

REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE
SAKARYA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING DEPARTMENT

**EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS' SELF-PERCEIVED EFFECTS OF
DIFFERENT MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION BACKGROUND IN THE ACADEMIC
CONTEXT: CHALLENGES, STRATEGIES, AND LANGUAGE PREFERENCES**

MASTER'S THESIS

MEHLİKA KOLBAŞI

SUPERVISOR

ASST. PROF. DR. ELİF BOZYİĞİT

CO-SUPERVISOR

ASST. PROF. DR. SABAHATTİN YEŞİLÇINAR

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is entirely my own work, that I have worked by following scientific and ethical principles, and that I have cited all the sources I have used while working in accordance with the principles of citation.

Mehlika KOLBAŞI

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ABSTRACT

EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS' SELF-PERCEIVED EFFECTS OF DIFFERENT MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION BACKGROUND IN THE ACADEMIC CONTEXT: CHALLENGES, STRATEGIES, AND LANGUAGE PREFERENCES

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Sakarya University, 2025.

This qualitative phenomenological study investigates the self-perceived effects of different medium of instruction (MOI) backgrounds on early career researchers' (ECRs) experiences in the Turkish academic context. Specifically, the study examines the research-related challenges ECRs encountered, the strategies they employ to overcome these challenges, and their academic language preferences in research practices. The study includes three groups of ECRs each including two participants who work as research assistants in Faculties of Education at Turkish universities: those who received both bachelor's and master's education in English medium instruction (EMI), those who received both in Turkish medium instruction (TMI), and those who transitioned from EMI undergraduate to TMI graduate education. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (RTA). The findings revealed that regardless of their MOI backgrounds, ECRs faced challenges in academic language skills, research writing and publication, and professional development. While EMI background ECRs struggled with dual focus on content and language, TMI background ECRs encountered difficulties with English academic writing and publication. ECRs who transitioned between MOIs experienced additional challenges in adapting to different academic terminologies. The results highlight insufficient emphasis on both Turkish and English academic writing skills and inadequate research training across different MOI contexts. To overcome these challenges, ECRs utilized various digital tools and translation services while also developing personal strategies. The study's findings have implications for higher education institutions

in terms of developing structured support systems and mentorship programs to better assist ECRs in their academic development, regardless of their MOI background.

Keywords: Academic Skills, Early Career Researchers, Medium of Instruction, Overcoming Strategies, Research Challenges, Turkish Higher Education.



ÖZET

FARKLI EĞİTİM DİLİ GEÇMİŞİNE SAHİP OLAN AKADEMİK KARIYERİNİN BAŞINDAKİ ARAŞTIRMACILARIN ALGILARI: ZORLUKLAR, STRATEJİLER VE DİL TERCİHLERİ

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Bu nitel fenomenolojik çalışma, farklı eğitim dili geçmişlerinin kariyerinin başındaki araştırmacılar üzerindeki öz-algılanan etkilerini Türk akademik bağlamında incelemiştir. Çalışma özellikle, genç araştırmacıların karşılaştıkları araştırmayla ilgili zorlukları, bu zorlukların üstesinden gelmek için kullandıkları stratejileri ve akademik dil tercihlerini araştırmıştır. Araştırmaya Türkiye'deki üniversitelerin Eğitim Fakültelerinde araştırma görevlisi olarak çalışan her biri ikişer katılımcı içeren üç grup genç araştırmacılar dahil edilmiştir: hem lisans hem yüksek lisans eğitimini İngilizce eğitim dilinde alanlar, her iki eğitim düzeyini de Türkçe eğitim dilinde alanlar ve lisans eğitimini İngilizce, yüksek lisans eğitimini Türkçe dilinde alanlar. Veriler yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla toplanmış ve yansıtıcı tematik analiz kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular, eğitim dili geçmişlerinden bağımsız olarak, kariyerinin başındaki araştırmacıların akademik dil becerileri, araştırma yazma ve yayınlama ile mesleki gelişim konularında zorluklarla karşılaştıklarını ortaya koymuştur. İngilizce eğitim dili geçmişli araştırmacılar içerik ve dile eş zamanlı odaklanma konusunda zorlanırken, Türkçe eğitim dili geçmişli araştırmacılar İngilizce akademik yazma ve yayın konularında güçlükler yaşamıştır. Farklı eğitim dilleri arasında geçiş yapan araştırmacılar ise diller arası akademik terminolojilere uyum sağlama konusunda ek zorluklar yaşamıştır. Sonuçlar, farklı eğitim dili bağlamlarında hem Türkçe hem İngilizce akademik yazma becerilerine ve araştırma eğitimine yetersiz vurgu yapıldığını göstermiştir. Bu zorlukların üstesinden gelmek için, erken kariyer araştırmacıları çeşitli dijital araçlar ve çeviri hizmetleri kullanırken, kişisel stratejiler de geliştirmiştir. Çalışmanın bulguları, yükseköğretim kurumlarının eğitim dili geçmişlerinden bağımsız olarak, kariyerinin başındaki araştırmacıların akademik gelişimlerini daha iyi desteklemek için yapılandırılmış

destek sistemleri ve mentorluk programları geliřtirmeleri aısından nemli ıkarımlar sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Akademik Beceriler, Arařtırma Zorlukları, Eėitim Dili, Kariyerinin Bařındaki Arařtırmacılar, Stratejiler, Trk Yksekėretimi.



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This section provides a brief overview of the background to the study, the problem, the purpose and significance of the study, limitations, along with definitions.

1.1 Background to Study

To understand the role and place of English as a lingua franca (ELF), firstly it is deemed to grasp lingua franca as a key concept. Lingua franca is defined as “language used as a means of communication between populations speaking vernaculars that are not mutually intelligible” in the Encyclopedia Britannica (Mufwene, 2024, para 1). A lingua franca refers to the language used as a bridge of communication between people who do not share a common native language (Seidlhofer, 2011). The starting point of lingua franca dates to the Middle Ages when communities needed a shared language to communicate effectively for commercial, religious, and diplomatic purposes also referred to as pidgin or jargon in the past (Mufwene, 2024). Several languages have served as lingua francas previously such as Latin, Spanish, and French. As Björkman (2013) indicates, the oldest common medium of communication lacked grammatical and lexical features which were developed later. Even though the earliest lingua franca holds corresponding purposes with the current lingua franca, the differences must be mentioned. While the oldest lingua franca lacked syntactic and lexical features, the current lingua franca holds these features as it is not a mixture of different languages. On the other hand, the current lingua franca is used in many diverse fields and both in spoken and written formats, unlike the old lingua franca as it was only a practical communicative language (Björkman, 2013). The most significant difference is that, unlike English, which is the native and most used language in many countries, the earliest lingua franca was not adopted as a native language. English has become the native language in many different countries, making it the global lingua franca and a widely used language

in various fields, a development influenced by numerous historical, political, economic, and cultural events such as massive migrations (Crystal, 2012).

Crystal (2012) points out the main reasons for a language to become a global one such as political, economic, technological, and cultural dominance over the world. In this regard, English stands out as the *lingua franca*, being the most widely used language worldwide; therefore, ELF has been the subject of numerous studies over the years in diverse fields such as linguistics (Ferenčík, 2021; Kiyak, 2021; O'Neal and Matsumoto, 2018; O'Regan, 2014; Reithofer, 2020; Schluer, 2015; Schmitz, 2017; Soruç and Griffiths, 2023; Wu et al., 2020), education (Guerra et al., 2020; Irgin, 2020; Köylü and Tracy-Ventura, 2022; Montakantiwong, 2020; Rose et al., 2020), business (Kaur and Birlik, 2021; Nielsen, 2019; Nielsen, 2020; Räisänen, 2020; Rajprasit et al., 2022; Roshid and Chowdhury, 2023; Takino, 2020; Wu, 2013), medicine (Carraro, 2021; Tweedie and Johnson, 2022), and translation and interpreting (Ehrensberger-Dow et al., 2020; Albl-Mikasa, 2022; Leal, 2021; Melchor and Walsh, 2020); hence having an impact on many fields including academia. Many researchers in the education field have focused on ELF from different aspects such as from higher education (HE) aspect (Ament, 2021; Deniz et al., 2019; Gruber et al., 2023; Kemaloglu-Er and Bayyurt, 2021; Ou et al., 2020; Zeng et al., 2022), primary education aspect (Larsson et al., 2022), critical language education aspect (Cogo et al., 2021), and business English as *lingua franca* (BELF) aspect (Altinmakas et al., 2018).

Based on these studies, it is evident that English becoming a *lingua franca* has greatly affected various fields along with the academic context. These effects include language education frameworks. The concepts of English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL) have emerged as important frameworks in the language education field. Though they appear to be similar, they have some significant differences. ESL involves teaching and learning English in settings where English is the dominant language, though it is not the students' native language. In contrast, EFL relates to situations where English is neither the main language spoken, nor does it have an official place. The emergence of EFL and ESL has performed as steppingstones to more targeted language learning among non-native speakers, paving the way for the development of English for specific purposes (ESP) which endeavors to provide learners with necessary language skills and lexicon related to the specific field of study or work such as business, law, healthcare, and engineering (Anthony, 2018). The emergence of EFL and ESL concepts has greatly affected the concept

of ESP which necessitates an effective usage and communication of English in specific contexts including academic and research settings. This process has contributed to the emergence of English for Academic Purposes (EAP)/English for Research Publication Purposes (ERPP) as the sub-branches of ESP, also nurturing the concept of English as Academic Lingua Franca (Hyland, 2006). With that being said, Hyland (2006) points out different facets to academic communicative practice; teaching at different levels of HE which encompasses task and material design, and lectures; classroom interactions such as teacher feedback and discussions; and lastly, research-related communication (research publications, conference presentations), writings of students (essays, exam papers, and graduate theses), and administrative procedures (course documents, thesis defense). Based on Jain's (2023) definition, EAP provides non-native English speakers with the opportunity to obtain critical skills such as effectively reading, understanding, and writing academic English texts along with communication in English within academic contexts. Additionally, Graddol (2000) indicates that the areas in which English is most used are international organizations, conferences, research publications, business and economics; thus, it is considered the academic lingua franca by researchers around the world (Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001; Hinkel, 2017). Researchers from diverse departments and fields both in Türkiye and around the world use English in their own academic contexts to read scholarly texts, to be read by other researchers, to write scholarly texts, to attend international conferences, and to present their own studies in these international gatherings. From the point of English as an Academic Lingua Franca, the points provided above help us better understand the critical role of English as an Academic Lingua Franca in influencing educational settings.

The globalization of English in both general and academic contexts drive us to investigate the adoption of English as a medium of instruction (EMI). To gain an in-depth understanding of EMI, it is necessary to grasp the concept of a medium of instruction (MOI) in general. MOI refers to the language used in the teaching-learning environment (Silver and Lwin, 2014). MOI is the language used by the teacher to teach. MOI performs as a channel that transfers knowledge and plays a significant role in educational contexts for learners, teachers, the learning environment, and culture in different ways, including employment, migration, and salary as it comes to the forefront with its effect on increasing job opportunities and salaries (Kılıçaslan et al., 2018). The most important effect of MOI may be the role it has on the learners' academic success. In this sense, MOI may either pose a

disadvantage/challenge or an advantage which makes this a topic of discussion (Altay et al., 2022; Bälter et al., 2023; Civan and Coşkun, 2016; Curle et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2023; Rose et al., 2019; Tang and Curtis, 2024; Thompson et al., 2019; Xie and Curle, 2020). Research has demonstrated that best learning occurs when learners are taught in a language they comprehend effortlessly (Cummins, 2008). This emphasizes the significance of the fitting choice of MOI in line with the students' backgrounds. Baker (2011) highlights language proficiency is linked to cognitive growth which indicates that students comprehend complicated concepts and think critically when taught in a language they are competent in. Given this situation, the fitting choice of MOI gains importance for educational stakeholders.

The English language has made its way as the MOI into the education field as it is the lingua franca of the world. EMI has become a common practice all around the world (Dearden, 2015; Dimova et al., 2015; Griffiths, 2023; Murata, 2020). Understanding the underlying reasons why many higher education institutions (HEIs) adopt EMI can provide us with a broader perspective. MOI is seen as a means of preserving the national language and culture (Crystal, 2012; May and Hornberger, 2010; Rubdy and Saraceni, 2006). However, there is competition between HEIs that encourages low-ranking HEIs to outperform the higher-ranking ones (Doiz et al., 2013) which compels the low-ranking HEIs to adopt EMI to reach a larger group of people. In the HE context, high-quality academic research is of great importance. Paul (2024) indicates that high-impact journals require high-quality studies to be published in English to reach out to more readers internationally, highlighting that publishing in English is recommended for studies to be read, rated in the best possible academic journals, and have a greater impact in the international context. Another important reason affecting the choice of MOI is the student profile. Students are a vital part of universities and HEIs. Training exemplary students is the primary goal and is not restricted to the mother-tongue instruction (MTI). Consequently, HEIs seek to attract international students, become higher-ranking institutions, and prepare local students for the global market which requires the use of EMI (Doiz et al., 2013). However, this adoption entails a high level of academic English proficiency for both students and the faculty members which is a key aspect for involving in the complicated disciplinary content and taking part in the global academic community.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

As MOI has a critical role in higher education, it is necessary to understand the higher education systems better. In the Turkish context of higher education and according to articles 130 and 27 in the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye (1982), universities are established with public legal entity and scientific autonomy, consisting of various units to provide education at various levels, scientific research publication and consultancy, and everyone has the right to freely learn and teach science and arts, to explain and disseminate them, and to conduct all kinds of research in these fields. Thus, this autonomy indicates various unique methods of teaching and research engagement for universities while it means various educational experiences for students and involved academics. As much as diversification promotes adaptation skills, it perplexes the understanding of how different MOI backgrounds affect students and academics involved at different universities.

The studies on EMI mainly concentrate on students (Aizawa et al., 2020; Ekoç, 2018; Macaro and Akincioglu, 2017; Soruç et al., 2018; Uçar and Soruç, 2018), academic achievement (Altay et al., 2022; Curle et al., 2020; Yuksel et al., 2021; Xie and Curle, 2020), and teachers' perspectives (Briggs et al., 2018; Dearden and Macaro, 2016; Macaro et al., 2019; Pun and Thomas, 2020); however, the experiences and perspectives of researchers themselves remain largely overlooked (Macaro and Rose, 2023). Although some studies have explored the implications of switching MOI across different contexts (Soruç and Griffiths, 2018; Zhou and Rose, 2021; Zhou and Thompson, 2023), little attention has been paid to how these shifts affect researchers. There is also a need for better understanding of language preferences of researchers in academic contexts to see the effects of changing MOI backgrounds on their preferences (Castro and Lombrio, 2021; Stockemer & Wigginton, 2019). Despite its significance, the impact of the fitting choice of MOI on researcher identity development and researchers is understudied. Considering the effect of the fitting choice of MOI on students and teachers, its effects on researchers and involved academics are inevitable.

Hyland (2016) and Ekoç-Özçelik (2023) emphasize that researchers' academic success is assessed through their publications and research productivity. They indicate that the more academic papers in English published in prominent journals, the greater the benefits, such as more readers, more citations, and more advantages in terms of tenure positions, research

funding, institutional and individual prestige, and contributions to international academic literature. These individual researchers begin their academic career journey as junior researchers defined in the OECD (2015) Frascati Manual. As for early-stage researchers (ESRs), the European Commission (n.d.) outlines them as individuals who are in the first four years of their research careers and have not yet earned a doctoral degree but meet the requirements to start a PhD. Based on these two definitions, the researcher of the current study aims to broaden the early career researcher (ECR) definition by integrating the junior researcher definition and including master's level students as well in the context of the current study. Consequently, the researcher refers to individuals who pursue more research experience under the guidance of more experienced researchers, including master's students as early career researchers (ECRs).

ECRs' beginning phase of the academic journey continues and develops into becoming experienced researchers or academicians. Proceeding from the first phase forward, ECRs construct some sort of researcher identities which are shaped by their academic environment and can change over time considering their social and academic contexts. During the identity development process, various factors, including personal, social, environmental, institutional, and academic ones play a significant role. More specifically, these factors include research engagement and professional development activities including research projects, conferences, workshops, or seminars (Çakmak and Çelik, 2024); a collaborative and supportive culture within the institution and the department (Baker and Lattuca, 2010; Ennals et al., 2016), mentorship (Conant et al., 1998; Kirk and Lipscombe, 2019), and internal factors such as motivation, personal characteristics, ideas, belief systems, and future plans, etc. (Jorgensen and Duncan, 2015). Owan et al. (2024) highlighted the facilitating role of mentorship followed by positive institutional culture and collaboration in research productivity. Creating and sustaining a positive academic culture and environment is significant for increasing research engagement, quality, and integrity, enhancing a collaborative work/research environment, supporting novice researchers' learning and identity development, institutional success, researchers' well-being, and retention etc. Consequently, the professional and academic environment, where early career researchers are, becomes a key factor in their journey of becoming experienced researchers and constructing researcher identities. Considering that today's ECRs are the future experienced researchers and research leaders, it is important in this sense to support their learning and identity development processes.

The consistency and the quality of ECRs' research engagement are likely to be affected and should therefore be investigated particularly in the Turkish context. Another issue is that the higher education system in Türkiye offers the opportunity to change universities, MOI, and disciplines between undergraduate and graduate levels of higher education making it necessary to examine the effects of these changes on ECRs since these changes may either present challenges or advantages in their journey of becoming experienced researchers. It may have major effects on ECRs' exposure to, proficiency, and utilization of different academic languages along with their overall research engagement activities and research skills. Even though ECRs who proceed from undergraduate to graduate level of education encounter some overall challenges, these challenges may become even more prominent in multicultural and multilingual contexts where the MOI varies.

With the globalization of English and the widespread adoption of EMI, changing MOIs has become more possible in the HE and academic context. The increased possibility of changing MOIs between educational levels puts researchers in a position that requires them to adapt their academic language skills and publication practices, while also promoting linguistic diversity in the research context. However, the current literature lacks insights into how exactly MOI affects the research and language experiences of ECRs. The challenges presented by different MOI backgrounds may vary from language barriers to cognitive academic language proficiency, affecting not only the comprehension of complicated academic content but also the skills of conducting and presenting research effectively. The strategies ECRs use to overcome these challenges seem to be insufficiently documented, creating a shortcoming of practices that can promote their academic and professional development. Given these points, it is necessary to investigate the challenges experienced by ECRs based on their MOI backgrounds, the strategies they utilize to overcome these challenges, and their language preferences in the academic context so that we will be able to deduce implications for the need for understanding how the results of this study can contribute to the teaching of English language to these ECRs for their development as researchers. Although extensive research has been carried out on EMI and MTI, EAP, and research engagement, the reviewed literature does not provide evidence on the challenges experienced by ECRs with different MOI backgrounds, their strategies, and academic language preferences in Turkish context.

1.3. Aim and Significance of the Study

The number of educational institutions that use EMI has increased significantly (Bolton et al., 2024), paving the way for new research. Along with other institutions, there has been an increase in the number of HEIs that adopt EMI as well both nationally and internationally (Bolton et al., 2024; Kurt and Bayyurt, 2024). Despite the increase in EMI practice, the self-perceived effects of different MOI backgrounds on early career researchers' journey of becoming researchers remain underexplored as highlighted in the previous section. The current study aims to fill this gap in literature by investigating the research-related challenges ECRs experience, the strategies they utilize to overcome these challenges, and their academic language preferences based on their MOI backgrounds. To conclude, this research addresses the following questions:

RQ1. What research-related challenges do ECRs experience in line with their MOI background?

1.1 What are the experienced research-related challenges of ECRs who had different MOIs at different levels of education? What are these challenges attributed to?

1.2 What are the experienced research-related challenges of ECRs who had the same MOIs at different levels of education? What are these challenges attributed to?

RQ2. What strategies do ECRs apply to overcome research-related challenges in line with their MOI background?

2.1. What are the applied research-related strategies of ECRs who had different MOIs at different levels of education?

2.2. What are the applied research-related strategies of ECRs who had same MOIs at different levels of education?

RQ3. What are the academic language preferences of ECRs in research practices in line with their MOI background? What are the underlying reasons?

