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Editor's Message

Dear Researchers and Practitioners,

As the NOVA Language Journal family, we are delighted to present Volume 3, Issue 1 with your continued support. Throughout this journey, we have witnessed the publication of outstanding studies, reaffirming our commitment to playing a leading role in scholarly publishing. We sincerely appreciate the valuable contributions and support of our field editors, authors, reviewers, and readers, whose dedication has been instrumental in the growth and success of our journal.

We look forward to your continued interest in and contributions to NOVA Language Journal, and we hope to meet again in our next issue.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Fatma ARSLAN
Editor-in-Chief

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Yabancı Dil Öğreniminde ChatGPT Kullanımı ve Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Deneyimleri

VOCABULARY TEACHING TO PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS VIA TRANSLANGUAGING

Perim Dönbak*

Abstract

Translanguaging encompasses multiple aspects of multilingualism, including the utilization of learners' linguistic resources, interactions between the mother tongue and additional languages, and its role as a pedagogical strategy for language learning. In this study, translanguaging is conceptualized as a pedagogical tool. This study focused on teaching English vocabulary to Turkish primary school students using translanguaging methods. This study aimed to examine the effects of translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy for vocabulary instruction in primary language education. The study involved 41 fourth-grade students (19 in the experimental group, 22 in the control group) from a private primary school in Antalya, Türkiye. A four-week vocabulary teaching plan that incorporated translanguaging activities was implemented. Prior to the intervention, both the control and experimental groups completed a pre-test to assess their English vocabulary knowledge. A post-test was administered to both groups at the end of the intervention. Data from the pre- and post-tests were analyzed using t-test procedures. The findings indicate that both translanguaging and English-only instructional approaches are effective in teaching English vocabulary to primary school students.

Keywords: English as a Foreign Language, Vocabulary Teaching, Primary School Students, Translanguaging

DİLLER ARASI GEÇİŞLİLİK İLE İLKOKUL ÖĞRENCİLERİNE İNGİLİZCE KELİME ÖĞRETİMİ

Özet

Geniş anlamda translanguaging (diller arası geçişlilik); dil öğrenenlerin dilsel kaynaklarını kullanımı, ana dil ile diğer diller arasındaki etkileşim ve dil öğrenimi için pedagojik bir strateji gibi çok dilliliğin birçok boyutuna atıfta bulunur. Bizim çalışmamızda bu kavram, pedagojik bir yaklaşımı ifade etmektedir. Çalışma, Antalya'daki (Türkiye) bir özel ilkokulda öğrenim gören 4. sınıf düzeyindeki 41 öğrencinin katılımıyla gerçekleştirilmiş ve diller arası geçişlilik yöntemi aracılığıyla İngilizce kelime öğretimine odaklanmıştır. Bu araştırma, ilköğretim düzeyindeki dil eğitiminde kelime öğretimi için bir pedagojik strateji olarak diller arası geçişliliğin etkilerini belirlemeyi amaçlamıştır. Çalışmanın uygulama sürecinde, diller arası geçişliliğin etkinliklerinden oluşan dört haftalık bir kelime öğretim planı uygulanmıştır. Uygulama öncesinde, kontrol ve deney gruplarının İngilizce kelime bilgilerini ölçmek amacıyla bir ön-test yapılmıştır. Uygulama sonunda ise her iki gruba da son-test uygulanmıştır. Ön-test ve son-testlerden elde edilen veriler t-testi analizleri kullanılarak incelenmiştir. Araştırmanın sonuçları, ilkokul öğrencilerine İngilizce kelime öğretiminde hem diller arası geçişlilik yönteminin hem de sadece İngilizce (English-only) yaklaşımının etkili olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce, Kelime Öğretimi, İlkokul Öğrencileri, Diller Arası Geçişlilik

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1. INTRODUCTION

Translanguaging involves the use of linguistic resources from multiple languages in a single context. As a pedagogical approach, it broadens the perspectives of bilingual and multilingual students. The importance of translanguaging in language education has been well established. It facilitates content comprehension and enhances language performance by leveraging diverse linguistic repertoires. Integrating translanguaging into educational settings can increase students' motivation and their confidence. Furthermore, this approach mitigates native language dominance and promotes inclusivity for learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Translanguaging was first named by Cen-Williams (1994). He coined the term *trawsieithu* to explain that bilingual students who speak Welsh and English should be given the opportunity to alternate the two languages to facilitate their language learning. The systematic use of languages, especially in multilingual and multi-ethnic classrooms, to receive information in one language and apply it in another provides a deeper cognitive grasp of the content. Rather than language separation, he believed that developing a concept in multiple languages strengthens students' academic proficiency.

Expanding the scope of the term translanguaging from the classroom to an internal perspective of language learners, García (2007; 2009) has become another leading figure in translanguaging. Multilingual speakers create a language system, but not a separate linguistic repertoire, through a unitary cognitive process. Bilingual and multilingual speakers utilize their full range of tools to communicate, create meaning, and experience the world. In this sense, it is not a scaffolding process but a natural cognitive state for such speakers (Canagarajah, 2011). To comprehend and perceive the world, they also use language resources flexibly (Creese and Blackedge, 2015). Following Vogel and Garcia (2017), translanguaging is a pedagogy that emphasizes social justice and inclusivity. A flexible classroom atmosphere that allows students to use their full linguistic repertoire enhances language learners' identities. For Wei (2018), translanguaging "was not originally intended as a theoretical concept, but a descriptive label for a specific language practice" (p. 15).

In the literature, translanguaging studies have received significant attention in diverse educational contexts. In higher education, Chicherina and Strelkova (2023) examined Russian university students' and teachers' attitudes towards translanguaging pedagogy and found a universal preference for English-only instruction in English language teaching and learning. Both educators and learners favoured strategies that minimized native language use. Zhang (2023) explored teachers' attitudes towards college students' translanguaging practices in China, observing that students perceived translanguaging as beneficial when it clarified content. In another higher education context in Canada, Galante (2020) reported that instructors had not yet adapted to this new pedagogy. However, students naturally and spontaneously used their multilingual repertoires in real-life conversations after participating in translanguaging activities in class.

Researchers have also shown interest in young learners' language learning processes through translanguaging pedagogy. Torpsten (2018) focused on the influence of translanguaging strategies on the identity development of primary school students. Participation in students' mother tongues created the ability to switch languages and consciously change their identities. Ergül (2023) emphasized that young learners tended to use L1 more often, which hindered the progress of language activities. Hence, teachers had to make principled decisions concerning their use of mother tongue and their acceptance of students' mother tongue deployment. Xiong (2024) highlighted that using linguistic resources of young language learners enabled teachers to overcome contingencies in language teaching by transforming unexpected student responses into meaningful learning opportunities.

Translanguaging continues to be a key area of exploration for those looking to improve teaching strategies in multilingual classrooms. Attempting to contribute to the literature on translanguaging pedagogy, this study intentionally investigated the role of translanguaging in English vocabulary learning by primary school students in a Turkish context. Ultimately, these findings are intended to bridge gaps in current literature regarding how young learners utilize their full linguistic repertoire to develop vocabulary. The central aim of this study was reflected in the following research question:

1. Does a translanguaging-based program enhance primary school students' vocabulary learning?
 - 1.a. Is there a difference in pre-test vocabulary knowledge scores between primary school students who participated in a translanguaging-based program and those who did not?
 - 1.b. Is there a difference in post-test vocabulary knowledge scores between primary school students who participated in a translanguaging-based program and those who did not?

2. METHODOLOGY

This study explored the role of translanguaging activities in the vocabulary learning process of Turkish primary school students. To accomplish this, a quantitative method was employed. In her 2021 study, Prilutskaya stressed that quantitative approaches are necessary to understand how pedagogical translanguaging affects both the academic success and linguistic advancement of students. To overcome ethical issues, we obtained approval for the study from the Ethical Board of Aydın University and from the school administration for the study to be conducted.

2.1 Participants

A convenience sampling strategy was employed to recruit the participants. As noted by Mark Saunders et al. (2012), this approach is suitable when participants are readily accessible for a study. The researcher was working as an English teacher at a private primary school in Antalya, Türkiye, and therefore selected the participants from this setting. In total, 41 students took part in the study, with ages ranging from 9 to 10. Of these, 19 students were assigned to the experimental group, while 22 were placed in the control group.

2.2 Data Collection

The researcher designed a four week vocabulary instruction plan grounded in translanguaging pedagogy. Initially, the target vocabulary was determined through an examination of the course book used by the students. A total of 20 words were selected, all aligned with the curriculum and taken directly from the students' materials. The implementation phase included a total of 12 translanguaging activities such as Language Portraits, Translanguaging Trees, Multilingual Word Walls, and Cognate Charts. These activities acted as a pedagogical scaffold, allowing students to use their full linguistic repertoire (Turkish and English) to anchor new concepts. Over the four-week intervention, five English words were taught each week. In contrast, the control group received vocabulary instruction following the guidelines provided in the teacher's manual of the selected course book. The translanguaging tasks were adapted from activities available on the Translanguaging Education website (<https://www.translanguagingeducation.org/translanguaging-top-activities>), and the implementation phase included a total of 12 such activities.

Before conducting the study, the researcher administered a pre-test to the participants. The pre-test comprised 20 multiple-choice items, including vocabulary that students had

learned. The aim of the pre-test was to determine whether the experimental and control groups were at the same level of vocabulary proficiency. After the experiment was completed, the researcher applied a post-test, consisting of 20 multiple-choice items, to determine whether the four-week translanguaging treatment enhanced students' vocabulary proficiency. In addition, both tests developed by the researcher were checked by two experts with PhDs in ELT to ensure their reliability.

The participants were divided into two groups: an experimental group that received vocabulary instruction through a translanguaging approach and a control group that was taught exclusively in English over a four-week period. The data were analyzed using t-tests. Following the pre-test and post-test administration, an independent-samples t-test was used to compare the two groups in terms of their test scores and to determine whether any statistically significant differences existed. In addition, a paired-samples t-test was conducted within each group to examine whether there were significant changes between pre-test and post-test mean scores.

3. FINDINGS

The ultimate aim of this study was to examine whether a translanguaging-based program improves primary students' vocabulary learning. A pre-test was conducted to ensure that the participants had the same level of vocabulary proficiency. An independent-sample t-test was performed to analyze the test results. There was a statistically significant difference between the scores of the control ($M=46.36$, $SD=13.46$) and the experimental group ($M=58.24$, $SD=20.38$) at the pre-test stage ($p=.048$). Although the groups were not identical at baseline, both groups demonstrated massive and statistically significant internal progress ($p=.000$) by the end of the intervention. The experimental group's mean score reached 96.76, indicating that the translanguaging-based program was highly effective.

Table 1 presents the results of this analysis. There was a statistically significant difference between the scores of the control ($M=46,36$, $SD=13,468$) and the experimental group ($M=58,24$, $SD=20,382$); $p=.048$)

Table 1. Independent-sample t-test scores of the pre-test for both groups

Post-test	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Control	22	46,36	13,468	2,871	-2,077	26,334	.048
Experimental	19	58,24	20,382	4,943			

Pallant (2005,p.208) explains that “effect sizes provide an indication of the magnitude of the differences between your groups.” She further provides definite values for the interpretation of the effect size (.01=small effect, .06=moderate effect, .14=large effect). There exist various online tools to calculate the effect size, one of which is available at <https://www.socscistatistics.com/effectsize/default3.aspx>. The online calculator provides three different effect size values (Cohen's d, Glass's delta, and Hedge's g). Glass's delta effect size is appropriate when the standard deviations are not identical in the two groups, whereas Cohen's is utilized if the standard deviations are nearly similar. In our case, the different values of standard deviations between the two groups in the pre-test scores were not similar to each other. Thus, Glass's delta value was selected. Regarding the pre-test scores, the effect size of Glass's delta was 0.088209, indicating a small effect. It would not be wrong to state that the experimental group and the control group were almost similar with regard to their vocabulary knowledge.

Table 2 displays the results of the independent-samples t-test conducted to compare the post-test scores of the experimental and control groups. There was a statistically significant

difference between the scores of the control ($M=84,09$, $SD=14,111$) and experimental groups ($M=96,76$, $SD=6,600$); $p=.002$]. The statistical difference between the groups proved that the translanguaging-based vocabulary teaching program applied to the experimental group improved the students' vocabulary knowledge. However, the effect size value of Glass's delta was small (0.089788).

Table 2. Independent-sample t-test scores of the post-test for both groups

Post-test	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)
Control	22	84,09	14,111	3,009	-3,418	37	.002
Experimental	19	96,76	6,600	1,601			

To evaluate internal progress within each group, paired-samples t-tests were utilized, with Table 3 specifically detailing the results for the control group's pre- and post-test performance. This statistical analysis was conducted to measure the impact of vocabulary instruction delivered strictly through English-medium instruction. The findings revealed a statistically significant improvement in scores ($M=37.727$, $SD=19.984$, $p=.000$), confirming that monolingual English training effectively enhanced student outcomes. However, the calculated Cohen's d value of 0.124067 indicates that while the improvement was statistically valid, the overall effect size remained small. To ensure the precision of these metrics, the effect size for the paired-samples t-test was determined using the specialized online calculator available at <https://statulator.com/SampleSize/ss2PM.html>, further supporting the conclusion that teaching vocabulary exclusively in English serves as a beneficial pedagogical method.

Table 3. Paired-sample t-test scores of the pre-test and the post-test scores for the control group

Control group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Df	Sig (2-tailed)
Pre-test-post-test	22	-37,727	19,984	4,261	-8,855	21	.000

Table 4 displays the results of a paired-samples t-test conducted to examine the influence of translanguaging-based vocabulary teaching on the experimental group's vocabulary knowledge. There was a statistically significant difference between the pre- and post-tests ($M=-38,529$, $SD=22,274$; $p=.000$). The p-value at .000 also proved that the translanguaging-based instructional intervention enhanced the students' scores in the post-test in the experimental group. These results are consistent with Zheng's (2021) findings, which showed that it has the potential to create a meaningful and culturally rich learning experience. Jahan et al. (2023) argue that an inclusive learning environment using translanguaging strategies, such as code-switching and multimodal communication, needs to be integrated into English teaching.

