

KARADENİZ TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY * THE INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

APPLIED LINGUISTICS MASTER'S PROGRAM

**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF ONLINE EDUCATION FOR EFL
TEACHERS DURING COVID-19 PERIOD**

MASTER'S THESIS

Nur GÖKCEN

NOVEMBER - 2022

TRABZON

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Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Mustafa Naci KAYAOĞLU

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APPROVAL

Upon the submission of the dissertation, **Nur GÖKCEN** has defended the study “**Challenges and Opportunities of Online Education for EFL Teachers During Covid-19 Period**” in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics Programme at Karadeniz Technical University, and the study has been found fully adequate in scope and quality as a thesis by **unanimous / majority** vote on **01/11/2022**.

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, **Nur GÖKCEN**, hereby confirm and certify that;

- I am the sole author of this work and I have fully acknowledged and documented in my thesis all sources of ideas and words, including digital resources, which have been produced or published by another person or institution,
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- this is a true copy of the work approved by my advisor and thesis committee at Karadeniz Technical University, including final revisions required by them.
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Date 15.09.2022

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The fact that the pandemic which broke out suddenly would impact the whole world aggregately was not something that was predicted by the world. Along with the areas of health and economy, education also became one of the fields that were affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. And, when coronavirus suddenly and rapidly spread everywhere in the world, many countries were not ready for its devastating effects. Even though Türkiye was not a stranger to online education, the majority of the education stakeholders were not used to it. Primary school, middle school and high school teachers who worked within the structure of MoNE predominantly didn't know online education that much. For this reason, many researchers started to conduct studies about online education.

As an English teacher who was about to complete her master's study for the graduate programme of Applied Linguistics in Karadeniz Technical University, I studied online education, too. As an English teacher who have taught during the pandemic, I experienced advantages and disadvantages of online education and I had to create new strategies to be able to deal with the difficulties I faced during online education times. By gaining inspiration from my prior experience, in my thesis, I aimed to reveal online education experiences of EFL teachers who worked in Türkiye's state middle and high schools during Covid-19 times. I am blissed out that I could finally finish my thesis which I wish will contribute to education policies, education stakeholders and online education system. And, I sincerely want to thank everyone who supported me during my journey.

First and foremost, I am grateful to my thesis advisor Prof. Dr. Mustafa Naci KAYAOĞLU whose academic wisdom and precious personality I admire deeply. He supported me during both good times and rough times of my thesis journey by staying positive and patient. Heartily saying, he is the best advisor any thesis student would want to work with. I am always and will always be proud that I had the chance to work with him. I am also grateful to committee members Prof. Dr. Recep Şahin ARSLAN and Asst. Prof. Dr. Öznur SEMİZ for all the guidance. Their feedback contributed a lot to the completion of my study.

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ÖZET

Bu karma yöntemler araştırması Türkiye’ de devlet ortaokul ve liselerinde çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin Covid-19 sürecindeki online eğitim deneyimlerini açığa çıkartmayı amaçlamaktadır. Spesifik olarak ise, çalışmanın amacı, online eğitimin İngilizce öğretmenleri için zorluk ve fırsatlarının neler olduğunu keşfetmektir. Tüm bunların yanında, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin süreçte deneyimlediği sorunları çözmeye başvurduğu yöntemler de araştırmanın odak noktalarından biridir. Nitel yönü ağır basan bu karma yöntemler araştırmasında veriler katılımcılardan yarı-yapılandırılmış mülakat formları ve anketler ile toplanmıştır. Bulgular İngilizce öğretmenlerinin bakış açısından en büyük problemin spesifik olarak öğrencilerdeki motivasyon eksikliği olduğunu göstermiştir. Genel anlamda ise bulgular, online eğitimde İngilizce öğretmenlerinin en çok karşılaştığı sorunların teknolojiyle alakalı, derse katılımı ile alakalı ya da deneyimsizlikten kaynaklananlar olduğuna işaret etmiştir. Online eğitimin İngilizce öğretmenleri için fırsatları konusunda ise, bir çok konuda sağlanan esneklik ve teknolojiyi kullanma ile ilgili fırsatlar öne çıkmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, araştırma İngilizce öğretmenlerinin ve öğrencilerin online eğitime adapte olduğunu, süreç başında karşılaşılan problemlerin çoğunun çözüldüğünü ancak online eğitime tüm öğrencilerin katılamaması probleminin hala çözülemediğini göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Online Eğitim, Uzaktan Eğitim, Covid-19, Zorluklar ve Fırsatlar

ABSTRACT

This mixed methods study aims to reveal online experiences of EFL teachers who taught at Türkiye' s secondary or high schools during Covid-19 times. Specifically, the study aims to find out challenges and opportunities of online education period for EFL teachers. Besides, the strategies employed to overcome the challenges faced by the EFL teachers are also focused in this study. In the study which qualitative side outweighs quantitative side, data were collected from the participants through semi-structured interview forms and questionnaires. Findings showed that from EFL teachers' perspectives, the biggest challenge was specifically students' lack of motivation. In general sense, findings addressed that the most frequently encountered problems by EFL teachers were the ones regarding technology, the ones regarding students' lack of participation and the ones which stemmed from teachers' inexperience. With respect to opportunities of online education for EFL teachers, flexibility and advantages regarding technology are the primary ones. As a conclusion, findings showed that EFL teachers and students adapted to online education, most of the problems faced in the beginning times of the online education process were solved; however, the problem that each and every student cannot participate in the online classes still could not be solved.

Keywords: Online Education, Distance Education, Covid-19, Challenges and Opportunities

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EAP	: English for Academic Purposes
EBA	: Education Information Network
EFL	: English as a Foreign Language
ELL	: English Language and Literature
ERE	: Emergency Remote Education
ICT	: Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
TRT	: Turkish Radio and Television Corporation
OI	: Online Instruction

INTRODUCTION

Türkiye experienced its first Covid-19 case on March 11, 2020 and the Minister of Health shared the ugly truth with the Turkish people. One day later, Türkiye's Minister of Education announced during a live broadcast that students would have a one-week Corona holiday. In his speech, the minister also stated that students at all levels would begin receiving online education on March 23, 2020. Thus, from that day forward, the school atmosphere would be carried into the homes. These announcements made by the minister of education were the first signs of the fact that the unprecedented virus would negatively affect the educational systems; therefore, Türkiye would give its own major battle against the well-known virus also in the area of education.

The fact that there would be emergent transition from face to face education to online education immediately put a lot of question marks in so many people's minds. This new situation would affect especially students at all levels, students' parents, teachers, school administrators, other educators working in private/government schools or universities, academicians, etc. in Türkiye. Therefore, people from education environment began to get worried because they could not exactly understand how online education process will be continued and how online education would actually work.

Even though each question in the minds was important by itself, some questions were more significant when compared to the others. The situation of the elementary school first-grade students was of paramount importance as first grade students had to have their literacy skills at this level. In addition, those students who haven't got preschool education experience could have a lot of difficulties during online education. They could fall behind other students in terms of adapting to school environment and educational attainments that are gained in the first grade level. Thus, the situation was especially a matter of concern for those students' families.

The situation of the students who would take important exams was not better than the situation of first grade students. Eight grade students in middle schools would take the high school entrance exam and twelfth grade students in high schools would take the university entrance exams. The situation of those students were critical in that those kinds of exams require overpreparation by the students. Students who would take the exams needed to study in a very disciplined manner and their teachers needed to make the best efforts to provide them the achievement. However, online education was something new to both Turkish students and Turkish teachers and thus students and teachers would probably have many difficulties during online education process. Therefore, teachers and the

families were quite worried that those students would not get the success they wanted. In short, the condition of the first grade, eight grade and twelfth grade students was especially an issue of concern and many questions in the minds of the people were somehow related to the situation of those students.

Teachers especially questioned the possible time to switch back to face to face education, their readiness for these new situations and the degree to which online teaching would be effective. Even though everyone had different opinions there was one decision that almost everybody trusted. Schools had to be closed. Online education was a new education system that Turkish people had to accept in their lives whether they liked it or not.

It must be noted that Türkiye has actually an old history with distance/online education. Distance education/online education, which was a topic that was discussed in 1920s, was claimed to be able to offer advantages to people with reference to literacy during a discussion carried out in the same year (Alkan, 1987 as cited in Ruzgar, 2004: 24). In addition, 1980s were the years Türkiye has started to use distance/online education (Ruzgar, 2004).

Covid-19 pandemic has been the actual spark that enabled the nationwide active use of online education at all levels in Türkiye. When the pandemic emerged, we all found ourselves in a big chaos. Education system became upside down. During quarantine times, students had to use different kinds of technological devices such as TVs, tablets, computers and mobile phones to be able to continue their education. In addition, all the students needed internet and whole infrastructure to be able to participate in online classes. Moreover, students needed to have enough technological competence to be able to use the devices and educational platforms. As for the teachers, they had the same requirements with the students. However, there were other problematic issues for them such as camera use, feedback and evaluation, interaction and classroom management in the new education system.

In short, online education created many challenges for all the education stakeholders especially for teachers and students. Teachers and students had to adjust to the ‘new education normal’ and they had to develop different kinds of strategies during Covid-19 times to be able to cope with the problems of online education.

CHAPTER ONE

1. FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

1.1. Statement of the Problem

In Türkiye, during the Covid-19 pandemic period, to a large extent online education took the place of face to face education. Despite the fact that during the period Türkiye has tried hybrid education at certain levels by opening schools from time to time, the education system in Türkiye during Covid-19 times so far has been mainly dependent on distance education. Nevertheless, in many aspects, distance education and face to face education are quite different from each other.

Face-to-face education takes place in schools, in which students and teachers are able to interact vividly without any barriers. Students come to the schools, sit on their desks and participate in the classes during lessons. Then, they spend their break times by socializing with each other. Additionally, teachers and students become close by sharing their ideas, feelings and both good and bad moments at schools. Face-to-face education provides teachers with many benefits. One example is that teachers can bring many teaching materials to the classroom environment and they can use any teaching technique. Besides, teachers can ask students to work in pairs or groups and it is easy for teachers to observe the pair or group works. As a result, it can be said that face to face to face education makes teaching easier for teachers.

As for distance education in Türkiye, it is the new education model which is administered through the instruments of computers, mobile phones, tablets or televisions. Therefore, students and teachers have to use these devices during distance education process. In Türkiye, distance education is mainly actualized through the medium of online classes or the EBA TV Course Channel. For that reason, students use tablets, mobile phones or computers to be able to gain access to online classes and use televisions to be able to follow the lessons. In the course of online courses, students sit in front of the televisions or computers in an effort to listen to the teachers. Teachers and students are involved in an interaction at a distance. Hence, it can be said that while in face to face education technology is only an instrument, in distance education technology is the basis which creates the atmosphere that puts together all the education resources such as teachers, students, school administrations, parents, course materials, etc. With its all-specific features and form, distance education has its advantages and disadvantages, as well.

Therefore, it is thought that teachers in Türkiye are thought to have experienced advantages and disadvantages of online instruction which is the new education normal during Covid-19 pandemic period.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The study aims to develop a greater understanding of EFL Teachers' perspectives concerning challenges and opportunities of online instruction during Covid-19 period.

The Main Research Question

What are the challenges and opportunities of online education for EFL Teachers during Covid-19 Era?

The Minor Research Questions

- What are the perceived challenges of online education for EFL teachers?
- What strategies do EFL teachers use to handle the perceived challenges of online education?
- What are EFL teachers' beliefs about opportunities of online education process?

1.3. Significance of the Study

When the pandemic started to lead the education system and switched it to online, researchers' radar had to turn to it, too. As a result, the research problem was created in my mind. As a researcher, after reviewing the literature, I noticed that in Türkiye context, there was a big research gap concerning EFL Teachers' online education experiences. Additionally, I saw that studies conducted in other countries were intensely at university level. And, least of them was at pre-school level. Therefore, this study will contribute to the literature a lot in that the study has the quality of comprising transition period, emergency remote education period and post-covid period online education experiences of middle school and high school EFL teachers in a very detailed way and thus reveals Türkiye's online education experiences. Consequently, I can claim that students, parents, teachers, school administrators but most importantly policy makers not only in Türkiye but also in the world can benefit from my study. Hence, it can contribute to education environment.

Researcher's Role in a Qualitative Study

Patton (1999: 1198) points out that researcher must be described in the qualitative studies "because the researcher is the instrument in qualitative inquiry". Patton also adds that researcher does

not come to the study field alone, but comes with his or her past experiences, education background and perspective. In addition, what the researcher brings to the field includes but not limited to these. The personal network of the researcher is included, as well. Giving information about the researcher must be made a rule and by doing so audience can recognize the information that may have any impact on the results. It is also remarked that even background information such as gender, age, race, ethnicity can have any impact on the study.

As this study has been approached and conducted with qualitative lens, study must involve information about researcher's personal and professional life, too. I am a woman who is at the age of 29 and at the same time I am an English teacher who works at a state high school in Türkiye with 7 years of teaching experience. I have taught at state middle school level for six years in the past. Therefore, I can say that I am in this study with my teacher identity, as well. It can be thought that there might have been some potential biases that were brought to the process by me. However, I want to emphasize that although this point might be thought as detrimental to my study; on the contrary, my experiences has been a golden opportunity for me to be able to get the best results from my study. I had the knowledge about teaching English during Covid-19 times and therefore I knew through which methods and with which questions I could get the significant data. Moreover, I also had the knowledge about interpreting the data that I collected. There were some measures taken to remove researcher biases, as well. I determined the steps to take in the study and analysed the study results by using both qualitative and quantitative data. In addition, I checked the items and questions and then did piloting to be able to see if there were any leading questions in my instruments.

Johnson et al. (2020: 139) express that researchers generally find the research question by real-life observations, experiences or events that cause a confusing problem. I wrote my research question in the context of novel coronavirus pandemic because I thought at that time research related to online education would be of great importance for the literature. I can say that context had direct effect on my study. I aimed to investigate the challenges and opportunities of online education during Covid-19 period from EFL teachers' perceptions. I wanted to examine two different groups which are public secondary and public high schools by taking into account my past teaching experiences. I didn't choose elementary and pre-school groups because I didn't have pre-school and elementary school teaching experiences. In addition, it would also not be convenient to work with instructor groups, too because it could be hard to find participants for me by taking into account the place I live. I started to collect the data on September 9, 2021, which is after one and a half year later after pandemic. Majority of the participants were either from my close circle or from my close friends' friends circles.

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Coronavirus Pandemic

The word pandemic is defined as “an outbreak of a disease that occurs over a wide geographic area (such as multiple countries or continents) and typically affects a significant proportion of the population” (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2022). In China, a person was infected with coronavirus in 2019 and the virus is believed to spread to other countries in a very short time (Zu et al., 2020). In three months’ period, the number of the countries that have coronavirus cases were more than two hundred (Santi et al., 2020: 158).

As soon as Covid-19 was announced to be an epidemic, social distancing was put into practice in numerous spaces as a precaution (Ferri et al., 2020: 1). “Travel bans” along with social distancing were the first precautions that nearly each country in the world adopted (Özer, 2020: 1125) and later on countries launched lockdowns. “Blockade of cities” and “strict medical system precautions” were other attempts adopted by the governments to prevent the spread of the virus among people, too (Tang et al., 2020: 1). Countries where the covid cases were observed also closed the schools to prevent the rapid spread of the virus (Santi et al., 2020: 158; Tosun et al., 2021: 360; Ferri et al., 2020: 1; Oyedotun, 2020: 1). In short, as soon as the pandemic occurs, countries took some steps to stop the spread of the virus (Taufik & Effendy, 2022: 44; Hashemi, 2021: 2).

The world has had hard times due to the pandemic as it caused wide range of obligatory transformances in many sectors across the globe (Oyedotun, 2020: 1). The transformation was such rapid and surpassing that all areas of social life have been touched and influenced by this situation (Arday, 2022: 365).

Transformation happened in Türkiye in a very short time, too. For the first time in Türkiye, someone came down with the novel coronavirus and the situation was followed by many measures taken such as ceasing education at all levels, travel and transportation bans, temporary quarantines, temporary café, bar and nightclub closures, intermittence to praying in a mosque, delaying the treatments for some health problems, pausing the service of barbers, hairdresser’s and beauty center’s, etc. (Göncüoğlu, 2020: 325).

During the pandemic, the use of internet in our daily lives became the biggest must since we could do our day-to-day business which is related to shopping, banking or health issues (Tosun et al., 2021: 360).

Within a short time following the pandemic, UNESCO announced a range of digital resources that can be used by education stakeholders for the continuation of their learning during the time when schools were closed (<https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/solutions>). Students were advised to utilize online platforms such as Google Classroom, Google Meet, Skype and Zoom during online education period (Ramadani & Xhaferi, 2020). In a number of countries, either the use of online education was encouraged or legislated by countries' education ministries (Ferri et al., 2020: 1).

To be able to provide continuance of education, transition to online education was inevitable (Sahu, 2020; Erkut, 2020 as cited in Demir & Sönmez, 2021: 1).

Not only the sectors of travel, business and economy were paralyzed but also education sector was unprecedentedly affected (Ghanbari & Nowroozi, 2022: 605). In the last one hundred years, no other factor has affected the education systems of the countries in the world as coronavirus did (Gherheş et al., 2021: 1). In the course of lockdown period of Covid-19, there has been worldwide destruction of education systems at all levels (Mishra et al., 2020). Educational institutions were closed across the world (Mukhtar et al., 2020; Aytaç, 2021: 405). A lot of states shut down “schools, colleges and universities” (Tsegay et al., 2022: 1).

Edelhauser & Lupu-Dima (2021: 1) state one year later after the pandemic that according to recent data nearly a hundred per cent of the education ministries in the world adopted online education which involve radio, television or internet.

A great number of countries imposed nation-wide school closures in order to protect health of their community from the virus and almost all the individuals' education life had their share of this situation (Ferri et al., 2020: 1). The fact that quarantine period can have bad effects on children in the long run “because online education can not entirely replace all educational activities with the same efficacy” is researchers' concern (Treve, 2021: 212). It has been stated that online education has been used in Australia and Finland in a widespread manner at all levels (Kruszewska et al., 2020). However, it has not been a common practice in Türkiye till coronavirus pandemic. The epidemic had an effect on nearly 2 billion students and especially the “vulnerable” students (UNESCO, 2022).

Online education was initiated at the time when there was no good example that could be followed. The sudden shift posed many problems for both teachers and students. However, the

“nature” of the shift was so uncommon that validity of the former research is thought to have been negatively affected (Ghanbari & Nowroozi, 2022: 605).

2.2. Online Education

Appana (2008 as cited in Santi et al. 2020: 159) describes distance education as “a formal learning activity conducted when students and teachers are separated by (geographical or temporal) distance and supported by communication technologies (television, computers, email and mail) – on-line learning falling under this broader framework”.

Online learning is described as “a form of distance education, a process that traditionally included courses taught through the mail, by DVD, or via telephone or TV-any form of learning that doesn't involve the traditional classroom setting in which students and instructor must be in the same place at the same time” and called as e-learning, that is to say, electronic learning, as well (Ko & Rossen, 2010: 3 as cited in Kayaoğlu & Akbaş, 2016: 213).

According to Clark and Mayer (2016: 8 as cited in Dhillon & Murray, 2021: 1), e-learning is “instruction delivered on a digital device (e.g., a desktop/laptop computer, tablet, smart phone) that is intended to support learning”.

Even though some researchers accept that online learning and distance education refer to the same thing (Zhou et al., 2020: 502), some others think they are two different things with small differences (Rhim & Han, 2020: 176; GuriRosenbilt, 2005; Moore et al., 2011 as cited in Bakan Kalaycıoğlu, 2022: 33).

Researchers have used these different concepts interchangeably as substitutes for online education (Singh & Thurman, 2021; Bakan Kalaycıoğlu et al., 2022; Moore et al., 2011). Nonetheless, online education was selected as the main concept to be used in this thesis. For that reason, this term is predominantly used in the thesis, the questionnaire, and the interview used to collect the data. The term distance education was also preferred on occasion in some places in this thesis because distance education is the English equivalent of the Turkish term “uzaktan eğitim” which is in Türkiye the most frequently used one by people among all the other concepts during the pandemic. And, in some other places, other terms such as online learning or remote education, etc. were used interchangeably and they referred to online education.

In the valuable literature review research carried out by Singh & Thurman (2019), the researchers analysed the concept of online learning by collecting 46 definitions from 37 journals. They collected definitions given to online learning in the last 30 years. Data analysis results showed that the terms that were used to define online learning were online learning, e-learning, blended-

learning, online education, online course, distance education, distance learning, web-based learning, computer-assisted instruction, web-based training, web based education, web based instruction, computer-based training, web-enhanced learning, resource based-learning, e-tutoring, computer-based learning, distributed learning and computer assisted learning. During the content analysis, it was realized that the definitions generally included the use of technology.