The significance of the current study lies within the effects of different MOI backgrounds on research-related experiences of ECRs in Türkiye where EMI universities are widespread. Although many researchers focused on English as an academic lingua franca (Abdeljaoued and Labassi, 2020; Chen, 2017; Faber, 2010; Mauranen et al., 2010; Mauranen, 2003),

research on MOI background effects on ECRs' experiences and language preferences during their journey of becoming a researcher remains limited. Therefore, the findings of the current study contribute to the literature by filling in these gaps and elucidating the relationship between ECRs' academic practices, their MOI backgrounds, and how this relationship affects their ECR experiences and academic preferences. Although research has shown that students learn best in the MOI they comprehend effortlessly (Cummins, 2008), the EMI is a common practice across the globe (Dearden, 2015; Dimova et al., 2015; Griffiths, 2023; Murata, 2020). The choice of MOI impacts learning and academic success (Altay et al., 2022; Civan and Coşkun, 2016; Curle et al., 2020) as it might negatively influence the academic success and content learning of the students in certain contexts (Bälter et al., 2023; Curle et al., 2020). Specifically in EMI contexts, there are different factors influencing academic success including English language proficiency, academic English skills, and self-efficacy (Feng et al., 2023; Rose et al., 2019; Tang and Curtis, 2024; Thompshon et al., 2019; Xie and Curle, 2020). Furthermore, Kamaşak and Sahan (2023) indicate that students' academic attainment might be positively affected, and they might encounter fewer difficulties in terms of language if they have higher language proficiencies. Considering the literature, language proficiency and academic English skills having impacts on EMI academic success might indicate a connection between MOI and research-related experiences and researcher identity development. Understanding this connection will benefit early career researchers' development, higher education institutions, and future researchers. However, the issue on this matter appears to be a gap in literature and the current research will pave the way for new research.

1.4. Assumptions and Limitations

A limitation of this study may be that the sample size is relatively small with a total of 6 participants. The experiences of the current study's participants could not portray those of other ECRs with different backgrounds. Given that the data collection method is semi-structured interviews, participants could give insincere answers to the questions, or they could fail to remember the details of their experiences. Another possible limitation is that the current study mainly focuses on the challenges experienced, strategies used, and the language preferences of ECRs based on the MOI background which results in disregarding

the other educational factors such as the quality of instruction, resources provided by instructors and institutions, and institutional support systems. The study may also overlook the differences across various academic disciplines. Each field may face distinct challenges and use specific strategies related to MOI, which may not be represented if the participants are from similar academic fields and backgrounds. Although the study focuses on self-perceived effects of MOI on research engagement and research practices, other unknown factors may have a role in research engagement and research practices as well. Another limitation may derive from the Erasmus+ student exchange program, which would affect the language-related perceptions and experienced challenges of the participants, altering the overall findings.

1.5. Definitions of Terms

English as a Lingua Franca (ELF): the use of English as a common means of communication among speakers of different native languages (Seidlhofer, 2011)

English for Academic Purposes (EAP): the teaching and study of English aimed at assisting learners in acquiring the language skills necessary for successful participation in academic environments (Hyland, 2006)

Medium of Instruction (MOI): the language used to teach academic subjects in schools and other educational settings for cognitive development and academic language proficiency (Cummins, 2000)

Mother-tongue medium Instruction (MTI): the use of students' first language (L1), or mother tongue, as the primary language of teaching and learning in educational settings. (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2013)

Early Career Researcher (ECR): individuals at the initial stages of their academic careers

Research Engagement: "engagement in research (i.e. by doing it) as well as engagement with research (i.e. by reading and using it)" (Borg, 2010, p. 391).

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section provides an overview of the theoretical foundations the current study is based upon, detailed explanations of two different theories, and how these theories are integrated to interpret the findings.

2.1. Introduction

This study aims to reveal the research-related challenges experienced by ECRs from diverse MOI backgrounds, the strategies and tools they utilize to overcome these challenges, and their language preferences in research practices with underlying reasons. In essence, it seeks to provide an in-depth examination of the academic experiences of ECRs across different MOI contexts. Gaining deeper insights into how ECRs navigate different MOIs requires a theoretical framework that accounts for both the challenges they face and the dynamics shaping their language preferences in academic settings. Thus, the study draws on two complementary theoretical perspectives to investigate how ECRs develop, sustain, and manage their academic language practices in both Turkish and English academic contexts: Bourdieu's theory of capital and the academic biliteracy framework proposed by Hornberger. Bourdieu's theory of capital provides a sociological perspective to see how diverse forms of capital (economic, cultural, social, and symbolic) shape access to and engagement with educational and academic opportunities, highlighting the role of power structures and social hierarchies. On the other hand, Hornberger's continua of biliteracy emphasizes the complex and multidimensional nature of biliteracy, focusing on the role of context, content, media, and development in bilingual experiences. Although Hornberger's framework was developed primarily for educational contexts, the current study applies it to research practices, publication processes, and professional academic development by expanding its scope (Hornberger, 1989). Hornberger's biliteracy offers a comprehensive perspective for understanding how language and academic skills act as valuable resources in different academic contexts and how ECRs develop and use multiple academic languages

in their research practices, while Bourdieu's concept of capital provides a lens for understanding the effects of different forms of capital and social structures on academic experiences in diverse linguistic contexts. By combining these two frameworks, this study aims to examine how ECRs organize these valuable resources in diverse biliteracy contexts and how the interplay between social structures and linguistic practices shapes their academic trajectories.

To ground these two frameworks with each other, it is necessary to understand the connections between capital and biliteracy. The connection between these two concepts portrays the interaction between social structures and language development in academic settings, especially for ECRs experiencing different linguistic contexts. Howlett and Davis (2018) found that biliterate contexts positively influenced students' social capital and overall well-being in their study. Based on this example, different types of capital may influence the academic biliteracy trajectories of ECRs in terms of accessibility, development, and success. There are possible opportunities for biliteracy development under the concept of capital. These opportunities can be listed as educational experiences, language exposure, academic networking and relationships, and access to various resources.

2.2. Bourdieu's Theory of Capital

The theory of capitals is a fundamental concept in sociology, proposed by Bourdieu (1986). To have a better understanding of the concept of *capital*, it is deemed to explain *field* and *habitus* as the three concepts work together dynamically. Bourdieu's framework concentrates on the interplay between social structures and individual agency in shaping human behaviour and social reproduction, conceptualizing fields as structured social spaces with their distinct rules, power dynamics, and forms of capital where individual or institutions (agents) strive for valuable resources or dominance within a specific field (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). These fields can be exemplified as academia, politics, education, art, and economy. In the case of academia, for instance, researchers attempt to achieve intellectuality, global visibility, and recognition. Each field is governed by its own dynamics, which define what is valued and shape how agents should behave to achieve status and power.

On the other hand, habitus is a system of dispositions shaped by past experiences and influenced by social, cultural, and economic conditions, which in turn shapes individuals' perceptions, thoughts, and behaviours; as a result, habitus varies among individuals based on factors such as experiences, social class, and economic background (Bourdieu, 1984). Considering the scope of the current study, for example, an individual who has an English language background may feel more comfortable in English academic contexts, while someone without an English background may experience anxiety.

Bourdieu's theory of capital explains how various forms of resources contribute to social power and reproduction, defining capital as assets and resources individuals possess, which exist in economic, cultural, social, and symbolic forms and can be exchanged or transformed into one another (Bourdieu, 1986). In academic settings, cultural capital, such as achieving higher academic degrees, can turn into economic capital through career enhancement and salary increases. Similarly, social capital, such as professional networks, can lead to new research opportunities. In essence, fields are social spaces that value different forms of capital and where agents strive for resources. Habitus, on the other hand, refers to the fixed skills and dispositions gained through life experiences that influence how individuals navigate specific fields, while the access to and use of different forms of capital significantly affects an individual's ability to succeed within these fields (Bourdieu, 1986). The concept of capital is a key element of Bourdieu's framework, which comes in different forms-economic, cultural, social, and symbolic- and is of critical importance in shaping success in specific fields and social structures (Bourdieu, 1986). To have better insights into how individuals succeed and achieve status in a field, it is important to scrutinize Bourdieu's every form of capital.

Economic Capital

Bourdieu defines economic capital as material resources that are instantly convertible into money, involving property, investments, inherited wealth, and business ownership (Bourdieu, 1986). These material resources allow access to other forms of capital and may provide economic, social, or cultural advantages to individuals who possess them. Economic capital is distinguished from other forms of capital by its convertibility and provision of formal recognition within legal systems. Moreover, it plays a central role in sustaining social structures by providing access to education, career opportunities, and wealth transfer across

generations (Bourdieu, 1986). An important feature of economic capital is its dynamic interactivity with other forms of capital, such as becoming cultural capital through education, supporting social capital through networking, and contributing to symbolic capital by displays of wealth and status. Bourdieu identifies economic capital as a key element in class formation, social stratification, and the maintenance of power dynamics within the field of power. Although economic capital offers multiple opportunities and advantages for success, Bourdieu argues that it alone does not determine success; its effectiveness depends on the social context and requires validation through other forms of capital, underscoring the complex interplay between the forms of capital in affecting social hierarchies and opportunities (Bourdieu, 1986).

Taking the academic context, economic capital is evident in the unequal distribution of educational opportunities and outcomes. For example, doctoral students with major financial resources can concentrate entirely on research without the necessity of working as teaching assistants or holding part-time jobs, allowing for faster progress and more in-depth research while also gaining access to international academic events, paid research materials, professional editing services, statistical consultations, and self-funded studies, all of which enhance networking opportunities and contribute to high-impact publications (Horta et al., 2016, 2019). In the long run, these advantages contribute to stronger academic profiles, more competitive job applications, and increased chances of securing tenure-track positions, illustrating a clear example of the transformation of economic capital into other forms of capital.

Cultural Capital

Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital represents the non-financial social assets such as knowledge, education, skills, tastes, and credentials that contribute to social mobility and power beyond economic wealth, and it exists in three forms: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized (Bourdieu, 1986). In its embodied state, cultural capital involves personal traits and behaviours acquired through socialization, such as language use, mannerisms, and tastes that signal cultural familiarity. The objectified form encompasses tangible cultural goods such as books, artworks, and musical instruments, which necessitate cultural capital to value and use effectively. On the other hand, the institutionalized form of cultural capital refers to the educational qualifications and degrees that formally recognize cultural

competence. Cultural and economic capital differ from each other in the way they are manifested. Cultural capital requires time and socialization to acquire, often inherited through family upbringing, which contributes to class reproduction.

To give an example, children from privileged backgrounds inherit ways of thinking, behaviours, and cultural knowledge that align with dominant social values and are rewarded in academic and professional settings. This process confirms social hierarchies, as the cultural capital of dominant groups is often validated, while the cultural capital of marginalized communities is overlooked because institutional systems such as schools and universities function as the gatekeepers valuing and reinforcing cultural capital by favouring the dominant class's knowledge and values. It can, therefore, be concluded that inequalities continue to exist both through economic factors and subtle cultural systems. Individuals who possess the “right” cultural capital navigate academic and professional environments more easily, gaining better opportunities and maintaining their social status across generations (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). This explains the persistence of social inequality across generations, as cultural capital is unevenly distributed, favouring those who are already privileged. Consequently, cultural capital supports social hierarchies by legitimizing class differences under the claim of individual merit.

Cultural capital has significant influences on the academic context and the way graduate students and researchers navigate higher education and research. Coming from an academic family, a graduate student may have much more familiarity with scholarly discourse, confidence in academic conversations, and an understanding of the unspoken norms of academic life, paving the way for easy success in an academic context (Thoa and Ju, 2023; Zhonglu, 2022). On the other hand, another individual without an academic background may find it much more difficult to achieve academic success and adapt to academic discourse despite having the same intellectual potential.

Linguistic Capital

Linguistic capital, a form of embodied cultural capital, refers to the language-related resources individuals acquire through socialization within the family and later reinforced through education (Bourdieu, 1991). Like other forms of embodied cultural capital, linguistic capital becomes embedded in an individual's habitus (ingrained dispositions)

(Bourdieu, 1984). Beyond lexical and grammatical proficiency, linguistic capital also encompasses phonetic features such as accent, intonation, rhythm, and speech style adaptability based on the context. For example, the ability to know when to use formal academic language and informal conversational language reflects an individual's linguistic capital. One's access to and possession of dominant linguistic forms may lead to advantages like social recognition, professional success, and economic opportunities. However, access to these prestigious linguistic forms most possibly requires the possession of other forms of capital as well.

Bourdieu (1991) views language not only as a means of communication but also as a social practice that reflects and reinforces power dynamics. He argues that the dominant linguistic form is often regarded as the standard or elite form and imposed by those in power, acting as a gatekeeper in social mobility. According to Bourdieu, those who speak dominant linguistic forms may have greater access to other forms of capital, illustrating that different linguistic practices have different values depending on the context and the individual's social status. This is exemplified by Received Pronunciation (RP or "BBC English"), which is associated with upper classes and elite educational institutions. Thus, speakers of RP are often perceived as more competent, authoritative, and intellectually capable than those with regional accents, reflecting the social power dynamics embedded in linguistic capital (Levon et al., 2021; Timming, 2016).

Moreover, individuals from dominant social classes have privileged access to prestigious linguistic forms and greater opportunities, while regional accents are often considered inferior and encounter symbolic violence (subtle social exclusion or devaluation) (Bourdieu, 1984). These speech patterns serve as markers of social status, shaping how speakers are valued in different contexts and reinforcing social reproduction, where class advantages are inherited through language. Thus, linguistic capital functions as a mechanism of social stratification, where alignment with dominant linguistic norms facilitates mobility, while deviation can result in marginalization.

Within this framework, individuals whose linguistic practices align with dominant expectations tend to receive greater awards, such as higher grades, better job opportunities, or social recognition. Meanwhile, those with distinct speech patterns that differ from dominant expectations may encounter obstacles despite their intellectual abilities.

Social Capital

The concept of social capital defined by Bourdieu as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” refers to the resources, advantages, and opportunities individuals gain through social relationships, networks, and group memberships which they can mobilize for economic and social gain (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248). It represents the benefits that come from being part of networks where individuals know and support each other. These networks can be formal, like professional associations or informal, like family ties and friendships. The value of social capital lies in the provision of access to collective resources; being part of a group enables individuals to benefit from the group's collective knowledge, influence, and support. Thus, the strength of social capital is based on two factors: the size of an individual's network (how many connections they have) and how resourceful those connections are (what kinds of capital – economic, cultural, or social – their connections possess). However, social capital does not develop naturally, and it requires continuous effort to build and maintain relationships through regular interaction, mutual recognition, and exchanges of support. Like economic and cultural capital, social capital might be considered unequally distributed as well, reinforcing existing social hierarchies. Although building such relationships takes time and effort, it fosters lasting bonds that can be relied upon in times of need, with elite networks often providing exclusive advantages in employment, political power, and educational opportunities (Liu and Wang, 2019; Tholen et al., 2013).

Considering the academic contexts, social capital plays a critical role in shaping professional trajectories. For instance, a doctoral student joining a research group led by a highly regarded professor might pave the way for an extensive professional network involving established scholars, journal editors, and conference organizers (Heffernan, 2020). As for research funding, the supervisor facilitates the process by introducing the student to people in grant committees and provides strong letters of recommendation. As well as symbolic and cultural benefits, social capital in the form of professional networks may help the student secure research funding or find a job through connections, corresponding to economic benefits. Furthermore, affiliation with a prominent research group may increase credibility and visibility among senior researchers in the field.

This example emphasizes that academic success is not solely contingent upon an individual knowledge or skills (cultural capital) but is also considerably shaped by professional networks and affiliations (social capital). The networks formed throughout one's academic career journey can open doors that might otherwise remain closed, providing access to key resources, opportunities, and recognition that contribute to scholarly advancement and career progression.

Symbolic Capital

Pierre Bourdieu conceptualizes symbolic capital as the recognition, prestige, or legitimacy that individuals accrue in specific social settings, distinguishing it from economic and cultural capital by its foundation in social perception and the value attributed to individuals by others (Bourdieu, 1986). For instance, a researcher with a high number of citations holds symbolic capital, as peers and colleagues regard their work as influential and contributory.

A notable feature of symbolic capital is its implicit nature; individuals may show respect to those who have it without consciously understanding the rationale. This form of capital may occur through titles (Doctor or Professor), prestigious awards, institutional affiliations, and simply reputation built over time, with one of its key features being its transferability to other forms of capital. A highly respected scholar, for example, may use their symbolic capital to secure research grants (economic capital) or to attract promising students and collaborators to work with them (social capital). Furthermore, symbolic capital is context dependent. For example, one individual may be highly respected in one domain and hold little influence in another. In the academic context, understanding the role of symbolic capital provides insights into why certain voices are more influential than others. The importance attributed to a researcher's perspective is determined not only by the content of their arguments, but also by their perceived status within the academic community.

To conclude, Bourdieu's theory of capital is a powerful framework for understanding how various forms of resources contribute to social inequality and the maintenance of power structures. It highlights the complexity of social life, demonstrating that economic wealth alone is not the sole factor in determining social status. Rather, cultural, social, and symbolic resources also play a vital role.

2.3. Hornberger's Continua of Biliteracy Model

The continua of biliteracy model offers a comprehensive framework and valuable insights into the complicated interplay between multiple languages in academic contexts. The central insight of this framework is that it has several dimensions which are interconnected and nested within each other. A better understanding of this framework requires familiarity with its key concepts and dimensions. The model utilizes the continuum as its foundational element to emphasize the continuous and interconnected nature of experiences, skills, practices, and knowledge, offering a flexible and non-binary approach to understanding the multiple dimensions of biliteracy (Hornberger, 2004). Drawing from Hornberger's definition, bilingual literacy or biliteracy refers to "any and all instances in which communication occurs in two (or more) languages in or around writing" (Hornberger, 2012, p. "1). Moreover, the continua model provides a framework for examining research, pedagogy, and language policy in bilingual and multilingual settings. Regarding this, Palfreyman and Van Der Walt (2017, p. 1) concentrate on biliteracy in academic contexts, offering an adapted definition of biliteracy: "the use in a higher education context of two or more languages in or around written text for the purpose of broadening or deepening knowledge". The continua model recognizes that biliteracy extends beyond proficiency in two language systems to involve dynamic and fluid relationships across multiple dimensions. It views academic biliteracy as a dynamic process rather than a fixed skill, developing across first and second languages, receptive and productive skills, and oral and written language skills (Hornberger, 2004). Adopting a holistic approach which recognizes the interconnectedness of all four language skills, academic biliteracy involves not only reading and writing but also listening and speaking, as these language skills are fundamental elements of effective use of language in academic contexts, enhancing the overall literacy development in both first and second languages (Hornberger; 1989; Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester, 2000; Palfreyman and Van Der Walt, 2017). In the context of this study, biliteracy refers to the ability to effectively engage in academic skills and discourse (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) in more than one language in academic settings, emphasizing the important role of both language skills and content knowledge, while drawing from and expanding the definitions provided earlier. Hornberger's continua of biliteracy framework consists of four main dimensions that are interconnected and intertwined. These dimensions

involve context, development, media, and content. Figure 1 illustrates the continuums and the power relations in the continua model.

