diary studies will be reviewed. Fifth, the samples of diary studies conducted to document language learning and teaching experiences will be presented. Finally, the procedures required to conduct a diary study will be summarized.

Affective Domain

An historical overview of the major schools of thought in psychology reveals the new dimensions added to language learning by the educational messages of social interactionism and humanism. The former reinforced the view that "the learning occurs through social interactions within a social environment". The pioneers of humanistic approaches (Rogers 1951; Rogers 1961; Maslow 1968; Erikson 1959), on the other hand, placed a particular value upon the inner world of the learner, and the individual's thoughts, feelings, and emotions in order to understand human learning in its totality. The concept of affectivity, thus, has been the focus of a wave of studies concerned with language learning (Williams and Burden, 1997, p. 30).

The philosophy derived from these studies has affected the ways in which researchers and teachers make sense of various aspects of classroom learning. The idea that the teacher should "convey warmth and empathy towards the learner" has been favoured greatly (Williams and Burden, 1997, p.36). The use of "humanistic techniques" which draw upon the messages underlying humanism was encouraged (Moskowitz, 1978, p.19). As summarized in Richards and Rodgers (1986), these humanistic techniques "engage the whole person, including

the emotions and feelings (the affective realm) as well as linguistic knowledge and behavioral skills" (p. 114).

In line with these views, some linguists and applied linguists have attempted to explore more deeply what is involved in affective domain, and to formulate a model of affective variables in second language acquisition. They have suggested a number of categorizations of the affective variables which they have found important in the process of becoming bilingual.

A set of categorization is offered by Brown (1994). He suggests that "the intrinsic side of affectivity" involves personality factors such as self-esteem, inhibition, risk-taking, anxiety, empathy, extroversion and motivation, whereas "the extrinsic side" comprises sociocultural variables (p. 134).

Schumann (1978) argues that acculturation, "the major causal variable in SLA" is an assemblage of social variables and affective variables such as 'language shock', 'cultural shock', 'motivation', and 'ego permeability' (p. 29). The categorization provided by Chastain (1988) includes 'self-concept' , 'attitude' , 'perseverance' , 'internal versus external locus of control' , 'introversion versus extroversion' , and 'interests and needs' as subsections.

In discussing the literature on affective variables, however, it is impossible to fit the theoretical

perspectives which have their roots within humanism, or at least derived their primary insights from humanistic approaches neatly into one of these categorizations. This suggests that more sophisticated approaches are needed to explain human behavior and human learning.

Affective Variables

Motivation

Research on affective variables in second language learning has emphasized the priority of motivation as it directly affects the learners' involvement in language learning. According to Oxford and Ehrman (1993), "motivation determines the extent of active, personal engagement in learning" (p. 190). For Oxford and Ehrman, L2 motivation is likely to be lowered if the learners have a negative attitude toward the value of learning the target language.

A number of different perspectives on motivation has been proposed. Williams and Burden (1997) interpret motivation as:

...a state of cognitive and emotional arousal, which leads to a conscious decision to act, and which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort in order to attain a previously set goal (or goals) (p. 120).

Viewing motivation in this way, Williams and Burden

suggest an interactive model including three distinct stages:

1. Reasons for doing something
2. Deciding to do something
3. Sustaining the effort, or persisting.

From a cognitive perspective, learners are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated depending on their reason for performing an act. If the reason lies within the activity, they are intrinsically motivated. Extrinsically motivated learners, however, perform an act "to gain something outside the activity itself" (Williams and Burden, 1997, p. 123). This is a common distinction.

Another well-known distinction suggests that learners are instrumentally motivated when they are studying a language to attain external goals such as passing exams or furthering a career. Integrative motivation, on the other hand, occurs when learners are studying a language with the intent of identifying with the target culture (Gardner and Lambert, 1972).

Various motivational components are categorized into three levels in Dörnyei's model provided in Williams and Burden (1997). In this formulation, the language level involves motives related to the second language, learner level involves the learners' individual characteristics, and the learning situation level covers course-specific,

teacher-specific and group-specific motivational components (p. 118).

Empathy

Empathy, which relates to an individual's ability to put herself / himself in someone else's position in order to understand her or him better, is commonly thought to facilitate second language acquisition and, therefore, to be a desirable quality in teacher-student interaction. Brown (1994) argues that both oral and written communication require "a sophisticated degree of empathy". Otherwise, one cannot fully understand the affective and cognitive state of the interlocutor or the reader (p. 144).

Another generalization that can be drawn from a review of the literature on this personality trait is that emphasizing the centrality of the learner may increase the empathy between the learners and the teacher, and this in turn, may increase cooperation within the group (Dickinson, 1987, p. 26).

Self-Concept

Self-concept is a "global" term in that it refers to the self-image, "the particular view that we have of ourselves" , self-esteem, "the evaluative feelings associated with our self-image" , and self-efficacy, "our beliefs about our capabilities in certain areas or

related to certain tasks" (Williams and Burden, 1997, p. 97).

Research in this field has shown that the conception of self is affected by one's social relationships and interaction with their environment. According to Chastain (1988) the experiences each individual has as they interact with their environments are influential in the development of self-concept. That is, experiences that are associated with achievement generate self-confidence. Williams and Burden (1997) provide another important insight:

The relationship is reciprocal: Individuals' views of the world influence their self-concept, while at the same time their self-concepts affect their views of the world. Both of these views will affect their success in learning situations (p. 97).

A similar perspective is provided by Brown (1994):

People derive their sense of self-esteem from the accumulation of experiences with themselves and with others and from assessments of the external world around them (p. 137).

He argues for three distinct levels of self-esteem:

Global self-esteem, specific self-esteem and task self-esteem. Global self-esteem refers to overall self-assessment of individual. Specific self-esteem concerns the way individuals perceive themselves in various life

contexts, and task self-esteem is related to self-evaluation on specific tasks.

The question is, however, whether positive self-concept is a cause or a product of achievement. According to Allwright and Bailey (1991), "they feed on each other" (p. 178). Research has shown that it is difficult to measure the relationship between positive self-concept and achievement because self-concept is a highly complex variable and it has a "multifaceted nature" (Williams and Burden, 1997, p. 99).

Anxiety

Anxiety is commonly thought of as "an acknowledged feature of second language learning" (Allwright and Bailey, 1991, p. 173). The kind of anxiety experienced in second language classrooms is usually situational. This type is also called 'state anxiety'. 'Trait anxiety', on the other hand, can be seen at a global level (Oxford and Ehrman, 1983).

It has associations, such as frustration, apprehension, uneasiness and worry, and can be experienced at the deepest level or at a momentary level. Despite having negative associations, anxiety itself is not necessarily a negative factor in language classroom. On the contrary, it can facilitate performance, and this specific form of anxiety, namely facilitative anxiety can be useful in keeping learners alert (Scovel, 1978).

MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) define anxiety as "the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning" (p. 284). On investigating the combined effects of anxiety, MacIntyre and Gardner found that anxious learners have more difficulty demonstrating the knowledge they possess (p. 301).

The research on anxiety suggests that like other affective variables, anxiety influences achievement. One argument proposed by Sparks and Ganschow (1995) is that although "low motivation, poor attitude, or high anxiety", can hinder learning, problems associated with second language learning are not primarily the result of these variables. On the contrary, "poor attitudes and high anxiety are more likely to arise from difficulties inherent in the task itself" (p. 235). On the basis of this argument, Sparks and Ganschow suggest that one should look "beyond anxiety to those factors which bring about the anxiety" (p. 236).

Diary Studies : An Emerging Tradition

In the mid-1970s, a number of experienced professional educators conducted more than thirty studies in order to understand affective aspects of SLA (Second Language Acquisition). With the intent of making new

generalizations about the role of affective/motivational variables, they examined diary entries reflecting learners' reactions to teacher, target language, its speakers, and target culture (Schumann, 1998).

These studies conducted in both the natural target language environment and in classrooms have been called "diary studies" in the SLA research literature. In retrospect, Schumann (1998) views those studies as accounts of the learner's "preferences and aversions" , "perceptions of novelty, pleasantness, goal/need significance, coping potential, and self and social image with respect to the language learning situation" (p. 104)

To date, diary studies have been used to investigate both language learning and teaching experiences. Schumann and Schumann's (1977) work, which was motivated by the desire for examining the "social-psychological profile" of an individual learner (p. 242), is known as an "early work using journals as language learning research tools" (Bailey, 1983, p.71). These two experienced researchers identified some external variables which they have called "personal variables" affecting learners and their classroom language learning (Schumann, 1980, p. 51).

Following the typical 'diary-keeping' procedures, diaries have been used extensively as an introspective research tool. Studies conducted in this tradition have involved both first-person analysis and second-person

analysis of first-person language learning diaries, and have produced useful insights. A variable, for example, "competitiveness" in second language learning, emerged from Bailey's (1983) work. This variable had not emerged from the previous studies.

Based on her own experiences in learning French as a foreign language, Bailey hypothesized that competitiveness can generate anxiety in the classrooms. Then, she reviewed ten other diary studies and found further evidence for the relationship between competitiveness and anxiety.

The experience derived from these studies contributed to the methodology which was in its infancy in the mid-1970s. There is now a considerable volume of literature on diary studies in language research.

Advantages of Diary Studies as a Research Tool

One of the advantages of a diary study is that it allows the researcher "to discover what the learners think is important about what happens in language lessons" (Allwright and Bailey, 1991, p. 193). Learner diaries, for example, can serve as an instrument to see the classroom experience as a dynamic process through the eyes of the language learners. In Bailey's words, learner diaries can benefit the researcher to get at the issues

which are not "accessible through outside observation" (Bailey, 1990, p. 216).

Bailey views diary studies as a "thought provoking process" (1980, p. 64), and summarizes her perspective in the following manner: "the diary studies, if they are candid and thorough, can provide access to the language learner's hidden classroom responses, especially in the affective domain" (1983, p. 94). Van Lier (1988) takes a similar approach:

Diaries can provide much information about what motivates learners and teachers in a classroom. They are thus particularly valuable for insights into affective and personal factors that influence interaction and learning (p. 66).

Bailey describes the process of finding out what the learner experiences in language classroom as a "complicated venture" (1983, p. 71), and suggests using diaries to obtain self-report data from the subjects:

Because they provide an in-depth portrait of the individual diarist, his or her unique history and idiosyncracies, the diary studies can give teachers and researchers insights on the incredible diversity of students to be found even within a homogeneous language classroom (1983, p. 86).

It can be argued, then, that diaries can be used efficiently to diagnose problems regarding the social and

psychological aspects of learning. This argument echoes Bailey's comments:

If we can use the diaries to identify the events and emotions leading up to changes in affect, we may be able to control or induce such changes. For instance, if we can determine the perceived causes of Language Classroom Anxiety, we might then be able to reduce this reaction or eliminate it entirely (1983, p. 98).

A related advantage is that shy students may tend to talk about their learning problems if they feel that what they write will be confidential. Thus, the teacher is alerted to hidden areas of difficulty. In addition, learner diaries can create an "ongoing dialogue" between the researcher/teacher and the diarists (Porter et al., 1990, p. 236).

Another value of diary studies is that they can provide developmental data. That is to say, diaries are "systematic chronological records of personal response", and this characteristic of diary entries allows researchers to see the process that informants go through. In the language learning situations, they can alert teachers to learners' "attitudinal changes" as well as their affective needs (Bailey, 1983, p. 98).

An additional advantage is that "the act of writing" in the diary solely, can be "therapeutic" for the learner

(Bailey, 1983, p. 98). This means that the diary-keepers might relieve themselves of their negative emotions by sharing these feelings with an outsider whose generic comments on the entries make the diary-keepers feel listened to.

A final advantage is linked to the learners' perception of classroom events. Parkinson and Howell-Richardson (1990) comment on the value of learner diaries as "a rich source of information about learners" in revealing how different the learners' view of classroom processes could be from that of teachers and researchers (p. 139).

On the basis of the evidence presented here, it would seem that the use of diaries in language research can be beneficial in that diaries are particularly effective in capturing the most intimate thoughts of the learners.