In the research mentioned above, the scholars utilized technology term in their descriptions of online learning in deferent ways that are stated below (Singh & Thurman, 2019: 295):

- Learning organized or delivered through web-based or internet based technologies
- Use of the internet to enhance interaction
- Use of the internet to enhance the learning environment
- Use of information and communication technologies
- Technology-based learning
- Audio/video CD-ROM, pre-2000 era

The most important research finding was that previous scholars had misused or overused the term “online learning” as an umbrella term when they were referring to online education. Another important result was that the previous definitions of the concept online learning did not actually clarify the concept. Therefore, the researchers contributed to the literature by proposing their own definitions (Singh & Thurman, 2019: 301, 302).

In this study the main term was selected as online education by considering the fact that most of the definitions of online learning in the previous literature had actually referred to online education as it was mentioned in the previous paragraph. Online education is defined as “education being delivered in an online environment through the use of the internet for teaching and learning” (Sing & Thurman, 2019: 302). Furthermore; “online learning and online teaching are sub-sets of online education...” (Sing & Thurman, 2019: 303).

Concepts of e-learning (Clark & Mayer, 2016; Singh, & Thurman, 2019), online learning, distance education (Singh & Thurman, 2019; Appana as cited in Santi, 2020: 159), online education, and remote education were defined by different people in different ways.

2.3. Educational Changes in Türkiye during Coronavirus Pandemic

During the pandemic, Ministry of National Education (MoNE) cooperated with Ministry of Health and Scientific Council. By taking into consideration Scientific Council’s advice and also considering health of almost 18 million students and 1 million teachers, MoNE found it appropriate to keep schools closed almost till May 2020 (Özer, 2020: 1126).

When the schools were closed, the use of “alternative platforms” became an important issue for education. Distance education system was the backbone to education during the pandemic. EBA and TRT were the platforms which sustained education. Nevertheless, EBA was the most important one. It was created by MoNE. EBA has many education materials at different levels –preschool, primary school, middle and high school - which can be used by teachers, students and other stakeholders. EBA includes a variety of learning materials such as videos, documents, e-books, tests, activities, and cartoons. Students and teachers can be very active on this platform. Students can do the tasks their teachers send them in this platform and therefore they can learn from their mistakes by seeing their results and studying the necessary material. (Özer, 2020: 1126)

In the early stages of the pandemic, students were able to follow both the EBA portal and watch course videos from TRT at the same time (Özer, 2020: 1126).

Table 1: Timeline of The Course of the Covid-19 Pandemic in Türkiye

Date	Case	Source
March 11th, 2020	The first case of coronavirus was seen in Türkiye.	(TRT News, 2020a)
March 16, 2020	One week of primary and secondary education and three weeks of university holidays have started. Then this holiday was extended.	(Anadolu Agency, 2020)
April 3, 2020	Lockdown is declared for people under the age of 20.	(T.R. Ministry of Interior, 2020a).
April 9, 2020	Distance education in service training program for teachers has started.	(Ministry of National Education, [MNE] 2020a)
May 4, 2020	Some freedoms have been imposed on the lockdown for citizens under the age of 20.	(TRT News, 2020b).
May 29, 2020	It was announced that private preschool institutions could be opened as of June 1, 2020.	(MNE, 2020b)
June 1, 2020	It has been announced that private schools could start face-to-face compensation training from 15 August 2020.	(MNE, 2020c)
June 2, 2020	It has been decided that public preschool institutions can remain open until June 19, 2020.	(MNE, 2020d)
June 18, 2020	A partial lockdown was imposed during the LGS sessions on June 20, 2020 and the YKS sessions on June 27-28, 2020.	(T.R. Ministry of Interior, 2020b).
July 3, 2020	It was decided that the new academic year would start on August 31, 2021, with distance education, and that schools would be opened gradually, first at the preschool and first grade level and then at other levels.	(TRT News, 2020c).

Tablo 1: (Contunie)

Date	Case	Source
November 18, 2020	Lockdown for under-20s have been imposed with certain freedoms	(T.R. Ministry of Interior, 2020c)
August 15, 2021	It was announced by the Higher Education Council that preparations were made for universities to start face-to-face education in the 2021- 2022 academic year.	(Higher Education Council, 2021).
August 19, 2021	The Minister of National Education announced the start of face-to-face training at all levels on 6 September 2021.	(MNE, 2021a)
September 5, 2021	It was announced that the students in the class, which had two cases in ten days, would be considered contacted and that class would pass to distance education during the quarantine process.	MNE, 2021b

Source: Karaaslan, 2021: 272-273

2.4. Related Literature

With the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, there is an increasing number of studies which focus on the topic of “online education/remote education” in the world. There are studies which investigate the challenges and/or opportunities of online teaching for higher education teachers (Perrotta&Bohan, 2020; Almazova et al., 2020; Hakim, 2020; Hashemi, 2021; Sonnenberg, 2021; Demir&Sönmez, 2021; Hamilton, 2014; Tsegay et al., 2022), for high school teachers (Ramadani & Xhaferi, 2020; Whitehead, 2022), for K-12 school teachers (Lemay et al., 2021; Bazelais, 2021; Tosun et al., 2021), for secondary school teachers (Smith, 2022), for primary school teachers (Lu & Han, 2022), and finally for pre-school teachers (Kruszewska et al., 2020) during Covid-19 period. Thus, it is clear that most of the studies conducted so far have focused on university instructors’ perception of challenges and opportunities of online education period. However, the number of studies which investigates high school and middle school EFL teachers’ online education experiences has been limited.

In their study, Sundeep and Neil (2021) investigated EAP (English for Academic Purposes) teachers’ viewpoints on e-learning technology. Besides, their study investigated how the EAP teachers become an expert about e-learning technology and how EAP teachers transfer the acquired knowledge about e-learning technology to their own teaching. Researchers utilized a convergent parallel mixed method approach. Data were collected through a survey and an interview. The numbers of the participants who contributed to the research through interview and questionnaire respectively were fifty-five and four. The results of the study indicated that from the viewpoints of the ESP (English for Specific Purposes) teachers, using technological tools was especially effective since it can encourage “student engagement” and “learner autonomy”. Nonetheless; the study

revealed that most of the EAP teachers who completed the survey did not use most of the given teaching tools particularly because of the reasons of not having enough “training” about e-learning tools, not believing in themselves and “practical” and “technical challenges” accompanied by these tools. The results of the study also showed that EAP teachers certainly want to professionally develop themselves about e-learning tools if they are given the chance to do so.

In another study conducted by Borkar and Nandula (2020), opportunities, strengths, weaknesses and threats of online education were examined through a swot analysis. In the study, 133 teachers completed an online survey questionnaire which was the source to prepare the swot analysis. Then, 3 professionals in the field of education interpreted the swot analysis and shared their ideas as to how teachers can survive the hardships of teaching online. “Determination to continue teaching”, “work from home”, “student response to online sessions”, “ease of evaluation”, “increasing student interactions” and “wider reach” were found as strengths of teachers’ online experience while “ineffectiveness of conducting practicals online”, “online distractions”, “students’ connection with teachers”, “lack of technical support” and “interpersonal skills” were shown as the weaknesses of teachers’ online teaching experience. It was also seen that “creating the need for training”, “managing larger classes”, “blended learning” and “market to create MOOC” were opportunities whereas “stress of change”, “planning and preparation time” and “technical issues faced while conducting online sessions” were threats of online education experience. At the end of the study, the researchers highlighted the importance of teacher’s professional development through training, increased online education “security and privacy” and updated “curriculum” related to online education system.

Lemay, Doleck & Bazalais (2021) investigated how Nepalese teachers “perceive” the shift from face to face teaching to online teaching. 68 teachers working in an “English K-12 school” completed an online survey form in May 2020. The study was a cross-sectional study. The results suggested that participants who disapproved “online teaching” were only a small number of respondents. Data gained through survey indicated that “during the transition time” teachers had more teaching motivation. However, the researchers concluded that “transition to online teaching” had difficulties, too. The fact that teachers are required to make a huge effort in regard to becoming an expert about “new technologies” and adjusting their “lessons and materials” to virtual learning environment was demonstrated as one of the biggest difficulties by the researchers.

In their qualitative study conducted in Macedonia, Ramadani & Xhaferi (2020) aimed to address 6 teachers’ “online teaching experience” with Zoom communication platform. EFL teachers in the study were high school teachers most of whom did not have much digital competence. Interview questions were given to the teachers all of whom used Zoom. Results showed that most of the teachers think face to face teaching is more “effective” and online teaching does not compare with face to face teaching. According to some teachers, the fact that visual environment can create

“cheating” occasions for students was pointed as the difficulty of online teaching. Teachers also think that the opportunity that technology provides to the students such as rapid access through the use of “different methods and tools” brings more success to “online teaching” sessions. Researchers come to the conclusion that teachers need to be trained in order to use Zoom well. They also recommend that required digital sources should be made available for the use of teachers by the “school management” during the course of the Covid-19 times. Finally, the importance of teacher-student cooperation is highlighted when it is considered that both teacher and student motivation are interrelated.

In another study by Hamilton (2014), ten full-time faculty instructors’ online teaching experiences, their “adaptation” to the implementation of online education and the ways instructors overcame hardships of online education were investigated. The location that the research was carried out was Midwest Community College. Participants who were chosen by way of purposeful criterion sampling had both face to face and online teaching experiences. Semi-structured open-ended interviews were the primary data collection instruments. One of the biggest challenges faculty members faced while teaching online was “interaction”. “Distance” was the barrier to “interaction” problems. Faculty members utilized different strategies such as “exchanging e-mails”, “announcements”, “commenting on student discussion boards before and after grading”, “being present in an online classroom” and “encouraging students with getting to know you activities” to strengthen the student-teacher bond. Participants were of the idea that no matter how increased the level of interaction gets, it is still “negative” and “insincere”. Data showed that another challenge faculty members faced during online teaching was “student behaviours”. Students’ not being ready for online classes and their participation problems were the most prominent challenging student behaviours. Faculty members used different strategies such as “e-mailing students”, “keeping them up to date”, “being available”, “maintaining consistent due dates,”, “providing clear instructions” and “anticipating possible student questions by creating a detailed syllabus” to overcome given class participation problems. According to the study, the degree to which faculty members are satisfied with themselves and their teaching is heavily influenced by the success of their students. Some of the strategies employed by the faculty members to increase student success included getting feedback from their students about their teaching and improving their “technical skills” and course materials.

Perrotta & Bohan (2020) studied faculty members’ online teaching experience by following a different kind of (reflective study) methodology. Results showed that instructors evaluated their teaching “experiences” as “positive” especially in terms of “professional development and “faculty support for designing and teaching online content”. The faculty members demonstrated the difficulties of online teaching as “feelings of isolation from students and colleagues”, “inconsistent teaching evaluations”, and “varying degrees of academic freedom and curriculum control”.

Tsegay, Ashraf, Perveen, & Zegergish (2022) conducted a study which examines “experiences of Chinese university teachers” amid pandemic. Challenges and opportunities that were experienced by the teachers during the pandemic were also investigated. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews from thirteen teachers whom researchers chose by random sampling. Results indicated that participants predominantly did not have necessary “ICT and pedagogical training” which is essential for “online teaching and learning”. Nonetheless, “flexibility” was shown as one of the opportunities of teaching online. Findings also showed that most of the participants’ “perception of online learning” shifted in a positive direction in later stages of the pandemic.

Another study, conducted by Hakim (2020) at the English Language Institute of King Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia, aims to investigate the challenges and opportunities encountered by teachers (EFL teachers) during “techno-led online classes”. There were fifty instructors who all completed their Master's degrees in English Language Teaching. The researcher chose Exploratory Sequential Mixed Method Design for the study and collected the data through a questionnaire and an interview. Findings showed that “the inability to have access to the modern equipment”, “interrupted or weak internet connection” and “learners’ low motivation level and attention deficit” were shown as the most encountered challenges of “techno-led online classes”. Data indicated that teachers’ having the opportunity to “access” many technological “applications” and “techniques” were shown as the opportunity of “techno- led online classes”.

Tosun et al. (2021) conducted a study investigating difficulties K-12 teachers faced during the Covid-19 crisis. Researchers collected the data between March and June 2020. A questionnaire form prepared by the researchers’ themselves was given to 1071 teachers. Results indicated that “lack of internet/device access by students” and “lack of experience by teachers in distance education” were the biggest challenges from the perspective of K-12 teachers. It was also found that teachers encountered “issues such as internet and infrastructure inadequacies in rural areas”, “low participation rates among students in online courses”, “indifference among parents”, and “failure by teachers to participate adequately in the system” as other difficulties.

Another study was conducted by Aytaç (2021) in Türkiye and the study aimed to present the difficulties teachers encountered during the Covid-19 period as well as teachers’ viewpoints regarding the pandemic period. The researcher followed “phenomenology pattern”. 80 participants were public and private school teachers working in “different provinces” of Türkiye during the “2019-2020 academic year.” The results indicated that EBA/educational portal is of prime importance considering the fact that it facilitated continuousness in education and also transfer of educational attainments. However, “content”, “presentation” and “connection” were demonstrated as negative sides of EBA TV/educational portal. Results showed that “students’ technical and hardware problems related to the internet connection”, “the inability of students to maintain their motivation to learn”, “the inability of parents to create a learning environment” and “the lack of their

support at home for their children” were the issues teachers frequently encountered. The fact that Covid-19 pandemic period affected students’ psychology in a negative manner was what the crowd thought. Moreover, findings also showed that teachers were of the opinion that their fellow workers were not good at using technology due to their lack of technological competence and their fellow workers’ “motivation” to utilize “distance education technologies” were not high.

In a different study, Civelek, Toplu & Uzun (2021) not only focused on teachers’ perceptions of online instruction (OI), but also focused on the effect of “training” on their perception of online instruction (OI), the challenges teachers faced and “strategies” they used during online instruction in order to increase success in online education. 70 EFL teachers participated in the study. Data collection instruments were semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire. The results showed that online education was not favoured by Turkish EFL teachers who lived through online education period of Covid-19 pandemic. The findings of the research also showed that teachers felt inadequate about online teaching during online instruction period because of their lack of “adequate knowledge” and “necessary skills”. Researchers finally recommend that training about “online instruction” is necessary for both in-service and pre-service teachers.

Demir & Sönmez (2021) investigated faculty EFL teachers’ viewpoints about online teaching and their online teaching “experiences” amid the pandemic. Participants chosen via random sampling method were 12 state and 6 private university instructors. Participants were asked to fill out an open-ended interview form which was designed by the researchers. Results of the study revealed that instructors’ attitude towards “distance teaching environment” was more negative than “face-to-face environment” despite the fact that they mostly consider themselves qualified about technology use. The study also showed that online teaching was evaluated in a negative manner by the participants who consider online teaching as “boring” and “an awkward way of teaching”. Moreover, the study showed that EFL instructors did not have the idea that online teaching was usable because “face to face interaction”, “higher learner engagement” and “motivation” were all essential for “teaching and learning foreign languages”.

Unlike others, Sonnenberg (2021) focused on “emotional challenges” experienced by instructors while teaching online during the pandemic. The data collection instruments of the qualitative study were interviews. Zoom platform was used in order to have an interview with the instructors. Study results showed that a virtual teaching environment enables people to have an “emotional connection”, too. Nevertheless, “lack of spontaneity”, “lack of nonverbal signals” and “the inability to read the classroom to determine students’ comprehension of material” were among the challenges instructors experienced during online teaching. Results also indicated that participants used different strategies in order to maintain the emotional bond with the students. “Revealing themselves through sharing information about their personal lives”, “maintaining consistent contact with students by checking in”, “asking questions”, “affirming when they share personal stories” and

“taking advantage of applications such as Zoom and voiceover capacity in PowerPoint” were some of the strategies used by the instructors to maintain emotional connection. Participants in the study expressed that they were happy to have extra “time” to deal with their students’ “personal concerns”. Instructors also stated that “not being in view of the entire class when engaging with the students” was also one of the emotional benefits of teaching online.

In his convergent mixed-methods study, Smith (2022) aimed to explore secondary school teachers’ perceptions of online learning, in Utah, USA. The study also explored challenges teachers faced during online lessons and strategies which are used by them in order to teach online lessons in a more “successful” way. Data were collected from the participants through a survey revised by the researcher. It was seen that only 44 teachers out of 51 participants who started to respond to the survey questions could complete the survey. “Flexibility for students”, “accessibility for students”, “aids student learning” were major themes of opportunities of online learning. “Distractions”, “lack of social interaction”, inequality problems which are deepened by online education, “lack of accountability”, “teacher interaction”, “support from home”, the problem of learning on one’s own, some students’ lack of required “success skills”, “district needs and goals for online learning”, students’ lacking enough “explanation” as compared with face to face education and “adapting teacher expectations for different learning levels online” were challenges of online learning.

Similarly, Ghanbari & Nowroozi (2022) also aimed to explore the difficulties teachers encountered and the ways teachers dealt with those situations during pandemic period. The study was a case study which was carried out in Persian Gulf University’s ELL department in Iran. There were two participants who were experienced university instructors. One of the female instructors had an M.A. degree in English Literature while the other had a Ph.D. degree in ELT. Purposive sampling technique was used by the researchers to select the participants. Data were collected through interviews which lasted 750 minutes. Interviewing process was finished when the sixth session was completed. Some of the interview sessions were the ones in which both participants were included. Interviews lasted for 12 weeks. Instructors also kept diaries to explain the transition period in education during Covid-19 pandemic. Researchers started data collection in February 2020 and they finished it in June 2020. “Lack of IT skills”, “negative attitudes to technology in education”, “limited online competence”, “security for online exams”, “privacy and protection”, “academic dishonesty”, “lack of appropriate electronic devices” and “poor infrastructure for online teaching” were some of the challenges the instructors faced. In addition to technological challenges, there were also pedagogical challenges. Researchers determined subthemes as “features of online education” and pedagogical demands of online education”. Teachers’ reports also showed that teachers were stressful and their “mental health” was affected by the pandemic. Administrative challenges were “lack of organization”, “no training for the staff” and “insufficient financial support”. There were strategies by the instructors to overcome technical problems. WhatsApp was used by the instructors when technical problems occurred. In order to solve pedagogical problems, teachers adopted “getting

familiar with the online environment” and “adopting new roles” strategies. Teachers reported that they searched for the problems other teachers faced and the ways they solved them. However, teachers also mentioned opportunities of online education, as well. Opportunities were “flexibility”, “availability of wide range of content for different audiences in different locations” and also “opportunities to adopt innovative pedagogical approaches”.

Hangişi (2022) conducted a research which aims to explore the challenges EFL teachers encountered in the earlier stages of the pandemic and strategies these teachers used to reduce the challenges. There were 17 participants who did not have any prior “online teaching experiences”. There were participants who worked in primary, secondary and high schools. There were both state school teachers and private school teachers as participants in the study. Participants were chosen by using purposive and convenience sampling techniques. In the qualitative case study, self-observation voice records, individual interviews and a focus group discussion were the instruments researchers used to collect data from the participants. Findings of the study revealed that challenges teachers encountered were “lack of technology literacy”, “lack of accessing the internet”, “lack of interaction”, “inequality of opportunities”, “short lesson times”, “lack of sufficient assessments”, “lack of internet connection”, “lack of communication”, “having distracting objects around students”, “lack of devices”, “giving no response”, “students’ background noises”, “lack of resources”, “power cut down, being insufficient of time management”, “less or no participation”, “lack of motivation”, “late attending”, “leaving the online sessions without permissions”, “non-class member attendance”, “sound problems”, “problems on EBA”, “behavioural disorders”, “irrelevant speech”, “being away from the keyboard”, “sudden changes of timetable” and “lack of eye contact” while teaching online. The results of the study showed that among all others, students’ lack of participation in classes was the most common challenge teachers encountered during ERE. Results also indicated that there were different ways participants dealt with the challenges. “Forcing the students to attend the sessions and well-planned courses”, “delaying the session”, “adding extra minutes”, “creating real conversations” and “calling parents” were some of the strategies. Participants’ “reminding the time”, “using web 2.0 tools”, “changing the timetable” and “starting lecture later” were the strategies to reduce participation problems. Participants’ use of WhatsApp or BIP was the strategy adopted to reduce interaction problems. Student “rewarding” was the strategy which was used to increase student motivation. “Making extra courses” was another strategy used by the EFL teachers during ERE. The strategy teachers used to reduce classroom management problems was one-on-one interviews. Teachers used strategies of “repeating sounds”, “changing the device” and “training on technology” to overcome technical problems. Teachers used “donating devices”, “encouraging the students to use EBA support points”, “and going to school” strategies to cope with the problems which are related to economical situations. Moreover, teachers’ reports showed that “delaying the session” and “integrating background objects into the session” were teachers’ way of coping with “contextual-based challenges”.