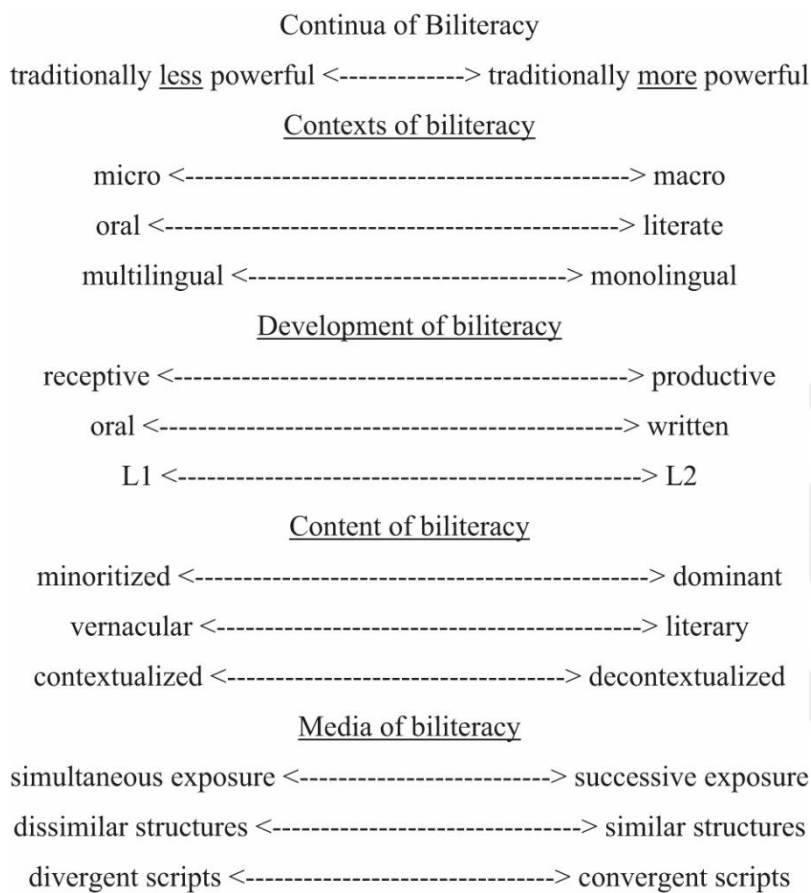


Figure 1. Continuums and Power Relations

Note: Retrieved from Hornberger, N. H., & Skilton-Sylvester, E. (2000). Revisiting the continua of biliteracy: International and critical perspectives. *Language and Education*, 14(2), 96–122. doi: 10.1080/09500780008666781

2.3.1. The Four Dimensions of Continua

Context of Biliteracy

The context of biliteracy continua refers to the multidimensional environments in which biliteracy develops and is structured around three main continua: micro-macro, oral-literate,

and monolingual-bilingual. The micro-macro continuum symbolizes the scope of interactions from individual and interpersonal to broader societal and institutional structures, a micro-level context corresponding to local environments and a macro-level to global ones. Moreover, the oral-literate continuum represents the relationship between spoken and written language, identifying contexts based on how knowledge is mainly communicated. Lastly, the monolingual-bilingual continuum illustrates the fluid relationship between using one or multiple languages, pointing out the individual's strategic use of linguistic skills and knowledge in a way that is contextually appropriate to achieve specific academic and social goals within their communities of practice. Thus, the main focus of this continuum is not the individual's use of one or multiple officially recognized languages since it acknowledges monolingual speakers' shift between various registers, dialects, and forms of their language based on the context and how bilingual speakers switch between languages.

Development of Biliteracy

The development dimension focuses on how biliteracy develops in terms of interrelated and intertwined continua. The dynamic nature of biliteracy and its not being a fixed linear process come to the fore in this dimension. Therefore, development can begin at any point and progress in multiple directions. The development of biliteracy is structured around three continua, which are: L1-L2, reception-production, and Oral-Literate. The L1-L2 continuum reveals the fluid and two-way relationship between L1 and L2. The fluid and two-way relationship between L1 and L2 allows for biliteracy skills to move in different directions across languages. An example that embodies this continuum would be how newly learned vocabulary in academic English may improve academic expression skills in one's first language. The reception-production continuum encompasses both receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) skills, challenging the traditional idea that receptive skills precede productive skills in the development process. Instead, it acknowledges that productive skills may also develop alongside or even ahead of receptive skills (Weissberg, 2000). Furthermore, the oral-literate continuum explains the interaction between spoken and written language, supporting the idea that reading skills can surpass speaking skills or vice versa. Biliteracy development is a complex process, as the transfer of skills across the continua is both extensive and unpredictable. Each continuum interacts with and influences the others, creating an interconnected structure where progress in one area

inevitably affects the development of others. Thus, each biliterate individual has individualized pathways, influenced by their linguistic backgrounds, educational experiences, and communicative needs.

Media of Biliteracy

The media of biliteracy helps explain the linguistic mediums in which bilingual literacy is expressed. This dimension is structured around three interrelated continua, emphasizing how language structures and language acquisition processes influence literacy development in more than one language. The three continua consist of simultaneous to successive, similar to dissimilar, and convergent to divergent. The simultaneous-successive continuum concentrates on chronological or simultaneous language acquisition, challenging the assumption that successive language acquisition/learning is more advantageous. Thus, this continuum suggests that the key point is not the time or sequence of language exposure, but rather both languages receive consistent and meaningful support throughout the development. The similar-dissimilar continuum addresses the structural relationships between languages, recognizing that structural proximity and distance can affect the development of biliteracy. Given that, structural proximity can be likened to a double-edged sword. On the one hand, similarities between the two languages may facilitate comprehension and learning, while on the other hand, they may create traps that should be avoided in the biliteracy development processes. Drawing from the literature, some academic studies indicate that cognates enhance comprehension (Azieb et al., 2021; Gampe et al., 2021; Proctor and Mo, 2009), while others assert that structurally similar languages may result in more linguistic interference (Derakhshan and Karimi, 2015). Therefore, individuals can better manage their biliteracy development journey by being aware of both the supportive and interfering effects of structural proximity between the two languages. Lastly, the convergent-divergent continuum focuses on the orthographic relationships ranging from languages with similar writing systems to languages with different writing systems. To exemplify, individuals attempting to acquire literacy in English and Chinese encounter different cognitive demands than learners of Spanish and Portuguese. In essence, the media of biliteracy emphasizes the entire communicative resources individuals use rather than focusing on languages as bounded systems.

Content of Biliteracy

The content of biliteracy dimension addresses the types of materials that biliterate individuals engage with, pointing out the social and political aspects of literacy practices across languages. This dimension is structured around three key continua including minority-majority, vernacular-literary, and contextualized-decontextualized. The minority-majority continuum examines the power reflected in texts, identifying the materials that portray dominant and marginalized perspectives. The distinction between minority and majority tackles the power hierarchies in knowledge production. In this sense, minority refers to groups with less power, while majority refers to groups with more power rather than demographic status. The vernacular-literary continuum signifies the texts ranging from every day and informal literacy practices such as social media posts, text messages, and local newsletters to formal and standardized genres such as essays, novels, and official documents. Lastly, the contextualized-decontextualized continuum examines the connection of texts to meaningful, real-life contexts. In other words, contextualized texts describe the lived experiences of individuals, while decontextualized ones are more abstract and detached from real-life contexts. Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester (2000) argue that biliteracy practices and educational policy tend to implicitly prioritize one end of the continua over the other, one end being associated with greater power than the other (written over oral development, majority over minority perspectives, literary over vernacular writing, and decontextualized over contextualized materials). This indicates how power is negotiated through language by individuals and institutions in biliterate settings, with certain language practices being offered greater power and influence than others (Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester, 2000). In essence, this dimension illustrates that the choice of content in teaching is often biased and affected by sociopolitical factors. Therefore, educational practices can either strengthen the existing power structures by emphasizing majority, literary, and decontextualized materials or encourage inclusivity with minority, vernacular, and contextualized materials that endorse students' multilingual identities and experiences.

CHAPTER III

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides an overview of ELF, EFL-ESL, ESP (academic and research publication), English as Academic Lingua Franca, MOI (mother-tongue and English-medium), and challenges of early career researchers.

3.1. The Concept of (English as) Lingua Franca and its Evolution

The concept of lingua franca has deep historical roots that inform our contemporary understanding of ELF. Originally, 'lingua franca' referred to a Mediterranean trade pidgin used between the 14th and 19th centuries. This early lingua franca borrowed heavily from languages derived from Latin—such as Italian, French, and Spanish—to create a practical trading language that merchants from different regions could understand (Brosch, 2015). This practical 'language' was used by diverse groups, including sailors, and traders, establishing a foundation for later 'lingua franca' (Brosch, 2015; Sedlaczek, 2017).

The evolution of the lingua francas reveals their role in intellectual and commercial exchange. Latin dominated European academia and science for centuries, followed by a period where English, French, and German competed for prominence (Burke, 2014). The post-World War II era marked English's emergence as the dominant language in scientific and medical communication (Pennycook, 2020). This historical context helps explain the current global position of English as a lingua franca, particularly in international business, science, and education (Seidlhofer, 2001).

The modern conceptualization of ELF emerged from this historical foundation, initially defined as “any use of English among speakers of different first languages” (Jenkins and Morán Panero, 2024). Early ELF researchers focused on laying the foundations of the field by identifying and documenting common linguistic features that characterized ELF

communication (Jenkins, 2015). Jenkin's (2015) study allowed for the classification of ELF as an academic field of study.

As the field matured, scholars' understanding of ELF underwent significant transformation. Rather than viewing it as a static system, researchers began recognizing ELF as a dynamic process shaped by speakers' interactions and relationships (Jenkins, 2015; Larsen-Freeman, 2017). This shift emphasized the importance of context in ELF communication, particularly through the lens of Communities of Practice, where speakers adapt their language use according to specific communicative needs and social relationships.

A crucial development in ELF research has been the recognition of its fundamentally multilingual nature. This understanding challenged both the traditional dominance of native speaker models and the potential linguistic inequality that critics have termed 'lingua frankensteinia' (Phillipson, 2008). The emergence of 'English as a Multilingua Franca' positioned ELF within a broader multilingual framework, acknowledging English as one of many resources which speakers employ to achieve their communicative goals (Jenkins, 2015).

Contemporary understanding of ELF acknowledges its inherent variability across geographical regions and communities of practice. This modern perspective rejects the notion of a single, standardized form of ELF, instead recognizes the diversity of linguistic practices in global English use. This view aligns with broader discussions about linguistic diversity, as evidenced by the existence of other regional lingua franca like Lingala and constructed languages like Esperanto (Bokamba, 2019). Such examples demonstrate that while English currently dominates global communication, it exists within a rich tapestry of linguistic resources that facilitate international understanding.

3.1.1 Significance of ELF in Global and Academic Context

The significance of ELF is observable via its contribution to global communication and academic contexts though this contribution brings both opportunities and challenges. Globally, ELF acts as a bridge between cultural and linguistic gaps, promoting interactions in trade, business, and diplomacy (Nickerson, 2005). Beyond serving as a communication

tool, its use allows for cultural blending and the creation of shared spaces where diverse identities interact and transform (Dewey and Jenkins, 2010).

Moving from the global context to the specific domain of academia, ELF plays a central role in knowledge exchange and scholarly achievement. Researchers all around the world can communicate and cooperate by taking the dominance of English in scholarly work (Mauranen et al., 2010). Furthermore, the adoption of EMI in universities across non-English-speaking countries has supported cross-border academic engagement and mobility (Björkman, 2018).

While acknowledging these benefits, it is crucial to consider the challenges and implications of ELF's influence on linguistic equity and cultural preservation. Because of its domination in many fields, critics point to ELF's potential to overshadow local languages and cultures, raising significant questions about linguistic hegemony (Phillipson, 2008). In academic settings, the reliance on English may lead non-English-speaking researchers to involuntarily comply with Anglophone norms, which could affect global research trends (Navarro et al., 2022). This tension between the practical benefits of a global lingua franca and the preservation of linguistic diversity remains a central challenge in both global communication and academic contexts. For ECRs who experience a shift in MOI, such as moving from MTI undergraduate education to an EMI graduate program, this transition can affect their research engagement, academic confidence, and even their perception of linguistic equity. While some may view English as a valuable resource that enhances their academic reach and facilitates international collaboration, others may encounter challenges in adapting to Anglophone academic conventions. This adaptation process may lead to feelings of linguistic disadvantage, potentially affecting their engagement with global academic discourse.

3.2 English as Foreign and Second Language

As Brown (2014) puts forward, the traditional understanding of English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has evolved in response to the global spread of English as an International Language (EIL). While historical definitions

provided clear borders between these approaches, global developments have brought elaborate contexts for English language instruction.

Traditionally, ESL instruction operated in environments where English served as the primary tool for communication, typically in English-speaking countries. This context necessitated a comprehensive approach integrating language acquisition with cultural adaptation to promote both social integration and academic achievement. Fitting in this definition, modern ESL programs take advantage of immersive learning environments and technology-integrated approaches to promote both linguistic and social competencies (Satullaeva and Kurbanbaeva, 2020). However, as Brown (2014) notes, the definition of ESL has become more complex in countries where English holds significant institutional status in education, government, or business, despite not being the native language.

Similarly, EFL instruction traditionally focused on developing language competence in regions where English was not commonly used in daily life. Thus, preparing learners for international communication, educational advancement, and career opportunities, often through cultural immersion and task-based learning methodologies was the norm (Byram, 1986). However, EFL instruction has evolved to incorporate different effective strategies, such as incorporating scientific perspectives and later employing a more humanistic outlook with communicative perspectives (Howatt and Smith, 2014).

However, Brown (2014) identifies two developments that have blurred the borders of these traditional definitions. First, the formation of immigrant communities within a country has created new opportunities for language immersion, even in traditionally EFL contexts. Second, English content in the media, through digital platforms, has increased exposure to authentic English usage, even in traditionally isolated settings. These changes have led to a more flexible understanding of English language teaching, where the focus has shifted from rigid ESL/EFL categorizations to considering English's function and to what degree it has been integrated within society.

Both ESL and EFL have adapted to this landscape. Modern programs in both contexts recognize the value of incorporating multilingual education models and contemporary pedagogical approaches while leveraging students' existing linguistic knowledge through systematic comparative methodologies. The evolution toward valuing multilingual competencies in education advances the academic biliteracy concept where ECRs need to

develop parallel academic literacies in both English and Turkish to thrive in their academic careers, regardless of their MOI backgrounds.

3.2.1 EFL and ESL in Turkish Context

As with the developments around the world, EFL education in Türkiye has also evolved. Because English plays a critical role in international communication, Türkiye's integration of a global language into the local educational framework presents both opportunities and challenges.

From a policy perspective, Türkiye has demonstrated a sustained commitment to English language education. Educational authorities have implemented significant reforms, aiming at alignment with European policies and standards (Kırkgöz, 2017). Despite these, the transition from policy to practice has revealed persistent operational challenges, particularly in curriculum design and teacher education (Oktay, 2015; Valizadeh, 2021).

These challenges are mostly evident in the day-to-day realities of English language teaching across Turkish schools. Public schools, especially those in rural regions, struggle with resource limitations such as qualified instructors and teaching materials. This situation has led to a grammar-focused approach to instruction, often neglecting the development of essential communicative competencies (Oktay, 2015). Consequently, despite years of study, learners lack proficiency in speaking and listening skills, and motivational barriers exist as learners view English primarily as an academic requirement rather than a valuable skill (Dağtan and Cabaroğlu, 2021; Gökçe, 2021; Madalińska-Michalak and Bavlı, 2018; Zaki, 2021).

However, beyond the classroom, the socioeconomic implications of English proficiency in Türkiye have become increasingly apparent as English language skills significantly influence career prospects and earning potential, particularly in internationally oriented sectors such as business and tourism (Di Paolo and Tansel, 2013). Furthermore, English proficiency has emerged as a marker of social status and modernization within Turkish society, reinforcing its importance in both professional and social contexts (Di Paolo and Tansel, 2019).

3.3 English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

Aforementioned evolutions of ESL and EFL have led to the development of approaches to meet specific professional needs. While ESL and EFL programs have embraced multilingual frameworks and comparative methods, a distinct branch of English language instruction emerged to address targeted vocational and academic requirements.

The field of ESP emerged in the 1960s as a response to the growing demand for English language skills in areas such as science, economy, and technology (Ennis and Prior, 2020). This focus on learners' needs has since developed into a sophisticated branch of English Language Teaching.

ESP distinguishes itself through its focused approach to meeting specialized learner needs within specific professional and academic contexts. Determining and tending to language needs/requirements plays a central role (Ennis and Prior, 2020). During this needs analysis, a comprehensive assessment of needs with support from learners' input is required (Ennis and Prior, 2020; Rahman, 2015), which introduces a variety of ESP programs. This has led to the development of specialized branches such as Business English (BE), Technical English (TE), and EAP. Notably, EAP emerged as a distinct approach in 1974, expanding beyond traditional adult learner contexts to include secondary and higher education settings (Ennis and Prior, 2020). Rather than teaching general language competency, ESP concentrates on how English is used in specific situations with relevant vocabulary, language structures, and communication styles (Rahman, 2015).

As with the global development of ESL and EFL, a significant shift in ESP has been the movement away from native-speaker proficiency as the primary goal. In today's context, where English functions as a lingua franca, ESP has shifted towards effective communication and meaning negotiation (Ennis and Prior, 2020). This challenges traditional notions of language ownership and acknowledges the status of non-native English speakers as a significant crowd (Haberland, 2011).

The effectiveness of ESP in professional development can be observed through various fields. For example, engineering students demonstrate improved professional vocabulary and communication skills that directly enhance their career prospects (Bekteshi and Xhaferi,

2020). Moreover, in legal and medical fields, ESP instruction has significantly improved practitioners' professional communication abilities (Xhaferi et al., 2015).

However, the field faces challenges in curriculum alignment and learner engagement (Nguyen, 2017), particularly as the internationalization of higher education and the rise of programs using English as a primary tool for instruction increase the demand for both ESP and EAP services (Ennis and Prior, 2020). Despite these challenges, ESP's emphasis on practical application and adaptability puts it as an effective component of English language education, particularly in preparing learners for increasingly global professional contexts where clear expression and shared understanding are valued.

3.3.1 English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

As mentioned earlier, demands of the academic context have led to the emergence of EAP in 1974, initially focusing on international students at British universities, which has since developed into a critical framework for addressing these specialized academic language needs (Ennis and Prior, 2020; Mauranen, 2019; Mauranen et al., 2010). As expected, EAP is no longer confined to British universities but is now taught in higher education institutions globally, both in English-speaking and non-English-speaking contexts (Ennis and Prior, 2020; Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022).

At its foundation, EAP offers to equip learners with the sophisticated linguistic skills required for scholarly work and academic success. This includes mastery of essential academic tasks such as research paper writing, conference presentations, and scholarly discussions (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022). In today's academic environment, where English functions as the primary medium for communication, EAP plays a crucial role in knowledge exchange and academic networking (Mauranen et al., 2010). EAP is especially vital in English-medium instruction (EMI) settings, enabling non-native English speakers to effectively participate in international academic discourse (Björkman, 2018; Ennis and Prior, 2020).

Modern EAP instruction encompasses two main branches: English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) and English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP). EGAP courses focus on core academic skills and general study strategies, such as critical thinking and note-

taking, while ESAP addresses discipline-specific language requirements, supplying specialized vocabulary, grammar, and discourse patterns of fields (Aleksandrak, 2018; Bond, 2020; Ennis and Prior, 2020). The ESAP approach has promoted research methods such as genre analysis and corpus linguistics, which allow for the investigation of the characteristics of academic language across disciplines and inform targeted pedagogical practices (Ennis and Prior, 2020; Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022).

The growing demand for EAP in tertiary education reflects the globalization of higher education. EAP courses aim to address the significant linguistic and literacy challenges of students studying in a second language, granting students access to academic discourse and enabling them to navigate their disciplines effectively (Bond, 2020; Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022; Song and Zhou, 2022). Studies suggest that task-based and interactive teaching methods within EAP enhance both language proficiency and critical thinking skills, contributing to better academic outcomes (Charles, 2012; Ennis and Prior, 2020).

However, the widespread adoption of EAP also brings challenges. Linguistic imperialism and the marginalization of non-English academic traditions exist as threats (Al-Kahtany and Alhamami, 2022; Fedorova, 2023; Navarro et al., 2022); practical issues exist in aligning course content with diverse disciplinary needs and ensuring equitable access to resources (Vijayan, 2019; Workie and Haregu, 2020); and the marginalization of EAP practitioners within university structures, reflected in their placement in service units and student services rather than a defined disciplinary home, complicates the field's development and status (Bond, 2020; Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022).

Despite these challenges, EAP draws upon a robust research base, including systemic functional linguistics, genre theory, corpus linguistics, academic literacies, and critical EAP, to inform its practices (Bond, 2020; Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022). This theoretical foundation underscores the potential of EAP to address linguistic barriers and promote academic success, making it a worthy tool.

3.3.2 English for Research Publication Purposes (ERPP)

ERPP has emerged as an extension of EAP to address the specific challenges of scholarly publication. Its development was led by the dominance of English in global academic

publishing, particularly in high-impact journals and international conferences (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022; Navarro et al., 2022). First introduced by Cargill and Burgess (2008), ERPP provides researchers, especially non-native English speakers, with the linguistic tools and cultural knowledge necessary to navigate international academic discourse, ultimately enhancing the visibility and impact of their research (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022; Mauranen et al., 2010).