Table 4. Paired-sample t-test scores of the pre-test and the post-test scores for the experimental group

Experimental group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Df	Sig (2-tailed)
Pre-test-post-test	19	-38,529	22,274	5,402	-7,132	16	.000

The findings of the study show that both English-only and translanguaging-based teaching techniques equip young learners with vocabulary knowledge. Translanguaging activities facilitate young learners' utilization of the linguistic resources of their mother tongue as a foundation for language learning. For language teachers, adopting translanguaging activities for such learners increases student engagement without language barriers and reduces the risk of students' reluctance and fear of making mistakes. Switching between two or more languages also stimulates cognitive flexibility in learning vocabulary.

On the other hand, the current study also displayed the effects of the English-medium instruction on young learners' English vocabulary proficiency. In this widely used instruction, young learners unconsciously acquire a vast amount of vocabulary while focusing on the content. The instructions guide these learners to fast-track new words through multisensory experiences. Exposure to English through daily classroom activities constantly forces their brains to build stronger cognitive connections, leading to vocabulary storage in long-term memory.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that both English-only and translanguaging-based instructional techniques are effective in equipping young learners with English vocabulary. However, the superior performance of the experimental group provides critical insights into the pedagogical advantages of translanguaging in primary education.

The primary reason for the significant improvement in the experimental group ($p=.000$) is that translanguaging activities facilitate a deeper 'anchoring' of new words. Unlike the immersion-only approach, where students may struggle to grasp the full meaning of a word due to limited linguistic context, translanguaging allows students to attach new English labels to concepts that are already fully formed in their minds in Turkish. As suggested by García (2009) and Wei (2018), this approach leverages the learners' existing linguistic repertoire as a foundation rather than an obstacle.

Moreover, the use of specific strategies such as Language Portraits and Multilingual Word Walls acted as a pedagogical scaffold. These activities reduced linguistic anxiety (a common barrier for young learners in private school settings) and encouraged them to engage more authentically with the target language. While the pre-test results showed a baseline difference ($p=.048$), the massive progress in post-test scores confirms that translanguaging provides a necessary 'anchor' that prevents fragmented comprehension.

5. CONCLUSION

This study investigated whether translanguaging activities enhance primary school students' vocabulary proficiency. Through convenience sampling, 39 primary school students from the 4th grade were selected as participants. Based on an experimental research design, control and experimental groups were formed. The experimental group was exposed to translanguaging-based vocabulary instruction for four weeks, while the control group received English-medium instruction. The independent-samples t-test analysis showed that both types of instructions were beneficial for the participants in improving their vocabulary proficiency.

The pedagogical implications of this study suggest that both types of vocabulary instruction can potentially enhance young learners' vocabulary proficiency. English-medium instruction leads to faster vocabulary acquisition through immersion in classroom activities. However, if young learners do not comprehend the main content, learning English vocabulary without mother tongue support may result in fragmented knowledge. At this point, translanguaging activities through the use of mother tongue anchor vocabulary learning for

young learners. The comparison of a new word in two languages helps them attach the new label, which is in English, to a fully formed concept in their minds, which is an indication of long-term vocabulary growth. Moreover, by reducing anxiety, translanguaging ensures more enthusiastic young learners who are open to experience and produce more English words.

The major limitation of this study is the short period of translanguaging treatment. Future research may track young learners' vocabulary learning over a long period of time, which would make it possible to conduct a delayed post-test to determine the long-term retention of vocabulary acquired through translanguaging. The impact of digital translanguaging tools may be a fruitful area for further research.

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THE HEGEMONY PATRIARCHAL PATTERN IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD FICTION: ELİF SHAFAK'S *THE FORTY RULES OF LOVE*

Housseyn Halimi **

Abstract

This article examines Elif Shafak's *The Forty Rules of Love* through the lens of and feminist critique, interrogating the hegemonic patterns of patriarchy operating within the contemporary contemporary novel. The study analyses the novel's dual narrative structure—the story of Ella Rubinstein, a modern American housewife, interwoven with the mystical journey of the thirteenth-century figure Shams of Tabriz—against the backdrop of gender dynamics, the discourse of liberation, and . Drawing on Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony, Simone de Beauvoir's concept of the Other, and the feminist literary criticism of Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, this paper argues that beneath the novel's ostensible project of making female subjectivity visible lies an implicit discourse that naturalizes and reproduces patriarchal norms across both modern and historical narrative planes. The article demonstrates that the novel's discourse of love, spirituality, and individual transformation consistently privileges male authority and spiritual guidance, while framing female emancipation as contingent upon male approval or romantic attachment—a tension that ultimately subverts Shafak's professed feminist credentials. In doing so, this study interrogates the limitations of literary globalisation in genuinely amplifying women's voices in contemporary literature.

Key words: Elif Shafak, patriarchy, hegemony, feminist criticism, contemporary fiction

ÇAĞDAŞ ROMANDA ATAERKİLLİK HEGEMONYASI: ELİF ŞAFAK'IN AŞK ROMANI ÜZERİNE KÜLTÜREL BİR ELEŞTİRİ

Özet

Bu makale, Elif Şafak'ın Aşk adlı romanını kültürel ve feminist eleştiri çerçevesinde inceleyerek, çağdaş ataerkilliğin hegemonyasındaki örüntüleri hegemonik örüntülerini ortaya koymaktadır. Araştırma, romanın iç içe geçmiş anlatı yapısını —modern bir Amerikalı ev kadını olan Ella Rubinstein'in hikâyesi ile 13. yüzyılda yaşayan Şems-i Tebrizi'nin mistik yolculuğunu— toplumsal cinsiyet dinamikleri, özgürlük söylemi ve sükût kültürü bağlamında ele almaktadır. Antonio Gramsci'nin hegemonya kuramından, Simone de Beauvoir'ın öteki kavramından ve Sandra Gilbert ile Susan Gubar'ın feminist edebi eleştirisinden yararlanılarak, metnin kadın öznelliğini görünür kıldığı iddiasının altında, hem modern hem de tarihi anlatı düzlemlerinde yeniden üretilen ataerkil normları meşrulaştıran söylemleri barındırmaktadır. Çalışmada, romanın aşk, ruhaniyet ve bireysel dönüşüm temalı söyleminin; erkek karakterlerin rehberliğini ve manevi otoritesini öne çıkardığı, kadın özgürleşmesini ise erkek onayına ya da aşkına bağımlı kıldığı gösterilmektedir. Bu bulgu, Şafak'ın feminist kimliğiyle kurduğu çelişkiyi açığa çıkarmaktadır. Sonuç olarak bu çalışma, dünya edebiyatında kadın seslerin gücünü artırmak için edebiyat dünyası tarafından yönlendirilen edebî küreselleşmenin kısıtlamalarını sorgulamaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Elif Şafak, ataerkillik, hegemonya, feminist eleştiri, çağdaş roman

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Forty Rules of Love (2009), originally published in Turkish as *Aşk*, stands as one of Elif Shafak's most celebrated works, occupying an influential position in the global literary world. Translated into more than fifty languages and widely praised by international critics, the novel has been frequently cited as a feminist intervention into the male-dominated canons of both Eastern spirituality and Western domestic fiction. Its author, Shafak, has publicly positioned herself as a champion of women's voices, a proponent of multicultural dialogue, and a writer whose fiction consistently disrupts patriarchal silences. Yet a sustained critical reading of the novel reveals a more troubled and contradictory text—one that, beneath its eloquent celebration of love and feminine awakening, quietly reproduces the very ideological structures it claims to resist.

This article proceeds from the proposition that hegemonic patriarchy does not always announce itself in the overt language of oppression. More commonly, and more insidiously, it operates through what Raymond Williams (1977) termed "structures of feeling"—the affective, cultural, and ideological patterns that come to feel natural, inevitable, and unquestionable. In Shafak's novel, these structures manifest in the very architecture of its double narrative: the thirteenth-century mystical tale centred on the philosopher-poet Rumi and his transformative encounter with the wandering dervish Shams of Tabriz, which is embedded within the frame narrative of Ella Rubinstein, a forty-year-old American housewife who reads a manuscript about those historical figures and undergoes her own spiritual and romantic transformation.

The critical questions this article pursues are as follows: How does the novel's narrative structure distribute agency, voice, and authority between its male and female characters? In what ways does the discourse of Sufi spirituality—refracted through a contemporary feminist-inflected prose—function to reinscribe, rather than dismantle, the cultural logic of female subordination? And what does the novel's global success reveal about the complicity between literary globalisation and the maintenance of ideologically conservative representations of gender? These questions are addressed through a close reading of the novel's primary and secondary narrative levels, informed by the theoretical frameworks of Gramscian hegemony, Beauvoirian existential feminism, and the tradition of Anglo-American feminist literary criticism inaugurated by Gilbert and Gubar's landmark study, *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979).

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: HEGEMONY AND THE CONCEPT OF OTHERNESS

The concept of hegemony, as elaborated by Antonio Gramsci in his *Prison Notebooks*, describes the process by which dominant social groups maintain their power not principally through coercion but through the cultivation of consent—the manufacture of a common sense that naturalises existing social arrangements and renders alternatives literally inconceivable (Gramsci, 1971). Applied to the domain of gender relations, Gramscian hegemony provides a framework for understanding how patriarchal power perpetuates itself not primarily through law, violence, or explicit prohibition, but through the more diffuse mechanisms of culture, narrative, and affect. The hegemonic patriarchal pattern is precisely that which does not need

to declare itself: it operates in the assumptions that shape what counts as love, what constitutes spiritual wisdom, who is authorised to speak, and whose silence is taken for granted.

Simone de Beauvoir's foundational analysis in *The Second Sex* (1949) remains essential to any feminist engagement with these questions. De Beauvoir's central argument—that woman is constituted as the Other in relation to man as the universal subject—furnishes a critical vocabulary for reading the asymmetries of narrative and agency that this article identifies in Shafak's novel. The woman who is perpetually defined in relation to a male subject, whether as wife, beloved, or spiritual seeker guided by a male teacher, is the woman who has been denied the capacity for autonomous self-definition. Crucially, de Beauvoir showed that this constitution of woman-as-Other was reproduced not only in explicitly misogynist discourse but also in the most idealizing representations of femininity: the pedestal is another form of the cage.

The feminist literary criticism developed by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar in *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979) extended and specified de Beauvoir's philosophical framework in relation to literary production. Gilbert and Gubar demonstrated that nineteenth-century women writers were confronted with a double bind: to write within the dominant tradition was to reproduce its ideological constraints; yet to write against it risked marginalisation and incomprehension. Their analysis of the "anxiety of authorship" experienced by women writers—as distinct from Harold Bloom's "anxiety of influence"—is pertinent to a reading of Shafak, who occupies a peculiar position as a Turkish woman author writing for an international market, navigating multiple cultural and generic traditions simultaneously.

More recently, Scholars of contemporary fiction have raised analogous concerns about the ways in which global literary circulation tends to favour certain kinds of representation over others. Pascale Casanova (2004) has argued that world literature is structured by an unequal distribution of literary capital, in which certain literary forms and traditions command prestige while others remain marginal or are absorbed into dominant frameworks. Sarah Brouillette (2007) has specifically analysed the phenomenon of postcolonial authors who are compelled to write in ways that confirm metropolitan expectations about non-Western cultures—a form of literary self-exoticisation that is, as Aijaz Ahmad (1992) argued, profoundly ideological in its effects. This article contends that a comparable dynamic is at work in *The Forty Rules of Love*,

3. THE MODERN NARRATIVE ELLA RUBINSTEIN AND THE DOMESTICATED FEMALE SUBJECT

The modern narrative strand of *The Forty Rules of Love* follows Ella Rubinstein, a forty-year-old Jewish-American woman living in Northampton, Massachusetts. When the novel opens, Ella is a literary agent's assistant tasked with evaluating a manuscript—the very manuscript that constitutes the novel's historical narrative. She is married to David, a prosperous but emotionally absent dentist who is conducting an affair; she has three children; she inhabits a large, comfortable house in which she feels, as the novel repeatedly tells us, invisible, unfulfilled, and imprisoned. The domestic sphere that should constitute her domain has become her prison; the love that should animate her life has been replaced by the hollow routines of bourgeois marriage.

At first glance, Ella appears to be an exemplary figure of feminist literary tradition: the woman whose story the dominant culture refuses to tell, the housewife whose inner life is richer, more complex, and more passionate than the social role assigned to her. Shafak's evident sympathy for this character, her detailed delineation of Ella's intellectual and emotional capacities, and her narrative investment in Ella's eventual departure from a deadening marriage all suggest a commitment to the recovery of suppressed female experience. Yet the manner in which Ella's emancipation is structured reveals significant ideological tensions.

Ella's transformation is initiated not by an act of autonomous self-discovery but by her encounter with a text written by a man—the manuscript authored by a character named Aziz Z. Zahara, a Sufi-influenced writer with whom she subsequently enters into a romantic correspondence and, eventually, a passionate relationship. The novel is, at its most fundamental level, the story of a woman who is awoken to spiritual and erotic possibility by a male guide. The male author's text is the catalyst; male spiritual wisdom is the vehicle; male romantic love is the destination. Ella's awakening, in other words, is consistently mediated through masculine authority and masculine desire.

This structural dependency is reinforced by the novel's characterisation of Ella's domestic situation. Her husband David is portrayed as spiritually and emotionally deficient—a foil whose inadequacy serves to justify Ella's departure and to make her new relationship with Aziz appear as an authentic liberation rather than a mere substitution of one male-centred life for another. But the logic of the novel's resolution—in which Ella achieves selfhood precisely by choosing a more spiritually enlightened male partner—preserves rather than dismantles the fundamental patriarchal premise: that female identity is constituted in relation to male others. As de Beauvoir might have observed, Ella does not achieve the status of a subject in herself; she merely exchanges one form of Other-hood for another that her culture regards as more romantically legitimate (de Beauvoir, 1949).

Moreover, the novel's representation of Ella's domestic imprisonment is ambivalent in ways that deserve critical scrutiny. The household chores, the emotional labour, the social invisibility of the housewife—all of these are presented with genuine sympathy. Yet the novel does not interrogate the systemic conditions that produce this situation; it does not name patriarchy as a structure, nor does it direct its critique toward the social arrangements that confine women to domestic roles. Instead, the problem of Ella's imprisonment is individualised: it is her husband's particular failings, rather than the institution of marriage or the gendered division of labour, that constitute her oppression. The solution, accordingly, is individual: a new love, a new man, a new spiritual orientation. The political is collapsed into the personal, and the structural is dissolved into the therapeutic.