Table 2: Summary of the Reviewed Literature

Researcher/ Researchers	Research Topic	Research Design or Method	Results
Sundeeep & Neil (2021)	EAP teachers' viewpoints on e-learning technology	Convergent parallel mixed method	Learner autonomy and student engagement were positively affected by the use of technological tools. EAP teachers prefer to use technological tools less because of the reasons of lack of prior training, lack of self-confidence and the practical and technical challenges. And, teachers are willing to develop themselves in terms of using technological tools.
Borkar & Nandula (2020)	Opportunities, strengths weaknesses and threats of online education	The swot analysis	Strengths: "Determination to continue teaching", "work from home", "student response to online sessions", "ease of evaluation", "increasing student interactions" and "wider reach". Weaknesses: "ineffectiveness of conducting practical online", "online distractions", "students' connection with teachers", "lack of technical support" and "interpersonal skills". Opportunities: "creating the need for training", "managing larger classes", "blended learning" and "market to create MOOC". Threats: "stress of change", "planning and preparation time" and "technical issues faced while conducting online sessions". At the end of the study, the researchers stressed the importance of teachers' getting training for professional development, more security and privacy during online education and updated curriculum.
Lemay, Doleck & Bazalais (2021)	How Nepalese teachers "perceive" the shift to online teaching	Cross-sectional study	Participants who disapproved "online teaching" were only a small number of respondents. "During the transition time", teachers had more teaching motivation. One of the biggest difficulty was that teachers should give huge effort in regard to becoming an expert about "new technologies" and adjusting their "lessons and materials" to virtual learning environment.
Ramadani & Xhaferi (2020)	Teachers' "online teaching experience" with Zoom platform	Qualitative approach	Difficulties: Students could cheat. Opportunities: Rapid access through the use of "different methods and tools" increases lesson success. Teachers need to be trained in order to use Zoom well. Required digital sources should be made available for the use of teachers by the "school management" during the course of Covid-19 times. Teacher-student cooperation is very important when it is considered that both teacher and student motivation are interrelated.

Table 2: (Contunie)

Researcher/ Researchers	Research Topic	Research Design or Method	Results
Hamilton (2014)	Full-time faculty instructors' online teaching experiences, their "adaptation" to the implementation of online education and the ways instructors overcame hardships of online education	Phenomenological research	Interaction was one of the biggest problems faced. "Distance" was the barrier to "interaction" issues. "Exchanging e-mails", "announcements", "commenting on student discussion boards before and after grading", "being present in an online classroom", "encouraging students with getting to know you activities" were the strategies to strengthen the student-teacher bond. Participants believed that no matter how increased the level of interaction gets, online education is still "negative" and "insincere". Another big difficulty was "student behaviours". Students' not being ready for online classes and their participation problems were the most significant difficult student behaviours. "E-mailing students", "keeping them up to date", "being available", "maintaining consistent due dates," "providing clear instructions" and "anticipating possible student questions by creating a detailed syllabus" were used strategies to overcome given class participation problems. The degree to which faculty members are satisfied with themselves and their teaching is heavily influenced by the success of their students. Student success was tried to be increased by using the strategies of getting feedback from their students about their teaching and improving their "technical skills" and course materials.
Perrotta & Bohan (2020)	Faculty members' online teaching experience	Reflexive study	Instructors' teaching "experiences" were thought by them as "positive" especially in terms of "professional development and "faculty support for designing and teaching online content". "Feelings of isolation from students and colleagues", "inconsistent teaching evaluations", and "varying degrees of academic freedom and curriculum control" were shown as the difficulties faced.
Tsegay, Ashraf, Perveen, & Zegergish (2022)	Chinese university teachers' experiences amid pandemic	Qualitative research design	Participants predominantly did not have required "ICT and pedagogical training" which were necessary for "online teaching and learning". "Flexibility" was one of the advantages of teaching online. Findings also showed that most of the participants' "perception of online learning" shifted in a positive direction as pandemic continued.
Hakim (2020)	Challenges and opportunities encountered by EFL teachers during techno-led online classes	Exploratory sequential mixed method design	The most encountered challenges of "techno-led online classes" were "the inability to have access to the modern equipment", "interrupted or weak internet connection" and "learners' low motivation level and attention deficit". Opportunities were teachers' having the opportunity to "access" many technological "applications" and "techniques".

Table 2: (Contunie)

Researcher/ Researchers	Research Topic	Research Design or Method	Results
Tosun et al. (2021)	Difficulties K-12 teachers faced during the Covid-19 crisis	Descriptive-survey model research	The biggest difficulties were “lack of internet/device access by students” and “lack of experience by teachers in distance education”. There were also problems such as “issues such as internet and infrastructure inadequacies in rural areas”, “low participation rates among students in online courses”, “indifference among parents”, and “failure by teachers to participate adequately in the system”.
Aytaç (2021)	Difficulties teachers encountered during the Covid-19 period as well as teachers’ viewpoints regarding the pandemic period	Phenomenology	EBA is of critical importance considering the fact that it facilitated continuousness in both education and in transferring educational attainments. However, “content”, “presentation” and “connection” were negative sides of EBA TV/educational portal. Teachers also faced the challenges of “students’ technical and hardware problems related to the internet connection”, “the inability of students to maintain their motivation to learn”, “the inability of parents to create a learning environment” and “the lack of their support at home for their children”. Majority thought that Covid-19 pandemic period affected students’ psychology in a negative manner. Teachers were of the opinion that their fellow workers were not good at using technology due to their lack of technological competence and also their fellow workers’ “motivation” to utilize “distance education technologies” were not high.
Civelek, Toplu & Uzun (2021)	Perceptions of OI, effect of “training” towards the perception of online instruction, the challenges teachers faced and “strategies” they used during online education	Mixed-method design	Turkish EFL teachers who lived through online education period of Covid-19 pandemic did not favour online education. Lack of “adequate knowledge” and “necessary skills” were the reasons for teachers’ feeling inadequate about online teaching. Researchers suggest that “online instruction” training is necessary for both in-service and pre-service teachers.
Demir & Sönmez (2021)	Faculty EFL teachers’ perception of online teaching and their “experiences” amid the pandemic	Qualitative research	Instructors’ attitude towards “distance teaching environment” was more negative than “face-to-face environment” despite the fact that instructors mostly think that they are qualified about technology use. Participants evaluate their experience mostly as negative by finding it “boring” and “an awkward way of teaching”. EFL instructors don’t think that online education works out because “face to face interaction”, “higher learner engagement” and “motivation” were all essential for “teaching and learning foreign languages”.

Table 2: (Contunie)

Researcher/ Researchers	Research Topic	Research Design or Method	Results
Sonnenberg (2021)	“Eemotional challenges” experienced by instructors while teaching online during the pandemic	Qualitative inquiry	Virtual teaching environment can provide “emotional connection”, too. Nonetheless, instructors had difficulties such as “lack of spontaneity”, “lack of nonverbal signals” and “the inability to read the classroom to determine students’ comprehension of material” during online education times. Different strategies were used in order to maintain the emotional bond with the students. “Revealing themselves through sharing information about their personal lives”, “maintaining consistent contact with students by checking in”, “asking questions”, “affirming when they share personal stories” and “taking advantage of applications such as Zoom and voiceover capacity in PowerPoint” were some of them. Instructors were pleased to have extra “time” to take care of their students’ “personal concerns”. “Not being in view of the entire class when engaging with the students” was one of the emotional advantages of teaching online, too.
Smith (2022)	Secondary school teachers’ perceptions of online learning in Utah, USA	Convergent mixed- methods study	Major opportunities were “flexibility for students”, “accessibility for students”, “aids to student learning”. Difficulties were “distractions”, “lack of social interaction”, inequality problems which are deepened by online education, “lack of accountability”, “teacher interaction”, “support from home”, the problem of learning on one’s own, some students’ lack of required “success skills”, “district needs and goals for online learning”, students’ lacking enough “explanation” as compared with face to face education and “adapting teacher expectations for different learning levels online”.
Ghanbari & Nowroozi (2022)	The difficulties teachers encountered and the ways teachers dealt with those situations during pandemic period	Case study	Some of the challenges were “lack of IT skills”, “negative attitudes to technology in education”, “limited online competence”, “security for online exams”, “privacy and protection”, “academic dishonesty”, “lack of appropriate electronic devices” and “poor infrastructure for online teaching”. There were also pedagogical difficulties. Teachers’ mental health was also negatively affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Among administrative challenges there were “lack of organization”, “no training for the staff” and “insufficient financial support”. WhatsApp was used to overcome some technical problems. Teachers’ “getting familiar with the online environment” and “adopting new roles” were strategies to solve pedagogical problems. Teachers searched for the difficulties other teachers encountered and the ways they solve their problems. Advantages were “flexibility”, “availability of wide range of content for different audiences in different locations” and also “opportunities to adopt innovative pedagogical approaches.

Table 2: (Contunie)

Researcher/ Researchers	Research Topic	Research Design or Method	Results
Hangişi (2022)	The challenges EFL teachers encountered in the earlier stages of pandemic and strategies they used to reduce these challenges	Qualitative case study	Challenges faced were “lack of technology literacy”, “lack of accessing the internet”, “lack of interaction”, “inequality of opportunities”, “short lesson times”, “lack of sufficient assessments”, “lack of internet connection”, “lack of communication”, “having distracting objects around students”, “lack of devices”, “giving no response”, “students’ background noises”, “lack of resources”, “power cut down, being insufficient of time management”, “less or no participation”, “lack of motivation”, “late attending”, “leaving the online sessions without permissions”, “non-class member attendance”, “sound problems”, “problems on EBA”, “behavioural disorders”, “irrelevant speech”, “being away from the keyboard”, “sudden changes of timetable” and “lack of eye contact” while teaching online. Lack of participation in classes was the most common hardship teachers faced during ERE. Results also indicated that there were different ways participants dealt with the challenges. “Forcing the students to attend the sessions and well-planned courses”, “delaying the session”, “adding extra minutes”, “creating real conversations” and “calling parents” were some of the strategies. Participants’ “reminding the time”, “using web 2.0 tools”, “changing the timetable” and “starting lecture later” were the tactics to deal with participation problems. WhatsApp or BIP use was another strategy to reduce interaction problems. To increase student motivation “rewarding” strategy was used. “Making extra courses” was another strategy used by the EFL teachers during ERE. One-on-one interviews were the tactics adopted concerning classroom management issues. To overcome technical problems strategies of “repeating sounds”, “changing the device” and “training on technology” were used. “Donating devices”, “encouraging the students to use EBA support points”, “and going to school” were the strategies to cope with the problems which are about economic conditions. Additionally, to deal with “contextual-based challenges”, “delaying the session” and “integrating background objects into the session” were used strategies.

2.5. Theoretical Framework

This study was based upon constructivism theory. The theory that was originated in the field of psychology “explains how people might acquire knowledge and learn. It therefore has direct application to education” (Bada & Olesgun, 2015). Jerome Bruner, Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky were among some of the pioneers of this approach (Liu & Chen, 2010). Liu & Chen (2010) mentioned that these founders of the study focused on two different kinds of constructivist approach which are social constructivism and cognitive constructivism; however, it is argued that there are some common grounds.

The ideas of one important scholar is really noteworthy to mention about this approach. Driscoll (as cited in Bada & Olesgun, 2015: 67) displays that constructivism learning theory works well about students’ “logical” and “conceptual growth”. The theory claims that experiences are how we know things and how we make sense of the things. Here, two terms step in: assimilation and accommodation. In assimilation, people take their new experiences and try to merge them into their previous experiences. For this reason, people consider their thinking again and therefore change their viewpoints. As for accommodation, it is people’s transferring their new shaped schemas and new experiences to their current “mental capacity”. Humans have their own thinking about the way world operates. Therefore, when there is conflict in this system, accommodation must occur.

According to Vygotsky (as cited in Liu & Chen, 2010), learners are active in learning process and while students become active during this process teachers prepare the required environment for students to be able to help their individual learning. Lev Vygotsky formed the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) first and detailed it till he died (Shabani et al., 2010). Shabani et al. (2010) mentioned Vygotsky’s definition of ZPD as:

In *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, Vygotsky defined the ZPD as “the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peer” (p. 86).

This study aims to reveal challenges and opportunities of online education for EFL Teachers during Covid-19 times. Therefore, constructivism theory can aid in interpreting teachers’ online education experiences.

CHAPTER THREE

3. METHODOLOGY

Table 3: The Methodology of the Study

Research Design	Mixed methods design
Theoretical Framework	Constructivism
The Setting	The study was conducted at a virtual setting.
The Participants	22 interview participants 104 survey participants
Sampling Methods	Purposeful sampling Snowball sampling
Data Collection Instruments	Semi-structured interview Questionnaire
Data Analysis	Quantitative Analysis (Descriptive & Inferential analysis using SPSS 16.0) Qualitative Analysis (Thematic analysis)
Piloting	Piloting for both the interview and the survey

This is a mixed methods research as it involves qualitative and quantitative traditions. And, in the article written by Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004: 17), mixed methods research is defined as “the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study”. In this study, two qualitative data collection methods were combined. Şahin & Öztürk (2019: 303) stated after their literature search that scientists who make remarkable contributions concerning evolution of mixed method approach are of the opinion that mixed method must be selected only when research question necessitated it. In our study the research question was “What are the challenges and opportunities of online education during Covid-19 period?”. Therefore, EFL teachers’ perceptions of challenges and opportunities of online education during Covid-19 period was investigated. It was considered that benefiting from different research methods by using mixed methods would enable the researcher to give solid interpretations about the topic studied by helping the researcher achieve richness in the data.

In addition, Johnson et al. (2007: 123 as cited in Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017) claim that there can be three distinctive motivations in mixed methods:

Qualitative dominant [or qualitatively driven] mixed methods research is the type of mixed research in which one relies on a qualitative, constructivist-poststructuralist-critical view of the

research process, while concurrently recognizing that the addition of quantitative data and approaches are likely to benefit most research projects. Quantitative dominant [or quantitatively driven] mixed methods research is the type of mixed research in which one relies on a quantitative, postpositivist view of the research process, while concurrently recognizing that the addition of qualitative data and approaches are likely to benefit most research projects. (p. 124)

The area around the center of the [qualitative-quantitative] continuum, *equal status*, is the home for the person that self-identifies as a mixed methods researcher. This researcher takes as his or her starting point the logic and philosophy of mixed methods research. These mixed methods researchers are likely to believe that qualitative and quantitative data and approaches will add insights as one considers most, if not all, research questions

In the present study, there were several reasons why this type of research was chosen. The first of these was triangulation. According to Green, Caracelli, and Graham (1989 as cited in Ahin & Öztürk, 2019: 303), mixed research methods have five advantages. Among them were triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation, and expansion. In general, triangulation refers to the process of ensuring the validity of data obtained from different data sets through the analysis of each set separately, which, in the end, ensures the validity of the conclusions. In accordance with Cohen & Crabtree (2006, as cited in Kisely & Kendall 2011), triangulation is another trustworthy strategy; researchers need multiple sources of information and multiple methods in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of interest.

3.1. Research Design

The convergent parallel design was adopted. The purpose of this type of design is to collect both qualitative and quantitative data at the same time and explain the data analysis results in order to gain a better understanding of the research problem. Therefore, it can be said that the data sets used in this design complement and strengthen each other, leading to a more detailed answer to the research question. (Şahin & Öztürk, 2019: 305).

In this method, quantitative and qualitative data are independently analysed and then results of them are studied to see if they overlap or conflict with each other. This type of analysis “allows data sources to be converged”. Both quantitative methods and qualitative methods are of equal amount of significance (Şahin & Öztürk, 2019: 305).

Nassaji (2020) explains the characteristics of qualitative research. In qualitative research, the aim is to “understand” and “explore” but not “explain and manipulate the variable”. It can be said that qualitative research is “naturalistic” and this type of research pays attention to “non-numerical data”. Qualitative research is process-driven. In addition, researchers pay special attention to interpreting data and highlighting the process. Interviews, field notes, diaries, observations, etc. are some data collection instruments that are used in qualitative research.

Qualitative research is defined as “the systematic collection, organization, and interpretation of textual material derived from talk or conversation. It is used in the exploration of meanings of social phenomena as experienced by individuals themselves, in their natural context” (Malterud, 2001, p. 483 as cited in Grosseohme, 2014: 109).

The qualitative aspect of this study outweighs the quantitative aspect despite being a mixed-methods study. An important determinant factor was the research question, as the purpose of this study was to explore participants’ shared experiences and to understand their perceptions of an ongoing phenomenon, which is online education during the Covid-19 period. By taking into account taxonomy of Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004: 22), this study was decided to be QUAL + quan type of mixed methods, meaning that qualitative side is emphasized. In fact, there are nine kinds of mixed methods category in taxonomy of Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004: 22) as shown below:

Figure 1: Nine Mixed Methods Categories that can be Selected Based on Paradigm Emphasis According to Johnson & Onwuegbuzie

Time Order Decision		
	<i>Concurrent</i>	<i>Sequential</i>
<i>Equal Status</i>	QUAL + QUAN	QUAL → QUAN QUAN → QUAL
<i>Dominant Status</i>	QUAL + quan QUAN + qual	QUAL → quan qual → QUAN QUAN → qual quan → QUAL

Source: Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 22

However, it is also important to state that creativity is important in mixed methods research and researchers don’t have to frame their research to any of the categories shown. On the contrary, it would be more accurate to be flexible about the process even though convergent parallel design was chosen (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

3.2. Participants & Setting

Planning sampling process is necessary. Moser & Korstjens (2018: 10) give remarkable information with respect to sampling plan. The number of “observations”, “interviews”, “focus group discussions” or “cases” which are necessary to guarantee the richness of the data is explained in the sampling plan. They also demonstrate that sampling is planned in different manners in qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research plans are not that detailed and this situation allows “variety” in participants, settings, situations, etc., which in turn leads to “achieving rich data”. Qualitative sampling plan has certain characteristics. First of all, participant selection is always intentional. Secondly, the number of participants change from one research to another and sample is not big. Thirdly, participant group is shaped in due course of the study. Finally, “conceptual requirements” rather than “representativeness” is critical while selecting participants. Consequently, it is critical to explain the reasons for selection actions in the sampling plan.

For this study, sampling was planned earlier and critical points were determined in the plan. For the present study, it was very important to reach data which can reveal the lived experiences of the chosen participant group. In this study, the group which was investigated was EFL teachers who work at public secondary schools and public high schools. In addition, the online education experiences of these teachers were investigated. Thus, it can be said that study group had to meet two significant criteria: they had to be public school teachers who worked in public high schools/secondary schools and they had to teach online during the Covid-19 times. Only the participants who had these two characteristics could give the data that could contribute to the findings. Purposeful sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique, was used. In this sampling method, selection of certain people, “settings” and “events” are essential since other resources cannot provide the necessary data. (Maxwell, 2012: 235). Furthermore, sampling was criterion based.

A total of 104 public high school/secondary school EFL teachers responded to the online survey. They had taught English online for public middle / high school students during the pandemic. Snowball sampling was used to increase the number of participants. However, the main sampling method used to select the participants was purposeful sampling. Four participants stated that they had taught online before Covid-19. Majority of those teachers were females. More than half of them were 27-30 years old. A big amount of the teachers were the ones who continue/have continued their post graduate education. They had different teaching experiences in terms of year they taught. As for the interviews, there were 22 participants. The participants in the study were also EFL teachers who had been involved with online education during the Coronavirus pandemic period. The teachers were either secondary school or high school English teachers. Participants were selected by way of purposeful sampling. The participants were mostly female. Among the participants, four were males and 18 were females. Schools where participants worked were located in different geographical

regions of Türkiye. 9 participants worked in Marmara Region, 8 participants worked in Black Sea Region, 2 participants worked in Central Anatolia Region, 2 participants worked in Eastern Anatolia Region and 1 participant worked in the South-eastern Anatolia region during the Covid-19 times. There were slight differences concerning participants' teaching experience. According to teachers' reports, 17 of them graduated from ELT departments and 5 of them graduated from ELL departments. There were some teachers who had completed postgraduate studies. When the study was conducted, three teachers were MA students and three teachers were doctoral students. Furthermore, four of the teachers had completed their MA degrees. Based on the saturation theory, the number of interviewees was determined.

It was very important to understand the meaning of the participants' online education experience and their online education perceptions. Each experience of each participant was very valuable. The objective was not searching for cause and effect relationship or comparing the groups. Yet, the objective was to reveal the shared experiences in detail. In this study, it was thought that it would be meaningful to reveal both experiences of teachers who lived in rural areas and urban cities. In addition, it was thought that more experienced teachers could have had different online education experiences than novice English teachers. Participants' living in different areas and schools and having different teaching experience was thought to contribute to richness of the data. Variation was looked for in participants' experiences. Some interview participants were project school teachers and some were village school teachers.

Participation in this study was entirely voluntary. It was made clear to all participants that their information would only be used for research purposes and that their identity would remain confidential. To increase confidentiality, participants' names were not used while saving collected data to a computer file. Each participant was attributed codes.

The study was carried out in a virtual setting. Zoom platform was chosen as the tool to create the setting. Due to the fact that Covid-19 had not yet ended, face-to-face interviews were not considered appropriate. Although phone interviews could have been conducted, considering that participants have used Zoom for almost one year, Zoom interviews were preferable. Zoom was also effective in situations where interviews lasted a long time, as it poses fewer technical risks than telephone interviews. In most cases, participants' cameras were closed during the interview at their convenience.