A key aspect of ERPP is its focus on supporting scholars in publishing research and addressing broader linguistic challenges. While initially centered on aiding non-English-speaking scholars, ERPP has broadened to include native English speakers who also face challenges in academic publishing (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022). To understand the complexities of academic publishing research in ERPP employs various methodologies. For example, genre analysis examines the structure and rhetorical features of research articles, grant proposals, and other academic genres to help researchers meet the expectations of their target audience (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022). Influential frameworks like Swales' (2014) CARS model provide valuable insights into the organization of research article introductions (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022). Additionally, naturalistic studies using ethnographic methods offer rich accounts of scholars' experiences, shedding light on the social practices that underpin academic writing and publication (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022).

Despite its contributions, ERPP faces significant challenges as well. The dominance of English in academic journals creates barriers for scholars, promoting inequalities in knowledge production (Flowerdew, 2022). Furthermore, many universities lack formal ERPP instruction, leaving scholars to rely on trial and error or informal support networks (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022).

To combat these challenges, integrating ERPP into university curricula through dedicated courses, workshops, and mentoring programs is critical to equipping researchers with the skills needed for successful publication (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022). Additionally, embracing digital transformations and leveraging online platforms for pedagogical purposes can help researchers adapt to the changing scholarly discourse (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022). Lastly, the lack of formal instruction highlights the need for universities to recognize ERPP as a vital component of academic development and highlights an area for improvement (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022).

Ultimately, ERPP and EAP rest at the center of having access to global academic discourse. The globalization of education and the central role of English in spreading knowledge across linguistic and cultural boundaries contribute to their significance. As academic publishing continues to evolve, these frameworks are indispensable for ensuring equitable participation in the global research community (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022; Navarro et al., 2022).

3.4. Medium of Instruction (MOI)

The decision to adopt an instructional language, also called a medium of instruction (MOI), emerges from cultural, political, and practical reasons and shapes both the learning processes and outcomes. Although the situation is different in language learning, when it comes to content learning, students learn best in the language they understand effortlessly (Cummins, 2008). This approach reinforces cultural identity and maintains linguistic heritage within communities. However, the increasing globalization of education has led many institutions to adopt international languages to provide students with broader access to global knowledge networks and opportunities (Macaro and Rose, 2023). Overall, local language instruction supports immediate comprehension and cultural preservation, while international language instruction facilitates global connectivity and career mobility. Therefore, these benefits create a challenge for policymakers in finding a balance since an inappropriate choice of instructional medium can have far-reaching consequences, potentially compromising both educational equity and learning effectiveness (Karabay and Durrani, 2024). Since the decision extends beyond mere linguistic considerations to encompass broader questions of educational access, cultural preservation, and preparation for an increasingly interconnected global society, institutions must carefully consider these factors when adopting a MOI.

3.4.1. English Medium Instruction (EMI)

The use of EMI has become widespread in higher education as universities respond to globalization and to increased number of mobilities by their staff and students. Many institutions now offer programs taught entirely in English to establish their international standing and prepare students for global careers. The expansion of student exchange

programs like Erasmus and staff mobility has accelerated this trend (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022). Research shows that EMI allows students and faculty members from different language backgrounds to participate in shared academic discussions and access international research networks (Macaro et al., 2017).

EMI provides clear advantages for universities. It supports international expansion, makes cross-border education easier, and gives access to global academic resources. Students and faculty members gain increased opportunities to engage effectively with international academic communities, potentially improving their global competitiveness (Lasagabaster, 2022). The growing use of EMI has also led universities to develop more academic English support programs (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022).

However, the adoption of EMI presents challenges, and its success depends on the careful balance of linguistic inclusivity, robust pedagogical support, and alignment with global and local educational objectives. While research demonstrates its effectiveness in improving language proficiency, its impact on content learning remains inconsistent. Both students and educators often face heightened cognitive and linguistic demands when navigating this instructional approach (Lasagabaster, 2022). In addition, in countries where English is not the primary language, EMI can push aside local languages and traditions, making education less accessible (Gülle, 2024) and since the use of English in academic settings is not a neutral phenomenon, it can create linguistic inequalities, potentially disadvantaging scholars who are not native English speakers, thus creating power imbalances in academic discourse (Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022).

Furthermore, institutions may encounter a misalignment between policy objectives and classroom realities, especially in environments lacking adequate support systems for linguistic and pedagogical adjustments (Lei and Hu, 2014). This gap between intention and implementation can impact outcomes and student success rates.

To address these challenges and preserve the benefits of EMI while maintaining linguistic and cultural diversity, contemporary research advocates for more nuanced implementation strategies (Rose et al., 2022). A multilingual approach has shown promise in creating more equitable and effective learning environments. In addition, the integration of ERPP support within EMI programs has been proposed to help students meet the demands of academic writing in English, thereby enhancing their ability to succeed in their studies and eventually publish research (Flowerdew, 2022; Flowerdew and Habibie, 2022). By integrating students'

broader linguistic capabilities and providing comprehensive support systems, institutions can work toward creating more inclusive and successful EMI programs (Gülle, 2024).

These possible challenges and benefits associated with EMI adoption are also relevant for ECRs who have changed MOIs during their academic trajectory. As highlighted before, the implementation of EMI in a way that balances linguistic inclusivity, pedagogical support, and alignment with educational objectives requires careful planning and support systems, such as multilingual approaches and ERPP programs. For ECRs who transition from MTI to EMI, the presence and absence of such support systems can shape their academic experiences, affecting their research engagement, confidence in academic writing, and overall linguistic adaptation. Thus, the current study examines how MOI transitions affect ECRs' self-perceived research and language experiences, providing insight into the role of EMI adoption in shaping ECRs' academic trajectories.

3.5 Early Career Researcher (ECR)

Defining ECRs in the literature presents a challenge, as there are several different terms and definitions used. ECRs are often referred to as junior researchers/academics, early-stage researchers (ESRs), early-career academics (ECAs), or emerging researchers. Although these terms seem to describe the very same group of people, their definitions vary across studies and contexts. Considering these different terms, junior researchers are defined as individuals engaged in academic research including master's students, doctoral candidates, and PhD students who strive for more research experience under the supervision of experienced researchers in the OECD (2015) Frascati Manual. As for Early-Stage Researchers (ESRs), the European Commission (n.d.) defines them as individuals who are in the first four years of their research careers and have not yet earned a doctoral degree but acquired a degree meeting the requirements to start a PhD regardless of their intent to engage in postgraduate studies. However, Bosanquet et al. (2016) provides a variety of criteria with which researchers defined ECRs: having a PhD status, time since PhD completion, length of academic employment, research output, and stable academic appointment. Similarly, Locke and Freeman (2017) point out that ECR status is determined by multiple factors: meeting researchers' criteria, time since doctorate completion, securing permanent academic

positions, winning external grants, and experience as a principal investigator, putting forward two key milestones that mark the transition to mid-career: obtaining a permanent full-time academic position and successfully leading an externally-funded research project as principal investigator. According to Bazeley (2003), an ECR is defined as someone within their initial five-year period of research employment after completing postgraduate studies, provided this period allows for continuous and stable research development. Lastly, Kenny et al. (2024) characterize ECRs as researchers in the transitional phase between PhD completion and becoming established independent investigators, typically occupying positions like senior postdocs, research fellows with external funding, or early-career lecturers. Thus, among these varied definitions, Bosanquet et al.'s (2016) idea of challenging these defining factors by proposing that it is not possible to have a singular and objective definition of ECRs become more reasonable.

Bearing these definitions in mind, the researcher aims to broaden the ECR definition by including master's level students in the context of this study. Therefore, ECRs referred to in this study involve individuals who aim for more research experience under the guidance of more experienced researchers regardless of their intent to pursue an academic career including master's students.

3.5.1 Challenges Faced by Early Career Researchers (ECRs)

Early Career Researchers (ECRs) face numerous significant challenges that can be categorized into several key areas, with implications spanning financial, professional, and emotional dimensions. The literature presents these obstacles and emphasizes the pressing need for instructional and structured support systems (Christian et al., 2021; Signoret et al., 2019). Studies across different academic fields show these issues create consistent barriers to career advancement.

Among the most significant challenges, job insecurity stands at the forefront of ECR concerns. Research indicates that many researchers operate under short-term contracts, with studies showing that most ECRs work on contracts of two years or less, with their positions often contingent upon external project-based funding (Alderson et al., 2023; Christian et al., 2021; Signoret et al., 2019). This uncertainty creates substantial barriers to long-term

planning and generates considerable stress. The situation is further complicated by the rising cost of living in major research centres, which adds another layer of financial pressure to early-career researchers (Thomas et al., 2024).

The role of mentorship emerges as another critical factor in ECR development, though access to quality guidance remains inconsistent across institutions (Boeren et al., 2015; Hurley et al., 2015). While some researchers receive formal mentoring, others must rely on informal relationships that may not provide complete guidance (Kamler, 2008; Mgaiwa and Kapinga, 2021). This uneven access not only affects skill development but also influences researchers' sense of belonging and professional identity within academia (Hemmings, 2011; Kirk and Lipscombe, 2019).

The academic environment's emphasis on publications creates additional pressure for ECRs, particularly those navigating language barriers as non-native English speakers (Cheung, 2010; Shamsi and Osam, 2022). These researchers often encounter significant obstacles when attempting to publish in international journals, while general anxieties about rejection and research quality affect the broader ECR population (Aydin et al., 2023; Drosou et al., 2020). The complex demands of conducting literature reviews, synthesizing findings, and managing the publication process present ongoing challenges that can impede career advancement (Chen et al., 2016; Daniel, 2022), creating what many refer to as the “publish or perish” culture (Da Silva, 2021).

Additionally, mental health concerns have emerged as a challenge among ECRs because of high stress, anxiety, and depression, especially among doctoral students and temporary contract holders (Cilli et al., 2023). These psychological challenges are often multiplied by limited access to coping mechanisms and support services, potentially altering researchers' academic trajectory (Signoret et al., 2019). Moreover, the combination of high workloads and research pressures contributes significantly to these mental health concerns (Hollywood et al., 2020). Lastly, during the transition from graduate student to independent researcher developing a distinct research identity result in feelings of isolation and inadequacy (Kirk and Lipscombe, 2019).

The struggle to maintain work-life balance represents another significant challenge, as ECRs attempt to manage teaching responsibilities with research demands (Hollywood et al., 2020). This pressure could lead to burnout and diminished job satisfaction (MacDonald et al., 2014), while institutional barriers such as administrative constraints and limited funding

opportunities put further stress on the researcher (Da Silva, 2021; Tayaban and O'Leary, 2022).

Furthermore, many ECRs encounter significant challenges in relation to language in their research practices, especially in writing, publishing, and communicating research. These stem from challenges in writing academic English, lack of institutional support, and insufficient training during graduate studies (Ekoç-Özçelik, 2023). As a result, the language-related challenges can affect their academic career trajectories, collaboration opportunities, and visibility in the global research community (Hanauer et al., 2018; Ramírez-Castañeda, 2020; Zheng and Guo, 2018). The dominance of English in academia offers both opportunities and barriers for researchers, affecting how ECRs access to academic literature, publish scholarly works, network with peers, and lastly contribute to knowledge production. Given that, many researchers from non-Anglophone contexts struggle to write and publish in high-impact international journals, which often requires English-written works (Canli and Yağiz, 2024; Ekoç-Özçelik, 2023; Hyland, 2016; Kuzembayeva et al., 2022; Shamsi and Osam, 2022). This limits ECRs ability to engage deeply with English academic literature, creating an imbalance in knowledge dissemination.

The challenges that ECRs face reflect the issues within academic institutions and handling these concerns requires a developing stable funding mechanism, robust mentorship programs, enhanced mental health support, and policies that prioritize both professional development and personal well-being (Arslantas et al., 2020). Such solutions are crucial for raising the next generation of researchers and ensuring their success in the global academic landscape since future academic research depends largely on how effectively institutions can address these structural and technological limitations while supporting their early-career scholars (Da Silva, 2021; Tayaban and O'Leary, 2022).

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

This chapter concentrates on the current study's methodology by outlining and explaining the research design, aims, research questions, the setting, the participant group, data collection, and analysis procedure in detail.

4. 1. Research Design

The complex relationship between MOI and academic development requires careful examination, particularly in Turkish higher education context, where researchers can experience MOI transitions in their academic trajectories. To examine this phenomenon in depth, the study adopts a qualitative phenomenological research design to uncover the lived experiences of ECRs who navigated different MOIs in their academic journeys. The phenomenological approach allows the researcher to uncover rich and detailed insights into how these MOI transitions shape ECRs' research experiences, challenges, coping strategies, and language preferences in research practices that would be difficult to capture through other methodological approaches. Understanding the complex nature of MOI transitions necessitates deep insights into the participants experiences, and how these experiences shape their researcher identity and practices. Through this lens, the current study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1. What research-related challenges do ECRs experience in line with their MOI background?

1.1 What are the experienced research-related challenges of ECRs who had different MOIs at different levels of education? To what are these challenges attributed?

1.2 What are the experienced research-related challenges of ECRs who had same MOIs at different levels of education? To what are these challenges attributed?

RQ2. What strategies do ECRs apply to overcome research-related challenges in line with their MOI background?

2.1. What are the applied research-related strategies of ECRs who had different MOIs at different levels of education?

2.2. What are applied research-related strategies of ECRs who had same MOIs at different levels of education?

RQ3. What are the academic language preferences of ECRs in research practices in line with their MOI background? What are the underlying reasons?

Aiming to find answers to the research questions above, the current study adopts a qualitative phenomenological research method which seeks to investigate the lived experiences of participants in-depth (Creswell, 2014). Several researchers have described phenomenology in similar ways. For example, Given (2008, p. 466) defines phenomenology as a “theoretical system of ideas that discusses the ways in which humans experience phenomena in the world” and points out that the phenomenological research method focuses on investigating and a deeper understanding of how individuals make sense of their own lived experiences through a meticulous examination. Creswell (2014) explains phenomenology as a qualitative research method that involves an in-depth understanding of participants’ thoughts, perceptions, and experiences of the phenomenon being studied. Cohen et al., (2018) indicate that everyone in a group may perceive or experience a situation, or phenomenon differently while emphasizing the focus of phenomenological research, which is participants' subjective experiences. Phenomenological research method necessitates in-depth interviews to be able to understand the lived experiences and perceptions of the participants (Cohen et al, 2018; Denscombe, 2014). Furthermore, Fraenkel et al. (2022) point out that researchers concentrate on a specific event, gather data through in-depth interviews, and then define what is common to their viewpoints. Given that the researcher of the current study aims to explore the participants’ experiences, thoughts, and perceptions of a particular phenomenon in depth, the qualitative phenomenological research design stands out as the most suitable one among other research designs. The definitions and key features of qualitative phenomenological research design help the researcher to find it as the most appropriate research method for the current study because the phenomenological research method aims to investigate the participants’ lived personal experiences, thoughts, and perceptions about a situation in depth.

4.2. Participants and Setting

The researcher utilized the non-probable purposive sampling method to reach the study's aims. Non-probable purposive sampling was defined as the intentional selection of participants based on the "researcher's judgement and/or knowledge of the population" and with the goal of drawing out the necessary data (Mackey and Gass, 2022). Moreover, Cohen et al. (2018) highlight that purposive sampling is a fundamental aspect of qualitative research. In non-probable sampling methods, the researcher aims for a specific group of people even though they do not represent the whole population. In qualitative research, as the name suggests, purposive sampling involves researchers purposefully selecting participants who they believe best represent the characteristics relevant to their study. This method of sampling enables researchers to concentrate on participants and cases that tend to offer meaningful insights into the phenomenon being studied. Although this type of sampling has its upsides as it offers significant depth to the research, it also has downsides in terms of generalizability compared to probability sampling. Purposive sampling enables the researcher to collect in-depth information on issues and cases (Dovetail Editorial Team, 2023). The main aim in purposive sampling is to obtain in-depth data from the specific group of people who are chosen based on the researcher's judgement. Researchers utilize their judgement to pick a sample that they assume will offer the data they seek (Fraenkel et al., 2022). Thus, the non-probability purposive sampling method is the most appropriate method to be used in the current study since the aims of the research require in-depth data collection on a specific issue and participants to be selected according to certain criteria.

The participants of this current qualitative study consisted of three groups of ECRs actively working as research assistants in the Faculties of Education at Turkish Universities. The first two groups were those who received their B.A. and M.A. education in the same language without changing the MOI between the two education levels (ENG-ENG, TR-TR). The third group was those who received their undergraduate education in English and their graduate education in Turkish (ENG-TR). Each group contained 2 participants for a total of 6 participants. Initially, the (TR-ENG) group who received their undergraduate education in Turkish and graduate education in English was included as a participant group. However, the researcher ultimately excluded this group due to challenges in reaching this group of participants.

To ensure the reliability of the results, participants needed to meet the specific requirements of the current study's population. All the participants were actively working under the umbrella of the Faculty of Education as research assistants at universities in Türkiye. This study contains certain inherent limitations in terms of its participants as well. As a result of the apparent discrepancy between educational fields, ECRs who made a change of field between undergraduate and graduate degrees were not included in the current study along with ECRs who participated in the Erasmus+ Exchange Program. Additionally, ECRs who are doctorate students were not included in this study due to their possible additional experience in academic engagement and teaching practices. The following Figure 2 and Table 1 demonstrate the participant group and numbers.

Table 1 Participants and their backgrounds

Participants and their MOI Backgrounds

MOI of ECRs	ENG (BA)	ENG (BA)	TR (BA)	Total
	TR (MA)	ENG (MA)	TR (MA)	
Participants	2	2	2	6

Participants

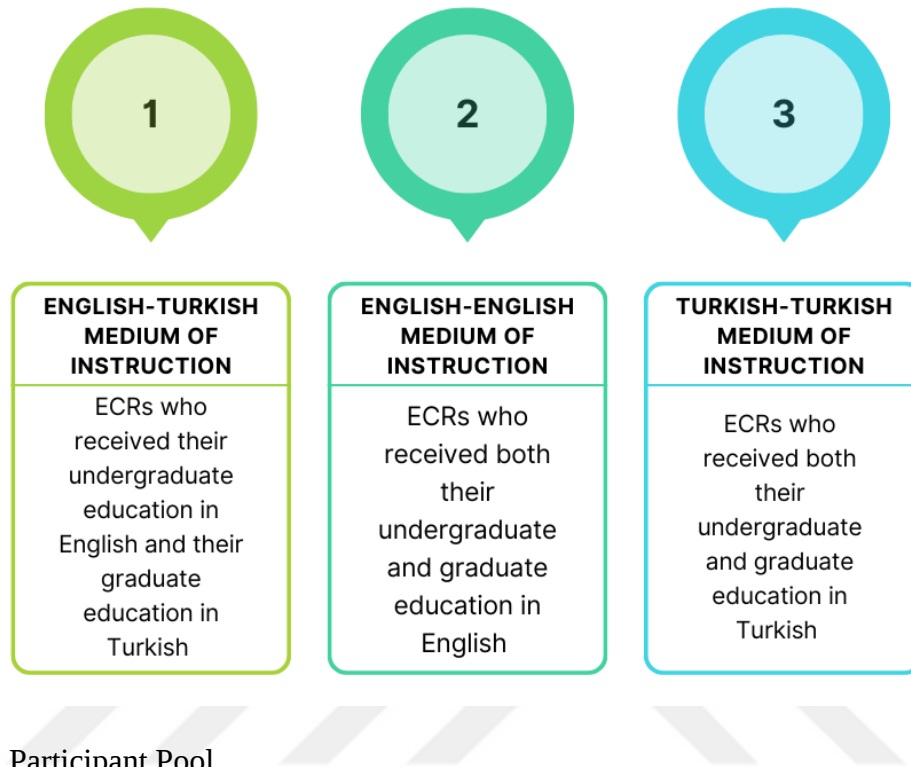


Figure 2. Participant Pool

After receiving ethical permission (Appendix 1), the researcher sought to reach out to the target population step by step through acquaintances using e-mail and WhatsApp. The researcher prepared the informed consent form on Microsoft Forms and a Google Sheets document to schedule the semi-structured interviews. The informed consent form included their language preferences for the semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted online on Google Meet, recorded and transcribed into text.

