The Teaching Dimension of Digital Education due to COVID-19 in the Light of a Survey in Hungary

*Erika Homoki - Laura Tímea Nyitrai**

Abstract:

Introduction: In the information society, the stimulus threshold for learners has changed, which requires a novel education strategy. Today, it is no longer what attracts students' attention that it was 20 years ago. In addition to the rapid development of ICT, public education cannot go either. We believe that advanced teacher digital competence can be one of the keys of finding common ground with students and doing effective teaching work.

Methods: In our research we examine the level of digital competence of public education teachers before the pandemic and during the 2nd wave in Hungary (2020 autumn). We examine the development of digital competence, student performance, and the effectiveness of education outside the classroom in the spring period based on teacher experience. Data from the completed forms were evaluated by using basic statistical indicators.

Results: According to the data received, the pandemic revealed serious shortcomings in the level of development of the digital competence of both teachers and students. However, it also opened the way for catching up on both sides. Teachers were already better prepared during the second wave, so they were able to solve education more efficiently. Regional development differences and a lack of digital tools have widened the gap between students.

Discussion: The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed these shortcomings in education. For here the process of teaching had to be placed in digital space from one moment to the next.

Limitations: The research shows data valid only for Hungary.

Conclusions: Expected result is the demonstrable development of competences.

Key words: Hungary, digital competence, digital education, COVID-19, extracurricular learning.

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EFL Instructors' Perceptions of Utilizing Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in Higher Education

Kübra Okumuş Dağdeler - Hakan Demiröz[*]

Abstract:

Introduction: One of the prominent approaches in language education is Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) due to recent advances in technology. To benefit from MALL effectively and develop it when it is required, it is important to know the perceptions of the ones who use it. Although much research related to students' and teachers' perceptions of MALL in primary and secondary education is present in the literature, research related to perceptions of instructors in higher education is limited. Thus, this study aimed at identifying the instructors' perceptions of utilizing MALL in higher education.

Methods: As the perceptions of the participants were aimed to be explored in detail, the qualitative research design was adopted. An open-ended questionnaire was developed by the researchers and administered to 24 instructors working at the English Language Teaching (ELT) departments of different universities in Turkey. The data were analyzed through content analysis.

Results: It was found that the instructors defined MALL as using mobile technologies for language learning. Moreover, the participants had positive perceptions about MALL as it had some benefits, such as anytime, anywhere learning, stronger students' interest, higher motivation and autonomy, individualized and collaborative learning. However, MALL users faced some challenges, such as weak internet connection and battery, time consumption in terms of preparing content for the class, classroom management problems and low digital literacy of both students and instructors.

Discussion: The results of the study were parallel to the findings of the previous studies in the literature. This study found that MALL contributed to learning independent of time and place, high motivation and interest, saving time and energy, individualized learning, collaborative learning, autonomous learning, and learning with fun.

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Limitations: This study is not without limitations. Triangulation of data with in-depth interviews could be implemented to increase detailed information and reliability.

Conclusions: The results of the study showed that instructors who had benefitted from technology in their teaching process had positive perceptions despite some challenges. To this end, it is suggested that MALL be utilized in language teaching by minimizing its challenges.

Key words: mobile-assisted language learning, EFL instructors, higher education, perception

English as a Foreign Language Teachers' Techno-Cultural Awareness Levels and Self-Reported Competencies

*İsmail Çakır - Yıldıray Kurnaz**

Abstract:

Introduction: In line with technological developments, many educational institutions offer students and teachers technical opportunities to benefit both inside and outside the schools. From the perspective of utilizing technology for a more effective language learning and teaching process, the present study aims to reveal techno-cultural awareness levels and self-reported competencies of secondary school English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers working in Turkey.

Methods: A total of 36 secondary school teachers participated in the study, and data were collected through a questionnaire and focus group interview. The focus group interview was conducted after the quantitative data analysis so that the quantitative data results guided the focus group interviews.

Results: The study's findings show that participants have positive attitudes towards using technology in EFL classes However, most participants still feel they are not competent enough to utilize it for instructional purposes. In this context, all participants agree that the education they received during pre-service and in-service training offered by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) is insufficient.

Discussion: The results obtained from data analysis are in parallel with some other studies. According to the findings, pre-service teacher training programmes need to be developed in line with the needs and expectations of teachers and learners regarding the use of technology in language teaching. Furthermore, it is suggested that teachers should be supported with much more comprehensive in-service training programmes to keep them up-to-date. In this regard, professional development programmes based explicitly on improving teachers' technological awareness would motivate them to teach and significantly impact their self-reported capabilities.