4. THE HISTORICAL NARRATIVE SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY AND THE GENDERING OF MYSTICISM

The historical narrative strand of the novel, which recounts the encounter between the Persian poet Jalal al-Din Rumi and the wandering dervish Shams of Tabriz in thirteenth-century Konya, is presented as the spiritual and philosophical core of the text. It is here that the novel's forty rules of love are articulated, and it is here that Shafak's engagement with the Sufi tradition

is most sustained. Yet it is also here that the gendering of spiritual authority is most starkly reproduced.

The central relationship of the historical narrative is, of course, that between Rumi and Shams—two men whose intense spiritual friendship is presented as the paradigmatic instance of transformative love. The women of Konya—Rumi's wife Kerra, the prostitute Suleiman's wife Desert Rose, the young widow Kimya who is married to Shams—are all present in the novel's historical sections, and Shafak clearly intends to give them voices and interior lives. Yet their narrative function is consistently subordinate to the central male dyad. They exist, narratively speaking, in the orbit of Rumi and Shams; their spiritual development, where it is represented at all, is mediated through their relationships with these men.

The figure of Kimya is particularly instructive in this respect. Kimya is depicted as a woman of remarkable intelligence and spiritual sensitivity—a potential mystic in her own right, a person who has something important to say about the inner life and its possibilities. Yet she is married off to Shams against her will, denied the spiritual education she craves, and ultimately destroyed by her marriage—she dies young, her spiritual potential unrealised, her voice suppressed. Shafak presents this as a tragedy, and her sympathy for Kimya is palpable. But the very fact that Kimya's story is narrated as tragedy—as the story of potential crushed by patriarchal structures—rather than as resistance or transformation, locates female spiritual aspiration firmly in the register of loss and lack. Kimya is defined by what she is prevented from becoming; her subjectivity is constituted through privation.

The representation of Desert Rose, the prostitute who discovers spirituality through her encounter with Shams, reproduces a different but equally problematic patriarchal narrative: the figure of the fallen woman redeemed through contact with male spiritual wisdom. Desert Rose's transformation from prostitute to spiritual seeker follows the familiar hagiographic pattern in which women achieve spiritual significance through their relationship to male saints or teachers. The male saint provides the occasion for female transformation; the woman's spiritual progress is narrated as a response to male illumination rather than as self-generated. This is, as Caroline Walker Bynum (1987) has shown in relation to medieval Christian mysticism, a deeply gendered narrative structure that consistently positions women as recipients rather than originators of spiritual insight.

The forty rules of love that give the novel its title are attributed primarily to Shams—that is, to a male figure—and their articulation constitutes the novel's most direct engagement with Sufi philosophical discourse. While several of these rules speak in terms that are not explicitly gendered, the overall framework within which they are embedded associates spiritual authority with masculine wisdom and masculine speech. The novel does not imagine a scenario in which a woman formulates the rules of love, nor does it present female mystical experience as equivalent in authority or prestige to the male-centred tradition it celebrates. The Sufi tradition, for all its genuine resources for challenging orthodox religious hierarchies, is here reproduced in a form that maintains its patriarchal valences—a reproduction that is all the more effective for being largely invisible.

5. LOVE AS IDEOLOGY: DISCOURSE, DESIRE, AND PATRIARCHAL REINSCRIPTION

One of the most pervasive ideological formations in *The Forty Rules of Love* is the novel's discourse of love—a discourse that presents romantic and spiritual love as the primary vehicle for personal transformation and as the solution to the various forms of existential impoverishment from which the novel's characters suffer. Love, in Shafak's novel, is presented as a universal solvent: it dissolves social barriers, transcends cultural difference, liberates the imprisoned self, and opens the way to spiritual wisdom. This is, of course, a deeply familiar literary and cultural formation—one that has roots in the Sufi tradition, in the Western Romantic tradition, and in the contemporary self-help culture that has shaped the global literary market.

The ideological work performed by the novel's discourse of love deserves careful scrutiny. At the level of plot, love functions primarily as the agency through which female characters are transformed—Ella through her correspondence with Aziz, Kimya through (and against) her marriage to Shams, Desert Rose through her encounter with Shams's spiritual charisma. In each case, it is the woman who is transformed by the encounter with male love or male spiritual wisdom; the men, by contrast, are the agents of transformation rather than its primary recipients. Rumi is transformed by Shams, it is true—but this male-male spiritual encounter is presented as a relationship between equals (or near-equals), as a dialogue between two powerful subjectivities, rather than as the subordination of one to the other.

The asymmetry is revealing. When two men encounter transformative love or spiritual wisdom, the novel represents this as a mutual process of elevation and co-creation. When a woman encounters love or spiritual wisdom, the encounter is structured as a relationship of illumination and reception: the man is the source, the woman the vessel. This asymmetry is not unique to Shafak's novel—it is, as numerous feminist scholars have observed, one of the most persistent features of the Western (and indeed many non-Western) literary tradition's representations of love and spirituality. But its reproduction in a novel that explicitly presents itself as feminist and as committed to the recovery of suppressed female experience is particularly striking.

It is worth noting, too, the ways in which the novel's discourse of love intersects with its representation of the body and sexuality. Female characters in the novel are consistently defined in relation to their bodies—their physical beauty, their reproductive functions, their erotic availability or unavailability—in ways that male characters, including the ostensibly embodied Shams, are not. Kerra is defined by her devotion to Rumi and her role as mother; Desert Rose by her sexual history and her eventual renunciation of it; Ella by her sense of physical inadequacy and her eventual erotic awakening. The female body, in other words, is consistently made a site of narrative meaning in ways that reproduce the cultural logic by which women's subjectivity is systematically reduced to their physicality—what Bordo (1993) termed "the unbearable weight" of femininity.

The novel's treatment of female silence is equally significant. Several of the novel's female characters are distinguished by their silence—their inability or unwillingness to speak their own desires, their tendency to communicate through indirect means, their experience of speech as a form of transgression. This silence is represented sympathetically: we are meant to understand it as the product of oppressive social conditions. Yet the novel does not fully

interrogate the conditions of its own production of female voice—the ways in which the female voices it does represent are always already filtered through a narrative apparatus that organises and contextualises them in relation to male authority and male discourse. The women of the novel speak, but they speak within a framework that is not of their own making; their words are heard, but they are heard in an acoustic space that has been shaped by male spiritual and narrative authority.

6. THE WORLD NOVEL AND THE POLITICS OF GLOBAL LITERARY CULTURE

The global success of *The Forty Rules of Love* raises important questions about the relationship between world literature, cultural translation, and ideological reproduction. The novel has been celebrated in mainstream literary culture as a work of cross-cultural understanding—a bridge between East and West, between the medieval and the modern, between Islamic spirituality and secular humanism. Its commercial and critical success in

Yet this very success should give us pause. As Scholars of contemporary fiction have noted, the global circulation of literary texts from non-Western or non-Anglophone traditions tends to follow patterns that reproduce rather than challenge the cultural hierarchies of the global literary system. Texts that confirm Western expectations about non-Western cultures—their exoticism, their mystical wisdom, their colourful traditions—tend to circulate more freely than texts that challenge or complicate those expectations. Texts that can be accommodated within Western liberal feminist frameworks—that present women as oppressed but capable of liberation, as exotic but ultimately aspirational in the manner of their metropolitan readership—tend to find larger and more enthusiastic audiences than texts that call those frameworks themselves into question.

The Forty Rules of Love is, in many respects, ideally suited to the demands of this global literary market. It combines the appeals of Eastern mysticism (the Sufi tradition, presented in an accessible and aestheticised form) with the appeals of Western romantic fiction (the story of a woman's awakening to love and selfhood). It tells its international readers that the great spiritual traditions of the East have something important to offer the spiritually impoverished West, but it tells them this in a language and a form—the literary novel, with its interiority, its psychological realism, its emphasis on individual transformation—that is thoroughly at home in the Western literary tradition. And it tells the story of female liberation in a way that, as this article has argued, ultimately confirms rather than challenges the patriarchal assumptions that structure both Eastern and Western cultural formations.

This is not to say that the novel has no value or that Shafak's work is without merit. The novel contains passages of genuine beauty; its engagement with the Sufi tradition, however filtered, introduces many Western readers to a rich and complex philosophical heritage; its sympathy for marginalised female experience, however limited, makes visible forms of suffering that dominant literary culture tends to ignore. But value and ideology are not mutually exclusive. A text can be beautiful and ideologically conservative; it can be genuinely sympathetic to female suffering and yet reproduce the structures that produce that suffering; it can celebrate cultural difference and yet do so in a manner that ultimately confirms the terms of the dominant culture's self-understanding.

The critical task, as this article has sought to demonstrate, is not simply to celebrate the inclusion of non-Western and women's voices in the global literary world, but to examine the conditions under which that inclusion is achieved and the ideological costs it entails. World literature, as a category and as a practice, has the potential to be a genuinely democratising force—a means by which marginalised voices and alternative cultural traditions can gain wider hearing. But that potential is only realised when the category is subjected to sustained critical scrutiny rather than uncritical celebration.

7. CONCLUSION

This article has argued that *The Forty Rules of Love*, despite its apparent commitment to feminist values and its celebration of female spiritual and romantic possibility, reproduces a series of patriarchal patterns that undermine its emancipatory pretensions. Through its narrative structure, its distribution of agency and voice between male and female characters, its discourse of love and spirituality, and its representation of female silence and embodiment, the novel perpetuates the very ideological formations it professes to challenge.

The concept of hegemonic patriarchy—understood in the Gramscian sense as a form of power that operates through the manufacture of consent rather than through overt coercion—is particularly useful for understanding how these patterns function. The novel does not present female subordination as desirable or natural; it presents it as unjust and painful. But by framing female liberation as dependent on male spiritual wisdom, by reproducing the asymmetries of the Sufi tradition's gendered spiritual hierarchies, and by individualising rather than politicising the structural conditions of female oppression, the novel ultimately leaves those conditions intact. The implicit patriarchal pattern is all the more powerful for being implicit: it does not need to declare itself because it has become, in the language of common sense that the novel shares with its global readership, simply the way things are.

The novel's global success, and the critical apparatus of celebration that has grown up around it, itself constitutes a form of hegemonic reinforcement. When a text that reproduces patriarchal norms is widely praised as feminist, the very category of feminism is subtly redefined in ways that accommodate those norms. The critical task for Scholars of contemporary fiction and feminist literary criticism is thus not merely to read individual texts carefully, but to examine the institutional and market conditions that determine which texts receive praise and wide circulation, and to ask whose interests those conditions serve.

In conclusion, *The Forty Rules of Love* invites us to think more rigorously about the relationship between literary form, ideological content, and the politics of global literary culture. Elif Shafak's gifts as a storyteller are considerable, and the novel's engagement with questions of love, spirituality, and cross-cultural understanding is, in many respects, genuinely valuable. But the critical reader owes it to the novel—and to the larger project of feminist literary criticism—to name what the novel leaves unsaid: the ways in which its beautiful and consoling narrative of female awakening is structured, at its foundations, by the very patriarchal logic it presents itself as transcending. To name this is not to dismiss the novel but to take it seriously—to treat it as a cultural object that repays, and indeed demands, the kind of sustained critical attention that this article has sought to provide.

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STRUCTURAL FEATURES OF ABBREVIATIONS IN ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

The rapid development of digital technologies and social media platforms has significantly influenced language use in modern society. Azerbaijani electronic communication, including messaging applications, social networking sites, online forums, and SMS communication, demonstrates an increasing use of abbreviations and acronyms. Electronic communication requires fast and convenient exchange of information. An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word or phrase, while acronyms are formed by shortening part of a word. These tools play several important roles in electronic communication. First, they make correspondence faster and save time. Second, they form a more friendly and comfortable style in informal communication. Third, they reduce the volume of text and make it easier to type on mobile devices. However, the use of abbreviations and acronyms can also cause some problems. For example, not everyone may understand all abbreviations, which create misunderstandings in communication. Their excessive use, especially in formal correspondence, can look unprofessional. In addition, the same abbreviation can have different meanings in different languages and cultures. This article investigates the linguistic characteristics, functions, and social implications of abbreviations and acronyms in Azerbaijani electronic discourse. The study examines different types of shortened lexical forms, their communicative functions, and their role in shaping online interaction among Azerbaijani speakers. The research also discusses the influence of globalization, English-language internet culture, and technological constraints on the formation of abbreviated expressions. The findings reveal that abbreviations and acronyms serve not only as tools for linguistic economy but also as markers of identity, informality, and group membership in Azerbaijani digital communication. Abbreviations and acronyms are an integral part of electronic communication and, when used correctly, make communication more effective. However, it is important to consider the context, audience, and level of formality of the communication when using them.

Keywords: electronic communication, abbreviation, acronyms, communication, speed.

ELEKTRONİK İLETİŞİMDE KISALTMALARIN YAPISAL ÖZELLİKLERİ

Özet

Dijital teknolojilerin ve sosyal medya platformlarının hızlı gelişimi, modern toplumda dil kullanımını önemli ölçüde etkilemiştir. Azerbaycan'da mesajlaşma uygulamaları, sosyal ağ siteleri, çevrimiçi forumlar ve SMS iletişimi de dahil olmak üzere elektronik iletişim, kısaltmaların ve akronimlerin kullanımında artış göstermektedir. Elektronik iletişim, hızlı ve kolay bilgi alışverişini gerektirir. Kısaltma, bir kelime veya ifadenin kısaltılmış halidir, akronimler ise bir kelimenin bir bölümünün kısaltılmasıyla oluşturulur. Bu araçlar elektronik iletişimde çeşitli önemli roller oynar. Birincisi, yazışmaları hızlandırır ve zamandan tasarruf sağlar. İkincisi, gayri resmi iletişimde daha samimi ve rahat bir üslup oluştururlar. Üçüncüsü, metin hacmini azaltır ve mobil cihazlarda yazmayı kolaylaştırır. Ancak, kısaltmaların ve akronimlerin kullanımı bazı sorunlara da yol açabilir. Örneğin, herkes tüm kısaltmaları anlamayabilir ve bu da iletişimde yanlış anlaşılmalara neden olabilir. Özellikle resmi yazışmalarda aşırı kullanımları profesyonel olmayan bir görünüm yaratabilir. Ayrıca, aynı kısaltma farklı dillerde ve kültürlerde farklı anlamlara gelebilir. Bu makale, Azerbaycan elektronik söyleminde kısaltmaların ve akronimlerin dilsel özelliklerini, işlevlerini ve sosyal etkilerini araştırmaktadır. Çalışma, farklı kısaltılmış sözcük türlerini, iletişimsel işlevlerini ve Azerbaycanlı konuşmacılar arasında çevrimiçi etkileşimi şekillendirmedeki rollerini incelemektedir. Araştırma ayrıca küreselleşmenin, İngilizce internet kültürünün ve teknolojik kısıtlamaların kısaltılmış ifadelerin oluşumu üzerindeki etkisini de ele almaktadır. Bulgular, kısaltmaların ve akronimlerin yalnızca dil ekonomisi

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araçları olarak değil, aynı zamanda Azərbaycan dijital iletişiminde kimlik, gayriresmîyet ve grup üyeliğinin göstergeleri olarak da hizmet ettiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Kısaltmalar ve akronimler elektronik iletişimin ayrılmaz bir parçasıdır ve doğru kullanıldığında iletişimi daha etkili hale getirir. Bununla birlikte, bunları kullanırken bağlamı, hedef kitleyi ve iletişimin resmîyet düzeyini dikkate almak önemlidir.