To provide the full framework of the participants, it is necessary to understand different definitions of the participant group and education levels. According to *ISCED 2011 Operational Manual* (2015), the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) is “the reference classification for organizing education programs and related qualifications by education levels and fields”. Based on the *ISCED Operational Manual* (2015), the levels of education are divided into eight starting from zero corresponding to early childhood education. Levels in *ISCED Operational Manual* (2015) are provided below.

ISCED 2011 has nine levels of education, from level 0 to level 8:

- ISCED 0: Early childhood education
- ISCED 1: Primary education
- ISCED 2: Lower secondary education
- ISCED 3: Upper secondary education
- ISCED 4: Post-secondary non-tertiary education
- ISCED 5: Short-cycle tertiary education
- ISCED 6: Bachelor's or equivalent level
- ISCED 7: Master's or equivalent level
- ISCED 8: Doctoral or equivalent level

Figure 3. Education levels and fields by ISCED

In the context of this study, ISCED levels 6-7 and 8 are the most relevant ones. While the education levels are listed this way in the ISCED Operational Manual (2015), these levels are taken into consideration to describe junior researchers in the OECD (2015) Frascati Manual. The OECD (2015) Frascati Manual defines junior researchers as individuals engaged in academic research including doctoral candidates, PhD students, and master's students who aim for more research experience under the supervision of experienced researchers and research leaders. As stated in the OECD (2015) Frascati Manual, doctoral candidates, PhD students, and master's students are considered in the "junior researchers" group as they are in the ISCED 7 and 8 education levels. As for the early career researchers (ECRs) also known as early-stage researchers (ESRs), the European Commission (n.d.) describes them as people who are in the first four years of their research careers and have not yet earned a doctoral degree. Moreover, these first four years begin when they acquire a degree meeting the requirements to start a PhD irrespective of their intent to engage in postgraduate studies. Bearing these definitions in mind, the researcher aims to broaden the ECR definitions by including master's level students in the context of this study. For this reason, ECRs referred to in this study involve individuals who pursue more research experience under the guidance of more experienced researchers including master's students.

Table 2

Overview of the Participants

MOI Background Undergrad/Grad	Participant	Gender	Department	Language Education/Experience
EMI/EMI	E.E1	F	Science Education	K12 Education Tertiary Preparatory Year
	E.E2	F	Psychological Counselling & Guidance	K12 Education Additional Courses for Language Skills & Exam Preparation
EMI/TMI	E.T1	M	Science Education	K12 Education Tertiary Preparatory Year
	E.T2	F	Primary Education	K12 Education Tertiary Preparatory Year
TMI/TMI	T.T1	M	Primary Education	K12 Education Highschool Preparatory Year Formal Additional Courses Language Exam Preparation
	T.T2	M	Computer & Instructional Technologies (CEIT)	K12 Education Formal Additional Courses Language Exam Preparation

An overview of the participants is illustrated in Table 2. As mentioned earlier, there are three different groups in this study, each group comprising two ECRs and having different MOI backgrounds. The study involves six participants in total, comprising three females and three males distributed across different groups. The departments of the participants include Science Education, Primary Education, Psychological Counselling & Guidance, and Computer & Instructional Technologies (CEIT). In the current study, all participants completed their K-12 education in Turkish schools following the standard curriculum, with English language proficiency ranging from A1-A2 to B1-B2 levels in line with CEFR. However, the participants with EMI backgrounds additionally received intensive preparatory education before their undergraduate studies. In this respect, E.E1 indicated experiencing difficulties in the transition process from the preparatory year to the undergraduate program, as the prep year was not concentrated on field content in English but on general and academic English. Furthermore, E.E2 reported that she was exempted from the preparatory year at the tertiary level by taking the institution's four-skills based language exam and proceeded directly to her undergraduate studies, which demonstrates her high level of English language

proficiency. On the other hand, E.T1 stated that he was able to pass the preparatory year successfully after three years which exceeds the standard time limit, sharing his struggles in productive skills and attributing this issue to rote learning of English in K-12 education. T.T1 also expressed his concerns that their English language education was primarily based on rote learning of language structures and noted that it had negative effects on his language learning experiences. However, T.T1 also added that attending an EMI preparatory language program in high school contributed to the development of his English proficiency. Moreover, both E.E2 and TMI/TMI participants received extra language support for exam preparation. E.E2 noted that she received a four-skills based language course.

4.2.1 Detailed Overview of The Participants

E.E1

This participant is a 26-year-old Turkish female working as a research assistant at a state university in Türkiye in the Department of Science Education and her mother tongue is Turkish. She has completed her undergraduate and graduate education at the same university and one of Türkiye's renowned universities in the same department in English. Although the participant's mother tongue is Turkish, since she received both undergraduate and graduate levels of education in English, she believes she is fluent in English but not as fluent as a native speaker. Upon completing her master's degree, she is also planning to initiate her doctoral education. Apart from her academic life, she has multiple hobbies such as frisbee, camping, trekking, painting, and bird observation.

When asked about her story with the English language, she said that her journey with learning English started from primary education and continued with secondary and tertiary level education. She indicated that she did not have any specific motivation to learn the English language at these levels of education. Thus, the participant stated that she completed her secondary education without any proper learning of the English language. After having been accepted to an EMI university, she felt obliged to study the preparatory year. Moreover, she asserted that she considered English language learning as a prerequisite for her undergraduate education and that's why she pursued her preparatory education. However,

the participant described the first two years of her undergraduate education as very challenging and attributed her low GPA to the EMI. Regarding the underlying reasons for the challenges experienced in the transition between the prep year and the undergraduate year, the participant asserted the obvious discrepancy between the English language in the prep year and the undergraduate years adding that their purposes differed in terms of content and language. Given that the field courses in undergraduate years aimed to provide field knowledge in English and the prep courses aimed to increase English language proficiency, the participant's opinions and experiences could be valid. Apart from that, the participant pointed out the undergraduate instructors' assumption that students had comprehensive knowledge of field English, adding that the undergraduate instructors delivered the field knowledge in English in a hasty manner and without considering the background field English knowledge of the students. The participant claimed that her English skills had improved considerably by the time she reached her master's level. She also noted that there were many opportunities to improve her English skills to the point of master's level such as additional readings assigned by teachers, in-class discussions in pedagogical courses, and English presentation courses. While the participant believed she was insufficient in daily English-speaking skills and could not express herself well, she considered taking daily English-speaking lessons from informal educational apps such as 'OpenEnglish' and 'Cambly'. On the other hand, she states that she is more confident in speaking academic English. As an early career researcher, the participant's research productivity consists of a conference paper and her master's thesis.

In conclusion, the participants' experiences demonstrate the challenges of adjusting to EMI and the hard work needed to develop academic language skills. Although she experienced difficulties at first, she improved her English through EMI undergraduate and graduate education and now feels more confident in academic settings. Her dedication to improving her colloquial English reflects her special attention and efforts to self-improvement. Through regulating both academic and personal goals, she establishes a well-balanced portrait as an early career researcher.

E.E2

This participant is a Turkish female working as a research assistant at one of Türkiye's renowned state universities in the Department of Psychological Counselling and Guidance

within the Faculty of Education. She specializes in Psychological Counselling and Guidance and is currently pursuing a PhD at the university previously mentioned where she is currently in her second year of doctoral education. Although her mother tongue is Turkish, she began learning English at a very early age in private schools, starting from kindergarten, which she claimed offered higher-quality education. Therefore, she identifies English as her second language. She did not prefer studying the prep year at university. As a result, she decided to take additional language courses tailored for exams assessing all four language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and then reaped the benefits. She completed her undergraduate and graduate degrees at two of Türkiye's best-known universities in EMI programs.

The participants emphasized her fast language-learning skills and her keen interest in learning languages. The participant actively used English throughout her education, particularly during her EMI tertiary studies. She is currently a teaching assistant, teaching students how to conduct statistical analyses, report results, etc. in computer labs. As the university she works at operates in English, these courses are also delivered in English. Even though daily communication is carried out in Turkish, English is used in academic contexts within her institution. Additionally, her academic readings mostly constitute articles, books, and academic papers written in English adding that her education and career 90% consist of English now.

When asked about her journey with the Turkish language, she stated that it began in the house where she was born and raised. She received her preschool, primary, and secondary education in TMI. After receiving EMI tertiary education and working at an EMI university, she indicated that there has been a noticeable decrease in her overall use of Turkish across three key areas of her life: education, career, and daily life.

The participant has not received any formal training in conducting research or project management beyond the university courses. However, she is currently involved in a project conducted in Turkish and she is independently working on a research article. Additionally, she is receiving therapy training.

When asked about the transition process from undergraduate education to graduate education, the participant indicated that undergraduate education had little depth into it and in contrast, the knowledge transfer was too much. Considering the more crowded classrooms and previously mentioned aspects, the participant stated that the importance and attention

given to the individual was much less. On the other hand, graduate education was different from undergraduate in many ways, for example, much fewer students in the classes at the master's level, fewer courses and the necessity of producing science, and presenting the product. Hence, the participant stated that she found the graduate education process challenging, specifically due to the demanding nature of thesis writing. Moreover, the participant said that although there are fewer courses the content of these courses was much heavier, and the expectations were much higher. Along with these aspects, she indicated that the expectations and tasks increased considerably at the master's level, adding that these aspects increased the necessity of involvement and burden of the process, as well as the given importance and attention to the individual. Therefore, the participant pointed out the ever-increasing anxiety she experienced in the process of graduate education. Knowing that the expectations would be higher, the participant was a bit relieved by reminding herself that the quality of education would be higher. The participant also pointed out the process of familiarizing with the school system, and functional, and personal changes.

In conclusion, the participant's experiences highlight the significant shift from undergraduate to graduate education and the challenges of working at an EMI university. Having a special interest in and motivation towards language learning, she began learning English from an early age. Thus, she identifies English as her second language. As she progressed in her education, she aimed to improve her language skills in every aspect. Currently, in the second year of her PhD, she completed both undergraduate and graduate degrees at an EMI university. She is also a teaching and research assistant at the university where she is receiving her doctoral education. The participant noted a decrease in the use of the Turkish language due to the dominance of English in her academic environment. Reflecting on her experiences, she noted that undergraduate education lacked depth and importance given to individuals, while graduate education necessitated much more effort and posed challenges. Moreover, she claimed to experience amplified anxiety and pressure due to the high expectations of educators. Nevertheless, she acknowledged the higher quality of education and opportunities for improvement and benefited from these opportunities.

E.T1

This participant is a Turkish male working as a research assistant at one of Türkiye's state universities in the Department of Science Education, having completed his bachelor's and

master's at two different prestigious universities in Türkiye in the same department. MOI was English at the undergraduate level and Turkish at the graduate level. The diverse linguistic and educational experiences formed his current academic career. He stated that he experienced challenges in the transition from EMI at the undergraduate level to TMI at the graduate level. When he began his current position as a research assistant, his master's course period was nearing an end. As a result, he transferred his registration to the university where he is now employed. After completing his thesis, he pursued his doctoral education at the same institution.

The participant's mother tongue is Turkish, and he regards himself as proficient in English. Considering his journey with English, he stated that he began learning English in primary school and continued until after his undergraduate preparatory education. However, he pointed out that the English language education he received before university had little to no effect, reporting it as ineffective and misleading. He underlined that his journey with the English language only began during his preparatory year at university as a beginner learner. He finished the preparatory year in three years due to an insufficient language background and irregular attendance which brought about challenges. Subsequently, the participant has made efforts to enhance his language skills and knowledge on his own and believes he has done so. Consuming English content, he gradually increased his proficiency in English and did not need to take additional language courses. He indicates that the current position of English in his life is mostly in the academic sense such as academic reading and writing.

Reflecting on his journey with the Turkish language, he believed that primary and secondary Turkish education was at the surface level and did not contribute to his Turkish language development. His development of a reading habit during long commutes during his university years promoted his Turkish language skills, as he claims. Additionally, he believes this reading habit had positive effects on his academic writing experiences in terms of sentence structure, punctuation, word use, etc. which also helped him in the process of master's thesis writing and other academic writings.

Considering the transition process from undergraduate degree to graduate degree, the participant expressed his experiences and challenges emphasizing the intense undergraduate education in terms of content, EMI in content courses (Physics, Chemistry, Biology), and the simplicity of these processes at the graduate level after experiencing such difficulties at the undergraduate level. Other experiences in the transition process include not having a

good command of relevant fields in Turkish but in English; hence, this appeared as a problem in graduate student exams and research assistant recruitment interviews as interviewers expected field knowledge in Turkish, as he expressed. However, he also mentioned that he managed to overcome this issue by being exposed to field knowledge in Turkish and gaining experience in academia.

In essence, the participant completed his undergraduate degree in EMI and his graduate degree in Turkish, which posed problems in the transition process between two different language mediums. The participant's overall experiences show the impacts of two different levels of education with different MOI on his current academic career and educational life. His educational path demonstrates the difficulties of tailoring the academic field knowledge from English to Turkish. The participant found primary and secondary education superficial in terms of language education; thus, he independently enhanced his both language skills through exposure and self-motivated learning strategies which had positive influences on his current academic reading and writing. Regardless of initial challenges with both languages, his commitment and self-directed efforts to improve his language skills show persistence.

E.T2

The participant is a female research assistant at a state university in Türkiye having completed her undergraduate and graduate degrees at prestigious universities in the Department of Primary Education. She completed her undergraduate degree at an EMI university and her graduate degree at a TMI university and is now pursuing her doctoral education at another prestigious university. This transition of MOIs might have influenced her academic and linguistic experiences. The participant's native language is Turkish and foreign language is English. Additionally, she can understand Arabic but cannot speak.

When asked about her journey with the English language, she expressed her feelings towards English and stated that English has always been her favorite language. She also adds that she has always been intertwined with foreign culture whether it is TV series or songs. She first started talking about her experiences at university and did not mention primary or secondary language education. Her story with the English language begins in the preparatory year at university as she tells, where significant emphasis was given to English language learning. Currently, she indicates that the English language takes part in the research and cultural

aspects of her life, as she usually does research on foreign literature. Furthermore, she did not take any additional formal courses on language and research-related aspects apart from school education.

When asked about her story with the Turkish language, she did not share much detail but said that she utilizes Turkish all the time to carry out daily activities as it is her native language. However, she reported using Turkish for research purposes as well, though less often than English, as she feels less confident in Turkish compared to English.

The participant described the transition phase from undergraduate to graduate degree as very challenging due to completing 6 years of EMI undergraduate education. Since the participant received her undergraduate education in English for 6 years, she has had a good command of the field knowledge in English; hence, she encountered some challenges when she started her TMI graduate education. These challenges primarily stemmed from the fact that she did not have a good command of field and research knowledge in Turkish. These challenges include answering instructors' questions using Turkish terminologies, graduate student exams, and research assistant recruitment interviews. Furthermore, she reported that her having difficulty remembering the Turkish terminologies that are field and research-specific was considered strange by other people. Having faced these difficulties, the participant attempted to overcome these issues through self-directed efforts and Turkish academic resources. Even though she experienced initial challenges in the process of adapting to transitioning from EMI to TMI, she managed to improve her academic skills in Turkish as well.

In conclusion, the participant is a Turkish native speaker with a good command of English. The exposure to the English language through cultural content, preparatory year, and EMI undergraduate education enhanced her English language skills. The participants' experiences demonstrate the complicated nature of changing MOIs between education levels. Considering the experiences the participant shared, the adaptation process has been highly challenging in terms of academic and field-specific terminologies. Regardless of the experienced challenges at first, her efforts allowed her to manage the transition process and improve her language skills in both languages.

T.T1

This participant is a male Turkish research assistant at a state university in Türkiye specializing in Primary Education. Having completed his bachelor's degree at another state university in the Department of Primary Education, his master's in the same field and at the university he is currently employed and is pursuing his doctoral education at his undergraduate alma mater. His mother tongue is Turkish, and he has intermediate English proficiency, as evidenced by his scores of 72.5 and 85 points on Türkiye's two different standard foreign language exams. His achieving these points on standardized foreign language exams reflects an intermediate level of proficiency, which is adequate for academic reading and writing tasks. Apart from this, the participant also applied for the double major undergraduate program at the department of English Language Teaching (ELT) which has a preparatory year. The participant stated that after applying for the ELT program to obtain a double major undergraduate degree, he also took the preparatory exam held within the ELT department and passed. However, the participant claimed that the personal circumstances did not allow it, and he could not pursue the double major undergraduate degree.

Reflecting on his journey with the English language, it started at a very early age in primary school continuing with secondary and tertiary level education. The participant asserted that the English language education at initial levels was inefficient. For example, he criticized the memorization-focused grammar instruction and found this practice ineffective in terms of building practical language skills. Moreover, the participant received an English preparatory education in high school, laying a strong foundation of English language proficiency and aiding him in getting high points from the standard language exams. The participant found the high school preparatory year effective as the teacher employed EMI. The preparatory year delivered in EMI, not only improved his fundamental English skills but also evoked his interest towards the English language. Apart from the formal education he received, he stated that he did not take any additional language courses. Regarding the research aspect, the participant reported that he attended short-term seminar sessions for project writing at the institution where he is employed. These sessions, intended to improve project writing and management skills, provided him with practical knowledge for academic projects. At both undergraduate and graduate levels, the participant received his education in TMI except for a few language-related courses at university including Academic English as an elective course. However, as the participant mentioned, the Academic English course

did not have an academic dimension at all. The participant stated that undergraduate education required minimum English proficiency, and his master's degree required English reading skills for course materials and research. He added that while there were no language prerequisites for graduate education programs in Primary Education; proficiency in English was essential for the necessary reading tasks to be done during the course period. Therefore, the participant's other classmates who were not proficient in English encountered challenges in doing these readings. Although he believes he has better English proficiency compared to his classmates in master's class, he clearly stated that he also encountered certain challenges while doing these readings such as unfamiliar concepts, terminologies, and words. Hence, he depended on digital tools such as DeepL, Google Translate, and ChatGPT to comprehend these unfamiliar concepts and terminologies crucial for his academic goals, enabling him to access academic field literature and publish research in international academic journals. These tools helped with understanding the complex content and simplifying the process of publishing in international journals through translation. He utilized these tools to translate his Turkish-written studies to English for international publication purposes adding that he always cross-checks the translated texts. Regardless of the educational aspect, the participant aimed to expose himself to the target culture and improve his language skills by watching foreign TV series and movies. Currently, English plays a crucial role in his academic research, specifically in accessing, reading, and citing the original works. While Turkish is primarily used for initial thought development and writing processes. Additionally, he expressed that he ability to think in English is a different point, that not everyone can reach that point, and that he does not feel confident enough in this regard.

As for his journey with the Turkish language, he started telling the story from the very beginning and added that the story starts from the times he cannot remember since his native language Turkish. Having started by hearing, listening, and reading, in other words by being exposed to it, the journey with his mother tongue has continued as a developing and changing process as he described. Furthermore, he explains that he has a special devotion to the Turkish language and is careful to use the language properly. He also believes that he is competent in terms of comprehension, grammar and self-expression in Turkish, although he believes he has some imperfect areas as well. Therefore, he continuously tries to improve himself in terms of his native language. Regarding the current role of The Turkish language in his life, he predominantly uses Turkish for his academic studies apart from his daily communication.

Evaluating the transition process, he emphasized critical differences between the two levels of education such as individual responsibility, class sizes, the expectation to produce scholarly work, active participation, etc. He reported that the undergraduate education he received provided a strong foundation which accelerated his transition to a more practical and applied focus of graduate education. He reported that being entitled to a research assistant position while continuing his master's had notable repercussions but did not elaborate on whether these repercussions were related to workload, professional development, academic performance, etc. While undergraduate studies prioritized group work and reduced individual accountability, graduate education gave more importance to individual accountability and scholarly output. Graduate studies required much more individual responsibility compared to the collaborative nature of undergraduate education and there was a process of putting a production out such as articles, book chapters, or theses. Another main difference is the number of students in the classes as graduate classes have much fewer people compared to undergraduate ones. The number of students at the undergraduate level was much higher causing a feeling of insignificance. Therefore, the participant expressed his feelings as more like an individual at the graduate level since there is a focus on each student separately. Moreover, the participant claims that the graduate classes necessitated active participation due to the low number of students including engaging in discussions, leading the discussions, and making presentations. He noted that the in-depth discussions and peers with diverse academic backgrounds broadened his perspectives in different aspects. On the other hand, the participant noted that students could often compensate for a lack of active participation through last-minute efforts. In this regard, he added that graduate education was at another level in terms of required consistent effort and commitment.