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Limitations: This study was limited to 36 participants working in secondary schools in the same province. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to all language teachers. Furthermore, the data collection process was carried out using questionnaires and focus group interviews.

Conclusions: What makes this study significant is that teachers are central to the research. From this point forth, the current study results reveal the analysis of the data obtained from a small province of Turkey. However, the study shows significant and representative results because the teachers included in the study are individuals with the same educational levels. They have graduated from different universities in Turkey, and their working environments somewhat reflect Turkey's working environments. Considering the differences between teachers' positive attitudes towards technology utilization in EFL classes and their capabilities, it is argued that in-service and pre-service training programmes should be reviewed to overcome these deficiencies and keep up with the new developments.

Key words: EFL teaching, technology, techno-cultural awareness, teacher training.

Adjustment to School as the Predictor of School Burnout in University Students

Mehmet Buğra Özhan - Mehmet Boyaci [*]

Abstract:

Introduction: Burnout emerges as a common problem during the university period when social competition and expectations from the individual increase, and daily life becomes increasingly complicated due to augmenting stress factors. The aim of this study was to examine whether the school burnout of university students can be predicted significantly by adjustment to school.

Methods: This study used a correlational survey model to investigate the burnout levels of university students in terms of their adjustment to university life. The sample of the study comprised a total of 334 students, enrolled in four different faculties of a university in Turkey. The data of this research were collected by using the "Adjustment to University Life Scale (AULS)", "The Maslach Burnout Inventory-Student Form (MBI-SF)" and personal information form.

Results: The findings obtained in this study showed that academic, social, and personal adjustment to university life among university students negatively and significantly correlated with school burnout that students experienced. In addition, personal, social and academic adjustment variables together significantly predict each of the exhaustion, cynicism and efficacy variables.

Discussion: According to these results, academic, social, and personal adjustment to university life among university students negatively and significantly correlated with school burnout that students experienced. This situation indicates that as students' academic, social, and personal adaptation to university life increases, they will experience less emotional burnout, become less cynical of their environment, and feel less personal inefficacy. In this context, it is thought that interventions that support adaptation to university life are an important factor that will protect students from the negative effects of burnout.

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Limitations: The sample of this study is limited to 334 participants. In addition, the findings of the study are limited to the sincere response of the participants to the instruments of the study and the qualifications of the measurement tools. In other words, this research has no claim of generalizability.

Conclusions: According to the findings of the study, students with high adjustment to university life experience less academic burnout. In this context, both individual and group work to be conducted by the guidance and psychological counseling units of universities gain importance. It will be particularly beneficial to conduct studies for adjustment to university life, such as psycho-education, group psychological counseling, or peer guidance.

Key words: adjustment to university, school burnout, academic achievement, university students, school counseling.

Attitudes of University Professors towards Distance Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Souraya Hamida - Kamel Hazhazi - Abdelhafid Kadri[*]

Abstract:

Introduction: With the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, we wanted to study the attitudes of university professors towards distance education during the home-quarantine period.

Methods: The sample of the study included 426 professors from 37 universities across the country. The study used the questionnaire as a tool to collect information, based on electronic distribution. Besides, the descriptive method was used to analyse the results.

Results: Findings revealed positive trends among university professors towards distance learning during the home-quarantine period. In addition, the results indicated that distance learning can be adopted by both sexes without any additional special features. Moreover, the finding demonstrated positive attitudes towards distance learning with non-significant differences concerning their speciality. It means that professors' speciality was not a hindrance in the distance learning process. Furthermore, the results suggested that distance learning could be one of the promising pedagogical technologies for higher education in Algeria.

Discussion: We conclude that the distance learning is a good alternative to the classic traditional system. Also, it facilitates the training and qualification process for the student. Moreover, professors have a positive attitude towards the distance learning process. In addition, the gender and the academic speciality do not affect the attitude among professors towards the use of distance learning.

Limitations: The study results are only regionally generalisable because the study data were only collected in Algeria.

Conclusions: Distance learning is a good alternative in these current circumstances. In addition, professors have a positive attitude towards the distance learning process.

Key words: COVID-19 pandemic, distance learning, attitude, gender, speciality.

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Do Positivity and Sensitivity to Cyber-Bullying Decrease Cyber-Bullying?

