

STANDARDIZED TESTING FOR TRANSITION TO HIGH SCHOOLS:
TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF HOW NATIONAL TESTS INFLUENCE
TEACHING AND LEARNING IN MIDDLE SCHOOLS ENGLISH CLASSES

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HATİCE EKİZ

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Prof. Dr. Yaşar Kondakçı
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Prof. Dr. Cennet Engin Demir
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Prof. Dr. Ali Yıldırım
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hanife Akar (METU, EDS) _____
Prof. Dr. Ali Yıldırım (Uni. of Gothenburg, IDPP) _____
Assist. Prof. Dr. Gülçin Tan Şişman (Hacettepe Uni., EDS) _____

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Name, Last name: Hatice Ekiz

Signature :

ABSTRACT

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Ekiz, Hatice

M.S., Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Ali Yıldırım

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The purpose of this research study is to identify the impact of national tests on teaching and learning in middle school English classes through teachers' perceptions. Through a phenomenological design, semi-structured interviews were used to gather data with 24 in-service teachers working in public and private middle schools in Denizli. The data were analysed through the emerging themes and codes within the scope of research questions. Similarities and differences between public and private middle schools and English teachers have also been analysed. The results showed that Transition to High School Exam (THSE) had an impact on both public and private school teachers' curricular and instructional decisions as well as their evaluation of student performance. The topics, question form, target words and competencies in THSE are extensively studied and integrated into English lessons while non-tested topics and competencies are ignored in the public middle schools. On the other hand, some private schools participating in the study followed two different curricula for THSE and English for general purposes to meet the demands of the curriculum and the THSE. Teachers reported that THSE affected students' emotions and attitudes,

studying, and learning habits. Moreover, parents' expectations in line with the THSE were found to create stress and anxiety for both students and teachers. The findings were further discussed and interpreted in relation to implications for practice and further research.

Keywords: Transition to high school, standardized testing, English Language Teaching (ELT), teacher perceptions, middle school

ÖZ

LİSELERE GEÇİŞ SINAVI: ORTAOKUL İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETİM SÜRECİNDEKİ ETKİSİNE İLİŞKİN ÖĞRETMEN ALGILARI

Ekiz, Hatice

Yüksek Lisans, Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim Anabilim Dalı

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Bu araştırmanın amacı, Liselere Geçiş Sınavı (LGS)'nin ortaokul İngilizce öğretim sürecine olan etkisini, öğretmen algıları çerçevesinde incelemektir. Nitel olgubilim deseni kullanılan bu çalışmada veriler, Denizli'de devlet ve özel ortaokullarda görev yapan 24 öğretmen ile yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla toplanmıştır. Veriler araştırma soruları kapsamında ortaya çıkan temalar ve kodlara dayanarak analiz edilmiştir. Sonuçlar LGS'nin devlet ve özel ortaokul eğitim ve öğretim sürecine olan etkilerini, benzerlikler ve farklılıklarıyla ortaya koymuştur. Devlet ortaokullarında LGS'deki konular, soru formatı, hedef sözcükler ve yetkinlikler öğretim sürecinde ağırlıklı olarak yer alırken, LGS'de ölçülmeyen konular ihmal edilmektedir. Öte yandan, çalışmaya katılan bazı özel okullar, öğrencileri sınava hazırlamak için genel İngilizce'ye ek olarak LGS için ikinci bir program takip etmektedir. Çalışmaya katılan öğretmenler, LGS'nin öğrencilerin tutumlarını, ders çalışma ve öğrenme alışkanlıklarını etkilediğini belirtmiştir. Ek olarak, öğretmenler velilerin sınavla ilgili kaygılarının hem öğrenciler hem de kendileri üzerinde stres ve endişeye neden olduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Bulgular son bölümde ayrıntılı olarak tartışılmış, bu çerçevede uygulama ve gelecekteki araştırmalar için çıkarımlar ortaya konmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Liselere Geiř Sınavı (LGS), standart testler, İngiliz Dili Eđitimi (ELT), đretmen algıları, ortaokul

to my mother

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

THSE	Transition to High School Exam
TEOG	Transition from Primary to Secondary Education (Temel Eğitimden Ortaöğretime Geçiş Sistemi)
SBS	Level Determination Examination (Seviye Belirleme Sınavı)
OKS	Secondary Education Institutions' Student Selection and Placement Examination (Ortaöğretim Kurumları Sınavı)
LGS	High School Admission Examination (Liselere Geçiş Sınavı)
MONE	Ministry of National Education
ELT	English Language Teaching

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the background to the study, research purpose, the significance of the study and definition of terms are described.

1.1. Background to the study

In the first decades of the Turkish Republic, education was regulated, controlled, and financed by the government, so the schools mostly were public institutions. To increase the number, Atatürk asked wealthy people to establish private educational institutions in his opening speech of the Grand National Assembly in 1925 (Gök, 2007). However, the purpose of these institutions cannot be to make a profit according to Article 2 of the Law enacted in 1965¹. Since then, the number of private schools has increased gradually. Based on the statistics published by the Ministry of Education (MONE), the number of private schools was recorded as 1367 in 1994 while this number increased to 11694 in 2017 (MONE, 2018).

While the number of private schools increased between the 1950s and 1990s, with the promise of a better life, migration from rural areas to urban areas started. Therefore, the schools could not meet the increasing number of students, so schools started to have a two-shift or even three-shift system (Şimşek & Yıldırım, 2004). In the 1990s, most of the high-secondary schools including Science, Anatolian, and Fine Arts high schools started to apply entrance exams because the demand for these high schools increased (Şad & Şahiner, 2016). Hence, with the competition among the students to

¹ “The purpose of making a profit can only be for the implementation of necessary investment and to provide services, based on the principles of enhancing the quality and further development of Turkish National Education” (Ministry of Education, 1965)

attend these high schools, a centralized high school entrance exam was put into the agenda of the government (Şad & Şahiner, 2016).

Five different high school entrance exam systems as LGS, OKS, SBS, TEOG and LGS (THSE) have been used since 2000 (Şad & Şahiner, 2016). Some changes such as the number of questions, courses involved, calculation of points, implementation of tests have been introduced to these exams almost every year. At the beginning of the 2000s, High School Admissions Exam (LGS) was used to select students especially for Science and Anatolian High Schools. The name was changed to the Secondary Schools Placement Exam (OKS) in 2006. With OKS, instead of doing different high school entrance exams for different high schools, one entrance exam was done for all high schools. Because of the criticisms that addressed the single opportunity of students and no make-up exams, the system was changed and a Level Determination Exam (SBS) was initiated in 2007. Instead of sitting the exam in one day at the stage of middle school graduation year, the students take the exam three times at the end of 6th, 7th and 8th grades. The cumulative point average of the students was also integrated into their exam results.

However, this new system also received criticisms due to multiple exams, and in 2013, Transition to Secondary Education Exam (TEOG) was initiated. Also, a new school structure called 4+4+4 education system was introduced. Students had to take an exam for each term in grade 8 and the cumulative point average was still taken into consideration in the calculation of the overall result (Şad & Şahiner, 2016). In 2017, TEOG exam was removed and Transition to High School Exam (THSE) was initiated, and it is still in use as of 2019.

THSE requires students to take one exam at the end of grade 8 and cumulative point average is not added to the exam results. THSE consists of two sections for scientific and verbal courses. The first part of the exam includes Turkish, Religious Science, the History of Turkish Revolution and Kemalism, and English Language and it is taken in the morning session lasting 75 minutes. In the second part of the exam, students are taking an exam including scientific courses which are Mathematics and Science within

80 minutes in the afternoon. Students who receive enough points from THSE make selections among qualified high schools. Before THSE, transition to high school exam was taken for all types of high schools, but with the new exam system, it is taken only for qualified high schools which are Science high schools, Social Sciences high schools, private institutions applying special programmes and projects as well as technical programs of Vocational and Technical Anatolian High Schools. The schools are listed by the MONE for consideration by the students in their applications to get acceptance. For the students who do not have enough points to select schools, the placement is done based on their addresses. Usually, it is the high school closest in location for these students.

English test in THSE has been designed to meet the objectives of the English national curriculum developed by the MONE and the objectives have included the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They have been published on the website of MONE and the materials including national coursebooks have been distributed to the schools at the beginning of the education year. Coursebooks have been designed to acquire the objectives stated by the MONE and they include the units of *Friendship*, *Teen life*, *In the Kitchen*, *On the Phone*, *The Internet*, *Adventures*, *Tourism*, *Chores*, *Science and Natural Forces*, respectively. According to the plan of the MONE, five of these units have been assigned to the first term and the other five have been planned for the second term. At the end of the school year, students are required to take THSE which has 10 multiple choice questions in English. Up to now, two THSE have been taken place and it has been seen that only reading skill with some vocabulary items has been tested although four main skills of the English language have been aimed to be taught.

The objectives of 2018 and 2019 THSE English tests have clearly matched with the objectives of MONE as can be seen in Table 1 and 2. As shown in Table 1, students were tested for six units including *The Internet*, *Tourism*, *Friendship*, *Teen Life*, *In the Kitchen* and *Chores* although they were responsible for all units. The weight of units was not equal which means three questions were asked from *Tourism* while *The Internet* was tested with only one question. Moreover, when the THSE 2018 English

test has been analysed, it has been seen that questions have been designed with different forms as dialogue, paragraph, simple instructions, and visuals.

Table 1

Curriculum Content and Objectives Covered in 2018 THSE English Test

Question number	Content	Objectives
1	The Internet	Students will be able to identify main ideas in short and simple texts about internet habits.
2	Tourism	Students will be able to find specific information from various texts about tourism.
3	Friendship	Students will be able to understand short and simple texts about friendship simple invitation
4	Friendship	Students will be able to understand short and simple texts about friendship simple invitation
5	Teen Life	Students will be able to understand short and simple texts about regular activities of teenagers.
6	In the Kitchen	Students will be able to understand the overall meaning of short texts about a process.
7	Teen Life	Students will be able to understand short and simple texts about regular activities of teenagers.
8	Chores	Students will be able to understand various short and simple texts about responsibilities.
9	Tourism	Students will be able to find specific information from various texts about tourism.
10	Tourism	Students will be able to find specific information from various texts about tourism.

The objectives of THSE 2019 English test questions have matched with the national curriculum and reading skill with some target vocabulary items has been tested in the exam as happened in 2018. Students were responsible for all the units in the THSE; however, questions appeared from nine units except *Science* as can be seen in Table 2. Only *Teen Life* has been tested with two questions and one question appeared from other units. Questions have been prepared with forms of dialogue, paragraphs, visuals, and graphs.

Table 2

Curriculum Content and Objectives Covered in 2019 THSE English Test

Question number	Content	Objectives
1	Friendship	Students will be able to understand short and simple texts about friendship simple invitation
2	Chores	Students will be able to understand various short and simple texts about responsibilities.
3	Teen Life	Students will be able to understand short and simple texts about regular activities of teenagers.
4	On the Phone	Students will be able to understand short and simple texts with related vocabulary.
5	Teen Life	Students will be able to understand short and simple texts about the preferences of teenagers.
6	Adventures	Students will be able to understand short and simple texts to find the main points about adventures.
7	Tourism	Students will be able to find specific information from various texts about tourism.
8	Science	Students will be able to understand short and simple texts about actions happening in the past.
9	The Internet	Students will be able to identify main ideas in short and simple texts about internet habits.
10	In the Kitchen	Students will be able to understand the overall meaning of short texts about a process.

Overall, it has been seen that THSE 2018 and 2019 have clearly matched with the objectives of the national curriculum. Even though four skills have been aimed to be taught, only reading skill has been tested in THSE. Moreover, it has been seen that the weight of the units has been distributed more equally in 2019 than in 2018.

Turkey is not the only country that uses standardized testing in schools. Many other countries have increasingly adopted the use of standardized testing. The USA has started to set higher standards in education, and this caused them to think about the measurement of the progress of students and whether they meet the standards or not (Barksdale-Ladd, & Thomas, 2000). Testing seemed appropriate to see the level of students who did not meet the standards and the performance of their teachers. Then the system has started to hold students, teachers, and schools accountable for those providing service and those consuming it (Barksdale-Ladd, & Thomas, 2000). The

results of those tests are used to make school comparisons, and this is named as high stakes testing (Lester, 2007). The results of the research conducted by Klein et al. (2006) indicate that standardized testing affects teaching and learning by demanding a need for accountability and an incremental record of success in all public schools. The legislation which provides high standards in schools is said to affect all educational settings in all public schools in the USA (Klein et al., 2006). The schools need to meet yearly progress standards or face closing. In the same way, the funds allocated to schools depending on the performance of schools. As a result, standardized testing may put significant pressure on teachers and administrators may create pressure on teachers to produce good test results. Thus, teachers simply do similar or parallel things in their classrooms to prepare students for the tests instead of providing variety (Klein et al., 2006).

The students' results of standardized tests are perceived as the outcomes of teachers' performance which increases teachers' workload, so this situation affects the parents' selection of schools (Buyruk, 2014; Ocak et al., 2010). It is also considered that the standardized tests make students gain more disciplined studying habits, have less absenteeism, and be motivated for the lessons (Şad & Şahiner, 2016). Although these tests provide advantages in relation to accountability and comparison of schools and students, they have raised issues in relation to the pressure on the teachers to increase students' achievement (Thibodeaux, Labat, & Labat, 2015). Ashadi and Rice (2016) say that standardized testing may affect the instructional planning and implementation of the teachers. Besides, the standardized tests make teachers follow the plans strictly and the teachers are panicked into catching up with the plan (Şad & Şahiner, 2016).

Furthermore, standardized testing is claimed to have more impact on what teachers teach rather than how they teach. It was also stated by the teachers that teachers feel frustration, confusion, isolation, and anger while preparing students for the test (Seagall, 2003). Teachers follow closely the curriculum by eliminating everything that is not in the textbook so that the curriculum can be covered by the time of the test. The frustration of teachers is related to the discrimination of subjects as the second rate which is not regarded as important enough as the other subjects (Seagall, 2003).

Demanding specific forms and norms of teaching and learning by restricting the others, teachers are asked to change their actions. The study conducted by Seagall (2003) shows that standardized testing affects teaching mostly in negative ways by drawing teaching to a low level of conceptual learning, asking teachers to carry out a designed curriculum and use materials designed to teach for the test (Seagall, 2003).

In relation to the impact of testing on students, there are negative results as well. For example, when the results of high stakes tests are explained, students experience shame, humiliation, or embarrassment. Besides, the students experience stress and question their skills. The impact of one test on their school choices creates anxiety and stress (Kearns, 2011). No matter how and when it is carried out, the existence of a standardized test worries the students (Öztürk & Aksoy, 2014). The most common disadvantage of the standardized exam is to create stress and anxiety on students (Dinç et al., 2014; Karadeniz et al., 2014; Ocak et al., 2010; Şahin et al., 2012).

The reliability and validity of standardized tests are low because of the chance factor which prevents reflecting the real learning (Şad & Şahiner, 2016). Testing high-level conceptual knowledge is not possible with multiple choices (Şad & Şahiner, 2016) and the multiple-choice format is claimed to fail in assessing communication skills but factual knowledge and formulaic applications (Lomax et al., 1995). Besides, since some of the subjects are not tested in the standardized tests, these non-evaluated subjects are disregarded by the students (Şad & Şahiner, 2016). As a result, the need for private teaching institutions arises because of standardized testing (Şad & Şahiner, 2016).

Turkey is one of the countries using standardized testing in education. Different forms of standardized testing have appeared in middle schools and high school. TEOG (High School Entrance Exam) was applied to the 8th-grade students between 2013 and 2017. After TEOG, THSE was introduced in 2017. Despite the broad research of related literature, it has been found that the existing literature mostly does not focus on English. The small number of studies that investigate English focus on TEOG test. Besides, perceptions of English teachers on THSE are not described thoroughly and

the literature lacks instructional planning and activities of English language teachers. Therefore, the study aims to provide some basis for this specific domain. The scarcity of recent research prevents the development and improvement of the current system by the policymakers or responsible authorities. That's why this study aims to fill the present gap and to contribute to that field in Turkey. Also, the results of the study may provide implications that help decision-makers improve or develop the current system.

1.2. Purpose of the study

This study aims to investigate the impact of the transition to the high school exam (THSE) on English language teaching and learning processes in middle schools through the perceptions of teachers. Teachers are the ones who experience the consequences of standardized exams through their observations of students in class as well as the instructional work they plan and carry out.

The following questions guided this study:

- a) What are teachers' perceptions of Transition to High School Exam (THSE) as an evaluation strategy?
- b) How do teachers perceive the impact of THSE on their curricular decisions?
- c) How do teachers perceive the impact of THSE on instructional processes in class?
- d) How do teachers interpret the impact of THSE on students' learning and motivation?
- e) How do teachers perceive the impact of THSE on their evaluations of student performance?

1.3. Significance of the study

In Turkey, as a densely populated country, standardized testing plays a significant role and draws the attention of scholars and policymakers. Because of this, the impact of standardized testing has become the focus of a great many studies that varied as high school entrance exams, university entrance exams, public personnel selection exams,

and others. Exclusively studies which focus on transition to high school exams have investigated the exam impacts on students, teachers, parents and school administrators (Akın, & Minaz, 2018; Atila, & Özekeken, 2005; Biber, Tuna, Polat, Altınok, & Küçüköğlü, 2017; Çelikel, & Karakuş, 2017; Gökcan, & Aktan, 2018; Kılıçkaya, 2016; Kondaş, & Özpolat, 2017; Kozikoğlü, 2018; Okutan, & Daşdemir, 2018; Özkan, Güvendir, & Satıcı, 2016; Şad, & Sahiner, 2016; Usta, 2017; Yuvacı & Demir, 2016; Zorluoğlü, Bağrıyanık, & Şahintürk, 2019).

The studies in this field are related to science course (Atila, & Özekeken, 2015; Okutan, & Daşdemir, 2018; Zorluoğlü et al., 2019), math course (Biber et al., 2017; Çelikel, & Karakuş, 2017), English course (Kılıçkaya, 2016; Kozikoğlü, 2018), the History of Revolution and Kemalism course (Yuvacı, & Demir, 2016) or general perceptions of students, teachers and parents on the exam (Akın, & Minaz, 2018; Gökcan, & Aktan, 2018; Kondaş, & Özpolat, 2017; Özkan et al., 2016; Usta, 2017). While some studies used quantitative method research design (Çelikel, & Karakuş, 2017; Gökcan, & Aktan, 2018; Kondaş, & Özpolat, 2017; Okutan, & Daşdemir, 2018; Özkan et al., 2016; Usta, 2017), some used qualitative method research design (Akın, & Minaz, 2018; Atila, & Özekeken, 2015; Biber et al., 2017; Kılıçkaya, 2016; Kozikoğlü, 2018; Zorluoğlü et al., 2019). There are also some studies which used mixed-method research design (Şad, & Sahiner, 2016; Yuvacı, & Demir, 2016). Most of the aforementioned studies focus on either another subject area rather than English or apply to the perceptions of students and/or parents rather than teachers. The study conducted by Kılıçkaya (2016) is the closest to the current study in terms of its purpose and research method design. However, the study investigates the effects of TEOG exam on language teaching practices in the classroom rather than studying THSE. Different from TEOG exam, the number of questions and the coefficient of English test have been decreased and the objectives have been narrowed while questions have been redesigned (MONE, 2017). Because of these differences between TEOG and THSE, the data possibly differ. Furthermore, different from the current study, public and private school teachers were not compared in the study of Kılıçkaya (2016).

Consequently, the previous research shows that there is still an urgent need to study the impact of THSE on English language teachers' implementation. This study has the potential to offer such an understanding of the impact of THSE on English teachers' instructional, curricular and evaluation processes through the perceptions of English teachers. This study may help decision-makers to consider the positive and negative impact of THSE on teachers, students, and parents for the improvement of THSE. Furthermore, the problems and suggestions for the discrepancy between English Language Teaching in private and public middle schools are supposed to help the specialists for their future curriculum improvements. Lastly, the findings of this study are expected to provide data for future English teachers about the implementation of the English program.

1.4. Definitions of terms

The definitions of the key terms used in the study are as follows:

Standardized testing is defined as measurement instruments that are administered and scored according to predetermined standards. The fundamental aim of this type of testing is to discriminate the students in the degree they have in terms of knowledge, skills, and abilities objectively and accurately (Howard et al., 2016). Standardized tests are developed based on accredited test development standards. The same set of questions is asked to everyone and the same conditions are assured for all test takers. The same instructions and duration are given for all participants. "The test scoring method is the same and those who are in charge of applying the standard test must follow the same directives, materials, and processes, and make assessment and evaluation according to the criteria specified in the test manual. The purpose of standard tests that differ in aim and design from other tests is to evaluate and compare the skills and competencies of individuals in a diverse community (e.g. having different educational backgrounds and learning in different institutions)" (Kınay & Ardiç, 2017).

High stakes exam is defined as a test of which results are used to make important decisions and it affects students, teachers, communities, schools, and districts (Au,

2007). It is considered as high-stake testing when the results are offered for the test-takers, teachers, administrators, parents, and the policymakers (Akpınar & Çakıldere, 2013). Moreover, high stakes exams may influence access for employment and the opportunities for further education opportunities (Putwain, 2008).

National exam refers to a standard evaluation system carried out by the Student Selection and Placement Center in Turkey. The equation of education quality has been aimed for all citizens by offering valid, reliable, and fair assessment by this institution.

Transition to high school is the placement of middle school graduates into higher secondary schools according to their high school entrance exam results.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of the literature within the scope of high stakes testing and its strengths and weaknesses in various countries including England, the USA, Australia, and Turkey. In addition, recent research on the impact of the transition to high school exams in Turkey is reviewed.

2.1. High stakes testing

The assessment has a crucial role in education in showing the effectiveness of the instruction and performance of students. It should be uncontroversial and if somebody like learners, teachers or parents wants to learn what the students have acquired, it can be easily done through straightforward instruments (William, 2010). Assessment is not a new term in education, and it has several forms like diagnostic, norm-referenced and criterion-referenced (William, 2010). For years, these types of assessments have been used. However, in order to enable accountability among the schools and see the achievement of each student, the standardized test has appeared (Ysseldyke et al., 2004).

Regarding positive aspects of high stakes tests, Ashadi and Rice (2016) state that first, they provide students, schools, and parents unbiased information about the progress of the child. Without this test, the results of the students may be influenced by the bias of the teacher about student efforts, attitudes, and other non-cognitive factors; however, this is not the case in standardized tests. In addition, the level of a student is compared with a much broader number of peers than the available number of local peers, so the achievement of the students can be judged in a broader sense.

Another point to put forward is the cooperation between the state and schools. To make it clear, the testing programmes send clear signals to schools about what is more

important to teach (Ashadi & Rice, 2016). Also, the transferability of the students is easier through these testing programmes because information about their achievement can travel with them. Besides, the results of these programmes allow the policymakers to make a judgment about the schools in determining how well they are teaching various skills as well as areas of the curriculum and policymakers can focus on the professional development programmes for the staff (Ashadi & Rice, 2016).

Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) found that countries, where the students are required to take exit exams, have shown a higher level of success than the others. Nevertheless, the success of them is connected to the teachers teaching for the test (Ashadi & Rice, 2016).

The drawbacks of high stakes testing have been observed in four different groups like students, teachers, administrators, and policymakers. In terms of the impact of high stakes testing on the students, the level of stress it causes is commonly mentioned. Ashadi and Rice (2016) state that high stakes testing increases the level of stress and anxiety in students and this can be observed with behaviours of exhaustion and crying as well as freezing in tests. Besides, it is proved that this type of test reduces the intrinsic motivation of the students rather than increase it. The opportunities of the students to become more self-directed learners are decreased because of this assessment program (Ashadi & Rice, 2016). Also, since students become more competitive for the exam, they do not give enough value for the school grades. Similarly, in terms of its impact on the students, Lomax et. al. (1995) have uttered that standardized tests reflect low-level conceptual knowledge and low-level thinking instead of recommended standards.

The impacts of the high stakes testing on the teachers are not less than on the students. This type of test interferes with the teaching and instruction used in the classroom. Mostly, teachers prefer traditional lecture-type methods to cooperative learning (Au, W., 2007; Minarechova, 2012; Ramezaney, 2014). Similarly, Wideen et. al. (1997) say that high stakes examinations discourage teachers to use strategies prompting enquiry and active learning. In other words, the teachers spend more time lecturing, testing,

and reviewing but they spare less time for field trips, library research and laboratory activities (Ramezaney, 2014; Wideen et. al., 1997). Moreover, for Ashadi and Rice (2016), the high stakes testing may lower the morale and satisfaction of the teachers due to the decrease of teacher professional autonomy, creativity, and decision-making capacity. These effects contribute to the attrition of the teachers (Ashadi & Rice, 2016). Another point is the emphasis on achieving maximum test score which causes teachers to teach for the test and to coach students on how to answer questions (Minarechova, 2012). In addition, the studies show that most of the teachers tend to show greater attention to the subjects that will appear in the tests rather than the non-tested ones (Ashadi & Rice, 2016; Au, 2007; Jacob, 2005; Minarechova, 2012; Wideen et al., 1997). As Berliner (2011) has mentioned, when the test becomes highly important for the teachers and the administrators, the pressure makes them cheat on the exam procedures. Naturally, this destroys the validity of the tests and the results do not show the intended aims. Also, the teachers and administrators may treat the poor students that will not do well in the tests badly and they may cause them to drop out of the school (Berliner, 2011). The students who have experienced a narrowed curriculum may suffer the effects of it in the long run. Berliner (2011) states that while at the lower level, simple decoding and algorithms are enough, in the upper levels, comprehension and reasoning are required, so those students perform poorly. Moreover, the methodology of teachers is affected in a great degree by the standardized tests and the interaction between teachers and students disappears (Ramezaney, 2014)

Concerning the impact of high stakes testing on the administrators, the need for the increase of test scores should be taken into consideration. To increase the test scores but not the learning, the administrator may start some policies (Minarechova, 2012). Also, they may use the money allocated for the other areas for the test preparation and test preparation may distract the administrators from the school's other needs and problems (Minarechova, 2012). Moreover, they may prepare some criteria to select students for the entry of the schools (Minarechova, 2012).

In terms of the impact on the policymakers, since the results of the exams may be misled, the information it provides may be misleading as well (Minarechova, 2012).

Also, it supports a simple view about education for the policymakers which can be a problem because it does not reflect the real conditions of education.

2.2. High stakes testing around the World

Despite the negative aspects, high stakes testing is commonly used around the world. According to Ashadi and Rice, when the performance of the students in the tests leads to a kind of reward for students, teachers or schools, then these tests are called high stakes (2016). However, in the case of no direct reward for the performance in national or state tests, if the results which lead parents to choose the schools showing high performances are in public, then it is still called high stakes because parental movement can be punishment or reward for the high or low-level schools (Ashadi & Rice, 2016). Moreover, this type of testing is associated with the concepts of school accountability, parental choice of the school and funding (Minarechova, 2012).

In addition to high stakes testing, standardized testing is a common term used in the literature. This type of testing is defined by Zucker (2003) as the one for which standards are set by the states and the development of the students and the necessities of schools are identified. In other words, standards-based testing aims to achieve both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced testing by combining them. Despite small differences, these terms, high stakes, and standardized testing are overlapping and used instead of each other.

Because commonly used, standardized testing is studied in many kinds of research most of which mention its impact. To start with, the significant impacts of the standardized testing on classroom teaching and instruction are mentioned by Lomax et al. (1995) while the strong washback effect on the curricular planning and instruction is shown by Ramezaney (2014). Moreover, teachers tend to use the standardized tests in their instructions as well as exams and the students tend to ask for previous samples of these standardized tests and explanations of them in the classroom. While the topics appearing in the exams take much attention, the other ones are considered as secondary. Furthermore, despite the teachers thinking on the significance of speaking in the English field, they tend to do the opposite in the classes,

so there is an obvious mismatch between the expectations and the fulfilment of the teachers (Ramezaney, 2014). In addition, regardless of their educational background, teaching experience, school type, gender, or school location, nearly all teachers experience the negative effects of standardized testing. This is inevitable since it has serious consequences for the future careers and lives of the students (Ramezaney, 2014).

Testing student achievement is not new in the literature and the policy structures in several countries focus on the systems of high stakes testing or standardized testing. The use of these tests is to report the achievement of the students and the schools (Polesel et. al., 2014). High stakes testing is common in many countries with similar or different purposes and implementations.

England is a country where standardized testing is used mostly. The history of standardised testing started with the introduction of the national curriculum in 1988 and England started to use the high stakes testing to assure assessment. The results of these tests have started to be shown in the school performance tables and league tables since 1992. To enable the diversity, technology colleges and language colleges have been built, and the parents have found themselves in the role of partners or customers rather than passive recipients (Minarechova, 2012). There are two public examinations in England which are *the General Certificate of Secondary Education* (GCSEs) and the *General Certificate of Education Advanced* (GCEA). These tests which are taken at the age of 11 and between the ages of 16 and 18 can be considered high stakes because they determine the future of the students, schools, and teachers (Minarechova, 2012).

In addition to England, the USA has a long history of standardised testing which started after the launch of Sputnik in 1957. Americans started to be interested in the improvement of education which led to the acceptance of education law in the elementary and secondary schools in 1965. Four years later, the NAEP project (National Assessment of Educational Progress) was initiated and this was a big step for the national assessment. The achievement of the students has been assessed

periodically in the subjects of geography, literature, science, reading, mathematics, writing, social studies, civics, citizenship, music, art, career development, the US history and computer competence (Minarechova, 2012).

In 2002, No Child Left Behind which was designed by the National Assessment Government Board in 1988, was signed by George W. Bush. This Act includes four aspects as consolidation of parental control, the operation of the system, flexible and local control. It also introduced the legal requirement of annual testing for the students (Minarechova, 2012). In other terms, every child in every school has to be tested in grades 3-8 and grade 10. By 2014, the teachers and administrators could have been fired if the school had not improved fully proficiencies of their students (Berliner, 2011). Jacob (2005) states that attached to the performance of the students in the high stakes testing, 18 states rewarded their administrators and teachers for the exemplary student performance while 20 states sanctioned school staff for the poor student performance.