Table 4: Interview Participants' Demographic Information

Participant No.	Gender	Teaching Level	School Region	Experience	Graduation (BA)	Highest Graduation
#1#	F	Secondary School	Marmara	0-10 years	ELT	Doctoral student
#2#	M	Secondary School	Marmara	0-10 years	ELT	BA degree holder
#3#	F	Secondary School	Central Anatolia	0-10 years	ELT	BA degree holder
#4#	M	Secondary School	Eastern Anatolia	0-10 years	ELL	MA student
#5#	F	Secondary School	Black Sea	0-10 years	ELT	MA student
#6#	F	Secondary School	Marmara	0-10 years	ELT	BA degree holder
#7#	F	Secondary School	Central Anatolia	0-10 years	ELT	BA degree holder
#8#	F	Secondary School	South eastern Anatolia	0-10 years	ELT	BA degree holder
#9#	F	Secondary School	Marmara	0-10 years	ELT	BA degree holder
#10#	F	Secondary School	Black Sea	0-10 years	ELT	BA degree holder
#11#	F	Secondary School	Black Sea	0-10 years	ELL	MA student
#12#	M	Secondary School	Marmara	10-20 years	ELL	BA degree holder
#13#	F	Secondary School	Black Sea	0-10 years	ELT	MA degree holder
#14#	F	Secondary School	Black Sea	10-20 years	ELL	BA degree holder
#15#	M	Secondary School	Black Sea	0-10 years	ELT	BA degree holder
#16#	F	Secondary School	Marmara	0-10 years	ELT	MA degree holder
#17#	F	High School (social sciences)	Black Sea	10-20 years	ELL	Doctoral student
#18#	F	High School	Marmara	0-10 years	ELT	Doctoral student
#19#	F	High School (girls' vocational school)	Eastern Anatolia	0-10 years	ELT	BA degree holder
#20#	F	High School (culinary school)	Black Sea	0-10 years	ELT	BA degree holder
#21#	F	High School (imam hatip school)	Marmara	0-10 years	ELT	MA degree holder
#22#	F	High School/ Imam Hatip Secondary school	Marmara	0-10 years	ELT	MA degree holder

Table 5: Survey Participants' Demographic Information

		<i>n</i>	%
Age	22-26	8	7,7
	27-30	57	54,8
	31-35	15	14,4
	36-40	10	9,6
	41-45	11	10,6
	46-50	3	2,9
Gender	female	78	75,0
	male	26	25,0
Current Academic Level	Bachelor's degree holder	62	59,6
	Master's student	2	1,9
	Master's degree holder	22	21,2
	Doctoral student	3	2,9
	Ph.D. degree holder	15	14,4
Teaching Experience	0-5 years	23	22,1
	6-10 years	53	51,0
	11-15 years	9	8,7
	16-20 years	9	8,7
	More than 20 years	10	9,6
Teacher's school location (as geographical region)	Marmara	41	39,8
	Black Sea	34	33,0
	Central Anatolia	9	8,7
	Eastern Anatolia	3	2,9
	Southeastern Anatolia	9	8,7
	Aegean	6	5,8
	Mediterranean	1 (1 participant didn't answer)	1

3.3. Research Instruments

Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interview and questionnaire were used data collection instruments and both of them were prepared by the researcher. The interview questions were initially formulated by the researcher in line with the research questions. Afterwards, interview questions were discussed with my supervisor, and Ph.D. holder in the field, and interview form came to its final version. There were 15 interview questions. The study was carried out after one and a half year of online education which started out due to coronavirus. Therefore, the participants had experienced both the transition time and the later times when adaptation could have been achieved. It was significant to reveal EFL teachers' online education experiences in different times. Due to this, the questions were intended to determine how teachers perceived the time when it was shifted to online teaching, as well as how they perceived their online education experience following the emergency remote teaching. Challenges encountered during these times and strategies developed by the EFL teachers to overcome

these difficulties were also asked. Opportunities for online education period were asked, as well. One significant point was that this data collection was carried out one and a half year later after the virus spread to Türkiye. For that reason, participants might have forgotten the times of the emergency remote teaching, which was the beginning of the pandemic. For this reason, it was thought that each participant would be asked whether they remember the first times of online education.

Table 6: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1) In Türkiye, a year ago in March, schools were immediately closed due to the Covid-19 epidemic. There was a sudden shift to online/distance education. Were there any problems you faced when it was shifted to online education for the first time? 2) Well, what kind of problems did you encounter? Could you explain? 3) Türkiye has been using distance education for one year. Could you overcome the challenges of online education process as time passes? 4) (If the answer is yes) Well, then, what sort of strategies have you developed while dealing with these problems? 5) What do you think is the biggest challenge of distance education? Why? 6) What can you tell about your students' and your attitudes and habits concerning camera use during online classes? 7) Up until now, as a teacher, you have expressed the difficulties you have experienced during the distance education period. Do you believe that this period at which you have gave online lessons for one year has its advantages? 8) (If the answer is yes) What do you think have been the advantages of this period? 9) Have you made any attempts concerning professional or vocational/career development during this period? 10) (If the answer is yes) What were your attempts? 11) Have you made any attempts concerning self-growth during this period? 12) (If the answer is yes) What were your attempts? 13) What do you think Covid-19 period has made you realize as a teacher? 14) What do you think about your efficiency during online education? 15) If I say... associate online education with three adjectives... What would be your answer?
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The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was created using Google Forms. There were 7 demographical information items and 80 survey items which included dichotomous, multiple choice, Likert scale and open-ended questions. There were 104 participants involved. In fact, there were two more people who started the survey but it was seen that they had dropped it. Therefore, they were not included in the study. The questionnaire consisted of three main parts. The purpose of the first part was to gain data concerning participants' demographic information. For that reason, in first part of the survey, participants were asked to give information about their age, gender, current academic level, their teaching experience and the province that they worked. Before participants started answering the survey questions, there was one critical item that they had to give an answer, which is:

Table 7: Critical Item of the Questionnaire: “Taught School Grade”

***Please select the school grade of the students that you want to take into account while answering the survey questions. You should answer all the following survey questions thinking ONLY the student grade that you choose now. *	
<i>Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin. (Mark only one)</i>	
5 th grade	☐
6 th grade	☐
7 th grade	☐
8 th grade	☐
9 th grade	☐
10 th grade	☐
11 th grade	☐
12 th grade	☐

The participants were required to answer all the questions by taking into account only one school grade of the students. It was thought that this strategy would allow seeing the results in a consistent and reliable manner and therefore results would be interpreted with greater confidence.

The objective of the second part and third part of the questionnaire was to explore participants’ perceptions and experiences about online education. Items were prepared in such a way that participants could not only explain their experiences in the very beginning of online education period but also they could express their perceptions and experiences after one and a half years of ERT. There were 72 items in the second part and finally there were 8 questions in the third part.

Croasmun & Ostrom (2011: 19) demonstrate that likert scales are functional in social sciences and “attitude research projects”. Likert scale responses in this research ranged majorly as 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral 4= agree, 5= strongly agree.

The researcher prepared the questionnaire on her own, as previously mentioned. A total of 80 items were included in the survey. In general, the items pertain to technology, classroom management, interaction, workload, camera use, ethics, teacher psychology, teacher health, hybrid education, face-to-face education, and teachers’ professional development.

Familiarizing with the literature concerning online education provided a solid basis for developing survey items which could grab data about teachers’ online education experiences. Utmost attention was paid to avoid leading and double-barred questions. The questions were different from each other. The items were balanced because the use of items on challenges and opportunities of online education was of equal intensity. Wording was given extra importance to avoid any misunderstandings as people must have understood almost the same thing when they read an item. Some strategies were used during the preparation stage. For example, when there was a doubt about an item concerning its meaning, sometimes additional information was given in parenthesis in order

to explain what is meant in the item. Similar strategies were created during piloting, which will be later explained in the piloting section.

After items were prepared, then came the part where piloting has been done. Necessary arrangements were done and later on at the final shape of the survey document, there were 80 items.

3.4. Piloting

Bowden et al. (2002: 322) state that “pre-testing is the main chance for researchers to gauge the meaning attributed to survey questions ‘before it is too late’, i.e. before a substantial investment is made in the wrong questions or in questions where the researcher cannot be sure about what is being asked”. Hence, pre-testing involved in this study, as well. Piloting was done for both survey items and the interview questions.

First of all, survey items were checked with a Ph.D. holder in ZOOM meetings before the piloting process. During ZOOM meetings, a Ph.D. holder gave very remarkable insights concerning the survey items. There were a few meeting sessions created to make comments on the items. There were always feedback and evaluation each time researchers held a meeting. After the given feedback, wording was changed in some items, some items were shortened, some items were deleted, etc. Items were in Microsoft Word document. And, they were transferred to Google Forms. Next, surveys were sent to a sample group for the piloting purposes and participants were also requested to give feedback about the survey. Participants sent their feedback with mails. Participants’ feedback was also analysed and there occurred new changes in the survey. Then, piloting process was finalized. Interview questions were discussed, as well. Questions were found appropriate. Therefore, there was no need to change them.

3.5. Data Collection Process

The researcher applied to Karadeniz Technical University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee for ethical permission. After ethical permission was obtained, researcher started the data collection. Data collection for both methods were started at the same time. Data collection was started on September 9, 2021 and was completed on fifth of October, 2021. As a result, the study can be said to have been conducted nearly one and a half year after Covid-19 pandemic outbreak.

Data collection process for the survey was not difficult. Data collection started in September, 2021. There were very specific participant groups that were looked for. Those participants must have been teachers working at public schools as secondary or high school English teachers and they must have taught English during Covid-19 times. Hence, participants were selected by way of purposeful (specifically criterion) sampling. There were participants that the researcher knows. The online

survey link created through Google Forms was sent to the participants who were known to meet the criteria mentioned. In addition, snowball sampling technique were used, too. Therefore, the number of the participants increased and reached to 106. Participation to the research was totally voluntary. Participants were told that their privacy and confidentiality would be protected. In addition, they could discontinue the research if they want.

As for the interviewing process, it was really difficult for the researcher. It started in September, 2021, as well. Participants with the same criteria with survey were found and requested to participate in the study. As it was said during the survey, interview participants were also informed before that all the information they provide would be kept confidential and their anonymity would be protected. 22 teachers in total accepted to be interviewed over Zoom. Researchers kept transcribing the records while continuing data collection process. Moser and Korstjens (2018: 11) state that principally, it is not necessary to go on data collection when saturation is reached. They also expressed that “the most important criterion is the availability of enough in-depth data showing the patterns, categories and variety of the phenomenon under the study. Miles & Huberman (1994 as cited in Palinkas et al., 2015: 3) explained that “qualitative methods place primary emphasis on saturation (i.e., obtaining a comprehensive understanding by continuing to sample until no new substantive information is acquired)”. Each interview was on average 15 minutes long. The shortest interview lasted 7 minutes and the longest lasted for 28 minutes. Transcribing 22 participants’ audios took long time, as well. Time for the interviews were arranged according to the participants’ availability. Participants were invited to Zoom sessions via Zoom links. Before the interviews begin, the researcher tried to put the participants at ease by chitchatting with them till they felt ready. In addition, each participant was asked whether they remember what was the first times of the pandemic and ERE period was like in Türkiye. When participants said they remembered those times, the interviews were started whereas when participants said they do not remember the times in a very detailed way, the researcher informed the participants about the systematic changes, etc. Fortunately, almost all the participants said they remember ERE times. There was no technical problem during ZOOM interviews. However, later on it was realized that very seldom some words that participants said could not be heard probably because there was a weak internet connection during the interview.

3.6. Data Analysis Procedure

36.1. Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative Descriptive Analysis

Before starting quantitative data analysis, all the subscales were checked in terms of their reliability by benefiting from SPSS 16.0. It should be definitely noted that some items were reverse coded during the analysis.

Table 8: Reliability Statistics

Items Related to Challenges of Online Education		
	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
Technology-Related Challenges 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9**, 30, 41	,691	10
Interaction Challenges 18,19,20,21,22,23**,24**	,799	7
Camera-Related Challenges 31, 32**, 33, 37	,787	4
Feedback& Evaluation Related Challenges 50, 51, 53	,695	3
Ethics-Related Challenges 34, 35, 36	,709	3
Items Related to Opportunities of Online Education		
40, 42, 43, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66	,731	9
Items Related to The Comparison of Online Education & Face to Face Education		
67, 68, 69, 70**, 71	,760	5
(“**” means scored in reverse order)		

SPSS 16.0 was used to analyse data descriptively. The number of the EFL teachers who strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree and strongly agree to the items and also their percentages were displayed. In addition, mean scores and standard deviations for the survey items were indicated to describe the data.

Quantitative Inferential Analyses

Mann - Whitney Tests were used to compare the differences between two groups. This test facilitated to compare two groups in terms of their perception and experience of online education. Teachers who have highest and lowest teaching experience, female and male teachers, teachers from highest and lowest academic level and teachers who teach 8th graders and 9th graders were compared.

Oti et al., (2021) explain that Mann – Whitney Test method is a nonparametric one and there should be two independent groups as well as continuous data. They also suggest that for this test, two groups' data are united and ranked, and then, the ranks are shown respectively and each groups' sums of rank are estimated.

3.6.2. Qualitative Analyses

In this study, analysis of the data was mainly based on thematic analysis. Braun & Clarke (2006: 79) stated that “Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data.”. They also stated that there were six phases of thematic analysis. Thus, thematic analysis of this study was also completed in six phases. Familiarizing with the data was the

first step in this study. Secondly, initial codes were generated. Next, themes were searched. After that, themes were reviewed. Later on, themes were defined and named. And, finally analysis for the report was produced.



CHAPTER FOUR

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Quantitative Analysis

It is very important to note that before the participants started to answer the questionnaire items, they had been asked to consider only one school level while marking the items. During data analysis, it was seen that most of the participants chose 9th grade and 8th grade. Some participants chose 5th grade level, which is the less frequent answer given than 9th grade and 8th grade. It should also be noted that some teachers (9,6% with more than 20 years' experience) were more experienced than the others (22,1% with 0-5 years of experience). In addition, there were also differences in terms of educational backgrounds. To give an example, 14,4% had completed their doctoral education whereas 59,6% were only bachelor's degree holder.

Survey results showed that 64.4% of the teachers agreed that constant teaching in front of a computer was challenging. Reports also showed that 47.1% of the teachers, which means nearly half of them, marked that they didn't have difficulty using EBA at the very beginning of online education times. Moreover, 50% of the participants also marked that they didn't have difficulty using Zoom at the very beginning of online education period. Most of the participants were found to adapt to using EBA and Zoom much better after one and a half year and it is remarkable to note that 78.8% and 91.4% marked that they don't have difficulty using EBA and Zoom respectively. Furthermore, the results showed that 63.5% of the teachers think they don't get easily confused in an online class environment. One important result was that 66.4% of the teachers are of the opinion that any technical problem happening during an online lesson is enough to break classroom atmosphere. It is important to see that 72% of the teachers can solve technical problems on their own. More than half of the participants (57.7%) agreed that they don't enjoy getting exposed to so much technology due to online education. Furthermore, 65.4% of the teachers agreed that technological problems that arise during an online lesson reduce their teaching motivation.

Table 9: Perceived Technological Challenges

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
1.Constant teaching in front of a computer is a challenge for me.	32,7	34	31,7	33	16,3	17	13,5	14	5,8	6
2.At the very beginning of the online education period, I had difficulty in using EBA.	8,7	9	24	25	20,2	21	27,9	29	19,2	20
3.At the very beginning of online education period, I had difficulty using Zoom.	7,7	8	28,8	30	13,5	14	22,1	23	27,9	29
4.Now, I still have difficulty using EBA.	1,9	2	9,6	10	9,6	10	16,3	17	62,5	65
5.Now, I still have difficulty using Zoom.	-	-	-	-	8,7	9	18,3	19	73,1	76
6.I get easily confused in an online class environment.	3,8	4	11,5	12	21,2	22	33,7	35	29,8	31
7.Any technical problem during an online lesson is enough to break the classroom atmosphere.	27,9	29	38,5	40	13,5	14	17,3	18	2,9	3
9. I can solve online technical problems on my own.**	27,9	29	44,2	46	18,3	19	8,7	9	1,0	1
30. I do not enjoy getting exposed to so much technology due to online education.	31,7	33	26,0	27	24,0	25	14,4	15	3,8	4
41. Technological problems that arise during an online lesson reduce my teaching motivation.	35,6	37	29,8	31	20,2	21	13,5	14	1,0	1

High mean scores regarding encountered technological challenges were displayed in the table below.

Table 10: High Mean Scores for Perceived Technological Challenges

Items	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
1.Constant teaching in front of a computer is a challenge for me.	1,00	5,00	3,7212	1,21844
7.Any technical problem during an online lesson is enough to break the classroom atmosphere.	1,00	5,00	3,7115	1,13781
30. I do not enjoy getting exposed to so much technology due to online education.	1,00	5,00	3,6731	1,17781
41. Technological problems that arise during an online lesson reduce my teaching motivation.	1,00	5,00	3,8558	1,08313

Participant responses indicated that there was less interaction during online education period. The percentage of the responses agreeing that there was less interaction with students, parents, school administrations, other teachers and colleagues during online education period were respectively 74.1%, 61.5%, 50%, 72.1% and 68.2%. However, 46.2% of the teachers agreed that it is easier to invite parents for parents' meetings and 51% of the participants marked that it is easier to hold the meetings online.

Table 11: Perceived Interaction Challenges

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
18. I have less/ fewer interaction with students because of the distance	43,3	45	30,8	32	12,5	13	11,5	12	1,9	2
19. I have less interaction/ fewer with parents because of the distance	31,7	33	29,8	31	16,3	17	15,4	16	6,7	7
20. I have less/fewer interaction with school administrations because of the distance.	27,9	29	22,1	23	14,4	15	18,3	19	17,3	18
21. I have less/fewer interaction with other teachers at my school because of the distance.	39,4	41	32,7	34	13,5	14	8,7	9	5,8	6
22. I have less/fewer interactions with my colleagues because of online education	26,9	28	41,3	43	12,5	13	14,4	15	4,8	5
23. It is easier to invite parents for a parents' meeting during online education times. (no paperwork, easier accessibility to the parents)	12,5	13	33,7	35	23,1	24	17,3	18	13,5	14
24. It is easier to hold parents' meetings online. (flexibility in terms of time and place)	18,3	19	32,7	34	21,2	22	20,2	21	7,7	8

The items which have the high mean scores concerning interaction challenges that teachers have experienced during online education period are shown below.

Table 12: High Mean Scores for Perceived Interaction Challenges

Items	Min.	Max.	Mean.	Std. Deviation
18. I have less/fewer interaction with students because of the distance	1,00	5,00	4,0192	1,09705
19. I have less/fewer interaction with parents because of the distance	1,00	5,00	3,6442	1,26121
21. I have less/fewer interaction with other teachers at my school because of the distance.	1,00	5,00	3,9135	1,18330
22. I have less/fewer interactions with my colleagues because of online education	1,00	5,00	3,7115	1,15475

As for camera challenges, 59.6% of teachers agreed that their opening cameras during online lessons increase students' motivation for class participation. More than half of the teachers with the percentage of 52% marked that they are bothered when students don't open their cameras during an online lesson. Plenty of the respondents (67.3%) were of the opinion that when students do not open their cameras, they cannot follow if they listen to them or not. When asked whether students' opening their cameras affect teachers' motivation during online lessons, there were no majority of the responses either from the agree or disagree side. Statistics for each interaction item is shown below.

Table 13: Perceived Challenges Regarding Camera Use

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
31. I believe students' motivation for class participation will decrease when I do not open my camera during an online lesson.	29,8	31	29,8	31	15,4	16	12,5	13	12,5	13
32. It doesn't bother me when students do not open their cameras during an online lesson.	14,4	15	18,3	19	15,4	16	30,8	32	21,2	22
33. When students do not open their cameras, I cannot follow if they listen to me or not.	32,7	34	34,6	36	10,6	11	14,4	15	7,7	8
37. Students who do not open their cameras during online lessons reduce my teaching motivation.	17,3	18	22,1	23	18,3	19	23,1	24	19,2	20

In the table below, items that have the high mean scores for perceived camera-related challenges are presented.

Table 14: High Mean Scores for Perceived Challenges Regarding Camera Use

Items	Min.	Max.	Mean.	Std. Deviation
31. I believe students' motivation for class participation will decrease when I do not open my camera during an online lesson.	1,00	5,00	3,5192	1,36518
33. When students do not open their cameras, I cannot follow if they listen to me or not.	1,00	5,00	3,7019	1,27622

With respect to perceived challenges related to ethical issues, it was revealed that 49% of the sample are not worried about the risk that students can save their photos during the online lesson. In addition, 44.2% are not worried about the possibility of students' recording their teaching during an online lesson. 46.1% of the teachers agreed that they feel like they do something wrong when they ask the students to open their cameras during an online class.

Table 15: Perceived Ethical Challenges

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
34. I am worried that students can save my photo during an online lesson.	21,2	22	16,3	17	13,5	14	29,8	31	19,2	20
35. I am worried that student can record my teaching during an online lesson.	12,5	13	21,2	22	22,1	23	27,9	29	16,3	17
36. I feel like I am doing something wrong when I ask students to open their cameras while I teach.	17,3	18	28,8	30	26,9	28	13,5	14	13,5	14

The highest mean score concerning ethical challenges was in item 36, as it was shown below.