*Adem Peker - Furkan Kasikci**

Abstract:
Introduction: The use of social media tools is increasing day by day. In addition to its positive use, social media tools are also used in the virtual environment to harm others. This harmful use is noted as cyber-bullying. Determining the factors affecting cyber-bullying is of great importance in terms of contributing to intervention studies. This study aims to examine the moderate role of positivity and sensitivity towards cyber-bullying between cyber-victimization and cyber-bullying.
Methods: The study was carried out with 342 university students, who approved voluntary participation in the process. The students who voluntarily participated in the research were 239 females (69.9%) and 103 males (30.1%), who were between 18 and 28 years old. In the data collection process, the revised cyber-bullying inventory, positivity scale, and personal information forms were used. In this research process, the moderating role of positivity and sensitivity (M) in the relationship between cyber-victimization (X) and cyber-bullying (Y) was investigated.
Results: As a result of the research, it was found that 35% of the participants were exposed to cyber-bullying and 1.4% were engaging in cyber-bullying. It was also found that there was a moderate positive relationship between cyber-victimization and cyber-bullying. In addition, the results showed that there is a negative relationship between positivity and sensitivity to cyber-bullying and cyber-victimization, and cyber-bullying. As a result of the analysis, it was observed that positivity and sensitivity affected the relationship between cyber-victimization and cyber-bullying. The results indicate that a decrease in positivity and sensitivity results in cyber-bullying behaviour, whereas an increase in positivity and sensitivity decreases cyber-bullying behavior.

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Discussion: The concept of positivity can be said to enable individuals exposed to cyber-bullying to create alternative emotions and create alternative strategies for the problem they are experiencing. In addition, the high level of positivity of the individual experiencing cyber-victimization can be thought to help develop and maintain friendship relations by improving their psychological resources. As a result, it can be stated that the probability of cyber-bullying decreases. In another result of the research, it has been revealed that the sensitivity between exposure to cyber-bullying and cyber-bullying has a moderating effect on cyber-bullying. When the sensitivity to cyber-bullying is low, it is observed that the effect of cyber-victimization on cyber-bullying is further increased. When there is a high sensitivity to cyberbullying, the impact of cyber-victimization on cyber-bullying is increasing very little and this effect is observed to be less powerful.

Limitations: The current study has also some limitations. First, the study was carried out as a cross-sectional study. A longitudinal study can be conducted to obtain more detailed results about the moderating effect. Second, positivity was used as an indicator of well-being. Therefore, it is essential to be careful while generalizing the results; different scales related to psychological well-being can be used. Third, the current study just used scales to evaluate the students' self-report; for this reason, the choice of mixed research approaches can offer a wide perspective by taking the opinions of different individuals such as friends and parents of individuals.

Conclusions: The findings provide evidence for reducing cyberbullying. In addition, the results provide useful information in the preparation of cyberbullying intervention programs.

Key words: cyber-victimization, cyber-bullying, positivity, sensitivity, moderating.

Same Mathematical Structure, Different Design: How Does Task Format Affect Creative Problem-Posing Performance?

Ercan Özdemir - Tuğrul Kar - Tuğba Öçal[*]

Abstract:

Introduction: The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of task format on pre-service mathematics teachers' creative problem-posing performance.

Methods: In this quantitative study, a figural and a written pattern related to daily life with the same mathematical structure were presented to participants and they were asked to write as many problems as they could. The problems were analyzed based on whether they were viable and then on the components of fluency, flexibility, and originality of creativity.

Results: The results of the study indicated that, although the flexibility and originality scores in the figural pattern were higher, the only statistical difference was observed in the originality component. Moreover, it has been found that some of the participants wrote similar problems in both tasks; however, the problems in the figural pattern were inclined to be more difficult.

Discussion: Developing students' creative-thinking skills is a main purpose of mathematics education research (Mann, 2006). However, the results of the research have indicated that the teachers' knowledge of how to develop students' creative-thinking skills is still lacking (Shriki & Lavy, 2012) and, consequently, students are provided with few opportunities to experience creative thinking and learning in class (Silver, 1997; Sriraman, 2005). Problem posing has a close association with creativity as well as with problem solving (Haylock, 1997; Silver, 1997). Therefore, to develop creative-thinking skills, learning environments should be enriched with problem-posing tasks. The results of this research do not assert that only one of the figural or written pattern types must be preferred to stimulate creative-thinking skills in the context of problem posing.

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Instead, the results emphasize that each of the written and figural patterns has its own strengths.

Limitations: The fluency, flexibility, and originality scores are affected by the sample size. Conducting similar studies on larger samples may provide more valid conclusions about possible differences. This study has taken two different task formats into account as follow; being in written form related to daily life or including figural patterns. Figural patterns can also be structured based on whether they explicitly provide the pattern rule (Barbosa & Vale, 2016). The effect of these types of problem-posing tasks on creativity components is another case that can be investigated.