After the previous examples in the USA and England, the government of Australia in 2008 introduced a national testing scheme, the *National Assessment Program-Literacy and Numeracy* (NAPLAN) (Polesel et al., 2014). NAPLAN was established by the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) which is an independent institution responsible for the development of the national curriculum, assessment program, data collection, and reporting program (Polesel et al., 2014). All students in 3, 5, 7 and 9 years are required to take these tests and the results of them are published through a website, MySchool, founded in 2010. The test includes reading, writing, numeracy and language components (spelling, grammar, and punctuation) (Polesel et al., 2014). After the tests, the individual reports are sent to the teachers to intervene in the learning process of the students and to parents to see their child's progress over time (Polesel et al., 2014). There was a discussion about whether NAPLAN was high stakes or not but later the *American Educational Research Association* developed a scale and put an end to the discussion. The NAPLAN became a high-stake test due to the website, *MySchool* (Minarechova, 2012).

2.3. High stakes testing in Turkey

The education system of Turkey has experienced various changes in its history starting with the foundation of the country. The French system has been adopted in the early years of the country; however, despite changes in French education, Turkey has kept this system. Şimşek and Yıldırım (2004) describe the Turkish system as more French than the French system. Turkey has four stages of education which are primary education, lower-secondary education, upper-secondary education, and higher education, respectively. Compulsory education takes 8 years in Turkey and if a student wants to go on his education, he needs to take Transition to High School Education Exam. The results of this exam determine the acceptance of the students to the prestigious high schools (Rotberg, 2006).

As a result of the increasing population and demands of the population, five different high school entrance exam systems as LGS, OKS, SBS, TEOG, and THSE have been applied since 2000. At the beginning of the 2000s, High School Entrance Exam (LGS) was applied to select students especially for Science and Anatolian High Schools. This examination system has experienced a change in 2004. Secondary Education Institutions Exam (OKS) was initiated in 2004. At the end of eight years, graduates were obliged to take this exam which used to decide the school the students would attend including science high schools, social sciences high school and all Anatolian high schools. OKS was in use from 2004 until 2007 after the new teaching and learning implementation (İncikabi, 2012).

OKS was replaced with Placement Test (SBS) whose aim was to decrease the burden of examination and increase the importance of the school. This new plan consisted of implementing the exam in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades (İncikabi, 2012). SBS was in use from 2007 to 2013. In 2013, Nabi Avcı, the Minister of Turkish National Education Minister, announced a new system for the placement of students into high schools, TEOG (Transition from Basic Education to Secondary Education) (Başol, &Zabun, 2014). The aim was to base the high school placement on the school performance of students rather than on a single high stakes test (Başol & Zabun, 2014).

With this goal, students needed to take six different nationwide tests on Science, Math, Turkish, History, Foreign Language and Religion and Ethics (Başol & Zabun, 2014). The total exam results of students were decided by seventy percent of test results and thirty percent of cumulative grade points. (Başol & Zabun, 2014). TEOG was applied from 2013 to 2017.

In 2017, the Ministry of Education of Turkey went on with a new exam system, Transition to High School Exam (THSE). In this implementation, the exam is currently carried out at the end of grade eight in a day with the subjects of Math, Science, Turkish, English, Religious Science and, the History of Turkish Revolution and Kemalism. Contrary to TEOG, THSE is applied only once and it is at the end of the 8th-grade. With THSE, students are taking the exam on a single day with two sections composed of scientific and verbal courses. The first part of the exam includes Turkish, Religious Science, the History of Turkish Republic Revolution and Kemalism, and English Language and it is taken in the morning session lasting 75 minutes. In the second part of the exam, students are taking science courses which are Mathematics and Science within 80 minutes. Based only on this examination, students receive their entrance exam points and do their choices among qualified high Schools. Before THSE, transition to high school exam was taken for all types of high schools, but with the new exam system, it is taken only for qualified high schools which are Science high schools, Social Sciences high schools, private institutions applying special programmes and projects as well as technical programs of Vocational and Technical Anatolian High Schools. For the students who do not have enough points to select schools, the placement based on the address is applied. The closest high school for the student is decided and the placement is carried out.

2.4. Studies related to the transition to high school examinations

International and national studies related to the transition to high school examinations are presented under this title.

2.4.1. International studies

The study conducted by Alzen et al. (2017) aimed to show the potential impact of alternative approaches on the current U.S. evaluation systems. Two reduced-testing scenarios, biennial testing, and staggered testing have been compared with every-year every-grade testing by collecting data from approximately 300,000 second- through fifth-grade students, 11,000 teachers in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) between 2006 and 2009. The results have shown that students will be beneficiaries when the allocated time has been shifted from testing to teaching by decreasing the testing burden. However, the reduced testing approaches will bring consequences for bias and the estimates for teacher accountability and education evaluation purposes will not be precise.

Aydeniz and Southerland (2012) have investigated the attitudes with justifications of 161 American high and middle school science teachers toward the use of standardized testing and the impact of standardized testing on their instructional and assessment practices. This quantitative study has revealed the mixed reactions of science teachers toward the use of standardized testing and the impact of standardized testing on instructional and assessment practices of science teachers.

Carr (2012) has investigated the impact of high stakes testing on teachers' instructional content and strategies, motivation, and morale through teachers' perceptions. The data of this correlation research was collected from 72 fourth and eighth-grade teachers from high and low performing school districts in Louisiana through a survey. The study has shown a significant difference in the impact of high stakes testing on instructional content according to district level performance. In addition, the perceptions of teachers have revealed a relationship between the impact of high stakes testing on instructional content, motivation and morale, and views on accountability.

The qualitative study of Coppola (2017) has investigated 16 elementary teachers' perceptions towards testing students in kindergarten, first, and second grade in New Jersey. The data collected through a semi-structured interview has negative and positive findings. Regarding negative results, anxiety, stress, high levels of worry and

lack of confidence have been found in students whereas positive results such as richer discussions between student, teacher, and parent as well as classroom planning and grouping have been revealed.

A longitudinal study carried out by Cocke et. al. (2011) has aimed to see the impact of recently included new tests in social studies and science on teachers' instruction. In addition, this study has investigated differences in this impact for early state test adapters and later state test adapters. Data was gathered from 14,557 teachers with over 5,000 teachers reporting in the years 2000 and 2004 and slightly fewer than 5,000 in 2008. The results have found a small impact of this test on the time allocated for science and no significant impact on the time allocated for social studies. However, it has been found that the content of what teachers are teaching has more impact on students' test scores than the actual time spent. Moreover, there is a difference in impact between states that initiated the test from 2000 to 2004 and from 2004 to 2008.

Fairman et. al. (2018) have investigated the types of tests administered and the amount of time Maine students spend on testing as well as the usefulness of the results for practitioners. Data were collected from 123 testing coordinators in fall 2017 through a state-wide survey. The findings of the study have shown that state tests are less useful than commercial or district tests for school and classroom decisions because of several factors such as the lack of multiple data points to measure growth or the inability to obtain timely results. However, there is not an option to reduce testing time without a change in the policy because of the requirements dictated by the state.

Kearns (2011) has studied the impact of high stakes testing on youth that failed the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test through a semi-structured interview. The findings of the study have revealed that youth feel shame as a result of the unintended impact of high stakes testing despite the aims of the literacy policy which are to help promote the well-being of youth and equity in the education system.

Klein et. al. (2006) have studied how teachers manage standardized testing in schools through a survey distributed to 20 schools in Western New York. The results of the study have shown that standardized testing affects teachers' instruction which causes

teachers to provide test-related instruction. Also, the need to address the standardized testing related problems that teachers face has been found.

The research of Lomax et. al. (1995) has studied the impact of mandated testing on minority students. The results have shown the poor instruction of mathematics and science in high minority classes and more instruction to prepare for the standardized tests that fail to meet recommended standards. It is suggested by the researchers that instead of standardized tests that do not show what high minority students know and do academically, authentic assessments with an enriched curriculum that promotes higher-order thinking skills should be used.

The study carried out by Mucherah and Yoder (2008) has examined middle school students' reading motivation and the relationship between their performance on a standardized test in reading and reading motivation. Data was collected from 388 grade six and eight public school students. The results of the study have shown that students who had high self-efficacy in their reading did better on the standardized test rather than the ones who read mostly for social reasons.

The study of Hite-Pope (2017) has examined classroom experiences of K-12 teachers with standardized testing. Data of this instrumental case study was collected from fifteen teachers in rural New Mexico schools through individual interviews, a focus group session, and document analysis. The findings have shown that teachers found the curriculum for standardized testing helpful to them and students, but it has been stressful and not comprehensive enough for students. Moreover, standardized testing was believed to be insufficient to test the intellectual capacity of students which did not benefit students.

The study conducted by Scogin et. al. (2017) has presented the implementation results of a project-based program called STREAM (science, technology, reading, engineering, arts, mathematics) despite standardized testing pressure which discourages schools from experiential learning opportunities. The results of this convergent-parallel mixed-method research have shown that students in the experiential program found school more enjoyable, showed noncognitive skill growth

and performed appropriately on standardized tests and did not differ from their friends in traditional classes.

The study of Stephens (2010) has investigated the perceptions of how Georgia middle school teachers use standardized state testing data. Data of this quantitative research study has been collected from 242 participants through a survey. The results have shown that teachers used standardized testing data according to its purpose and benefits. Moreover, teachers had enough time to analyze and plan their instruction based on the results of standardized testing.

The study of Thompson (2013) has studied teacher perceptions of the impact that NAPLAN has on learning and relationships with parents. Data was collected from 941 teachers in 2012. The findings have shown several effects of NAPLAN at the class and school level. These effects were negative for most teachers and further explained as performance pressure, demand for high ranking, impact on teachers' curricular and instructional decisions as well as students' learning opportunities and experiences.

The study of Tingey (2009) has investigated the impact of high stakes testing on school culture through individual interviews and focus groups. Data was collected from teachers and principals from schools in Utah. The results of the study have shown the negative impact of high stakes testing on student and teacher motivation, teaching and learning, and curriculum. Moreover, the accuracy of this high stakes testing under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has been questioned by the participants.

2.4.2. National studies

The studies in the field of transition to high school exams in Turkey are related to science course (Atila & Özeken, 2015), math course (Biber et al., 2017; Çelikel & Karakuş, 2017), English course (Gökcan & Aktan, 2018; Kılıçkaya, 2016; Kozikoğlu, 2018), the History of Turkish Republic Revolution and Kemalism (Erol, 2016) or general perceptions of students, teachers and parents on the exam (Şad, & Sahiner, 2016). While one study used quantitative method research design (Gökcan, & Aktan, 2018) and one study used mixed method research design (Şad, & Sahiner, 2016), the

rest of the studies used qualitative method research design (Atila, & Özeke, 2015; Biber et al., 2017; Çelikel, & Karakuş, 2017; Erol, 2016; Kılıçkaya, 2016; Kozikoğlu, 2018).

A study conducted by Kılıçkaya (2016) investigates the impact of TEOG (Transition Examination from Primary to Secondary Education) on the English language teachers' practices in the classroom. 30 English language teachers at middle schools in Turkey were interviewed to seek answers for the questions based on the experiences and reflections of the participants. The results of this qualitative study show us that the practices of English language teachers were greatly affected by the style and content of the TEOG exam. Also, it was observed that the teachers neglected several language skills as listening, speaking, and writing because they did not appear in the TEOG exam.

Çelikel and Karakuş (2017) examined the relevance of 8th-grade students' academic achievements and the instructional process of math class by a survey method research. The participants were 17 math teachers teaching at grade 8 and 3 private and 5 public schools were selected randomly in Mersin. In this research, a semi-structured interview was applied, and the results were analysed by creating codes and themes. The results of the study showed that 8th-grade students' TEOG achievements on math course were significantly well-matched with their academic achievements. Besides, the focus of math lessons was to be successful in TEOG exam.

A study about the perceptions of the students, teachers, and parents is conducted by Şad and Şahiner (2016). The convergent parallel mixed research method is used, and the quantitative data were collected from 415 participants and the qualitative data were collected from 17 participants. The results show that the students feel more comfortable since they attend the exam in their own schools and to take the exam in two terms, providing a make-up exam and using correction for guessing formula make the students feel more relaxed by decreasing their anxiety level.

Erol (2016) talks about the course of the History of Turkish Republic Revolution and Kemalism and the questions in TEOG by basing on the opinions of the Social Science

teachers. The study used qualitative research and case study design in Adıyaman with 18 Social Science Teachers. The data were collected with semi-structured interview questions and %64.28 of the teachers approved TEOG. The teachers also supported the limitation of the topics at the beginning of the terms which has made their planning and organization easier. The good sides of TEOG have been mentioned as makeup exams, the conduct of TEOG twice in a year, taking the exam in their own schools. The number of eliminative questions should be increased, and the exam did not affect the tendency for private courses out of the school even though it had been aimed.

Atila and Özeken (2015) examined the perceptions of science teachers on TEOG exam. The study design was a qualitative research method and a case study. The participants of the study were 15 science teachers working at five different middle schools. The results of the study showed that TEOG was compatible with the curriculum, it decreased the stress of students compared to earlier transition exams, it increased the responsibility of teachers, but teachers found doing the exam in two different terms positive.

A research carried out by Biber et al. (2017) investigated the perceptions of math teachers working at support and training courses on THSE followed to TEOG. The participants were 16 teachers working at 10 different institutions. The data was collected through interview and the design of the study is a case study with a qualitative method research design. The data were analysed through content analysis and the results showed that THSE sample questions published by MONE were more distinctive than TEOG questions. Also, teachers could give a modern education in which students could use their skills and knowledge.

Another study investigated the effects of students' attitudes towards English, exposure to English, school type (i.e. state or private), foreign language anxiety, parents' English proficiency and education level on the students' English achievement in TEOG exam. The design of the study was a quantitative method research design and a survey was applied to the students. The results of the data showed that students' attitudes towards English, school types, amount of English exposure, parents' education level and

English proficiency have meaningful and positive effects on English proficiency, while language anxiety has a significant negative effect on it (Gökcan & Aktan, 2018).

Kozikoğlu (2018) conducted a study to evaluate the 8th-grade English curriculum and TEOG exam questions according to the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy. The design of the study was a qualitative research method with a descriptive study and a document analysis technique was used. The English curriculum and TEOG exam questions were obtained from the website of the Ministry of Education (MONE). The results showed that more than half of the objectives are at the "apply" level and there is no objective at the meta-cognitive level. Only 23% of objectives are intended to use higher-order thinking skills.

As a result, despite the broad literature regarding standardized testing in Turkey, most of the studies address previous high school entrance exams. This shortage of literature may derive from the new exam system which was started to be implemented in 2017. Because of this, there are only two studies which have similar aims. A research carried out by Biber et al. (2017) presented the perceptions of math teachers on the impact of THSE while another research conducted by Kılıçkaya (2016) investigated the impact of TEOG on the English language teachers' practices in the classroom. However, considering all the studies aforementioned, it can be said that the impact of THSE on the English teachers has not been studied thoroughly and the perceptions of English teachers have not been consulted. Additionally, studies lack providing detailed information on the impact of THSE on the methodology, curricular decisions and instructional decisions of English teachers and the attitudes, behaviours, and expectations of students as well as parents' expectations.

2.5. Summary of the literature review

The literature review has started with different concepts used in the testing as norm-referenced, criterion-referenced, diagnostic, high stakes and standardized testing. Then positive and negative aspects of high stakes testing have been explained to understand the impact of standardized tests. Next, the application of high stakes testing in the contexts of England, the USA, and Australia have been described and the background

of high stakes testing in Turkey in specific has been presented. Lastly, similar studies in the field of high stakes testing in Turkey have been summarized.

The concept of high stakes testing has appeared with the increasing population and demands of the decision-makers (Ysseldyke et al.,2004). When the literature was sought, the application of these tests was observed to have an impact on teachers, students, parents, and administrators (Minarechova, 2012; Ramezaney, 2014; Wideen et. al. ,1997). Nevertheless, the use of standardized tests takes place in many countries including England, the USA, Australia, and Turkey. Using the French system, Turkey has eight-year compulsory education which ends with a transition to high school standardized test. This transition exam has undergone many changes since it was first held. Five different high school entrance exam systems as LGS, OKS, SBS, TEOG, and THSE have been applied since the 2000s, respectively. Lastly, with the announcement of the Turkish Ministry of Education in 2017, THSE was initiated. In this exam system, students are required to take an exam at the end of grade eight and THSE includes questions from the subjects of Math, Science, Turkish, English, Religious Science and, the History of Turkish Republic Revolution and Kemalism.

When the literature of transition to the high school exam in Turkey was analysed, a few numbers of studies have been found. Most of these studies focus on different subject areas rather than English field. The studies that investigated English subject either studied TEOG exam or used a quantitative research method design different from the current study. Studying TEOG exam and using a quantitative research method may bring some limitations in showing real conditions of the current education. Firstly, TEOG exam was replaced with THSE; therefore, the results of these studies cannot reflect the present circumstances of the education. Secondly, the quantitative research method does not show the reactions, perceptions, and feelings of an individual and how she/he experienced an event that is principally important to the phenomenologist looking to understand an event beyond purely quantitative detail (Gaston-Gayles, et al., 2005). Because of these reasons, this current study is designed with a qualitative research method and THSE.

To sum up, all studies conducted in the context have revealed the impact of standardized testing on the teaching process. This impact has been described in the methodology of teachers as teaching for the test and taking the exam topics as the centre of the lessons. Moreover, the evaluation process of teachers such as the exam topics and question formats has been greatly affected by the previous entrance examinations. Students expect to be taught and tested within the scope of entrance examinations. Although teachers play a key role in the teaching process, different problems that public and private school teachers have faced are often neglected by the researchers. Moreover, the impact of standardized tests on the learning and teaching process as well as parents' and students' expectations have not been described thoroughly. Therefore, this study intends to contribute to the literature in terms of delivering detailed information about the impact of standardized tests on English teachers' curricular decisions, instructional decisions, and evaluation process as well as students' attitudes, behaviours, and expectations and also parents' expectations by consulting English teachers' perceptions.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

In this chapter, the overall design of the study with research questions is introduced. Following this, sampling, the data collection instrument, data collection procedures, and data analysis are explained. Finally, limitations of the study are discussed.

3.1. Design of the study

This research was designed as a qualitative research method to investigate teachers' perceptions of how standardized testing, THSE, influences teaching and learning in middle schools. The research was designed as a phenomenological study in which phenomenon refers to an occurrence or experience and logical refers to a path toward understanding. In other words, there is an occurrence and a path, which leads to a way of looking at the phenomenon from an individual's point of view (Gaston-Gayles et al., 2005). The reactions, perceptions, and feelings of an individual and how s/he experienced an event are principally important to the phenomenologist looking to understand an event beyond purely quantitative detail (Gaston-Gayles et al., 2005). For example, a study conducted by Gaston-Gayles et al. (2005) has shown how the civil rights era changed the role of college administrators. The phenomenological design is used to define the possible impact of the standardized test named THSE on the instructions of teachers and the perceptions of them.

Within this design, a sample of English teachers including 12 private and 12 public English teachers were chosen from Denizli. The data were gathered from 24 English teachers through a semi-structured interview and analysed through content analysis.

3.2. Research questions

Within the scope of phenomenological research design, this study aims to contribute to the literature by offering an in-depth understanding of the impact of the Transition to High School Exam (THSE) on the curricular and instructional decisions of teachers.

The specific research questions are below;

- a) What are teachers' perceptions of THSE as an evaluation strategy?
- b) How do teachers perceive the impact of THSE on their curricular decisions?
- c) How do teachers perceive the impact of THSE on instructional processes in class?
- d) How do teachers interpret the impact of THSE on students' learning and motivation?
- e) How do teachers perceive the impact of THSE on their evaluations of student performance?

3.3. Participants

Any public and private school English teachers implementing the national curriculum during either/both the 2017-2018 or/and 2018-2019 education years in eighth grades of public or private schools could have been a participant of this study. Table 3 below shows the number of public and private middle schools, the number of teachers and students in these schools as well as the overall number of English teachers in Turkey.

Table 3

Number of Middle Schools, Students, Teachers, and English Teachers

Number of middle schools			Number of students studying at middle schools	Number of teachers working at middle schools			Number of English Teachers
Public	Private	Total		Public	Private	Total	
16875	1869	18745	5590134	302 257	37593	339850	73088

As can be seen in Table 3, since the numbers do not provide an opportunity to reach every English teacher in public and private schools, several sampling strategies have been applied in this study. Firstly, convenience sampling was applied to the context of the research. Denizli has been chosen because it is one of the most populated provinces as a result of industrialization and consists of people from other cities as well as people with other nationalities. Based on the 2017-2018 statistics of MONE, Denizli consists of 257 which includes 231 public and 26 private middle schools. The number of teachers was presented as 4792 while the number of students was shown as 61427 in these schools. Because of the high number of teachers, the most populated districts of Denizli which are Pamukkale and Merkezefendi are chosen for sampling. According to the 2019 official statistics, Pamukkale consists of 37 public and 7 private while Merkezefendi has 28 public and 26 private middle schools. Convenience sampling was applied for these districts because as it is stated by Delice (2010), there is no need to keep the sample too high due to the issue of accessibility. More reliable data can be gathered with more reasonable sampling. As a result of this procedure, four public and nine private middle schools have been visited for the data. The participants of the study were selected from both public and private schools in Denizli. The contributors to this study are English Language Teachers (ELT) from public and private schools. The public-school teachers are appointed through a central examination carried out by the MONE and the private school teachers are selected by the school administrations. A maximum variation has been applied at this step. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2016), the aim of creating a sample-based upon maximum is not assuring this variation for generalization; on the contrary, it is to try to find out whether there are common or shared phenomena among the situations showing variety and to reveal the different perspectives of the problem according to this variety. For the maximum variation, the requirement has been set as English teachers having taught in 2017-2018 or/and teaching in 2018-2019 at 8th-grade. The variety has been enabled in terms of school type, university of graduation, overall teaching experience, 8th-grade teaching experience, graduate studies, and age. At the end of the process, 24 public and private school English teachers that meet the requirements have been interviewed.

As a result, 12 public school teachers ($N_m=3$, $N_f=9$) and 12 private school teachers ($N_m=5$, $N_f=7$) were interviewed. The ages of 12 public school teachers ($N_{pt}=12$) and 12 private school teachers ($N_{ft}=12$) are categorized as 20-30 ($N_{ft}=4$, $N_{pt}=1$), 30-40 ($N_{ft}=6$, $N_{pt}=4$), 40-50 ($N_{ft}=2$, $N_{pt}=6$) and 50-60 ($N_{ft}=0$, $N_{pt}=1$).

Of all the teachers, 3 of them were graduates of Selçuk University, 3 of them were graduates of Pamukkale University, 2 of them were graduates of Marmara University, 2 of them were graduates of Atatürk University, 2 of them were graduates of Dokuz Eylül University and 2 of them were graduates were graduates of Hacettepe University. Other teachers were the graduates of different universities, one from each, as Selçuk University, Uludağ University, Bilkent University, Çukurova University, METU, Anadolu University, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Akdeniz University, Near East University, Başkent University and the University of Cyprus as it can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4
Demographic Profile of the Participants

Participant	Type of institution	University of graduation	Overall teaching experience	8th-grade teaching experience	Graduate studies	Age
1	Public	Selçuk Üniversitesi	22	9	No	47
2	Public	Uludağ Üniversitesi	16	6	Yes	36
3	Public	Bilkent Üniversitesi	20	8	No	42
4	Public	Marmara Üniversitesi	15	6	No	39
5	Public	Atatürk Üniversitesi	14	8	No	38
6	Public	Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi	23	10	No	45
7	Public	Çukurova Üniversitesi	30	20	No	51
8	Public	Hacettepe Üniversitesi	20	8	No	42
9	Public	ODTÜ	6	6	Yes	29
10	Public	Atatürk Üniversitesi	12	10	No	37
11	Public	Selçuk Üniversitesi	21	18	No	43
12	Public	Anadolu Üniversitesi	20	10	No	42
13	Private	Pamukkale Üniversitesi	4	2	No	41
14	Private	Pamukkale Üniversitesi	5	3	Yes	26
15	Private	Selçuk Üniversitesi	18	9	No	41
16	Private	Hacettepe Üniversitesi	12	3	No	34
17	Private	Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi	10	3	No	33

Table 4 (Continued)

18	Private	Akdeniz Üniversitesi	2	1	No	26
19	Private	Yakın Doğu Üniversitesi	10	3	No	32
20	Private	Başkent Üniversitesi	6	3	No	29
21	Private	Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi	13	4	No	37
22	Private	Yakın Doğu Üniversitesi	13	10	No	35
23	Private	Pamukkale Üniversitesi	5	2	Yes	29
24	Private	Marmara Üniversitesi	11	6	Yes	34

3.4. Data collection instrument

A semi-structured interview guide was used to collect the data. The reason why the interview has been decided is that it best catches the experiences of the interviewees through their own words (Higgins & Harreveld, 2013). Also, the semi-structured interview gives comparable results and assures the flexibility for deeper understanding (Mouza & Barrett-Greenly, 2015). Besides, it gives an opportunity to find out as many details as possible (Xiao & Zhao, 2011).

Within the frame of research questions, the semi-structured interview questions have been prepared by the researcher. The questions have been designed to find out the aim of the research and organised in a logical order. Although the questions were prepared to comprehend the understanding and perceptions of the teachers, the first part of the interview was prepared to find out descriptive information of the participants to make a background for the study. This part has questions for age, gender, overall years of experience, years of 8th-grade teaching experience, university of graduation and graduate studies. The second part of the interview includes questions to see the impact of THSE on the language skills practiced in the classroom. In the third part of the interview, the teachers were asked to state their observations regarding the impact of THSE on their curricular and instructional decisions. The next part is designed to reach the perceptions of teachers about the impact of THSE on the study and learning habits of students as well as students' and parents' expectations. The final part has investigated the impact on the evaluation and assessment process of teachers.

Following this procedure, three expert opinions were taken to abolish the ambiguity and misunderstanding in the interview. As a result of these examinations, several revisions have been made in the interview questions. Five questions have been taken out because they were overlapping with other questions, the word order of a few questions have been changed and lastly, probes and prompts have been added to some questions. Finally, the interview was piloted with three participants to detect any flaw or inaccuracy and the interviews were recorded to see the flow and clarity of the speech.

3.5. Data collection procedures

Before starting the data collection, approvals of the Human Subjects' Ethics Committee and MONE have been assured. After this step, the identified districts and schools have been informed about the study. Following the notification, the researcher set appointments with the teachers who were willing to participate in the study. As the location of interviews, mostly the places that the teachers preferred and felt comfortable were chosen because the place could affect the interviewee which would cause unrealistic results. The flow of the interview was not interrupted by external causes and the confidentiality of the participants was assured through pseudonyms. Following this, the purpose of the study was explained, and the teachers were informed about the procedure and steps of the research. Then the participants were asked to sign the consent form and the permission for recording was taken by assuring the aim of saving time. Approximately one interview took 30 minutes and at the points when the interviewee did not understand what had been asked, the researcher rephrased the question or asked additional questions or probes. After each interview, the researcher transcribed all the recordings. The length of the data collection process took approximately three months while the transcription of recordings and analysis of the interviews took around two months.

3.6. Data analysis procedures

The steps of qualitative data analysis are taken from the article of O'Connor and Gibson (2003). After the data collection procedure is completed, getting to know data

is done. This is mentioned as listening to the tapes, transcribing them from tape to the paper and reading these transcripts (O'Connor & Gibson, 2003). For confidentiality, pseudonyms are used instead of the real names of the participants. After the transcription is done, the first step of the data analysis is conducted. In the step of organizing the data, the interview guide is taken as a basis. While organizing the data, the topics or questions which are aimed to be answered are differentiated from the other data. When the answers for the target questions are found, emerged themes or ideas are noted. They can be related to the questions or help for future considerations (O'Connor & Gibson, 2003). After the transcription, the interview results are displayed in a table. In the second step which is finding and organizing ideas and concepts, the data is read again, and different ideas or answers are kept as a list. Also, idiolect is taken into consideration since different words can express different meanings for different people (O'Connor & Gibson, 2003). Besides, the participants may have wanted to talk about some different topics and the direction may have gone in that way. Since this gives a valuable resource (O'Connor & Gibson, 2003), the points mentioned in this case are analysed. After this procedure, coding and categorizing concepts and ideas are applied. The emerged themes are replaced under related groups. In the third step which is building over-arching themes in the data, the themes are considered and analysed, then the common themes which explain the research questions deeper are taken into the centre (Higgins & Harreveld, 2013; Mouza & Barrett-Greenly, 2015; O'Connor & Gibson, 2003).

3.7. Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness is the backbone of a study because “the trustworthiness of a research study is important to evaluating its worth” as stated by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Although it is given as a step for the analysis, the trustworthiness is ensured from the beginning of the research. The accuracy of the research method's appropriateness for the purpose of the study has been assured at the beginning. After this, the credibility of the study has been provided through triangulation which can be achieved using multiple sources. Lincoln and Guba explained the use of multiple sources as “multiple copies of one type of source” (such as interview respondents) and

they added that the information in interviews was discounted unless it could be checked in the available documents (1985). By considering these points, the data were gathered from multiple participants and the interviews have been recorded. The audios and transcripts of these interviews have been kept by the researcher to be consulted if required. To enable the credibility, also debriefing sessions have been made with the supervisor of the researcher. The aim of the debriefing is explained by Lincoln and Guba as providing the inquirer an opportunity for catharsis, thereby clearing the mind of emotions and feelings that may be clouding good judgment or preventing the emergence of sensible next steps which makes an important contribution to the quality of the study (1985). In addition, the transferability of the study has been achieved using “thick description” which was mentioned by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to be provided only when necessary to enable someone interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether the transfer can be considered as a possibility. To achieve this, the context of the study has been described, the demographic information of the participants has been provided and all procedures have been explained thoroughly. Similarly, the trustworthiness of the research is done through consistency throughout the interviews, transcription, and analysis. Since the ethnicity of the interview plays a sensitive role in the collection of data (O’Connor & Gibson, 2003), the attitude of the interviewer is friendly and non-judgmental towards the interviewee. During the interview, in case of difficulty, the elicitation is enabled which assures the validity (Xiao & Zhao, 2011). The trustworthiness of the data is also ensured through the rationales and interview results. Outliners that appear at the end of the data analysis are explained through rationale. At the last step, the findings are explained through possible and plausible explanations (O’Connor & Gibson, 2003). The findings are compared with the literature and the results are related to the context used.