Drawbacks of the Diary-Study Technique

In contrast to the arguments supported by the proponents of diary studies, critics of this type of research have pointed out a number of limitations. The major limitation is that because many diary studies have involved limited number of subjects, the results may not lead to generalizable trends.

From Bailey's point of view, however, it may not be a good idea to generalize from the results of introspective diary studies. In other words, findings

derived from diary data are unique and idiosyncratic, and, by nature, do not lend themselves to generalizations to other learners and language learning environments.

A second limitation refers to the need for the aggregation of the findings for those who intend to compare these individual case studies. Bailey (1980) notes that "the aggregation of qualitative information poses a serious problem" (p. 64). Likewise, Schumann (1998) reports that "aggregation across studies has proven very difficult" (p. 103).

A third problem is linked to the fact that diary studies require an "unusual degree of co-operation from learners" (Allwright and Bailey, 1991, p. 190). Although the promise of correction can motivate the learners to keep diaries in the target language, and allows the researcher to see what emerges, it may lead them to focus on accuracy, and "take the focus away from the real issue of getting all their thoughts and memories down, however imperfectly" (p. 191).

A fourth limitation concerns the dilemma as to whether to use the target language or the first language. Tarone and Yule (1989) comment on this issue as follows:

Since keeping of a diary would probably be done in the first language, it would seem that time and creative energy would be devoted to use of the learner's first language during a period when that

time and energy might more beneficially be devoted to using the second language (p. 137).

A final limitation concerns the reliability of the diary data. Parkinson and Howell-Richardson (1990) comment on this aspect in the following manner:

The main problems lie in refining research techniques so that this information becomes more fully interpretable and reliable, in integrating diaries with other research and teaching tools (p.139).

Selected Diary Studies

The functions of diary studies in language research have varied. They have been used for both self-investigation in second language learning and for others to gain insights into the second language learning process through the eyes of the learners. Diary studies also have been used in teacher education programs as a professional development instrument. What follows is a review of the samples of diary studies.

Personal Variables in Second Language Acquisition

Schumann and Schumann (1977) used journals as a research tool for self-investigation in second language learning. They kept detailed journals of their feelings and reactions toward the foreign cultures, the target language speakers, and the method of instruction during

their acquisition of Arabic in Tunisia and Persian in Iran to collect data for their introspective study. They went through the data in order to identify the important variables affecting their language learning.

Francine and John Schumann were both the subjects and researchers. Schumann (1980) reports that "the journals revealed a number of psychological factors which we (Schumann and Schumann, 1977), along with Jones (1977), have called *personal* variables that affect the acquisition of a second language" (p. 51).

The study of Francine and John Schumann, has an important place in the research literature since it is assumed to be the early work in systematic diary keeping for the purpose of gaining insights into the second language learning process. The aims of their project were to direct attention to the lack of in-depth longitudinal case studies examining the social-psychological variables, and to see how these variables affect an individual's perception of his own progress.

The findings of their study revealed a number of personal variables such as "nesting patterns" , "reactions to dissatisfaction with teaching methods" , "motivation for choice of materials" , "transition anxiety" , "desire to maintain one's own language learning agenda" , and "eavesdropping versus speaking as a language learning strategy" (p. 247).

'Competitiveness' in Language Learning

Bailey's (1980) study, which is based on the diary of her experiences in studying French as a foreign language, is considered to be particularly valuable for insights into affective and personal factors that influence language learning. Bailey reports:

My original intent had been to document my language learning strategies. However, my records of such strategies were soon over-shadowed by entries on my affective response to the language learning situation (p. 59).

During this experience, Bailey felt isolated from the teacher and the rest of the class due to the seating arrangement, and when she analyzed her diary she found that the language learning environment was influential in her language learning. The initial analysis of her diary also showed that the democratic teaching style of her teacher increased Bailey's enthusiasm for learning French. Another significant finding was her need for success and positive feedback.

To her surprise, the further examination of the diary revealed a great deal of competitiveness in her approach to learning French. Bailey examined the excerpts from her diary with the intention of finding specific evidence of competition in the French class, of competitiveness on her part, and potential effects of

this competitiveness on her learning. After a conscientious investigation, Bailey was convinced that she was a competitive language learner in the French class, and this competitiveness influenced her language learning.

Learner Variables

Parkinson and Howell-Richardson (1990), who experimented with learner diaries on a full-time *General English* course within the framework of 'Learner Variables' research project, and focused on both in-class and out-of-class experiences of learners, report that "the multiplicity of diary uses can sometimes be a handicap rather than a benefit" (p. 135).

They worked with three group of learners studying for periods from two weeks to two years to provide input for counselling the learners on their study and language use habits, and to identify variables which could explain the reasons for the differences of the rates of language improvement. "Informativity" , "use of English outside class" , and "anxiety" have emerged as main diary variables. Although they found a high correlation between rate of language improvement and the amount of time spent in social interaction with native speakers of English outside class, no other variables correlated significantly.

Insights from the Diaries of Adolescent Learners

Warden, Hart, Lapkin, and Swain (1995) explored the diaries that were kept by eighteen anglophone high-school students of French who participated in a three-month exchange visit to Quebec. The diaries provided insights into "language learning process" , "affective factors" , and "extralinguistic aspects of the exchange".

Warden et al. (1995), with an emphasis on the collection and analysis of qualitative data, supplemented learner diaries with other instruments such as pre-tests, post-tests, questionnaires, interviews and on-site observation. The diarists received explicit instructions about the amount of time that should be devoted to writing and the type of information that would be of most interest to the researchers, as well as two payments of \$ 100 that served as a "continuing incentive" (p. 539).

With respect to what the diary comments added to the data gathered from the tests and questionnaires, Warden et al. report that considerable affective information that did not emerge from the tests or the questionnaires were provided.

Twelve of the diarists were core French students, and six were from immersion backgrounds. The analysis of the diaries revealed trends with respect to affective differences between the core and immersion groups, however, no clear generalizations emerged regarding the

language learning process. Warden et al. view the lack of generalizability, which is seen as the greatest shortcoming of diary studies, from a different perspective, and comment that "...it is perhaps this very facet that best reminds us of dissimilarities among students, such as their individual needs, different approaches to the language learning task, and varying abilities" (p. 540).

Warden et al. conclude that there were common themes running through the exchange diaries, and that "it would be useful for prospective exchange candidates to be aware of these patterns in order to anticipate the initial shock and to understand that there is soon rapid progress" (p. 548).

The analysis of the diaries yielded much information about individual differences among language learners. Common themes concerning affective variables are listed below:

a) Emotional highs and lows

- Initial fear and shock at encountering an unfamiliar situation
- Fatigue brought on by having to function constantly in a second language
- Feelings of frustration and inadequacy
- Fear of appearing stupid
- Feelings of satisfaction

b) Students' attitudes toward French and English language use

- Feelings of frustration and resentment
- Feelings of relief

The work of Warden et al. (1995) is an example of diary studies that involve a relatively large number of participants.

A Secondary Analysis of Novice ESL Teachers' Needs

Numrich (1996), a teacher educator, conducted a study of student teachers' diaries when she was teaching a practicum course to 42 graduate students who were assigned to teach adult learners. The student teachers kept a diary of own experiences in this practicum over a period of 10 weeks. Each participant analyzed their own diary entries.

Numrich (1996), then, examined their language learning history, their diary entries, and their own diary analysis to discover what was important to the novice teachers in their learning and early teaching experiences. The secondary analysis of the diaries uncovered the following themes:

1. the preoccupations of novice teachers with their own teaching experience,
2. the transfer (or conscious lack of transfer) of teaching methods/techniques used in the teachers' own L2 learning,

3. unexpected discoveries about effective teaching, and
4. continued frustrations with teaching (p. 134).

This study is an example of the use of diaries in teacher preparation programs.

A Longitudinal Study of Second Language Anxiety

The subjects of this diary study conducted by Hilleson (1996) were a group of scholars taking courses in English in a boarding school in Singapore. The scholars were asked to keep a diary over a ten-week period in their second language. Interviews, questionnaires, and observations served as additional data collection instruments.

The aim of the project, in Hilleson's own words, was "to explore the affective state of a particular group of students" (p. 269). Data grouped in three analytic units, namely "language shock" , "foreign language anxiety" , and "classroom anxiety" (p. 253) were discussed within the framework of five categories (motivation, knowledge, skills, outcomes, and context) provided by Foss and Reitzel's (1988) relational model of competence (p. 269). Here are the findings emerged from these five categories:

- Loss of motivation
- Feelings of insecurity due to language shock
- Feelings of anxiety resulting from perceived language incompetence
- Frustration at not having the necessary skills to

function in the target language according to one's self-image

- Competitiveness
- Loss of self-esteem generated by competitiveness
- Satisfaction with the environment

Bailey's (1983) work has led to a popularity of research on the issue of anxiety, and Hilleson's (1996) study is a contribution to this area.

Designing a Diary Study

Diary studies are first-person case studies as cited in Bailey (1990):

A diary study is a first-person account of a language learning or teaching experience, documented through regular, candid entries in a personal journal and then analyzed for recurring patterns or salient events (p. 215).

A number of points arise from this definition. To start with, it is important to emphasize that diaries are "introspective". That is, the diarists reflect upon their own learning or teaching experiences (Bailey, 1983, p. 72). Second, the original diary entries should be as candid as possible.

The necessity for "discipline and patience" is emphasized for a diary study to succeed (Bailey, 1990, p. 218). Further, the researcher/teacher should write "text-

specific" responses to each entry to create "an ongoing dialogue" (Porter et al., 1990, p. 230). With respect to the length of an entry, "at least one paragraph per entry seems a minimum to develop an idea" (p. 229). The major steps which the process entails are illustrated in Figure 1.

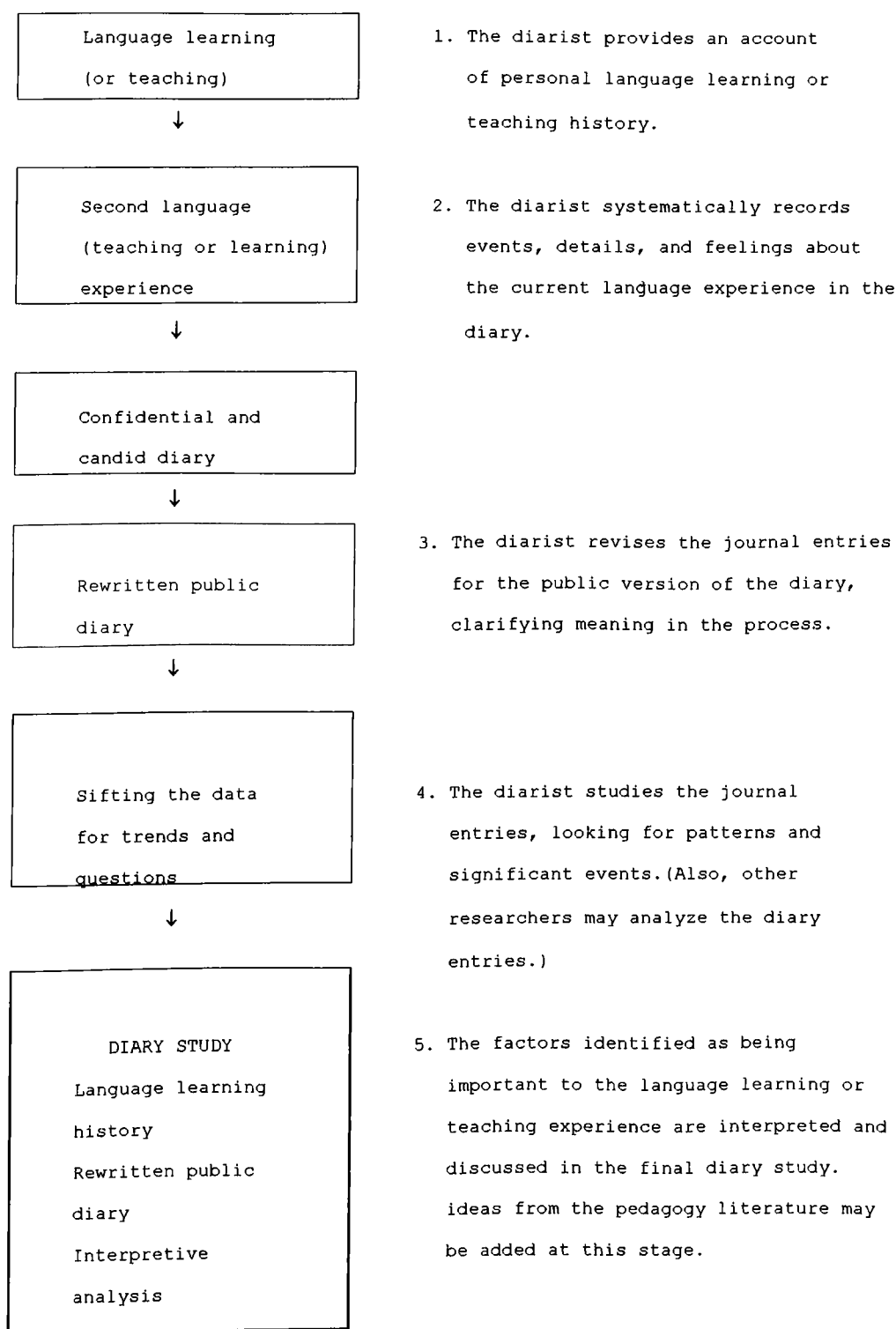


Figure 1. Conducting a language learning or teaching diary study.