Conclusions: Considering these results together, while including problem-posing tasks for both written and figural patterns to improve the flexibility and originality components of creativity is supported, the use of problem-posing tasks for figural patterns may be further recommended.

Key words: problem posing, creativity, task presentation, pattern, pre-service mathematics teachers.

Receiving Education in a Different Country: Challenges Encountered by Foreign Students and Proposed Solutions

Fevzi Dursun - Özge Maviş Sevim[*]

Abstract:

Introduction: The purpose of this study is to determine the problems of primary and secondary school teachers about foreign students and propose solutions to these problems.

Methods: In the research, qualitative research method was conducted. Primary and secondary school teachers who had at least one foreign student in their class and volunteered to participate in the study in one of the provinces of Middle Black Sea Region of Turkey were included in study group. They were 29 participants in total (15 female and 14 male). The classes of the teachers generally included 1-5 foreign students. As a data collection tool, a semi-structured open-ended questionnaire consisting of 7 questions was used. After data collection, analyses were performed with content analysis method.

Results: Findings of the study reveal that the most basic problem experienced by foreign students is the language problem. Students had difficulty in understanding their environment because of this problem and this situation brought problems of adaptation to school, the teacher and classmates. Especially the students whose parents did not know Turkish experience these problems more than others because of the lack of support from their parents. The majority of the teachers mentioned that they could not reach the achievements in the education programs with these students, and they stated that they included additional activities related to reading and writing. Conducting orientations programs, language and literacy courses, family education (especially language teaching to families), providing therapy for children who had a tendency to violence, providing a separate education program for foreign students and providing training by teachers who were their own citizens in separate classes were among the proposed solution obtained as a result of the research.

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Discussion: The opinions of the teachers were evaluated under the themes of positive opinions about foreign students, the level of achievement of outcomes, additional activities, experienced problems, the way teachers solve problems, and teachers' suggestions for solutions. The study shows that the first problems of foreign students that need to be solved are language and communication problems. Also, parents are as important as students in teaching foreign students and that parents' language skills are critical in terms of informing parents and conducting the process with school-family cooperation. Furthermore, it is of great importance that foreign students must not be alienated because of their culture, that they must not be excluded by other students, and that they must primarily be helped to ensure their adaptation and integration into culture and school through activities.

Limitations: The study group of the research includes 29 primary and secondary school teachers who had at least one foreign student in their class and volunteered to participate in the study in one of the provinces of Middle Black Sea Region of Turkey.

Conclusions: Based on the results obtained throughout the study, it is possible to say that taking into account the given recommendations can contribute to the solution of the problems of foreign students. Further research can be conducted in different context to shed light on different problems of foreign students experience and proposed solutions to these problems.

Key words: foreign students, problems, proposed solutions, teacher.

An Investigation of the Relationship between Prospective Teachers' Self-Management and Self-Control Skills, Metacognition and E-Mobile Learning Readiness Perceptions

Ali İbrahim Can Gözüm - Özden Demir[*]

Abstract:
Introduction: This study aims to investigate the relationship between prospective teachers' self-management and self-control skills, metacognition, and e-mobile learning readiness perceptions.
Methods: This study adopted a procedural model that was relational screening in nature. This study was conducted with 303 prospective teachers who attended Primary School Classroom Teaching, Primary School Science Teaching, Pre-school Teaching, and Psychological Counseling and Guidance departments in a State University Education Faculty in Turkey. In this study the "Self-control and self-management scale", the "Metacognition scale" and the "E-Mobile learning readiness scale" were used as data collection tools. It was determined that the data collection tools used in the study were valid and reliable.
Results: According to the results of the study, mobile learning readiness perception is positively affected by metacognition. Metacognition is positively affected by Self-management and Self-control Skills. In the study, the effects of e-mobile learning readiness perceptions on both metacognition and self-management and self-control skills were discussed in accordance with the proposed model.
Discussion: The aim of this study is to determine the relationships between the variables of prospective teachers' self-management and self-control skills, metacognition and e-mobile learning readiness perceptions. Four hypotheses in the proposed model were discussed according to the literature.

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Limitations: This study was conducted only with the participants consisting of teacher candidates at a state university in Turkey. However, the participants of the research can be expanded with different teaching areas of higher education.

Conclusions: Prospective teachers' self-regulation, self-assessment and control skills positively affect their metacognition skills. The metacognition skill of prospective teachers has a positive effect on mobile learning readiness perception.

Key words: mobile learning, metacognition, self-management, self-control.