To conclude, the participant's academic journey demonstrates the experiences of studying at different educational levels in the same MOI. His efforts to improve his English proficiency and reinforce his native language illustrate his commitment to both academic and personal development. The shift from undergraduate to graduate education increased his active involvement in research, amplified his knowledge and perspectives, and promoted a greater sense of responsibility.

T.T2

This participant is a male Turkish research assistant at one of Türkiye's best-known universities in the field of Computer and Instructional Technologies (CEIT) in the Education Faculty. His job involves assisting and teaching lab-based lectures. His academic journey started with a bachelor's education at a state university in the same department, currently pursuing a master's education at another prestigious university within the Faculty of Education. Even though he has received both levels of education in TMI, his current position as a research assistant requires English for academic discourse since he teaches in lectures and is also a teaching assistant and lectures are carried out in EMI. Thus, he speaks English as a foreign language. Moreover, he has studied Spanish for 3–4 months as an additional language but indicates that he is at a beginner level. Regarding his language education background, the participant began learning English at a very early age at primary school, and then secondary school. He continued learning English until his senior year of high school; however, he indicated that the language education received up to that point did not contribute to his four language skills and he also did not prioritize learning English himself. He also reported having taken additional formal English language courses but finding them inefficient. Additionally, he stated that there were no contexts in which he needed to use the English language before the tertiary level. The necessity of English language proficiency gradually increased from his point of view upon qualifying for university. Following his bachelor's degree graduation, the participant aimed for academia and endeavored to be an academician. To be able to become a research assistant, in other words, an academician, there is a prerequisite of having initiated graduate education. Therefore, the participant took the Academic Staff and Graduate Education Entrance Exam and Foreign Language Proficiency Test which are necessary for research assistant positions and graduate education entrances. In line with the purpose of being an academician, the participant indicated that he viewed the English language as a threshold to be overcome. Subsequently, English has taken a greater place in his life and current work life in terms of teaching and academic discourse compared to the past. He became aware and considered the English language as a must in academic contexts while working as a research assistant for purposes such as seeking international academic positions, attending international academic conferences, reading and comprehending English-written scholarly works, and writing and publishing high-quality English academic papers. He also reported not having received any formal education or

seminars on research conducting and writing, project writing and management apart from his formal tertiary-level courses.

Regarding his relationship with the English language, it developed considerably over time. Even though he began learning English at a very early age, his proper engagement with English started along with his beginning of graduate education and employment. He tried to improve his English for exam preparation and language proficiency tests thus far and acknowledged his true language proficiency was lower than expected once he got involved in academia. Currently, English takes a significant place in his life while teaching, reading related field literature, writing and publishing high-quality academic papers, and lastly pursuing academic positions abroad.

As for his journey with his native language, Turkish has been at the centre of his academic and personal life. Although the participant's native language is Turkish and he is good at expressing himself, he mentioned having deficiencies in Turkish academic writing. Following his master's supervisor's several remarks on his academic writing and his advice on taking additional academic writing courses to enhance his writing, he stated that he acknowledged his own deficiencies in Turkish academic writing and aimed for improvement.

When asked about the transition experiences from a bachelor's to a master's degree, the participant mainly remarked on the face value of the universities such as the university environment, buildings, the city, etc. He reported that the quality of his undergraduate university was below his expectations in terms of face value, not mentioning the educational aspect elaborately. However, he indicated that the number of competent instructors at the undergraduate level was low besides one or two. Additionally, he explained that the scoring system differs largely between the two institutions. For example, getting the minimum passing score on exams was adequate to be considered competent in a course at the undergraduate level, unlike his graduate education. Therefore, we can infer from this information that he found undergraduate education inefficient in general. As for graduate education, he stated that transforming from one institution to another prestigious one and changing cities bore certain challenges in terms of adaptation, personal and social life; however, he expressed his admiration and good feelings about his graduate institution regarding its face value, educational quality, and instructors.

In conclusion, the participant is a male Turkish research assistant in the Department of Computer Education and Instructional Technology (CEIT) at one of the prestigious universities in Türkiye. Apart from the research aspect of his job, he also teaches lab-based lectures in EMI even though he received both undergraduate and graduate education in TMI. Having initiated his academic journey with undergraduate education at a state university, now he pursues his graduate degree at another renowned university. In the initial stages, he viewed English as a threshold for being admitted to the graduate program and research assistant positions and aimed to enhance his language test scores through additional formal education and self-study. Upon being qualified for the research assistant position, English language proficiency has become vital in terms of teaching in English-medium, international research and academic opportunities. Although he is a native Turkish speaker, he is aware of his own deficiencies in Turkish academic writing particularly, which were remarked by his master's supervisor. Regarding the transition phase from undergraduate to graduate studies, the participant noted the low quality of his undergraduate education in contrast to the graduate. The participant's experiences demonstrate his adaptation to different contexts, dedication to self-improvement, and commitment to his academic journey despite initial challenges.

4.2.2 Setting

This study was conducted in the higher education context in Türkiye, where English has a key role in academic and professional settings. The Turkish education system provides a standardized K-12 education nationwide, with English language education beginning in primary school and continuing through secondary education. However, the scope and quality of English courses in K-12 education vary significantly, depending on the decisions of institutions and instructors. Even though there is a standard curriculum, instructors have the freedom to conduct English Language courses as they wish in the K-12 education context, meaning they may adopt EMI or TMI. Primary and secondary English language education provided in Türkiye corresponds to A1-A2 and B1-B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR) as followed by the Ministry of Education in theory (MoNE, 2018a; MoNE, 2018b). Students who wish to pursue tertiary-level education apply for university entrance exams. Like all other national tests, national university entrance

exams are also organized and administered by the Measuring, Selection, and Placement Centre (ÖSYM). While not all universities and departments in Türkiye offer EMI, high school graduates who attain a qualifying rank in the national university entrance exam are eligible to enrol in EMI programs, irrespective of their English language proficiency level. To mitigate the language-related challenges students may encounter in their undergraduate studies, Turkish universities provide a compulsory preparatory year to support and improve the language proficiency of the students before their undergraduate education. Although preparatory education is compulsory for EMI students, they can skip it by submitting a passing score from standardised national or international foreign language tests or by taking and passing the four-skills-based exam conducted by the institution. However, certain HEIs, such as Bosphorus University and Middle East Technical University (METU), do not accept national foreign language test scores, and they conduct their own language exams. The preparatory year before EMI undergraduate education concentrates on developing all four language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) to prepare students for English-medium academic studies. However, HEIs are autonomous according to articles 130 and 27 in the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye, which results in different methods, approaches, and programs for teaching in each university. This includes the preparatory programs as well. Additionally, according to the regulation published in the Official Gazette number 32489 put forward by the Presidency of the Council of Higher Education, the Senate of higher education institutions determine the regulations regarding the qualification of foreign language proficiency through preparatory classes or other means and the assessment of the level of foreign language proficiency. Therefore, the Senate of each university has the right to plan and implement its own preparatory programs freely within certain frameworks and rules. As a result, while one HEI may aim to improve the general English proficiency of students, others may concentrate on academic English regardless of the undergraduate program. Either way, the curriculums of preparatory programs in HEIs do not include field-specific content tailored for undergraduate studies.

As for the career aspect, pursuing an academic career involves meeting specific examination requirements. Two key examinations are particularly relevant: ALES (the Academic Personnel and Graduate Education Entrance Exam) and language proficiency tests such as YDS (National Foreign Language Test) and YÖKDİL (National Higher Education Institutions Foreign Language Test) administered by ÖSYM, along with international standardised language tests such as TOEFL IBT or IELTS. Even though the two national

tests are similar, YÖKDİL differs from YDS in its item sub-section structure and the distribution of questions across sections. Additionally, it incorporates discipline-specific language to assess proficiency more effectively in three different fields. Applicants can choose from three specialised fields including Science, Social Sciences, and Health Sciences. The national language proficiency tests involve 80 multiple-choice questions which aim to assess foreign language grammar and vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, and translation skills of the test-takers, excluding listening, writing, and speaking skills. The scores obtained from the language proficiency tests can be used for various purposes. These purposes include promotion in academic degree, salary increase for public personnel, employment in academic positions, application to postgraduate programs, and skipping the preparatory education provided that the institution accepts YDS and YÖKDİL scores. After obtaining qualifying scores on two tests (ALES and any language proficiency test), individuals apply for graduate programs at universities and are ranked based on their scores. Following this process, institutions invite those who rank higher to take the field proficiency exam, aiming to assess the field and research knowledge of the applicants. After being admitted to a graduate program, individuals can apply for faculty positions announced by universities, be ranked according to their test scores (ALES and Language Proficiency Test), and take the field proficiency exam conducted by the institute, as previously mentioned. Upon successfully completing all stages and securing a position, they can begin working as research assistants while continuing their master's studies.

While the language proficiency test scores are compulsory for securing academic positions and admission to postgraduate education programs, the national language proficiency tests primarily assess grammar and vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, and translation skills rather than all four skills and academic language competencies. This creates a notable gap between test scores and the actual academic language competencies required for successful participation in national and international academic discourse. As a result, even individuals with high scores on these tests may not necessarily have developed the academic literacy skills required for research, writing, and publication in English. The discrepancy between language test performance and actual academic language proficiency often leads to a gap where scholars possess certified English proficiency yet have difficulties in research-related linguistic demands.

This situation underscores the significance of EAP and ERPP training in Turkish academia, as mastering academic English extends beyond passing standardised tests. While scholars achieve sufficient scores on national language tests, they may often require additional language support for their research practices, or they may not prefer the English language in such practices due to low levels of English competency, lack of confidence, and challenges in academic writing. From another perspective, some scholars may lack Turkish academic literacy even though they are native speakers of the language as they have an EMI background. Addressing these issues requires a transition towards a more holistic academic biliteracy approach, where scholars receive targeted training in both Turkish and English academic discourse, including not only reading and writing but also listening and speaking. By enhancing support systems for academic writing and publication, the higher education system in Türkiye could better equip ECRs to engage with global academic communities. In essence, the language proficiency assessed by national tests and academic language proficiency in research practice follows different trajectories. Regardless of the MOI background, researchers may experience academic language-related challenges in their research practices, whether in Turkish or English. As mentioned before, this situation creates a gap between theory and practice for researchers in Turkish academia. To bridge this gap, actions should be taken to unify these two separate trajectories into one.

4.3. Data Collection Procedure

The current study aimed to gather in-depth data and a deeper understanding of the self-perceived effects of different MOI backgrounds on the journey of becoming a researcher. Following the principles of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which emphasizes detailed examination of lived experiences and how participants make sense of these experiences (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009), the study employed in-depth semi-structured individual interviews as the primary data collection instrument. IPA was particularly suitable for this research as it allows for a detailed exploration of how participants interpret their educational and professional experiences through the lens of their MOI backgrounds. This methodological approach aligns with the study's focus on understanding the subjective experiences and meaning-making processes of researchers who have navigated different language-of-instruction environments throughout their academic

careers. The semi-structured interviews were designed to facilitate deep reflection and rich narrative accounts, enabling participants to articulate their personal experiences, challenges, and adaptations in their journey toward becoming researchers. This approach is consistent with IPA's idiographic commitment to understanding experiential phenomena in detail and from the perspective of particular people in a particular context (Smith and Osborn, 2015).

The researcher conducted in-depth semi-structured individual interviews. Interviews enable researchers to explore phenomena that are not apparent and noticeable, such as participants' self-reported perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs (Mackey and Gass, 2022). Structured or standardized interviews involve a set of predetermined questions, and they mirror verbal questionnaires. However, semi-structured interviews, which are frequently employed in qualitative interpretive research, are less fixed. Researchers use predetermined questions as a model and have the freedom to digress and investigate for further information (Mackey and Gass, 2022). On the other hand, unstructured interviews resemble natural conversations since interviewers do not use a predetermined set of questions. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were adopted as the data collection tools to gather in-depth data on the self-perceived effects of MOI background on the ECRs' journey of becoming researchers.

Interview questions comprise four separate sections, each concentrating on a different aspect. The researcher and thesis supervisors developed the interview questions, which were then refined through a process of expert opinion (Appendix 2), revision, and piloting to ensure the instrument's validity and reliability. Although the interview questions were predetermined, the researcher digressed and investigated for further information to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena when necessary. The sections of the interview questions are given in Table 3.

Table 3

Sections of the Interview and Topics

Sections	Topics
Section 1	Language Proficiency and Preferences
Section 2	Reading/Listening to Academic Papers
Section 3	Writing and Publishing Academic Papers
Section 4	Speaking and Academic Conferences

Participants were asked about their preferred language for the interview which could be conducted in either English or Turkish based on their choice. The researcher began the data collection process by finding the appropriate participant groups with different MOI backgrounds that are coherent with the objectives of the current research. Subsequently, the participants' Higher Education Information websites were analyzed to gain insights into ECRs' academic engagement and productivity.

The interviews were conducted online on Google Meet for applicability since the participants were from different parts of Türkiye. The researcher prepared a Google Sheets document to schedule the interviews with each participant taking both interviewer's and interviewees' availability into account. To reach the participants, the researcher examined the academic staff webpages of different universities in Türkiye. The researcher examined the personal higher education information websites of research assistants working in departments within the Education Faculty in different universities and created a participant list according to their MOI backgrounds. Following this process, the researcher contacted the participants via Gmail to find out whether they are suitable for the study and to invite them to take part in the research (Appendix 3).

4.4. Data Analysis

The primary focus in qualitative data analysis is the in-depth, rich data and meanings provided by the participants driven by their subjective experiences and specific contexts with the researcher serving as the main research instrument (Cohen et al., 2018). In qualitative data analysis, the starting point is the already gathered data. The qualitative data comes from several sources such as observations, interviews, documents, and websites. The researcher proceeds from the data to "understand, explain, and interpret the phenomena in question" (Taylor and Gibbs, 2010, p.1). Newby (2014) draws an analogy for the qualitative data analysis process by comparing it to extracting valuable minerals, copper, or gold. Newby (2014) states that to reach the valuable mineral (our main resource), the rock surrounding the mineral needs to be mined either by physical or chemical processes. The qualitative data analysis approach is similar in how we divide it into smaller units. Some parts are discarded, while others are reorganized to determine the structure that best conveys the meaning of the data. Cohen et al. (2018) add that there is no one way to analyse, interpret, and demonstrate

the meaning of the data; hence, the approach to qualitative data analysis should be guided by how well it fits the intended purpose. The intended purpose is to reveal the common patterns of meaning across participant groups which address the research questions and identify the relationship between these patterns. Thus, two different data analysis methods were adopted for the current study. First, interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was utilized to gain insight into the participants' educational backgrounds and past experiences. Secondly, reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) was adopted for the analysis process of the semi-structured interviews in line with the research questions.

IPA is a qualitative research approach concerned with the examination of how people experience and make sense of their lived experiences (Smith et al., 2009). It is theoretically grounded in phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography. IPA adopts a double hermeneutic approach and an idiographic stance in which the researcher interprets the participants' interpretations of their experiences, examining each case in depth before looking for patterns across cases (Eatough and Smith, 2017). IPA allows for an in-depth understanding of personal and emotional experiences, valuing the first-person insights into how individuals attribute meaning to their experiences. Therefore, IPA is particularly suitable for understanding educational backgrounds and past experiences of participants in the context of this study. As for RTA, according to Braun and Clarke (2006) p. 79, "Thematic analysis (TA) is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data". The analysis process entails systematic organization of the data to reveal common patterns of meaning in the dataset. According to Given (2008), TA is a method for reducing and analysing qualitative data by dividing it into segments, categorizing it, summarizing key elements, and reorganizing it to highlight significant concepts within the qualitative dataset. On the other hand, RTA is a means of approaching TA emphasizing the active and reflective role of the researcher in the analysis process (Braun and Clarke, 2022). Researcher reflexivity includes the practice of critically reflecting on your role as a researcher along with your research practice, and processes (Braun and Clarke, 2022). The role the researcher takes in the TA processes shapes how data is interpreted and informs the way the researcher constructs meaning from it. Epistemologically, the constructionist perspective allows for social construction and continuous reproduction of meaning and experience. (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

The qualitative data can be analysed through inductive (bottom-up) or deductive (top-down or theoretical) approaches. Inductive approach involves coding the data without any prior coding frameworks or analytic assumptions while deductive coding is data-driven, and the researcher's theoretical and analytic viewpoint is of importance (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This approach to data analysis aims to provide a “detailed analysis of some aspect of the data” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 84).

Consequently, RTA is a flexible qualitative data analysis method for discovering shared patterns of meaning in qualitative data. In addition to its flexible features, RTA is more time and resource-efficient for the context of the current study. Moreover, the researcher of the current study believes that the reflexive viewpoint the researcher adopts might contribute to the process of extracting useful information from the dataset. Considering the adopted approaches, the analysis procedures such as coding and creating themes revolve around the research questions. As RTA acknowledges the active interpretive role of the researcher in theme development, subjectivity is not considered a bias but rather an integral part of the analytical process. Therefore, inter-rater reliability is not required, as RTA does not seek to achieve coding consensus but values the unique analytical insights of the individual researcher. With a constructionist and inductive approach, the data gathered from semi-structured interviews are analysed through RTA methods following Braun and Clarke's (2022) suggested stages of RTA analysis. Table 4 presents the phases of RTA.

Table 4

Braun and Clarke (2022) Six Stages of Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA)

Phases	Descriptions
Familiarizing with the dataset	Immersing oneself in the data through reading, re-reading the data (listening to the recordings), and taking notes
Coding	Identifying the parts that are interesting, relevant, and meaningful to your research aims, and creating codes.
Generating initial themes	Finding the common patterns of meaning, a shared idea or concept which have a potential to answer your research questions. Creating initial themes.
Developing and reviewing themes	Checking if the initial themes serve your research questions, make sense in the sense of coded data and the full dataset.

Refining, defining, and naming themes	Refining to ensure each theme is distinctly defined and centred around a clear core.
Writing up	Reporting the results of the analysis which is an integral phase of the analysis process.

The coding process followed the RTA framework, which underscores the researcher's active role in knowledge construction and the analysis process. As mentioned earlier, the codes were developed inductively, allowing participants' experiences to guide the analysis process. Initially, the recorded data was transcribed utilizing an AI application named 'Transkriptor' and then thoroughly reviewed by the researcher to correct errors and ensure accuracy. After the thorough review of transcriptions, the researcher transferred each document to Google Drive and then immersed in the data, focusing on each case (participant) separately in line with IPA approach. In the first phase of data analysis, the researcher engaged in an iterative process of reading and re-reading the data to develop initial ideas of codes, highlighting and noting them down to become familiar with the data. The second phase involved the formation of codes based on the detailed notes taken. The notetaking and coding process was carried out on Google Docs using commenting and highlighting. The notes taken were then analysed and interpreted in a different file to report the lived experiences of the cases in detail. The researcher focused on each case individually and sequentially, interpreting the past experiences and educational backgrounds of each participant. In the first and second phases, the researcher highlighted and took notes on parts of the data that answered the research questions as well to reduce the extra workload besides the coding process of past experiences. For RTA, the researcher utilized color-coded highlighting to organize the data in line with the research questions in the analysis process, which helped maintain focus on study's objectives. Moreover, the researcher herself experiencing similar research-related challenges facilitated the process of familiarization with the data and the context. In the following process, the researcher ensured that the preliminary codes should align with the research aims, scope, and address the research questions, identifying and fine-tuning the codes accordingly. For the next phase, the researcher reviewed and aimed to find out common patterns of meaning in the coded dataset between participant groups of ECRs who have different mediums of educational backgrounds, creating preliminary themes. For example, academic writing challenges emerged with initial codes such as "vocabulary limitations", "academic tone difficulties", and "paraphrasing challenges" in the analysis process of research-related challenges. These codes were grouped into broader themes to

create preliminary themes. The researcher sought to create clear, concise, and ideal codes and themes for readers to make sense of the findings while remaining true to participants' experiences. The analysis process was recursive as it involved going back and forth between each phase, analysing, reviewing, and refining both the codes and themes. An example of initial codes and preliminary themes are provided in Table 5.