Adapted from Bailey and Ochsner, 1983, p. 90.

Anyone who has a wish to conduct a diary study is advised to begin with a pilot project. Based on the experience derived from the previous studies, some suggestions for the data collection phase of the research are listed:

- 1 Set aside a regular time and place each day in which to write in your diary.
- 2 Plan on allowing an amount of time for writing which is at least equal to the period of time spent in the language classroom.
- 3 Keep your diary in a safe, secure place so you will feel free to write whatever you wish.
- 4 Do not worry about your style, grammar , or organisation, especially if you are writing in your second language.
- 5 Carry a small pocket notebook with you so you can make notes about your language learning (or teaching) experience whenever you wish.
- 6 Support your insights with examples. When you write something down, ask yourself, 'Why do I feel that is important?'
- 7 At the end of each diary entry, note any additional thoughts or questions that have occurred to you. You can consider these in more detail later (Allwright and Bailey, 1991, p. 191).

CHAPTER 3 : METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The aim of this diary study was to provide insights into the affective aspect of language learning at Bilkent University, School of English Language (BUSEL) from the perspective of the learners. The data for the study were gathered through the learner diaries kept by ten volunteer BUSEL students. This chapter is organized around four themes: Subjects, instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

The use of diaries as data has been called 'diary studies' in the second language acquisition research literature (Bailey and Nunan, 1996), and this research genre is seen as a technique of naturalistic inquiry which has its roots in ethnography (Chaudron, 1988). In naturalistic research, the ultimate goal of the researcher is to discover and understand the phenomena from the perspective of the participants engaged in the activity rather than the perspective of the researcher.

The diary-study technique which is part of the qualitative research in the naturalistic inquiry tradition in language learning was designed to elicit introspective data as documented by the diary-keepers. What characterizes this technique as a valuable research tool is a commitment to collecting and analyzing a

substantial amount of longitudinal records through which the learners have reflected upon their own experiences.

The proponents of the use of diaries as an ethnographic technique generally agree that the analysis of data obtained through diaries' allows the researchers to explore aspects of language learning process which are normally hidden.

Subjects

The subjects of this study were ten students studying at the Bilkent University School of English Language (BUSEL) who were asked to reflect upon their individual language learning experiences in their diaries on a voluntary basis. In November 1997, seven class teachers of four different levels, namely Foundation, Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate, and Pre-Faculty who the researcher was familiar with, and who were likely to cooperate throughout the research project, were identified. Individual sessions were conducted with each class teacher to explain the purpose of the study, how the study related to the course objectives, and how it could benefit the student participants. All seven teachers volunteered to cooperate, and agreed that they would provide a list of student volunteers that would include information about the students' levels and their section numbers.

The class teachers were asked to identify the students who were willing to keep a diary during the third course of this academic year. They were advised to give priority to the students who were already keeping diaries. The criteria for the selection of the students were composed of two items:

1. Willingness to be introspective about the language learning process which they were going through. In other words, the participants were expected to be capable of reflecting on their own experiences.
2. Commitment, consistency and cooperation in terms of keeping to the ground rules that would be established through negotiation with the students in a preliminary meeting.

The investigation by the class teachers revealed that there were thirty five students who had a positive attitude toward the active participation in a diary study.

In December 1997, all volunteers received a letter, Message 1 (see Appendix B) from the researcher informing them about the general purpose of the study, the importance of commitment, and how they would benefit. The main purpose of the letter was to make clear the responsibilities for the potential participants, to make them aware of the longitudinal nature of the study and the need for a high degree of commitment, and to see

whether all volunteers were still determined to join. In total, nineteen students responded positively filling in the form saying that they would like the researcher to contact them in their new classes at the beginning of the next course. Among these nineteen students, there were twelve Intermediate level students, four Upper-Intermediate level students, and three Pre-Faculty level students. There were no students from the Foundation level.

Following the BUSEL semester break between January 11 and February 4, 1998, the class lists for the new course, namely Course 3, were examined to identify the new levels of the nineteen potential diarists before their arrival. This investigation showed that of the twelve Intermediate level students, eleven transferred to the Upper-Intermediate level whereas one of them decided to leave school. Of the four Upper-Intermediate level students, two transferred to the Pre-Faculty level, one transferred to her department as a result of a newly acquired right to enter the departments after having successfully completed the Upper-Intermediate level, and one had a leave of absence for the second semester. Of the three Pre-Faculty level students, one failed and therefore had to repeat the same level, and two transferred to their departments. Finally, the total number of the students appeared as fourteen. Four of

these students withdrew from the study at the initial stages of the diary-keeping.

Materials

The materials that were used for this diary study comprised diary entries, messages, guidelines, and feedback letters. The diary entries (see Appendix A) were written by the learner-diarists for seven weeks, and consisted of learner reflections on their perceptions of language learning and classroom events, their feelings and reactions about anything related to their study, and their emotional reactions and feelings toward the method of instruction. The messages intended to establish an ongoing dialogue between the diarists and the researcher (see Appendix B). The guidelines (see Appendix C) were designed to help the diarists to write their diary entries in order to ensure the quality of data so that the data could lend themselves to the development of good insights. The feedback letters (see Appendix D) consisted of the researcher's responses to the diary entries, and helped the researcher to have a good rapport with the diarists. These responses focused on the different issues raised in the diaries.

Procedure

The classes were visited in order to arrange a preliminary meeting with these nineteen students at an appropriate time. Although all students agreed to meet on January 5, 1998, only ten students attended the meeting. The following points were on the agenda:

- Pilot study
- Language choice
- Length of diary entries per week
- Type of feedback to establish a rapport between the diarists and the researcher
- Collection of diaries
- Confidentiality of diary content
 - a. Could the raw data be discussed with anyone except the researcher?
 - b. Could the researcher photocopy the diary entries and use them for her study?

The details of the agenda items were agreed on through discussion. The students were informed about the need for a pilot study in order to avoid problems. Two trial phases were determined, the first between January 6-7, 1998, and the second between February 6-15, 1998. Three students volunteered to be the subjects of the first trial phase in which they would keep diaries without guidelines, and all students agreed to be trained

through the second trial phase with the specific guidelines provided by the researcher.

The students also agreed that their diaries would not be corrected by the researcher, and that they would be as honest as possible in their reflections. The students who were not able to join this meeting were informed about the agenda through a letter, and were given a chance to comment on the agreed decisions and to raise objections to any particular issue on the agenda.

The analysis of the diaries which were kept as part of the first phase of the pilot study revealed that the second trial phase was a crucial step of the design. That is, the entries did not reflect the feelings and emotional reactions of the students. On the contrary, they were too mechanical.

After the semester break, on February 9, 1998, the diarists received a second letter, Message 2 (see Appendix C) from the researcher reminding them that they would all be engaged in the second phase of the pilot study between February 10-16, 1998. The original schedule which intended to conduct the second phase of the pilot study between February 6-15, 1998, was affected by the need for the classes to settle in at the beginning of the second semester.

In Message 2, the students were provided with a set of guidelines including information on the content of the

diaries they would keep as part of the research project. The diaries were collected once a week by the researcher, and the diarists received their feedback letters which served as a continuing motivation, immediately.

Data Analysis

In this study, qualitative data were collected through learner diaries which enabled the researcher to gain insights into the affective resources of the learners from their own perspective. The data were analyzed in two major phases through the technique of coding.

During the preliminary analysis, a set of originally intended categories and the categories emerged from the raw data combined to form an organizing scheme. This organizing scheme was used to identify the significant trends in the diary entries during the final analysis.

The themes emerged from the diary entries were categorized according to the organizing scheme. Finally, conclusions based on the findings were supported with the excerpts from the diaries, and affective variables identified were displayed and discussed in figures.

In Chapter 4, the techniques and procedures for data analysis will be discussed in detail.

CHAPTER 4 : DATA ANALYSIS

Overview of the Study

This diary study investigated learners' feelings and thoughts about their language learning experiences in order to gain insights into the affective aspect of language learning at BUSEL from the perspective of the learners. Data for the study came from learner diaries. The participants in this study were ten BUSEL students who were keeping a diary of their language learning experiences on a voluntary basis.

The purpose of the study, as highlighted in the first message sent to the students, was "to view the language learning process through your eyes and to capture your perspective of what is going on in a language classroom" (see Appendix A). The students were asked to keep a diary on a day-to-day basis in their preferred language, and to include their feelings, thoughts, reactions, ideas, expectations and frustrations as an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learner. The diary entries were written over a seven-week period and collected once a week. The data were analyzed through the technique of coding.

This chapter discusses the analysis of data. First, the analytical procedures used are described. Then, the significant patterns that emerged from the diary entries

are presented according to their frequency of mention. Finally, the themes identified as being important to the language learning experience of the diarists and coupled with excerpts from the diaries are interpreted.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data Reduction

Early analysis of data is strongly recommended as it helps the researcher "cycle back and forth between thinking about the existing data and generating strategies for collecting new, often better, data" (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Further, in qualitative data analysis researchers are advised to approach the "alpine collection of information" with caution (p. 56). Among the problems highlighted are:

1. Selectivity is inevitable. That is, informants may tend to hide parts of their perceptions.
2. Qualitative research basically relies on words which are relatively "fatter than numbers", and they have "multiple meanings" (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 56). Words, therefore, by their nature, may have a double-edged function when analyzing data. That is, even though they render more meaning, it may be more difficult to work with words.
3. Researchers face risks such as "tunnel vision, bias, and self-delusion" during the analysis due to the

massive amount of data (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 56).

Data reduction is suggested as a solution to these problems. Miles and Huberman (1994) define data reduction as "a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organizes data" (p. 11). Coding, which occurs as data collection proceeds is one of the techniques to achieve data reduction. Codes are defined as "tags and labels for assigning units of meaning" to data, and are applied to "chunks of varying size -words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs" (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 56).

The participants of this study received explicit instructions informing them of the type of information that could be of most interest for the research purpose. However, they were not required to narrow their scope only to the focus of the study. On the contrary, they were encouraged to feel free to include issues of their choice even though these issues could be out of focus. The diary entries, therefore, reflected a wide spectrum of the diarists' interest. Some diarists usually exceeded the suggested length which was one A4 sheet for each day. Because of this, the data collected needed to be reduced and organized into manageable chunks.

Throughout the analysis of diary entries, data were reduced through selection. Codes were attached to

segments of data which consisted of sentences or paragraphs, as suggested. Depending on how relevant they were to the research question, these segments, then, were either eliminated or identified as an analytic unit.

Following guidelines from Bailey (1983), and Miles and Huberman (1994), the qualitative data were analyzed qualitatively on an ongoing basis. The first wave of data which comprised the diary entries collected in the first week of the process was examined to identify emerging themes. The categories that emerged and the provisional categories united to form an organizing scheme in order to analyze the remainder of the data. Table 1 presents these predetermined categories.