Anahtar kelimeler: elektronik iletişim, kısaltma, akronimler, iletişim, hız.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the rapid expansion of the World Wide Web and the increasing popularity of social media platforms, internet language has become an important object of linguistic and sociolinguistic research. Digital communication represents a specific communicative environment that combines characteristics of both written and oral discourse, including spontaneity, emotionality, informality, interactivity, and structural flexibility (Crystal, 2004). Unlike traditional written language, online communication is characterized by speed, immediate feedback, multimodality, and the constant transformation of linguistic norms under the influence of technological innovation and globalization.

The development of electronic communication has significantly influenced language behavior, especially among younger users who actively participate in social networking platforms, online forums, and instant messaging applications. The increasing need for rapid communication has encouraged the emergence of shortened lexical forms, abbreviations, acronyms, and hybrid structures that simplify interaction while maintaining communicative effectiveness. Recent studies demonstrate that digital communication environments substantially increase the frequency of abbreviated forms and contribute to the development of new linguistic practices associated with internet culture (Gao, 2025).

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, electronic communication has promoted greater freedom of linguistic expression. Informality, openness, emotional expressiveness, and the weakening of strict literary norms have become central features of internet discourse. Bergelson (2002) characterizes internet language as a bridge between written and oral communication, while Vinogradova (2001) emphasizes that digital discourse integrates elements of different functional styles and communicative subsystems into a hybrid linguistic environment. Consequently, internet communication cannot be viewed merely as a simplified form of written language; rather, it constitutes an independent communicative sphere with its own structural, stylistic, and pragmatic features.

One of the most distinctive characteristics of internet discourse is the extensive use of abbreviated lexical forms. In Azerbaijani electronic communication, shortened forms have become increasingly widespread in chats, social media interactions, online forums, and comment sections. Users frequently simplify lexical units, omit vowels, shorten syntactic constructions, and adopt international internet terminology in order to communicate more rapidly and efficiently. Expressions such as “slm” (salam), “tmm” (tamam), “mncə” (məncə), and “ncsn” (necəsən), together with international forms such as “LOL”, “OMG” and “DM” have become common elements of Azerbaijani online discourse.

The increasing frequency of abbreviations and acronyms raises important questions concerning language change, linguistic economy, sociolinguistic identity, digital literacy, and the influence of globalization on the Azerbaijani language. The adaptation of English internet terminology into Azerbaijani communication practices also reflects broader cultural and technological processes associated with globalization and transnational digital culture. Consequently, the study of abbreviations in Azerbaijani electronic communication contributes not only to internet linguistics but also to broader discussions concerning language modernization and sociolinguistic transformation in the digital age.

2. METHODOLOGY

The present study investigates the structural and functional characteristics of abbreviations and acronyms in Azerbaijani electronic communication. The article analyzes the main categories of abbreviated forms, their communicative functions, and the influence of English-language internet culture on Azerbaijani online discourse. Particular attention is devoted to the role of abbreviations in linguistic economy, identity construction, expressive communication, and the formation of online communities.

In linguistic studies, shortened lexical forms are divided into several structural categories that should be clearly distinguished from one another. The term abbreviation functions as a general concept referring to any reduced form of a word or phrase created through the omission of letters, syllables, or lexical elements. Abbreviations perform important communicative functions associated with linguistic economy, communicative efficiency, emotional expressiveness, and stylistic creativity.

This study examines the use of abbreviations and shortened lexical forms in Azerbaijani electronic communication. The research focuses on the structural characteristics, communicative functions, and sociolinguistic significance of abbreviated forms used in online discourse.

The corpus consists of 180 Facebook posts and 520 user comments collected from three Azerbaijani-language discussion groups between January 2024 and March 2026. The selected groups represent informal digital communication environments characterized by spontaneous interaction and active user participation. The corpus includes examples from discussions related to entertainment, education, technology, and everyday communication.

The research investigates the most frequently used abbreviation types in Azerbaijani online discourse, the communicative functions of these forms, and the influence of English-language internet culture on Azerbaijani electronic communication. The examples were selected through qualitative discourse analysis and categorized according to their structural and functional characteristics. The analysis focuses on initialisms, acronyms, clippings, phonetic abbreviations, internet-specific forms, and hybrid Azerbaijani-English constructions.

The study also examines the relationship between abbreviation usage and broader sociolinguistic processes such as globalization, language contact, code-switching, and digital identity formation. Particular attention is devoted to the role of abbreviations in creating informal communicative environments and strengthening group identity within online communities.

3. FINDINGS

One of the most widespread abbreviation types in Azerbaijani electronic communication is the initialism. Initialisms are formed from the initial letters of lexical units and are pronounced letter by letter. Examples include “BDU” (Bakı Dövlət Universiteti), “DM” (Direct Message), “BK” (basketbol klubu), and “FHN” (Fövqəladə Hallar Nazirliyi). Such forms are especially common in social media communication and online messaging because they reduce writing effort and facilitate rapid interaction. Many English-language initialisms are directly borrowed into Azerbaijani internet discourse without translation, demonstrating the significant influence of global internet culture on local linguistic practices (Baron, 2008).

Acronyms represent another productive category of abbreviated forms. Unlike initialisms, acronyms are pronounced as ordinary words rather than letter by letter. Examples include “AzTV,” “UNESCO,” “NATO,” “AQTA,” and “ADNSU.” In electronic communication, acronyms often become lexicalized and are perceived as complete lexical units

by internet users. Their increasing frequency reflects the tendency toward communicative simplification and the normalization of abbreviated forms within digital discourse.

Clippings, or truncated forms, are also highly productive in Azerbaijani online communication. Clipping involves shortening a lexical unit by omitting one of its parts while preserving its semantic meaning. Examples include “uni” (universitet), “prof.” (professor), “info” (informasiya), “moder” (moderator), and “admin” (administrator). Such forms are particularly widespread in student communication, youth discourse, and informal online interaction, where speed and brevity are highly valued (Jose et al., 2025).

Another important category consists of phonetic abbreviations formed according to pronunciation principles. These forms are especially common in instant messaging and informal chats. Examples include “slm” (salam), “ncsn” (necəsən), “grşk” (görüşərik) and “mncə” (mənəcə). Phonetic abbreviations significantly reduce typing effort while remaining understandable within familiar communication groups. Their increasing popularity demonstrates the tendency toward orthographic simplification and rapid interaction in electronic discourse.

Azerbaijani internet communication also demonstrates the widespread use of hybrid forms combining Azerbaijani and English lexical elements. Expressions such as “like elə,” “post paylaş,” “story at,” and “follow et” illustrate the integration of English internet terminology into Azerbaijani grammatical structures. Such hybrid constructions reflect the influence of global digital culture and the dominance of English-language internet terminology in online communication (Androutsopoulos, 2015).

The distinction between these categories is important because different types of abbreviated forms perform different structural and communicative functions in digital interaction. Some forms primarily contribute to linguistic economy, while others fulfill expressive, phatic, or identity-related functions. Consequently, abbreviations in internet discourse should not be viewed solely as simplified linguistic units but rather as multifunctional elements of contemporary digital communication.

In Azerbaijani linguistics, the study of electronic communication remains relatively recent. Researchers note that digital discourse demonstrates several distinctive linguistic features, including orthographic simplification, omission of diacritical marks, code-switching, transliteration, and extensive use of abbreviations and emojis. Such features distinguish internet discourse from traditional written communication and contribute to the emergence of new communicative norms.

Mechkovskaya (2006) argues that abbreviations in internet discourse are not used solely to save time but also reflect the playful and creative nature of online communication. Nevertheless, linguistic economy remains one of the central principles of electronic interaction. Internet users seek to transmit information rapidly while simultaneously maintaining emotional expressiveness and attracting the attention of interlocutors. Consequently, abbreviations function not only as mechanisms of simplification but also as stylistic and pragmatic tools within digital discourse (Həbibova, 2023).

The influence of English-language internet culture on Azerbaijani electronic communication is particularly significant. International abbreviations and internet terminology spread rapidly through global social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X. As a result, Azerbaijani users frequently adopt English lexical forms and adapt them to local communicative practices. The widespread use of English-based abbreviations demonstrates the integration of Azerbaijani speakers into global digital culture and reflects the growing impact of globalization on language behavior.

Hybrid Azerbaijani-English constructions have become increasingly common in online communication. Expressions such as “like elə,” “story at,” “follow et,” and “post paylaş” demonstrate the integration of English internet terminology into Azerbaijani syntactic

structures. Code-switching similarly represents a characteristic feature of Azerbaijani internet discourse, particularly in technology-related contexts where English terminology dominates international communication.

The omission of Azerbaijani-specific letters such as “ə,” “ş,” “ç,” “ğ,” and “ö” has also become widespread in informal electronic writing. Such tendencies are primarily associated with keyboard limitations, typing speed, and the influence of international digital communication practices. However, researchers note that the frequent omission of diacritical marks may negatively influence orthographic habits among younger users and contribute to the weakening of traditional literary norms.

The analysis demonstrates that abbreviations in Azerbaijani electronic communication perform several important communicative functions. The primary function is linguistic economy, since abbreviated forms allow users to transmit information more rapidly and efficiently in fast-paced online environments. The reduction of lexical units decreases typing effort and accelerates communication, particularly in instant messaging and social media interaction.

Abbreviations also fulfill expressive and stylistic functions. Graphic variation, unconventional spelling, and capitalization contribute to emotional expressiveness and increase the intensity of online messages. Forms such as “LOL,” “OMG,” and “TBH” frequently express emotional reactions, evaluations, or discourse attitudes and help users convey pragmatic nuances that might otherwise be absent in written communication. V.N. Vinogradova notes that abbreviations formed from the first syllables of words are less productive, they are considered secondary for many readers, since they require explanation (Vinogradova, 2002: p.29).

Another important function is the phatic function associated with maintaining social interaction and group solidarity. Internet users often employ abbreviations to create informal communicative environments and strengthen social cohesion within online communities. Repeated use of the same abbreviations within thematic groups contributes to the formation of shared communicative norms and facilitates interaction among users with common interests.

Abbreviations additionally perform identity-related functions. Young users frequently employ internet abbreviations to signal digital literacy, familiarity with online culture, and membership in specific virtual communities. Certain abbreviated forms become markers of youth identity and participation in global internet culture.

Table 1. Distribution of abbreviation types in social media corpus

Type	2024 (%)	2025 (%)	2026 (%)	Average (%)
Initialisms (DM, FB)	38%	41%	44%	41%
Clippings (info, insta, prof.)	27%	26%	24%	25.6%
Acronyms (ADNSU, AQTa)	18%	17%	16%	17%
Internet-specific forms (admin, , nick)	17%	16%	15%	16%

The collected corpus demonstrates that initialisms constitute the most productive category in Azerbaijani electronic communication. Their increasing frequency reflects the growing tendency toward linguistic economy and communicative simplification in online interaction.

Table 2. Main functions of abbreviations in Azerbaijani electronic communication

Function	Description	Examples
Economy Function	Reduction of writing effort and faster communication	slm, tmm, dm
Expressive Function	Emotional emphasis and stylistic creativity	LOL, OMG
Phatic Function	Maintaining interaction and group solidarity	BTW, ok
Identity Function	Signaling digital literacy and online identity	bro, nick, insta

Abbreviations in Azerbaijani electronic communication are formed through several productive word-formation models. Letter-based initialisms and acronyms remain among the most widespread forms due to their structural simplicity and communicative efficiency. Clippings created through morphological reduction are also highly productive and reflect the tendency toward lexical simplification in internet discourse.

Some abbreviated forms emerge through transliteration and adaptation of English lexical units. Examples such as “bro,” “pro” and “OK” illustrate the influence of English-language internet culture on Azerbaijani communication practices. The coexistence of Azerbaijani and English elements within the same utterance demonstrates the dynamic and hybrid nature of digital discourse.

Another important feature of internet abbreviations is the development of homonymy and semantic flexibility. Initialisms frequently acquire multiple meanings depending on communicative context, creating opportunities for language play, stylistic creativity, and pragmatic variation. Such tendencies illustrate the productive and dynamic character of internet discourse as a rapidly evolving communicative environment.

The study demonstrates that abbreviations and acronyms constitute essential structural elements of Azerbaijani electronic communication. Initialisms, acronyms, clippings, phonetic abbreviations, and hybrid forms actively contribute to linguistic economy, expressive communication, identity construction, and interaction management in online discourse.

The findings reveal the strong influence of English-language internet culture on Azerbaijani digital communication, particularly through code-switching, lexical borrowing, and the adoption of international internet terminology. At the same time, Azerbaijani users creatively adapt these forms within local linguistic and cultural frameworks, producing hybrid communicative practices characteristic of contemporary digital discourse.

4. CONCLUSION

Although concerns exist regarding orthographic simplification and excessive English influence, abbreviation practices also demonstrate the flexibility and adaptability of language in the digital age. Azerbaijani internet discourse continues to evolve dynamically under the influence of globalization, technological innovation, and social media culture.

The study of abbreviations in Azerbaijani electronic communication contributes to broader research in sociolinguistics, internet linguistics, discourse analysis, and language change in digital environments. Further research may focus on comparative analyses of abbreviation usage across different social groups, communication platforms, and age categories in order to better understand the ongoing transformation of language in the digital era.