3.8. Limitations of the study

The study has two major limitations derived from the research design and the data collection process.

Since the study was designed as a qualitative, the nature of this research brings some limitations. Purposeful sampling was carried out and the data was collected from 8th-grade private and public school English teachers. Since the sample was limited to Denizli, the data obtained from these interviews may not be valid for all English teachers in Turkey. However, the variation among participants was enabled through gender, age, university graduation, experience, and school types, so this limitation was decreased to a certain level.

The data were collected through interviews which may have limited the study. In this type of technique, the participant is supposed to give accurate information; nevertheless, because of the variables as limited interview length or the demand for recording, the participant teachers may have felt anxious, so the data gathered from these participants may have been subjective. Moreover, being under pressure, the interviewees may have misunderstood the question or skipped the focus and they may have changed their perceptions on instructions, students, or the impact of THSE. To eliminate these limitations, the researcher interviewed the participants individually and the setting which had been chosen by the interviewee was decided. At the beginning of each interview, the aim of the study was explained and permission for recording was asked. Then, the purpose of the recording which was to save time was explained and the participant was guaranteed that pseudonyms would be used instead of real names. Moreover, the researcher was careful about using her voice, tone, accent, and body language during interviews not to cause any pressure or stress on the participants. Lastly, in the case of misunderstanding the question, the interviewee was not interrupted suddenly but he was guided through prompts and probes to the focus.

3.9. My role as a researcher

Since my graduation from English Language Teaching Department, I have had a chance to be involved in the language learning process of both private and public school students. During these 6 years of teaching experience, I have observed the impact of national tests on my planning and instruction as well as on students. I discovered my colleagues in every institution that I worked in had similar experiences. These experiences informed my approach to this study and helped the data collection

process run smoothly since the interviewees were speaking to one of their colleagues. In addition, these experiences helped me to make sense of the data better since I had some of these experiences myself in my own classrooms. Still, I kept my distance to the data not to let my previous experiences cause a biased approach to the analysis and interpretation of the data.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the data under four main headings. The first part of the data includes results on teachers' observations and perceptions regarding the impact of THSE on the language skills applied in the classrooms. The second title includes two subtitles to see the impact of THSE on instructional curricular decisions of teachers. The next part describes the perceptions of teachers regarding the impact of THSE on students and their study and learning habits. The last part shows the findings regarding the impact of THSE on the evaluation and assessment process that teachers follow.

4.1. Teachers' perceptions of Transition to High School Exam (THSE) as an evaluation strategy

Regarding perceptions of teachers on THSE as an evaluation strategy, two main themes have been found. The teachers have mentioned the impact of multiple-choice question types on their lessons and some problems emerged in the implementation of the national curriculum.

4.1.1. Impact of multiple-choice question type used in THSE on teachers' lessons

Public school teachers stated that they used multiple-choice question types to prepare students for THSE (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). Especially this question type was said to be used to study target words and paragraph questions (PT1), exams (PT6, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12), quizzes (PT6, PT10, PT11, PT12) and homework (PT9, PT11). Teachers stated that they could and should have used many other types of questions rather than multiple-choice, but they needed to use multiple-choice to prepare students for THSE (PT1, PT5).

In my own opinion, using multiple-choice questions is not a healthy method for measurement and evaluation of English. Actually, multiple questions do not really show how much a person knows. As the exam format is that way, we use it in our own formal exams. We do this because both children can get accustomed to such questions and multiple-choice questions provide an advantage for reviews. I mean, especially for word studies. Because some units of the 8th grade contain loaded words. In other words, the student must keep it fresh with continuous repetitions. The multiple choices work in this sense. This occurs because the high school entrance exam is composed of multiple-choice questions, but if it were made with open-ended questions, then open-ended questions would have been much more functional (PT1).

One teacher who tries to avoid the use of multiple-choice questions teaches words with the help of games in the classroom and assign vocabulary homework which requires playing Candy Crush-style game on the internet instead of giving the wordlist and making students memorize (PT2). In addition, rather than multiple-choice questions some other question types as T/F questions, matching, finding different sentences, writing the end of a story are used in the formal exams with the condition of not having high points (PT9).

The most common observed effects of the multiple-choice question type on the students in the lessons are laziness (PT7), unwillingness to write (PT2, PT7) and avoidance of speaking (PT7).

I'm writing some exercises on the board, the students ask whether they are going to write or not. I wrote everything on the board, I made a word section there. For example, let's say I am teaching simple past tense and wrote the irregular and regular words. The student is going to write it on his notebook whatever he sees on the board. Still, he says "teacher is it okay if we don't write it?" It's a topic, something important. Where do you get it from? (PT2)

All private school teachers expressed the effects of the multiple-choice question on their lessons. The use of multiple-choice questions is observed in review tests (FT1), pilot exams (FT2, FT8), exams (FT2), AGIS (FT2), in-class and extracurricular material selection (FT2, FT3, FT4, FT6, FT7). While some teachers stated that after a certain point, everything had become multiple choices (FT3, FT6), some said that they were teaching multiple-choice test strategies to the students, and they were doing some studies in which even if the students did not know what a paragraph, sentence or word

meant, they could reach the correct answer by eliminating wrong ones (FT4, FT6, FT9, FT11). It was said that these strategies were difficult to teach students because the students intellectualized the questions and focused on meanings (FT4, FT11). While a teacher expressed English for general purposes and multiple-choice English were very different from each other (FT11), another teacher said that doing multiple choice was much simpler than the education the students received (FT9). As an example, it was said that different from 8th grade, reading skills were assessed with open-ended questions in the lower levels (FT9). Some teachers said they found using multiple questions in exams positive (FT4, FT8, FT9).

As the effects of multiple-choice questions on the students, the participants uttered that laziness (FT5), doing tests instead of interaction and speaking (FT5), eliminating analytical thinking (FT7), pragmatism (FT7), free-riding (FT12), having a difficulty in production (FT12) and consternation when a question like “if you were in the place of the character, what would you do?” was asked because they were stuck in the process of knowledge (FT12).

I speak English even in breaks, but 8th graders come to ask for answers. When I ask the possibility of speaking in English, the student answers like ‘Miss, I must ask quickly and go to Math teacher because I have some problems in Math.’ (FT10)

As can be seen in the quotation, instead of using English in their daily lives, students prefer doing multiple-choice questions. This may derive from the anxiety and stress the students experience.

Different from multiple-choice tests and strategy training, a teacher who teaches words by using them in sentences, said that he used activities of writing or telling recipes such as vegetable soup (FT5), while another teacher said that he preferred to prepare his exams with open-ended questions because he wanted to eliminate the chance factor (FT10).

Overall, teachers mostly used multiple-choice questions in their lessons to prepare students for THSE. Moreover, they prefer it for revisions, exams, and classroom

materials. However, overuse of it has caused laziness, pragmatism, and low interaction on students. Compared to public school, private school teachers tried to use alternative question types.

4.1.2. Emerging problems during the implementation of the curriculum

Regarding the problems emerged during the implementation of the program, all public-school teachers complained about the impact of THSE on their lessons. Predominately, they complained about the abrupt change in the examination in 2017. Public school teachers stated that they had lessons based on high school entrance examination; therefore, the teachers changed their methods and techniques according to THSE (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). In other words, the teachers focus on the skills and topics to be tested in THSE, so they save time from production-based skills like speaking and writing (PT1, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT9). They also stated that after TEOG, the new exam naturally affected the motivation of students because, in the former exam, the coefficient of English test used to be much higher than THSE. Therefore, the attitude and approaches of students towards English lessons have changed to an important extent (PT4, PT8).

Private school teachers uttered similar problems in the implementation of the program (FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12). The new testing system shaped the lessons which mean teachers used to have grammar-based studies; however, they have more skill-based such as vocabulary, reading and comprehension studies now (FT2, FT5, FT12). A teacher stated that when the exam was getting closer, because of the students' demands and low motivations, he stopped teaching, but this situation put the teacher at stake (FT4). In addition, a teacher told that except only a few students, all students were preparing for THSE (FT5). Moreover, a teacher stated that when he tried to teach some non-tested competencies in THSE, he faced the reactions of students using sentences like 'no need for confusion if it doesn't appear in high school entrance exam.' The teacher believed that because students did not have any concern for using English in the future, they did not have any interest in learning English. Additionally, he added that when the teacher stated a topic would not appear

in THSE, then the students lost their interests for that topic (FT10). Moreover, it was observed by a teacher that after the change in the coefficient of English test in THSE, the students changed their behaviour and attitudes towards the lessons (FT9). The problems experienced in the first year of the THSE were expressed by a teacher as following (FT12).

We're not having any trouble this year, because it's obvious. But in September last year, the exam system changed 3 times. It was open-ended, multiple-choice, it happened twice, and at that time we seriously lost the students' motivation. So, these changes have caused a loss of motivation and we have changed our formal exams according to it; both the open-ended and the multiple-choice. Since there was no question in the market, we had our own productions. Whether these were useful or not is open to discussion, we achieved some for students, but I don't think I have the education to write a question. Writing a question is something different (FT12).

Different from usual high stakes testing problems, the students experienced more stress and chaos in the first year of implementation as stated by both groups of teachers. The unknown parts of the exam such as question types, courses included, number of questions or number of sessions had an impact on the students and teachers.

4.2. Impact of THSE on teachers' curricular and instructional decisions

Public school teachers stated that they had lessons based on THSE examination. In other words, the teachers changed their methods and techniques with THSE (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). What is meant with the lessons based on THSE is that the teachers focus on the skills and topics to appear in the exam and they cannot spare time for the production-based skills like speaking and writing (PT1, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7). More tests, vocabulary and reading studies for THSE preparation are done while the time from the speaking, writing, and listening is saved (PT9). At the same time, supplementary material selection is based on THSE (PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT11, PT12). A lot of teachers pointed out that they do not find the coursebook enough, so they need an extra resource (PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT11, PT12). It was commonly stated that the coursebook is their first resource, but it is not enough, so it should be supported with an extra book to be bought by the students or to be provided with photocopies. For supplementary resources, vocabulary-based

books are chosen (PT5). Considering the interviews, it can be deduced that while the teachers used to choose supplementary books based on grammar to prepare for TEOG, lately they have changed their tendency to supplementary books based on vocabulary or reading and comprehension (PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT11, PT12). They also stated that after TEOG, the new exam naturally affected the motivation of students because, in the former exam, the coefficient of English test used to be much higher than THSE. Therefore, the attitude and approaches of students towards English lessons have been affected to an important extent (PT4, PT8). A teacher complained about the insufficiency of lessons and added that because of this, he cannot do enough practice in the class (PT9).

All private school English teachers, except for two (FT1, FT3) stated that THSE has an impact on their lessons (FT2, FT3, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12). In most of the private schools, two curricula have been followed. One of them is the national curriculum designed and tested by the MONE. The other one is English for general purposes. Mostly the schools have changed their systems accordingly and material selection is based on this (FT2, FT4, FT5, FT7, FT12). In one school, lessons allocated to English for general purposes are added to the lessons for THSE preparation (FT12). It was also stated that there were fundamental changes in the methods and materials (FT1, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT10). In lessons, paragraph and vocabulary studies are done and it was uttered that teachers did not do so many grammar studies. The lessons are usually about reading comprehension and tests (FT2, FT3, FT5, FT12). In addition to the main coursebook provided by the MONE, at least 7 different books are added into the curriculum and 2 or 3 more books are used later (FT3, FT12). A teacher stated that videos were used to teach grammar, also the vocabulary items were taught with colourful pictures, the lessons were supported with powerpoint slides and the vocabulary items were practised with the games (FT3). The new testing system shaped the lessons which means teachers used to have grammar-based studies; however, they have more skill-based such as vocabulary, reading and comprehension studies now (FT2, FT5, FT12). In some schools the teachers stated that English for general purposes is also important, so they support that with allocated

lessons and books (FT2, FT4, FT7, FT12). Moreover, it was observed by a teacher that after the change in the coefficient of English test in THSE, the students changed their behaviour and attitudes towards the lessons (FT9).

All public-school teachers stated that THSE influenced their decisions about their lessons. All private school teachers uttered the same thing except one who said THSE didn't have any effects (FT4) and one who said THSE affected partially (FT1). Overall it is seen that THSE influences the curricular and instructional decisions of teachers.

4.2.1. Impact of THSE on teachers' curricular decisions

Most of the private and public-school teachers mentioned parallelism between the curriculum of the lessons and THSE exam questions. Among the statements, there is the one that the lessons were parallel with the objectives in the curriculum and there were not any surprising topics or skills in the exam. However, they complained about the first year of THSE when the students were responsible for 10 units but in THSE only the first 8 units were included like TEOG.

4.2.1.1. Compatibility between curriculum and English language competencies in THSE

The public-school teachers stated that THSE covered all topics and skills practiced in the lessons (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT7, PT8, PT10, PT11, PT12). Teachers practiced reading and vocabulary in their lessons and the English test in THSE had questions for these skills. It was said by a few teachers that instead of traditional test questions, daily dialogues and speech were tested in THSE (PT2, PT5, PT7, PT8, PT9). For THSE preparation, teachers taught students collocations. It was stated that speaking and writing skills weren't practiced in the lessons because they didn't appear in the exam, so it was not a need and, they weren't stated in the curriculum (PT5). It was stated that topics were covered earlier than planned time by MONE and then, tests and revisions were done (PT3). In addition, the test questions in THSE were much simpler compared to EBA materials and the resources in the market (PT9).

Regarding the same issue, the private school teachers stated that THSE after TEOG was in more match with their instructions and plans, but they also said THSE was simpler (FT4, FT9, FT12). Some teachers followed two curricula and if time is left from THSE studies, teachers practiced English for general purposes (FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12). It was seen that mostly the private school teachers practiced speaking, writing, and listening skills and they didn't have any concern regarding catching up with the plans because they had enough lessons and time. They implied that since the exam was about reading and vocabulary, they felt more relaxed.

Both public school and private school teachers said that THSE covered the skills and topics in their lessons and it was generally simpler than it was expected. Because the exam was about reading and vocabulary, they did studies on these skills. Both groups of teachers commented on the simplicity of the exam. Different from public school teachers, the private school teachers can spare some time for speaking and writing and the reason for these may derive from more lessons they have. Besides, private school teachers have more studies for English for general purposes. However, the general opinion among the teachers is that the new exam system, THSE, after TEOG is more in the way to show the real data of students' English levels but they complained about the simplicity of the questions.

4.2.1.2. Impact of the English language competencies in THSE on instructional planning

The public-school teachers said that instead of direct grammar questions, reading and comprehension with dialogue questions were tested in THSE (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT8, PT9, PT11, PT12). For these questions, teachers taught what was necessary for their lessons which means they didn't spend so much time teaching grammar but more into the studies to help the exam (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT8, PT9, PT11, PT12). The change in the testing created a change in the instructions, plans, and materials of teachers (PT3, PT4, PT5, PT8). They mentioned the following the national curriculum, a need for supplementary resources and the preparation with difficult questions;

however, simple questions appeared in THSE (PT4, PT8). Some teachers remarked that as a result of these preparations, the students got used to the written and spoken channels of English, but they didn't feel confident in expressing themselves in those forms (PT2, PT7, PT9, PT10). This may derive from not sparing enough time for speaking and listening. Another reason may be the limit of English lessons and mostly they use the Grammar Translation Method. It was mentioned that the quizzes were used to teach vocabulary in which Turkish meanings were asked (PT9). One of the teachers complained that the topics of the units in the coursebook were not appropriate to the age level of students; on the contrary, they consisted of so many vocabulary items and the topics did not draw students' interests (PT9). Besides, the changes in the meanings of some words created some confusion (PT6).

Since the topics tested in the exam are the same as the curriculum, we have lessons based on the exams. For example, in the vocabulary part, if a word was given in the book, such as the word "cool, and the word "cool" was given as popular, you just give the meaning of popular. One year, this word means amazing, another year it may mean suitable, the following year it means popular. This creates ambiguity in students. They may say 'teacher, you taught us its different last year but this year it is different.' I say, 'you will know this like this from now on' because the questions are asked in this way (PT6)

Private school teachers stated that THSE supported and reflected their lessons more compared to previous high school entrance exams (FT4, FT9, FT12). In some of the private schools, only one curriculum which was designed for THSE was followed while in some of them, in addition to that one, another curriculum that was prepared for English for general purposes was followed. In this case, they followed two curricula at the same time with lessons allocated to each of them. For lessons for THSE, mostly they follow the steps as little lecturing, then vocabulary teaching, doing tests including reading and comprehension with dialogues. At this program, the topics, and skills in THSE are taken into consideration (FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12). On the other hand, the second program in some schools is followed to catch up with the missing parts of the THSE preparation program such as listening, speaking, and writing. Since these skills are not tested in the exam, teachers integrate these skills into their written exams and the decided resources are

mostly authentic (FT1, FT2, FT4, FT5, FT8, FT12). Most private school teachers complain about the simplicity of the exams, the limitation of the topics and simplicity of the units with the decrease of English test coefficient (FT3, FT10).

The reading texts could be simplified. This year there is a problem like this. For example, there are base stations in the communication unit. That doesn't excite the students. In the same way, there is a sushi recipe. For Turkish students, of course, English is an international lesson which is a bridge to teach different cultures, but another fun topic could be added instead of sushi. (FT3)

Although it is stated that THSE is much simpler compared to previous high school transition examinations, few teachers complained about the dull topics of the reading texts and loaded vocabulary items related to these texts (FT3, FT10).

Regarding the impact of the English language competencies in THSE on instructional planning, all public-school teachers stated they had focused on these skills while the private school teachers stated they did the same to decrease the stress of students towards the exam and to try to teach some exam tips.

4.2.2. Impact of THSE on the competencies covered in the classroom

First of all, the public school teachers said that the high school entrance exam tested only reading except listening, speaking and writing skills (PT4, PT6, PT7) and as a result of this they used predominantly multiple-choice techniques (PT1, PT2, PT4) and grammar (PT4, PT8), vocabulary (PT4, PT6, PT7). PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12), comprehension skills (PT6, PT9, PT10, PT12) in their lessons. A few teachers have also stated that grammar was important in the TEOG examination; however, it lost its importance with THSE, so it did in their lessons accordingly (PT7, PT10, PT12). Although some of the teachers said that they could not use speaking (PT3, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8, PT10, PT11, PT12), listening (PT3, PT5, PT6, PT8, PT 11) or writing skills (PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT 7, PT 8), some teachers said that they could do listening (PT4, PT10, PT11, PT12) or writing (PT9) skills when they were required. There are also some teachers one of who said despite several listening, students could not understand the track, so he found the solution to write the unknown words on the board in a simple way (PT4), another one who read the listening audio scripts (PT11) some

who scanned the target words in the listening tracks and sometimes gave the transcripts to the students by photocopying (PT8, PT11).

For example, in the 8th grade last year, there was the subject of photosynthesis. The subject of photosynthesis has not been given in the written form in the book but in the form of listening. A scheme for that was given only. Now there were a lot of words. I copied the words and distributed like that. I gave the students important words only. (PT11)

In addition to teachers who said they used supplementary materials and books as well as they focused on the national coursebook in-depth (PT5, PT11) some teachers complained about the negative attitudes and indifference of students towards the non-tested skills and competencies (PT4, PT8) and a teacher said that despite the willingness of the teacher to do interactive activities, the students did not want to do those because of exam anxiety and stress (PT2). A teacher expressed that as a result of this situation, the teacher threw away everything he had learned at university and master's degree and gained the thought that the exam was exploiting the energy of teachers (PT2). On the other hand, at 5th-6th or 7th grades, a teacher said they could spare some time for speaking, listening, writing, role play, dramatization instead of spending so much time for doing tests (PT1), while another teacher said that they could also do role-play, debate, projects in those grades (PT2). However, in addition to these teachers who added that this situation was not valid in the 8th grade, there are teachers who said that the allocated lessons were insufficient, so they should have used the time carefully (PT1, PT9).

When the language skills in the high school entrance exams were compared with the language skills they covered in their lessons, some of the private school teachers stated that they followed two curricula one of which included studies for THSE, while the other was aimed at measuring the language skills not covered by THSE (FT1, FT3, FT4, FT5, FT7, FT8). Teachers stated that the skills used in the course had changed with the changing high school entrance exam system; they uttered that simple sentence comprehension studies used to be done in the SBS period which they described as easy (FT3, FT9, FT10), while with TEOG system, grammar and reading comprehension skills (FT3, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12) and objectives assessment (FT11) were the focus

of their lessons . However, with THSE, they started to use reading and word-based studies (FT3, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT11, FT12), grammar (FT4, FT11) and exam related tactics (FT4) in their lessons.

Same. It looks like. SBS was like a university exam and was in June. We even had choices of 20. There were 16 units and the coefficient of the test was x2. That's why there was only 1 point different from other subjects. I assume math's was 3, English's was 2. There were the same 20 questions as in the other subjects and that's why the exam wasn't discriminating against you from other subjects. I still meet with my SBS students. They haven't forgotten many things. Because the coefficient was high, and the students were taking English seriously. Maybe it was affecting negatively because they were taking the test in June, but it was nice. The content was heavier, such as present perfect could be tested. We are currently studying these topics pointlessly because they are in the curriculum but not in the entrance exams. TEOG was easier than SBS but a bit difficult than THSE. (FT10)

Teachers who believe that evaluating English with a single question type, multiple-choice, is wrong, think that some skills will not be improved when students study for only one competency of English; they also think not only grammar but also speaking or other skills should be studied so that English can fully be acquired because a language should be thought as a whole (FT1, FT4, FT8, FT11). Apart from the skills measured in the THSE, speaking (FT3, FT4, FT8) writing (FT4, FT8) listening (FT4, FT5) are practiced. On the other hand, some teachers have THSE-focused lessons such as lecturing (FT2), multiple-choice practises (FT2), memorizing some chunks and words (FT3), grammar studies (FT7), not integrating speaking, writing, or listening (FT7, FT12). With the new examination system, it was said that general culture was included (FT11), the 8th grade coursebook units (paragliding, kayaking, social media, etc.) became interesting, but the need to simplify the reading texts appeared (FT3), some questions which even could be asked in YDS exams were asked in THSE (FT9). The teacher added that despite the opinions that YDS and YÖKDİL did not measure the language skills of a person, they were still used (FT9). Furthermore, a teacher mentioned that the motivation in the private school was different because the expectation of parents was that the student learns and uses the language (FT3). At the same time, there is a private school that uses coursebooks chosen according to

European Common English Framework (FT4), and another one that prepares students for the Cambridge exams (FT5).

In the issue of comparison language competencies tested in THSE with the language competencies included in the courses, both state and private school teachers mostly talked about the lessons that are parallel to the competencies in the exam.

4.2.2.1. Impact of THSE on in-class instruction

The public-school teachers observed the effects of the exam as negative ones on their lessons mostly. The teachers used individual learning instead of group work or pair work which is very important for ELT because they wanted to diminish the loss of time derived from limited lesson time (PT3, PT4, PT5, PT9, PT11). A teacher mentioned the overuse of the Grammar Translation Method because it was required to speed up preparations for THSE (PT9). The teachers talked about being in a rush to catch up with the program because they didn't have enough lessons (PT5, PT6, PT9, PT10, PT12). A few teachers said that they planned their lessons based on the weight of THSE topics and they disregarded English for general purposes (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). Moreover, a teacher expressed that students didn't care about the topics and skills not to be tested in THSE (PT2). As stated mostly by the teachers, they tried to finish all the topics earlier than planned, so they could review again to make sure they were learnt well (PT1, PT4, PT10, PT12). Furthermore, it was better for the students to see as many questions as they could in the lessons and to do pair work or group work as done at 5th, 6th or 7th grade was not possible at this grade (PT3).

I am a graduate of Anatolian high school lasted 7 years and we finished learning at Secondary School, but we had a practice at every 15 days. We used to put on makeup or staff like that. I tried to do that here. Since 7th graders don't have exam anxiety, I organized a costume party. In 6th grade, we had a topic about occupations. They dressed as they wanted to. The lessons are limited at 5th or 6th graders. They only have 3 lessons. We tried to give elective lessons to them, so we can do something with them. At least it should be 6 lessons, so their English levels or skills can be improved. (PT6)

The teachers uttered that the importance of grammar in THSE followed to TEOG decreased to a significant degree and they mentioned the importance of vocabulary teaching gained importance in their lessons (PT8, PT10, PT12). One of the teachers stated that they came to the lessons with their plans co-ordinately prepared with the other teachers in the school, first they taught the main topic of a new unit followed by vocabulary study and grammar acquaintance and lastly the students were evaluated by tests or quizzes (PT8). It was said the help of supplementary resources was needed and some practise tests from 5-6 different resources were added to the materials (PT8). In a similar way, every in class or outclass studies were conducted based on THSE and everything done at this grade was based on THSE (PT1).

All private school teachers mentioned the effects of THSE in their instruction and teaching process. Some of the teachers stated that they didn't do group work or pair work, but they started to focus on individual learning methods (FT1, FT5, FT6, FT10). In addition, some teachers said that they used group work or pair work even it was rarely, but they couldn't see the effect of these (FT2, FT8, FT11).

We did group works or pair works. These ways of teaching are seen as no teacher in the class. Group work that we used while teaching vocabulary was not enough. We started to do it for doing the test as a group. We don't do it in the class but in the garden as well. In pair works, the students used to go next to their best friends, and they start chatting. It is not useful, either. We started to do activities in which students learn individually. We can do more of these techniques in 7th grade. Of course, this is a result of THSE. (FT2)

A few teachers said they could do these interaction patterns in their lessons and did various activities according to the topics (FT3, FT11, FT12).

For example, we have a unit called communication and the students need to pick up the telephone. The best example is this. I do role-play here. The situations are like 'I am not at home, I am not available, call me in an hour' or 'no service here, it is a bad line.' The teacher has more chances to do this at a private school because there are more lessons and fewer students. (FT3)

Some teachers talked about the use of Turkish in the classes and they couldn't integrate speaking into his/her classes (FT1, FT9).

Because the student is waiting for this from you. Suppose that you were teaching the 'Adventure' unit. New words are expected to be taught and practised immediately, later, if there is a grammar topic, it can be given superficially. Then, the students can do a lot of tests or exercises on this topic, and if they cannot do the questions, so they can ask them the teacher. (FT9)

While some teachers were saying that they did some listening exercises as short videos or tracks (FT1, FT2), some were saying they didn't apply to these skills (FT7, FT12). The teachers said the focus of their lessons was vocabulary based (FT9, FT10, FT12) and doing tests (FT9, FT10). A teacher told the students could practise both reading and writing skills and practise new words with the help of games (FT12). Also, some teachers mentioned the complaint of parents when the teachers tried to do some activities (FT1, FT10). One of the teachers was trying to save some time by taking out some topics (FT2) while one was blending two totally different curricula (FT4). The teacher said s/he was negotiating with the students to catch up with the plans of both curricula (FT4).

I sometimes tell them to compare the materials done in the classroom with the ones for exam preparation. I always say them to compare both and check the reading and vocabulary skills which are in parallel with THSE. I always refer to THSE. If I cannot do anything, I just give some time to them at the beginning or end of the lesson. I tell them to finish the topic because they will be evaluated at the end and the exam average would affect their exam results. This is not a threat of course but a kind of agreement or negotiation. It means like 'you let me finish this topic, so I can give you 10-15 minutes. (FT4)

Although a teacher was thinking the exam was causing motivation on both teachers and students (FT3), some teachers were thinking it created anxiety and stress on teachers (FT3, FT4, FT7). Lastly, it was added that one to one study with some students were done on the necessary topics (FT1, FT9, FT12).

As a conclusion, both public and private school teachers expressed that their instruction and planning were affected by THSE as well as their materials and methods were shaped according to THSE. Different from public school teachers, private school teachers mentioned their anxiety.

4.2.2.2. Relationship between teachers' methods and THSE

Many of the public school teachers stated that there was an increase in anxiety along with the exam preparation process and consequently they did not use interactive methods such as group work or pair work and instead they progressed with individual methods (PT1, PT3, PT5, PT6, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). They said that they were doing full examination-oriented studies in a test-based environment (PT1, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT11, PT12).

A teacher who said that the high school entrance exam narrowed down the methods used in his lessons, stated that he could not use the education he had received in the university and complained about not doing task types such as role-play, reflection or portfolio (PT9). The teachers who compared the 5-6-7th grades with the 8th grade stated that within the first group, they could do activities for speaking, writing, doing projects, preparing bulletin boards including more interaction patterns such as group work or pair work because they did not have test anxiety or adolescence changes, as well as they, had more interests towards lessons (PT1, PT4). However, it was expressed that 8th-grade students were unwilling for these activities (PT6). On the contrary to this, some teachers stated that the students were willing but when they used these interaction patterns with classes having around 40 students, students made some noise, so the administration started to think that the teacher could not manage the class and also to draw attention of students to the lessons became difficult after these interactive activities (PT4, PT8). When these activities were removed from the book, the time allocated for the book was reduced (PT4) and time is used instead of doing multiple-choice exercises, comprehension check, word studies or some other exercises in the coursebook (PT8). In addition, there is also a teacher who integrates YouTube for studying the topics (PT9). On the other hand, a group of public-school teachers said that since the coursebook required them to use group or pair works, they applied them in their lessons (PT2, PT7).