Table 1

List of Predetermined Categories

Category	Code
Motivation	MOT
Empathy	EMP
Self-Esteem	SEST
Anxiety	ANX

During the final analysis, each wave of data was reviewed thoroughly to find examples which address the categories identified.

Preliminary Analysis

The primary concern of this stage was to derive a set of categories from the raw data, and thus, to

understand the learners' priorities with reference to the affective variables that can influence their learning. In keeping with the diary study methodology suggested by Bailey (1983), the diary entries were read in detail in order to identify the significant trends, and were grouped into segments. Each segment was given a tentative name which then became the name of a category. Table 2 is a sample of how the diary entries were divided into segments.

Table 2

Identification of Emerging Themes

Data Segment	Tentative Category
I have awful news for you. I could not pass the end-of-course exam so I have to repeat the Pre Faculty level. I am very unhappy for failing.	FRUSTRATION : Failure
Apart from this, I had a big argument with my family members. It was completely my fault because I did not tell my parents that I failed.	CONCERN : Family
I was afraid of their anger. I thought they would not let me continue my education in Bilkent. After a search, my father discovered the truth. It was the worst moment of my life. I was in tears and he took me to the school without saying anything.	FEAR : Parents
Now I Bilkent. I am here again. I am happy, because I love Bilkent.	SATISFACTION: Bilkent
I am in a new class. All my close friends are away from me. I miss them.	REACTION: Class change
I could not concentrate on the lessons today.	PROBLEM : Concentration

I think I will have some problems
because the level of my new class is
too low...

PROBLEM : Adaptation

...but I like my new teacher. He is
very nice and energetic.

REACTION : Teacher change

I hope I can adapt to my new class as
soon as possible.

CONCERN : Adaptation

The classified list of these tentative categories constituted the preliminary coding scheme which was, then, applied to the rest of the data. Table 3 shows the emerging themes as a result of the preliminary coding phase.

Table 3

Preliminary Coding Scheme

Emerging Themes

Class Change
Adaptation Difficulty
Fear of Failure
Teacher Change
Workload
Failure-oriented Frustrations
ISC (Independent Study Component)
Language Learning Facilities
Reactions to BUSEL
Level of Class
Nature of Class
Peer Pressure
Teacher's Attitude
Teacher's Rapport with Class
Teacher's Style
Teacher's Flexibility
Teacher's Encouragement
Variety in Classroom Activities
Lack of Confidence in L2
Lack of Practice in L2
Interest Level of Classroom Activities
Concentration Problems
Motivational Factors
Vocabulary Development
Opinions of Textbook
Accommodation Problems
Love Affairs
Emotional Problems

Need for Intimate Friends
 Parental Pressure
 Arguments with Roommates
 Feelings for Ankara
 Feelings for Bilkent University

The tentative names given to the segments of data were modified as long as the new data brought new insights, and the themes that overlapped were eliminated from the scheme. According to Schumann, "An issue is usually deemed important if it arises frequently or with great salience" (Schumann, quoted in Bailey, 1983, p. 72). Consistent with Schumann's viewpoint, salient issues which were more relevant to the research question were selected as the focus of the analysis when examining the data. A sample of the final version of coding scheme is depicted in Table 4. The three-letter codes stand for the major categories, and those that attached to these codes represent the subcategories.

Table 4

Final Coding Scheme

Attitude toward the Components of EFL at BUSEL	AFL
AFL : Beliefs about Target Language	AFL-L2
AFL : Beliefs about Language Teachers	AFL-TRS
AFL : Beliefs about Language Learners	AFL-LERS
AFL : Beliefs about Textbook	AFL-TEXT
Accommodation Problems	ACP
ACP : Conflicts with Roommates	ACP-RM
ACP : Need for Sleep	ACP-SLE
ACP : Sensitivity to Suicide Attempts	ACP-SUI
Feelings of Anxiety	ANX
ANX : Quantity of Workload	ANX-WL
ANX : Pre-Exam Concerns	ANX-EX
ANX : Peer Pressure Affecting Self-Esteem	ANX-PP
ANX : Reactions to Independent Study Component	ANX-ISC

ANX : Fear of Failure / Repeated Failure	ANX-FAIL
ANX : Family Pressure with reference to Success	ANX-FP
Personal Reactions to Change	CHA
CHA : Level Change	CHA-LEV
CHA : Class Change	CHA-CLASS
CHA : Teacher Change	CHA-TR
Failure / Repeated Failure-Oriented Feelings	FOF
FOF : Withdrawal from Emotional Involvement in Language Learning	FOF-EMO
FOF : Withdrawal from Physical Involvement in Language Learning	FOF-PHY
FOF : Loss of Reliance on Teacher	FOF-REL
Language Learning Activities	LLA
LLA : Teacher's Choice of Focus	LLA-FOC
LLA : Interest Level of Tasks	LLA-INT
LLA : Preferences for Variety	LLA-VAR
Motivational Factors	MOT
MOT : Access to Language Learning Facilities	MOT-FAC
MOT : Participation Level of Class	MOT-PART
MOT : Desire to Transfer to Post-Prep Department	MOT-DEP
MOT : Class Dynamics	MOT-DYN
MOT : Vocabulary Development	MOT-VOC
MOT : Novelty of Learning Items	MOT-NOV
MOT : Effectivity of Lessons	MOT-EFF
MOT : Socializing with Friends	MOT-SOC
MOT : Pride in Bilkent University	MOT-BIL
Perceived Language Needs	PLN
PLN : Fluency in Speaking	PLN-FLU
PLN : Better Listening Performance	PLN-LIST
PLN : Better Writing Abilities	PLN-WRT
PLN : Larger Repertoire of Vocabulary	PLN-VOC
Perceptions of Teacher	POT
POT : Attitude toward Learners	POT-ATT
POT : Professional Enthusiasm	POT-ENT
POT : Flexibility	POT-FLEX
POT : Teaching Style	POT-STY
POT : Rapport with Class	POT-RAPP
POT : Support, Guidance, Empathic Capacity	POT-SGE
POT : Personality	POT-PERS
Relationships	REL
REL : Partners : Boyfriends & Girlfriends	REL-BF/GF
REL : Friends	REL-FRI
REL : Classmates	REL-CM
REL : Class Teachers	REL-TRS
REL : Family	REL-FAM

Final Analysis

As mentioned earlier, each wave of data was reread, and recoded according to the categories on the coding

scheme in order to reduce the data. The following strategies were used to achieve the coding procedure:

1. Each diary entry was reread, and the units of analysis were determined. Emerging themes appeared on the right-hand side margin beside each segment.
2. Codes were assigned to each unit of analysis, and appeared on the left-hand side margin.

Table 5 outlines the coding procedure.

Table 5

Final Analysis of the Diary Entries

Codes	Selected Diary Entry	Emerging Themes
FOF-REL	If I love my teacher, I can concentrate on my lessons. Otherwise...	TEACHER Loss of Reliance
POT-SGE	For example, today I tried to answer the teacher's questions but all day she didn't give any permission to me.	TEACHER Support
FOF-EMO	I lost my desire.	FEELINGS Withdrawal
POT-RAPP	Why was she doing it? I don't know. I felt worried. Maybe she was trying to imply something and I couldn't understand.	TEACHER Rapport
ANX-FAIL	These behaviors don't quit me. In spite of everything I will continue to learn my foreign language and I will reach my goals.	ANXIETY Fear of Failure

Note. FOF-REL= Failure / Repeated Failure-Oriented Feelings-Loss of Reliance on Teacher; POT-SGE= Perceptions of Teacher-Support, Guidance, Empathic Capacity; FOF-EMO= Failure / Repeated Failure-Oriented Feelings-Withdrawal from Emotional Involvement in Language Learning; POT-RAPP= Perceptions of Teacher-Rapport with Class; ANX-FAIL= Feelings of Anxiety-Fear of Failure / Repeated Failure

The number of times each category mentioned in the diary entries was identified in order to discover the diarists' priorities and report data in terms of quantifiable

PLN-FLU	-	-	-	16	-	-	-	4	-	1	21
PLN-LIST	3	3	6	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	17
PLN-WRT	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	5	-	-	7
PLN-VOC	-	-	-	6	-	4	-	6	-	2	18
POT											196
POT-ATT	-	2	-	4	5	6	9	4	6	6	46
POT-ENT	-	3	2	-	-	5	5	3	-	-	18
POT-FLEX	-	-	-	-	5	3	-	4	-	-	12
POT-STY	3	4	-	2	5	3	-	4	-	6	27
POT-RAPP	-	2	3	-	-	-	7	5	3	-	20
POT-SGE	-	-	-	-	-	4	23,	-	1	-	28
POT-PERS	9	6	-	-	11	4	4	-	5	6	45
REL											180
REL-BF/GF	3	6	-	25	5	3	-	-	6	-	48
REL-FRI	-	4	2	24	-	3	6	3	4	1	45
REL-CM	-	2	1	8	5	4	7	6	-	-	33
REL-TRS	-	-	-	-	10	3	8	5	-	-	26
REL-FAM	-	-	-	16	-	7	-	-	5	-	28

Note. AFL= Attitude toward the Components of EFL at BUSEL; ACP= Accommodation Problems; ANX= Feelings of Anxiety; CHA= Personal Reactions to Change; FOF= Failure / Repeated Failure-Oriented Feelings; LLA= Language Learning Activities; MOT= Motivational Factors; PLN= Perceived Language Needs; POT= Perceptions of Teacher; REL= Relationships

What follows is a discussion of the most frequently mentioned points in each of these categories.

Results of the Study

The final analysis of the diary entries revealed several themes of perceived importance with reference to affective variables in language learning. Figure 2 summarizes how influential each of these variables was in the language learning experience of the learners.

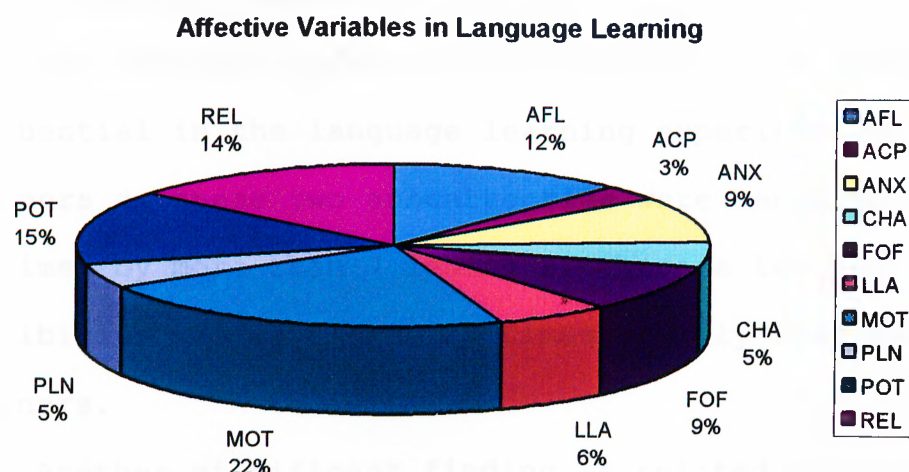


Figure 2. Affective variables in language learning.

Note : AFL= Attitude toward the Components of EFL at BUSEL; ACP= Accommodation Problems; ANX= Anxiety; CHA= Change; FOF= Failure-Oriented Feelings; LLA= Language Learning Activities; MOT= Motivation; PLN= Perceived Language Needs; POT= Perceptions of Teacher REL= Relationships.

As can be seen in Figure 2, motivational factors (MOT), namely, access to language learning facilities (MOT-FAC), participation level of class (MOT-PART), desire to transfer to post-prep department (MOT-DEP), class dynamics (MOT-DYN), vocabulary development (MOT-VOC), novelty of learning items (MOT-NOV), effectivity of lessons (MOT-EFF), socializing with friends (MOT-SOC), and pride in Bilkent University (MOT-BIL) emerged as the major affective variables in 22% of the total entries. The number of remarks with reference to the above mentioned subcategories range between 14 (MOT-VOC) and 46 (MOT-EFF) (see Table 6 for the frequencies).