Table 5

Initial Codes and Preliminary Themes

Theme	Sub-theme	Codes	Excerpts
Research	Methodological	Literature review	“...it is very challenging for me to review the literature and find a gap.” (E.T1) “Literature is the scariest place for me to navigate. Because there is such a vast amount of knowledge, and synthesizing it is required.” (E.E2) “Things like meeting the required number of participants, the quality of the tool, and so on. I mean, methodology is challenging in that sense, but especially establishing the research design is also a challenging aspect.” (E.E2) “You get past that, then you struggle to decide on your instrument—it's very difficult. Then you move on to data collection, but will people even want to provide data? How motivated are they? What can I do to get better data from them? I had a lot of these concerns.” (E.E1) “Then you try to discuss your findings. Discussing is already a whole different challenge. Why do I call it a challenge? Because there's an overwhelming amount of information to consider and trying to take it all in can make you feel completely lost.” (E.E1)
		Finding a gap	
		Participant Finding	
		Research Design	
		Ensuring the quality of data collection tool	
		Discussion	
Academic Language Skills	Reading Writing Listening Speaking	Unknown concepts and comprehension	“You encounter numerous unfamiliar concepts—academic terms and vocabulary. I would read them and try to understand their meanings.” (T.T1) “I could understand the questions of Turkish students. However, I had difficulty understanding foreign students, particularly Indian and Iraqi students.” (T.T2) “British English can sometimes be different in terms of vocabulary or accent, which can make it more
		Accent Intelligibility	
		Setting the academic tone	
		Vocabulary & Paraphrasing	
		Speaking anxiety	

			challenging and cause some anxiety. There tend to be more things I don't understand in those situations.” (E.E2) “Sometimes, I feel like I've written something in a very plain and informal way. So, I think, 'Let me add a more structured linking sentence here.' When making such additions, I occasionally refer to resources like a phrase bank.” (E.E1) “Since we need to paraphrase, having a broad vocabulary is essential. The challenge comes with avoiding repetition. I notice that I tend to rely on certain words automatically when writing. The hardest part for me is finding alternatives—both in terms of vocabulary and sentence structures” (E.E2) “I usually give presentations under a lot of stress, and the same goes for speaking in English. People say that it's not noticeable from the outside, but I am fully aware of the stress I experience internally.” (E.T1) “In English, before forming a sentence, I would construct it in my mind first—Is it correct? Is my pronunciation correct? I would overthink it and had to pay much more attention to these details. Naturally, I wasn't as comfortable as I am in Turkish.” (E.T2)
Institutional & Professional	Occupational Systemic Requirements	Communication with colleagues Academic promotion criteria	“Someone asks me a question—How did you select your sample? What was it called in Turkish? And at that moment, I completely forget it. Then I start thinking in English, and I wonder, 'Are these professors misunderstanding me?' This might also be related to my colleague not being as proficient in English as I am.” (E.E1) “Because the criteria for things like associate professorship and full professorship are constantly changing here. I understand people as well—there's the reality of survival and sustaining a career. However, sometimes works that lack strong content or quality progress more quickly in this system.” (E.E2) “There are promotion criteria, and within these criteria, high-impact journals are generally preferred. Of course, there are also TRDizin and other journals in Türkiye, some of which publish in English. For this reason, I would most likely prefer to advance in English and publish my work in English.” (E.T1)

4.5. Trustworthiness

To ensure trustworthiness for the current phenomenological study, the researcher adopted Shenton's (2004) suggested quality criteria for credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as seen in Table 6.

Table 6

Shenton's Suggested Quality Criteria

Quality Criterion	Possible provision made by the researcher
Credibility	Adoption of appropriate, well recognised research methods Development of early familiarity with culture of participating organisations Random sampling of individuals serving as informants Triangulation via use of different methods, different types of informants and different sites Tactics to help ensure honesty in informants Iterative questioning in data collection dialogues Negative case analysis Debriefing sessions between researcher and superiors Peer scrutiny of project Use of "reflective commentary" Description of background, qualifications and experience of the researcher Member checks of data collected, and interpretations/theories formed Thick description of phenomenon under scrutiny Examination of previous research to frame findings
Transferability	Provision of background data to establish context of study and detailed description of phenomenon in question to allow comparisons to be made
Dependability	Employment of "overlapping methods" In-depth methodological description to allow study to be repeated
Confirmability	Triangulation to reduce effect of investigator bias Admission of researcher's beliefs and assumptions Recognition of shortcomings in study's methods and their potential effects In-depth methodological description to allow integrity of research results to be scrutinised Use of diagrams to demonstrate "audit trail"

Note: Retrieved from Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for information*, 22(2), 63-75.

As highlighted by Shenton (2004), credibility in qualitative research is one of the most important components, comprising the process of ensuring that the study's measurement tools or tests fit the intended purpose. Therefore, the semi-structured interview questions underwent several processes of different experts' opinions along with double piloting of the questions. Following the expert opinion and piloting processes, the researcher refined the questions with the help of the thesis supervisors.

The researcher adopted the research methods best aligned with the aim of exploring participants' research-related experiences and applied strategies through consultation with the supervisors, other experts in the field, and peers. As the participants of the current study already had an active role in academia as research assistants, they bore a sense of honesty in their responses and the researcher ensured their confidentiality for confirmability, encouraging them to share their true experiences. Moreover, the researcher experiencing similar challenges within the master's thesis writing process facilitated the personal connection with the participants and the context familiarization process, developing a better understanding of participants' backgrounds and educational contexts in Türkiye. As another means of ensuring credibility, the researcher asked each participant to provide overall feedback on the study and the interviews, actively improving the interviewing process continuously. As for the data analysis, the researcher utilized the 15-point checklist for good thematic analysis suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) presented in Table 7.

Table 7 Checklist by Braun and Clarke

15-point checklist by Braun and Clarke

Process	No.	Criteria
Transcription	1	The data have been transcribed to an appropriate level of detail, and the transcripts have been checked against the tapes for 'accuracy'.
Coding	2	Each data item has been given equal attention in the coding process.
	3	Themes have not been generated from a few vivid examples (an anecdotal approach), but instead the coding process has been thorough, inclusive and comprehensive.
	4	All relevant extracts for all each theme have been collated.
	5	Themes have been checked against each other and back to the original data set.
Analysis	6	Themes are internally coherent, consistent, and distinctive.
	7	Data have been analysed – interpreted, made sense of – rather than just paraphrased or described.
	8	Analysis and data match each other – the extracts illustrate the analytic claims.
	9	Analysis tells a convincing and well-organized story about the data and topic.
Overall	10	A good balance between analytic narrative and illustrative extracts is provided.
	11	Enough time has been allocated to complete all phases of the analysis adequately, without rushing phase or giving it a once-over-lightly.
Written report	12	The assumptions about, and specific approach to, thematic analysis are clearly explicated.
	13	There is a good fit between what you claim you do, and what you show you have done – ie, described method and reported analysis are consistent.
	14	The language and concepts used in the report are consistent with the epistemological position of the analysis.
	15	The researcher is positioned as active in the research process; themes do not just 'emerge'.

Note. Retrieved from Braun, V., and Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.

Additionally, the researcher discussed the results of the study considering the literature. The focus of this study indicated a gap in literature in relation to how the MOI changes affect research-related experiences. Seeing that the literature on EMI from researchers' perspectives remains a gap and the literature mainly focuses on teachers' or students' perspectives, the current study will lead the way for new research. Furthermore, the researcher reported the methods and actions taken throughout the study as detailed as possible for other researchers to replicate the study in different contexts and to ensure dependability. The researcher explicitly acknowledged her beliefs and assumptions, sustaining transparency through reflective notes.

4.6. Reflexivity

As the researcher, it is acknowledged that personal and professional background has shaped how this study was approached, how data were gathered, and how findings were interpreted. The researcher is also an early career researcher who has witnessed firsthand the challenges arising from the MOI in academic contexts. Observing how MOI influences the experiences of early career researchers led the researcher to investigate these challenges and explore the strategies they use to overcome them.

In this study the researcher adopts a constructionist perspective, viewing knowledge and meaning as co-created within social and institutional settings. This implies that participants' accounts reflect not only their individual experiences but also broader academic discourses. Also, the researcher recognizes that real institutional structures, such as language requirements and publication standards, affect early career researchers beyond mere discourse.

Because the researcher is also in the early stages of an academic career, participants may have viewed the researcher as a peer sharing similar concerns rather than an authority figure. This shared status could have made them more comfortable in disclosing their experiences, but it might also have led them to assume certain perspectives were already understood. To foster genuine discussion, the researcher clarified the intent to learn from participants'

viewpoints and maintained a focus on confidentiality and openness, encouraging honest reflections on the challenges and strategies related to the medium of instruction.

Overall, the researcher's stance influenced both the methodological choices and the subsequent analysis. Recognizing that findings are not purely objective, the researcher presents them as one possible interpretation, shaped by personal experiences.



CHAPTER V

RESULTS

Chapter V presents the findings of the study based on the analysis of the collected data. The results are organized around the main research questions and include insights gathered from semi-structured interviews. Emerging themes and patterns are discussed in detail, supported by relevant participant quotations and interview excerpts.

5.1. Findings

The reflective thematic analysis of Braun and Clarke (2022) was conducted inductively from a constructionist viewpoint. The researcher provided the analysis results in line with the research questions. In the analysis process, the researcher employed Braun and Clarke's (2022) suggested Six Stages of Reflexive Thematic Analysis as can be seen in Table 8.

Table 8

Six Stages of Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA)

Phases	Descriptions
Familiarizing with the dataset	Immersing oneself in the data through reading, re-reading the data (listening to the recordings), and taking notes
Coding	Identifying the parts that are interesting, relevant, and meaningful to your research aims, and creating codes.
Generating initial themes	Finding the common patterns of meaning, a shared idea or concept which have the potential to answer your research questions. Creating initial themes.
Developing and reviewing themes	Checking if the initial themes serve your research questions and make sense in the sense of coded data and the full dataset.
Refining, defining, and naming themes	Refining to ensure each theme is distinctly defined and centered around a clear core.
Writing up	Reporting the results of the analysis, which is an integral phase of the analysis process.

5.1.1 Research-Related Challenges and Overcoming Strategies Among ECRs Based on Their MOI Background and Their Language Preferences

The analysis of the semi-structured interviews with three groups of ECRs who had different MOI backgrounds revealed common and diverse results regarding the experienced challenges, attribution, and overcoming strategies. Therefore, the common and diverse patterns found in analysis and results were presented under this heading. In addressing the main research questions (RQ1 and RQ2 and RQ3), the results of the sub-research questions were exploited. According to the analysis, while there were common challenges across the ECR groups irrespective of their MOI backgrounds, there were also different challenges unique to each group and their academic contexts. The analysis of the data and the reported results of sub-research questions identified several core challenges which were consistent among the three groups of ECRs including research and methodology, academic skills, and professional difficulties.

Common Academic Skills-Related Challenges and Attributions and Strategies

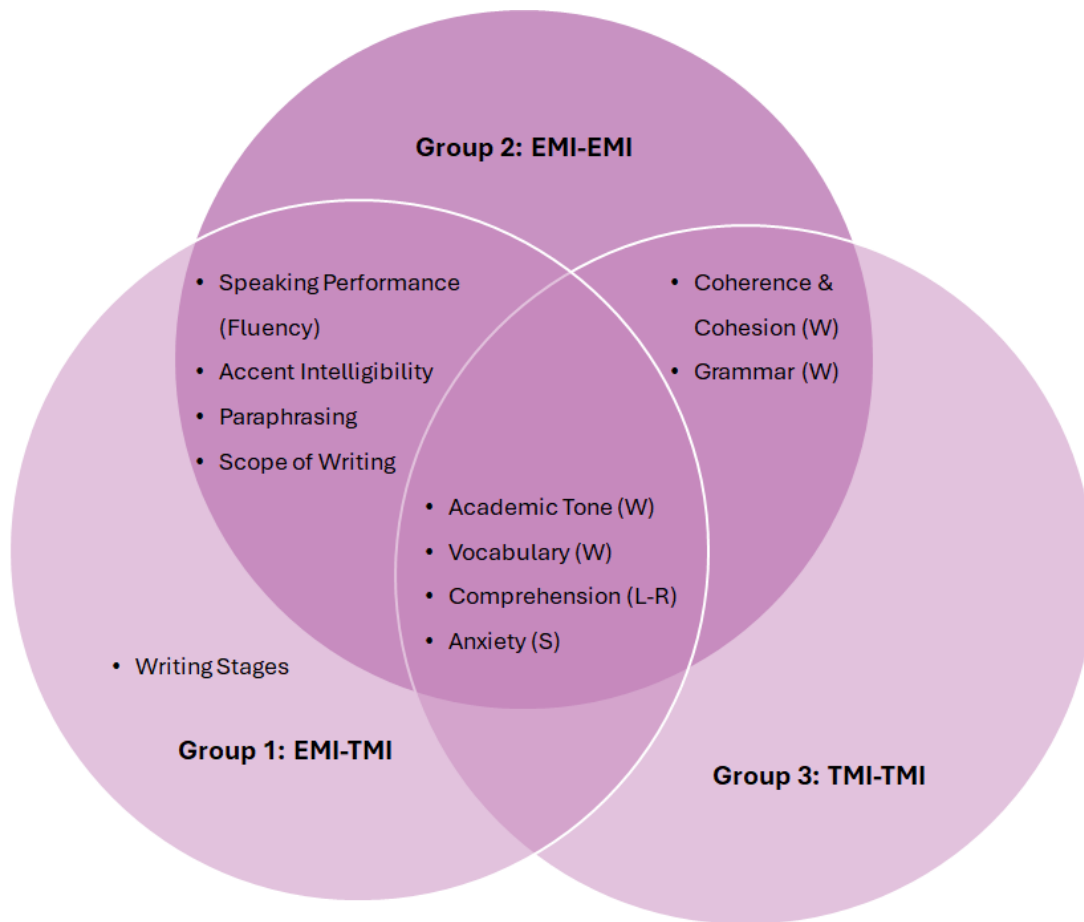


Figure 4. Academic skills-related challenges

The common academic skills challenges across the three groups included all four language skills: academic listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The specific aspect all participants struggled with most was academic writing; particularly with setting the academic tone regardless of the language and the MOI background. The participants utilized academic phrase bank and AI to overcome this issue in academic writing. Another prominent challenge identified among ECRs in terms of academic writing was the vocabulary. Each group reported experiencing challenges in academic writing regarding vocabulary stemming from limited vocabulary knowledge and language barrier. The participants sought to overcome the vocabulary-related challenges using dictionaries such as Thesaurus, Longman, and Tureng etc. Other than using dictionaries, participants also exposed themselves to English content to improve their overall skills. Moreover, the results revealed that the two groups of ECRs, including EMI background ECRs and TMI background ECRs, shared a challenge in

terms of low self-confidence in English academic writing which led both groups to employ digital tools such as Google Translate, DeepL, AI and EMI background ECRs to use Grammarly. Although TMI background participants indicated preferring academic writing in Turkish, they also noted that publishing in English would enhance visibility of their research in the global context. Therefore, TMI background ECRs preferred publishing in English with the help of translation tools and support systems despite their low proficiency and low self-confidence in English academic writing.

The analysis revealed the experienced difficulties which were common in two groups of ECRs, EMI background and EMI-TMI background, which involved the scope of writing and paraphrasing skills. The scope of writing included determining the level of detailing and elaboration of the content. Paraphrasing skills also found as a shared challenge among EMI and EMI-TMI background ECRs, which might be attributed to the low English proficiency levels or limited vocabulary knowledge of the participants. A common academic writing challenge identified between the EMI-TMI and TMI background ECRs consisted of grammar in addition to coherence and cohesion. Primarily, the two groups of participants (ENG-TR and TR-TR) attributed their experienced grammar challenges in academic writing to their prior educational backgrounds and rote learning the rules which they found ineffective. As for coherence and cohesion in academic writing, the EMI-TMI and TMI background ECRs reported struggling in maintaining a logical flow, synthesizing and connecting ideas.

As for speaking skills, all groups of ECRs experienced speaking anxiety and low self-confidence both in and out of the academic context. Speaking anxiety included the aspect of public speaking and overall English-speaking anxiety. Participants who had an EMI educational background indicated experiencing both. The only challenge shared regarding the academic speaking skills between EMI background ECRs and EMI-TMI background ECRs was about their speaking performance. The two groups of ECRs noted experiencing self-expression difficulties which mainly affected the fluency in English, and self-doubt about their accuracy and pronunciation.

The analysis revealed certain listening skills-related challenges common in all groups regarding comprehension. Listening comprehension challenges stemming from advanced language and vocabulary use. Another listening challenge found from the data and shared between the two groups, EMI and EMI-TMI background ECRs, was the accent

intelligibility. The participants reported experiencing difficulties when encountered with strong accents and unfamiliar pronunciation. In addition to this, participants also noted that the language proficiency of the speaker affected their listening performance.

When it comes to reading skills, the identified challenges in the data analysis indicated academic reading comprehension challenges, stemming mostly from limited vocabulary knowledge, overly complex or advanced academic language used in texts. The participants mentioned that comprehension became much more difficult if the reading text had advanced language and vocabulary.

Distinct Academic Skills Challenges

Regarding the experienced challenges specific to EMI background researchers, the analysis identified that they faced challenges in terms of the stages of academic writing which is attributed to their lack of experience and knowledge in this matter. Their lack of experience and knowledge in academic writing planning might be attributed to some of the other writing challenges they experienced such as the scope of writing and their low self-confidence. EMI background ECRs consisted of two participants, E.E1 working at a TMI university and E.E2 at an EMI university as research assistants. Since their profession required teaching assistantship at the university, they utilized the MOI that the university adopted in their teaching practices. E.E2 encountered challenges in levelling down for her students in her teaching assistantship practices, while E.E1 employed proactive strategies for TMI teaching practices. The specific challenges experienced by each ECR were provided to you in the following sections.