Table 16: The Highest Mean Score for Perceived Ethical Challenges

Items	Min.	Max.	Mean.	Std. Deviation
36. I feel like I am doing something wrong when I ask students to open their cameras while I teach.	1,00	5,00	3,2308	1,27127

With regard to feedback and evaluation challenges teachers faced during the online education, more than half of the teachers (57.7%) agreed that they didn't have enough time to give feedback to each students during online lessons. Additionally, most of the participants (58.6%) also agreed that it was hard to check whether each student did their homework or not. A remarkable amount of the participant responses (71.1%) indicated that evaluation during the online education period was more difficult.

Table 17: Perceived Challenges Regarding Feedback and Evaluation

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
50. I do not have enough time to give feedback to each student during online classes.	29,8	31	27,9	29	18,3	19	16,3	17	7,7	8
51. I have difficulty checking whether each student did their homework or not during online education times.	36,5	38	22,1	23	19,2	20	14,4	15	7,7	8
53. Over the course of online education period, it was more difficult for me to evaluate students' works.	34,6	36	36,5	38	15,4	16	10,6	11	2,9	3

Three items which have the high mean scores regarding feedback and evaluation challenges are shown below.

Table 18: High Mean Scores for Challenges Concerning Feedback and Evaluation

Items	Min.	Max.	Mean.	Std. Deviation
50. I do not have enough time to give feedback to each student during online classes.	1,00	5,00	3,5577	1,28340
51. I have difficulty in checking whether each student did their homework or not during online education times.	1,00	5,00	3,6538	1,31289
53. Over the course of online education period, it was more difficult for me to evaluate students' works.	1,00	5,00	3,8942	1,08760

With regard to the perceived opportunities of online education, the percentages of the responses agreeing that spending less money on transportation, spending less money on food and having more free time are respectively 78.8%, 68.3% and 55%, meaning that a decrease in expenses and having more free time were shown as the advantages of online education. More than half of the participants (54.8%) agreed that the best part of online education is that they do not have to deal with students' behavioural problems. The majority of the participants (80.8%) marked that they feel more comfortable about clothing for their online lessons and also again most of the teachers (70.2%) agreed

that they are not much attentive to their appearance for an online lesson. 58.6% of the participants are of the opinion that the fact that online class length is shorter increases their teaching motivation. Furthermore, 41.3% of the participants are not of the opinion that teaching from home increases their teaching motivation. Nevertheless, participants are not of the common idea as to whether online teaching is enjoyable or not.

Table 19: Perceived Opportunities of Online Education

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
61. I spend less money on transportation because I less often go to school during online education period.	64,4	67	14,4	15	11,5	12	6,7	7	2,9	3
62. I spend less money on food because I less often go to school during online education period.	40,4	42	27,9	29	13,5	14	12,5	13	5,8	6
63. I feel I have more free time during online education times.	30,8	32	25,0	26	19,2	20	12,5	13	12,5	13
64. The best part of online education is that I do not have to deal with students' behavioural problems.	28,8	30	26,0	27	21,2	22	10,6	11	13,5	14
65. I feel more comfortable about clothing for my online lessons.	51,0	53	29,8	31	16,3	17	1,9	2	1,0	1
66. I feel I am not much attentive to my appearance for an online lesson.	36,5	38	33,7	35	18,3	19	8,7	9	2,9	3
40. The fact that online class length is shorter increases my teaching motivation.	28,8	30	29,8	31	20,2	21	16,3	17	4,8	5
42. Teaching from home increases my teaching motivation.	10,6	11	22,1	23	26,0	27	24,0	25	17,3	18
43. Online teaching is enjoyable.	9,6	10	27,9	29	26,9	28	23,1	24	12,5	13

Next table displays the items which have higher mean scores regarding perceived opportunities of online education.

Table 20: High Mean Scores for Perceived Opportunities of Online Education

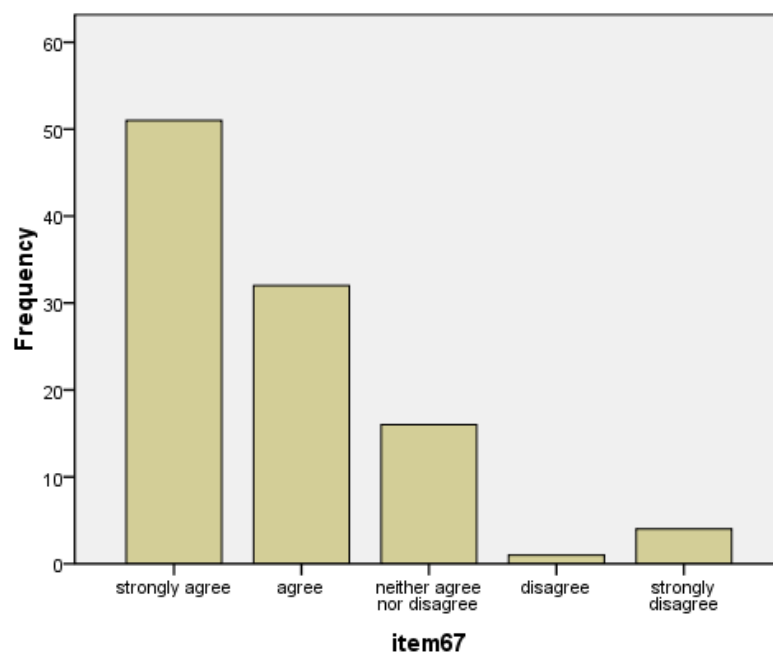
Items	Min.	Max.	Mean.	Std. Deviation
61. I spend less money on transportation because I less often go to school during online education period.	1,00	5,00	4,3077	1,09790
62. I spend less money on food because I less often go to school during online education period.	1,00	5,00	3,8462	1,24455
63. I feel I have more free time during online education times.	1,00	5,00	3,4904	1,37237
64. The best part of online education is that I do not have to deal with students' behavioural problems.	1,00	5,00	3,4615	1,36477
65. I feel more comfortable about clothing for my online lessons.	1,00	5,00	4,2788	0,87530
66. I feel I am not much attentive to my appearance for an online lesson.	1,00	5,00	3,9231	1,07660
40. The fact that online class length is shorter increases my teaching motivation.	1,00	5,00	3,6154	1,20119

Results also clearly showed the critical importance of face to face education. 79.8% of the teachers agreed that face to face education is more important than online education. 76% of the teachers agreed that they would choose face to face teaching rather than online teaching if they were given the right to choose. Almost all of the participants (91.3%) agreed that they used to feel more connected with students during face to face education. More than half of the teachers (57.7%) hope that they won't need to teach online in the future. It is also interesting to observe that 54.8% of the teachers believe that some lessons should be taught online in addition to the classes that are taught at school. Finally, 83.6% of the participants agreed that they are worried that the pandemic would cause irrecoverable academic failure in the educational lives of the middle school generation.

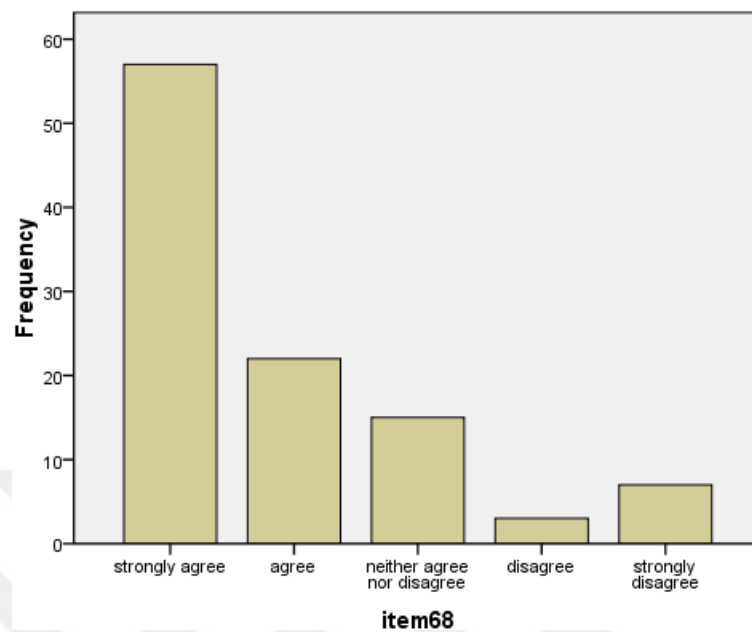
Table 21: Participants' Perception of Face to Face Education & Online Education

Items	Min.	Max.	Mean.	Std. Deviation
67. I believe face to face education can never be replaced by online education	1,00	5,00	4,2019	,99883
68. If I was given the right to choose, I would choose face to face teaching rather than online teaching.	1,00	5,00	4,1442	1,18582
69. I used to feel more connected with students during face to face education.	1,00	5,00	4,5000	,83608
71. I hope I won't need to teach online in the future.	1,00	5,00	3,7308	1,22459

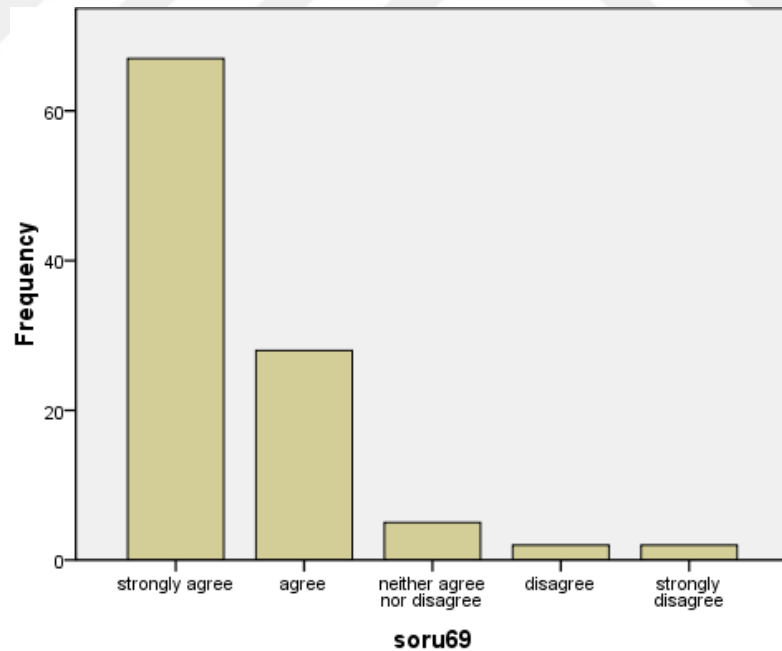
Graphic 1: Participants' Responses to Item 67 "I Believe Face to Face Education Can Never be Replaced by Online Education"



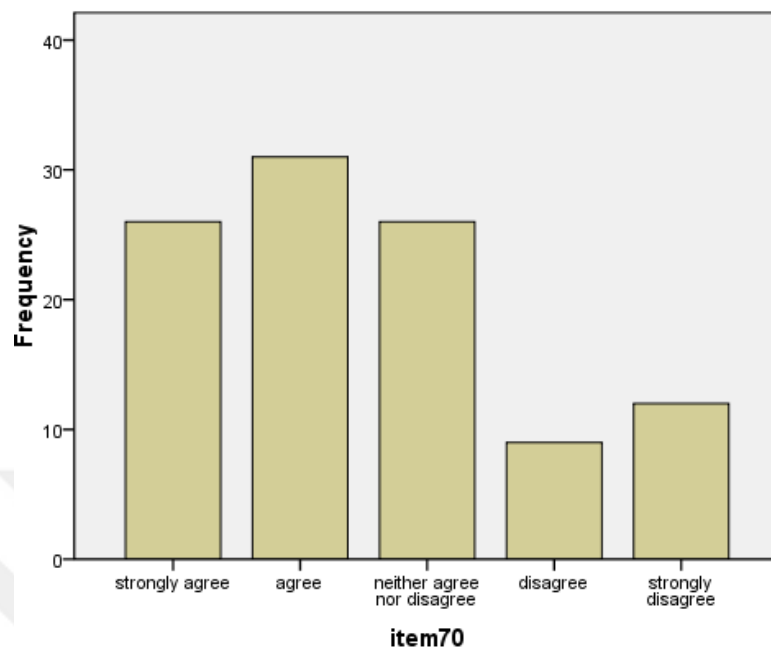
Graphic 2: Participants' Responses to Item 68 "If I Was Given the Right to Choose, I Would Choose Face to Face Teaching Rather Than Online Teaching"



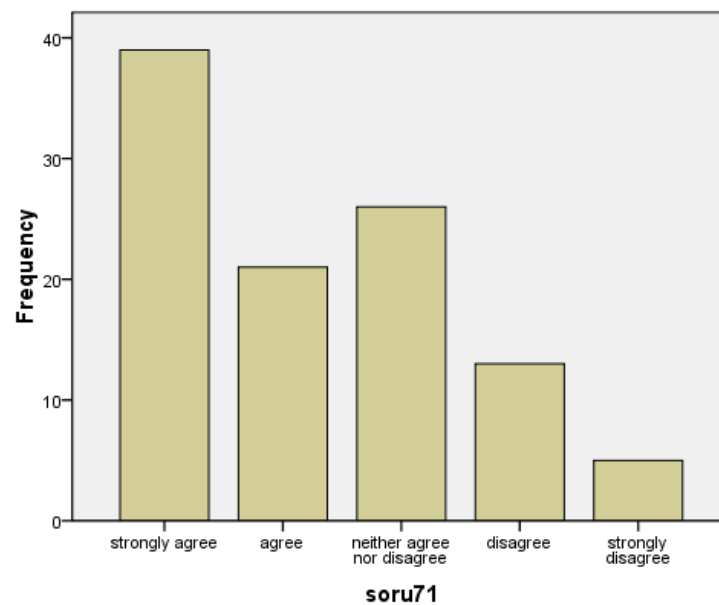
Graphic 3: Participants' Responses to Item 69 "I Used to Feel More Connected With Students During Face to Face Education"



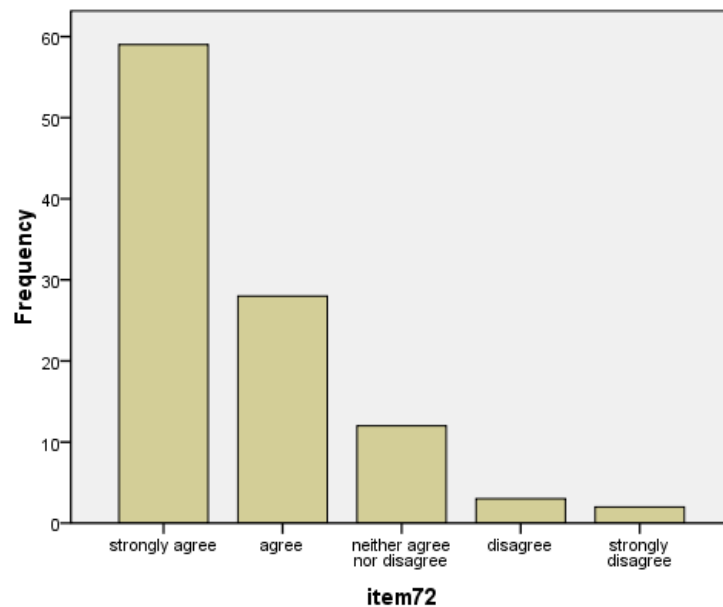
Graphic 4: Participants' Responses to Item 70 "I Believe That Some Lessons Should be Taught Online in Addition to The Classes That Are Taught at School"



Graphic 5: Participants' Responses to Item 71 "I Hope I Won't Need to Teach English Online in The Future"



Graphic 6: Participants’ Responses to Item 72 “I am Worried That The Pandemic Will Cause Irrecoverable Academic Failure in The Education Lives of The Middle School Generation”



Mann - Whitney Test Results

Question 1: Is there any significant difference between 8th grade EFL Teachers’ mean scores and 9th grade EFL teachers’ mean scores regarding challenges or opportunities they faced during online education?

Firstly, sub scale mean scores of 8th grade EFL teachers’ and 9th grade EFL teachers’ were compared in order to reveal if the scores differed significantly. 9th grade teachers’ mean rank was **21, 96** and 8th grade teachers’ mean rank was 31, 85 in terms of feedback. Therefore, scores of 8th grade teachers’ means were higher. It was observed that the difference between two groups’ scores was meaningful ($0,018 < 0,05$).

Table 22: Taught Grade Level (8th grade-9th grade) Based Differences in EFL Teachers’ Perceptions of Online Education

	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Feedback& Evaluation Related Challenges	220,0	571,0	-2,359	0,018
Face to face is better than online education	246,0	597,0	-1,880	0,060
Opportunities	284,0	662,0	-1,198	0,231
Camera-Related Challenges	284,5	662,5	-1,189	0,234
Ethics-Related Challenges	325,0	703,0	-0,467	0,641
Technology-Related Challenges	327,5	705,5	-0,420	0,675
Interaction Challenges	338,0	716,0	-0,233	0,816

Question 2: Is there any significant difference between EFL teachers who have the highest academic level and the lowest academic level regarding the challenges or opportunities they faced during online education?

Participants from doctoral degree holder group had marked higher numbers in agree part for camera challenges than the bachelor degree holder group. As it is shown in the table below, there is meaningful difference in terms of camera-related challenges that both groups faced.

Table 23: Highest and Lowest Academic Level Based Differences in EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Online Education

	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Face to face is better than online education	359,5	2312,5	-1,361	0,173
Interaction Challenges	428,0	2381,0	-0,477	0,633
Technology-Related Challenges	326,0	2279,0	-1,792	0,073
Camera-Related Challenges	275,5	2228,5	-2,444	0,015
Ethics-Related Challenges	388,5	2341,5	-0,990	0,322
Feedback& Evaluation Related Challenges	449,5	569,5	-0,201	0,841
Opportunities	340,5	460,5	-1,603	0,109

Question 3: Is there any significant difference between participants from two different genders regarding the challenges or opportunities they faced during online education?

Table 24: Gender Based Differences in EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Online Education

	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Face to face is better than online education	887,0	1238,0	-0,957	0,339
Interaction Challenges	968,5	4049,5	-0,342	0,732
Technology-Related Challenges	935,5	4016,5	-0,590	0,555
Camera-Related Challenges	683,0	1034,0	-2,493	0,013
Ethics-Related Challenges	937,5	4018,5	-0,577	0,564
Feedback& Evaluation Related Challenges	604,5	955,5	-3,099	0,002
Opportunities	1010,5	4091,5	-0,026	0,979

Female participants agreed more than male participants to the items in terms of camera and feedback related challenges. Female EFL teachers' mean rank for camera-related challenges was 56,74 whereas male EFL teachers' was 39,77. In addition, mean rank of female participants for feedback was 57,75 while mean rank of male participants was 36,75. The table shows that for both subscale camera and feedback the difference in scores was significant.

Question 4: Is there any significant difference between EFL teachers who have the most teaching experience (more than 20 years) and EFL teachers who have the least (0-5 years) teaching experience in terms of the challenges or opportunities they faced during online education?

More experienced teachers have mean rank of 23,30 for technology-related challenges and 22,65 mean rank for ethics-related challenges whereas less experienced teachers had lower mean ranks of 14,26 and 14,54 for them respectively. The next table shows that their differences were meaningful.

Table 25: Teaching Experience Based Differences in EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Online Education

	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]
Face to face is better than online education	92,5	368,5	-0,891	0,373	0,384
Interaction Challenges	96,5	372,5	-0,731	0,465	0,475
Technology-Related Challenges	52,0	328,0	-2,483	0,013	0,013
Camera-Related Challenges	83,0	359,0	-1,266	0,205	0,221
Ethics-Related Challenges	58,5	334,5	-2,232	0,026	0,025
Feedback& Evaluation Related Challenges	95,0	150,0	-0,800	0,424	0,451
Opportunities	87,5	363,5	-1,084	0,279	0,287

In total, the results of the quantitative analysis showed that online education had both its advantages and disadvantages from the perspectives of EFL teachers. There were many challenges teachers faced during the online education period. As for the technical problems, quantitative analysis showed that in the beginning of the online education period, nearly one teacher out of two had difficulty in using educational platforms like EBA or Zoom. However, as time passed teachers could adapt to use them pretty well. In addition, most of the teachers think that they don't get easily confused in an online environment. Nevertheless, the analysis also indicated that technical problems can easily break the classroom atmosphere. What's more, the majority of the teachers' reports revealed that their motivation to teach is negatively affected by these technical problems. Another thing the analysis presented was that majority of the teachers can solve the technical problems they faced on their own. According to quantitative analysis results, teachers experienced interaction problems at the highest level. And, teachers especially had difficulty in interacting with students. However, there were also too much interaction problems teachers experienced with parents, other teachers and teachers' colleagues. With respect to challenges regarding camera use, majority of the teachers were of the opinion that when teachers open their cameras, students become more motivated for online classes. In addition, most of the teachers were of the idea that when students' cameras are closed, teachers cannot know if the students follow the lessons or not. As for ethical issues, analysis of the data showed that less than half of the teachers are worried about either student's saving their

image or students' recording teachers' online teaching. In the same way, less than half of the students think that encouraging students to open their cameras is wrong. Regarding the issue of feedback and evaluation, large majority of the teachers believe that evaluation during online education period was more challenging. And, what's more, the analysis revealed that more than half of the teachers are of the idea that time was very limited to give feedback for each student during online education period and to check each students' homework. The analysis also showed that from the perspectives of EFL teachers, online education has opportunities, as well. Majority of the teachers think that online education is thought to be more economical especially in terms of transportation and also in terms of food cost. More than half of the teachers also think that online education provides more free time for the teachers. Once more, more than half of the students were of the belief that the best thing about online education is that they don't have to make an effort for students' behavioural problems. Majority of the teachers were of the idea that online education is more advantageous in terms of clothing, too. Teachers think that online education made teachers feel more comfortable in terms of clothing and teachers didn't worry much about their clothing. Most of the teachers think that they felt more motivated to teach during the online education period because class length was shorter. According to the analysis, the importance of face-to-face education was highlighted. When it comes to the comparison of online education and face-to-face education, nearly all of the participants were of the opinion that teachers used to feel more close to and bonded to the students during the face-to-face education. Majority of the teachers think that face-to-face education is more significant and they find face-to-face education more preferable. More than half of the teachers do not want to teach online in the future unless they have to. However, an interesting finding was that more than half of the students incline toward the idea of a face-to-face education system in which some lessons are also taught online. Furthermore, most of the teachers worry that middle school generation which experienced the pandemic will be quite negatively affected by it in terms of their academic life. As for the comparisons, the study showed that teachers who teach at 8th grade level had more difficulty in feedback & evaluation during the online education period than the teachers who teach at 9th grade level. The study also showed that teachers who held a doctoral degree experienced more problems concerning camera use during the online education period than the teachers who are only bachelors' degree holders. Additionally, it was revealed that female teachers faced with more challenges regarding camera use and feedback and evaluation related challenges during the online education period than male teachers. Finally, the analysis of the data showed that teachers who had more than 20 years' experience had more difficulty in technological problems and ethical problems than teachers who had 0-5 years' experience.