Learners ' perceptions of teachers (POT) which was mentioned in 15% of the entries seems to be the second

major category. Teacher's attitude toward learners (POT-ATT) and teacher's personality (POT-PERS) are highly influential in the language learning experience of the learners as these two subcategories were mentioned over 45 times by more than 7 learners, whereas teacher's flexibility was mentioned 12 times by only 3 of the learners.

Another significant finding is related to the highs and lows in the relationships within which the learners are involved. This category, relationships (REL), appears in 14% of the entries.

The fourth theme which runs through in 12% of the entries refers to learners' attitude toward the components of EFL at BUSEL (AFL). The frequency of references made to this theme suggests that the learners' beliefs about the target language (AFL-L2) and their teachers (AFL-TRS), and other components of the EFL such as the personal profile of other language learners at BUSEL (AFL-LERS) and the textbook followed in the course (AFL-TEXT) have an important impact on their learning.

This category is followed by the feelings of anxiety (ANX) with a percentage of 9. The fear of failure (ANX-FAIL), which was mentioned frequently in 27 entries, seems to be another common theme. In particular, 6 of the learners are preoccupied with this negative emotion.

Those who experienced a repeated failure tend to withdraw from language learning as it can be seen in another category, failure / repeated failure oriented feelings (FOF). This category emerged in 9% of the entries.

The references to the subthemes of the seventh category, language learning activities (LLA), fluctuate between teacher's choice of focus (LLA-FOC) and learners' preferences for variety in the tasks they are engaged in. This category was mentioned in 6% of the entries. Only 2 of the learners appear to be interested in the focus of the tasks, whereas 50% of them expresses their preferences in favor of having a variety of tasks in a 50-minute lesson.

These results suggest that the design of the classroom activities affects the way the learners approach a particular activity. In addition, these language learners expect their teachers to be aware of their specific needs in English.

In 5% of the entries, the learners express their reactions to the fact that they might have to change their classes at the end of each course as a result of the educational system at BUSEL. From the evidence in the entries, it is felt that the learners are not willing to change their classes and teachers. They usually have a negative reaction to change when they have to leave a

bound class to join another where they need to build up new relationships with the class members as well as the teachers. Their reactions to the change in the social and psychological domains of learning environment reinforce the notion that learning never takes place in a vacuum.

The learners' perceptions of their needs in the specific aspects of the target language (PLN) refer mainly to four areas: Fluency in speaking (PLN-FLU), better listening performance (PLN-LIST), better writing abilities (PLN-WRI), and finally larger repertoire of vocabulary (PLN-VOC). They talk about these needs in 5% of the entries.

Given that there is no explicit reference to a need for improving reading skills, it may seem difficult to understand the absence of this language skill in this category. Yet, an explanation lies in their stronger needs in other areas which might overshadow their needs in the reading skill.

The last category, accommodation problems (ACP) appears at a relatively low level of frequency with a percentage of 3%. However, the strength of the way these problems are expressed attracts attention to the saliency aspect of this theme rather than the frequency aspect. The fact that only 2 learners mentioned accommodation problems and 8 did not, may deserve an explanation. That

is, those who reflect on this category live in the dorms, whereas the others do not.

Two-part codes will be provided to indicate the subcategories in the figures that follow. Figure 3 shows the number of references to motivation in the diary entries.

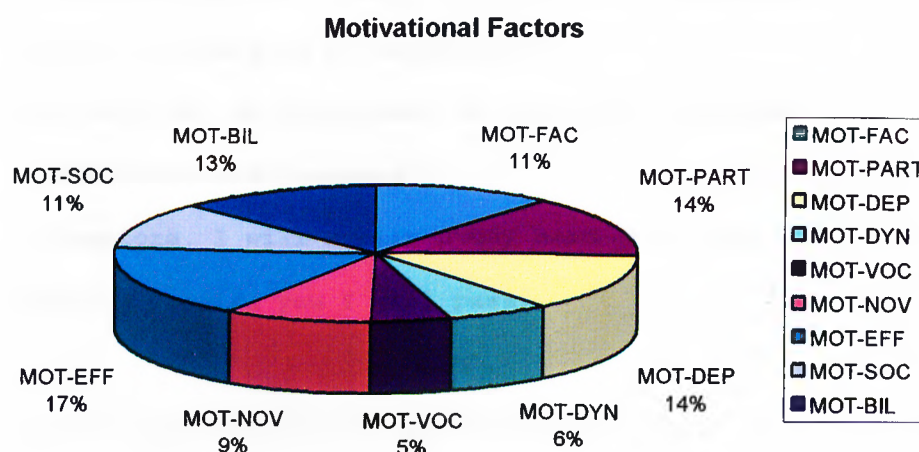


Figure 3. Motivational factors.

17% of the entries was marked by the learners' comments referring that an effective lesson is the major factor that increases their motivation for learning. This theme was mentioned 46 times by 7 of the learners. They seem to be highly motivated by the effectiveness of the lesson (MOT-EFF), and they enjoy learning in classes where they experience active learner participation. Six learners are particularly motivated to study harder by a strong desire to be in their post-prep departments (MOT-

DEP) as soon as possible. Some learners express their ideas, as recorded in the following entries:

(I): **My primary goal is to go to my department next year.**

For this reason, I need to improve my English. Can you give me some advice about how to do this?

Whatever happens, I have to pass this course and start studying in my department.

(B): **Believe me, my department is the best: "English Literature and Language".**

Therefore, I will really study hard this term. I really promise you I will pass.

It seems that exposure to language input that presents novel items (MOT-NOV), such as new vocabulary (MOT-VOC) and grammatical structures facilitates their learning. Figure 4 provides information on learners' perceptions of various aspects of teachers' classroom behavior.

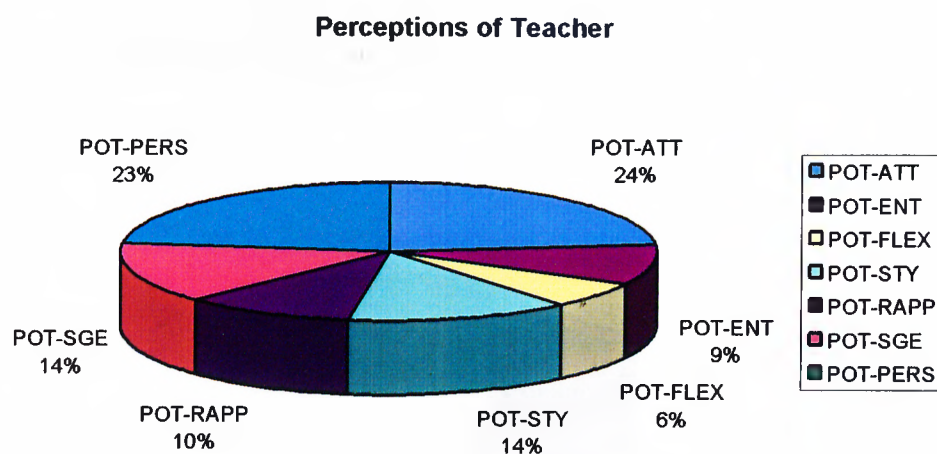


Figure 4. Perceptions of teacher.

24% of the entries contains remarks on how teacher's attitude toward learners (POT-ATT) enhances motivation on the part of the learners. Likewise, the results confirm the fact that teacher's personality (POT-PERS) is one of the major factors in learning. In 23% of the entries, there is a shared opinion that some teachers, by virtue of their understanding, motivate the learners positively. These results suggest that the learners are highly sensitive to these particular aspects of their teachers' qualities, and they primarily value the teachers for their sympathetic and understanding efforts with the students. The following comment is from (F) who is trying to get used to her new teacher:

I do not feel close to my new teacher. Even though she tries to do her best for us, she is not as friendly as my ex-teacher. In addition, she often

threatens with low grades. I miss my ex-teacher.

She was just like a friend. She was like my elder sister.

In another entry, she reflects more on the same issue:

My ex-teacher was so sweet. He was very active in the lessons and this motivated us to be active in the lessons. His lessons were interesting. He was not capricious like Turkish teachers. He did not treat us as if we were kids.

Another learner, (G), who also transferred to a different class, expresses his feelings to stress the connection between his motivation to learn and his teacher's personal enthusiasm for teaching:

The teachers are very nice. They are professional in their jobs and they like teaching English. Therefore, I enjoy the lessons and I improve my English.

Other entries have a similar tone:

(E): She is really a very good teacher. I like this woman. She is so understanding. We have a good dialogue.

(B): For me, a lesson is enjoyable if I like the style

of the teacher. Our main teacher,
as I told you before, is so nice. He was so
energetic today. Sometimes he made jokes when we got
bored.

What an energetic man! Yesterday he had an
operation, today he came and gave his lecture.
Despite being sleepy and tired, we always tend to
participate in his lessons.

(H) :We were tired and we couldn't concentrate on the
lesson. Our teacher realized that we were not
motivated and he understood us. We persuaded him to
do something different, for example to write a
paragraph or to discuss about a subject. If I don't
understand a point, I can ask it to my teacher. The
teachers are willing to help us because they like
their jobs.

Learners' in-class and outside class relationships
are also influential in their learning. This can be
clearly seen in Figure 5.

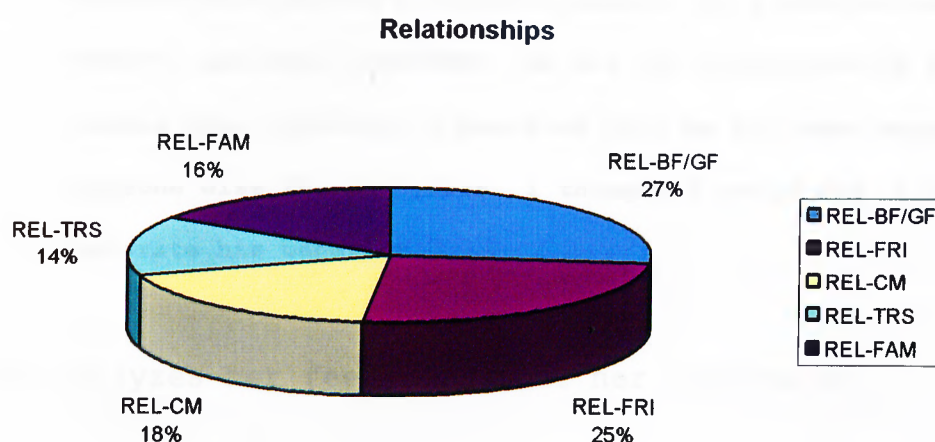


Figure 5. Relationships.

Among the themes which compose this category, relationships with intimate partners (REL-BF/GF) and close friends (REL-FRI) deserve more attention as they were mentioned by 6 learners over 45 times. 27% of the entries contains remarks referring to the intimate relationships. Similarly, relationships with close friends emerged as a frequently mentioned pattern in 25% of the entries. Reading through all the diaries, one is struck by the amount of commentary on love affairs. Among the 6 learners who seem preoccupied with emotional problems, 2 writes about the breakup of a relationship due to jealousy and pressure, and how they coped with the suffering. Here is a very candid comment from (D):

At the beginning of our relationship, I was more cautious. I was trying to understand what kind of a person he was. Then, I

decided that he was a reliable person. He looked sincere, honest, and self-confident. He was not interested in the girls around him. Suddenly, I realized that he had been engaged with someone else for two years. I thought I would die. I cannot tolerate his behavior.

(A) analyzes her feelings about her boyfriend:

I have always felt his pressure. I cannot do anything without his permission. I do not feel happy about this situation. In fact, I want to leave him but it is not easy to end a relationship. I am puzzled about what to do.

Three of the learners express dissatisfaction with their ongoing experience in terms of fidelity and need for a faithful partner. One of them, (E), tends to idealize the special rapport he formed with his partner. He writes:

Our relationship is perfect! I love her. I have very serious feelings for her. She is so understanding. I am very happy.