Some of the private school teachers said that their methods were adapted according to the changes in the high school entrance exams (FT3, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT9, FT10,

FT11), while others stated that they used their own methods (FT1, FT2, FT4, FT8, FT12). Teachers who said that their techniques and methods of instruction changed according to THSE, said that they preferred individual learning methods instead of group work or pair work (FT3, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT9, FT10, FT11). While a teacher who used a test-oriented method said that he did not normally choose this but he had to (FT9), another teacher who said that the THSE curriculum should be approached with a traditional approach, expressed that it was necessary to memorize the words and do tests for THSE (FT11). The teaching style of the teacher changes with the way the student studies and this is naturally reflected in the planning and teaching methods of teachers (FT5). Similarly, a teacher who said that the topics and multiple-choice questions caused to atrophy of teachers expressed that the high school entrance exam was trying to make complicated questions by using a simple curriculum which was described with an analogy(giving a tea glass but asking for water glass)(FT2). It was also stated by a teacher that students had been given the tactics used in the KPDS or YDS exams (FT9) and also speaking could not take place because students were not exposed to language (FT2).

On the other hand, teachers who said that the lesson techniques and methods were not influenced by the high school entrance exam, said that they preferred student-centered methods instead of teacher-centered as well as interactive patterns such as group work or pair work rather than individual learning (FT1, FT2, FT4, FT8, FT11, FT12). Moreover, there was also a teacher who tried to use these interactive methods in his lessons (FT4).

For example, I made a discussion about a subject, that is, dividing the class into two, by assigning their sides like agree or disagree. Something in debate style. It was incredibly enjoyable, and they were relieved, and they've learned something from each other. (FT4)

One of the teachers said that even if the students had a level of English at B1 according to CEFR if they did not know the meaning of a word in the given context, they might do the question wrong. The teacher said “For example, we were talking about economics. In the first unit, it says “we have similar interests,” but since the students did not know this meaning of the word ‘interest’, they might transfer wrong” (FT12).

Both the public and private school teachers talked about a relation between the methods used in their lessons with the high school entrance exams, but few teachers stated they used different methods rather than the entrance exam required. Mostly, teachers prefer traditional learning methods rather than interactive learning methods.

4.2.2.3. In-class activities for higher THSE achievement

Public school teachers stated they needed extra materials for higher THSE achievement. They mostly added multiple-choice tests into their lessons, and they had lessons for vocabulary along with reading and comprehension studies. (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). They uttered that they skipped listening and speaking but they did more studies on reading and vocabulary (PT3, PT4, PT7). Some of them used writing skills to teach vocabulary. Also, some stated that they tried to diversify their lessons with visual materials and presentations which increased the motivations and interests of students (PT2, PT3, PT4). In the same way, it was stated that smartboards were used in their lessons for the same purpose (PT4). Moreover, they stated that they visited some websites and forums to find useful resources and materials (PT4, PT5). A few of the teachers stated they integrated the quizzes into their lessons to make the students memorize vocabulary items (PT4, PT7, PT8). One of the teachers said that they coordinated with each other for the sake of their students' success and advanced as an academic lesson (PT4). However, one of the teachers mentioned that the students perceived English as an unimportant course, and they didn't study enough (PT6). Furthermore, it was uttered that the limitation of lessons put a limit on practices done in the lessons (PT8).

In terms of the things private school teachers did in their lessons to increase the success in THSE, all of them talked about two curricula one of which is to study THSE and another one is to study English for general purposes (FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12). Overall what is received from the teachers is they feel happy and satisfied when they implement their own curriculum. However, they stated that the reality of the exam created stress on the students, so unavoidably, they spared time and got materials for this (FT2, FT3, FT4, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT9,

FT10, FT12). The number of supplementary books that the teachers used in the exam process ranged from 2 to 8 (FT10). The teachers who said that the resources changed every year stated that they searched all the possible books in the market and decided on the most useful ones. Besides, some of the schools have their own books, so the teachers used those (FT1, FT4, FT10, FT12). Moreover, the example questions published by MONE were included in the lessons (FT2).

Predominately, they uttered that they focused on vocabulary study and reading skills; however, some said that to make the vocabulary items permanent, they integrated speaking and writing skills (FT2, FT3, FT5). It was uttered that being a teacher which requires extra work after the school brings some workload as preparing wordlist, searching for resources on the internet and doing a lot of extra works (FT3). The previous exams were thought much simpler than THSE because its focus is on the reading and comprehension tested through challenging questions (FT3). Nevertheless, they uttered that since the level of students is good, so the teachers didn't spend so much time teaching grammar, instead, they did a lot of tests and vocabulary studies (FT5, FT7, FT8, FT9). They did more on doing test techniques (FT4, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT9). Some of the teachers used games while teaching vocabulary and did revisions about the topics that had been studied (FT5, FT12). A few of the teachers stated that they identified the mistakes of the students after each practise test and they did individual studies to compensate those (FT8, FT12).

In a nutshell, almost all teachers mentioned tests and vocabulary studies in terms of things they have done to increase the success of students in THSE. In the previous system, the focus of lessons was on grammar but now they have more vocabulary-based lessons. Different from private schools, the public-school teachers did some studies more based on the coursebook because of fewer lessons and more class sizes. Also, they did a lot of vocabulary studies and tests in the class rather than one-to-one studies. On the other hand, the private school teachers followed two different curricula at the same time, and they did individual studies if they found out some topics that students had struggled with. Both groups of teachers took vocabulary and reading skills in the centre.

4.2.2.4. Impact of THSE on assignments

The public-school teachers mentioned that they couldn't teach any non-tested topics in their lessons because of their limited time, so all assignments were for THSE (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). For the topics of project work the students need to submit every term, they mentioned the topics were also connected to THSE (PT1, PT3, PT5). The examples for these projects that appeared in the interview results are practise tests, word memorization, the memorization of the dialogues with their partners and demonstration of them in front of the class, the memorization or translation of the reading texts, presentations of specific units in front of the class. A teacher stated that students were eager to practise interactive activities, but because of the limited lessons, he couldn't spare enough time for them (PT8). The public-school teachers uttered the lessons and assignments were parallel with each other and they exemplified homework they used as vocabulary studies, learning outcome tests, completing an extra resource for THSE and doing tests (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). One of the teachers told that s/he asked for preparation of ppt for the topics not understood enough (PT8). In addition, it was said that the quiz was done to make the words long term by memorizing in the class (PT4). In addition, it was said that the assignments were given parallel with the topics (PT7). Except for this, it was stated that there was some homework as vocabulary studies, translation, matching and fill-in-the-blanks exercises (PT1, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). It was also stated that the students were punished by sending their names to the WhatsApp groups of parents in the case of not completing the assignments (PT6). Generally, they said they tried to assign different kinds of homework but in 8th grade, this was not so applicable, so they assign more test-based homework.

The private school teachers were almost in the same opinion with the public-school teachers (FT2, FT3, FT5, FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT12). Generally, they follow project-based curricula but in 8th grade because of the reality of the high school entrance examination, materials and studies became exam-oriented (FT3, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT12). At this point, the assignments were said to be about tactics and

techniques of test solving (FT4, FT7, FT12). The assignments usually were tests, sentence writing to use some words, fill in the gaps or writing. A lot of teachers did etudes with weaker students or they gave individual assignments (FT4, FT12). For the topics of the project works, they again mentioned the THSE effect and gave an example as designing a website (FT3, FT6). Concerning the same issue, the private school teachers expressed that the assignments at this level were in parallel with the topics covered in the lessons (FT7, FT8). The teachers who were in the opinion that only the MONE coursebook was not enough stated that they used supplementary book/s in their lessons. Therefore, the assignments were given from different resources (FT1, FT3, FT4, FT5, FT6, FT9, FT12). Moreover, the assignments were said to be mostly multiple-choice tests (FT3, FT4, FT5, FT6, FT8, FT9, FT12), but teachers also assigned different types of homework to make the students not to forget the use of English (FT4, FT6, FT10, FT12). They taught the target words in the class with activities and they gave the students the opportunity of practise those words through assignments (FT2, FT3, FT5, FT6, FT10). Some teachers stated they didn't assign homework for listening and writing while some stated that they assigned homework as writing with specific words to make them not forget target words (FT4, FT5, FT6, FT12). Except for this, there are some schools that receive homework from their center and some schools which prepare their own homework including inference and reference skills. The types of homework can be exemplified as a reading text, vocabulary matching, fill-in-blanks, tests in their books or recording a video showing a recipe as required in the cooking unit. It was also mentioned that by looking at the results of each practise test, some teachers assigned individual homework according to students' mistakes (FT4, FT8).

As a conclusion, THSE had an impact on both groups of teachers' decisions for assignments. They assign homework for THSE preparation and homework based on production was not assigned mostly. In other words, both public and private school teachers assign homework such as tests and vocabulary studies to help students in THSE. However, the public-school teachers assign types of homework which can be said as traditional such as translation and memorizing words with their Turkish

meanings while some private school teachers assign homework based on production in which they can use the words and practise them.

4.2.2.5. Impact of THSE on teachers' performance

Concerning the impact of THSE on teachers' performance, all public-school teachers stated that the exam increased their performances (PT1, PT3, PT7, PT8). A teacher said that he was doing his best, trying to give topics from point to point, solving sample questions, solving questions in previous years, trying not to skip even the smallest thing (PT3). They also stated that the publications were followed carefully, materials were shared among the teachers and teachers supported each other (PT4, PT8). Moreover, one of the teachers expressed that he had the ambition to put more on the things he already needed to do and took responsibility for the exam energy (PT7). In addition, a teacher told that he had to prepare the students for the exam; therefore, he could not be left behind the curriculum because the results appeared in the practise tests and the teacher had to put efforts with or without willing as the teacher said "The 8th grade teachers have to put maximum efforts for both THSE and practise tests to meet the expectations of the child and the family" (PT1).

A group of public-school teachers said that the examination had negative effects on teachers (PT2, PT6, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). Firstly, the teachers are uncomfortable with not being able to do interactive studies or teach the skills not tested in the THSE even the teachers have a desire to teach (PT2, PT6, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). As a result of this, their teaching methods became like Social or Turkish teachers (PT6) or became traditional (PT11). They are also in the rush of catching up with the curriculum (PT1, PT10, PT12) or fear of missing a topic (PT7). In addition to the students asking for doing tests (PT2, PT6, PT12), the teacher tried to solve different questions from various sources (PT12), and the teacher was expected to take this practice into the centre (PT2, PT6, PT9, PT12). If these studies are not done, the teachers are experiencing a guilty conscience (PT2, PT11). They also stated that at this grade, they did not have colourful English lessons or competitions as they had in 5-6-7 grades (PT6, PT3) and the stress level of teachers was less at these younger grades (PT3). In

addition, a group of public-school teachers told that the performance changed from teacher to teacher (PT3) and they would do their best even if there was no exam (PT5).

On the other hand, some of the private school teachers stated that THSE had a positive change in their performance (FT1, FT4), while another group said that it had negative effects on their performance (FT2, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT10, FT11, FT12). In addition to this, several teachers mentioned both positive and negative effects (FT3, FT5, FT9).

The teachers, who talked about the positive effects, said that the high school entrance exam increased the performance of both teachers and students. Teachers said that they were trying to get better results and motivated themselves to increase average test scores of students (FT3, FT7, FT9). Teachers stated that this type of evaluation took place everywhere and that they were satisfied with this exam system (FT4, FT5). Moreover, teachers stated that the high school entrance exam contributed to the students because they became more active in the lessons (FT4, FT5, FT9). If the student was reluctant, it was assumed that this would affect the teacher's motivation (FT9). Finally, it was stated that the teacher had to follow the topics continuously to prepare students for the subjects that could be tested in the high school entrance examination (FT1).

For example, I heard Turkish teachers saying, 'although this is usually the subject of the curriculum, no question appeared last year and it hasn't been asked for two years,' so the teacher has to keep track of everything. What can be asked or what cannot be asked. (FT1).

Apart from this group, teachers who considered the effects of the exam as negative think that English should not be asked in high school entrance exams. The teachers said that they or their friends experienced stress and anxiety along with the high school entrance exam with the question of whether students could do or not in their minds (FT2, FT3, FT4, FT6). Although they have received communication-based training in the ELT field, they must teach with the test techniques and as a result of this, they have experienced situations such as atrophy and forgetting English (FT5, FT6, FT10, FT12). On this subject, a teacher said that he was educated in Cyprus and he used to use English in his daily life there; however, he did not differ from a Turkish teacher at the

moment and that he requested to do the meetings at least in English for the sake of speaking (FT10). There is also a teacher who evaluates this period as a transition (FT5) and another one who said that there was an increase in their performance because of the competition among teachers (FT7) and a teacher who said that he had to teach more and faster (FT8). It was stated that the activities were designed to contribute to the development of the students (FT12), but in the case of doing the speaking, listening or writing skills since they were not tested in the high school entrance exam, they received reactions of students and parents (FT9, FT12). At the same time, a teacher said that he felt conscientiously disturbed when he conducted interactive studies (FT6), and another one stated that college students had a negative attitude towards the lessons with the claims they knew it which put the teacher at stake (FT11). Teachers who cannot practise these skills in their lessons feel atrophy with the attitudes of the students and changed their instructional methods and techniques (FT2, FT3, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12).

Both state and private school teachers have different opinions within themselves regarding the impact of high school entrance exams on the performance of teachers. Some of the teachers talked about the negative impacts of the test, while others expressed some positive effects. Some of the teachers mentioned both positive and negative effects.

4.2.2.6. Impact of THSE on cooperation among teachers

While public school teachers said that THSE increased the interdisciplinary cooperation, this cooperation was said to be mostly keeping in continuous touch and informing each other about the situation like falling behind the program (PT1, PT4, PT5, PT7, PT10, PT11, PT12), work allocation for preparation extra worksheets (PT1, PT2, PT7), sharing workload for the exam or quiz preparation (PT4, PT7, PT8).

We were four colleagues in 8th grade. We always kept in touch and shared extra studies, worksheets, and vocabulary studies that we thought to provide benefit to the students. We were constantly sharing these with each other. (PT1)

These teachers also mentioned that communication with other disciplines was also increasing (PT1, PT3, PT5, PT6, PT9, PT11). It was also stated that this communication was about the decrease in performance of some students (PT1), the situations of weaker students (PT9), or sometimes to gather information when the teacher was not familiar with some parents (PT11).

Our cooperation with other branches is this, especially if we see students whose performances are declining, or if we cannot get the result as we expect in English, we ask other branches. I mean, does this student have a problem? What? Why? The previous test was as high but not this one. If necessary, this situation is also discussed with the guidance and counseling service and school administration. Also, it could be asked to the family (PT1).

In some situations, related to the mistakes in a specific lesson, teachers kept in touch (PT6).

For example, the child has done a lot of mistakes in the Religious Science test, but the other parts are very good, in this case, we talk to the child and do one-to-one guidance. Our charts are always updated and kept based on performances. When the mistakes of a student are increasing in the last two months, we start to ask what's happening, why he is coming down. (PT6)

A teacher said he cooperated with the Social Studies teacher once their subjects were similar, and it required the cooperation between these disciplines (PT9).

For instance, I don't remember totally but I was going to teach superlatives. That is, Zonguldak is located in the furthest north in Turkey. The student does not know where Zonguldak is. I told the Social Studies teacher about it and after him, I could have taught (PT9).

Teachers who think that this communication may be negative stated that it might cause competition in some cases and sometimes they can take the easy way out by using social networking sites (PT2, PT9).

Private school teachers on the same subject stated that THSE increased disciplinary cooperation, and this cooperation showed itself generally keeping in constant communication and informing each other in the cases of falling behind the program (FT5, FT7, FT9, FT11), in the work allocation such as sharing works, preparation of materials (FT3, FT5, FT10), closing the gaps of students and doing etudes (FT4, FT6)

There was the word "cooker" in a question and many students didn't do it. We've come together and sat, and we have brainstormed about what to do about it. As far as I'm concerned, there were some questions in the high school entrance exam about everyday conversations and we made them a list. We came up with 300-400 chunks and made them groups of 5 and assigned students each week at certain intervals. Normally we have them in our books, but we thought it would be a little more useful. (FT1)

In addition, it was expressed that private school teachers were in cooperation with other disciplines (FT2, FT4, FT7, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12) and teachers often came together to evaluate the situations of students (FT4, FT9, FT12) because even the fractions were important in the high school exam, so being good at only one or two subjects would not save the student in the exam in question (FT9). Interdisciplinary cooperation is usually seen as asking for help when the subjects were similar (i.e. asking the Turkish teacher to teach the adverbs in Turkish and then teaching adverbs in English) (FT2, FT7, FT9), directing students to the counseling service when the student cried or he was unhappy (FT2), taking each other's lessons to catch up with the program when necessary (FT2) and negotiation with other teachers by the mentor teachers after the analysis of students' mistakes in a school which uses mentorship system (FT11).

As I mentioned in the previous example, the student who preferred Social Sciences was not very good at mathematics but was very good in non-math courses and English. When he learned that high school offered a year of preparation, he felt more motivated. The social sciences gave a chance to send a student abroad for the last two years, he became interested more. were also eager to learn that it was possible to send abroad for the last two years. We do this by talking with other disciplines. We do this for other grades, but the frequency is changing. If we do this once in 2-3 weeks, we're doing it every week in the 8th grade. (FT12)

As the negative effects of THSE on communication and cooperation among teachers, it was mentioned that teachers in some schools started to consider each other as rivals and stopped communication with their colleagues (FT3). In addition, a teacher stated although they could do a project-based collaborative study, they focused on test techniques (FT6).

All public and private school teachers stated that THSE increased their inner and interdisciplinary cooperation. Despite a few negative impacts of THSE, teachers mostly believe THSE increased their cooperation in a positive way.

4.3. Perceptions of teachers on the impact of THSE on students' learning and motivation

Data collected from public and private school teachers about the impact of THSE on students' learning and motivation are presented under five subtitles as the impact of THSE on students' expectations, students' attitudes, learning and studying process, emotional states, parents' expectations.

4.3.1. Impact of THSE on students' expectations from the process

All public-school teachers uttered that THSE affected the expectations of students to a great extent (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). Moreover, a few teachers said that THSE affected everything unavoidably (PT5, PT6, PT11). There were some teachers who mentioned that students requested the written exams to be preparations for THSE (PT3, PT4, PT6, PT9), some teachers who said that the students asked the exams with multiple-choice questions (PT2, PT7) and a teacher said that students asked for the high score (PT4).

For the impact of THSE on the expectations of students for written exams, most of the teachers said it had an impact (FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT12). A teacher stated THSE didn't affect the written exams so much (FT11). The impact of THSE on students was observed by the teachers as a focus on THSE preparations (FT7), asking for parallel questions to THSE (FT3), anxiety (FT4), the importance given to the cumulative point average (FT4) and disgust against multiple-choice questions (FT2). A few of the teachers stated that the students were divided into two groups one of which were not aware of the exam and aimed at some high schools by looking at their names and the other group who were aware of the high school entrance exam and aimed at a good high school (FT1, FT9). A teacher stated that some

students couldn't have integrated English into their lives but some of them did this in a very successful way (FT4).

There are also some students who could stand up in the class and says "Friends, THSE is a temporary process and also university entrance exam, the only thing that can remain with us is this, English." We are very happy when we can give this awareness to the students and this also depends on the language skills of the students (FT4).

Another teacher said that different teaching methods and materials were required to prepare students for the new exam system following TEOG, if the students were prepared for the exam with a simple program in a simple way, they would experience frustration at the end of the year. (FT9)

As I told earlier, for example in TEOG, the same sentence given in the MoE coursebook could appear in the exam. Or the same question could have been asked. For instance, one of the questions gave a picture of a person playing football and 'play football' was taken out from the sentence and the students needed to write that. For this, the students didn't need to take high-quality English education. 4th-grade students or even younger age groups could have done this. That's why, since the new system is difficult, we proceeded like this (FT9).

Overall, both groups of teachers stated the impact of THSE on the expectations of students for the written exams. written exams are usually expected to be a preparation for THSE, consisting of multiple-choice questions and being easy enough so that students can get high points.

4.3.2. Students' attitudes towards English lessons

The public-school teachers argued that students found it vital to study for THSE and asked lessons to focus on THSE (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). Most teachers thought that students only cared about the topics and skills which could help for THSE and they did not want to focus on other concepts and skills. Some uttered that when they tried to do some practical language studies, they received reactions from the students and their parents (PT2, PT6). A significant number of teachers complained about students' approach towards English as a lesson to be graded and students' only concern about aligning their studies with the questions

in THSE (PT1, PT2, PT6, PT7, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). A teacher mentioned that when s/he tried to do speaking exercises, the students reminded him speaking was not tested THSE, so no need for it and some exercises involving listening to songs were not appreciated by the students (PT2). In other words, the teacher complained about the statement of students which was doing test instead of interactive, communicative, and authentic materials. An example given by a teacher can summarize the unwillingness of the students:

For example, when something is asked from my class in the simplest term, the class notebook, the students do not want to ask for it because they need to speak in English. If they do not ask in English, I do not respond. When it is given in the written form, it is not a problem but in the spoken form it is. Yes, they understand when they read but there is a problem in practice (PT6).

The problem of not being able to speak is explained by the oversized class, not finding situations in which students can speak and not reading books by a teacher (PT6). Another teacher talking about the same problem stated that because of oversized classes, the priority was given to catch up with the curriculum (PT7). As mentioned above, also mentioned by a teacher, teaching exam-based affected everything about the planning and material selection of teachers (PT2). Additionally, a teacher uttered that THSE is not the right English evaluation method because it does not approach and evaluate the language equally (PT1). In addition to some teachers with this opinion, some stated that the students had exam anxiety and they affected each other at this point. In addition to this, they followed the anxiety of doing all correct in THSE and the classes started to compete with each other (PT1, PT3, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). Due to the effect of English grade-point average on their cumulative grade point average which affects their exam results, some students gave importance on lessons while some replaced English into second place. The main reason for this replacement is the decrease of the coefficient and questions of English test in THSE after TEOG (PT1, PT9). A teacher stated that students had an understanding of English in THSE as doing five more correct questions in Math instead of doing the English test in the exam (PT9). In addition to the approach of students, another point made by the teachers is that some students had the exam

awareness and tended to study for THSE while some acted loosely and did not want to do anything for it (PT3, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT12). Lastly, there is a teacher who told that the exam awareness of the parents brought benefit to the school (PT7), and another teacher who told that they did not do some skills as speaking or listening and assign project-based homework not to lose time (PT11).

Concerning the relationship between the thoughts of students about English lessons and THSE in the perspective of learning and usage of the language, the private school teachers said that most of the students did not care their lessons and they started to find English easy (FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FT11, FT12). The teachers complained about the change caused by THSE in the 8th-grade program which is the flexibility in the use of Turkish during the lessons and put some skills requiring production aside (FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT12). It was talked by the teachers that the motivation of the students in 8th-grade totally directed to THSE exam and the coefficient decrease of English test in THSE brought some negative effects (FT1, FT9, FT10).

The fact that the coefficient of the English test is 1 while the others are 4 drops the motivation of students critically. The students often mention about 4 mistakes in English take their 4 points while 1 mistake in Math costs 4 points (FT1).

According to the teachers, the expectation of students at 8th grade is only answering all ten questions in THSE correct and the skills as speaking or listening are regarded as a loss of time by the students and parents (FT5, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12). They thought a small number of students have the willingness to learn and speak English and some students attend some extra etudes or courses to fill the gap that the curriculum followed has (FT2, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12). At the same time, schools follow another curriculum which is called with different names to fill the gap and to provide English for general purposes education (FT8, FT11, FT12). Additionally, a teacher mentioned the efforts given by the teacher to persuade students about the importance of English for general purposes (FT8).

In the lessons, some materials compiled from different resources are used, so naturally, the lessons become exam preparations and after each frequent practice test, the mistakes of the students are analysed (FT1, FT2, FT5, FT8, FT10, FT12). According

to the statements of the teachers, students want to keep their grades high because they are aware of the fact that the grades affect THSE results at the end of the year; therefore, teachers help students by doing official exams based on the national curriculum and quizzes based on English for general purposes (FT5, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT12). A teacher uttered that he couldn't ask the students to read English books in their free time or attend in some competitions because they didn't have free time and he could have had a chance to do some activities like drama, speaking or listening activities after TEOG but with the new examination, THSE, this chance was taken away (FT10). Additionally, a group of teachers told that having an English test in THSE affected their lessons in a positive way. They talked about a group of students who were not aware of the exam that they were going to take, but still, they had high expectations and another group who were very ambitious so they experienced demotivation after few mistakes in their practice tests (FT5, FT8, FT9, FT12). A teacher stated that the attitudes of the students were shaped by the teachers (FT3) while another teacher stated sometimes, they needed to do motivational speeches about the importance of daily English (FT8).

As a summary, regarding what students think about the relationship between English lessons and THSE in terms of learning and usage of the language, most of the private and public-school teachers stated that a significant number of the students directed their studies towards THSE which affected their lessons, naturally. Moreover, public-school teachers brought up their lessons which are about preparing students for the exam and some extra studies like speaking and listening exercises are not done because of the oversize of the classes and limited lessons. On the other hand, private school teachers complained about the decrease of coefficient and question number of English test in THSE which caused the demotivation of students.

4.3.3. Impact of THSE on students' learning and studying process

All public-school teachers mentioned the changes in the study and learning habits of students in the preparation process of THSE. It was stated that THSE changed the

studying frequency of students and the students started to study in a more planned and conscious way (PT1, PT2, PT4, PT5, PT8).

For instance, parents come in 7th grade and ask what they are going to do because their boy or girl is going to take the exam. I tell them to be calm and add that they will see a totally different child in the following year because the goal is set, and things are getting serious. The following year, they come again. They tell me that as I said, the child has changed totally, and s/he studies regularly. That brings motivation (PT11).

It was mentioned by the teachers that the students used to study for open-ended exams but in 8th-grade, they totally focused on test-based exams (PT1, PT2), they followed an education based on rote-learning (PT9) and they followed test-based learning in every subject (PT4). However, it was stated that the changes in the learning and studying habits appeared in two different ways; one group of students set their goals earlier and started their study process on their own while the other group didn't have a goal, so the parents and environment pushed them to study and have a goal (PT1, PT2). In addition to these, a few teachers divided the effects of THSE among the students into two and stated that one group of students who were not successful had a motivation towards THSE (PT6, PT9, PT11); however, they experienced not catching up with their peers in a year since they ignored their school subjects until 8th grade (PT2, PT5, PT7) as a teacher said "Even if a student studies, it is too late since s/he doesn't have a background. It is difficult to learn Present Perfect without knowing Present Simple." (PT2).

If a student has inner study discipline, s/he can do well at 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades. However, let's say the student didn't study in 5th and 6th grade and started to study in 8th grade but couldn't compensate for the words. In 8th grade, we have some words taught in 5th or 6th grade. At that moment s/he complains about the unknown words. I cannot teach all the words in the past year, even if I did, the student cannot handle it. For me, the biggest problem is this. If a student memorizes the word on time and takes that word to the next grade, then the student will be relaxed and happy (PT7).

It was mentioned that even though the second group was successful, they still put a lot of effort to close their gaps (PT6, PT7, PT9, PT11). The public-school teachers said that this group of students did a lot of things for the sake of THSE in the previous years

(PT1, PT2, PT8) and they should have done that (PT7), supported by another teacher who pointed that a 5th grader aimed Science High School and started to do studies for that goal (PT8).

We as class teachers teach how to study in a planned way with a program in 5th grade if necessary, by doing it together. Daily reviews, reading books, doing tests... By getting used to it slowly not a lot of questions at a time but little in 5th grade, little more in 6th grade and a little more in 7th grade because to catch up with the speed of 8th grade, the students need to experience that process. (PT8)

A teacher mentioned the weaker students had unrealistic self-confidence and stayed indifferent against the exam (PT7). It was stated that the exam awareness existed in most of the students (PT5) and 80% of students were exam oriented (PT8). An effect observed by a teacher is that English was not seen as a communication way but as a subject (PT9) and another one is the negative effect of students' placement based on their addresses (PT12).

All private school teachers uttered that they had observed changes in the learning and studying habits of students in the THSE process. Some teachers stated they had observed negative effects of THSE on students (FT1, FT2, FT5, FT7, FT10) while some uttered it caused a positive change in the students' habits (FT3, FT4, FT12).

Some of the negative effects observed by a teacher are that students do not have a fun time for themselves and they spend most of their time doing a test (FT1). In addition to these, the students didn't want to attend the trips and activities organized by the school because they saw these as a waste of time and even if it lasted one day, they preferred to do tests instead (FT1). Although some teachers said that the students involved in the process that they used to (FT2, FT12), some teachers expressed that the students had difficulties in planning (FT2, FT4, FT12) and time management (FT2, FT12). As a result of these, exam anxiety was said to appear and it showed itself starting from younger classes (FT2, FT7).

For example, the anxiety level of 7th graders is much lower than 8th graders but even in 5th grade, the students have this anxiety. I have a 5th-grade class for who I am responsible. I am teaching them for 14 hours. Sometimes they express their THSE anxiety in their statements. For me, in a few years, this anxiety will be

seen at primary school. That means THSE is a thing mentioned often by the parents. This is chain anxiety; parents-students-teachers. This anxiety comes back to you. (FT7)

In addition, another group of teachers observed that students quitted the studies for production based and using English in an effective way and focused on test techniques (FT5, FT6, FT7, FT9, FT10, FT11) and wanted to do studies only for THSE preparations (FT5, FT6, FT7, FT10). Furthermore, the students were observed to ask for individual studies (FT6) and ready-made things instead of activities including speaking or listening as done in the previous years (FT5, FT11) which is also supported by a teacher who said that “Usually we do more group work or pair works and while doing lots of speaking or writing activities, suddenly the students changed all their habits and attitudes”(FT5). The fluctuations in the education system and change in the exam system were observed to create despair in the study and learning habits of students (FT1).