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IMPACT OF GAMIFIED FLIPPED LEARNING ACTIVITIES ON STUDENTS' SELF-EFFICACY AND ANXIETY LEVELS*

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Abstract

The study examines the effect of gamified flipped learning on the levels of anxiety and self-efficacy of 3rd-grade engineering students in summer school at a state university in Türkiye, in the course “Technical Writing and Communication”. A one-group pretest-post-test design was employed as the research method. Two validated and reliable scales were used to collect data from the participants: (1) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, and (2) English Self-Efficacy Questionnaire. 40 students took the tests. Five students were interviewed at the end of the summer school to gain a clearer insight into their feedback on the gamified flipped learning process. Pre-test and post-test results demonstrate that, while flipped learning with gamified in-class activities decreases students' anxiety, it increases their self-efficacy. The course design enabled students to experience lower anxiety and improved self-efficacy at the end of the course. Students' self-efficacy was examined by comparing pre- and post-test scores theon and English Self-Efficacy Questionnaire. Students' post-test scores on sel improved at tscores he end ofbyhe course. Furthermore, student interviews reveal that familiarizing students with the content through classroom videos and Kahoot activities positively affected learning.

Key words: Kahoot, self-efficacy, anxiety, active learning, gamification

OYUNLAŞTIRILMIŞ TERS-YÜZ ÖĞRENME ETKİNLİKLERİNİN ÖĞRENCİLERİN ÖZ-YETERLİKLERİ VE KAYGI DÜZEYLERİ ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ

Özet

Bu çalışma, Türkiye’de bir devlet üniversitesinin yaz okulunda, “Teknik Yazım ve İletişim” dersi kapsamında öğrenim gören üçüncü sınıf mühendislik öğrencilerinin kaygı ve öz-yeterlik düzeyleri üzerinde oyunlaştırılmış ters-yüz öğrenmenin etkisini incelemektedir. Araştırma yöntemi olarak tek gruplu ön test–son test deseni kullanılmıştır. Katılımcılardan veri toplamak amacıyla geçerliği ve güvenirliği kanıtlanmış iki ölçek kullanılmıştır: (1) Yabancı Dil Sınıf Kaygısı Ölçeği ve (2) İngilizce Öz-Yeterlik Ölçeği. Çalışmaya 40 öğrenci katılmıştır. Yaz okulu sonunda, oyunlaştırılmış ters-yüz öğrenme sürecine ilişkin öğrenci geri bildirimlerini daha derinlemesine anlamak amacıyla beş öğrenci ile görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Ön test ve son test sonuçları, sınıf içi oyunlaştırılmış etkinliklerle desteklenen ters-yüz öğrenmenin öğrencilerin kaygı düzeylerini azalttığını ve öz-yeterliklerini artırdığını göstermektedir. Ders tasarımı, öğrencilerin ders sonunda daha düşük kaygı düzeyleri deneyimlemelerine ve öz-yeterliklerinin gelişmesine olanak sağlamıştır. Öğrencilerin öz-yeterlik düzeyleri, İngilizce Öz-Yeterlik Ölçeği ön test ve son test puanlarının karşılaştırılması yoluyla incelenmiştir. Bulgular, öğrencilerin öz-yeterlik son test puanlarının ders sonunda arttığını ortaya koymaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra, öğrenci görüşmeleri, ders öncesinde izlenen videolar ve Kahoot etkinlikleri aracılığıyla içeriğe aşinalık kazandırılmasının öğrenme sürecini olumlu yönde etkilediğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Kahoot, öz-yeterlik, kaygı, aktif öğrenme, oyunlaştırma

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1. INTRODUCTION

Flipped learning, like some other alternatives to traditional learning methods, has gained significance, especially with the COVID-19 pandemic. The important advantages it provides both for students and lecturers justify its role in the continuity of education (Kim, 2024). Flipped learning (also known as flipped teaching, flipped classroom, or inverted classroom) dates back to 2007 in the USA. Jon Bergmann and Aaron Sams, who were chemistry teachers, were working on a solution to help non-attending students catch up on lessons. Then, they created lesson materials and slides for their students to study and follow the course contents. When they realized this model was useful, they developed in-class activities to promote active learning (Lee, 2017).

Flipped learning is a pedagogical method in which learning materials are presented before class. In this way, it can be said that flipped learning is an instructional model since the lecturer assigns the required course material (Lee, 2017). This is also beneficial because it will save students more time to be more actively engaged in class, completing exercises or tasks related to the subject. The lecturers can spend less time explaining the subject theory in class. Instead, they will design tasks or activities that involve students' active participation. Furthermore, student collaboration on tasks such as role-play or group work will make the learning process more meaningful and realistic. As a result of this collaboration, students will create something together, requiring high-order thinking skills.

COVID-19 is not currently a cause for concern. People have returned to their normal lives, resuming their routines as if the pandemic had never occurred. However, the education system has been equipped with various techniques that rely more on technology. In addition, the techniques now used offer a more flexible approach to teaching and learning than traditional methods.

According to Bloom's taxonomy, students can use skills such as analyzing, evaluating, and creating when lecturers set objectives and design class activities accordingly. Students' pre-class preparation to understand the course material can be regarded as low-order thinking skills, whereas their in-class activities develop their higher-order thinking skills through questioning, analysis, application, and creation (Guo, 2021a). Students can work at their own pace in the flipped classroom by watching the asynchronous video as self-study material before class. Exposure to the theoretical part of the subject before class prepares students for the tasks that involve higher-order thinking skills. Individual or collaborative tasks, depending on the subject, enable students to improve their critical thinking skills, leading them to higher levels in Bloom's Taxonomy (Zainuddin & Halili, 2016). Learning remains at the lower stages of Bloom's Taxonomy if students are not provided with activities that require active participation with the target subject or content that has been previously instructed. This is also important because it means that students need to be more active in class than the lecturer. Accordingly, the learning process inevitably becomes a student-centered journey. Students take control of their own learning by completing the pre-class tasks assigned by the lecturer. Pre-class learning materials are significant in flipped classes because they are used to assess students' recall and understanding skills, preparing them for more advanced classroom activities (Guo, 2021b).

Another significant advantage of this situation is that students become more autonomous in their learning. Working on a task as a group, role-playing about the given subject, or discussing the content with a friend in class enables students to follow a set of steps and organize the activity outline. Students are expected to fulfill the tasks with the instructions and learning materials provided before class. Traditional, more teacher-centered courses do not offer students the engaging atmosphere of flipped classes (Sam, 2016). The more engaged learners are in class activities, the more autonomous they become. It is possible to suggest that, in addition to the learning materials, in-class activities are critical because they address students.

Therefore, lecturers are required to plan in-class tasks so that they capture students' attention and encourage active learning. When students are actively involved in tasks, they become more motivated and confident, indicating increased self-efficacy. This is important in language learning.

According to Bandura, people possess a system that influences their actions, decisions, and performance. This system relates to cognitive patterns that play a significant role in learning (Pajares, 1996). In teaching English, self-efficacy is about a student's belief in their own learning process. They have a self-image of how successful they are at learning English. Bandura points out that one's feelings and opinions are critical factors in controlling one's actions in the learning process. Self-efficacy can be considered a form of self-reflection that provides a person with feedback on their performance on each task (Pajares, 1996). Self-efficacy plays a significant role in a student's motivation. The lesson material, whether an asynchronous video or a reading text, is provided to the student before class, allowing time for self-study to review the subject's theory. This will make students feel more confident in class, as they are familiar with the background information on the content. It inevitably positively affects students' self-efficacy (Awidi & Paynter, 2019). Students with higher self-efficacy have a more positive attitude towards the learning process. They believe that they can succeed in learning English. This also helps them stay more motivated. The more they achieve the tasks, the higher their self-efficacy. When a student has created a set of minds related to their perception of their performance on the task, how much their communicative skills improve also plays a significant role in their academic success. It is essential to provide students with a creative learning environment whenever possible. As the lesson's content is shared with students before class, they become familiar with the subject. Thus, learning becomes a more student-centered activity, requiring students to be involved in tasks that demand higher-order skills. Cooperation with peers, problem-solving, and model creation are examples of such activities (Zhao et al., 2021).

Students' performance in a foreign language class is also related to their experience of foreign language anxiety (FLA). Students learning a foreign language may feel stressed, especially when they need to perform a task in class. This anxiety can be observed at different levels and forms. Some students experience nervousness, while others feel fear (Çubukçu, 2008). If a student has FLA, they believe others in the class do better than they do. Furthermore, they think that their performance is considered poor by their classmates (Horwitz et al., 1986). Moreover, there are different types of anxiety underlying FLA. One of the anxieties is about communication anxiety, which can be seen if the student needs to come to the front of the class to talk about a subject, for instance. The student is afraid of not understanding the other student's speech and, at the same time, of not being understood by others. As for test anxiety, the student is afraid of tests because of making a mistake, which is related to another type of anxiety, which is being evaluated negatively by others (Horwitz et al., 1986). The student may feel that when they are doing a role play, their friends make fun of them or criticize their performance. It is important that students be provided with a supportive learning environment in which they feel confident and safe. Flipped learning enables students to prepare before class by watching an asynchronous video at their own pace, any time they want. This is important to the student as they know what is expected from them before the lesson. In addition, the student will feel more confident considering the content presented beforehand. At this point, flipped learning provides a suitable learning environment for teachers to design and implement, thereby enhancing active learning. Teachers will have more time to give students feedback on classroom tasks. As students are required to participate in classroom activities, they will be actively engaged rather than just listening to a lecture. This is also important for retention. Another important point is that teachers are required to support their students as coaches in flipped

classes, so when students are actively involved in role-plays or case studies, their “coaches” encourage them to do better next time (Chou et al., 2021).

As a flexible model, flipped learning enables students to become autonomous learners. This can be a challenging issue for some students, though. For this reason, integrating games (gamification) into the flipped learning environment can make the process less difficult and more enjoyable. Gamification is generally defined as a pedagogical approach that uses game elements in non-game environments (Lo & Hew, 2020). Flipped learning is supported by games in order to enhance student engagement and motivation (Huang & Hew, 2018). When classroom activities are enjoyable, students are more willing to participate, and flipped learning with gamification can boost this willingness by supporting the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Albshry, 2024). Students are required to study the course material at their own pace before class. Thus, it is their responsibility to focus on the content and to understand the material before the lesson. This also enhances one’s competence in the subject. While students are in class, they will work on tasks based on the shared material. They need to be competent about the subject if they want to do well in the tasks. In-class tasks are generally designed to develop higher-order thinking skills, including critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and questioning. Gamification helps create social relatedness in the classroom. Students share a sense of belonging as they participate in the game. Avatars, badges, or points are used to announce students’ success without being judgmental. This can be considered as support in the learning environment. Taking charge of your own learning is supported by an enjoyable and positive surrounding shared by a small community, which is a class this time. Loyalty, social attachment, and collaboration enable students to feel socially accepted (Nortvig et al., 2018).

In a previous study (Bezircilioğlu & Yürüm, 2023), researchers examined how online flipped learning could reduce language-learning anxiety and enhance students’ self-efficacy. Building on these findings, the present study strengthened the in-class component through gamified activities. To ensure students came to class prepared, they were required to watch an asynchronous lesson video in advance and complete a short video-based writing task. Unlike the earlier implementation, this task was graded, making pre-class preparation more consistent and supporting meaningful participation during class.

2. METHOD

This study employed a one-group pretest-posttest design (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). This study aimed to evaluate the impact of gamified flipped learning activities on students’ self-efficacy and anxiety levels within a specific group. Due to logistical constraints, a control group could not be formed, as it was not feasible to split one class into “learning” and “non-learning” groups for the research. Additionally, it was deemed important to observe behavioral changes within a single group.

To establish a baseline for comparison, a pre-test was conducted to measure students’ anxiety levels and self-efficacy before implementing the gamified flipped learning activities. This baseline was essential for assessing the intervention’s impact.

The study lasted five weeks, which is relatively short. Thus, threats related to history or maturation, as discussed by Campbell and Stanley (1963), were minimized. The primary concerns with a one-group pretest-posttest design are threats to history and maturation. However, given the brief time frame, it was unlikely that any significant changes in maturity would occur, and no noteworthy incidents happened in the classroom that could affect the results.

A pre-experimental one-group pre-test post-test design is used in the present study (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). True experimental designs are preferred for their higher validity; however, the pre-experimental design was the most feasible for this specific educational setting.

Furthermore, the pre-experimental one-group pre-test-post-test design is a common design in educational research. For instance, Sun et al. (2022) used this design to examine the effects of 3D printing and rapid prototyping on students' learning outcomes in a classroom setting. They used one class of middle school students. In another study, Lysenko and Abrami (2014) noted that the quasi-experimental research design was one of the study's weaknesses. There was one control and one experimental group, but there was no randomization. Postareff et al. (2007) conducted a study with 200 educators to examine the effects of pedagogical training on teaching in higher education. The teacher training was given to all teachers over a period; therefore, a control group was not applicable.

Research Questions

There are three main research questions in this study:

RQ1. Does flipped learning with gamified lessons decrease the anxiety level of the students?

RQ2. Does flipped learning with gamified lessons improve students' self-efficacy?

RQ3. Do the technology-enhanced class activities improve students' language skills?

2.1 Participants

The participants (N=40) are 3rd-grade male and female engineering students aged 20-21. The sample consisted of 22 male and 18 female participants. They took the Technical Writing and Communication course at a public university's summer school in Turkey. The course is mandatory for students studying Mechanical Engineering, Energy Systems, and Materials Science and Engineering during the regular term. Students who wish to take the course in the summer session to alleviate their schedule can register for the summer school offering. This course is designed to develop students' technical English skills. The medium of instruction at the university is English. This group was chosen using convenience sampling, as explained by Johnson and Christensen (2019). It was the most suitable sampling method because the group was an intact classroom for this study. Convenience sampling could be considered the most suitable strategy in an educational context, as in the present study, because a real classroom setting provides a high level of ecological validity. Engaging an intact group in research provides educators with essential insights to effectively implement pedagogical tools, such as gamified flipped learning activities, in their classrooms. Furthermore, the naturalistic setting was significant, as the study aimed to observe the impact of gamified flipped learning activities on students' anxiety and self-efficacy during the normal school period. In addition, choosing Johnson and Christensen's (2019) convenience sampling was a practical reason since the researcher was already teaching the class, ensuring a seamless and effective data collection process.