Others, who do not have a partner, feel envy of happy couples. (I) sums up her feelings in the following comment:

It is the fourteenth of February, Valentines Day. I have been trying to erase this day from all of my life. I have not had a

boyfriend since twenty years. When I see the other people, I feel very sad.

On the whole, the majority of the participants who reflect on this issue (4 people)' seem to be dissatisfied with their intimate friends.

Another theme that emerged under this category in 16% of the entries is domestic issues that affect the climate in their home domain (REL-FAM). (F) writes about her family:

The gap between me and my family is getting bigger every day. I cannot communicate with them. They closed all the channels. I do not know what to do. Please help me...

The impression is that the rapport with their peer groups is more influential on the learners than the rapport they form with their teachers and family members. In Figure 6, the percentages for each component of the English course that affects the learning are displayed.

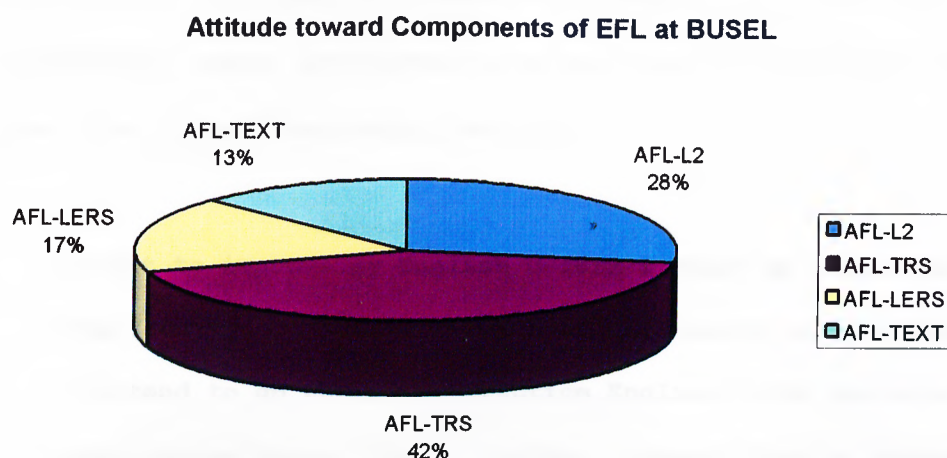


Figure 6. Attitude toward the components of EFL at BUSEL.

Examples from the diary entries with regard to this category intensify the impression that the learners' beliefs about their teachers (AFL-TRS) have a remarkable effect on their learning. In 42% of the entries, there is evidence of how learners' beliefs about their teachers affect their learning. Nine students commented on this issue. Here are some typical entries:

(G) : **In general, teachers in BUSEL are very friendly in class. We can talk about anything with them.**

(B) : **I really hate BUSEL but I like the teachers. They do their best to help us. I think this is encouraging.**

(I) : **If I love my teacher, I can concentrate on my lessons.**

The learners' attitude toward the target language (AFL-L2) is another common theme. This theme was mentioned by

the 50% of the participants 43 times. (D), who is apparently more introspective on this particular theme than the other learners, writes:

I want to improve my English before I start my education in the faculty. Otherwise I can have difficulty in the department. I intend to go abroad to practice English. (Can you give me some advice about this?). Perhaps I should find a temporary job in the tourism sector in summer.

Five learners express their thoughts about the student profile in BUSEL (AFL-LEERS). Their commentary provides insights into the attitudinal aspect of the characteristic of typical BUSEL students. (C), for example writes:

Genarally the students are the people who have money in their pocket, and no brain in their heads.

(E) feels the same:

I cannot understand them. They are so inconsiderate, strange, and selfish.

Four learners report that they have a special dislike for the textbook followed in the course (AFL-TEXT).

Figure 7 presents learners' feelings originated from failure.

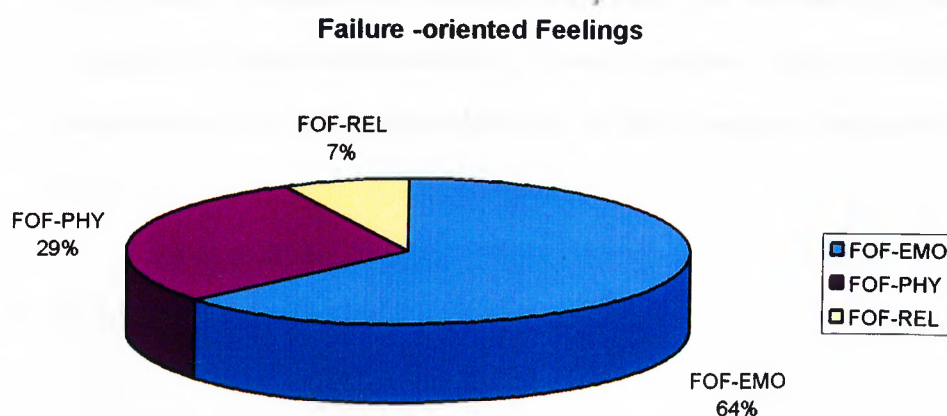


Figure 7. Failure-oriented feelings.

The learners' frustration at not being able to pass the end-of-course tests or the classroom tests is stated 124 times in an exceptionally large amount of comments. Two types of withdrawal are observed in the diary entries:

1. Learners try to remain physically involved in the classroom activities although they are not genuinely interested in learning.
2. Learners explicitly reject physical involvement.

Withdrawal from emotional involvement in language learning (FOF-EMO) which appeared in 64% of the entries is the most frequently mentioned pattern among the other subthemes covered. In fact, this theme on its own is the

most frequently emerged pattern in all diaries. (F) is looking back toward a past experience:

Last year I failed in Foundation level. No matter how hard I studied, I was unsuccessful. I was hopeless, and I had a depression. I was participating in the lessons because I had to.

(E) writes:

I do not know why but I am getting bored in the lessons. I try to listen to the teacher but it is impossible. I don't feel that I am learning something.

Sometimes, frustration is due to repeated failure which seems to generate a deep-rooted reaction. The students who have to repeat the same level of the course confront this feeling, and as they proceed, their self-esteem and motivation in learning seem to be irreparably damaged. Another comment from (E) is related to her recent failure:

I wish I could tell you that I passed. We are all trying to hide our feelings but in fact we feel very nervous. Everybody is angry. This is not fair. Anyway, life goes on. We should be strong enough to open a new page in our life.

(I) writes:

In my opinion I am not good enough to study in BUSEL. I do my homework on time, I study regularly. Why am I still in BUSEL then? What's wrong with me?

Two of the learners direct their negative emotions toward their teachers. A gradual loss of trust in their teachers' professional talent as well as in teacher-learner relationship (FOF-REL) is reflected. Figure 8 illustrates the percentages of anxiety-producing factors.

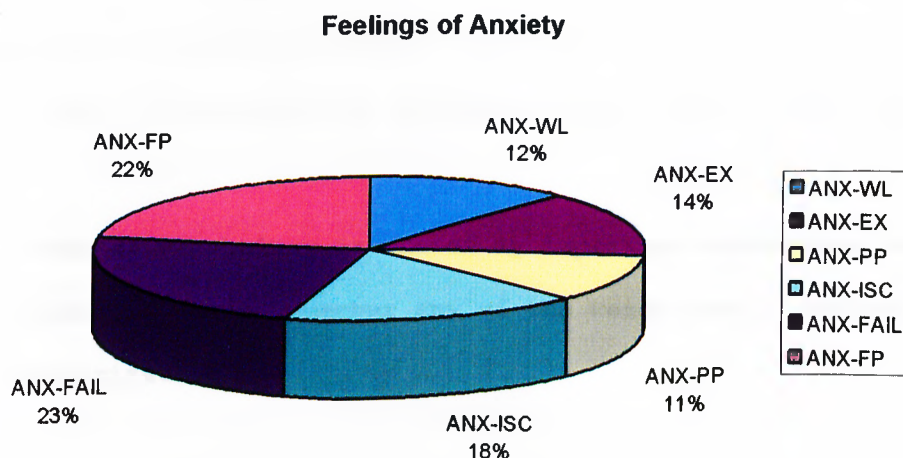


Figure 8. Feelings of anxiety.

The learners' reflection on the anxiety-producing sources varies widely. As the majority (23%) of these sources is directly related to this theme, fear of failure (ANX-FAIL) is essence of this category.

Almost everyone expresses some degree of anxiety. Six learners feel an initial fear (ANX-EX) as the exams approach. (H) reports:

The main teacher gave us information about the exam, and he encouraged us not to be nervous. I think we should do more practice in writing and grammar. I need to improve my listening. Listening tests are very difficult for me because the speakers talk too fast.

Four learners mention that the program is unmanageable (ANX-WL), and they are overwhelmed by the amount of work. Two of the learners state that they are discouraged by the fear of being laughed at their speaking errors (ANX-PP). The following are excerpts from (D)'s reports:

Lack of vocabulary is one of my important weaknesses. When I speak, I don't remember any of the words that I learned by memorization.

When I pronounce a word incorrectly, almost everybody is laughing. They start teasing me. As a result, I prefer to be silent in class. I speak only when I am asked a question. I am very angry about this situation but I don't want to argue with them.

Family pressure (ANX-FAM) was also mentioned in 22% of the entries as a reason for anxiety. The following comments sum up the pressure felt by the learners:

(A) : I am scared. If my parents know that I have to repeat this course, I may lose my chance of studying here.

(F) : They didn't show their anger but obviously they spent lots of money on my education.

Most of my friends did not tell the truth to their families although they failed. First, I decided to do the same but then I changed my mind. They didn't say anything but I felt their disappointment.

At last, I have discovered why I am so unhappy: Because of my parents who always accuse me of being unsuccessful. They put a lot of pressure on me. When they force me to study, I am demotivated.

Learners' evaluation of the classroom activities is summarized in Figure 9.

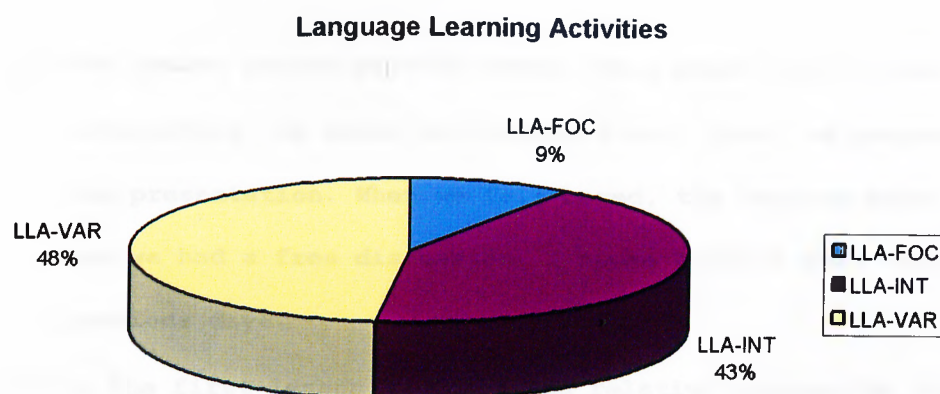


Figure 9. Language learning activities.

Another theme revolves around the focus of language learning activities (LLA-FOC). Even though this theme emerged in only 9% of the entries, it is worth mentioning because the learners perceive a close connection among the focus, interest level (LLA-INT) and variety of a task (LLA-VAR). The learners comment on how difficult it is for them to be engaged in a task which focuses on one specific area of language during the entire lesson. What they prefer is to be exposed to a larger repertoire including tasks that intend to improve their motivation toward learning by creating a positive classroom climate. Yet, they appreciate the value of the tasks that have a focus such as practising a grammar item or developing specific language skills. They also express a preference for the activities which have a fun element. The following excerpts represent this tendency:

(C) :The lesson passed quickly today. This means that it was interesting. We wrote an outline first. Then, we prepared for the presentation. When we felt bored, the teacher made a change and we had a free discussion. I spoke English more than the previous days.

(H) :In the first lesson we practiced relative clauses. We told our teacher that we were bored. We played 'vocabulary game' to relax.

After lunch, we reviewed the grammar rules. I did the exercises easily because I study grammar on a daily basis. After that, we changed the topic. We wrote short stories. We got motivated because we were interested in studying like this.