In terms of its positive effects, THSE was said to have created an environment in which the students had a chance to experience time management and planning and put their lives in an order (FT4, FT7, FT12), also it was said that 80% of students studied a lot and even indifferent ones did at least 40-50 questions daily with their desires to do full in THSE (FT3, FT7). A teacher who claimed that this change was not a big one because the students were used to do tests even in 6th grade added that some friends of the teacher got students used to the process by assigning them tests even in 2nd grade (FT2). Another teacher emphasized THSE was an important process for study and learning habits of students as long as they kept their anxiety under control because every student in Turkish society loved a system and discipline and if this wasn't applicable, then in the placement process, some of them couldn't be placed (FT4). In addition to this, a teacher mentioned that the students took the exam as a fear object and they tried to reach it (FT12). The teachers expressed that before 8th grade, the students just studied for the requirements of each lesson but in this process, they needed to study more (FT2, FT9, FT10, FT12).

The habits change; for example, in 6th or 7th grade, it was enough for a student to review the topic taught by an English teacher or a question solved by a Math

teacher in the school at home. The student used to think s/he was enough when the teacher asked a question about it or could do an assignment regarding the topic. However, in 8th grade, he has a lot of things to apply, different types of questions, different topics. From now on, he must test himself with these. Of course, it changes. (FT9)

The start of these changes in students observed by the teachers was said to differ from students to students. A teacher said some of the students started to study in the second term of 7th grade and kept on all summer while the other students could have reached that awareness at the beginning of 8th grade (FT8). Another teacher uttered that very few students carried that awareness earlier than expected and started to study but most of the students struggled around September or October and starting from December, they noticed what was expecting them and experienced changes (FT9). It was also expressed that even there were some changes between the 1st and 2nd term (FT7).

In a nutshell, all public school and private school teachers stated the students experienced changes in their learning and studying habits in this process caused by THSE. Different from public school teachers, private school teachers said there were more negative effects than positive ones.

4.3.4. Impact of THSE on students' emotions and attitudes

All public-school teachers emphasized the critical effects of the exam on their lessons and exemplified the effects as stress, tension, anxiety, unhappiness, uneasiness. Some teachers stated that hardworking students felt relaxed due to their regular study habits and inner discipline while weak and uninterested students were in a panic and indifferent to the exam (PT1, PT7). A teacher said that 80 percent of the class was trying but 20 percent of them were nervous and this uneasiness came from the primary school (PT8). Regarding this, the teacher spent one or two months to decrease students' THSE and exam uneasiness and increase their motivations (PT8). A teacher uttered that the students had anxiety for each subject, but the teacher thought the defining test could be English in THSE (PT11).

Most of the teachers said that the anxiety of students increased a lot after the change in the exam in 2017 and the unknown aspects of the new system as question format,

courses included, number of tests or calculation of the results made huge impacts on the students (PT2, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT11). One of the teachers observed the disregarding attitude of students towards their lessons (PT2) and another teacher stated that after the update on the exam system which states the test would be open-ended instead of multiple-choice questions, some students had a nervous breakdown and a chaos atmosphere appeared (PT6). Besides, some teachers stated they couldn't ask students to buy resources after the open-ended question update (PT3, PT6) and a teacher said all their plans and exams changed after the change (PT6). Among the responses, there was one saying that the emotional change of students increased a lot with the puberty as their ages required (PT1, PT11, PT12). At the same time, this change may occur because of the expectations of the families and the society on students (PT1). In addition to the emotional changes of students, the teachers experienced anxiety to catch up with the curriculum (PT4, PT8).

In terms of their opinions about the effects of high school entrance exam, THSE, on the emotions of students, private school teachers summarized these effects as stress, tension, anxiety, unhappiness, uneasiness, test anxiety, being mentally depressed, crying, pressure, panic (FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FT5, FT7, FT8, FT10, FT11, FT12). A teacher said that some of the students were anxious while some were too self-confident (F6). In addition, another teacher stated that the students weren't aware of the situation in the first year of the new exam but now they were more aware, and they felt more stressed at Math and Science rather than the others (F9). To exemplify this situation the quote taken from below stated by a teacher can summarize:

In terms of the emotional change of students, I had an introvert student. He had a yellow notebook which he used to show me it often. In the beginning, he was drawing beautiful pictures. After a while, towards the middle of the notebook, he started to write he hated some of the students at school, his parents. There were some situations in the class that he experienced bullying. His peers never forgave when he mispronounced a word. When it was said not being able to choose their high schools, they started to feel depressed (FT2).

Besides, one of the teachers stated that the division of the schools as qualified or unqualified classified the students as qualified and unqualified and even the exam was over, the effect of this division kept on:

For example, I have a student, as you know there is a division like qualified and unqualified schools. It is not clear how this division was made. Mustafa Kaynak can be a qualified school but most unqualified schools are defined as qualified. On the other hand, most qualified schools as TEV or Hasan Tekin Ada are defined as unqualified. We used to try our best to prepare students for these schools in the time of OKS and SBS. A student got a high score around 480 but he couldn't attend the qualified schools. He is asking why he is here. The student thinks himself unsuccessful since he came to a private school. Because of the division like qualified-unqualified, the students do the same for themselves. At the time of SBS, they had a choice. They used to rank their choices from 1 to 20. You could get your choice based on your results. This was a better system (FT10).

Among the statements of the teachers, it was one of the most common ones that the students felt a great pressure from their parents, social environments and classmates and they felt they had to attend a high school based on the approaches of the society they came from (FT2, FT4, FT5, FT7, FT11, FT12). The panic atmosphere became the most when it was left one or two weeks left to the exam (F3, FT7) and it was stated that tiredness, giving up and discouragement were felt especially not at the beginning but towards the end of the process (FT12). In addition to this situation, the teachers experienced two different groups of students in terms of exam anxiety. One group having a goal studied at every opportunity and got stressed while the other one having a thought that they would not be successful gave up in the process and built a wall around themselves and developed a defense mechanism for themselves (FT4, FT8, FT9, FT12). A teacher said that anxiety appeared in these groups in the opposite way, while successful students were relaxed, the weaker ones were stressed (FT5). A teacher complained that students had a chance to repeat while preparing for the university exam, but they didn't have a chance for the high school that decides their university in the future (FT3). Moreover, it was stated by a teacher that the division of qualified-unqualified school division and attending the school near their addresses created panic over the students who had scholarships while they didn't have any effect on the students who had a chance to attend private schools (FT2).

Honestly speaking, I am observing students in the breaks and also in the lunch breaks when students have their lunch about 10 or 15 minutes and start to study. Clearly, I don't think they are happy and that tension keeps on. Even if I wanted to have something fun in my classes, the students start to say "Teacher, let's not

do this thing but do a test because the exam is approaching". They think the activities done work less than doing a test (FT1).

It was mentioned that the anxiety of the students was due to the lack of gaining exam awareness to the parents (F2) and the parents were sensitive in 8th grade (FT5) and the parents competed with each other and they used their children for that competition (FT12). In addition to parents, it was stated that the teachers felt pressure on themselves, so they felt stressed and this affected their performances (FT5, FT7, FT10). It was stated that when the exam changed, all lesson plans and exams which had been ready needed to be changed and this caused demoralization among teachers (FT1).

Some teachers stated that students felt more stress for Science and Math lessons rather than English and this derived from the increased coefficient of English test in THSE (FT3, FT6, FT9). Furthermore, some teachers stated that this may also be because of the puberty that their ages brought (FT4, FT8, FT11).

In the topic of how THSE affected the communication between private school teachers and the students and their attitudes in the lessons, most of the private school teachers stated that they directed the students to the guidance and counseling service and before this, they kept in touch with the administration, the other teachers and the counselling service (FT2, FT11, FT12). The teachers expressed they did motivational speeches sometimes even up to 2 hours long and tried to relax students (FT2, FT7, FT8, FT11). A situation in which guidance was done by the teacher can support this:

Last year I had a student who wanted Social Sciences High School. We did a serious study with him and explained what he needed to do. At that point, the student got interested and he showed a high achievement and he is there now. Besides, we supported his English for general purposes. He had already some basis, but we added on that. He was the only one who skipped the prep year. In this situation, the student needed serious motivation, counseling, and coaching. As a teacher and the service of coaching and counselling, it is important to see the stress of the student and direct the parents in the right way (FT12).

It was mentioned by a teacher that THSE affected the communication between teachers and students naturally and the students came to the lessons as tired, sleepy and without

having breakfast (FT4). Furthermore, the teacher needed to be careful in the choice of wording which requires not using a critical language but more motivational one (FT4).

I don't experience any problem in communication with the students, I mean, of course, we need to be careful in wording, the choice of words. The students cannot stand the sentences as "why didn't you do this?" especially when the high school entrance exam date is closer. At this situation, it is important to be careful (FT4)

Moreover, there was insecurity among students because they know they would be evaluated all the time (FT5, FT7). As a result of this situation, it was among the results that the students studied exam-oriented and being successful in the tests became more important than everything (FT3, FT9). A teacher uttered that the results of the practice tests were very significant for the students because it affected their popularity among their peers (FT4). One of the teachers mentioned the necessity of the high school entrance exam because it was a small piece of life and the students needed to experience those emotional changes (FT4) while another expressed these standardized testing types were the right tests for the high population as Turkey (FT3).

Our country is a developing country. How can you place these many students without testing in this populated society? This is a big problem. The problem for the Turkish youth, they study for the exam and they learn for it (FT3).

In a nutshell, all teachers including private and public schools expressed that they observed the serious effects of high school entrance exams, THSE, on students as anxiety, stress, tension, or panic. While the public-school teachers stated the change in the exam system created demoralisation on the students, instead of this, the private school teachers expressed that they needed to teach differently than they used to and progressed differently than the fixed system.

4.3.5. Impact of parents' THSE related expectations on students

All public-school teachers said that some parents caused negative emotions for students. The first thing mentioned by the teachers is the high expectations of parents for THSE and asking for the best school; however, the students who cannot meet these expectations feel break-down under these expectations (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5,

PT6, PT7, PT8, PT9, PT11, PT12). As a result of this situation, negative states as stress, unhappiness, and forgetting appeared (PT2, PT4, PT5, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT12). Even this situation is applicable to younger grades not specific to 8th grade (PT4).

For example, last year I experienced a problem with 5th graders. A kid got 97-98 points from a quiz by doing only one mistake. You can't believe but she was going to faint because her mom was going to go mad. Then I reached the parent and talked with her. We have a lot of ambitious parents like this. (PT4)

It was also said that some of the parents were like role models because they enabled a relaxing environment for their children and supported them (PT2, PT7, PT10, PT12). The parents who were role models are a motivation source for the teachers and healthy communication among parents, students and teachers created positive changes (PT7). On the other hand, some of the parents blamed teachers for the failure of students (PT11).

All private school teachers mentioned the effects of parents on the emotional state of students. As a few teachers were talking about the higher expectations of parents rather than ones the students had for themselves (FT1, FT3, FT4, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12), few of the teachers stated the existence of parents who were aware of their children (FT2, FT4, FT9, FT11). A teacher explained the high expectations of parents by giving an example (FT1).

For example, while organizing a trip, we called the parents and asked for permission. However, they questioned the trip and why we organized this instead of letting them do tests. They reminded THSE and asked them to sit and study. The expectations of parents are much higher than the students'. (FT1)

The effects of parents on students were defined as repressive, stress booster, insistent, tracker, ambitious, anxiety booster, and the effects were told to be observed during the lessons (FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12). As examples, it was told by the teachers that one of the parents got used to waiting in the student's room to make him study (FT3) or another one who was used to watch educational videos on Youtube with the student (FT9). Despite a few parents, most of them were described as a stress source for the students as explained by a teacher (FT5).

Of course, there are some exceptions but generally, it is like this. They keep asking their exams, results and criticized them. They are also put so much pressure on the shoulders of students. As a result of this, the kids got disturbed willy-nilly. (FT5)

The teachers who said that the parents were in a continuous expectation and made the students climb higher positions than theirs described the situation like a horse-racing (FT1, FT4). In addition to this, it was expressed that in the situations of academician parents, the students had to better than their parents (FT1). Moreover, a teacher told that the parents made the students study by taking away the students' all social activities which gave the impression that the students were punished (FT3).

If you take the kid to breakfast in a café on Saturdays and to lunch another café on Sundays one after the other, you shouldn't make him sit and study when the student passes to 8th grade. If you do this, the kid will feel punished and under more pressure (FT3).

Parents were said to put the pressure on not only students but also teachers and administration staff and to direct them for the sake of their expectations (FT2, FT6, FT10). In one case, it was told that a parent interrogated the teacher about not assigning homework one day on the phone (FT2). To solve these kinds of problems, the importance of cooperation among the students, teachers, and parents was emphasized (FT2, FT3, FT4).

As a teacher, we try to diminish the expectation of parents if the student is not able to meet it. Or else if they don't expect anything from the student, then we try to increase it. Actually, we are trying to balance expectations between parents and students. Mostly parents' expectations are not high maybe because of their financial conditions. If the financial situations of parents are good, then students feel more relaxed (FT2).

Besides it was said that to increase the awareness of parents in the process of THSE by increasing the communication skills between parents and students was so crucial (FT3, FT12).

One of my student's parents told me this -The student does every assignment at home, then does extra studies and he has a schedule, so what they can do more. Here we have a student who is aware of his responsibilities, does homework, does extra studies, and shares these with the teachers and asks his questions. In

this situation, he cannot do anything more, but the parents keep asking more. Nothing negative results appeared on the kid yet. Following this conversation, I replied to the parent as -everything is good with the kid, so no need to follow a strict approach to the kid. For me, the kid needs spending time with you because a long-lasting race is waiting for us. I define this process as a race because of Turkey's realities. I also added I didn't want to lose the kid in this process. (FT12)

As a result, the effects caused by parents on the emotional states of students were expressed by both the public and private teachers. They used the words as pressure on the students, stress, and high expectations. Different from the public-school teachers, private school teachers felt more pressure on their shoulders, and they were expected to do more by the teachers.

4.4. Impact of THSE on teachers' evaluation of students

All public-school teachers talked about the effect of THSE on their written exams (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). In terms of which aspects THSE affected their written exams, public school teachers talked about THSE's subjects and words affected the exams (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). As some teachers mentioned that students were unsuccessful when the open-ended questions were asked (PT11, PT12), many of the teachers stated they used multiple-choice questions as used in THSE (PT1, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT11, PT12). Teachers said the distribution of the questions to be asked in their formal exams was done according to the weight of the questions raised in previous years high school entrance exams (PT1, PT6), and also it was mentioned that instead of writing or open-ended questions, test-weighted evaluation was done on the basis of demands from students (PT10, PT11, PT12). Furthermore, a teacher said students were afraid of writing or composition, so he feared and threatened the students with writing or composition (PT11). While some teachers stated that studies, formal exams, and quizzes in the classroom were composed of multiple-choice questions (PT1, PT4), some teachers stated that they made students do tests by keeping time (PT10, PT12). At the same time, some of the teachers emphasized the importance of MONE objectives, used the previous years' high school entrance exam questions as samples, and did the achievement tests

published in the website of MONE (PT1), while some teachers said that they checked reading comprehension of students by using T/F questions (PT6, PT8) and a teacher stated they did vocabulary or sentence completion (PT6).

The impact of THSE on the questions in formal in-class exams prepared and applied by the teachers was mentioned by most private school teachers (FT1, FT2, FT3, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12). Some teachers mentioned they used the same exam for all classes in the same grade (FT6, FT7, FT8, FT11). The questions were prepared based on the national curriculum (FT1, FT2, FT3, FT5, FT10) and the words and subjects in the exams were taken from the MONE book (FT1, FT2, FT3, FT5, FT6, FT8, FT10, FT11). A teacher who mentioned about the existence of two MONE books in the market said that he compared the words and their meanings in both books and asked them in exams (FT3). In addition, a teacher expressed that he wrote a test book in the SBS period but could not use it at that moment, and all his materials and exams were shaped according to the changing examination system (FT9). A teacher gave some extra phrasal verbs in addition to the words to be asked in THSE and asked them in the exam and said that their exams are in the style of activity (FT2).

It was mentioned that the children were tested with multiple-choice questions because it was a formality and the teachers did not want to cause trouble for the students (FT7). It was said that the questions asked in the exam were open-ended questions (FT1, FT3, FT6), gap filling (FT1, FT5), matching (FT1, FT5), T/F questions (FT12), inference (FT5, FT6) or dialogue (FT5). Some teachers said they had multiple-choice questions (FT1, FT3, FT5, FT11, FT12). Additionally, a teacher raised that inference, analysis, or production-based questions were asked in the formal exam (FT12). A teacher who followed a curriculum completely different from the one preparing for THSE stated that he did THSE studied in line with his own initiative and the expectations of parents (FT4). One of the teachers following the two curricula said that the curriculum outside the THSE was evaluated in a completely different way (FT12).

There is no parallelism between IELTS lessons and THSE lessons. IELTS lessons focus on integrated skills, something very very separate. Let me give you an

example. In the THSE course, we study present simple and present continuous, while the IELTS course discusses topics such as reported speech or relative clauses. (FT12)

The effects of THSE on the questions in the in-class exams prepared and applied by teachers were mentioned by all public-school teachers. In the same topic, most of the private school teachers mentioned the effects (FT1, FT2, FT3, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12).

4.4.1. Evaluation of competencies not covered in THSE

The public-school teachers stated that they did not give an extra subject other than THSE and that the subjects were parallel to the MONE curriculum (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8). In a very limited way, a teacher mentioned that he could hardly touch on different subjects due to the lack of time (PT9).

In that unit, how should I say, because it is topic-based, in itself actually it makes sense, useful. I can ask questions like "What is your favourite meal?" for their favourite or unfavourite dishes. I can teach the present simple tense. Or, I can teach imperative words. When you give me a recipe. I mean, it can vary according to the course. For example, the child says a different sentence and a different subject can come from there. There's a sports unit. Like watching a video about different sports, which one you would like to do. The subject can be taken elsewhere. I can do things other than objectives (PT9).

Some teachers mentioned that the students were responsible for the first 8 units during the TEOG exam but while they were responsible for all units in THSE, the last two units weren't tested (PT1, PT4, PT6, PT8, PT9, PT11).

I felt frustrated because the last two units I had taught were pointless and they didn't pay much attention. One of them was a disaster-related unit. The other was a science unit. Both of them didn't interest the students much. They were too heavy. I'm disappointed that they weren't tested in THSE. (PT9)

One of the teachers mentioned that all the units were tested equally in the high school entrance examination and that the teacher completed all the units earlier than their time, he reviewed the units, did revision tests and vocabulary studies (PT1).

Some of the private school teachers mentioned that they did not study any topics rather than the ones in THSE (FT6, FT7, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12). One of the teachers mentioned that the students were responsible for all the units in the THSE exam but there were no questions from the last two units (FT2). Based on his experiences, a teacher said that while it was not possible to give an extra subject in public schools because of the time limit, in private schools these subjects had already been given despite their enough time (FT3).

It is not possible to give an extra subject during the lessons in the public schools. The kid doesn't even know what's Past Perfect Tense. In the 8th grade, we just gave students the feeling of present perfect. You don't lose time for teaching the present perfect. When that child becomes familiar with the adventure unit, he gets to know the pattern by hearing it a lot such as 'have you ever been to London?' The child perceives it and then gets familiar with 'when did you go?' In the private school, the 8th-grade child already knows these topics. Even 'if clause- type 3' is taught in the private school because the children are taking the Cambridge examinations. There are tests, quizzes, vocabulary quizzes, grammar quizzes, sometimes end-of-year shows. You can't compare private schools with public schools. The studies carried out in private school are both very detailed and visual. The goal is to make students and parents happy, and so the range is very wide. But you don't have a chance in the public school (FT3).

Many of the private school teachers mentioned that they followed two curricula different from public schools (FT1, FT4, FT5, FT7, FT8, FT12). The content of this curriculum was described as following a skill-based coursebook, instructions based on CLIL method, watching videos and talking about it, the activities for English for general purposes at B1 level, projects like the production of absurd technology, equalizing the levels of students before the THSE curriculum (FT1, FT4, FT7, FT8, FT12). A teacher evaluates the other curriculum with unit tests, tests at the end of each unit, and tests after every three units (FT1). They also said that they were doing an overall evaluation (FT4, FT12).

Overall, while all the public-school teachers mentioned that they did not have any not tested topics other than THSE questions, most private school teachers stated that they followed two different curricula and they made different evaluations in both curricula.

4.4.2. Students' expectations from the teacher made English exams

Regarding this topic, the public school teachers said that the students wanted to get 100 for their cumulative point average which would affect their exams at the end, so students asked for an easy exam (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT7, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT12). In addition to this, they expressed that the students asked for the exam topics to be parallel with THSE topics (PT1, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT8) and not based on production (PT2, PT8, PT9). In other words, it was expressed that the students felt more relaxed when the questions had multiple choices in which their chance factor was higher, and they thought it was easy to memorize for the test (PT9). These types of testing decreased the practice chances of the students (PT2, PT8), but they increased the self-confidence of the students and the students started to gain the sense of "I can do it" (PT1, PT11, PT12). Before the exams, the teachers stated that they did some studies for the exams and reviewed the units they were responsible for (PT4, PT6, PT7, PT8). Even if the students were used to the exams, without willing, especially the hardworking students felt tension and stress (PT3, PT6, PT11). These feelings didn't appear not only for English but also for all the subjects' exams (PT12). In terms of examination, the importance of the teachers' roles was underlined by a teacher (PT9).

For the same topic, a few private school teachers expressed that the students asked for the parallelism of the topics with THSE and instead of production-based testing, they preferred multiple-choice testing (FT6, FT7, FT10, FT11). Some teachers stated that the students did not get lower marks than their expectations (FT1, FT2, FT3, FT5, FT11). A teacher depends on his experience and education which requires the approach "test what you taught", so the students found the exams easy (FT2). As a result of this, the students started to love English lessons and, they started to do English tests first in the practice tests for THSE and the students tried to use English in their daily lives (FT2).

We are used to speaking in English in our teachers' room. The students tried to follow the routine and sometimes tried to speak. When they ask for permission, we ask them to use some formulaic structures as "Can I come in? Can I go to the toilet?" (FT2).

A group of teachers divided the requests coming from the students into two and they said that while a group of students requested the exam to be easy, the other group having a goal asked the exam to be difficult (FT4, FT9). The teacher said “Teacher, this exam was easy, next time ask it more difficult. Or for example, we did an exam last time, they found it too difficult. Teacher, this was good, do this all the time” (FT9).

Different from the statements of the public-school teachers, some of the private school teachers mentioned the parents’ expectations. It was exemplified with the statements that “whatever you do, get the highest score” (FT3, FT4, FT10, FT12). In addition to this, it was also mentioned about the students who had the expectations of getting high scores (FT8, FT10, FT12). While it was mentioned that most of the students did not approach learning and skills (FT12), it was uttered that the students experienced stress, anxiety, and tension before the exams (FT8, FT12). Some of the teachers stated that they did only tests and THSE practices (FT6, FT7,), one stated he did open-ended exams for evaluation (FT2). A teacher who wanted to include both two approaches blended THSE topics and words with skills like reading, listening, writing by open-ended questions in their exams for the sake of evaluation (FT10, FT11).

As a result, for the expectations of the students from the formal exams, most of the teachers mentioned the students desired it would be for the exam preparation. In addition to this, the students were said to ask for an exam not based on production. Referring to the statements of the teachers, the public-school students ask for multiple-choice questions in the exams and the parallelism of exam topics with THSE as far as possible. Getting higher scores plays a more important role for private school students because of parents’ expectations. An interesting finding seen in the private school teachers is that the teachers squeezed between two curricula and they blended the requirements of both curricula to evaluate properly.

4.5. Suggestions for alternative strategies for transition to high schools

All public-school teachers reported that they would make changes in the methods and techniques in the case of no high school entrance examination. A teacher said that his teaching style would change 80% compared to the current one (PT1). Many of the

public school teachers expressed that their lessons would be better, different, fun, enjoyable, meaningful and comfortable (PT1, PT2, PT3, PT6, PT10, PT11, PT12) as long as there would be no tests for every subject (PT2), reasonable class size and enough technological equipment (PT8), enough number of lessons (PT11), the abolition of necessity which might let students feel less stressed (PT7, PT12). The evaluation of students should be done because it was expressed that students might be reluctant in the lessons (PT2, PT4, PT7, PT8, PT9). The assessment can be done something like a TOEFL exam or portfolio which would be meaningful (PT9).

In 2003, when there was OKS as a high school entrance exam, I did research for the master's degree. I measured the anxiety level of 8th graders and 5th graders by using a questionnaire. My expectation was that 5th graders would be less anxious and freer while 8th graders would be more anxious because of puberty and high school entrance exams. After the data collection process, it appeared that the concerns of the 8th Grade could not even be said so low, because they are not asked English in the high school entrance exam. It doesn't matter; they can have English lessons, or they cannot. There were some questions about speaking; for example, when I say wrong, the class laughs at me. He never cared. Very low output. The reason for this is that they don't care even if it happens. Actually, it may be a good thing, though. The results showed that they did not need, and care English and it kept on for a couple of years, and we couldn't teach students English. (PT2)

Teachers expressed that different from their current lessons, they would have more studies for practice (PT1, PT3, PT5), speaking (PT1, PT3, PT5, PT8, PT9, PT10, PT12), visualization (PT1), videos (PT1, PT8), story reading or reading (PT1, PT8, PT10, PT12), listening (PT1, PT9, PT10, PT12), dialogue and role-playing (PT1, PT8), portfolio-based evaluation (PT2), theatre (PT2), less grammar (PT3), less vocabulary studies (PT9), writing (PT10, PT12), project (PT11), games and competitions (PT11). A teacher who gives much importance to speaking stated that although the students got education for years, when they went abroad, different from foreigners who might do lots of grammar mistakes while speaking, they could not express themselves and did not trust themselves with the fear of doing a mistake (PT3). Similarly, another teacher complained that the students could not speak despite their 15-20 years of education (PT5).

More likely when we ask a student what his name is if the student gives an answer like “my name is ...”, it's very pleasing to us, but when I ask you, you will tell me just your name. It is a very painful situation when the child is overtaking some structures such as parrots. (PT5)

Some of the public-school teachers think that the abolition of the examination may have negative consequences along with the changes in their instructional methods and techniques (PT2, PT4, PT7, PT8, PT9). At the beginning of these, the attitudes of the students towards English lessons would change (PT2), the lessons would not be taken seriously (PT2), no matter what kind of activities were done, the students would not participate in lessons (PT2), with the removal of the exam, as happened in OKS period (PT7) the students' motivation would decrease (PT4, PT7, PT7, PT8, PT9). In addition, it was stated that indifferent pupils would be pushed aside (PT7), and that the background was already given by the teacher and that the students could put it on themselves at the current conditions (PT8).

Of course, it may, but because of the high number of class sizes and the inadequacy of technological equipment, it would not change much. So, I'd proceed in the same way. Children's motivation is always at the peak as they know there is an exam at the end of the year. (PT8)

All private school teachers, except for a teacher (FT8), stated that they would change their instructional methods and techniques positively if there was no high school entrance exam (FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FT5, FT6, FT7, FT9, FT10, FT11, FT12). A teacher who said that the exam in question developed students in one-way said that taking a very good grade from the exam and using English effectively were different issues (FT1). If students were exposed to English, given freedom instead of punishment, then students were said to be happier (FT2, FT10). In addition, many of the teachers said that the students would have the higher motivation (FT2, FT4), would be more focused (FT4), and learn better by decreasing their anxiety and stress (FT7, FT8, FT11). In addition, a teacher said that he could prepare more students for the Cambridge exams (FT4) and another teacher said that he would spare more time like seven lessons instead of four lessons for his rich curriculum (FT12).

It would be necessary for students to increase and develop their interactions they should create a different environment to use this language effectively and

the teachers should integrate modern activities by getting rid of traditional methods and direct the class according to innovative activities. (FT11)

Teachers said that when there was no high school entrance exam, their lessons would have more active and production-oriented activities (FT2, FT5, FT11), no multiple-choice tests (FT1, FT5, FT9, FT11), speaking (FT1, FT4, FT7, FT11, FT12), reading (FT1, FT4, FT7, FT9, FT11), listening (FT1, FT4, FT7, FT11, FT12), writing (FT1, FT4, FT7, FT12), integrated videos (FT2, FT9, FT10), reading books (FT2, FT9), the use of group work or pair work (FT5), preparing and presenting presentations (FT6), production-based English (FT6), reduction in grammar teaching (FT7), debates (FT9), games and social activities (FT10). A teacher who teaches at different levels said that he would not speak Turkish with the students (FT10). A teacher said that he would teach the words to the students by making the words as stories in the way he explained: “As a simple example, profit means benefit, profiterole means be a beneficial soldier” (*Translation of this sentence may not meet the purpose) (FT2).

It was told that a middle school teacher could not improve himself by the THSE (FT10) and that in the case of no high school examination, the teacher would also be comfortable (FT8). In addition, it was said that there should be a different assessment based on speaking skills and an assessment like the TOEFL, IELTS or Cambridge examinations (FT11), and that preparation for the following grade like spiral system could be applied in the case of no examination (FT12). A teacher said even though there was neither high school entrance exam nor the program, he would continue his teaching with whatever useful for the students (FT3).

In addition to the teacher who stated that he would not make any changes in his methods and techniques (FT3), some of the teachers said that the removal of the exam could lead to negative results (FT4, FT7). They stated that students might have lax attitudes towards English lessons (FT4, FT7); on the other hand, THSE also enabled study discipline, system and conscious for the students (FT4). At the same time, a teacher who expressed that THSE integrated weaker students to the program, said that those students also improved with the test in question (FT4). A teacher said that

without depending on the existence of high school entrance examinations, some English teachers could not even follow a program or even speak English (FT3).