Participants registered for this course because it was compulsory on their third-year syllabus. The students' departments were Mechanical Engineering, Energy Systems Engineering, and Materials Science Engineering. The students' English proficiency level was assessed as Upper-Intermediate, corresponding to B2 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), as this is the exit level of the institution's English Preparatory Program. The participants consisted of students who passed the Proficiency Exam at the beginning of the year they entered the university, as well as those who successfully completed the English preparatory program at a B2 exit level. Moreover, a third-year technical English course requires at least B1 proficiency. The institutional mandatory exit level in the English preparatory program is considered the participants' level of English proficiency in the current study. The participants were all native speakers of Turkish. The participants were not familiar with the gamified flipped learning activities; therefore, it was possible to measure their gain scores.

At the end of the course, five students were interviewed about the questions below, and the interviews were recorded with their permission. The researcher used purposive sampling to select participants for the interview, based on their completion of the course and engagement in class activities. They were from different departments, but all of them were in their third year. There were three males and two females in the focus group. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each student individually via Microsoft Teams. This pattern allows participants to add more comments and to share their opinions about the subject in a more flexible way. Each interview lasted nearly 15 minutes. Interviews were recorded with the participants' permission. These recordings were transcribed verbatim.

--Did the course contribute to you in terms of (a. writing, b. listening, c. reading, and d. speaking)? How did the course contribute to you in terms of (a. writing, b. listening, c. reading, and d. speaking)? a. If it did not, why did it not contribute?

--Did you feel anxious during the course? When? Why? a. If you did feel anxious, how can we reduce this anxiety?

--What is your general feedback about the design of the course?

2.2 Instruments

The data was collected through two validated and reliable scales: (1) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), and (2) English Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (ESEQ). FLCAS was developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). The purpose of the FLCAS was to measure students' anxiety toward a foreign language. It contains 33 five-point Likert-type items, ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). ESEQ, developed by Wang et al. (2014), aims to measure students' beliefs about their English capabilities. There are 32 seven-point Likert-type items, ranging from 1 (I cannot do it at all) to 7 (I can do it well). It also includes 4 basic English skills: Listening, Writing, Reading, and Speaking. These two scales were used because they are among the most common and reliable in this kind of research. The FLCAS was chosen on purpose because it differs from the general performance anxiety by focusing on language-specific anxiety. The FLCAS in the present study demonstrated high reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .93$). The ESEQ was selected for its multidimensional structure, which measures self-efficacy across four language skills. This was significant because it enabled the researchers to examine the effects of the gamified flipped learning model on language skills separately. The ESEQ in the current study demonstrated high reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .97$).

2.3 Procedure

During the first week of summer school, students completed pretests to assess their anxiety levels and self-efficacy in learning English as a foreign language. A total of 40 students participated in these pretests. Afterward, the students received an introduction to the course, followed by a review of the course syllabus. In the applied flipped learning, the lecturer shared the same type of video lecture with the students two days before the face-to-face lesson time each week through a learning platform (Microsoft Teams). These videos were professionally recorded in the green box studio at the Distant Learning Centre. Students were asked to watch four video lectures before the class. Then, students were assigned to write a short summary of the video and submit it through the same learning platform weekly. Each video was graded out of five points. It was sufficient to write a summary of the video lecture focusing on the main ideas and key points about the subject. At the beginning of the second week, the students were provided with a video lecture on technical writing skills. This subject was the title to be studied in the second week. The lecturer used Kahoot to run quizzes on technical writing skills in class

to review the subject. The questions were prepared by the lecturer herself. In the third week, the video lecture was about professional communication skills. The students wrote their summaries after they watched the video lecture. During the class, Kahoot was used to play quiz games about the video lecture again. In the fourth week, the subject was how to prepare poster presentations. Students watched the video lecture before the lesson and submitted their summaries. The review of the subjects was again conducted through Kahoot quizzes in class. In the fifth week of the course, students were provided with a video lecture on effective communication skills. The class review exercises were conducted via Kahoot quizzes, whose questions were prepared by the lecturer, as in previous weeks. In the sixth week of the course, students delivered their poster presentations in class. This was the last week of the course. The post-test was given to the students in the sixth week. While evaluating the students' summaries, the lecturer considered whether they had referenced content from the video lectures.

3. RESULTS

A mixed-methods design was used to collect data in the current study. The quantitative and qualitative results of the study are separately presented below.

3.1 Quantitative Results

As shown in Table 1, pre-test and post-test results demonstrate that, while flipped learning with gamified in-class activities decreases students' anxiety, it increases their self-efficacy. The course design enabled students to experience lower anxiety and improved self-efficacy at the end of the course. As shown in Table 1, students' post-test scores for self-efficacy improved at the end of the course. Therefore, it is possible to claim that the flipped learning design, supported by gamified in-class activities, enabled students to gain a more positive understanding of their own learning process.

Table 1. Results for students' anxiety and self-efficacy levels

Variable	Pre-test	Post-test	p-value
Anxiety	2.73	2.43	0.000
Self-Efficacy	5.20	5.51	0.007

The skill-based results also demonstrate that students' self-efficacy in writing, speaking, reading, and listening improved at the end of the course. Table 2 presents a comparison of the pre-test and post-test results for students' skill-based self-efficacy. It is possible to observe the improvement in students' English language skills, as presented below.

Table 2. Self-efficacy in four skills

Variable	Pre-test	Post-test	p-value
Listening	5.27	5.47	0.094
Speaking	5.14	5.52	0.006
Reading	5.31	5.60	0.011
Writing	5.07	5.45	0.003

Considering the four skills presented in Table 2, the improvement in listening self-efficacy appears to be slight and not statistically significant. Regarding self-efficacy in speaking, the improvement is statistically significant, as shown in Table 2. When self-efficacy in reading is considered, Table 2 also indicates an improvement in this skill. As presented in Table 2, self-efficacy in writing improved significantly at the end of the course.

The pre-test-post-test results and student interviews reveal that the flipped learning course design, enhanced with in-class gamified activities, reduces students' anxiety and improves their self-efficacy in language skills, especially writing, reading, and speaking. This suggests that students felt more confident in their technical English skills through structured writing tasks, presentations, and interactive class activities.

3.2 Qualitative Results

Five students were interviewed at the end of the course to gather additional feedback on the course, including whether they thought it had contributed to their skills, reduced their anxiety, and shaped their overall impressions. These interviews were conducted online, on a voluntary basis, and recorded on a learning platform with each student's consent. Both researchers coded the themes, and the reliability was 92.

The interviews were analyzed thematically. Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis framework (2006) was employed here, which includes (1) familiarization with data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) writing the report. The main themes were presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3. Student Interviews

Main Theme	Sub-Theme	Quote	Interpretation
Language Skills	Speaking	"Speaking was the most efficient part of the course." "The course improved my presentation skills."	Speaking activities and presentations improved students' self-efficacy in communication competence.
	Writing	"Summary writing was good." "The course taught me to write more accurately in technical English. I learnt that long sentences aren't preferred in technical English."	The course raised students' awareness about the features of technical writing. Students' self-efficacy in writing skills improved.
Anxiety	Reduced Anxiety	"I overcame my anxiety with presentations." "I was having anxiety but you (the lecturer) were very supportive, so I felt better."	Supportive class environment and collaboration with friends reduced students' anxiety level.

	Confidence	“I didn’t feel anxious because we all and were doing the same thing”.	Equality in participation made students feel confident.
Overall impression	Usefulness	“Videos were useful”. “Sharing the subject before class through videos is good; it creates familiarity. It’s better than assigning the text.” “Videos were effective.” “It was very good to know the subject beforehand thanks to videos; it was useful.”	Asynchronous videos as pre-class self-study material were useful. Also, students found videos more useful compared to other lesson materials for assignment.
	Effectiveness	“Kahoot and activities were good.” “Kahoot was effective.” “Kahoot was good; it was easy to participate in the lesson.” “It was good to practise APA citation style as Kahoot competition because it was a hard subject.”	Students were engaged in the lesson willingly as gamification was integrated into the in-class activities.
	Fun in groupwork	“Poster activity about ethics was fun.”	Group activities enhance students’ communication and social skills. They liked this poster activity because it was fun to work with their posters to focus on ethics creatively as well as critically.

3.3 Discussion

This study aimed to investigate how flipped learning, supported by gamified activities, affects students’ anxiety levels, self-efficacy, and language skills in an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course. A mixed-methods design combining quantitative and qualitative methods was used to gain a deep understanding of students’ perceptions of the course design.

RQ1. Does flipped learning with gamified lessons decrease the anxiety level of the students?

Both post-test results and student interviews point out that the students' anxiety levels decrease while self-efficacy improves. As shown in Table 2, students' anxiety levels decrease significantly throughout the course for several reasons. One reason is that asynchronous lesson videos are shared with students before the lesson. This helps them learn familiarity with the subject, which means they will be prepared for what to do in the lesson. Students feel less anxious about the course subject because they can preview it at home (Latiff et al., 2024). When this familiarity is supported by gamified in-class activities such as Kahoot, students' anxiety levels decrease. Another reason for this decrease is that game-based collaborative tasks, such as group poster work, create a positive atmosphere where students feel more relaxed and more confident. Kahoot is a game-based voting system where students do not have to answer questions in front of the class; they can voice their answers. Also, Chen et al. (2022) found that the avatars used in the game helped students feel less anxious when they made a mistake, as avatars or nicknames created anonymity, which avoided potential negative judgment in the class. One of the most significant benefits of such systems is that students do not feel stressed when answering questions about the subject. This also means that students do not feel embarrassed when they make a mistake. It is essential that they verify their understanding of the subject without being concerned about making mistakes (Cutrim, 2008). Students have control over their own learning, without having to announce where they fail in the subject, which gives them confidence. In addition, students enjoy being part of the Personal Response Systems (PRS) because they all feel part of the whole as they engage in the activities. For instance, students participating in our research reported that Kahoot, a PRS, was useful, as shown in Table 3. These systems enable instant responses and feedback during the lesson, allowing students to answer questions anonymously while actively engaged and to collaborate with each other, which creates a positive learning environment (Chan et al., 2019).

RQ2. Does flipped learning with gamified lessons improve students' self-efficacy?

Students' self-efficacy in speaking and writing skills developed most, as shown in post-test results and student interviews. Self-efficacy and confidence are important in language learning. When students know what the lesson will be about before class, they feel more confident because they are better prepared for the subject and the activities. Flipped learning requires that students use recording, video, text, or a learning platform prepared by the lecturer before the lesson. Students were provided with the asynchronous videos on the subject theory, recorded by the lecturer, in the green box in the present study. Students' self-efficacy in writing improved through summary writing tasks on the asynchronous videos. The asynchronous videos were designed as self-study materials for students to use before class. Students were pleased that the lesson content was shared as short videos before the lessons, as shown in Table 1. There was more time for activity and student engagement in the lesson. This is significant because it shifts the lesson format from a lecture-based approach to a collaborative one. Students become active participants in a learning environment where they engage in problem-solving, which positively affects their academic performance (Ahmed & Asiksoy, 2021). Short summary writing tasks were also assigned as a part of the course assessment. The purpose was to ensure the videos were watched before the lesson. In a similar study (Bezircilioğlu & Yürüm, 2023), the asynchronous videos were also used, but they were not a part of the course assessment. Additionally, summary writing tasks helped enhance students' writing skills. This gave them a chance to assess their understanding of the course material before the in-class lesson. Additionally, students received individual feedback on their writing.

Furthermore, the games used in class, such as Kahoot, create a student-centered, engaging, and fun atmosphere for practicing the course material. The badges or leaderboards enable students to receive immediate feedback on their progress. This increases their self-efficacy because they

are intrinsically engaged in the activities, which makes them feel more confident in their learning process (Latiff et al., 2024). In addition, when students are provided with activities to practice their knowledge of the course subject, their self-efficacy increases (González-Gómez et al., 2019).

RQ3. Do the technology-enhanced class activities improve students' language skills?

Students are engaged in high-order learning activities during the lesson, based on the pre-course material they watched beforehand. It is essential to consider that student-centered and engaging activities are more effective because they enable students to actively participate in the learning process (Albshry, 2024; Sailer & Sailer, 2021). In addition, students take the responsibility for their own learning, which improves learner autonomy. This, however, presents another challenge, as expecting students to be in charge of their own learning may not be easy. Therefore, motivating students to explore a new language can be difficult. Technology-enhanced class activities are helpful at this point. Gamified technology-supported in-class activities are effective in motivating students to participate and enabling them to use language skills more efficiently (Smith et al., 2022). Based on the pre-test and post-test results, it can be concluded that students' language skills, especially speaking and writing, improved the most. Students had more opportunities to engage in hands-on activities based on the lecture videos they watched before class. Flipped teaching is useful for students' vocabulary retention and language use because it exposes them to the pre-class material as a self-study resource. It gives them time to review the material as many times as they need. Furthermore, the use of digital tools in teaching makes the learning process more student-centered, as it is based on individual learning preferences (Soltanabadi et al., 2021; Sudarmaji et al., 2021).

The results of the present study show that flipped learning, supported by gamified in-class activities, positively affects students' self-efficacy while decreasing their language learning anxiety. Gamified flipped learning enabled students to engage in class activities without feeling stressed, as they enjoyed the learning process. Kahoot was used to check students' understanding of the subject. The badges, avatars, scoreboard, and podium encouraged them to participate in the in-class lesson. Furthermore, students were familiar with the content before the lesson through short asynchronous videos. The fact that they were assigned to write a short summary of each video made them watch the video before the lesson, which provided them with the content knowledge necessary to prepare for the activities in class. As mentioned, the short interviews revealed that familiarity with the subject through videos increased self-confidence. Moreover, they also demonstrated that using Kahoot for in-class exercises made the class period more enjoyable and engaging. Based on an electronic voting system, Kahoot games were perceived as supporting students' language learning by providing immediate feedback while protecting learner privacy. As an individual student, they learn whether their answer is right or wrong without letting others know (Cutrim, 2007).

4. CONCLUSION

It is obvious that flipped learning has a positive impact on students. Students feel more confident when the lesson materials are shared in advance of the class. They have a chance to prepare for the lesson. This enables students to actively participate in class activities. Moreover, it fosters learner autonomy, as students decide when and how to access the learning materials. In contrast to traditional education models, flipped learning enables students to actively engage in the learning process. Instead of direct instruction, students create their own space by studying self-study materials before class (Sun et al., 2023; Sailer & Sailer, 2021; Sudarmaji et al., 2021).