(B) :In the second lesson, we were all active but in the third lesson nearly everybody got bored. We suggested having a discussion. The teacher agreed. "Thanks God!" said, one of my friends. The subject was 'abortion'. We expressed our thoughts about it.

Figure 10 displays the learners' reactions to the change of classes and teachers.

Personal Reactions to Change

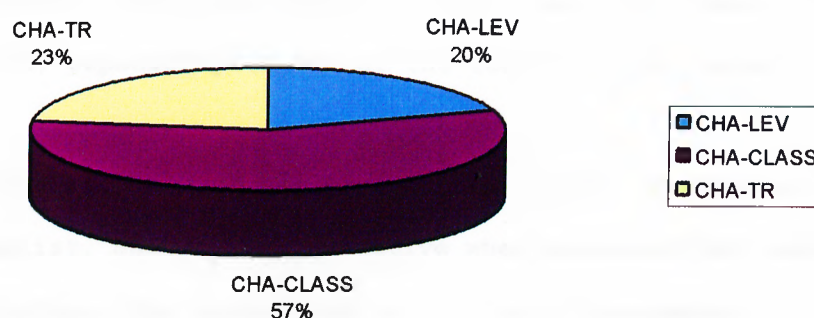


Figure 10. Personal reactions to change.

In the entries forming the data for this category, class changes (CHA-CLASS) were mentioned in 57% of the entries and dominated over the other themes. The learners express their feelings of nostalgia for their past classes and teachers. They usually mention the professional and personal qualities of their ex-teachers (CHA-TRS), praise them for being a sensitive, warm, friendly, and qualified teacher. (D) recalls her previous teachers:

I used to had excellent teachers. I enjoyed their lessons. I didn't need to memorize the new words in their classes because they were really teaching them. I am happy because my new teachers are as good as them.

(F) comments:

What made me feel happy in foundation was my class and teachers. They were great. I wish I were with them. I owe them a lot, especially (*names of the teachers are listed*)...

I miss her (*one of her ex-teachers*) a lot. She was an idealist. She was authoritative when necessary but she wasn't provoking. She looked like a lion which has mercy.

In addition, they compare the intragroup relationships and the level of proficiency in their new classes with those in the previous ones. Then they express their concerns about having to get used to a new situation. However, a rapid change in their thoughts and feelings can be traced through their entries commenting on the same themes. The learners who have transferred to an upper level, seem to experience some degree of adaptation difficulty (CHA-LEV). Data concerning the perceived needs of the learners in the target language can be found in Figure 11.

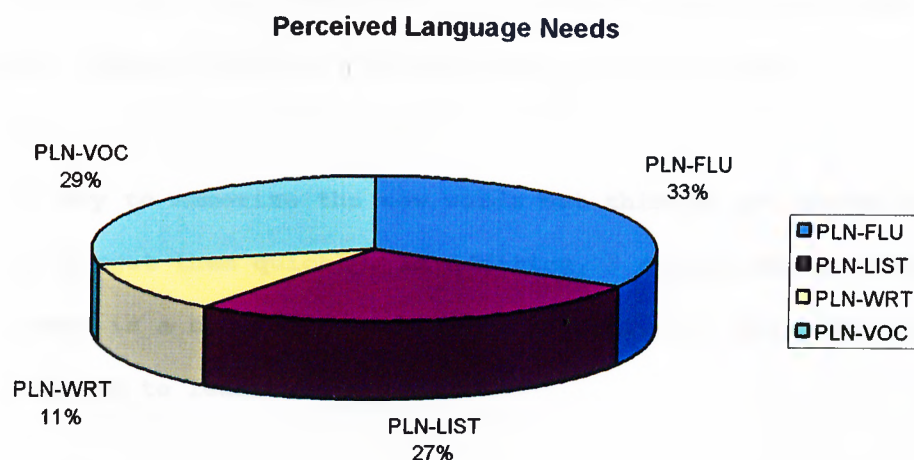


Figure 11. Perceived language needs.

The needs of the learners in the target language, as they perceive, cover three areas of the language skills, namely speaking, listening, and writing. Among these, a need for fluency in the speaking skill (PLN-FLU) was mentioned in 33% of the entries as the major theme. What follows is a need for better listening performance (PLN-LIST) which was mentioned in 27% of the entries. The following excerpts capture the learners' opinions:

(J): I can write good compositions. I like writing but I have problems in speaking.

(H): Listening is difficult for me because I cannot concentrate on what the speakers say during the listening exam. Therefore, I listen to English tapes to improve my listening.

In addition, they express discomfort with the need for a larger repertoire of vocabulary. (D) writes:

I try to memorize the new words but this is not useful because I forget them quickly. In addition, I cannot decide whether a word is a noun or a verb or an adjective. I watch English movies to learn new words.

Surprisingly, no one mentions a need in reading skill. Figure 12 shows the type of problems that the learners who live in the dorms experience.

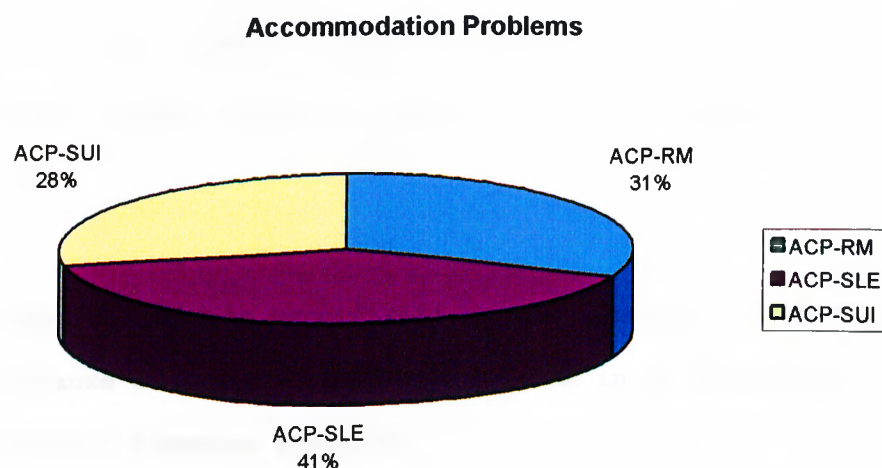


Figure 12. Accommodation problems.

The diaries of the all 4 participants who stay in the dorms in the university campus reveal that these students encounter difficulties influencing their classroom performance. For example, they all try to resist falling

asleep in class as they are not able to have sufficient sleep (ACP-SLE) at night due to the constant noise in the dorms. Almost half of the entries reflect this problem. Three of the learners do not get on well with their roommates (ACP-RM), and consequently they do not take advantage of sharing a peaceful physical environment. (A) expresses her feelings:

I have a big problem with my roommate. She is too nervous. She always murmurs about something and spoils my happiness. Now I am in my room and my dear (!) roommate is not here. I AM VERY HAPPY, MORE THAN HAPPY, I FEEL COMFORTABLE!

Further, the rumours about suicide attempts in the dorms (ACP-SUI) have a great impact on their psychology. (J) writes:

Today I couldn't concentrate on the lessons. I felt depressed because some girls committed suicide in my dormitory. I don't want to remember anything.

CHAPTER 5 : CONCLUSION

Overview of the Study

The present study was designed with the intention of gaining insights into the affective aspect of language learning at BUSEL. The subjects for the study were ten students who volunteered to keep diaries of their learning experiences. The data were collected through the diary-study technique. This technique was chosen because it was believed that it could provide learners' point of view which is normally hidden.

The qualitative data collected for this study were analyzed on an ongoing basis through the technique of coding in two major phases. During the preliminary phase of the analysis, the diary entries were read in order to identify the emerging themes. An organizing scheme composed of these themes and predetermined categories was created in order to classify the data. During the final phase of the analysis, this scheme was applied to the data and the themes emerged were classified according to the categories which were constantly modified as the data collection proceeded.

The analysis of the data revealed a number of affective variables which were specific to BUSEL context. What follows is a discussion of the research results, the institutional implications, the limitations of the study,

and the suggestions for those who have an interest in this research genre.

Summary of the Study

The research findings suggest that it is possible to gain valuable insights into a variety of affective variables in language learning through learner diaries.

However, the research findings also reinforce the idea that it may be difficult to crystalize how these variables affect learning a new language because they are enormously complex, and they may not lend themselves to clear separation as they are intertwined. Motivation; for example, can be negatively influenced by anxiety in a language classroom. In a similar vein, anxiety can be related to attitudes, and self-esteem. Research findings, therefore, will be discussed in a broader perspective beyond the categories emerged in order to minimize misinterpretation.

One message which emerges strongly from the analysis of the learner diaries is that a variety of motivational components in the BUSEL context seems to have a positive or negative influence on the learners' desire for learning a foreign language. The level of motivation is affected by the learners' future goals, needs in the target language, perceptions of teachers, values of the language learning environment, feelings caused by the

change of classes, feelings of anxiety generated from the fear of failure, and finally the learners' personal relationships.

It appears from the diary entries which consistently reflected on the areas listed above that both internal and external influences arouse the learners' feelings and thoughts toward language learning motivation, however, any given factor does not affect all learners in the same way.

This interpretation echoes the comments on Dörnyei's well-known formulation on motivation in foreign and second language learning reported by Williams and Burden (1997). His model reinforces the idea that motivation is a multifaceted phenomenon, and suggests a three level categorisation including "course-specific" , "teacher-specific" , and "group-specific" motivational components (p. 118).

The findings of this study revealed that the 'effectivity of lessons' and the 'participation level of class' dominated over the other motivational factors in the category (MOT). On the basis of this result, it can be argued that teacher-specific and course-specific motivational components are more influential.

The second message concerns the insight into how learners' interpretations of their teachers can influence the learning of a language. It is clear from the diary

comments that the internal affective factors, such as natural interest in learning a language and attitude toward learning environment that make the learners want to learn, interact with the positive or negative motivation the learners derive from their perceptions of teachers in a dynamic way. The teachers' personality and behavior have a critical importance on the way the learners judge their professional quality and value as teachers. Furthermore, the need for teachers' support, guidance and empathy varies according to the learners' level of proficiency in the target language. That is, each individual is not affected by this variable in the same manner. Some needs more encouragement, even the insistence of the teachers to develop their full potential.

It can be a sensible approach to judge the neutrality of these interpretations in the educational context in which they occur. That is to say, BUSEL is an institution which intends to provide a transition for the students in order to bridge the gap between high school experience and real university education. BUSEL classes which are taught by the same team of teachers ranging from 2 to 4 throughout each course, are conducive to a dense network of teacher-learner relationship due to the magnitude of teaching hours per week. The learners, however, may not be fully aware of what being a student

at BUSEL means as they do not have an initial idea of the requirements of the educational system applied in that institution.

As a result, the interaction between the teachers, and learners may involve so many interrelated emotional, psychological and sociological factors, and there might be a mismatch between the learners' preferences, values and teachers' actual behavior regarding teachers' teaching style and their attitude toward learners. This mismatch may lead to subjectivity in the learners' perceptions of their teachers.

A third message is that the language learning is affected by the totality of the learners' surroundings including both the learning environment and the physical and social environment of them. From this perspective, it may be of limited value to merely emphasize the affective variables involved in the language learning process without considering the implications of the external affective variables that the learners bring with them into the classroom such as accommodation problems or love affairs. Given the justification for the possible effects of these two variables, teachers should be expected to act upon the knowledge that learners' emotional and physical needs might sometimes prevent them from the active involvement.

Both positive and negative attitude toward teachers and target language emerged. It seems clear that the learners' attitude toward the teachers is either formed by a stereotyped view of teachers or the biased views stimulated by the individual rapport that the learners had with particular teachers throughout their learning experience. The learners' attitude toward English, however, is primarily formed by their short-term educational goals and long-term professional goals. In other words, the attitude of those who have an intention to work in an area where English is more likely to be needed is usually positive. This suggests that these learners are instrumentally motivated to succeed as cited in Gardner and Lambert (1972).