When teachers were asked to assume there were no high school examinations, except for a teacher who would not make any changes (FT3), all the public school and private school teachers mentioned there would be a significant change in their current methods and techniques. The possible changes were mostly expressed to be production-based and activity-oriented such as speaking, writing, listening, and drama.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents the discussion of the results in line with the themes and codes observed in the qualitative analysis of the interviews under four main headings as teachers' perceptions regarding the impact of THSE on the language skills, impact the THSE on instructional and curricular decisions of teachers, perceptions of teachers regarding the impact of THSE on students and their study and learning habits, and impact of THSE on the evaluation and assessment process teachers follow, respectively.

5.1. Discussion of results

Concerning Transition to High School Exam (THSE) as an evaluation strategy, all teachers in the study pointed out the significant impact of multiple-choice question type used in THSE on their lessons. Public school teachers use this type of question to prepare students for THSE by using it in exams, quizzes, and homework including word and paragraph questions. For the same issue, private school teachers use multiple choice question type in review tests, formal and practice exams, in-class, and extracurricular material selection. Some of the public-school teachers include different types of testing as gaming, T/F questions, matching, finding different sentences and writing the end of a story. On the other hand, some of the private school teachers use writing, speaking and open-ended questions for testing purposes. Different from public school teachers, private school teachers think the English test in THSE is much simpler than the English education students receive at private schools. Furthermore, the private school teachers teach students tactics and techniques used in multiple questions and some of the teachers find this type of question positive for students. Similarly, in the study of Şad and Şahiner (2016), teachers have different ideas in using multiple choice

question format in the exams. While a group of teachers believed that using open-ended questions would be difficult for students as well as an unfair assessment of students, the other group of teachers believed that using multiple-choice questions increased the chance factor of questions as well as not assessing higher-order thinking skills. The impact of using multiple-choice questions is seen as laziness, unwillingness to write and avoidance of speaking in public schools while mechanization, having difficulty in production, avoidance of interaction, speaking, and analytical thinking and pragmatism. These results are consistent with Ashadi and Rice who found out that the opportunities of the students to become more self-directed learners are decreased because of this assessment program (2016). Also, the students become more competitive for the exam and they do not give enough value for the school grades. Similarly, in terms of the standardized testing impact on the students, Lomax et. al. (1995) have uttered that standardized tests reflect low-level conceptual knowledge and low-level thinking instead of recommended standards. The findings of the current study match with the ones that Atila and Özeken (2015) have found. According to the study in question, because of the importance of the high school entrance examination, teachers used to focus on more doing multiple-choice test skills rather than the other forms. Also, the teachers who believed that TEOG was not distinctive enough were not objective for grading the school exams due to the impact of students' average grade points on their high school entrance exams. Considering the results, it can be said that THSE plays a crucial role in the instructions of teachers because multiple-choice question type has been preferred even the students have a higher level of education as in the case of private schools. Moreover, not learning the topics but doing all questions in THSE correct is important for both groups of teachers because even though the teachers believe open-ended question type is more appropriate for testing and they see the impact of using multiple choice question type on students, teachers keep using multiple choice question type in their written exams, homework and in-class materials.

Regarding the problems emerged during the implementation of the program, all public-school teachers complained about the impact of THSE on their lessons. Predominately, they complained about the abrupt change in the examination in 2017. The change

required public school teachers to change their methods and techniques as well as the skills and topics to be tested in THSE. Moreover, the motivation of students has been affected to a great extent because of the lower coefficient of English test in THSE. This has concluded with the attitude and approaches of students towards English lessons. On the other hand, private school teachers have experienced similar problems as having skill-based studies such as vocabulary, reading, and comprehension, lower interest towards English lessons because of lower English coefficient in THSE as well as negative attitudes and approaches towards English lessons. Overall, it can be said that both groups of teachers and students have been affected by the change in the exam system in 2017 to a great extent. This effect has shown itself in lessons, motivation, and attitudes.

The teachers experienced the impact of the THSE on their curricular and instructional decisions. They changed their methods and techniques with the new system. With this, their lesson focus was also adapted for the new exam, THSE. For TEOG, they used to have grammar-focused lessons, but they have the vocabulary, reading and comprehension, and dialogue studies instead of grammar currently. On the other hand, they do not spare enough time for production-based skills which are speaking, writing, or listening. This is because these skills do not appear in THSE. Although this situation is valid for public school teachers, private school teachers try to save time for the skills that are not tested. To accomplish this, private school teachers follow two different curricula. One is designed for THSE studies and the other one is designed for English for general purposes. However, because of the importance of THSE, lessons allocated to English for general purposes are sometimes added to THSE studies. Both public and private school teachers need supplementary materials in the THSE preparation process. In other words, the teachers are in the opinion that although they have a coursebook provided by the MONE, it is not enough to practise for THSE.

Different from public school teachers, private school teachers are also in need of supplementary books for English for general purposes curriculum. While choosing a supplementary for THSE, both public and private school teachers pay attention that the books' focus is on vocabulary. In addition, private school teachers add a book that

is based on production skills. Public school teachers complain about the insufficiency of allocated lessons because they cannot teach further than the national curriculum. Both public and private school teachers shared the opinion that the decrease in coefficient of English test affected the motivation of students. In terms of compatibility between national curriculum and language competencies in THSE, all teachers have supported the compatibility. The focus of the English test in THSE is on reading, vocabulary, and dialogues, so the teachers study these competencies in their lessons. After the TEOG exam, grammar lost its value to a great extent, but vocabulary gained importance as it was stated by both private and public school teachers. However, all teachers are in the opinion that THSE is much simpler compared to TEOG. While public school teachers do not see speaking or writing skills as a need because of the English test in THSE, private school teachers try to practise those skills. The reason may derive from the allocated time for English which means while public school teachers have around four lessons in a week, private school teachers have more than seven lessons in a week. Another reason may be, based on the statements of the private school teachers, the expectation of parents from private schools is to give survival skills of English.

Despite all these reasons, both public and private school teachers share the opinion that THSE followed to the TEOG exam gives the real data of students' English levels. At this point, Kozikoğlu (2018) had similar findings that say most of the TEOG English questions were at the "apply" level of Bloom's Taxonomy. In other words, the questions were not designed for higher-order thinking skills such as analyse, evaluate, and create level but lower-order thinking skills such as remember and understand level. Overall, one can say that both groups of teachers feel the requirement to prepare students for THSE. However, private school teachers follow another curriculum to teach English for general purposes which includes survival skills such as listening, speaking, and writing since these skills are not tested in THSE. Different from public schools, private schools are paid for teaching which has caused schools to follow the second curriculum to fill the gap in the national curriculum.

In the issue of comparison language competencies tested in THSE with the language competencies included in the courses, both state and private school teachers mostly use parallel competencies with THSE. Since THSE does not test four language skills, public school teachers use grammar which is believed to have lost its value compared to earlier examinations, vocabulary, comprehension skills with multiple-choice techniques instead of speaking, listening, or writing. The reason behind this discrimination is explained with limited lesson time and oversize of the classes in the public schools. Despite the willingness of the teachers for non-tested language skills, students show negative attitudes or unwillingness. On the other hand, public school teachers can do interactive activities with lower levels which explains the impact of THSE on students' attitudes. Totally different from public school teachers, private school teachers follow two different curricula one of which is for THSE and the other one is for English for general purposes. The teachers have experienced a significant change in their instructions regarding the programme for THSE; however, the other programme they have followed has not been affected critically. For the first programme, the adaptation has been made since the SBS period. Firstly, the focus was on simple sentence comprehension studies, then, grammar and reading comprehension became the focus of the TEOG system. Lastly, with THSE, grammar, reading and word-based studies with exam related tactics have become the focus in their lessons. In addition, THSE-focused lessons require lecturing, multiple-choice practise, memorizing some chunks and words, grammar studies, general culture by excluding speaking, writing, or listening which are practiced in the other programme. Overall, the change in the high school entrance exam can be said to cause a change in the instruction of teachers in both groups of schools. Naturally, this also affects the materials and written exams. However, the curriculum that private school teachers follow has not experienced a great change because the gap in the exam system has stayed still.

Concerning the impact of THSE on the instructional planning of teachers, all teachers mentioned the effects. The change in the testing created a change in the instructions, plans, and materials of the teachers. Firstly, public school teachers have changed their

instructional planning according to what is necessary for the exam. To make it clear, public school teachers have followed the national curriculum, used extra resources with difficult questions, applied quizzes to teach words with their Turkish meanings but not integrated speaking, listening, or writing. Mostly public-school teachers use the Grammar Translation Method due to time constraint, complain about the ambiguity in the meanings of the words and complexity of the units which do not draw the attention of students. On the other hand, private school teachers share the opinion that THSE reflects their lessons more compared to previous high school entrance exams. Since private school teachers follow two curricula mostly, one of them is the national curriculum to practise for THSE while the other one is designed to catch up with the missing parts of national curriculum such as listening, speaking, or writing. Except for a small group of private school teachers who try to spare some time for production-based skills, the results mostly agree with Kılıçkaya's (2016) as well as Çelikel and Karakuş's (2017) studies. It was stated that English teachers' practises are significantly influenced by several factors as the content and style of the exam. The most common negative impact is found as neglecting several skills such as speaking, writing, and listening because they are not tested. This is evaluated as dangerous in the world which values communication at a high degree.

Regarding the impact of THSE on instruction, both public and private schools of teachers have experienced the impact on their instruction. The teachers have changed their plans, methods, and materials according to THSE. Public school teachers use individual interaction pattern instead of group work or pair work and overuse the Grammar Translation Method. In addition, they skip non-tested topics, focus on vocabulary studies, and use supplementary materials for THSE. In other words, every plan, method, or material used by public school teachers in the classroom is based on THSE and/or to save time for THSE. On the other hand, private school teachers mostly prefer individual learning methods as public-school teachers do while some use interactive methods when required. The focus of their lessons has become vocabulary and test techniques with the demands of parents, and teachers do not spare time for non-tested skills. The results of the study have shown that standardized testing has an

impact on the teaching and instruction of the teachers and teachers prefer traditional methods to cooperative learning which were also found in the studies of Au (2007), Minarechova, (2012) and Ramezaney (2014). In other words, as it was observed in the studies (Ramezaney, 2014; Wideen et. al., 1997), high stakes examination discouraged teachers to spend more time on fields trips, library research or laboratory activities but encouraged teachers to spend more time on lecturing, testing, and reviewing. It can be said that there is not a significant difference between the two groups of teachers regarding the impact of THSE on their instructions. Since private school teachers follow two curricula, the one for English for general purposes is not affected by THSE while the one for THSE has experienced similar changes as happened in the public schools.

Both the public and private school teachers use methods that help for high school entrance exams except few teachers who prefer interactive methods. The first group of teachers prefers individual interaction patterns instead of group or pair works because the students feel exam anxiety and the teachers do not have enough time. In other words, public school teachers do full exam-oriented studies in a test-based environment. Two reasons for taking interactive exercises out are added as the unwillingness of the students and the noise which is a big problem in the case of a crowded class. On the other hand, public school teachers can do some interactive activities like speaking, writing, doing projects, preparing bulletin boards at lower levels because students do not have test anxiety or puberty changes, so they have more interest in lessons. The second group of teachers has either an exam-based or personal methodology. The ones who have exam-based methodology do individual studies instead of group work or pair work. Also, they skip parts requiring interaction to save time for doing tests. Besides, they use multiple choice questions to teach target words. On the other hand, some private school teachers use student-centered methods in the THSE preparation process. In a nutshell, the fact that teachers give emphasis on achieving maximum test scores which cause teachers to teach for the test and to coach students on how to answer questions stated by Minarechova (2012) was also proven in this study. Furthermore, the results showed that the methodology of teachers is

affected to a great degree by the standardized tests and the interaction between teachers and students disappears as proven by Ramezaney (2014). It can be deduced that both groups of teachers have experienced less interaction in their lessons caused by THSE and even the lessons for English for general purposes carried out by private school teachers have experienced this effect. Clearly, interactive methods are seen as a loss of time in the THSE preparation period and the expectations of parents and students also directed teachers towards individual learning.

To increase THSE achievement of students, both public and private school teachers do studies. Vocabulary, reading, and comprehension with multiple choice questions have become their lesson focus. Public school teachers suffer from limited lessons, so they save time for THSE studies by skipping production-based skills as listening, speaking, or writing. Different from public school teachers, private school teachers do not complain about class size or allocated time. Although private school teachers feel satisfied when they study their own curriculum, because of THSE reality, they must spare time for it. If the students have trouble in the process, the private school teachers do one-to-one studies with those students. The impact of school type on the high school entrance achievement has been observed by Okutan and Daşdemir (2018). According to the study, private schools have higher achievement in the transition to high school exams compared to public schools. The reason behind this fact can be explained with smaller class size, more lessons and mentoring. However, the findings of Gökcan and Aktan (2018) have found that the school type has no significant effect on the level of exposure to English. According to these researchers, students with positive attitudes toward English are more exposed to English. In a nutshell, while school type plays an important role in the high school entrance exam achievement, instead of school type, attitudes towards English play a key role in learning English. Lastly, it can be said that public schools suffer from crowded classes and limited lessons, so naturally, teachers cannot spare time for one-to-one studies while private schools allocate more lessons and time for this type of study. As a result of this, private institutions may show greater success compared to public schools.

Regarding assignments, all teachers stated that the lessons and the assignments were parallel with each other and mentioned the significant effect of THSE on the assignments. Public school teachers assign homework as vocabulary studies, learning outcome tests, doing extra tests for THSE, translation, matching, fill-in-blanks exercises, preparing a ppt. For vocabulary quizzes, they ask students to memorize words with Turkish meanings. For the project homework that students need to submit every term, practice tests, word memorization, the memorization of the dialogues with their partners and demonstration of them in front of the class, the memorization or translation of the reading texts, presentations of specific units in front of the class are given. On the other hand, private school teachers have nearly the same opinion as public teachers. They assign THSE oriented tests for techniques and tactics, reading texts, vocabulary matching, fill-in-blanks, or video recording. Private school teachers have differences in terms of using listening, writing in the assignments. Different from public school teachers, private school teachers have some assignments of English for general purposes. Also, the teachers prefer to teach the words in the classroom instead of assigning them as homework as public-school teachers do. Furthermore, private school teachers have etudes with weaker students and prepare individual assignments that are decided by looking at the mistakes of students. For the topics of the projects, the THSE effect is observed and designing a website is given as an example. The importance of assignments has been found by Yuvacı and Demir (2016) who proved that the students reading more showed higher success in the TEOG examination. Instead of assigning multiple-choice test questions, it was advised to assign book reading with open-ended questions, summarizing, or lecturing tasks. Overall, one can say that public school teachers assign mechanic homework that does not require production while private school teachers integrate production-based homework in addition to mechanic ones. This may derive from the expectations of parents which lead to preparation for THSE and acquirement of English for general purposes.

Both state and private school teachers have different opinions within themselves about the impact of high school entrance exams on the performance of teachers. Some of the teachers talked about the negative impacts of the test, while others expressed some

positive effects. Some of the teachers mentioned both positive and negative effects. Firstly, some of the private and public schools' teachers believe that THSE has a positive impact on their performance. Teachers do their best, try to teach every detail, solve sample and previous years' questions, follow the curriculum closely and meet the demands of students and parents. Secondly, a group of private and public school teachers sees the impact of THSE negative. They need to have traditional methods and rush to catch up with the curriculum while they are afraid of missing a point or a word and feel guilty when teaching interactive studies. Lastly, some teachers think THSE has both positive and negative impacts aforementioned to their performances. The results of this study which are parallel to the findings of Ashadi and Rice (2016) have shown the effects of high stakes testing on the teachers as low morale and satisfaction because of the decrease in teachers' professional autonomy, creativity, and decision-making capacity. These effects contribute to the attrition of the teachers (Ashadi & Rice, 2016). On the other hand, Şad and Şahiner (2016) found that teachers' performances increased as happened in SBS term which was explained with the relation of high school entrance examination achievement to the success of teachers. This relation was said to be effective in the parents' school selections. As a result, it can be said that the impact of THSE on the teachers is perceived as negative or positive individually no matter the school type is. If the characteristic of a teacher allows himself competitive among their colleagues, then the impact may be mentioned as positive while if it is not competitive, then the impact may be perceived as negative.

THSE has increased the disciplinary and interdisciplinary cooperation of both public and private school teachers. Public school teachers keep in touch constantly to inform each other, share their work allocation as preparation of supplementary materials, exam, and quizzes. In addition, they communicate with other disciplines about the performances or personal information of some students and rarely about some academic cooperation. Similarly, private school teachers keep in touch with each other, share their workloads as preparation of materials or exams, do individual studies or etudes. Moreover, private school teachers cooperate with other disciplines for evaluation of students' performances, academic support, guiding students or catching

up with the plans. Lastly, few private and public school teachers have experienced negative cooperation among teachers which is competition among teachers and seeing each other rivals. Overall, because of its nature, THSE has required teachers to stay in touch with each other constantly to increase the success of students in THSE no matter the school type is. However, one can infer that because of its higher demands, private school teachers have to show higher cooperation to prove themselves.

The impact of THSE on the attitudes of students towards English lessons was mentioned by all teachers in this study. Public school teachers mostly stated that students asked for studies towards THSE which was seen vital by the students. Instead of doing practical language studies such as listening, speaking, and writing, interactive, communicative, and authentic materials, the public-school students prefer topics and skills which can help for THSE. Besides, oversize of the class and limited lesson time made the teachers decide on the priority, which is to catch up with the curriculum, so public school teachers do not spend time on non-tested topics or skills. On the other hand, exam anxiety is seen which results in competition among students. Due to the impact of English grade-point average on their cumulative grade point average which affects their exam results, some of the students give importance on lessons while some replace English into second place. The main reason for this replacement is the decrease of coefficient and number of questions of the English test in THSE after TEOG. In addition, the fact that some students in public schools have exam awareness while some of them are indifferent is observed in English lessons in public schools. In addition to public school teachers, private school teachers complained about the impact of THSE on the attitudes of students towards English lessons. The most frequent point stated by the teachers is the fact that students have found THSE much easier compared to TEOG, so they do not give enough importance to English lessons. In the same way with public school teachers, most of the private school teachers put production-based skills such as speaking, listening, and writing aside while topics and skills for THSE have become the focus of lessons with the demands of students and parents. Moreover, there are some changes as using the Turkish language as a medium in the class, using supplementary resources, assigning individual homework considering the mistakes of

students, private tutoring with certain students. As happened in the public schools, the decrease of coefficient and the number of questions of English test in THSE has made students consider English much easier compared to previous high school entrance exams. Furthermore, it is seen in the private schools that some students have exam awareness while some are indifferent. Excluding a few examples, the students have experienced a narrowed curriculum which may cause the students to suffer the effects of it in the long run (Berliner, 2011). The example is given by Berliner (2011) is that while at the lower level, simple decoding and algorithms are enough, in the upper levels, those students perform poorly because it requires more comprehension and reasoning. Furthermore, Gökcan and Aktan (2018) found that school type does not play an important role in language learning but positive attitudes of students which help students to seek meaningful input. Also, they add that language anxiety affects language learning negatively. In a nutshell, it can be inferred that both groups of students demand THSE preparation studies instead of interactive studies which may be explained with the exam anxiety and parents' higher expectations. Moreover, the decrease of the English test coefficient in THSE has created lower interest of students towards English lessons in both groups of schools. On the other hand, different from public school students, private school students have found the English test in THSE much easier, so they have lost their interest to a great extent.

All public and private school teachers have observed important changes in the habits of students' learning and study in the process of THSE. Some of the public-school students have increased their study rhythm in a more planned and conscious way in a test-based environment while some of them are made to study by their parents and teachers since the students have not set a goal. On the other hand, private school teachers regard these changes as negative and positive. To clarify, private school students do not spare time for fun, attend school trips, manage, and plan their time carefully. Moreover, they demand ready-made materials and individual studies; therefore, exam anxiety is seen among these pupils. On the other hand, some private school students have gained inner discipline and acquired time management with regular study habits. These findings overlap with the findings of Şad and Şahiner

(2016) who stated that the high school entrance examination gained students' regular studying habits. In addition to this, the results of the study conducted by Usta (2017) revealed the correlation between motivation and TEOG score as well as intrinsic self-confidence and TEOG score. In other words, the students who have high motivation and self-confidence tend to have higher TEOG scores compared to the others. By considering these results, the case of the current study can be explained as students directed by exam anxiety tend to show lower THSE achievement while the ones with intrinsic motivation and self-confidence may show higher THSE achievement.

The impact of THSE on emotional states of students was exemplified as stress, tension, anxiety, unhappiness, uneasiness, test anxiety, being mentally depressed, crying, pressure, panic by both public and private school teachers. Moreover, both groups of teachers share the opinion that there is significant pressure on parents, society, and peers on the students. Although these effects are regarded as common in the case of any transition exam, some special emotional changes derived from a sudden change in the transition to high school exam system have been observed by the teachers. With the announcement of MONE in 2017, TEOG was abolished and a new system called THSE was initiated. The details of this new exam system such as courses included, question format, number of questions, or address-based placement were not explained clearly; therefore, a chaotic environment appeared, and students experienced a nervous breakdown. Both groups of teachers spent a significant time to increase motivation and decrease the uneasiness of students. Furthermore, all plans and materials of teachers experienced a change which also created anxiety on teachers. In terms of the impact of high stakes on the emotional states of students, the level of stress it causes has been mentioned by a significant number of teachers. The findings regarding this issue are parallel with Ashadi and Rice (2016) who state that high stakes testing increases the level of stress and anxiety in students and this can be observed with behaviours of exhaustion and crying as well as freezing in tests. Besides, it is proven that this type of test reduces the intrinsic motivation of the students rather than increase it (Ashadi and Rice, 2016). Akın and Minaz (2018) have supported this claim with the negative metaphors used by students to describe high school entrance examinations

such as “a matter of life or death”, “suffering in hell” or “doomsday” despite few positive metaphors. Furthermore, Şad and Şahiner (2016) have shown that several practices introduced with TEOG to reduce exam anxiety such as the setting of the exams, extending the exam over two semesters or providing a make-up exam did not decrease the anxiety level of students. Therefore, this proves that even the existence of a high school entrance examination creates stress and anxiety on students. Another result found in the current study is supported by findings of Biber et al. (2017) who found out that the rapid change in the exam system raised the anxiety level of students, their parents and caused a loss of motivation by driving the students to despair. Overall, it can be said that no matter the school type is, all students experience the impact of THSE on their emotional states. Moreover, the sudden change in the high school examination can create greater level stress for students as happened in the case of 2017.

The expectations of parents have affected the emotional states of both public and private school students. Public school teachers see two groups of parents’ expectations which have positive and negative impacts on students. Firstly, most of the public-school parents have high expectations which lead to the break-down of students because they cannot meet these expectations. Moreover, stress, unhappiness, and loss of concentration are common results of these expectations. On the other hand, some public-school parents create a relaxing and supportive environment and become role models for students. On the other hand, private school teachers observe the negative rather than positive impact of parents’ expectations on students. The effects of parents on students are defined as repressive, stress booster, insistent, tracker, ambitious, anxiety booster and these effects are observed during the lessons by the teachers. Moreover, different from public school parents, private school parents put pressure on not only students but also teachers and administration staff and to direct them for the sake of their expectations. However, there are also a few parents who are aware of their students and support them. These findings are parallel with Atila and Özeke (2015) as well as Kılıçkaya (2016) who have found that parents’ expectations create an impact on teachers as well as students. As a result, one can say that private school students and teachers suffer more from parents’ expectations compared to public

school teachers and students. The existence of motivating parents can be seen more in public schools than in private schools.

All public and most private school teachers have observed the impact of THSE on their evaluation process. Public school teachers prepare exams based on THSE's subjects and words. Also, they do not test students through writing or open-ended questions but multiple-choice questions. The weight of the topics in the written exams is calculated depending on the weight of the previous year's high school entrance examination. In addition to exams, public school teachers do achievement tests and sample questions published by the MONE. On the other hand, private school teachers do their formal exams based on words and subjects from the national curriculum. Since most of the private school teachers follow two curricula to meet the demands, they test students with the national curriculum. The reason behind this, students need the cumulative point average at the end, so the teachers test students with an easier curriculum. Most of the private school teachers use multiple-choice questions while some use open-ended, gap filling, matching, T/F, inference, or dialogue questions. The results of a study carried out by Çelikel and Karakuş (2017) overlap with the findings of the current study. According to the study aforementioned, 8th-grade students' TEOG achievements on math course were compatible with their academic achievement because teachers applied parallel exams to TEOG exam. Moreover, teachers were found to change the difficulty level of exams according to the success level of classes. These findings explain that students are taught to be successful in the high school entrance exams rather than to acquire skills needed in their lives. The findings of Zorluoğlu et al. (2019) have shown that the questions in the TEOG exams were not distributed to learning outcomes homogenously and they were determined not to test upper knowledge and metacognitive process skills. These findings show the low level of the TEOG exam's validity and reliability. In a nutshell, it can be inferred that both groups of teachers are affected by THSE concerning their in-class evaluation. Even though private school teachers follow two curricula, they choose the national curriculum for the formal assessment because it is much easier compared to English for general purposes and teachers want to help students for their cumulative point

average. Moreover, compared to public school teachers, private school teachers apply to other types of questions rather than the multiple-choice question type.

Regarding non-tested topics in THSE, all the public-school teachers do not have any topics left non-tested but last two units of the coursebook whereas private school teachers apply different tests for two curricula they follow. Moreover, private school teachers have an additional curriculum that includes a skill-based coursebook, instructions based on the CLIL method, watching videos, and talking about it, the activities for English for general purposes, and projects. Teachers evaluate this curriculum with unit tests and overall evaluation. In addition, the results which are parallel to several studies (Ashadi & Rice, 2016; Au, W., 2007; Jacob, B., 2005; Minarechova, 2012; Wideen et. al., 1997) show that most of the teachers tend to show greater attention to the subjects that will appear in the tests rather than the non-tested ones. In conclusion, both groups of teachers commonly prefer to teach the topics and skills in THSE while private school teachers compensate for the non-tested topics and skills with their second curriculum.

The expectations of students for the formal exams were stated by the teachers in both groups as parallelism with THSE topics and skills and getting high scores. Public school students demand formal exams not based on production and including multiple-choice questions. Different from public schools, high expectations of parents for the formal exams have been observed in the private schools and summarized as “do whatever you do but get the highest score.” Lastly, an interesting finding seen among the private school teachers is that the teachers who are squeezed between two curricula have found the solution in blending the requirements of both curricula to evaluate properly. To conclude, students of public and private schools expect exams based on THSE in terms of parallel topics, skills, question formats and high grades which affect cumulative point average at the end. These findings were further explained by Konaş and Özpölat (2017) who found out that scores taken from written exams were important predictors of TEOG exam scores. Overall, it can be said that for both groups of students, getting a high score is more important than learning as well as the written

exams are demanded to be parallel to THSE regarding topics and skills by both students and parents.

In the assumption of no high-school entrance examination, a significant number of teachers would change their current methodology. Public school teachers would change their methods and techniques so their lessons would be better, different, fun, enjoyable, meaningful and comfortable as long as there would be no test for every subject, reasonable class size, and enough technological equipment, enough number of lessons, the abolition of necessity which might let students feel less stressed. Moreover, their lessons would include studies for practice, speaking, visualization, videos, story reading or reading, listening, dialogue and roleplay, portfolio-based evaluation, theatre, less grammar, fewer vocabulary studies, writing, projects, games, and competitions. However, there might be some negative consequences as the lessons not taken into serious no matter what kind of activities included, no participation, less motivation and putting the indifferent students aside. On the other hand, private school students would be happier, more focused and learn better by decreasing their anxiety and stress. The lessons of private school teachers would have more active and production-oriented activities, no multiple-choice tests, speaking, reading, listening, writing, integrated videos, reading books, the use of group work or pair work, preparing and presenting presentations, production-based English, reduction in grammar teaching, debates, games and social activities. However, the students might have negative attitudes towards lessons and lose the discipline that THSE provides. Overall, it can be inferred that both groups of teachers want to change their current teaching methods and strategies under certain conditions. However, demands from students, parents, and administrators, as well as the existence of the high school entrance examination, have directed them to their current approaches towards English teaching and evaluation.

5.2. Implications for practice

Implications for practice are suggested in this section based on the findings of the study concerning high stakes testing, materials, and improvements for stakeholders like teachers, students, parents, and policymakers.

Firstly, depending on the results, teachers mostly complained about the swift change of the high school entrance system in 2017. With this abrupt modification, teachers had to change their plans, written exams, and supplementary materials. The reason behind this originated from question format in the high school entrance examination which was decided as open-ended for a while. This caused the publishers to come up with multiple resources composed of open-ended questions. After another announcement about using multiple choice in the high school entrance examination, the resources in the market were designed with multiple questions again. At this period, students experienced severe breakdowns as well as anxiety and stress. In addition, to keep up with the changes, teachers changed their plans several times as well as their materials and exams. Along with students and teachers, parents were said to experience stress and anxiety. This swift change in the high school entrance exam system costs low morale on people involving in the process. To prevent such a high loss of energy, a new adaptation in the exam system should be informed in a way to give enough time to teachers and stakeholders. At the same time, sample questions and details of the examination should be announced earlier so as to give enough amount of time for the publishers and teachers.

Secondly, it has been found that in the implementation of the national curriculum, several problems have been faced. While public school teachers suffer from limited allocated time, private school teachers face low motivation of students in the process of exam preparation. The first group of teachers has found the solution in taking out interactive activities in the coursebook and giving the vocabulary items directly with their Turkish meanings. On the other hand, since private school students find the English test in THSE easy, they do not give enough importance to English lessons. Besides, some private school teachers are supposed to finish two curricula at the same

time to meet the demands of the parents. In addition to these, the decrease of coefficient in English test with THSE has caused low motivation and negative attitudes on students towards English lessons in grade 8. To solve these problems and improve the evaluation system, the English test in the high school entrance examination should be designed with practical language skills such as listening, writing, and speaking. In addition, process-based evaluation should be applied to students by using criteria and asking students to keep a portfolio which is to be checked through the MONE.