4.2. Qualitative Analysis

In this study, the period of transition period, emergency remote education period and lastly the post pandemic period will be separately analysed. The reason is that the study investigates the topic

of “challenges and opportunities of online education for EFL teachers” one and a half year later after Covid-19 pandemic emerges.

Coffey & Atkinson (1996: 2 as cited in Lester et al., 2020: 96) state that “there is no single right way to analyze qualitative data; equally, it is essential to find ways of using the data to think with”.

Research Question 1:

What are the perceived challenges of online education for EFL teachers?

Some teachers stated that after the pandemic when the schools were shut down there was huge uncertainty and they did not know what they were going to do. Three teachers reported that there were no classes for a while. One challenge shown was that fast transition could not be realized. There was confusion. Furthermore, it was also stated that the period of transition to online education couldn't be understood well.

...When the pandemic first emerged and we suddenly entered into the process of closure/lock down the situation of the schools were uncertain. Actually, while the schools were being closed we kept us in quarantine by thinking that we would turn back to schools. As the phrase is, we thought it as one or two weeks of holiday. But, the situation got worse as time passed and the process of closure continued. Last year, I mean from March to summer the schools were almost all the time closed and in some way we had to immediately shift to distance education. Of course we faced with many challenges. First of all, we realized that online education was not common in Türkiye and it was not known by people that much. We, student, teachers and parents, all had problems concerning equipment. The students in my school didn't have computers, tablets and phones. And, the ones who had them did not have internet. To tell the truth, we could never enable that fast transition. In some way, we started live lessons but the participation was low which again stemmed from financial inadequacy which were rooted in their socio-economic background and no access to internet. Besides, just like us, students and parents as well they couldn't actually understand the initial transition period much. As a matter of fact, I don't want to name that period as “distance education period”. You know, it was kind of a situation like emergency distance education. We gave an emergent response but it was like for want of a better word we couldn't do a lot about educational attainments. In that respect, you know the previous year's situation was very different from its current situation. (P.1)

As for the emergency remote education, the fact that teachers in Türkiye didn't know about online education was shown as one of the challenges by four teachers. Nonetheless, the most frequently reported challenges teachers faced during emergency remote education were identified and they were three themes.

Themes

- 1.Challenges Regarding Technology
2. Challenges Regarding Learner Participation
3. Challenges Regarding Teacher Inexperience

Challenges Regarding Technology

How to teach online, not knowing the applications, adapting to the new applications, connecting to EBA or ZOOM, assigning a class on EBA or Zoom, not knowing what to do, using technical devices and teaching in front of camera were the subthemes and were frequently experienced problems by the EFL teachers.

No one knew about ZOOM programme. First, we had to learn that. You know, English teachers were the among the ones who could best and fast adapt to this because the programme language was English. Even the school principle asked me to prepare a guideline instruction for the other teachers regarding the use of the programme. First, teachers had to learn that. Moreover, we also had problems with students. This was the problem we faced most. And also our texting on WhatsApp. You know, if this was face to face education, they wouldn't text us in the evening at 8 or 9, I mean to their teacher. But, we started to get their message at 4 am 1 am from the student. You know it became a 24/7 job. And, yeah that became a little bit of a problem for us. I mean until the system was settled, I mean in the beginning, we absolutely experienced these kinds of problems. Let us say especially the use of social media because students were not familiar with both WhatsApp and Zoom kind of programmes. Neither did teachers. In fact, it took time to learn them. (P.22)

First connection related problems and not only the fact that system was not ready but also the fact that students didn't know how to use it well were big difficulties for us. Anyways, first we learned then we did try to teach our students and because it was distance education even informing them about that actually it was our first barrier. When I first experienced online education, it was a big problem for me to inform them about that EBA or ZOOM system. (P.19)

First of all, we were confused about which class we would teach. We couldn't understand it. Live lessons were assigned to us in a complex way in online education and it was one hour. The fact that it was an hour was a disadvantage because we didn't have any material that we can show on the screen. We had problem about that. Other than that children couldn't connect to the lesson because they didn't have computers. We could reach too few students. And, we could do with them only as far as we could do. Of course, there was this inexperience resulting from facing something like this for the first time. Both students and teachers were inexperienced. So, I had a problem about that, too. First, I couldn't adapt to it. I mean I got a little bit nervous because everyone listens to me. I am aware that it is not only one student who listens to me. (P.14)

Challenges Regarding Learner Participation

Teachers indicated that there were many reasons for participation related problems. Some of the students didn't have internet. In addition, it was expressed that some students didn't have enough technological competence. However, one significant reason shown by many teachers was related to economical situations of the students' families.

There were students who didn't have internet. 2-3 students used to come to the live lessons. Sometimes, no one used to come. (P.13)

First of all, a chaos emerged. Especially, If I approach the situation from a broad perspective, from both my friends' and my own experiences I think school administrators failed a lot because they couldn't provide healthy interaction between the ministry and students and the teachers. I mean they made us feel that chaos to our bones. Of course, when we felt that this reflected on the students, too. In the beginning, we failed a lot, we tottered a lot. I mean I am telling it about

communication and interaction. As to one or two months later, we were in the different mood. In a way, it was understood that examinations were cancelled and it was understood that the process length would increase. Ok, there is no problem with that, too. Maybe it is also our failure but I think indeed, we couldn't motivate our students to online education. I mean, we couldn't give them the message of "Look, this year will pass like this but education process will continue we will continue to it online and you need to participate to it". Ok, I was lucky about that situation. I worked in a project school. My students were more motivated. But, in general when I looked at my friends I think the fact that very few students participated in the classes and the fact that even at some schools, distance education was not implemented were quite problematic things. You know, right now at least we can all say this. I am doing my best as a teacher. School administrator can also say that I am teaching. But, then the disconnection turned to irreparable and I think we still suffer for it and will suffer next year, too... (P.18)

The biggest challenge was class participation. Calling the students every day was the strategy to overcome this problem. But, there were many factors and the problem couldn't be solved. I mean, the end of the year was the same. It was like at first there were five students coming to the classes and in the same way at the end there were five students, as well. (P.20)

...A lot of students come to our school from villages by buses and these students don't have the internet opportunity. And, tablets were given to a few students this year. Moreover, we couldn't provide a good working system when this online education was first started. We had many difficulties about this. In fact, the performance of the students was good during face-to-face classes but when the live lessons started most of them couldn't participate. Even those who participated were incompetent about technology use when compared to the ones in big cities because in big cities students grow up with tablets in their hands. Their children grow up like this. But, I really saw this inequality of opportunity. (P.8)

Challenges Regarding Teacher Inexperience

Teachers who were new to online education said that they faced with many problems which resulted in adaptation problems because of lack of experience. Most of the teachers said that they had no prior training. Thus, they didn't know a lot about the nature of online teaching, as well.

Actually at first, both student and teachers had an adaptation period in terms of using distance education tools such as ZOOM and we had difficulty about this issue. In the beginning, we used to assign and teach live courses on EBA but then we realized we had to become more practical about these because lessons were not in order and students' connection was problematic, too. There were problems. But, now because the process continued we came into such a phase that only with a click to a teacher's ZOOM link students can easily connect to the live lessons. But, in the beginning, students had a lot of difficulty in connecting to the classes, logging in the system, using technological applications and connecting through technological applications. They couldn't do these. They couldn't ask for the right to speak and they couldn't raise their hands. The ones who could come to the classes had different problems, as well. (P.7)

Yes, at first we faced with technical problems when we first shifted to distance education because I didn't have prior training about online education. In the end, the teachers don't know how to design online lessons, how to give lessons online and how to give permission to students to come in to the live lessons, as well. Therefore, first we had technical issues. I mean, there was an adaptation period concerning where to click. The main problem was this...I mean I also had difficulties in preparing materials. (P.21)

At that time, everything was new to us and we didn't know much about the system. The MoNE's infrastructure was not that strong like now. Lesson programs were chaotic. The lessons used to be given to those who ask for them. You know, no one knew what they were going to do. Of course, this disorder resulted in challenges. You see... I remember the times I taught live lessons

for the first time. How am I going to use them? I will need to write things. How am I going to write? How am I going to teach? I experienced these kinds of problems. Also, as I had said earlier, there were disconnection problems. The system used to kick us from the lessons. (P.13)

The problem I had was explaining the way of using technology to students and parents. During that first period, I worked at a private institution. Right now, I work at a state school. But, at that period, we needed to deal with all the things such as explaining students how the assignments would be given, in which way they would come to live lessons and which programme they would download by communicating with them. We gave special care to anxiety state of the parents because even though we were not health personnel, they tried to obtain information from us down to the explanation of World Health Organization because of our expert roles from parents' perspectives. And, we did our best to relief them in spite of the fact that we teachers were hit by a pandemic for the first time, too. (P.11)

Research Question 2:

What strategies do EFL teachers use to handle the perceived challenges of online education?

The reports of the analysis revealed that teachers used different strategies during the Covid-19 period for mainly three purposes and these purposes were shown in the table below:

Themes

1. Strategies EFL Teachers Used to Increase Interaction/Participation
2. Strategies EFL Teachers Used to Overcome Technical Problems

Strategies EFL Teachers Used to Increase Interaction/Participation

First of all, calling parents and students, creating mail groups, recording a video about technical information and sending it to parents' group, giving phone numbers and mail address to parents, establishing empathy with parents, guiding students, giving right to speak during online classes, rewarding students, messaging parents when students didn't participate in classes, sending materials to the students who skipped the classes, trying to increase students' motivation to come to online lessons were the strategies used by the teachers to overcome participation problems. However, calling students and teachers were shown to be the most used tactic.

Personally, I am dealing with many students. I feel sorry for them. I mean for this period. I assign homework to students. All the teachers were immediately added to Bip and WhatsApp groups. Homework was shared there. I keep tally daily and share it with parents. This is to understand whether homework was done or not. I do this because many parents don't know about their children's situation. Under these circumstances, I give homework to students and they are given generally at least 3-4 days to finish them considering the period of the pandemic. Like, they have at least four days. Meanwhile, they finish their homework and send their photos to me. And yet, the message programmes I used become too full. I mean I can say 50 or 60 students who did their homework message me each week. This was really tiring but I can say that I got used to it. (P.15)

To be honest, I have more classes to teach at eight grade level. I think first students should be persuaded that they need this online class and they can really learn from this lesson the information

that can affect their lives. After all, there was hybrid education most of the times. Half of the classes were taught face to face and training courses (DYK) continued but most of the classes were online. I mean the first thing was that students had to believe that they needed this lesson and they could never be prepared for LGS (high school entrance exam) exam without this lesson. I informed these students about this issue from time to time when I have extra time... After this, if the student needed it, the student persevered. When the student had a problem, he/she started to solve it, tried to get help or asked about it to the ones around him/her. But, when the students are not convinced by heart there are always the students who do not come to the classes even though you provide them all the improved conditions... (P.7)

I used my own emotional intelligence. I mean I showed empathy towards them. I tried to see the situation from their perspectives by putting myself to their places... And, it is the age of communication. I gave my number and my e-mail address to all the parents. We overcame these problems with empathy and communication. (P.12)

Strategies EFL Teachers Used to Overcome Technical Problems

One strategy was to learn how to use the devices used in distance education. Watching informative videos was another adopted strategy. Practising online education out of school time was one of the used strategies, too. Trying to increase students' technical information was frequently used strategy. Teachers also reported that they attended professional trainings. Examining sample online lessons was another strategy, as well.

It was considered that teachers may have used different strategies concerning camera use to increase the success during online lessons. Similarly, the study revealed that teachers had used different strategies about camera use. It was observed that they had different habits. Six out of 24 teachers reported that they opened their camera during the online classes. Four teachers said they didn't prefer to open their cameras during the classes. As for the others, most of them expressed that at first they used to open their cameras; however, later on they started to use their cameras closed.

I do not open my camera because my students may not concentrate on the lesson. I do not want them to get distracted by me. I am a teacher I mean of course it is normal at that age group that they... teachers' hair is like that today... I mean they give importance to that kind of things. After all, I teach English by usually sharing my screen. They do not open it. Even about their voices, when I ask. Moreover, there are reasons for them to not to talk. You know, their houses are crowded. (P.8)

One of the biggest challenges that we have experienced. At first, they used to open their cameras. Actually, even if their number is fewer, there were teachers who do not open their cameras. You know, it was really hard to teach without opening the cameras. At first, for example, I mean this is a problem that comes to my mind right now, I used to feel like I teach to an empty wall. I don't see faces, mimics, I can't crack a joke. I didn't use to like it I mean when it was closed. But, children have the luxury to not to open their cameras while teaching, especially during a class done on EBA. I expressed this in a very clear way. I started to teach on Zoom platform after EBA. This was an easiness for us... I mean I told it to them like it is. If you do not open the cameras, I will not open, too and this process will go on like this. So, if you accept I mean you can close your cameras. But, as far as I understand, children get shy or camera... (P.17)

It is not obligatory. But, if I cannot get the answer from the student in a way that I want, if the student never answers my question when I ask it, I ask them to open their cameras to check if they are there or not... My camera is always open. (P.4)

I didn't open my camera. And, I didn't ask them to do so, too. After all, they are high school students. Even though I asked them to open, they wouldn't open their cameras. Of course, I would want it to be like classroom environment. I think it was better to keep them closed by thinking that opening them could create a lot of problems. (P.20)

Students open their cameras if they want to do so. I don't force them because they are at family environment so some of them may be available while others may not be available. At some we did something like this. For the first fifteen or twenty minutes we opened our cameras then we gave them the permission to be free about it. But this tactic always required us to control them so after a time we gave it up. Children open or close the cameras as they like and so do I. I do not always open it, too because sometimes I see that there are parents I saw in the camera near their children. I mean, why should their mom or dad see me? I mean, I really get bothered because of this situation. There is no privacy at that situation. I mean, that's why I am more flexible about camera use in my classes. I mean I do not force. I do not always open it, either... (P.13)

In our school, it was obligatory to open the cameras. I think this is a big blessing. Otherwise, students can pretend that they are not in the class even though the situation is totally opposite and they may not want to answer when you ask a question. And, you can't understand it like whether the student is there or not. Whether the student is talking to his/her mother right now or not. Is he/she sleeping or talking to his/her mother or eating. You can't know this. I mean if you do not make them open their cameras... (P.22)

At first, there was a decision to close the cameras thinking the private life of both students and teachers. I mean, there was this rumour everywhere. Therefore, in fact, we didn't insist our students to open their cameras. But, for example, I always opened my camera during each lesson. I asked them to participate in the class like this, too. And, I made the process continue like this. But, when I opened my camera, majority of the students opened their camera, too. One thing is our branch is English I mean communication. Consequently, there needs to be an environment where we can see them face to face and communicate more effectively. I think, lessons are more effective when the cameras are open. (P.11)

Actually, at first I used to open my camera. Of course, ethically no one including me has to open the camera. But, I used to open my camera by considering and feeling that the students had this psychological exhaustion and they missed their schools, friends, and teachers. And, I felt that this made them feel happy. But, after a time, distance education became so tiring and painful that we are always on the Zoom screen. You also experience the same thing and believe me we got exhausted a lot both physiologically and psychologically... Therefore, after a time I started to close my camera. Students' cameras are always closed anyways. Both their age groups, middle school students, how to say, they are in process of transition to puberty. They don't want to show themselves. They don't like themselves. Also, sometimes their house environments may not be available... During the class, they close their cameras. We overcame this problem in this way. For example, if I want to do a different activity during English lesson and if I want to ask them to open their cameras, I told it before. Like, for example, on Monday during our class I told them that on Thursday I guess I have the intention to open my camera. Guys, just to let you know we are going to do an activity like this so we are going to open our cameras. I clearly explained this. On Thursday, during my class, they were waiting for me and their cameras were open. I mean I didn't force them. (P.1)

One teacher states that she warned her students that they should open the camera otherwise their teacher will not open the camera, too. Another strategy was to inform the students about when the cameras will be opened and for which purposes such as different class activities. However, generally, teachers didn't force the students to open their cameras.

The study showed that teachers mostly communicated with their colleagues to overcome the problems that they couldn't solve on their own.

But, by searching and with support that comes out of the interaction between teachers we learned what we could do. (P.19)

We exchanged ideas with our colleagues. How are you doing that? How is that happening? Are you opening your cameras? Do you totally mute yourself? These were discussed. (P.3)

Research Question 3

What are EFL teachers' beliefs about opportunities of online education process?

Results showed that teachers believe that online education provides many opportunities.

Themes and Subthemes

1. Opportunities Regarding Technology
2. Opportunities Regarding Flexibility

Opportunities Regarding Technology

Teachers emphasized that the online education period conducted them to be more competent about technology use. It was frequently mentioned by the teachers that teachers could use the applications during the online education period much more effectively than face-to-face education. The reports also showed that reaching digital sources was much easier during the online education period. In addition, audios opened more quickly and teachers could act spontaneously in terms of showing different contents. The facts that education became more interactive and student's technological competence improved were other advantages of online education.

...In our school there isn't any smart board. I make during the online lessons because there was smart board in the school that I worked before my present school. Especially, you know during English lessons movement is needed. Voice is needed. I mean these kinds of things put the basis for students' learning. Therefore, the smart board is very advantageous. But, in our school there is no smart board I can only give them this opportunity by sharing my screen during the live lessons. I mean I can say that's the only advantage. (P.6)

...It can be about English lessons because it is more international and intercultural. For example, there is this technology topic. At that moment, something comes to my mind and I can teach it spontaneously without any plan. I am telling them oh ok let's go to BBC News's page and check what are the latest news about technology. Or I tell them there was news about a unit on a website about cybercrimes let's see it. At that moment, it is wonderful to be able to do it in a spontaneous way. You know even though there are smartboards in your schools, we know there is always something wrong with them while teaching. So, I don't waste time. I do not feel a twinge of guilt about it. We all experience it. We try to do something with smart board but it is always like half of the class hour is wasted with these technical problems. But, during the online education I do not have that problem. I mean I really love this. Being independent from time and place and reaching digital sources very easily. (P.18)

I believe it has advantages because actually blended system that Ministry of National Education mentioned sounds nice. Let me say it in this way. I don't believe that education can be done without face-to-face education. But, this has certain advantages. For example, in terms of solving

problems, I can do it in a very easy way by putting the question on the screen and solving it on the screen. Something comes to my mind like that right now. For example, you know solving problems with students who are about to be prepared for exams takes a lot of time. Analysing the question, explaining the question. In this sense, lesson hours are really precious for these kinds of things. (P.15)

Opportunities Regarding Flexibility

It was frequently articulated by the teachers that online education provides flexibility with respect to many things. First of all, teachers stated that, during Covid-19 times, education became time and place independent. Teaching hours were more flexible and teachers could do their lessons wherever they wanted. Teachers also addressed that they didn't have to place special emphasis on their clothing during online lessons and this situation was more comfortable for them.