A related message is the issue of language needs. The learners perceive the productive skills speaking and listening as the areas where they are relatively less competent. What they need, they say, is more words that they can easily employ when they attempt to convey their messages in English and to cope with the tasks in a listening exam. This might suggest that the two categories, namely, 'vocabulary development' which seems to accelerate positive motivation and 'larger repertoire of vocabulary' which seems to generate some degree of anxiety need to be viewed in coexistence with the above mentioned needs in the productive language skills.

In view of the notion of language learning activities, the affective dimension of the classroom activities was emphasized more strongly by the learners than the linguistic dimension. This preference can be explained by their need for the use of "humanistic techniques" which intend to develop a sense of personal worth in the learners (Moskowitz, 1978, p. 19). That is, they feel they learn best when they are engaged in the activities which encourage free production of the language, and when the teachers provide creative alternatives as soon as the learners get bored. On evaluating the overall qualities of teachers, the learners' references to teachers' flexibility are often related to the above mentioned preference.

A final message is that the cumulative effect of failure is particularly felt on the learners' attitude toward their teachers and toward the institution as a learning environment. To the extent that failure is a threat for them, the learners tend to become more judgemental and even aggressive in their feelings toward both as these are the subjects of the prejudice developed.

Institutional Implications

The first implication that can be drawn from the findings of this study is related to the insights with

reference to affective variables. It would be useful for teachers to be aware of their students' positive and negative emotions, their perceived linguistic needs and priorities as well as the personal clashes among the class participants in order to give them more effective guidance and enhance their motivation.

The insights gained enable teachers and teacher trainers to have a better understanding of the diversity and complexity of the variables affecting the learners' attitudes to learning. It can also sensitize the teachers to the individual differences among their students in perceiving for example, teacher's role and classroom behavior.

Open discussion of the specific affective variables which have a negative influence on learners in seminars could enlighten the learners and inform the teachers about the nature of the pressure felt by their students. This could in turn, help teachers discover the roots of these variables from the learners' perspective.

An additional implication concerns the diary-study technique as a research tool. The learner diaries prove to be effective in indicating the areas where the learners affective needs lie.

Limitations

A major limitation of this diary study originated from the difficulty to keep apart the relevant and irrelevant themes in the entries during the data reduction because most of the diary-keepers wrote quite long entries that included a wide variety of topics.

The reason for this was that the diary-keepers were instructed to explore areas that are of interest to them rather than writing within the parameters determined by the researcher. In addition, they were allowed to write in English or Turkish. Thus, the idea of sharing feelings and thoughts with an outsider who is interested in their language learning experiences, and writing in a diary without paying attention to language errors served an incentive to write longer than required. This aspect of the study made it difficult for the researcher to provide a crystal-clear division between the relevant and irrelevant segments of data.

Another limitation is related to the issue of internal validity of qualitative research. That is, there is no single true interpretation of a phenomenon. Therefore, it is necessary to obtain different perspectives on the issue under discussion and enhance the internal validity of diary data through triangulation.

Further Research

Those interested in further research might investigate to what extent positive affective support is effective in minimizing learners' problems and learning outcomes in language learning. An experimental research study can be designed in order to address this question and generalize the results of this study to a wider population.

Integrating teachers' perspective can contribute to both the learning and teaching process. A group of teacher-researchers might expand this study by exploring teachers' feelings and thoughts about their language teaching experiences through the diary-study technique on a larger scale research.

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Appendix A

A Sample Coded Entry from (D)'s Diary

February 23, 1998

Yeniden merhaba,

Bugün öncelikle sizden aldığım mesaja yanıt vermek istiyorum. Bizlerden günlük tutmamızı isterken, bize de yardımcı olabilmek için İngilizce yazabileceğimizi tekrar belirtmiş olmanız çok güzel, teşekkür ederim. Türkçe'yi, düşüncelerimi daha kolay ifade edebileceğim için tercih ediyorum. Açıkçası, biraz da tembellik sayılır. Aslında elbette İngilizce yazmak benim için faydalı olacak ama ara sıra İngilizce, ara sıra Türkçe yazsam çok mu saçma olur bilemiyorum.

Geçen mesajınızdaki 'yazmak' hakkındaki düşüncelerinize ben de katılıyorum. Bu proje bana 'Sofi'nin Dünyası' nı hatırlatıyor. Orada Sofi'ye gelen esrarengiz mektuplar ve o tarz, gizemli mektuplaşma benim çok hoşuma gitmişti. Şu anda biz de onun bir benzerini yapıyoruz ve bu da bana keyif veriyor. Onun için siz mesajlarınızı Türkçe gönderin.

REL-CM Şimdi biraz sınıftan ve hocalardan bahsedeyim.

Yeni sınıfımı eskisinden daha çok seviyorum.

Kişilerin birbirlerine olan davranışları daha olumlu.

ANX-PP Eski sınıfımda herkes sürekli birbirinin açığını

yakalamaya çalışıyor gibiydi. Örneğin, İngilizce konuşmaya çalışırken bir kelimenin yanlış telaffuz edilmesi ya da yanlış bir sözcük seçilmesi halinde, neredeyse bütün sınıf alaycı bir tavırla, konuşan kişiyi zor durumda bırakıyordu. Bu durum, benim konuşmaktan çok susmama ve yalnızca soru sorulduğu zaman konuşmama neden oluyordu. Herkes sürekli "biri hata yapsa da gülsek!" düşüncesiyle bekliyordu sanki.

MOT-DYN Ama bu sınıfta, doğru ya da yanlış, istediğim gibi İngilizce konuşabiliyorum çünkü sınıf arkadaşlarımdan tümü, henüz hazırlık sınıfında olduğumuzun ve hepimizin hata yapabileceğinin bilincinde.

AFL-TRS Yeni hocalarım da öncekiler gibi dünya tatlısı insanlar.

MOT-VOC Bu hafta pek çok yeni kelime öğrendik. Bu benim için önemli...

PLN-VOC ...çünkü kelime yetersizliği İngilizce' de en büyük sorunum.

PLN-FLU Pratik yetersiz olduğu için ve yeterince kelime bilmediğim için, İngilizce konuşmakta

zorlanıyorum. Yakın vadeli hedeflerimden bir tanesi, İngilizce' min bir an önce yeterli düzeye ulaşması. Eğer koşullar uygun olursa, pratik yapmak amacıyla bu yaz, birkaç hafta için yurtdışına gitmeyi düşünüyorum.

Uzun vadeli hedeflerimden en önemlisi ise, yokluğumla varlığım arasında bir fark olması. Bunu biraz açacak olursam, bence herkesin yaşamak için bir nedeni olmalı. Eğer yaşıyorsam, yaşadığım zaman dilimi içerisinde öyle birşey yapmalıyım ki, yüzlerce yıl sonra bile saygı ile anılsın. Bu benim yaşamımın anlamı. Görüşmek üzere, iyi geceler...

Appendix B

Message 1: Brief Information about the Study

Dear ,

Thank you for volunteering to participate in a diary study. The purpose of the study is to view the language learning process through your eyes and to capture your perspective of what is going on in a language classroom. I am interested in your feelings and thoughts related to your own language learning experience.

This project will benefit you by giving you an opportunity to express yourself in the target language, thus improving your writing skills. If you choose to write your diary in Turkish, you will be able to channel your feelings, ideas, concerns about your study to someone who is looking forward to sharing them. Whatever language you choose, keeping a diary of your own language learning experience will help you increase awareness and understand this experience better.

I would like to arrange a meeting and negotiate all details with you including the length of the study, length of the diary entries per week, language choice, type of feedback, collection of diaries, and confidentiality of diary entries. It is important that we should agree upon these issues through discussion. This study requires a high degree of cooperation and commitment on the part of the diary-keepers as it merely

relies on the diaries as a data collection instrument. I would also like to remind you that you will be keeping your diaries over a period of seven weeks.

I expect that you will take full responsibility for meeting the requirements of the study once you start. If you are still determined to participate in the diary study, please fill in the following form and give it to your class teachers.

Thank you for your cooperation.

I volunteer to participate in the diary study.

Please contact me in my new section after the semester break.

Surname / Name:

Signature :

Appendix C

Message 2: Guidelines for Writing a Diary

Please follow these guidelines when you write your diaries:

1. Please use white paper and black ink so that your diary entries can be photocopied.
2. Please fill in one A4 sheet every day including weekends.
3. Please use the language in which you feel you can express yourself better.
4. Please remember to include the date and your name on your diary entries.
5. Please express your thoughts and feelings as openly and truthfully as possible. This information will be available to me only, and I will not quote from your diaries without your permission. It is within your own discretion to use a pseudonym to assure full confidentiality.
6. In particular, I am interested in how you perceive your own language learning experience. Please feel free to write about anything relating to your individual experience, and remember to include the following:
 - Your thoughts and feelings about what is going on in your class.

- Your positive and negative reactions towards the classroom activities.
 - Your opinions about your teacher's style.
 - Your thoughts and feelings about your relationship with your teachers and classmates.
 - Your ideas, expectations and frustrations as an EFL learner.
 - Anything that affect your psychological mood in class or outside class.
 - Anything that encourage you to study or discourage you from studying in class or outside class.
7. I will collect your diaries and hand in entry-specific responses every Monday.

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix D

A Sample Feedback Letter to (D)

February 20, 1988

Sevgili (D) ,

Öncelikle dil seçiminden söz edelim istersen. Bu tür çalışmalarda doğal olan, günlük tutan kişinin kendisini en rahat ifade edebileceği dilde, anadilinde yazmasıdır. Çünkü anadil, bir halka özgü sözcüklerin, seslerin, gramerin toplamından daha fazla, daha derin birşeydir. Ancak, bir yığın kaygıları olan bir öğrenciden, bir projeye zaman ayırmasını isterken, ben de onun için yararlı birşeyler yapabilmek isterim. Öğrenci perspektifinden bakıldığında, en yararlı desteğin İngilizce yazılı iletişim kurmak olacağı açık. Dolayısıyla, İngilizce seçeneği bir tür motivasyon olarak açıklanabilir.

Hayatı yorumlayışın genelde pozitif olduğu halde "sevginin, inancın bittiğini" düşünüyorsun. Genç bir insanın böyle hissetmesi hüznün verici. Günümüzde bu tür kavramlara baktığımızda bir değerler kaybının yaşandığını söyleyebiliriz. Ancak, güven, sevgi, dayanışma gibi pozitif değerlere yeniden hayat verebilme şansımızın da olduğunu düşünüyorum.

Yazdıklarını ilgiyle okuyorum. Tarz ve içerik olarak, duygu ve düşüncelerini yansıtmaya biçimin bu

projeye olumlu katkıların olacağını düşündürüyor. Sınırlar koymaksızın, özgürce, hayatında bu proje yokken günlüğüne ne yazıyorsan aynı rahatlıkla yazman çok güzel. Düşüncelerini tam da o 'doğallık' içinde anlamak istiyorum. Günlük tutmak, tanımadığın bir insanla günlük aracılığıyla iletişim kurmak, günlüğünün bir araştırmada kullanılmasına izin vermek başlıbaşına anlamlı, güzel ve heyecan verici. Yazmayı ben de seviyorum. Bence yazmak, insan yaratıcılığının ve yalnızlığının doruk noktası. Senin bu deneyime dair düşüncelerini bilmek istiyorum.

Yine birtakım önerilerim ve sorularım olacak. Bu hafta yazdıklarından örnek vermek gerekirse;

1. "...yeni sınıfım şimdilik çok iyi" diyorsun.

Gelişmeleri günlüğünde izlemeyi umuyorum. Süreç içinde ilk izlenimin güçlenebilir ya da tümüyle değişebilir. Her ne olursa, lütfen yaz.

2. İngilizce' yi rahat konuşamadığından sözediyorsun.

Sence bu sorunun temelinde neler olabilir?

3. İngilizce kelime öğrenmek için daha etkili yöntemlere ihtiyacın olduğunu anlıyorum. Bu konuda kendini yetersiz hissetmen, sınıftaki performansını ne şekilde etkiliyor?

Bir sonraki günlüğünde bu konulara tekrar değinirsen sevinirim. Yeniden yazıncaya dek sevgiyle, dostlukla.