This study may provide fruitful data to newly graduated teachers or inexperienced teachers in the process of the recently initiated examination, THSE, while experienced teachers are thought to find similar obstacles they face. Based on the findings of the current study, most of the teachers were found to be squeezed among students' needs, parents' expectations, administrators' directives, and the recently initiated exam system's demands. It was also seen that teachers mostly lost their autonomy and motivation as well as implemented the curriculum for the sake of duty. Besides, while public school teachers rush to catch up with the national curriculum, private school teachers try to cover both curricula. Within the framework of these findings, some space should be given to teachers to let them decide on their lessons. Furthermore, the pressure on the shoulders of both groups of teachers should be decreased through seminars and workshops in which teachers can find their own voice and increase their motivation. Also, the solutions for the obstacles they have faced as well as some practical advice can be provided.

After the analysis of data, it has been found that most of the parents create stress and anxiety on students as well as teachers. It was commonly mentioned that some parents were not aware of the academic level of their children, therefore, parents either expected from their children more than or less than their capability. As a result of this, students have felt either too much stress on their shoulders or insignificant because of their parents' expectations. Moreover, especially private school teachers have been found to be directed by the parents to achieve their expectations. Regarding this issue, prospective parents of the grade 8 students should be given seminars before the academic year starts and they should be gained awareness of their attitudes and

approaches. Furthermore, cooperation between teachers and parents should be strengthened through activities outside of the school environment. In this way, parents and teachers can understand each other and parents will provide support to the teachers.

5.3. Implications for further research

In this section, implications for further research are suggested below based on the findings of the study.

This study has been carried out in Denizli within the districts of Merkezefendi and Pamukkale. Volunteer grade 8 English teachers from both public and private schools participated in the study. To understand their perceptions and experiences in relation to recently initiated THSE, 12 public and 12 private school teachers were interviewed. For further researches, conducting studies in different cities and settings such as villages or towns could show a broader picture of Turkey. Integrating different cultures and regions could show the results are similar or not. Besides, this study has been carried out to understand the perceptions of teachers but perceptions and experiences of many other stakeholders as students, parents, school principals or curriculum specialists may also be studied.

THSE has been initiated in 2017; therefore, the number and scope of the studies concerning THSE have stayed restricted. In addition, the impact of THSE on English teachers has been studied but the other subject areas also need investigation. In this way, an interdisciplinary comparison may be done and similarities with differences may be found out. Moreover, this current study has used the interview as a data collection tool, so other tools of data collection such as observation, questionnaire or teaching journals may be integrated. Besides, the teachers have been consulted concerning students' attitudes and expectations as well as parents' expectations. Therefore, students and parents of public and private schools can be integrated into further studies as well as the principals of schools. After such an attempt, different angles of the process can be reflected.

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APPENDICES

A. TEACHER INTERVIEW GUIDE

Merhaba, ismim Hatice Ekiz. Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim bölümünde yüksek lisans öğrencisiyim. Ortaokul düzeyinden liseye geçiş sınavlarının İngilizce derslerindeki öğretim programlarına, sınıf içi öğretime, değerlendirmeye ve öğrencilerin bu derslere karşı tutumlarına etkisini araştırıyorum. Bu amaçla görüşmelere yapıyorum. Bu görüşme yaklaşık 30 dakika sürecektir ve görüşmede paylaşacağınız tüm bilgiler gizli tutulacaktır. Araştırmada isminiz ve kurumunuz yer almayacaktır. Eğer sizin için sakıncası yoksa görüşmeyi kaydetmek isterim. Amacım not almada oluşacak zaman kaybını önlemektir. Arzu etmeniz durumunda yaptığımız görüşmeyi dinleyebilirsiniz. Görüşme sırasında herhangi bir sorun veya rahatsızlık duymanız durumunda görüşmeden çekilebilirsiniz.

Kişisel Bilgiler

- 1- Yaşınız:
- 2- Cinsiyetiniz: K(...) E(...)
- 3- Kaç yıllık öğretmensiniz? (...)
- 4- Hangi kurumda çalışıyorsunuz? (İşaretleyiniz)
Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı (.....) Özel okul (.....)
- 5- 8. sınıflara kaç yıldır ders veriyorsunuz? (.....)
- 6- Hangi üniversiteden mezunsunuz?
(.....)
- 7- Öğretmenlik meslek formasyonunuz var mı?
Evet (...) Hayır (...)
- 8- Lisansüstü eğitiminiz var mı? İşaretleyiniz.
Yüksek Lisans (...) Doktora (...) Diğer (.....)

LGS'nin öğretmenlerin ders programı ve dersin işleyişle aldığı kararlara etkisi

1. Okulunuzda verdiğiniz dersle ilgili alınan kararlarda liseye geçiş sınavının bir etkisi oldu mu?

- 1.1. Öğrencilerinizin liseye geçiş sınavlarındaki başarısını artırmak için dersinizde neler yapıyorsunuz?
- 1.2. Dersin programı ile sınav sorularında yer alan yeterlikler ne düzeyde örtüşüyor?
- 1.3. Öğretim planlarınızda bu sınavlarda çıkan sorulara ilişkin yeterlikleri dikkate alıyor musunuz? Ne düzeyde ve nasıl?
- 1.4. Verdiğiniz ödevlerle bu sınavlarda çıkan soruları ilişkisi konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?
- 1.5. Sınıf dışında verilen ödevlerde yaptığınız tercihler üzerinde LGS'nin etkisi ne ölçüdedir?

Öğretmen ve öğrencilerin LGS algısı

2. Dil öğrenmeye ya da dili etkili kullanmaya olan tutumları açısından, öğrencilerin derslerle ve sizin sınavlarınızla ilgili düşüncelerinin liseye geçiş sınavı ile ilişkisi konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?

- 2.1. Liseye geçiş sınavlarının öğrencileriniz üzerindeki duygusal etkisi ile ilgili ne düşünüyorsunuz? Bu etkiler sizin derslerinize ve öğrencilerle iletişimize nasıl yansıyor?
- 2.2. Öğrencilerinizin sınavlardan beklentisi ne yöndedir?
- 2.3. Sizce LGS'nin bu beklentide bir etkisi var mıdır?

LGS'nin öğrencilerin öğrenme ve ders çalışma sürecine etkisi

3. LGS öğrencilerinizin öğrenme ve çalışma alışkanlıklarında sizce nasıl bir değişikliğe yol açtı?

- 3.1. Sınıf içi öğretim süreçlerine bu sınavlar nasıl yansıyor?
- 3.2. LGS'ye hazırlanma sürecinde velilerin beklentileri öğrenciler üzerinde ne tür etkiler oluşturmaktadır?

LGS'nin öğretmenlerin değerlendirme sürecine etkisi

4. Sınıf içi hazırladığınız ve uyguladığınız kendi sınavlarımızda (ortak ya da bireysel) LGS'nin bu sınavlarda çıkan sorulara herhangi bir etkisi oldu mu? Ne düzeyde ve nasıl?

4.1. LGS sorularının dışında kalan konuların ölçülmesi konusunda nasıl bir değerlendirme yapmayı planlıyorsunuz?

4.2. LGS'de kullanılan çoktan seçmeli soru türü dersinize nasıl bir etki yarattı?

LGS'nin öğretmenlerin uygulama sürecine etkisi

5. Liseye geçiş sınavlarında ele alınan dil yeterlikleri ile dersinizde kapsadığınız dil yeterliklerini nasıl karşılaştırıyorsunuz? TEOG, SBS ve önceki sınavları dikkate alarak yanıtlayabilirsiniz.

5.1. Bu sınavlar size öğretmenlerin performanslarında olumlu ya da olumsuz bir etki yapıyor mu? Nasıl?

5.2. Derslerde kullandığınız yöntemlerde bu sınavların ilişkisi konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?

5.3. Programın uygulanması konusunda herhangi bir sorun yaşadınız mı?

5.4. LGS'nin öğretmenler arası iş birliğini hangi ne yönde etkilediğini düşünüyorsunuz?

5.5. Herhangi bir liseye geçiş sınavının olmadığını düşünün. Şu anki ders yöntem ve teknikleriniz nasıl değişirdi? Öğrencilerin sınıf içi katılımı ve derse tutumu farklı olur muydu?

B. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Gönüllü Katılım Formu

Bu çalışma, Liselere Geçiş Sınavı'nın Türkçe, Matematik, İngilizce, Fen Bilimleri, Sosyal Bilimler ve Din Kültürü derslerindeki sınıf içi öğretime, değerlendirmeye, eğitim programına, materyal seçimine ve ders dışı verilen ödevlere etkisini; aynı zamanda, öğretmen ve öğrencilerin sınav algılarını ölçmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Anket 43 sorudan oluşmaktadır ve likert tipi ölçek kullanılmıştır. Ölçeği yalnız olarak yapmanız beklenir ve her soru verilen ifadeye ne kadar katıldığınızı sorar. Beş seçenekten birini işaretlemeniz gerekir. Araştırmada yer alan soruların doğru ya da yanlış cevabı bulunmamaktadır. Sizi en iyi ifade eden seçeneği işaretleyiniz.

Çalışmaya katılım tamamıyla gönüllülük temelinde olmalıdır. Ankette, sizden kimlik belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Cevaplarınız tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir; elde edilecek bilgiler bilimsel yayımlarda kullanılacaktır. Anket, genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek soruları içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz cevaplama işini yarıda bırakıp çıkmakta serbestsiniz. Böyle bir durumda anketi uygulayan kişiye, anketi tamamlamadığınızı söylemek yeterli olacaktır. Anket sonunda, bu çalışmayla ilgili sorularınız cevaplanacaktır. Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim Anabilim Dalı öğrencisi Hatice Ekiz (Telefon: 05467282582, e-posta: hatice.ekz@hotmail.com) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum ve istediğim zaman yarıda kesip çıkabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayımlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum.

(Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

İsim, Soyisim

Tarih

İmza

C. EXCERPT FROM AN INTERVIEW

LGS'nin öğretmenlerin ders programı ve dersin işleyişle aldığı kararlara etkisi

1. Okulunuzda verdiğiniz dersle ilgili alınan kararlarda liseye geçiş sınavının bir etkisi oldu mu?

Okul LGS ye göre sistemini değiştirdi. Özel bir okulda çalıştığım süre içinde ilk önce, 7 tane kitap belirlendi MEB bazlı. Daha sonra üzerine 2-3 tane daha ekleme yapıldı. Ama merkezde LGS önemli ama genel İngilizce de önemli deyip ek bir kitap eklendi. MEB müfredatının yanında ek olarak genel İngilizce de takip ettik. Bu sene LGS'ye çok ağırlık vermiyoruz. 7 saat dersin 3 saatinde sadece LGS çalışıyoruz. Geriye kalan 4 saatte genel İngilizce olarak değerlendiriyoruz.

1.1. Öğrencilerinizin liseye geçiş sınavlarındaki başarısını artırmak için dersinizde neler yapıyorsunuz?

Kelime bazlı oyunlar, okuduğunu anlama üzerine çalışmalar, yani bununla ilgili worksheetler yapıyorum. Kendi yazdığım piyasadakilere ve örnek sorulara benzer sorularımı da kullanıyorum. Tabi yetişemediğim yerde internetten de alıyorum. Daha önce yayınlanmış ve basılmış olan LGS kaynaklarını kullanıyorum.

1.2. Dersin programı ile sınav sorularında yer alan yeterlikler ne düzeyde örtüşüyor?

MEB'in kaynak olarak verdiği çok yüksek değil. Sınav bazında baktığımızda, bizim Okulstic benzer denemelerimizde LGS'nin biraz daha yüksek geldiğini görüyorum ben. Bendeki düşünce, LGS'nin ters köşe yapabilmesi. Geçen sene sayısala verilen zorluk bu sene sözele verilebilir. Bu seneki örnek sorulara baktığımızda, okuduğunu anlamaya daha fazla yoğunlaşmışlar. Geçen seneki sınavda sadece görsel sorular vardı nerdeyse.

1.3. Öğretim planlarınızda bu sınavlarda çıkan sorulara ilişkin yeterlikleri dikkate alıyor musunuz? Ne düzeyde ve nasıl?

Tabi LGS'ye yönelik oluyor ama bunu hazırlarken öğrenci profilini de göz önüne alıyoruz. Bazı denemelerimizde ve kendi çalışmalarımızda, düşük, orta ve üst düzey

sorular da var. Yani bunu dengeleyerek vermeye çalışıyoruz. Her öğrenciye hitap etsin felsefemiz var. Tabii LGS'yi de baz alarak yapıyoruz. Farklı kaynakları da kullanmaya çalışıyoruz çünkü farklı soruları da görsünler istiyoruz.

1.4. *Verdiğiniz ödevlerle bu sınavlarda çıkan soruları ilişkisi konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?*

Buradaki ödevlerde benim elimden değil de merkez bazlı geliyor. Gelen ödevlerde de okuduğunu anlama üzerine daha fazla bir çalışma var. Okuduklarını anlasınlar ve test şeklinde ya da comprehension check şeklinde sergilesinler yönünde bir çalışma var. Arada V-Cloud ödevlerimiz var ki kelime ve okuduğunu anlama şeklinde olduğu için bir örtüşme var. Listening ya da ona benzer ödevlerimiz olmuyor. Hatta MEB kitabımız içinde listening gözüküyor ama bunları kullanmıyoruz. Merkez de listening kısmına zaman ayırmıyor. Ama writing ödevlerimiz var.

1.5. *Sınıf dışında verilen ödevlerde yaptığınız tercihler üzerinde LGS'nin etkisi ne ölçüdedir?*

Oluyor tabii. Benim sınıf içi verdiğim denemelerde, nerde ne kadar yanlışı var onu görmeye çalışıyoruz. Kaç yanlışı varsa onunla ilgili soru bazlı çalışma yapıyoruz. Mesela şu an 3. Ünitedeyiz. 3 üniteden hangisinde yanlışı var. Ünite bazlı değerlendirdikten sonra MEB'in verdiği kazanımlara göre bakıyoruz. Making simple inquiries diye geçiyor. Mesela suggestion yapabiliyor mu bakıyoruz. Eğer bu konuda bir eksiği varsa ödevlendirme de bu şekilde oluyor. Öğrencinin kazanımı ve ona göre eksiği. Denemelerde biz bunu görüyoruz. Bunun dışında okul başarısını görmek için yaptığımız denemeler var ki bunlar merkezden geliyor. O da 20 okul arasında neredeyiz, bunu görmek adına yapılıyor.

Öğretmen ve öğrencilerin LGS algısı

2. *Dil öğrenmeye ya da dili etkili kullanmaya olan tutumları açısından, öğrencilerin derslerle ve sizin sınavlarınızla ilgili düşüncelerinin liseye geçiş sınavı ile ilişkisi konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?*

Dersi ikiye böldüğümüz için biz, genel İngilizce ve LGS diye. Genel İngilizceye geçtiğimizde, öğrencilerin beklentileri daha çok konuşabileyim, kendimi anlatabileyim, kitabın vermiş olduğu B1 seviyesine ulaşabileyim. Bu belirli bir

kesimde var. Devletten gelen ve özel okullardan gelen öğrenciler olduğu için bu noktada bir seviye farklılığı oluşabiliyor. Bu farkı kapatmak için hafta sonu etkinlikleri ya da ekstra ödevler yapıyoruz. Ama LGS'ye geçtiğimiz zaman, belli bir kesim öğrenci de ben yapabiliyorum, kelime çalıştığım zaman eksikim yok, yapabiliyorum diyen öğrenciler de var. Ama diğer taraftan dışardan gelen ve altyapısı çok olmayan öğrencilerde ise, deneme bazında ful yapayım şeklinde. İngilizcede bazı becerileri elde edeyim şeklinde değil ne yazık ki. Bizim ödev günlerimiz var, pazartesi, Salı ve hafta sonu şeklinde. Pazartesi ve Salı LGS bazlı ve hafta sonu da genel İngilizce bazlı ödevler geliyor. Sınavlar öğrencilerin not ortalamalarını yüksek tutmak için LGS bazlı değerlendirme yapılıyor. Genel İngilizcede sadece quizler yapılıyor.

2.1. Liseye geçiş sınavlarının öğrencileriniz üzerindeki duygusal etkisi ile ilgili ne düşünüyorsunuz? Bu etkiler sizin derslerinize ve öğrencilerle iletişimize nasıl yansıyor?

Danışmanlık sisteminde 8ler benim sorumluluğumda. Öğrenciler veli ve okulun beklentilerini karşılamaya çalışıyorlar. Bu düzeni bazen tutturamayan, sistematik çalışmadığı için, bunun altında ezilen öğrenci gruplarımız oluyor. Ama o noktada PDR ile iletişime geçip, orda duygusal ihtiyaçlarına yönelik çalışmalar yapıyoruz. Örnek olarak da geçen sene bir öğrencim Sosyal Bilimler lisesini istiyordu. Onunla beraber ciddi bir çalışma yaptık ve yapması gereken şeyleri belirledik. Bu durumda çocukta heveslendi ve atak sergiledi ve şu an orda. Ayrıca genel İngilizcesine de destek olmuştuk onun. İngilizcesi de vardı zaten ve üstüne de ekledik. Hazırlığı da geçen tek öğrenci oldu. Burada ciddi anlamda öğrencinin motivasyona, koçluğa ve ciddi yönlendirmeye ihtiyacı var. Öğretmen ve PDR olarak öğrencinin yaşadığı stresi iyi görmek gerekiyor ve veliyi doğru yönlendirmek gerekiyor. Bu işin gerçeği şu, veliler kendi içinde yarışıyor ve öğrencileri yarıştıyor. Bunu biz de derslerde hissediyoruz ve gözlemliyoruz. Bu sene de var. Öğrenci senenin başında anne-babayla ilişkisi iyi olduğu için dışarı pek yansıtmıyor ama ilerleyen süreçlerde, yorgunluk, pes etme, yılma gibi sonuçlar oluyor.

D. AN EXAMPLE OF DATA ANALYSIS

LGS'nin öğretmenlerin ders programı ve dersin işleyişle aldığı kararlara etkisi

1. Okulunuzda verdiğiniz dersle ilgili alınan kararlarda liseye geçiş sınavının bir etkisi oldu mu?

Daha çok kelime ağırlıklı dersler işledik ya da reading ağırlıklı. Kelimeler ve reading e önem vermek zorunda kaldım. Listening'i açıkçası göz ardı etmek durumundaydım çünkü ders sayıları da az olduğu için. 4 saat ders oluyor ama öğrenciler 2 saat seçmeli ders olarak yabancı dili seçiyorlar. Artı kurs da oluyor bizim. Toplamda 8 saati buluyor aslında. Kurs hafta içi okul çıkışı 15-17 arası oluyor.

Impact of THSE on teachers' planning

1.1. Öğrencilerinizin liseye geçiş sınavlarındaki başarısını artırmak için dersinizde neler yapıyorsunuz?

Dersimde daha önce çıkmış LGS sorularını çözdürüyorum. Bol bol reading yaptırıyorum. Çünkü sınav reading ağırlıklı olduğu için. Ya da kelime çalışmaları yaptırıyorum. Arada presentationlar olabiliyor. Ya da writing de yaptırabiliyorum. Kelimeleri kullanmaları için. Writing de yapıyorlar ama dediğim gibi listening biraz göz ardı edilebiliyor. Listening de speaking de sınavda çıkmayacağı için. Speaking yapıyoruz ama çok yeterli olmuyor. Kitapta alıştırmaları oluyor. 7. sınıf ders kitaplarında da var. Yani ders kitapların hepsinde listening kısımları var ama çok da faydalı değil tabi. Kendim ekstra hazırlayabilirsem onları yaptırıyorum daha çok. Hazırlayamazsam da o da göz ardı oluyor. Daha çok reading ve vocab ağırlıklı.

In-class activities for higher THSE achievement

1.2.Dersin programı ile sınav sorularında yer alan yeterlikler ne düzeyde örtüşüyor?

Açıkçası sınav kitabın ya da EBAnın yeterliliğine göre daha kolay geliyor bence. Bizim öğrencilere öyle geliyor. Benim öğrencilerimin seviyeleri biraz yüksek yani. Sınavı daha kolay buluyorlar. Reading olarak yoğun işliyorum. Vocab çalışması için sunumlar oluyor ya da TEOG ya da LGS için Youtube’da hazırlanmış videolar var. O videoları izliyoruz. Kelime için de cümle içinde kullanıyorum. O şekilde sınava hazırlıyorum ve soru çözerek. Daha önce çıkmış soruları ya da işte Milli Eğitim’in hazırladığı sorular. Onları çözdürüyorum. Onun üstünden gidiyoruz.

Compatibility
between the
curriculum and
THSE
competencies

1.3.Öğretim planlarınızda bu sınavlarda çıkan sorulara ilişkin yeterlikleri dikkate alıyor musunuz? Ne düzeyde ve nasıl?

Listening ve speaking i az yaptırıyorum. Daha çok reading ve vocab ağırlıklı gidiyorum sınava yönelik. Listening i çıkarmayı tercih ediyorum çünkü ders sayısı yetmiyor. Eğer listening yaptırırsam reading e ya da sınavda çıkacak konulara zamanım yetmiyor. Yetiştiremiyorum o konuları. O yüzden de listening e çok az vakit ayırıyorum. Writing i de tenseleri öğretmek için kullanıyorum. Mesela geçmiş zamanla ilgili writing yaptırabiliyorum. Ya da perfect tense e geldiğimizde onun için writing yazdırabiliyorum. Daha çok hatırlaması için. Sınavda writing çıkmıyor ama ben writingin diğer skillere faydalı olduğunu düşünüyorum ve onun için yaptırıyorum. Grammar ile ilgili olarak, sorular çıkabiliyor ancak direk soru gelmiyor.

Impact on in-
class instruction

E. LIST OF THEMES AND CODES

Demographics

Teachers' perceptions of THSE as an evaluation strategy

- Impact of the multiple-choice question type
- Emerging problems during the implementation of the program

Impact of THSE on teachers' curricular decisions

- Compatibility between the national curriculum and English language competencies in THSE

Impact of THSE on the instructional process of teachers

- Impact on instructional planning
- Impact on in-class instruction
- Impact on teachers' methods
- In-class activities for higher THSE achievement
- Impact on the decisions for assignments
- The parallelism between assignments and THSE
- Impact on teachers' performance
- Impact on the cooperation among teachers

Impact of THSE on students' learning and motivation

- Impact on students' expectations
- Impact on students' attitudes towards English lessons
- Impact on students' learning and studying process
- Impact on students' emotional states
- Impact of parents' expectations on students

Impact of THSE on the evaluation process of teachers

- Impact of THSE on teachers' evaluations
- Impact on the evaluation of non-tested topics by THSE
- Impact on students' expectations from written English exams
- Possible changes

F. APPROVAL OF METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

DUMLUPINAR BULVARI 06800
ÇANKAYA ANKARA/TURKEY
T: +90 312 210 22 91
F: +90 312 210 79 59
ueam@metu.edu.tr
Sayı: 28620816 / 829

06 Haziran 2018

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Prof. Dr. Ali YILDIRIM

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız yüksek lisans öğrencisi Hatice EKİZ'in "LGS'nin Ortaokul Düzeyinde İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Öğretim Planlaması ve Uygulamasına Etkisi: Öğretmen Algısı" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay 2018-EGT-094 protokol numarası ile 18.06.2018 - 30.12.2018 tarihleri arasında geçerli olmak üzere verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Prof. Dr. Ayhan SOL

Üye

Prof. Dr. Ş. Halil TURAN

Başkan V

Prof. Dr. Ayhan Gürbüz DEMİR

Üye

Doç. Dr. Yaşar KONDAKÇI

Üye

Doç. Dr. Emre SELÇUK

Üye

Doç. Dr. Zana ÇITAK

Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Pınar KAYGAN

Üye

G. APPROVAL OF MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION



T.C.
DENİZLİ VALİLİĞİ
İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğü

Sayı : 16605029/44-E.14667399
Konu : Anket Uygulama İzni

14/08/2018

VALİLİK MAKAMINA

İlgi : Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Rektörlüğü'nün 30/07/2018 tarih ve 044-E.24 sayılı yazıları.

Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Anabilim Dalı Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim Programı Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi Hatice EKİZ, Öğretim Üyesi Prof. Dr. Ali YILDIRIM'ın danışmanlığında "LGS'nin Ortaokul Düzeyinde İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Öğretim Planlaması ve Uygulamasına Etkisi: Öğretmen Algısı" başlıklı çalışmaya yönelik hazırlanmış olduğu anket/ölçek formlarını ilgi yazı gereği Müdürlüğümüze bağlı Denizli İli Merkezefendi İlçesinde bulunan özel ve devlet ortaokullarında görev yapan İngilizce öğretmenlerine uygulamak istemektedir.

Yukarıda adı geçen müracaat ile ilgili (Lisans/Lisansüstü/Doktora) öğrencileri ve Öğretim Görevlilerinin ilgi yazıları ekinde belirtilmiş oldukları okullarda, (Ortaöğretim/İlköğretim/Okulöncesi) konuları ile ilgili anket çalışmalarının "Araştırma, Yanışma ve Sosyal Etkinlik İzini" Genelgesinde belirtilen esaslar gereğince; Okul ve kurumların eğitim-öğretim faaliyetlerini aksatmayacak şekilde ve bu araştırma kapsamında oluşturulan tezin linkini denizliarge@gmail.com adresine gönderilmesi kaydıyla 2018/2019 eğitim-öğretim yılı içerisinde uygulamaları Müdürlüğümüze uygun görülmüştür.

Ourlarınıza arz ederim.

Mahmut OĞUZ
Millî Eğitim Müdürü

OLUR
14/08/2018
Hakkı ÜNAL
Vali a.
Vali Yardımcısı

Güvenli Elektronik İmza

Ash Ne Aydınır
15-08-2018

Mahmut TUR
Memur

T.C.
DENİZLİ VALİLİĞİ
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H. TURKISH SUMMARY/ TÜRKÇE ÖZET

LİSELERE GEÇİŞ SINAVI: ORTAOKUL İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETİM SÜRECİNDEKİ ETKİSİNE İLİŞKİN ÖĞRETMEN ALGILARI

GİRİŞ

Geniş ölçekli sınavlar, artan nüfus ve karar mercilerinin talepleri doğrultusunda ortaya çıkmıştır (Ysseldyke vd., 2004). Literatür taraması bu sınavların öğretmenler, öğrenciler, aileler ve yöneticiler üzerinde etkisi olduğunu göstermektedir (Au, 2007; Minarechova, 2012; Ramezaney, 2014; Wideen vd. ,1997). Öğrencilerin standart testlerden elde ettikleri sonuçlar, öğretmenlerin performanslarının sonucu olarak algılanmakta ve bu durum da velilerin okul seçimlerini etkilemektedir (Buyruk, 2014; Ocak vd., 2010). Buna ek olarak, standart testlerin öğrencilere daha disiplinli çalışma alışkanlıkları kazandırdığı, daha az devamsızlık ve derslere karşı motivasyon sağladığı düşünülmektedir (Şad & Şahiner, 2016). Bu testler, okullar ve öğrenciler arasında bir denklik ve kıyaslama sağlamasına rağmen, öğretmenler üzerinde öğrencilerin başarılarını artırmaları yönünde baskı da yaratmaktadır (Thibodeaux, Labat & Labat, 2015). Ashadi ve Rice (2016) standart testlerin öğretmenlerin öğretim planlarını ve uygulamalarını da etkileyebileceğini belirtmektedir. Ayrıca, standart testler öğretmenlerin eğitim planlarını sıkıca takip etmesine ve plana yetişmek için panik olmasına yol açmaktadır (Şad & Şahiner, 2016). Buna rağmen, standart testler, İngiltere, Amerika, Avustralya ve Türkiye'yi de içeren birçok ülkede kullanılmaktadır.

Liseye giriş sınavları kalabalıklaşan nüfusla ve taleple birlikte, Türkiye'de kendini göstermiştir. 1950'li ve 1990'lı yıllar arasında kırsal alanlardan şehir merkezlerine göçlerle beraber, okullar artan öğrenci sayısını karşılamak için ikili hatta üçlü öğretim sistemlerini kullanmışlardır (Şimşek & Yıldırım, 2004). 1990'lı yıllarda, Fen, Anadolu ve Güzel Sanatlar liseleri dahil olmak üzere çoğu lise artan talebi karşılamak için giriş sınavı uygulamaya başlamıştır (Şad & Şahiner, 2016). Bunun sonucunda öğrenciler

arasında bu liselere girmek için artan rekabetle beraber, merkezi lise giriş sınavı hükümetin gündeminde yer almıştır (Şad & Şahiner, 2016). Türkiye’de 2000’den itibaren sırasıyla LGS, OKS, SBS, TEOG ve LGS adıyla beş farklı liseye giriş sınavları uygulanmıştır (Şad & Şahiner, 2016). Hemen hemen her sene bu sınavların soru sayısı, içeriği, kat sayısı ve uygulanması gibi alanlarda bazı değişikliklere gidilmiştir. 2000’lerin başında, Liseye Giriş Sınavı (LGS) özellikle Fen ve Anadolu Liseleri için uygulamaya konulmuştur. Ardından bu sınav Ortaöğretim Kurumları Sınavı (OKS) olarak 2006 yılında değiştirilmiştir. OKS ile bütün liselerin sınavları aynı çatı altında toplanmıştır. Ancak, öğrencilerin bir tek sınavla değerlendirilmesi ve telafi sınavlarının olmaması gibi eleştirilerle, OKS kaldırılıp Seviye Belirleme Sınavı (SBS) 2007 yılında uygulamaya başlanmıştır. Sekizinci sınıfta sadece bir kez yapılan sınav yerine altıncı, yedinci ve sekizinci sınıfların sonunda öğrencilerin sınava dahil olmasına ve öğrencilerin okul ortalamalarının da liseye giriş sınavı için gerekli olan puana dahil edilmesine karar verilmiştir. Bu sistemin de uygulanmasında çıkan bazı eleştirilerle, 2013 yılında Temel Eğitimden Ortaöğretime Geçiş (TEOG) sınavı uygulanmaya başlanmıştır. Ayrıca, yeni okul sistemi olan 4+4+4 de hayata geçirilmiştir. Bu sınav sisteminde öğrenciler, sekizinci sınıfın her iki döneminde birer sınava girip okul ortalamaları da dahil edilerek liseye geçiş için gerekli puanı elde etmiştir (Şad & Şahiner, 2016).