I definitely believe that it has advantages, as well. For example, you can do give an online class at anywhere you like...For example, you go to your hometown and you teach from there. It is neither a disadvantage for you or for your student. The same goes for the students, too. Other than that I think we started to adapt ourselves more to the necessities of the time, at least partially. Beforehand, we didn't used to use technology this much. Right now, we dabbled a lot in technology. At some point, I think this is good because competence of the children improved, as well. For example, we used to ask students to send their homework on Edmodo system. I mean the student used to learn the system and used to upload the homework there. After that, we used to check their homework from there. Well, this is actually a system which has been already used in Europe since long time ago. But, we used, had to use this system during the online education period and I am glad we did it. I mean, I think its advantages are many. Beautiful. (P.22)

I don't think it has many advantages. Only one advantage is that we didn't encounter with the virus a lot or we were not in an environment that has virus. In fact, I couldn't feel that it has many advantages or I couldn't see during the online education period. (P.14)

Of course it has advantages. I mean, the fact that you can give a class while passing from one room to another at home. Especially there are our teacher friends who work at a place which is quite far from the city they live. For example, the teacher lives in İstanbul but comes to the school by passing 20 kilometres of way. I don't know how many vehicles that person changes while trying to go to school. But, my school was five minutes away. There is nothing changing for me but sitting in front of my computer after I woke up and did my breakfast at my comfort was a big convenience. Other than that I didn't think about what would I eat in the afternoon and what would I do because if I am at my own house I can realize it easily by planning it much earlier. (P.2)

There were also other important advantages of online education shown by the EFL teachers. The fact that teachers spent less money during online education period was shown as one advantage. Additionally, it was less tiring for teachers whose houses were far away from their schools. Teachers also reported that students could gain self-discipline during the online education period.

...Students who did not want to participate in the class didn't come to live lessons. Or, it was nice to not experience problems that we normally faced about classroom management. I am talking about vocational high school. Otherwise, of course I want each student to come to the classes. (P.20)

Post Pandemic Period

Many of the teachers reported that both students and teachers got adapted to online education. There were problems that were solved and couldn't be solved. The frequently mentioned solved problems and unsolved problems are shown in the table below.

Table 26: Solved and Unsolved Problems in Post Pandemic Period

Problems that could not be solved even one and a half year later after pandemic	- participation of the students (meaning there are still students who can't connect to online classes because of lack of internet, technical devices, infrastructure, etc.) however, teachers declared that tablets and EBA Support Places were effective about increasing participation. Some of the students also bought internet or technical devices or they provided internet infrastructure to be able to participate in live lessons. Consequently, even though many people didn't or couldn't participate in online classes during post pandemic period, participation was certainly in a much better place when compare to emergency remote education period. - internet/connection problems still occur from time to time.
Solved problems	- becoming an alien to online education teachers became more experienced about planning online classes and teaching online as time passed. - internet/connection problems (they are not that frequent anymore) - teaching in front of a camera - students and teachers' lack of enough technical competence - chaos environment (teachers managed to create an order in the system)

Lessons' becoming not efficient till summer, students' chatting or playing games during online lessons, not having the possibility to intervene their family environment and educational losses stemming from the online education were also shown by some teachers as the problems that still could not be solved.

The Biggest Challenges for Teachers

Students' having low motivation for online education was shown as the biggest challenge by many teachers.

I can say that the biggest difficulty is students' lack of motivation. I really think that students have concentration problem when they were sitting in front of the screen, especially younger age group. I mean you can easily grab younger age group's attention in the classroom. But, when you are sitting in front of the camera, you are done when the student looked at other places. If he/she gets distracted by something else, at that moment you can't turn their attention back to the class. I think that is one of the biggest problems. (P.6)

The biggest difficulty is motivation. Children. At first, they thought it was fun but as time passed they got tired and they lack motivation. The same problem goes for the teachers, too. In the beginning, we thought it was easy. We could do it, etc. But, right now I think all the teachers got tired. (P.12)

Another big challenge was interaction with the students.

Reaching the student. Looking at students' eyes I mean to be able to check whether he/she understood things or not and whether she/he gave a response or not. In a classroom environment this is definitely possible. You can easily understand which students understood and which one didn't, which ones listened carefully and which ones didn't. Plus, you can do more for them when you are always with the students even in the break times. You become closer to them emotionally. The student becomes close to you, too. I think, in this way education definitely becomes much easier. But, from the distance for example, prep students, who were newcomers, came to our school by finishing 8th grade and we immediately started online education with them. I mean, we started with online education. It took our time to become close with them. I mean, we had difficulty in communication. They couldn't get to know us and neither did we. I think this was the biggest thing... (P.22)

The biggest challenge is the communication gap because we cannot physically come into contact with them and because we do not constantly keep in touch with them one by one. I mean I am talking on the phone with the child. I am asking him/her why he/she didn't come to the live lesson or why he/she didn't do her/his homework. The students ensure me that they will do it but there are unending excuses. Moreover, his/her parents don't know the situations. Children became much more independent and lonely. I mean I can say their rooms became their worlds. Consequently, we lost a few students. (P.15)

Furthermore, the fact that there was no meaningful learning environment were also shown as significant challenge experienced by the teachers.

...As for distance education, unfortunately, each student does not have his/her own room. They are at the same environment with their families. Students attend online classes when they do their own things. Their existing in online lessons while also watching television or their being present at online lessons while eating or drinking things. These all caused students to experience adaptation problems. On the other hand, when the students don't know anything about a subject they could mute their voices or close turn off the camera. And, this cuts our communication. But, at a school environment, there is no such a thing... (P.4)

...I think here the difficulty is not that students cannot attend the classes. But, the environment of the students. In the beginning, I was at this mood, too. Look at the student, he/she does not give a response. I doubt whether they are not in front of the cameras because we didn't tell them to open their cameras. Our school administration told us that we can't force them to open their cameras. Okay, I agree. Soon, I realized maybe these students did not have the environment that they wanted. Maybe they did not have their own rooms. The student is in the lesson but family is at the background. Maybe, he/she has a sibling. I think the biggest challenge was that students didn't have the study environment. In this way, students' psychological needs, social needs or academic needs are not met. What's more, students do not have their private/personal place. How come a student who doesn't have a private place can participate in the class or listens to the class let alone study? How can he/she do his/her homework? This is the biggest problem for me. And, I still think the same. (P.18)

Teachers' Professional Development Attempts

Attending trainings, researching and exchanging ideas with other teachers were teachers' three major ways of professional development. Webinars, seminars, national/international conferences, in-service trainings, ministry's and universities' training were the ones teachers attended. Researching was the second most preferred way of teachers' professional development. Teachers indicated that

they mostly searched for materials. However, they also searched for how to give more successful online lessons and the ways to motivate students to the class.

Things that Teachers have Realized

Most of the EFL teachers stated that they realized that face-to-face education is a must and they really missed their schools and students. Teachers also came to the realization that they were caught unprepared to online education.

We forgot the beauty of physically being at school...the beauty of being in the same environment with students. (P.7)

I mean, in fact, we realized how beautiful face-to-face education is during the Covid-19 period. You know, beforehand, it used to be like being at school with our student used to sound like routine. But right now, it is thought to be a privilege. I mean we went to schools from time to time. Schools were opened and closed. But, I can say face-to-face education is much more efficient. (P.10)

It is the importance of face-to-face education. Definitely it is exchanging glances. I mean there are things you understand when you look into their eyes. I mean this is really important. The other thing is going to the school, the time you eat your meal, etc. are in order. I think this is one of the things that give meaning to humans... (P.20)

First of all, I realized that school means much more than a lot to students. I mean now I know and we used to say before. Yes, the school is a place for socialization for the students. Okay, but we had never experienced that like this before. Right now, we understand it very clearly because now, somehow, we understand that students are unhappy at home or we understand that they were demotivated or they missed the school very easily. I mean somehow keeping them at school I mean school occupies a very important position in their lives. As a teacher, I realized somehow we always say that a teacher is always a learner. Okay, there is no problem with that, too. But, the fact that this does not have its limits. The fact that the things we learned can be reset at any moment. For example, concerning online classroom management, we had to update ourselves because online classroom management has its own rules as I just mentioned. We can encourage students to participate in the classes in the classrooms even we can force them. But, for example, we shouldn't do this during online classes. We should create that balance in online education because otherwise we can completely lose that child. I mean, somehow, just as an acrobat walking on a tightrope, we had to obtain different skills. And this made me realize that this is a period and we are living through it. Maybe, we started its second year, we got used to it more. But, in the future, another crisis can occur. I don't think it only at global level. It can also be a local crisis. Some problem can break out at school. In the simplest term, I mean, I know this because my colleagues from the previous school where I worked told me this. Imagine, one day there was a case of suicide at school and that student died. Isn't this a very big crisis? As teachers, we will always face with these crisis... Somehow, we have to proactively improve our skills concerning crisis management. How are we going to behave at crisis times? I mean, we don't have the chance to say that I was never trained for this. (P.18)

Efficiency of Online Education

Teachers have different ideas related to whether their online lessons were effective or not. Some teachers said that lessons taught during face-to-face education times were much effective. In addition, some teachers were of the opinion that as time passed the efficiency of online classes

increased. One teacher expressed that hybrid education was more effective than online education. There were those who believe that their teaching during Covid-19 times was not effective at all. However, there were also some teachers who thought that their online classes were very effective. Some of them thought that they had done their best. The fact that there was no continuity in participation and there were students who cannot have access to the live lessons were shown as the reasons for low class efficiency.

I think my classes were efficient because if the student had been interested in the lessons as much as I was and if he had come to the lessons and followed my teaching, I think the situation of the student must have been good. But, of course the ones that I could not reach I can't say the same thing for them. As I told you before, if the student had followed the lesson regularly, I think I managed the process very well without much learning losses even though it was not like in face-to-face education. (P.5)

I can say that it is not like a class lesson. I mean no matter how I tried to become efficient, I cannot touch them. Really, I can't grab their attention. Maximum 3-5 people are in online lessons and I can lose others very easily because their only the names of them and I can't actually touch them. If the student was in school, I would take the student to my side and I could persuasively chat with him/her. (P.15)

I don't think that it would have been efficient if I had fully taught online. I would not think that. The fact that even the courses continues in a period that we progress with hybrid education increased 8th graders' motivation to participate in online classes. I mean we see each other at school at least once in a week during course times. Seeing each other once twice a week increased the class participation. Anyways, if there were situation where we had never seen each other, like the term there were total closures, at those times participation suddenly decreased. I mean while somehow you could control the student before, there was positive communication when you see the students face to face. As soon as this communication stops, efficiency suddenly decreases... (P.7)

...At first, I was shocked like everyone. I had no idea about what I could do. But, then, when we started to completely realize this, I think the efficiency increased at some point because now I know what I can do and where to do it much better. And from now on, I think I can manage the situation much better but I hope we continue with face-to-face education. (P.19)

As I said before, I actually think that my online teaching from computer was much more efficient than my teaching at school because there was no smart board. But, if all of my students came to school, I would say my teaching was 100% efficient. But, I can't say it as 100% because there were students who could not come. But, I think, the opportunities I provided to those who come to the classes and follow my lessons concerning English were much more during online education period... (P.6)

I don't want to show modesty about this issue because I saw that most of the teachers had difficulty in adapting to the process. I needed to put so much effort, too. I was quite ready when I needed to teach my friends who are teachers some technical things. And, I could easily get adapted to it. Both in terms of equipment because I had all of them and also because of the fact that I had this required training which enables me to be readier. I mean I could directly do whatever was just told to me during this distance education period. Even I could improve it and I think I had a lot of contributions to both school and the school administration. (P.1)

I could do much better. Of course, if participation was higher. Generally, we were 6 people in English lessons in total with my students. As a matter of fact, those students were the ones who like English lesson. I think at least they could obtain this year's learning outcomes. But, there is nothing that I can do about those who can't come to my lessons. I feel sorry for them. (P.20)

Well, students' motivation for the class decreased because of many reasons. First of all, there are students who cannot attend online classes. In addition, there were no examinations and there were no evaluation and testing. This situation resulted in their overcoming by languor. Therefore, students lost their interest in classes. It can be said that there is one year's education loss. I mean we can't say that it is very effective. (P.16)

Both me and my students we got exhausted anymore. Moreover, I feel like I write on water I mean it just doesn't work. I got classes which have 30 students and their financial situations are fine. But, in the classes where there are students whose financial situations are not good, I teach my lesson with 5-10 students. They do not open microphone or camera. We can't object to them because we know their parents' economical background. As a result, when I think about distance education from my perspective and my situation, I feel like I couldn't be efficient enough recently because I think it is like writing on the water. (P.12)

Actually, I think my online classes' efficiency was less when compared to face-to-face education. In face-to-face education at least one point of an activity used during the classes can be fun. Or, it can be attractive for the students. But, in online education I realized that I couldn't grab students' attention even if I used videos or different materials. Maybe, it was about me. I think I became more distant to students because for example, in face-to-face education you can sometimes chat with the students. You learn things about them. Or, you can learn the students' attitudes towards the language. But, in online education, we don't have this because we don't have chance to observe or to chat with them. I mean we only see them during the live lessons... (P.21)

One important finding was that teachers believe that online education does not work out with younger age groups.

... I think in terms of age group; university students can benefit a lot from online education because they are conscious a lot more than the others. But, for example, I work at a middle school. A student who studies at a middle school I mean he/she is not that old. I mean they shouldn't get online education because of their level. They are not aware of many things. I think distance education can be more advantageous for high school or university students who are more aware of the things. (P.9)

... You can easily grab the attention of the students in lessons if it is face-to-face education. But, when you teach online everything is over if the child looks at somewhere else as you are on the screen. (P.6)

At the same time, I study for doctorate. I do my doctorate in the field of education in ... University. Because of that, in fact, I experienced online education period both as a teacher and as a student. On the one hand, I gave online classes to my students, on the other hand I attended online courses for my doctorate classes with my student identity. For example, it was more enjoyable to be a student. And also more efficient. During the distance education period, I had a better distance education experience with adults in a university environment. And, I still have. But, of course in younger age groups the parents and our students had more problems considering their socio-economic and school environment. Online education had more challenges there... (P.1)

There were opinions of the teachers concerning hybrid education, as well. One teacher hopes that the hybrid education will continue to become a part of our lives and another teacher was glad that classes were not only online during Covid-19 times.

In second week of face-to-face education I realized that hybrid education can actually be here to stay. I mean, in the sense that for example, 9th graders have four hours of English lessons. One or two of them are/can be open to planning. Let's say two. Two of them can be face-to-face and two of them can be online. I say this because I definitely agree that face-to-face is a must I don't even

argue about it. But, online is also necessary because of the reasons that I showed. I mean because I will not be able to provide the students the digital sources that I want. I wouldn't want to lose that advantage of online education. We will lose it but I wouldn't want that. I hope hybrid education will be permanent. (P.18)

One of the most significant findings was that teachers mostly used negative words to summarize online education period. The most frequently given response when teachers were asked the question of "If I say... associate online education with three adjectives... What would be your answer? was "tiring".

Table 27: Connotations for Online Education

Negative Connotations	Positive Connotations
Inequality**, disconnected**, limiting**, inefficient**, cold**, unsatisfactory, laziness***, tiring*****, lifeless, chaos**, passivity, boring**, upsetting, lack of communication, difficult, tiredness, problematic, uncertainty, isolation, technological (can be positive or negative)	alternative learning, experience, easy, efficient, innovative***, devotion****, self-discipline, communication, patient**, exciting, longing, effort, comfort***, researching, technological (can be positive or negative), flexible

To sum up the qualitative analysis of the study, what teachers faced with in the beginning of the pandemic was chaos and uncertainty. As for the emergency remote education, the main problems teachers faced were related to technology, participation and lack of experience. What's more, some teachers expressed that the fact that teachers in Türkiye were not familiar with online education was a serious problem. It was observed that teachers used different strategies to overcome the challenges faced during the online education period. They tried to increase class participation/interaction and overcome technical problems. Teachers used different strategies about camera use, as well. Some teachers said that they preferred to keep their cameras closed while others always open their cameras. However, most of the teachers' habit was to use it open in the beginning of online education times and to close their cameras after a while. Teachers believed that online education had advantages in terms of flexibility and technology issues. As for the post pandemic period, many teachers reported that online education is not new to them anymore and both students and teachers could adapt to it. In addition, according to most of the teachers' reports some problems of online education period was solved and some others stayed. The most significant difficulty of online education period was shown as motivation. Interaction and lack of meaningful learning environment were also shown as other most important difficulties. The analysis showed that most of the teacher attempted to develop themselves in terms of their profession. What most of the teachers realized was that education has to be face-to-face and they had this longing for school. They also realized that they were rather not ready for online education when it was first introduced. With regards to efficiency of online education, teachers' ideas differed. Some teachers thought this period of online education was efficient while others thought it wasn't. Some also thought that the efficiency increased by time.

However, the shared idea was that low lesson efficiency stemmed from unsustained participation and impossibilities.



CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

This study aimed to investigate EFL teachers' online education experiences during Covid-19 period. Rather than solely focusing exclusively on the challenges or problems faced by English teachers and the strategies teachers used to handle experienced problems, the discussion also focused on the opportunities offered or utilized by online education for these teachers. Three minor research questions were addressed in an effort to explore the pains and gains of EFL teachers during Covid-19 period.

Firstly, data revealed that one of the most encountered challenges were technology-related problems. Technology-related problems were also highlighted in the previous studies, as well (Borkar & Nandula, 2020; Hakim, 2020; Tosun et al., 2021, Ghanbari & Nowroozi, 2022; Hangişi, 2022). The major technology-related problems were teaching in a virtual environment, being a stranger to new applications and adapting to those new apps, EBA/ZOOM connection, assigning classes on EBA or ZOOM, technological competence, the use of technical tools and on-camera teaching. Besides these ones, there were many internet connection problems during online education, as well. The fact that there were many technology-related problems during online education is not surprising considering the fact that for online education, technology is the most used tool all by itself and there are many conditions needed to be met to execute online education process. As for the effects of technical problems happening during the online lessons, they not only easily break the classroom atmosphere but also decrease teachers' motivation. Thus, measures must be taken to minimize or remove all the technical problems and thus their bad effects on teacher motivation and teachers' teaching. Data also brings into light the importance of having technological competence to be able to participate in classes. In this study, it was clearly seen that students were not competent about technology use in the beginning times of online education and they adapted to the period with the help of their teachers. Namely, teachers adapted to the period much quicker. Therefore, Kobul (2022)'s findings and findings of this study overlaps about a common critical point. Kobul (2022) mentions the empirical evidence showing that even though adults label younger generations as the ones who are quite competent about technology; however, this assumption might not be true. Hence, just as Kobul (2022) underlined in his paper, "assumptions or labels on the practices of current new generation should be exercised with caution rather than being taken for granted".

Secondly, participation-related problems were among the most frequently encountered challenges, as well. It is critically important to say here that the previous studies also underlined that participation problems were quite often faced by the teachers during online education. (Hamilton, 2014; Tosun et al., 2021; Hangişi, 2022). It goes without saying that the issue of participation problems in online education is a multidimensional issue. This study showed that students either did not have the required infrastructure/technical devices/internet or they didn't prefer to participate in online classes even though they were able to do so. In Turkey, the Ministry of National Education didn't make class participation compulsory for the students for a long time during Covid-19 distance education times. Therefore, this could be the reason why some students act arbitrarily in terms of class participation. Students could also participate in the classes that were given by the teachers they favoured since according to the system, they had the luxury to do so. However, the issue of making the participation compulsory during an outbreak is a dilemma since there can be many vulnerable students who have high health risks or there can be students who have no possibility to participate in online lessons because of the rural place where they live, etc. Data clearly shows that class participation is directly affected by the families' economical situations. Thus, unfortunately, all the students were not evenly lucky to participate in online education.

Just as the previous studies unplighted (Hamilton, 2014; Smith, 2022; Hangişi, 2022), interaction was extremely challenging during Covid-19 times. Data showed that interacting with the students was the most challenging one for the teachers.

Lastly, there were many challenges stemming from lack of experience. Thus, it can definitely be suggested that teachers should be trained about online education as also the previous studies suggested (Civelek, Toplu & Uzun, 2021; Borkar & Nandula, 2020). Even though issues of technology, participation, lack of experience and interaction were major problems, teachers faced other problems, as well. Feedback and evaluation, ethical issues, camera use, infrastructure, etc. were some other problematic issues during the online education period.