The positive impact of flipped learning increases when it is combined with games. Gamified in-class activities create an engaging, fun atmosphere, making students more likely to participate. The challenge, competition, and fun make students more willing to join the

lesson. Gamified activities help alleviate students' anxiety by providing opportunities to engage without fear of making mistakes. Even if they make a mistake, they know that nobody will judge them. In addition, having students play games in class about the pre-class material makes them more willing to learn it. This creates a class atmosphere based on students' active participation. Learning takes place in a more engaging environment thanks to game elements such as badges, leaderboards, and interaction. In-class games increase students' motivation, making them more engaged in the lesson. The teacher is not the sole authority of the knowledge in the class; instead, students start to take ownership of their own learning (Lo & Hew, 2020; Sailer et al., 2017). Thus, it leads to learner autonomy, requiring students to monitor their own learning process. It can be challenging, as students need to be aware of their responsibilities in their studies. Meccawy et al. (2023) point out that the use of games in the lessons helps students cope with the difficulties they meet in the learning process. It is significant because students feel the positive power of achievement, which builds self-confidence. Furthermore, students' self-efficacy increases as their self-confidence grows, raising their awareness of their own capacity to improve. In addition, the present study demonstrated that gamified in-class activities increased students' self-efficacy in language skills, particularly speaking, reading, and writing, while decreasing students' anxiety. It is worth noting that a supportive classroom atmosphere and collaboration with classmates encouraged students to be more actively engaged in the learning process.

Furthermore, the current study shows that gamified flipped learning offered a range of benefits for both the lecturers and the students. For instance, the writing tasks students did as part of the pre-course preparation were based on the videos they watched in the present study. The tasks provided students with the flexibility to watch the video at their own pace, at any time, and from any location, allowing them to rewind and fast-forward as needed. Students had sufficient time to focus on their own learning after completing the task on the learning platform. They focused on the writing task about the asynchronous video that was assigned before class. Moreover, students tend to manage cognitive load related to the task better when they are involved in technology-enhanced tasks. They can personalize their study time by completing the tasks at their own pace. That is also one of the reasons students love online tasks: they can study at their own pace. In addition, tasks on an online platform can be beneficial for students with busy schedules (Jadhav & Gavade, 2024; Konoplianyk et al., 2021; Sudarmaji et al., 2021). As for lecturers, they have more time to engage students in activities and games during class, fostering a more positive, interactive atmosphere. Additionally, they can better observe how well students perform in activities that require creativity and critical thinking skills. This is made possible because students come to class having already been exposed to the course material through online resources beforehand (İlter & Yeşilyurt, 2021).

However, the present study had several limitations. First, the study was conducted in a single instructional context with a limited sample, and no control group was included. This may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Another limitation is that the study was conducted over a short period during the summer school. The observation over a longer period could have yielded more data.

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USE OF CHATGPT IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES*

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Abstract

This study aims to reveal the experiences of foreign language learners using ChatGPT. The research was conducted using a phenomenological design. Researchers tried to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' perceptions, attitudes, and experiences regarding the artificial intelligence-based language learning process. The study group consisted of seven second-year students in the Department of Translation and Interpreting, selected through criterion-based purposive sampling. Two primary criteria were considered in the selection of participants: their status as foreign language learners and their active use of ChatGPT. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Interview questions focused on the purposes, frequency, and manner in which participants use ChatGPT, as well as the effects of this use on language skills, motivation, self-confidence, critical thinking, and creativity. Content analysis was used. The findings showed that the participants evaluated ChatGPT as a tool that contributes to their overall learning process, is motivating, and supports language development. The potential findings may contribute theoretically and practically to the studies on artificial intelligence-supported language learning and may also pave the way for the development of recommendations for the use of ChatGPT as a pedagogical support tool in foreign language teaching environments.

Key words: ChatGPT, Foreign language learning, Student experience

YABANCI DİL ÖĞRENİMİNDE CHATGPT KULLANIMI VE ÜNİVERSİTE ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN DENEYİMLERİ

Özet

Bu çalışma, yabancı dil öğrenenlerin ChatGPT kullanım deneyimlerini ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma, fenomenolojik bir desen kullanılarak yürütülmüştür. Araştırmacılar, katılımcıların yapay zekâ temelli dil öğrenme sürecine ilişkin algılarını, tutumlarını ve deneyimlerini derinlemesine anlamaya çalışmışlardır. Çalışma grubu, ölçüt tabanlı amaçlı örnekleme yoluyla seçilen yedi Mütercim Tercümanlık Bölümü ikinci sınıf öğrencisinden oluşmaktadır. Katılımcıların seçilmesinde iki temel ölçüt göz önünde bulundurulmuştur: yabancı dil öğrenen olma durumları ve ChatGPT'yi aktif olarak kullanmaları. Veriler yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerle toplanmıştır. Görüşme soruları, katılımcıların ChatGPT'yi kullanma amaçları, sıklığı ve biçiminin yanı sıra bu kullanımın dil becerileri, motivasyon, özgüven, eleştirel düşünme ve yaratıcılık üzerindeki etkilerine odaklanmıştır. İçerik analizi kullanılmıştır. Sonuçlar, katılımcıların ChatGPT'yi genel öğrenme süreçlerine katkıda bulunan, motive edici ve dil gelişimini destekleyen bir araç olarak değerlendirdiğini göstermiştir. Elde edilen bulgular, yapay zekâ destekli dil öğrenimi çalışmalarına teorik ve pratik açıdan katkı sağlayabileceği gibi, yabancı dil öğretim ortamlarında ChatGPT'nin pedagojik destek aracı olarak kullanımına yönelik önerilerin geliştirilmesine de katkı sağlayabilir.

Anahtar kelimeler: ChatGPT, Yabancı dil öğrenimi, Öğrenci deneyimi

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1. INTRODUCTION

Learning a foreign language has become an indispensable skill for individuals to effectively participate in academic, professional, and social fields in our globalized world. Therefore, foreign language learning is a vital part of the modern education system. Unlike traditional teaching methods, it is emphasized that the instant and collective responses provided by technology facilitate the language learning experience and offer students a faster learning opportunity. The use of artificial intelligence-based tools, in particular, is becoming a focal point of educational research (Balci, 2024). Rapid advancements in information and communication technologies have also impacted language learning processes; many artificial intelligence tools, from automated writing assessment systems to speech recognition applications, have begun to be used by learners and teachers. Following its public presentation in November 2022, ChatGPT, developed by OpenAI and based on natural language processing, stands out as a revolutionary tool in foreign language education. ChatGPT is a multi-functional AI assistant that allows users to interact in real-time through a text-based interface, receive personalized feedback, and practice language learning (Bonner et al., 2023; Warschauer & Wu, 2024). This tool is notable for providing a fault-tolerant environment accessible to students 24/7, thereby reducing language anxiety and increasing motivation for language learning. In this context, ChatGPT plays a significant role by offering numerous advantages for foreign language education.

While the current literature on AI-assisted language learning focuses primarily on quantitative, experimental, and large-scale research, phenomenological studies examining students' ChatGPT usage experiences through subjective meaning dimensions remain limited. Furthermore, research has mostly concentrated on general EFL student groups; translation and interpreting students, who require a high level of competence in terms of linguistic accuracy, terminological precision, and interpretive skills, have not been adequately addressed. In this context, a unique investigation into the effects of ChatGPT use on the learning experience and professional identity development of this student group emerges as a crucial necessity.

In this context, the current study aims to deeply examine the experiences of second-year Translation and Interpreting students using ChatGPT through a phenomenological design. The research is structured around the following research questions:

RQ1. For what purpose and how often do students use ChatGPT?

RQ2. How does ChatGPT contribute to the language learning processes of the participants?

RQ3. How does the use of ChatGPT affect students' motivation, self-efficacy, critical thinking skills, and creativity in foreign language learning process?

The findings of this study may offer a unique and phenomenologically profound contribution to the literature on AI-assisted language learning. It could provide a concrete and nuanced evidence base for developing recommendations on how ChatGPT can be positioned as a pedagogical support tool in foreign language teaching environments, and it could also bring the specific needs of translation and interpreting education into the AI-assisted learning debate.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Technology-Assisted Language Learning: Historical Perspective and the Modern Era

The history of technology-assisted language learning can be traced through a broad trajectory of transformation, from audio tape and language lab applications to computer-assisted language learning (CALL), and then to internet-based online environments. Each technological paradigm has generated both great expectations and serious doubts regarding its potential

impact on foreign language acquisition. The current AI-driven transformation is described as the beginning of a new era in foreign language learning, and it is emphasized that its pedagogical potential must be questioned from both instrumental and epistemological perspectives (Warschauer & Xu, 2024). This perspective suggests that, unlike past CALL research, today's AI tools, particularly large language models (LLMs), have the capacity to fundamentally transform the nature of the relationship between the learner and their language practice.

ChatGPT is a large language model that has achieved an extraordinary level of natural language comprehension and production capacity by drawing on billions of human-generated texts (Bonner et al., 2023). This structure fundamentally distinguishes ChatGPT from previous generations of CALL tools. Unlike traditional language learning software that relies on fixed response repertoires, ChatGPT can generate responses that dynamically adapt to the student's individual language level, discourse context, and immediate learning goals. Bonner et al. (2023) demonstrated the implications of this feature in educational practice with concrete examples in the dimensions of curriculum development, activity design, and individualized feedback. Kohnke et al. (2023) particularly highlighted ChatGPT's potential to increase the linguistic confidence of students learning English as a foreign language. According to the researchers, for students who are concerned about being judged in a traditional classroom setting or interacting with native English speakers, ChatGPT's non-judgmental, private interaction environment provides a safe ground for trial-and-error practice. In another study, Li and Wang (2023) revealed that ChatGPT, in the context of Chinese universities, offered unique contributions to traditional language pedagogy with its functions such as instant personalized feedback, automatic error correction, and adaptive pedagogy that adapted to the individual pace of the student.

2.2 ChatGPT's Contribution to Basic Language Skills

Balcı (2024), in her systematic review encompassing twenty-one studies compiled from the Web of Science database, comprehensively mapped the advantages and disadvantages of ChatGPT in EFL education. The most striking finding of the review was that ChatGPT had measurable positive effects on all core language skills, including speaking, listening, reading, grammar, and vocabulary; writing skills stood out as the area where the strongest and most consistent effect was observed. Equally, Allen and Mizumoto (2024), in their study with Japanese EFL students, revealed that thirty-three participants comparatively experienced ChatGPT with writing groups during the writing editing and proofreading phases. The vast majority of students found the feedback provided by ChatGPT to be more original, consistent, and immediately applicable compared to peer assessment. Correspondingly, Huang and Wang (2025), in their qualitative study monitoring the interaction of Chinese EFL students with ChatGPT in the academic writing process, revealed that effective students selectively extracted and reformulated the content generated by artificial intelligence, thus activating higher-level cognitive processes such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis. In Turkish context, Karataş et al. (2024) in a qualitative study conducted with 4-week online courses in the context of a preparatory class, showed that students particularly valued receiving rapid, contextually sensitive feedback and needed structured support protocols to effectively use ChatGPT. This study, which has a strong methodological and institutional kinship with the Turkish context in which the current research was conducted, provides a direct basis for comparison.

2.3 The Motivational, Cognitive, and Self-Regulation Effects of ChatGPT in Foreign Language Learning

Foreign language anxiety is consistently documented in research as a major factor hindering participation in language practice. The opportunity offered by ChatGPT in this area is a non-judgmental, private interaction environment that allows students to practice language without fear of evaluation or ridicule (Kohnke et al., 2023). By the same token, Alshammari (2024), in her study in the context of Saudi Arabia, showed that the use of ChatGPT significantly increased communication confidence and willingness to practice language. Çobanoğulları and Özbek (2025), in their studies on developing a ChatGPT usage scale for foreign language learners, showed that interaction with this tool was strongly correlated with motivational outcomes through perceived usefulness and ease of use variables. Zhang et al. (2025) examined how a ChatGPT-based learning environment triggers the flow experience. The researchers found that ChatGPT simultaneously supports four key flow antecedents: skill-challenge balance, clear goal, immediate feedback, and ease of use. It was observed that students who experienced deep flow showed increased task intensity and academic output quality. This finding provides a strong theoretical framework for understanding the experiences of current research participants who described ChatGPT as a motivating and enjoyable learning tool.

The effects of artificial intelligence tools on critical thinking and creative production present a bipolar picture in the literature. While some argue that ChatGPT encourages students to think in multiple dimensions by offering different perspectives and reasoned arguments, there are growing concerns that its production of ready-made answers stifles students' efforts to develop original thought. Balcı (2024) reported that twenty-one studies she examined consistently report this bipolar picture. Wang (2024) also illustrated this tension as excessive reliance on artificial intelligence tools can hinder the development of basic language skills. These contrasting patterns strongly suggest that the effect on critical thinking depends on whether the student uses ChatGPT as a conscious catalyst or as a repository of solutions. Hockly (2023) offered an assessment of the role of artificial intelligence in foreign language teaching that was both promising and carried serious risks within this framework. Highlighting ethical concerns such as breaches of academic integrity, over-reliance, and algorithmic bias, the researcher emphasized that integrating ChatGPT into classroom settings required transparent policies and structured usage protocols.

Wang (2024), in a mixed-methods study with seventy-nine EFL students at a university in Japan, examined how students self-regulated their use of AI tools in academic writing tasks. The most critical finding of the research is that the guidance provided by the teacher regarding AI tools is a factor that fundamentally determines the quality of the learning experience. In contexts where sufficient pedagogical guidance is not provided, students tend to use ChatGPT not as a tool, but as a problem-solver. Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development can be re-evaluated within this framework. ChatGPT functions as a dynamic scaffold that allows the student to surpass the limits of their current competence; however, this function only gains its true meaning in environments where the AI is consciously and planned by the educator. In the study by Allen and Mizumoto (2026), it was observed that students spontaneously turned to groups for peer support when they encountered technical problems while working with ChatGPT. This phenomenon clearly shows that human interaction maintains a social learning dimension that AI cannot fill. Lee and Lee (2024) systematically synthesized the effectiveness of AI-guided individualized language learning in their meta-analysis encompassing sixty-one samples and 8,282 participants from 17 research projects. Within-group pre- and post-test comparisons, as well as between-group comparisons, demonstrated that AI-assisted language learning exhibits undeniable effectiveness in terms of

both statistical and practical educational significance. Moderator analyses revealed that the effect size differs systematically according to factors such as student age, target language skill, and learning context. This finding may provide a strong evidence-based framework for interpreting the individual differences which will be observed in the current study.