2017 yılında, TEOG sınavı kaldırılmış, Liselere Geçiş Sınavı (LGS) uygulamaya konulmuş ve 2019 yılı itibariyle hala uygulanmaktadır. LGS ile sekizinci sınıf öğrencileri senenin sonunda bir sınava tabi tutulup, TEOG sınavının aksine, not ortalamaları sınav sonuçlarına eklenmemektedir. Sınav sayısal ve sözel bölümlerden oluşan iki oturumdan oluşmaktadır. Sınav 75 dakika süren Türkçe, Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi, T.C. İnkılap Tarihi ve Atatürkçülük ve İngilizce sorularından oluşan sözel oturumla başlayıp, 80 dakika süren Matematik ve Fen Bilimleri sorularından oluşan sayısal oturumla tamamlanmaktadır. Bu sınav sonucuyla öğrenciler, nitelikli liseler olarak kabul edilen liseler arasından tercihlerini yapabilmekteler. Bu liseler Fen liseleri, Sosyal Bilimler liseleri, Meslek ve Teknik liselerinin bazı programları ve de özel program ve proje uygulayan liseler olarak belirtilmiştir. Öğrencilerin tercih

yapabilecekleri liselerin listesi Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından kendi web sitesinde yayınlanmaktadır. Tercih yapmak için yeterli puana sahip olmayan öğrenciler için adrese dayalı yerleştirme yapılmakta, genellikle öğrenciye en yakın lise olarak belirlenmektedir.

1.1. Araştırmanın amacı

Bu çalışmanın amacı LGS'nin ortaokulda İngilizce eğitim ve öğretim sürecine olan etkisini öğretmenlerin algıları aracılığıyla araştırmaktır.

Aşağıdaki sorular bu çalışmada cevaplanmıştır:

- a) Öğretmenler, bir ölçme yöntemi olarak LGS'yi nasıl algılar?
- b) Öğretmenler, LGS'nin eğitim programlarıyla ilgili olarak aldıkları kararlara olan etkisini nasıl algılamaktadır?
- c) Öğretmenler, LGS'nin öğretim planlarıyla ilgili olarak aldıkları kararlara olan etkisini nasıl algılamaktadır?
- d) Öğretmenler, LGS'nin öğrencilerin öğrenme ve motivasyonları üzerine olan etkisini nasıl yorumlamaktadır?
- e) Öğretmenler, LGS'nin öğrencilerin performanslarını değerlendirmede olan etkisini nasıl algılamaktadır?

1.2. Araştırmanın önemi

Artan nüfuslu Türkiye'de standart testler önemli bir rol oynamakta ve akademisyenlerin ve politikacıların dikkatini çekmektedir. Bunun sonucunda, liselere giriş sınavı, üniversite giriş sınavı, kamu personeli seçme sınavı gibi standart testlerin etkileri birçok çalışmanın odak noktası haline gelmiştir. Özellikle liselere giriş sınavına odaklanan araştırmalar, öğrencilerin, öğretmenlerin, velilerin ve yöneticilerin üzerine odaklanmıştır (Akin, & Minaz, 2018; Atila, & Özeke, 2005; Biber, Tuna, Polat, Altınok, & Küçüköğlü, 2017; Çelikel, & Karakuş, 2017; Gökcan, & Aktan, 2018; Kılıçkaya, 2016; Konaş, & Özpolat, 2017; Kozikoğlu, 2018; Okutan, &

Daşdemir, 2018; Özkan, Güvendir, & Satıcı, 2016; Şad, & Şahiner, 2016; Usta, 2017; Yuvacı & Demir, 2016; Zorluoğlu, Bağrıyanık, & Şahintürk, 2019). Ancak, geniş bir araştırmaya rağmen, mevcut olan literatür genellikle İngilizce'ye odaklanmamakta, odaklanan birkaç çalışma da TEOG sınavını temel almaktadır. Ayrıca İngilizce öğretmenlerinin LGS algıları hiçbir çalışmada bulunmamıştır. Bu çalışma literatürdeki bu açığa katkı sağlayacak ve de yetkililerin LGS'nin getirdiği sorunları görmelerini sağlayacaktır. Bu şekilde eğitimde iyileştirme sağlanabilecektir.

ARAŞTIRMANIN YÖNTEMİ

Bu araştırma, öğretmenlerin ulusal testlerin orta okullarda öğretme ve öğrenmeyi nasıl etkilediğine ilişkin algılarını araştırmak için nitel bir araştırma yöntemi olarak tasarlanmıştır. Araştırma öğretmen algı ve deneyimlerine odaklandığı için olgubilim deseni çerçevesinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Başka bir deyişle, bu desen bir olguya bireyin bakış açısından bakmanın bir yoludur. Bir bireyin tepkileri, algıları ve duyguları ve de bir olayı nasıl algıladığı, temelde niceliksel ayrıntıların ötesinde bir olayı anlamaya çalışan olgubilim bakış açısı için önemlidir (Gaston-Gayles vd., 2005). Özetle bu çalışmada olgubilim deseni, LGS'nin öğretmenlerin algıları ve öğretimleri üzerindeki olası etkilerini tanımlamak için kullanılmıştır.

2.1. Araştırmanın katılımcıları

Araştırmanın katılımcıları, sanayileşmenin bir sonucu olarak en kalabalık illerden biri olan Denizli'deki özel ve devlet okullardan seçilen İngilizce öğretmenleridir. Devlet okulu öğretmenleri MEB tarafından yapılan merkezi bir sınav ile atanmakta ve özel okul öğretmenleri okul idarecileri tarafından seçilmektedir. İlin merkezi örnek olarak alınmıştır; çünkü Delice (2010) tarafından belirtildiği gibi, erişilebilirlik sorunu nedeniyle örnekleme çok yüksek tutmaya gerek yoktur. Daha makul örnekleme ile daha güvenilir veriler toplanabilir. Araştırma Denizli'nin Merkezefendi ve Pamukkale ilçeleri ile sınırlandırılmış olup, araştırmacı tarafından buradaki birçok devlet ve özel

okul ziyaret edilmiştir. Toplamda 12 devlet ve 12 özel okul öğretmeni olmak üzere toplam 24 sekizinci sınıf İngilizce öğretmenleriyle görüşmeler yapılmıştır.

2.2. Veri toplama tekniği

Verileri toplamak için yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılmıştır. Veri toplama tekniği olarak görüşmenin seçilmesinin nedeni, bu teknikte görüşülen kişinin deneyimlerini en iyi şekilde kendi sözcükleriyle ifade edebilmesinden kaynaklanmaktadır (Higgins & Harreveld, 2013). Ayrıca, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme karşılaştırılabilir sonuçlar verir ve daha derin bir anlayış için esneklik sağlar (Mouza & Barrett-Greenly, 2015) ve mümkün olduğunca fazla ayrıntı bulma fırsatı verir (Xiao & Zhao, 2011). Araştırma soruları çerçevesinde, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme soruları araştırmacı tarafından hazırlanmıştır. Sorular, araştırmanın amacını bulmak için tasarlanmış ve mantıklı bir sıra izlenmiştir. Görüşme dört alt bölümden oluşmakta ve her ne kadar sorular öğretmenlerin anlayışlarını ve algılarını anlamak için hazırlanmış olsa da görüşmenin ilk kısmı katılımcıların tanımlayıcı bilgilerini araştırmak amacıyla araştırmaya zemin hazırlayacak şekilde tasarlanmıştır.

2.3. Verilerin analizi

Yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme sonunda elde edilen bulgular içerik analiziyle incelenip, temalar belirlenmiştir. Ardından benzer ifadeler gruplandırılıp alt temalar oluşturulmuştur. Son olarak, bulgular, araştırmacı tarafından öğretmenlerin ifadelerinin özgünlüğünü bozmadan yorumlanmıştır.

2.4. Araştırmanın sınırlılıkları

Çalışma, araştırma yöntemi ve veri toplama sürecinden kaynaklı olarak iki sınırlılığa sahiptir. İlk olarak, araştırma yöntemi nitel olarak karar verildiğinden bu yöntem bazı sınırlamalar getirmektedir. Amaçlı örnekleme yapılması ve Denizli iliyle sınırlı kalınması, görüşmelerden elde edilen verilerin Türkiye'deki tüm İngilizce öğretmenleri için geçerli olmasına olanak vermeyebilir. Bu sınırlılığı azaltmak için,

katılımcılar arasındaki cinsiyet, yaş, üniversite mezuniyeti, deneyim ve okul türleri gibi farklılıklar artırılmıştır.

İkinci olarak, veriler, başka bir sınırlama olabilen yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme yoluyla toplanmıştır. Bu teknikte katılımcının doğru bilgi vermesi beklenir. Ancak, sınırlı görüşme süresi veya kayıt talebi gibi bazı değişkenler nedeniyle, öğretmenler endişeli hissedebilir, bu yüzden katılımcılardan toplanan verilerin geçerliliği sorgulanabilir. Bu sınırlamaları ortadan kaldırmak için, araştırmacı, katılımcıların belirlediği ortamlarda bireysel olarak görüşmüştür. Her görüşmenin başında çalışmanın amacı açıklanıp kayıt için izin istenmiştir. Dahası, araştırmacı görüşmeler sırasında ses tonuyla ya da beden diliyle, katılımcılar üzerinde herhangi bir baskıya veya strese neden olmamak için dikkatli olmuştur.

BULGULAR VE YORUMLAR

Yapılan görüşmeler sonucunda, bütün öğretmenler LGS’de kullanılan çoktan seçmeli soru türünün dersleri üzerindeki etkisinden bahsetmiştir. Devlet okulu öğretmenleri, bu soru türünü, her türlü sınavda ve kelime ve paragraf sorularını içeren ödevlerde kullanmaktadır. Aynı konuda, özel okul öğretmenleri tekrar testlerinde, yazılı ve uygulama sınavlarında, sınıf içi ve dışı kaynak seçiminde çoktan seçmeli soru türünü kullanmaktadır. Devlet okulu öğretmenlerinden bazıları; çoktan seçmeliye ek olarak, oyun, farklı cümleyi bulma, eşleştirme, doğru/yanlış ve hikâyenin sonunu yazma gibi farklı soru türlerini de derslerine eklemektedir. Öte yandan, bazı özel okul öğretmenleri sınavlarda yazma, konuşma ve açık uçlu sorular kullanmaktadır. Devlet okulu öğretmenlerinden farklı olarak, özel okul öğretmenleri, LGS’deki İngilizce testinin, özel okullarda öğrenim gören öğrencilere göre çok kolay olduğunu düşünmektedir. Ayrıca, özel okul öğretmenleri öğrencilere çoktan seçmeli sorularda kullanılan taktikleri ve teknikleri öğretmekte ve öğretmenlerin bazıları bu tür soruları öğrenciler için olumlu bulmaktadır. Bu bulgular, Şad ve Şahiner’in (2016) bulgularıyla örtüşmektedir. Çoktan seçmeli sorularının kullanımı öğrenciler üzerinde tembellik, yazma isteksizliği ve iletişime geçmekte isteksizlik, mekanikleşme, üretimde güçlük,

etkileşimden kaçınma ve pragmatizm olarak kendisini gösterir. Bu bulgular, Atila ve Özeke (2015), Ashadi ve Rice (2016), Lomax vd. (1995) ile örtüşmektedir.

Öğretmenler, LGS'nin kendi programları ve uygulamaları üzerinde önemli etkilerinden bahsetmiştir. Öğretmenler yöntem ve tekniklerini yeni sınav sistemine göre değiştirdiklerini belirtmişler ve TEOG için gramer odaklı dersler işlerken LGS ile gramer yerine kelime, okuma ve anlama ile diyalog çalışmalarına yönelmişlerdir. Öte yandan, devlet okulu öğretmenleri LGS'de ölçülmediğinden konuşma, yazma veya dinleme gibi üretime dayalı beceriler için yeterli zaman ayıramazken, özel okul öğretmenleri bu beceriler için zaman kazanmaya çalıştıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Bunu başarmak için, özel okul öğretmenleri, biri LGS çalışmaları diğeri genel İngilizce olmak üzere iki farklı eğitim programını takip etmektedirler. Ancak LGS'nin önemi nedeniyle, genel İngilizce dersleri LGS çalışmalarına eklenmektedir.

Her iki okul öğretmenlerinin LGS hazırlık sürecinde ekstra kaynağa ihtiyaç duyduğu öğretmenler tarafından belirtilmiştir. Bütün öğretmenler, ulusal İngilizce programı ile LGS'deki dil yeterlikleri arasında uyumluluk olduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Ayrıca, TEOG sınavında gramer önemliyken, LGS'de kelimenin önem kazandığı belirtilmiştir. Dolayısıyla, ders işleyişinde gramer yerine kelime odak haline gelmiştir. Ancak TEOG'a göre LGS'nin basit olduğu hemen hemen bütün öğretmenler tarafından dile getirilmiştir. Buna rağmen, birçok öğretmen TEOG'a göre LGS'nin öğrencilerin gerçek İngilizce seviyelerini daha çok yansıttığını savunmaktadır. Bu bulgular Kozikoğlu (2018) ile uyumludur.

LGS'nin ölçtüğü dil becerileriyle derslerde ele alınan dil becerilerinin karşılaştırılması konusunda hem devlet hem de özel okul öğretmenleri çoğunlukla LGS'ye paralel yeterlilikleri derslerinde işlediklerini söylemişlerdir. LGS'nin dört temel beceriyi ölçmemesinden kaynaklı ve de devlet okulu öğretmenlerinin sınırlı sayıda derse sahip olmasıyla, devlet okullarında dersler sınava yönelik hal almıştır. Bazı durumlarda, devlet okulu öğretmenlerinin ölçülmeyen bu becerileri kullanmak istemesi öğrenciler üzerinde isteksizlik olarak kendini göstermiştir. Ancak bu durum alt sınıflarda tam tersidir. Özel okul öğretmenleri iki farklı ders olarak götürdükleri iki farklı programın

genel İngilizce olanında herhangi bir deęişiklik yapmazken, LGS için olan kısmında devlet okulu öğretmenlerinin yaşadığı durumu deneyimlemişlerdir. Buna ek olarak, özel okul öğretmenleri LGS'nin İngilizce sınavı olarak daha uygun olduğunu düşünmekte. Bu sonuçlar Çelikel ve Karakuş (2017) ve Kılıçkaya'nın (2016) çalışmaları ile paralel sonuçlar içermektedir.

LGS'nin sınıf içi öğretim üzerindeki etkisine ilişkin olarak hem devlet hem de özel okul öğretmenleri, bu sınavın sınıf içi öğretim üzerinde önemli bir etkisi olduğu fikrindedir. Öğretmenler, planlarını, yöntemlerini ve materyallerini LGS'ye göre değiştirmiştir. Devlet okulu öğretmenleri, grup çalışması veya ikili çalışma yerine bireysel yöntemi tercih etmekte ve Dilbilgisi Çeviri Yöntemini de derslerinde sık sık kullanmaktadır. Bunun nedeni kalabalık sınıflardan ve de kısıtlı ders saatinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Başka bir deyişle, sınıfta kullanılan her plan, yöntem veya materyal LGS'ye dayanmaktadır ya da LGS için zaman kazanmak adına yapılmaktadır. Öte yandan, özel okul öğretmenleri çoğunlukla bireysel öğrenme yöntemini tercih ederken, bazıları gerektiğinde etkileşimli yöntemleri kullanmaktadır. Derslerin odak noktası kelime olurken, velilerin talepleri ise test tekniklerinin öğretilmesi olmuştur. Ayrıca gerekli görülen noktalarda öğrencilerle birebir çalışmalar da yapılmaktadır. Çalışma sonuçları Au (2007), Minarechova, (2012) Ramezaney (2014) ve Wideen vd. (1997) ile uyumludur.

Ödevlerle ilgili olarak, tüm öğretmenler derslerin ve ödevlerin paralel olduğunu ifade etmiş ve LGS'nin ödevler üzerindeki etkisinden bahsetmiştir. Devlet okulu öğretmenleri kelime çalışmaları, tekrar testleri, LGS için fazladan testler, çeviri, eşleştirme, boşluk doldurma çalışmaları, sunum hazırlama gibi ödevler vermektedir. Öte yandan, özel okul öğretmenleri bu konuda neredeyse devlet öğretmenleriyle aynı görüşe sahiptir. Verilen ödevler LGS odaklı testler, teknik ve taktik, metin okuma, kelime eşleştirme, boşluk doldurma veya video kaydı olarak örneklendirilmiştir. Devlet okulundan farklı olarak özel okul öğretmenleri ödevlerinde dinleme ve yazma gibi becerileri de eklemektedir. Ayrıca genel İngilizce için de ödevlendirme yapılmaktadır. Bu bulgular Yuvacı ve Demir'in (2016) bulgularıyla paraleldir.

Hem devlet hem de özel okul öğretmenlerinin kendi içlerinde LGS'nin öğretmenlerin performansı üzerindeki etkisi hakkında farklı görüşlere sahiptir. Öğretmenlerden bazıları LGS'nin performansları üzerinde olumsuz etkileri olduğunu savunurken, bazıları ise olumlu etkilerini dile getirmiştir. LGS'nin performanslarını olumlu yönde etkilediğine inanan bazı özel ve devlet okullarının öğretmenleri, ellerinden gelenin en iyisini yaptıklarını, her ayrıntıyı öğretmeye çalıştıklarını, örnek soruları ve önceki yılların sorularını çözdüklerini, programı yakından takip ederek öğrencilerin ve velilerin taleplerini karşılamaya çalıştıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Diğer taraftan LGS'nin olumsuz etkilerini dile getiren bir grup özel ve devlet okulu öğretmenleri, herhangi bir noktayı veya sözcüğü kaçırmaktan korktuklarından ve etkileşimli çalışmalar yaparken suçluluk duyduklarından, programın gerisinde kalmamak için geleneksel yöntemlere ve acele etmeye ihtiyaçları olduğundan şikâyet etmişlerdir. Hem devlet hem de özel okul öğretmenleri LGS'nin disiplin içi ve de disiplinler arası iş birliğini artırdığını dile getirmiştir. Bu bulgular Ashadi ve Rice (2016) ve Şad ve Şahiner (2016)'in bulguları ile benzerlik göstermektedir.

LGS'nin, öğrencilerin İngilizce derslerine karşı tutumlarına etkisi, bu çalışmada tüm öğretmenler tarafından dile getirilmiştir. Devlet okulu öğretmenleri çoğunlukla öğrencilerin, hayati önem taşıyan LGS'ye yönelik çalışmalar talep ettiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Dinleme, konuşma ve yazma gibi pratik dil çalışmaları yapmak yerine, devlet okulu öğrencileri LGS için yardımcı olabilecek konuları ve becerileri tercih etmektedirler. Ayrıca öğretmenler TEOG'dan sonra öğrencilerin İngilizce derslerine karşı olumsuz davranış gösterdiklerini dile getirirken bunun nedeni olarak da LGS ile İngilizce testinin katsayı ve soru sayısının azaltılmasını öne sürmüşlerdir. Özel okul öğretmenleri, devlet okulu öğretmenlerine ek olarak, öğrencilerin LGS'yi TEOG'a göre daha kolay buldukları, bu yüzden İngilizce derslerine yeterince önem vermediklerini düşünmektedir. Bu bulgular daha önce yapılan araştırmalarla tutarlıdır (Berliner, 2011; Gökcan ve Aktan, 2018).

Tüm devlet ve özel okul öğretmenleri, LGS sürecinde öğrencilerin öğrenim ve çalışma alışkanlıklarında önemli değişiklikler gözlemlemiştir. Devlet okulu öğrencilerinden bazıları daha planlı ve bilinçli bir şekilde çalışma ritimlerini arttırırken, diğer taraftan,

bazıları bir hedef belirlemediği için ebeveynleri ve öğretmenleri tarafından yönlendirilmektedir. Öte yandan, özel okul öğretmenleri bu değişikliklerden bazılarını olumlu ve bazılarını olumsuz olarak görmektedir. Başka bir deyişle, bazı özel okul öğrencileri hazır materyal ve bireysel çalışmalar talep edip yüksek sınav kaygısı yaşarken bazı özel okul öğrencileri düzenli çalışma alışkanlıklarıyla iç disiplin ve zaman yönetimi kazanmıştır. Bu bulgular, Şad ve Şahiner (2016) ile Usta (2017) tarafından desteklenmektedir.

LGS'nin öğrencilerin duygusal durumları üzerindeki etkisi hem devlet hem de özel okul öğretmenleri tarafından stres, gerginlik, kaygı, mutsuzluk, huzursuzluk, test kaygısı, baskı altında olma, ağlama, panik şeklinde örneklenmiştir. Ayrıca, her iki öğretmen grubu da velilerin, toplumun ve akranların öğrenciler üzerinde önemli bir baskı oluşturduğunu düşünmektedir. Bu durumların her liseye geçiş sınavında gözlemlendiğini ifade eden öğretmenler, TEOG sınavının ani bir değişikliklerle kaldırılması ve LGS'nin uygulamaya konulmasının öğrenciler üzerinde fazladan stres yarattığını dile getirmiştir. LGS hakkında yeterli bilginin verilmemesi ve ani değişiklik bir kaos ortamı doğurmuş ve bu durum öğrencilerin daha fazla gerginlik yaşamasına yol açmıştır. Her iki öğretmen grubu da motivasyonu artırmak ve öğrencilerin huzursuzluğunu azaltmak için önemli bir zaman harcamıştır. Ayrıca, öğretmenlerin tüm planları ve materyalleri de öğretmenler için endişe yaratan bir değişim yaşamıştır. Bu duruma ek olarak, velilerin beklentileri hem devlet hem de özel okul öğrencilerinin duygusal durumlarını etkilediği ifade edilmiştir. Velinin tutumuna bağlı olarak öğrenci üzerinde olumlu ya da olumsuz duygusal etkiler gözlemlenmiştir. Devlet okulu velilerinden farklı olarak, özel okul velileri sadece öğrencilere değil, aynı zamanda öğretmenlere ve idari personele de baskı yapıp kendi beklentileri için yönlendirme yaptıkları ifade edilmiştir. Bu konularla benzer bulgular Akın ve Minaz (2018), Ashadi ve Rice (2016), Atila ve Özeken (2015) Biber ve ark. (2017), Kılıçkaya (2016) ve Şad ve Şahiner (2016) tarafından elde edilmiştir.

Tüm devlet ve özel okul öğretmenleri, LGS'nin kendi değerlendirme sürecine olan etkisini dile getirmişlerdir. Devlet okulu öğretmenleri, LGS'nin konularına ve kelimelerine dayanarak yazılı sınav hazırlayıp uyguladıklarını ve de açık uçlu soru

türünden ziyade çoktan seçmeli soru türünü tercih ettiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. Yapılan yazılı sınavların konu ağırlığı bir önceki liseye giriş sınavı baz alınarak hazırlanmaktadır. Benzer şekilde, özel okul öğretmenleri yazılı sınavları devlet müfredatındaki kelimeleri ve konuları temel alarak hazırlayıp uygulamaktalar. Talepleri karşılamak için iki müfredatı takip eden özel okul öğretmenlerinin çoğu, sadece ulusal programdaki yazılı sınavları resmi olarak baz aldıklarını çünkü dönem sonunda öğrencilerin akademik ortalamalarının yüksek tutmak istediklerini dile getirmişlerdir. Özel okul öğretmenlerinin çoğu çoktan seçmeli sorular kullanırken bazıları açık uçlu, boşluk doldurma, eşleştirme, doğru-yanlış, çıkarım ya da diyalog soruları kullanmaktadır. Sınavların bu şekilde hazırlanmasında öğrenci beklentisi de etkisini göstermektedir. Öğrencilerin yazılı sınavlara ilişkin beklentileri, her iki okul öğretmenleri tarafından LGS konularına ve becerilerine paralel olması ve yüksek puan almaları olarak ifade edilmiştir. Çelikel ve Karakuş (2017) tarafından yapılan bir çalışmanın sonuçları bu çalışmanın bulgularıyla örtüşürken Zorluoğlu vd. (2019) tarafından yapılan araştırmayla da açıklanmıştır. LGS’de ölçülmeyen konulara ilişkin olarak, tüm öğretmenler ölçülmeyen konu olmadığını ve LGS’de çıkan konular dışında başka konulara zaman ayıramadıklarını ifade ettiler. Sonuçlar bazı çalışmalarla paraleldir (Ashadi & Rice, 2016; Au, W., 2007; Jacob, B., 2005; Minarechova, 2012; Wideen vd., 1997).

Liseye giriş sınavının olmadığı bir durumda, önemli sayıda öğretmen mevcut öğretim yöntemlerini değiştirebileceklerini belirtmişlerdir. Hem devlet hem de özel okul öğretmenleri yöntemlerini ve tekniklerini değiştirerek derslerinin daha iyi, farklı, eğlenceli, anlamlı ve rahat olacağı fikrindedir. Ancak, devlet okulu öğretmenleri hiçbir şekilde liseye geçiş sınavının olmaması, makul sınıf mevcudu, yeterli teknolojik ekipman ve yeterli sayıda ders olması gerekliliğini de şart olarak öne sürmüştür. Ek olarak, bütün öğretmenler derslerde uygulama, konuşma, görselleştirme, video, hikaye okuma veya okuma becerisi, dinleme, drama, portfolyo temelli değerlendirme, tiyatro, daha az dilbilgisi, daha az kelime çalışması, yazma, projeler, oyunlar ve yarışmalar gibi çalışmalar yapılabileceği düşüncesini paylaşmaktalar.

ÖNERİLER

4.1. Uygulamaya yönelik öneriler

Bulgulara dayanarak standart testlerle ilgili olarak uygulama için aşağıdaki önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

Öğretmenler çoğunlukla 2017 yılında lise giriş sisteminin hızlı bir şekilde değişmesinden şikayetçi olmuşlardır. Bu ani değişiklikle öğretmenler, planlarını, yazılı sınavlarını ve ek materyallerini değiştirmek zorunda kalmış, öğrenciler endişe ve stresin yanı sıra ciddi motivasyon kaybı yaşamışlardır. Öğrenciler ve öğretmenlerle birlikte, velilerin de stres ve endişe yaşadıkları söylenmiştir. Bu değişimin sonunda yaşanan manevi kayıpları önlemek için, sınav sisteminde olabilecek bir değişikliğin ilgili kişilere yeterli zaman sağlayacak şekilde önceden bildirilmesi gerekir. Aynı zamanda, öğretmenler ve öğrenciler için, örnek sorular ve sınavın detayları açıklanmalıdır.

Araştırma sonucunda, devlet müfredatının uygulanmasında bazı sorunların yaşandığı bulunmuştur. Bu sorunları çözmek ve eğitim sistemini geliştirmek için LGS'nin İngilizce testi tekrar tasarlanmalı, dinleme, yazma ve konuşma gibi pratik dil becerileri de dahil edilmelidir. Ek olarak, süreç temelli değerlendirme kriterler kullanılarak öğrencilere uygulanmalı ve öğrencilerden MEB tarafından kontrol edilmek üzere bir portfolyo dosyası hazırlamaları istenmelidir.

Mevcut çalışmanın bulgularına dayanarak, çoğu öğretmenin öğrencilerin ihtiyaçları, velilerin beklentileri, yöneticilerin yönergeleri ve yeni başlatılan sınav sisteminin talepleri arasında sıkıştığı tespit edilmiştir. Bu durumun çözümü için, öğretmenlere derslerinde kendi kararlarını uygulayabilmeleri için ulusal programda bir miktar boşluk bırakılmalıdır. Bunlara ek olarak, her iki öğretmen grubunun omuzlarındaki baskı, öğretmenlerin kendi seslerini bulabilecekleri ve motivasyonlarını artıracabilecekleri seminer ve atölye çalışmaları ile azaltılmalıdır.

Velilerle ilgili olarak, 8. sınıftaki aday velilere, akademik yıl başlamadan önce seminerler verilmeli ve tutum ve yaklaşımlarının farkındalığı kazanılmalıdır. Ayrıca, öğretmenler ve veliler arasındaki iş birliği okul ortamı dışındaki aktivitelerle güçlendirilmelidir. Bu şekilde, veliler ve öğretmenler birbirlerini anlayabilir ve veliler öğretmenlere destek sağlayabilir.

4.2. Araştırma için öneriler

Aşağıda, bu araştırmanın bulgularından yararlanarak ilerideki araştırmalar için öneriler öne sürülmüştür.

Bu araştırmadan farklı olarak, köy veya kasaba gibi yerleşkeleri de içererek farklı şehirlerde çalışmalar yapılabilir. Farklı kültür ve bölgelerden elde edilen sonuçlarla bu çalışmanın sonuçlarının benzer olup olmadığı incelenebilir. Ayrıca, bu çalışma öğretmenlerin algılarını incelemiştir, ancak, öğrenciler, veliler, okul müdürleri veya eğitim programı uzmanları gibi diğer birçok paydaşın algıları ve deneyimleri de incelenebilir.

LGS'nin İngilizce öğretmenleri üzerindeki etkisi bu çalışmada incelenmiştir ancak diğer derslerin de araştırılması gerekmektedir. Bu şekilde disiplinler arası bir karşılaştırma yapılabilir ve farklılıklarla benzerlikler ortaya çıkarılabilir. Ayrıca, bu çalışmada yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme veri toplama aracı olarak kullanılmıştır; bunun dışında, gözlem, anket ya da yansıtıcı öğretmen günlükleri gibi diğer veri toplama araçları da araştırmalarda kullanılabilir. Öte taraftan, devlet ve özel okul öğretmenlerine ek olarak öğrencileri, velileri ve de okul müdürleri kapsayan çalışmalar yapılmalıdır.

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Adı / Name : Hatice

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