It is remarkable to note that teachers made use of many strategies to deal with challenging situations during Covid-19 period. Pandemic period limited almost all kinds of interaction. In addition, it necessitated the education system get upside down. Furthermore, students got isolated in their homes. There is no need to say that in face to face education, there is already an institution called school which provides an atmosphere where students can directly socialize with their friends and teachers and can easily participate in the lessons without any barrier. Compared to school atmosphere, online education setting by its nature is an artificial environment. Therefore, interaction is tasteless compared to face to face education. Moreover, even though in a class environment teacher can bring many factors under control to able to keep class peaceful, teachers may not keep the peace online because of many reasons (cheating, students' private chatting with other students, no camera control, etc.). Consequently, it is not surprising that during online education period teachers adopted

strategies in this direction. For this study, teachers benefited from different strategies for mainly two aims. Teachers mostly aimed to increase the participation and interaction. The findings of this study was in line with some previous studies' findings, as well. For example, trying to reach students via phoning them (Hangişi, 2022), mail groups, sharing informative videos over parent groups, giving personal information like phone numbers and mail address to the students (Hamilton, 2014), feeling empathy with parents, leading the students, trying to make students speak during online lessons, rewarding the students (Hangişi, 2022), informing students' parents when students skipped the classes, trying to motivate the students towards online education and sending materials to the students when classes were skipped by them were the strategies used by the teachers to increase class participation and interaction during the online education period. Teachers' strategies also aimed to overcome technical problems. Trying to learn the way technical devices used for online education, teachers' practising teaching online on their own when they have free time, trying to ease students' technical adaptations for online education, attending professional trainings and examining sample online lessons were some of the strategies to decrease technical problems faced during online education period. Teachers used different strategies about camera use, as well. As for the camera use, data directly suggests that students get more motivated when their teachers use their cameras open. In addition, when the data was examined, it was clearly within the sight that teachers agree that students should open their cameras during online lessons because otherwise teachers cannot know anything about the situation of the students. According to the data, most of the teachers' camera using habit was to open it in the very beginning of online education period and then slowly giving up this habit as time passed. What's more, the strategy used by a lot of teachers to overcome the problems they cannot solve on their own was to ask other teachers. One more strategy adopted by most of the teachers was to attend trainings for their professional development. This study included middle school and high school teachers and not only children but also teenagers have their psychological and pedagogical needs according to their developmental stages. Here, being a teacher as a researcher, I can't (but I want to) emphasize enough that even though teachers had adopted many strategies to increase participation/interaction and to overcome technical problems, students' other critical needs except their academic ones may have not been unmet not only in Türkiye but also in the world. After I reviewed the literature, I realized that there is a big gap in the literature concerning pedagogical dimension of online education and therefore this topic needs to be touched by the researchers.

According to the data, online education provided a lot of opportunities especially on the subjects of technology and flexibility. One advantage concerning technology was that not only teachers but also the students had to improve their technological skills during online education. In addition, online education enabled teachers to use applications in an efficient way during the online education period. Online education had also the advantage of providing fast access to the digital sources. This finding was in line with the study of a prior research conducted by Ramadani & Xhaferi (2020). Moreover, teachers could easily open the audios and education became more interactive during the online education period. Another major opportunity was flexibility. This finding was also

in parallel with some previous research findings (Tsegay et al., 2022; Smith, 2022; Ghanbari & Nowroozi, 2022). Online education provided flexibility in terms of education place and hour. One of the biggest advantage for the teachers was flexibility in relation to clothing preferences. With reference to other opportunities, online education was very economical especially in terms of transportation and food cost, as well.

Data strongly showed that teachers favoured online education a lot in that they didn't have to endeavour for students' behavioural problems. One very significant finding revealed in this study was that short class hours increased teachers' motivation to teach during the online education period. However, in another study conducted by Hangişi (2022) in Türkiye, short class hours were found to be problematic by EFL teachers.

When it comes to the question whether the problems faced when the pandemic first emerged still continue or not, data showed that most of the problems were solved. Perhaps one of the most significant results is that teachers and students adapted to online education in spite of many challenges and difficulties they experienced. There were no more much problems concerning internet or connection. Students and teachers were observed to improve their digital technological competences. The chaos felt at the very beginning appeared to have vanished. As a matter of fact, most teachers were capable of adapting to the newly-emerged digital challenge. Nevertheless, some structural problems still stayed. And, the biggest of them is participation. The study indicated that teachers gave big efforts to incorporate the students into the online education; however, it should not be forgotten that participation during online education was not compulsory and examinations were mostly cancelled during the online education period. Therefore, these two factors may have contributed to motivation and participation problems during the online education period a lot.

It is also important to point out that low motivation, limited interaction, and the lack of meaningful learning environments (the learning environments of students) were among the biggest challenges teachers faced when teaching online. Nevertheless, the most important and prominent one was students' low learning motivation. It was revealed that it was really hard to motivate students to participate in online classes. Motivation is a critical factor in education and Bakar (2014) defines motivation as "a complex part of human psychology and behavior that influences how individuals choose to invest their time, how much energy they exert in any given task, how they think and feel about the task, and how long they persist at the task". Hence, it can be said that with higher possibility students who have had high learning motivation during online education period (in individual sense) must have participated more actively during online classes. The main reasons for students' low learning motivation are "teacher teaching methods", "unclear curriculum and teaching objectives", "economic and socio-cultural backgrounds of the students", "advances in technology and information", "feeling unable to certain subjects", "personal problem of the students..." along with the fact that "there is no relevance of the curriculum to the needs and interests of students" (Sardiman,

2004 as cited in Fajri et al., 2021: 4). This study showed that students had low motivation for learning and there may be many reasons for this. First of all, there was chaos at the beginning of the distance education period. Neither teachers nor students knew exactly what was going on. Secondly, students' socio-cultural background has been different and therefore they might have thought that they had already fallen behind other students who have higher status. In addition, technology has advanced so much that students are not interested in academic benefits of it and they mostly deal with the fun side of technology. Surely, students' personal problems and other given factors along with the ones we do not yet know should be thought as other possible causes of students' low motivation to learn. For example, Meşe & Sevilen (2021: 20) published that "not being satisfied with the course content and materials", "lacking self-discipline to follow the course", "a lack of communication as a group of teachers" and students" and "lack of private space to follow the course" were among the reasons for EFL learners' low motivation during online education. In this study, the finding of lack of meaningful learning environment as a challenge was in line with Aytaç (2021)' s findings, as well. In some former studies (Hakim, 2020; Aytaç, 2021; Demir & Sönmez, 2021; Hangişi, 2022), lack of motivation was shown as a challenge, as well.

As for the perceptions of EFL teachers towards comparison of the face-to-face education, online education and hybrid education, data provided interesting results. First of all, critical importance of face-to-face education in both students' and teachers' lives was stressed by the teachers so many times. One of the most important reasons was that face-to-face education could bring the students and teachers closer not only in physical sense but also in emotional sense. Teachers many times expressed that they had this nostalgia for the old times. Data showed that teachers would prefer teaching face-to-face in the future rather than teaching online if they would torn between those two choices. This may be accounted for by the fact that teachers felt more comfortable or safer in face-to-face classes. Some may have found it difficult to leave their comfort zones where they had been living or confined for a considerable period of time. In the case of digital platforms, they may have felt that they were in a no-man's land. Their position or control was somehow challenged. However, teachers also found hybrid education (face-to-face and online together) logical because of some important factors. Online education was more practical concerning solving questions. Furthermore, online education enables teachers to present different kinds of digital sources to the students. It can be said that high school EFL teachers and middle school EFL teachers had more positive attitude towards face-to-face education and this was in line with the findings of the previous study carried out by Demir & Sönmez (2021).

In this study, online education experiences of EFL teachers who have different characteristics were compared. First of all, online education experiences of 8th grade teachers and online education experiences of 9th grade teachers were compared. It was found out that it was harder for eight grade teachers to give feedback and do evaluation than ninth grade teachers. This can stem from the fact 8th grade students are supposed to take high school entrance exam and therefore teachers may regard

their efforts about giving feedback and evaluation to them as inefficient. In addition, middle school 8th grade teachers may think their students may need more feedback as a matter of their ages. Moreover, data presented that male teachers experienced less problems concerning camera-related challenges and feedback & evaluation-related challenges. One more interesting result was that teachers who have more than 20 years' of teaching experience experienced a lot more difficulties concerning technology and ethical issues. This can be explained by the fact that younger generations grew up with technology and as a result of this they can be ahead of their older colleagues about technology use.

With regard to the efficiency of online education period, teachers appeared to have been divided into two different camps. There were few of them who perceive their experience as very efficient or partly efficient, as well. However, data most of the times indicated that the one of the problematic side was online education system in which each and every student participated in the lessons could not be realized especially because of inequality of opportunities in online education stemming from the economic situations of parents. Therefore, it was shown that online education could be beneficial for those who could regularly come to the classes. However, according to the data, it will not be totally true to say that economic conditions of the students were the only reason for low participation. Data also showed that it is also a choice made by the students to come to online classes even though they have all the technical equipment. Furthermore, the fact that online education is not appropriate for younger age groups were also expressed by the teachers.

Applicability of the theory: The findings showed that the theory of constructivism is applicable for this study. Teachers were successful in terms of adapting the students to the new normal of education. Even though there was the distance barrier, by using alternative ways, teachers enabled students' learning during online education.

Limitations of the study: This study had one clear limitation. The study was conducted during post-covid period. Even though the main intention was already to reveal the teachers' experiences during all the phases of the pandemic which are the beginning phase, adaptation phase and post-pandemic phase, it should be taken into account that participants may have had difficulty in remembering the beginning times and adaptation times of the pandemic.

Further research: I think one very important further research that I consider needed is studying efficiency of hybrid education at secondary and high school level. Another significant further research that I think should be investigated is studying efficiency of the strategies used by EFL teachers during online education from EFL teachers' perspectives. In addition, I believe comparison of the efficiency of online education concerning younger age groups and older age groups from the perspectives of teachers is critical studying topic. Another further research topic that should not be missed out is studying motivation in online education.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1) Türkiye’de bir yıl önce mart ayında Covid-19 salgını sebebiyle çok hızlı bir şekilde okullar kapatıldı. Aniden çevrimiçi / uzaktan eğitime geçildi. Uzaktan eğitime ilk kez geçildiğinde karşılaştığınız sorunlar oldu mu?
2) Peki ne tür sorunlarla karşılaştınız? Açıklayabilir misiniz?
3) Uzaktan eğitim bir yıldır devam ediyor. Süreç içerisinde karşılaştığınız problemlerin zamanla üstesinden gelebildiniz mi?
4) (Eğer cevap evet ise) Peki bu problemlerin üstesinden gelirken ne tür stratejiler geliştirdiniz?
5) Sizce uzaktan eğitimin en büyük zorluğu nedir? Neden?
6) Sizin ve öğrencilerinizin ders esnasındaki kamera açma tutum ve alışkanlığınız hakkında neler söyleyebilirsiniz?
7) Şimdiye kadar başlıca uzaktan eğitim sürecinde bir öğretmen olarak yaşadığınız zorlukları dile getirdiniz. Bir yıl boyunca evden ders anlattığınız bu sürecin avantajları olduğuna inanıyor musunuz?
8) (Eğer cevap evet ise) Sizce sürecin ne gibi avantajları oldu?
9) Bu süreçte profesyonel ya da mesleki anlamda kendinizi geliştirmek için bir şeyler yaptınız mı?
10) (Cevap evet ise) Neler yaptınız?
11) Bu süreçte kişisel gelişim anlamında kendinizi geliştirmek için bir şeyler yaptınız mı?
12) (Cevap evet ise) Neler yaptınız?
13) Covid-19 sürecinin bir öğretmen olarak size neleri fark ettirdiğini düşünüyorsunuz?
14) Online eğitim sürecindeki verimliliğiniz hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?
15) Online eğitim sürecini üç sıfatla özdeşleştirin desem. Ne derdiniz?

Appendix 2: Example Piloting Feedbacks

Subject: Re: Fw: Anket

Hocam,

Anketi cevapladım ve sorular gayet açıktı. Yalnız anket soruları fazla olduğundan uzun zaman aldı. Öğrencilerin kamera açıp açmamasına yoğunlaşmış fakat bazı öğrenciler seslerini de açmamayı tercih ediyorlar ve hiçbir şekilde cevap vermemeyi seçiyorlar. Öğretmen ve öğrenci motivasyonu için belki bu konuda da bazı düzenlemeler yapılabilir. Son olarak 79. maddede Covid-19'dan önce de online eğitim tecrübemizin olup olmadığı sorulmuş. Benim herhangi bir tecrübem olmadı fakat hemen sonraki maddede yani 80. maddede ise kaç yıl tecrübemiz olduğu sorulmuş ve cevaplamamız zorunlu tutulmuş. Ben de bu sebeple 0-6 ay seçeneğini işaretledim. 80. maddenin cevaplama zorunluluğunun kaldırılması gerekir diye düşünüyorum.

Saygılarımla

Değerli hocam,

Öncelikle çalışmalarınızda kolaylıklar dilerim. Anket esnasında aldığım notlarımı ekte paylaşıyorum. Umarım eleştirilerimi yapıcı/dostane bir şekilde görür ve kabul edersiniz.

Üniversite düzeyinde çalıştığım için özellikle EBA ile ilgili sorulara cevap verip vermeme konusunda çok tereddüt ettim. Onun dışında 80'den fazla soruya cevap vermek inanılmaz yorucu oldu. Nottarda da belirttiğim üzere sorular arasındaki geçiş inanılmaz hızlı oluyor, dolayısıyla ilgili soruları ilgili başlıklar altında toplamanızı tavsiye eder, çalışmalarınızda başarılar dilerim.

Saygılarımla.



Subject: Re: Anket

Hocam merhabalar,

Güzel hazırlanmış bir anket ancak, örneğin özel bir kurum çalışan öğretmen olarak yalnızca EBAYla ilgili sorular sorulmuş olması problemli (çalışma yalnızca devlet öğretmenleriyle yapılmıyorsa tabii) haricinde çok fazla soru olması yine online bir sistem üzerinde dikkatimi sürdürmemi zorlaştırdı. Harici parantez içlerinde verilen ses kaydı, editleme gibi açıklamalar yerine bunlarla ilgili birebir sorular oluşturulabilir

Saygılarımla,

Appendix 3: Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Colleague

The purpose of this questionnaire is to learn your perspectives concerning the challenges and opportunities of online education during Covid-19 times. I want to emphasize that your participation is totally voluntary. All information you provide will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes.

Above all, your ideas are of utmost importance as they will significantly contribute to my study.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely
Nur Gökçen

PART 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Age

22-26 () 27-30 () 31-35 () 36-40 () 41-45 () 46-50 () 50+ ()

2. Gender

Female () Male () Prefer not to Answer ()

3. If you answer the question above as "other", please use this section to specify your current academic level.

4. Teaching Experience

0-5 years () 11-15 years () 16-20 years () 6-10 years () more than 20 years ()

5. Please write the province where you work.

6. *Please select the school grade of the students that you want to take into account while answering the survey questions. You should answer all the following survey questions thinking ONLY the student grade that you choose now.**

5th grade () 6th grade () 7th grade () 8th grade () 9th grade ()

10th grade () 11th grade () 12th grade ()

Appendix 3: (Continue)

PART 2	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1) Constant teaching in front of a computer is a challenge for me.	1	2	3	4	5
2) At the very beginning of online education period, I had difficulty in using EBA.	1	2	3	4	5
3) At the very beginning of online education period, I had difficulty in using Zoom.	1	2	3	4	5
4) Now, I still have difficulty in using EBA.	1	2	3	4	5
5) Now, I still have difficulty in using Zoom.	1	2	3	4	5
6) I get easily confused in an online class environment.	1	2	3	4	5
7) Any technical problem during an online lesson is enough to break classroom atmosphere.	1	2	3	4	5
8) It is necessary to have training to be more effective while teaching online.	1	2	3	4	5
9) I can solve online technical problems on my own.	1	2	3	4	5
10) I think the vast majority of the students have at least one web enabled device. (mobile phones, tablets, computers.)	1	2	3	4	5
11) I believe the vast majority of the students have access to the internet at their homes.	1	2	3	4	5
12) I think the vast majority of the students lack the technical competence required to participate in the class activities. (share screen, start the video, mute, chat, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
13) Most of the students attend online lessons via their smart phones.	1	2	3	4	5
14) I think students who attend online classes via their mobile phones have so much difficulty in following the lessons.	1	2	3	4	5
15) Weak internet connection creates too much problem during online lessons. (voice arrives too late, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
16) Online classroom management is harder.	1	2	3	4	5
17) I find it difficult to motivate my students to participate in online lessons.	1	2	3	4	5
18) I have less interaction with students because of the distance.	1	2	3	4	5
19) I have less interaction with parents because of the distance.	1	2	3	4	5
20) I have less interaction with school administrations because of the distance.	1	2	3	4	5
21) I have less interaction with other teachers at my school because of the distance.	1	2	3	4	5
22) I have less interaction with my colleagues because of online education.	1	2	3	4	5
23) It is easier to invite parents for parents' meeting during online education times. (no paperwork, easier accessibility to the parents)	1	2	3	4	5
24) It is easier to hold parents' meetings online. (flexibility in terms of time and place)	1	2	3	4	5
25) Scheduling the upcoming online lessons on EBA increases my workload.	1	2	3	4	5
26) Helping students about technical problems increases my work load.	1	2	3	4	5
27) I think EBA system was quite enriched with a lot of new materials during pandemic.	1	2	3	4	5
28) EBA system was made more functional the following academic year.	1	2	3	4	5
29) I believe students become more addicted to the internet due to online education.	1	2	3	4	5
30) I do not enjoy getting exposed to so much technology due to online education.	1	2	3	4	5
31) I believe students' motivation for class participation will decrease when I do not open my camera during an online lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
32) It doesn't bother me when students do not open their cameras during an online lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
33) When students do not open their cameras, I cannot follow if they listen to me or not.	1	2	3	4	5
34) I am worried that students can save my photo during an online lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
35) I am worried that student can record my teaching during an online lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
36) I feel like I am doing something wrong when I ask students to open their cameras while I teach.	1	2	3	4	5
37) Students who do not open their cameras during online lessons reduce my teaching motivation.	1	2	3	4	5
38) My motivation while teaching online is generally very low.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix 3: (Continue)

39) I find teaching online boring.	1	2	3	4	5
40) The fact that online class length is shorter increases my teaching motivation.	1	2	3	4	5
41) Technological problems that arise during an online lesson reduce my teaching motivation.	1	2	3	4	5
42) Teaching from home increases my teaching motivation.	1	2	3	4	5
43) Online teaching is enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5
44) At the very beginning of online education period, many students did not have enough technological competence.	1	2	3	4	5
45) As the time progresses, the vast majority of the students improved their technological competence.	1	2	3	4	5
46) When online education started in March last year, I faced many problems while teaching online.	1	2	3	4	5
47) I adapted myself easily to any sudden change in the education system during Covid-19 epidemic.	1	2	3	4	5
48) When online education started, I was exhausted by the students who asked for my technical help.	1	2	3	4	5
49) After all this time, a lot of students still go on bothering me by asking for technical help.	1	2	3	4	5
50) I do not have enough time to give feedback to each student during online classes.	1	2	3	4	5
51) I have difficulty in checking whether each student did their homework or not during online education times.	1	2	3	4	5
52) I mostly give homework feedback for each student during online education times.	1	2	3	4	5
53) Over the course of online education period, it was more difficult for me to evaluate students' works.	1	2	3	4	5
54) Teaching during Covid-19 times is more stressful.	1	2	3	4	5
55) I am scared that I can catch coronavirus at school environment.	1	2	3	4	5
56) I believe teaching with a mask in the classroom is difficult.	1	2	3	4	5
57) Students' wearing a mask in classrooms makes their learning more difficult.	1	2	3	4	5
58) I think my wearing a mask in the classroom affects my teaching negatively.	1	2	3	4	5
59) I am worried that looking at the screen for a long time damages my eyes.	1	2	3	4	5
60) I have a lot of back pain as I sit in front of computers for a long time.	1	2	3	4	5
61) I spend less money for transportation because I less often go to school during online education period.	1	2	3	4	5
62) I spend less money for food because I less often go to school during online education period.	1	2	3	4	5
63) I feel I have more free time during online education times.	1	2	3	4	5
64) The best part of online education is that I do not have to deal with students' behavioral problems.	1	2	3	4	5
65) I feel more comfortable about clothing for my online lessons.	1	2	3	4	5
66) I feel I am not much attentive to my appearance for an online lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
67) I believe face to face education can never be replaced by online education.	1	2	3	4	5
68) If I was given the right to choose, I would choose face to face teaching rather than online teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
69) I used to feel more connected with students during face to face education.	1	2	3	4	5
70) I believe that some lessons should be taught online in addition to the classes that are taught at school.	1	2	3	4	5
71) I hope I won't need to teach English online in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
72) I am worried that pandemic will cause irrecoverable academic failure in the education lives of middle school generation.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix 3: (Continue)

PART 3

73) How much do you think you have contributed to your professional development during online education times?

Not at All () Slightly () Moderately () A Lot () Extremely ()

74) How satisfied are you with your professional development attempts during online education times?

Very Dissatisfied () Dissatisfied () Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied ()
Satisfied () Very Satisfied ()

75) How often do you interact with other English teachers during Covid-19 times?

Never () Rarely () Sometimes () Often () Always ()

76) How often do you share your online lesson experiences with other English teachers during Covid-19 times?

Never () Rarely () Sometimes () Often () Always ()

77) How often do you talk about problem solving strategies you use during online education with other English teachers?

Never () Rarely () Sometimes () Often () Always ()

78) Have you ever taught online before Covid-19 times?

Yes () No ()

79) How long have you taught online before Covid-19? (answer only if you have this experience)

0-6 months () 6-12 months () 12-18 months () more than two years ()

80) Would you like to add anything else that you want to add? Please feel free to use this space.

CURRICULUM VITAE

She completed her high school education in Tosya Anatolian Teacher Training High School. After completing her high school education, she studied English Language Teaching at Boğaziçi University. As soon as she graduated from the department of Foreign Language Education in 2015, she straight off started working as an English teacher. She has seven years of teaching experience.

GÖKCEN is single and has native-like fluency in English language.