3. METHOD

3.1 Research Design

This research was conducted using a phenomenological design, which is part of the qualitative research study. Phenomenology is a research approach that aims to deeply understand individuals' perceptions, meaning-making processes, and experiences regarding a particular phenomenon or experience (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The phenomenon examined in the present research is the experience of university students using ChatGPT in the context of foreign language learning. The phenomenological design was determined to be the most appropriate methodological framework, aligning with the goals of the research, as it allows for understanding the subjective meaning dimensions of this experience beyond superficial outcome measurements.

3.2 Participants

The participant group consisted of seven native Turkish speakers aged between 18 and 22 years. Of the participants, five were female and two were male. They are second-year Translation and Interpreting students selected using a criterion-based purposive sampling method. Two main criteria were taken into consideration in the selection of the participants: their status as foreign language learners and their active use of ChatGPT. Translation and interpreting students are considered to be a particularly meaningful study group for this research since these students use artificial intelligence tools under pressure to both deepen their foreign language proficiency and develop critical language evaluation specific to translation practice. The demographic characteristics and ChatGPT experience profiles of the participants were kept anonymous for reasons of research ethics; each participant was identified with codes ranging from P1 to P7.

3.3 Data Collection Tool and Analysis

This study has been prepared in accordance with the rules of scientific research and publication ethics, with the Ethics Committee Approval Certificate dated 02.12.2025 and numbered 10059539-020-68782 from the Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee of Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University. A semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers was used as the data collection tool in the study. This technique was preferred because it allows for flexible questioning opportunities to reach the depth and detail specific to the participant's experience. Expert opinion was obtained from a specialist with a doctorate in English language teaching for the interview questions. The interview form consists of seven open-ended questions and is structured around the following themes: the purposes and frequency of ChatGPT use, factors encouraging the use of the tool, key features ensuring its effectiveness, contributions to language skills, effects on critical and creative thinking, effects on self-confidence and motivation, and reflections on the efficiency and enjoyment of the learning process.

The collected data was analyzed using the content analysis method. Content analysis is an analytical strategy that enables the structuring of raw qualitative data into meaningful

patterns and themes through systematic coding and categorization processes. In the analysis process, researchers first determined the initial codes by repeatedly reading the transcript of each interview; then, they grouped these codes under higher categories with similar meanings to create six main themes. The reliability of the themes was ensured through a cross-checking procedure conducted among the researchers. In the findings section, each theme is presented supported by representative participant quotations.

3.4 Validity and Reliability of the Research

The validity and reliability of qualitative research are evaluated using credibility, transferability, and consistency criteria, instead of the internal validity and reliability concepts of quantitative research. In the present research, credibility was ensured through in-depth data collection, direct support of findings with participant quotations, and thematic consensus among researchers. For transferability, the research process, contextual conditions, and participant characteristics were described in detail. Consistency was ensured by clearly and traceably documenting the research processes and analytical decisions.

4. FINDINGS

Content analysis of data from semi-structured interviews revealed six main themes describing participants' ChatGPT experience. These themes and their corresponding codes are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Semi-structured interview results

Themes	Codes
Purposes and Frequency of Use	Frequent use Research Homework
Accessibility	Language practice Fast access Practicality
Contribution to the Language Learning Process	Clear explanation Personalized feedback Contextual learning Writing correction Vocabulary development Speaking practice Listening
Effects on Critical and Creative Thinking	Different perspective Mental laziness Creative atrophy
Motivation	Reduced fear of error Courage to communicate Neutral effect
Reflections on the Learning Experience	Enjoyable learning Time saving Convenience

Theme 1. Purposes and Frequency of Use

All participants reported using ChatGPT regularly and primarily for foreign language learning, completing assignments, research, and acquiring information. Some participants also stated that they frequently used the tool in their daily lives. When the frequency of use was examined, it was observed that the vast majority interacted with ChatGPT almost every day.

Quotes:

"I use ChatGPT regularly almost every day... to improve my English language skills..." (P3)

"I use it every chance I get, instead of asking Google..." (P5)

"Almost every day to learn foreign languages, culture, history, and psychology..." (P4)

These findings reveal that for this student group, ChatGPT has evolved from being merely a tool for specific assignments to becoming part of a comprehensive information practice. The preference, framed by one of the participants (P5) as an alternative to Google, demonstrates the depth of the tool's adoption.

Theme 2. Accessibility

Participants stated that the main reasons they use AI are speed, practicality, ease of gathering resources, and clear explanations.

Quotes:

"It gives me in seconds what would otherwise take hours of research. Thanks to the 24/7 accessibility of ChatGPT, any information can be easily accessed at any time." (P1)

"I don't have to go through multiple steps to access information." (P2)

"I don't have to search for something for minutes." (P6)

These responses reveal that accessibility is perceived not only as a technical convenience, but as a transformative element in learning process.

Theme 3. Contribution to the Language Learning Process

The majority of participants stated that they found ChatGPT effective in terms of its personalized feedback, error correction, and contextual language learning features.

Quotes:

"The most effective aspect is that it offers personalized feedback..." (P3)

"Explaining information in a clear and concise manner makes it effective." (P5)

Participants who reported improvements in reading and writing skills in particular, and those who used the voice chat feature, also highlighted gains in speaking and listening practice.

Quotes:

"It strengthened my grammar awareness by correcting errors in my texts." (P3)

"I communicate in English with the voice-over feature... my listening improves." (P5)

"Sometimes I can see different words, and it expands my vocabulary." (P7)

The finding of incidental word acquisition reported by P7 is particularly noteworthy as lexical repertoire expands through ChatGPT interactions without any intentional word instruction. This finding is especially significant from a theoretical perspective, as lexical richness and the selection of language-appropriate expressions constitute one of the fundamental components of translation competence for translation students.

Theme 4. Effects on Critical and Creative Thinking

Participants exhibited a dichotomous picture as some reported that ChatGPT provided perspectives they had not previously considered, while others pointed to the risk of mental laziness and atrophy of creativity (P1, P5).

Quotes:

"It contributes a lot because it offers perspectives I haven't considered." (P4)

"It makes people accustomed to the easy way... it lowers my tolerance level and focus." (P1)

"I think it dulls my creative side." (P5)

This theme contains the most original and controversial findings of the research. This bipolar picture shows that the impact of ChatGPT on critical and creative thinking is not

universal or uniform; rather, it is strongly shaped by individual usage, metacognitive awareness, and pedagogical framing.

Theme 5. Motivation

The vast majority of participants stated that using ChatGPT in language practice reduced their fear of making mistakes and increased their communication confidence. However, the effect on motivation remained neutral for one participant (P1). P1's neutral assessment reveals that the motivational effect is dependent on individual differences.

Quotes:

"It reduced my fear of making mistakes... it increased my self-confidence." (P3)

"It's motivating because it's easily accessible..." (P2)

"I don't think it affected me in that regard." (P1)

Theme 6. Reflections on the Learning Experience

Most participants stated that ChatGPT makes learning fast, easy, and enjoyable.

Quotes:

"It speeds up the learning process and makes it fun." (P3)

"It makes it enjoyable because I can talk to it about anything I want." (P5)

"Homework doesn't feel overwhelming." (P6)

These findings reveal that participants interpreted their ChatGPT experience not merely as the use of a functional tool, but as an experience that changed the nature of the learning process. The fact that homework no longer felt overwhelming (P6) and learning became an enjoyable activity (P3, P5) indicates a change in the emotional layer of meaning attributed to the learning process.

Participants expressed that it allowed them to instantly correct their mistakes in writing and speaking, which minimized students' fear of making mistakes and encouraged them to interact with ChatGPT. Participants also stated that the use of ChatGPT increased the permanence of language knowledge such as writing, speaking, listening and improved vocabulary. Additionally, the ability of ChatGPT to offer customized feedback based on users' learning styles held the potential to respond to students' individual needs.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that ChatGPT is rapidly and comprehensively integrated into the daily learning practices of foreign language learners. It shows tangible contributions to language skill development, increased motivation, and improved quality of the learning experience. Furthermore, it is believed that the customized learning experiences offered by ChatGPT can provide students with a more meaningful and lasting language learning process. Results were consistent with recent literature (e.g., Çobanoğulları & Özbek, 2025; Lee & Lee, 2024; Warschauer & Xu, 2024). The findings reveal the beneficial effects of technology in foreign language education and open new horizons for future research.

The participants' positive evaluations of writing, vocabulary, and grammar development align with the findings of Allen and Mizumoto (2024), as the originality and applicability of the writing feedback offered by ChatGPT surpass the limited capacity offered by traditional peer feedback. The active cognitive interaction pattern revealed in Wang's (2024) study with Chinese EFL students is also reflected in the qualitative data obtained from the participants. For example, P7 reporting incidental vocabulary acquisition and P3 reporting increased grammatical awareness support the hypothesis that ChatGPT interaction can activate higher-level cognitive processes. Balci's (2024) systematic review finding the strongest effect on writing skills reinforces this interpretation.

When evaluating the motivation findings of the study, Zhang et al.'s (2025) flow theory perspective stands out as an important explanatory factor. ChatGPT's dynamic skill-challenge balance, provision of instant feedback, and ease of use facilitate students becoming fully task-oriented while working with ChatGPT. In traditional classroom feedback settings, students may experience emotional discomfort, shyness, or performance anxiety because they perceive immediate feedback from teachers in an evaluative and judgmental context. In contrast, immediate feedback from AI-powered systems like ChatGPT involves lower levels of social pressure, allowing students to approach the feedback process more positively and strengthening their learning motivation. The fact that the research participants reported finding ChatGPT enjoyable and motivating provides strong phenomenological evidence that this flow mechanism is also at work in the present study. On the other hand, the non-judgmental environment mechanism emphasized by Alshammari (2024) and Kohnke et al. (2023) directly coincides with participants' reporting of decreased fear of error and increased self-confidence.

The most original contribution of the study is the paradoxical dichotomous picture observed regarding critical and creative thinking. While some participants reported gaining different perspectives, others expressed concerns about mental laziness and atrophy in creativity, phenomenologically demonstrating that two contradictory subjective realities can coexist regarding the same tool. This finding aligns with Balci's (2024) compilation findings and the contrasting patterns documented in Wang's (2024) study. The significance of this bipolar picture is particularly important in the context of translation students. Since translation competence requires a critical interpretation practice that goes beyond passive transfer and engages the pragmatic and cultural dimensions of the source text, whether the use of ChatGPT weakens this critical and original production capacity over time emerges as one of the most critical questions in translation education. Zhang et al.'s (2025) finding that the deep flow experience can paradoxically lower self-efficacy perception is also thought-provoking in this context since students may begin to question their own writing abilities more critically when they encounter the high-quality texts produced by ChatGPT.

One participant's neutral motivational assessment and another's concern about creative blindness indicate that the use of ChatGPT in relation to creativity does not produce equally positive experiences for all students. These individual differences are not surprising, as the moderator findings of Lee and Lee's (2024) meta-analysis revealed that the effect size varied systematically according to student characteristics and contextual factors. As Wang's (2024) study notes, this finding in the current research suggests that the extent to which ChatGPT can be used in a way that is sensitive to individual differences depends largely on the quality of pedagogical framing and instructional guidance.

This study, using a phenomenological approach, deeply examines the experiences of translation and interpreting students using ChatGPT, revealing a unique and nuanced picture shaped around six main themes. When the findings are considered as a whole, it is seen that ChatGPT is comprehensively integrated into students' daily learning practices, making tangible contributions to the development of language skills, increased motivation, and improved quality of the learning experience. These results are consistent with systematic reviews and meta-analyses in the literature, qualitative studies, and student perception research. Perhaps the most original contribution of the research is the paradoxical bidirectional effect observed on critical and creative thinking. This finding reveals that the role of ChatGPT in foreign language learning is not merely a matter of pedagogical tools but also highlights a profound educational policy issue that needs to be discussed in terms of professional identity, intellectual independence, and long-term language competence. For the new era of AI-assisted language learning, as predicted by Warschauer and Xu (2024), to be truly transformative, it is essential to systematically build frameworks for pedagogical guidance, critical AI literacy, and ethical usage. In the future, the widespread adoption of such applications will provide unprecedented opportunities in language

learning. The effective use of these technological advancements by students will further strengthen language learning and open the doors to new learning processes.

6. LIMITATIONS

This research has some limitations. First, the study is limited to seven participants in a single department. Due to the nature of phenomenological design, the aim is to provide in-depth understanding, not generalization. Therefore, the findings cannot be directly transferred to different departments, institutions, and cultural contexts. Second, the study used only semi-structured interview data. Therefore, data sources measuring the objective effects of ChatGPT use on language performance were not included in the study. Third, the cross-sectional design of the research does not allow for monitoring the long-term effects of ChatGPT use on language skills and attitudes. These limitations raise open research questions for future studies.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the research findings, several pedagogical recommendations can be offered. For teachers, it is suggested that structured learning tasks be designed that enable the use of ChatGPT not as an answer machine, but as a cognitive scaffold and a tool for critical thinking. Through specific prompt strategies, as exemplified by Allen and Mizumoto (2024), students can be encouraged to engage consciously and critically with ChatGPT. As Hockly (2023) also emphasizes, making AI literacy education an integral part of foreign language curricula is of great importance. It is recommended that program-level ethical usage protocols be developed that determine when and how students use ChatGPT. These protocols should be designed to encourage students to use ChatGPT output as a starting point while preventing them from unquestioningly adopting AI suggestions.

Finally, it should be recalled that phenomenological research designs play a critical role in understanding the effects of AI tools on individual learning experiences. Subjective meanings (such as the enjoyment of learning, reduced fear of error, and questioning of critical thinking capacity), which are difficult to measure with quantitative methods, can only be grasped in their true depth when expressed in the participants' own voices. Therefore, this research not only provides thematic findings to the ChatGPT literature but also reveals the value of phenomenological approaches in this field at the methodological level.

Some suggestions can be offered for future research. For example, studies conducted with larger samples and mixed-methods designs may allow for stronger causal inferences regarding the effects of ChatGPT on language development. Longitudinal studies are critical for monitoring the long-term effects of ChatGPT use on language skills. Finally, mixed-methods studies aimed at more objectively measuring the effects on critical thinking and creativity can make a meaningful contribution to the limited discussion in the literature regarding the paradoxical finding presented in this research.

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