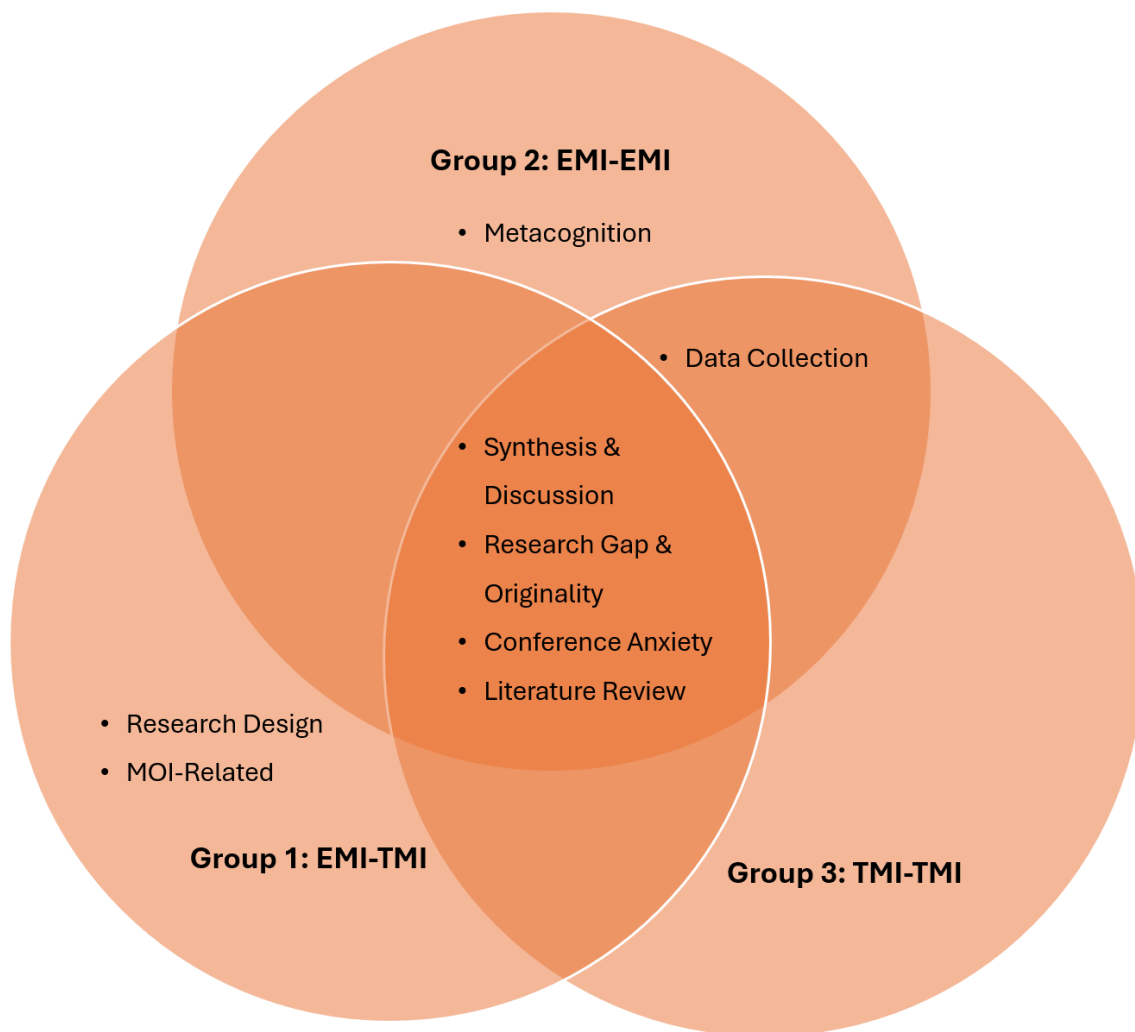


Figure 5. Research-related challenges

The research-related challenges shared by the three groups of ECRs who had different MOI backgrounds identified several main themes according to the data analysis: research gap and originality, synthesis and discussion, literature review, conference anxiety. Firstly, the participants remarked struggling with narrowing down broad research topics, identifying research gaps, and establishing research originality. Even though they did not share their attributions, these challenges might be attributed to the challenges they encountered during the literature review processes. Correspondingly, the literature review process revealed significant challenges for ECRs. Specifically, ECRs had difficulty in finding appropriate and related resources to discuss in their academic work, emphasizing the sense of being lost in literature. Followed by literature review challenges, the participants also highlighted their

experienced challenges in synthesizing different concepts, analyzing the gathered data, reporting the results, and discussing them coherently. In addition to these difficulties, academic events like conferences and congresses gave rise to anxiety and stress among all ECRs. Particularly, the most mentioned aspects to academic conventions were Q&A sessions and the fear of negative criticism and judgment. Regarding the Q&A sessions in their own academic presentations, ECRs emphasized the increased stress which might be due to low self-confidence in either speaking or research. They reported their fear of not being able to answer the questions properly. As for the negative criticism aspect, the participants mentioned facing fear and anxiety about receiving negative criticism and judgment about their research in academic conventions. This fear might occur due to their lack of experience and knowledge in research. However, one TMI background participant (T.T1) noted observing that Turkish academics primarily tended to criticize the presenting researchers negatively in academic conventions; hence the fear of negative criticism might be attributed to the background academic experiences. To overcome these issues, participants reported using several strategies and tools, such as psychological support, self-suggestions, awareness of limitations and strengthening justifications, along with physical outdoor activities.

Another significant challenge found from the data analysis shared between the two groups of researchers involving EMI background and EMI-TMI background researchers was about the research design. ECRs encountered challenges in establishing theoretical frameworks and developing a research design which emphasized a general problem with the research skills in connection with the common research difficulties. The two groups (EMI and EMI-TMI groups) also experienced challenges in relation to their MOI backgrounds, particularly with research and field terminology. Both EMI background and EMI-TMI background ECRs particularly attributed this challenge initially having acquired the research knowledge in English at the undergraduate level of education, with EMI background ECRs pursuing EMI graduate education later. The specific challenges in terms of MOI included having difficulties in research terminologies in Turkish which might be attributed to their acquisition of research knowledge in English. However, the inconsistency of MOI background of EMI-TMI background ECRs caused significant challenges in the adaptation process as participants reported.

Another significant challenge common between two groups, EMI background and TMI background ECRs, occurred as the data collection procedures. They reported encountering significant challenges in participant recruitment and deciding on a data collection tool along with ensuring the tool's validity and reliability. Both groups noted that despite finding appropriate participants for their study, they did not volunteer to take part in their study, which made the data collection process much more difficult.

Overall, the most common challenges among groups were found in the research theme which indicated a need for a proper support system to enhance the development of ECRs. However, the participant employed several common strategies and tools to overcome the reported difficulties in research such as digital translation tools, AIs (ChatGPT and others), self-efforts to grasp the Turkish research methodology, and proactive strategies.

Distinct Research-Related Challenges

Further analysis revealed certain challenges specific to EMI background ECRs which resulted from the extensive reading of English academic content, the dual focus on both content and language, and comprehension of concepts leading to cognitive load and challenges as reported by the EMI background ECRs. The support systems primarily include digital translation tools such as Google Translate.

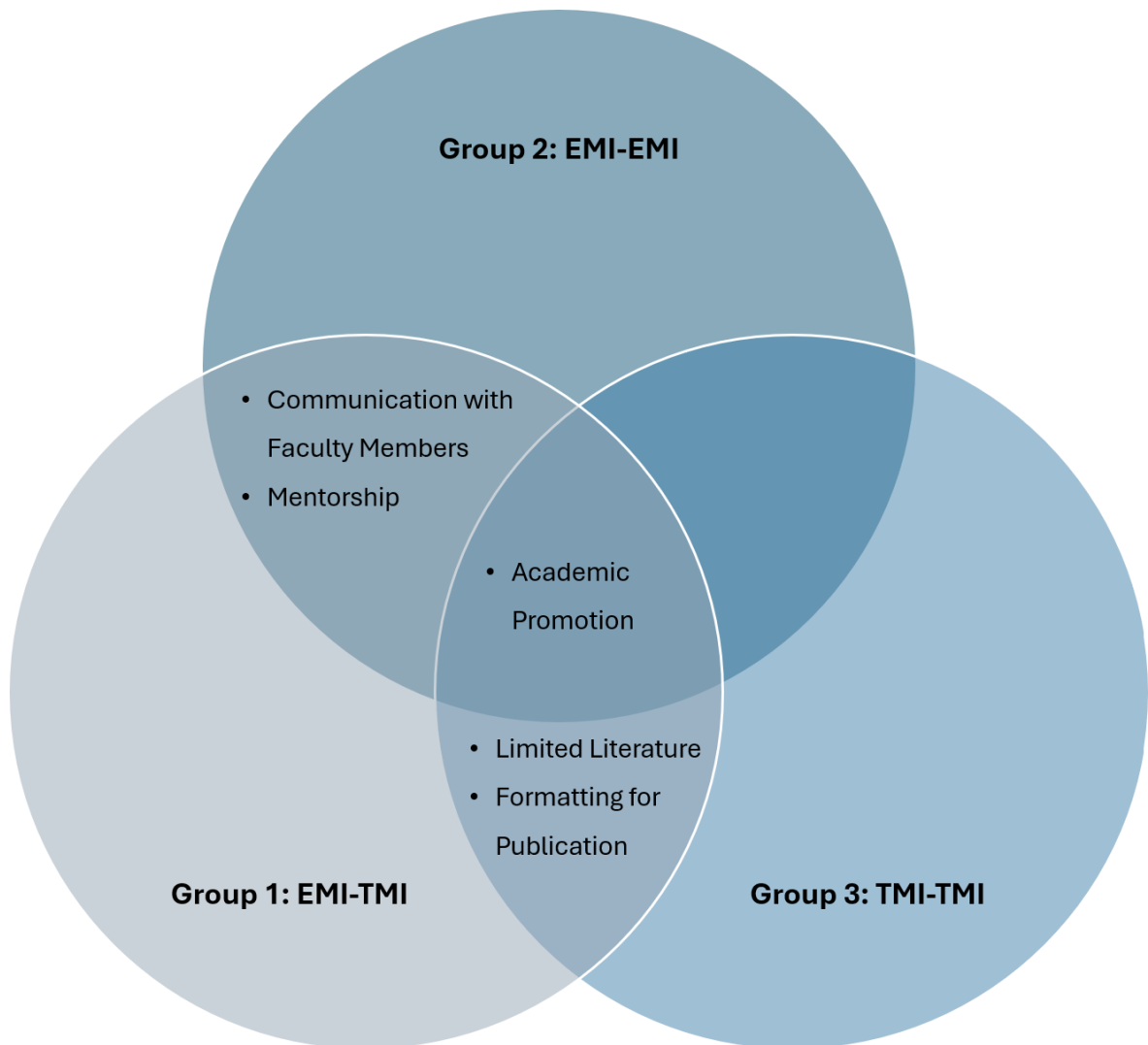


Figure 6. Professional challenges and attributions

The last and only common theme occurred in the data was academic promotion criteria required by the institution and the higher education council. Universities determine the academic degree promotion criteria according to their own vision, resulting in a situation where faculty members are forced to adapt to this vision. To be promoted to an academic degree, it is necessary to comply with the promotion criteria set by the Council of Higher Education and the institution. These criteria vary from institution to institution and from department to department. However, as a general framework, researchers are expected to publish in high-quality journals either in English or Turkish. While there are many high-impact journals in English, the scarcity of Turkish academic journals with high-impact

elevates the difficulties ECRs face, as they report. Due to the high standards of academic degree promotion set by the Higher Education Council and the institution and constantly changing of these criteria, each group of ECRs experienced challenges in meeting these criteria and reported a sense of pressure to produce high-quality academic output and limited academic freedom in research publication.

The two common aspects identified in EMI and EMI-TMI groups included the communication with colleagues and faculty members, and the mentorship aspect. Firstly, the two groups (EMI and EMI-TMI background ECRs) noted encountering challenges during their communication with their colleagues, attributed to the colleagues' MOI backgrounds and English language proficiency. The participants claimed having a good command of English and the academic literature in English as well, emphasizing some of their colleagues' low level of English language proficiency and lack of command of English academic literature in their fields. Particularly, one participant (E.T2) indicated that her colleagues did not prefer reading international academic studies because of their English proficiency and she indicated that this preference led her colleagues to a narrow point of view which created communication problems within academic contexts. Another aspect of communication problems with colleagues was related to code-switching; with one EMI background ECR remarking her use of English terminologies in daily speeches. Therefore, her use of English terminologies in daily speeches with colleagues gave rise to the fear of being perceived as arrogant. However, she clearly indicated not knowing the Turkish equivalents of these terms. Apropos the mentorship challenges commonly found in two groups, both groups encountered a lack of guidance at the initial stages of their academic journey.

Another significant challenge common in a different pair of groups, EMI-TMI and TMI background ECRs), was the scarcity of high-quality Turkish academic journals. The limited number of high-quality journals in Turkish academic context drove the ECRs to publish in English through digital translation tools and AI, putting a pressure on ECRs with a low self-confidence in English to write English academic papers to be more visible globally and meet the standards of Higher Education Council for academic degree promotion, proving the point of English academic literature being much broader. Moreover, one participant (E.T2) mentioned a challenge regarding their dependence on Turkish academic works and materials due to the PTs' English language proficiency in her teaching assistantship practices. This exact challenge of teaching assistantship practice might be attributed to the scarcity of high-

quality of Turkish academic literature. In addition to limited literature challenges, the pair of ECR groups reported struggling with the journal selection and adjusting their manuscript to the selected journal criteria for publication.

Distinct Professional Challenges and Attributions and Strategies

According to articles 130 and 27 in the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye (1982), the universities have public legal entity and scientific autonomy which allows for diverse methods to teaching and research in the Turkish context within institutions as mentioned in the Introduction section. This diversification of teaching methods and research engagement results in diverse quality and culture between institutions. As a distinct challenge, TMI background ECRs encountered difficulties during the transition from one institution to another in terms of educational quality and academic culture. Another distinct challenge identified in the TMI group was the difficulty of associating theoretical knowledge with practical application in terms of research and teaching which might be attributed to a lack of emphasis on research practices at the undergraduate level.

5.1.2 Research-Related Challenges, Attributions and Overcoming Strategies of ECRs with Different MOI Backgrounds Across Educational Levels

EMI-TMI Background ECRs (E.T1 and E.T2)

The study's participants consisted of three groups of ECRs actively working as research assistants in the Faculties of Education at Turkish Universities. The first two groups included those who received their B.A. and M.A. education in the same language without changing MOIs between the two education levels (ENG-ENG, TR-TR). The other group included ECRs who experienced a shift of MOI from B.A. to M.A. In other words, ECRs who received their undergraduate education in English and graduate education in Turkish were included in the current study. All participants were given pseudo names such as E.E, E.T, and T.T according to their MOI backgrounds with E.E corresponding to English to English, E.T corresponding to English to Turkish, and T.T corresponding to Turkish to Turkish. Under this heading, research-related challenges experienced by ECRs with different MOI backgrounds and their attributions to these challenges will be reported. The reflexive

thematic analysis revealed four main themes in the research related challenges experienced by ECRs with different MOI backgrounds: MOI transition, Academic Skills, Research, and Professional and Systemic.

Table 9

Key Themes of EMI-TMI Background ECRs' Experienced Challenges

Themes	Sub-themes
MOI Transition	Linguistic Duality Language Barrier
Academic Language Skills	Listening Reading Speaking Writing
Research	Lack of Experience and Knowledge Methodological Availability and Quality of Resources Academic Conventions Publication
Institutional and Professional	Teaching Assistantship Systemic Requirements Institutional

Theme 1: MOI Transition

The first theme encompasses encountered challenges of ECRs transitioning between different MOIs and its effects on their current academic journey. The analysis revealed certain challenges regarding MOI transition from TMI to EMI. E.T2 remarked on her experiences in adapting to TMI with the following words:

“Çünkü ilk kez yani 6 sene boyunca full İngilizce bir eğitim almışım. Literatür İngilizce üzerine kurulmuş ve ilk kez gördüğüm şeylerdi hep.”

(Translation: “Because for the first time, I had received a fully English education for six years. The literature was built on English, and they were always things I encountered for the first time.”).

Having mastered the content knowledge in English at undergraduate level, E.T2 also reported using English terminology and facing challenges in the classroom interactions at graduate level:

“Derste falan İngilizce söylüyordum cevabı. Hocalar sıkıntı yapıyordu hani bunun Türkçesi ne. Türkçesini bilmediğim kelimeler oluyordu hep.”

(Translation: “In class, I would respond in English, and the teachers would make an issue out of it, like, 'What's the Turkish for that?' There were always words I didn't know the Turkish for.”).

She attributed this challenge to instructors’ obsession of Turkish terminologies and possible prejudice of her undergraduate university which is a very prestigious university in Türkiye:

“Takıntı haline getirdiklerini düşünüyorum. x üniversitesi ön yargısı mıdır? Türkçesini bilmem gerekiyor kafasındalardı.”

(Translation: “I think they were obsessed with it. Was it a prejudice against X university? They were stuck on the idea that I needed to know the Turkish equivalents.”).

In addition to these challenges, both participants noted the difficulty in research assistant and graduate student recruitment interviews in relation to the MOI transition with E.T2 stating:

“Bilim sınavlarında yine sıkıntı oldu. Çünkü bazı terimler direkt çeviri olmuyor. Türkçeyi çevirince değişik. Evriliyor.”

(Translation: “There were issues again in the recruitment exams because some terms don't have a direct translation. When you translate them into Turkish, they change—they evolve.”)

“Mülakatta bununla ilgili sorun da yaşadım. Hocalar sordular bir soru. Ben dedim hocam ben İngilizce eğitim gördüm o yüzden bilmiyorum ne olduğunu” (E.T1)

(Translation: “I also had an issue with this during the interview. The professors asked a question, and I said, 'Professor, I received my education in English, so I don't know what it is in Turkish.”)

Although E.T1 reported that the transition from EMI to TMI was not challenging for him *“İngilizceden Türkçe'ye geçişte zorlanma olmadı.”* (Translation: “There was no difficulty transitioning from English to Turkish.”), he mentioned experiencing challenges in terms of field terminologies in recruitment interviews:

“Alanla ilgili literatüre İngilizce hakimdim ve Türkçe herhangi bir şeyim yoktu, bilgim yoktu. Bütün o alanla ilgili kavramlarının İngilizcesini biliyordum.” (E.T1)

(Translation: “I was proficient in the English literature related to the field, but I had no materials or knowledge in Turkish. I knew all the concepts in English.”)

E.T1 further explained his situation stating that he also learned the Turkish version of field and research terminologies upon engaging in graduate studies and working as a research

assistant at the university. Overall, these results emphasized the effects of MOI transitions on language use, professional development, and disciplinary knowledge. Additionally, language barrier identified as a significant challenge in productive skills writing and speaking.

Theme 2: Academic Skills

Further analysis revealed important results regarding the academic language skills of ECRs with different MOI backgrounds. These results included four language skills-based challenges in the academic contexts. Both E.T1 and E.T2 did not experience any challenges unless the speaker had an unintelligible accent or pronunciation and unless the spoken language was advanced in terms of vocabulary and structure in terms of listening skills with the following words:

“Çok bir aksan yoksa eğer Dinleme açısından sıkıntı yaşadığımı düşünmüyorum. Çünkü dediğim gibi İngilizceyi zaten genel olarak dinleyerek öğrendim.” (E.T1)

(Translation: “As long as there's not much of an accent, I don't think I have any trouble with listening. Because, as I said, I mostly learned English through listening.”)

“Dediğim gibi çok aksanlıysa problem yaşıyorum ama İngiliz aksanı falan özellikle hiç algılama noktasında sıkıntı yaşıyorum. Onun dışında bir problem yaşamıyorum.” (E.T1)

(Translation: “As I said, if there's a heavy accent, I have trouble, but with accents like the British one, I especially struggle with comprehension. Other than that, I don't have any issues.”)

“Türkçe'de yok sorun. İngilizce'de de kaçırdıklarım oluyor ya da... ..pronunciation'ını anlamıyorum ne dediğini. Sonradan tekrar bakamıyorum sözlüğe yani. Kaçırabiliyorum yani o kelimeyi. Ya da konuşurken hadi kalk sözlüğe bak. biraz sıkıntı olabiliyor.” (E.T2)

(Translation: “I don't have any issues in Turkish. In English, though, there are times when I miss something or don't understand the pronunciation of a word. I can't look it up in the dictionary right away, so I might miss that word. Or when speaking, having to stop and check the dictionary can be a bit of a problem.”)

Moreover, participants highlighted several challenges associated with academic reading in both English and Turkish. A significant challenge was the complex language in academic papers, which often impeded the comprehension of the text regardless of the language. E.T1

pointed out emphasizing that the challenge resulted from how other researchers transferred their ideas and knowledge rather than the language itself:

“Bazı araştırmacılar çok böyle karışık bir şekilde anlatıyor anlatmak istediğini. Bu Türkçe ile alakalı değil de araştırmacının ifadelerini nasıl bize aktardığıyla alakalı büyük ihtimalle.”

(Translation: “Some researchers explain what they want to say in a very complicated way. This isn’t about the Turkish language itself but is most likely related to how the researcher conveys their ideas to us.”)

Moreover, E.T1 encountered academic reading challenges in English as well. Particularly, he had difficulties with dense and advanced language including unfamiliar vocabulary and lengthy sentences, as E.T1 indicated in the interview:

“İngilizce’de zorlandığım nokta da genelde şey oluyor, bazen çok böyle ağıdalı dil kullanıyorlar çalışmalarında. Çok değişik kelimeler kullanıyorlar, hiç bilmediğimiz, hiç duymadığımız kelimeler. Ve cümleleri çok uzun olabiliyor bazen. Özellikle nitel çalışmalarda bunla karşılaşıyoruz.”

(Translation: “The point where I usually struggle in English is when they use very elaborate language in their studies. They use very unusual words we’ve never known or heard of before. And sometimes, their sentences can be very long. We especially encounter this in qualitative studies.”)

While E.T1 mentioned experiencing reading comprehension challenges when faced with advanced language, vocabulary and complex language, E.T2 shared her academic reading language preference and attributed it to the perceived high-quality and richness of the available resources stating:

“Akademik okumalarda İngilizceyi tercih ediyorum. Dilimin çok daha rahat olmasından değil. Tabii ki de Türkçeyi daha iyi biliyorum. Oradaki verilerin, kaynakların çok daha nitelikli ve daha zengin olmasından dolayı.”

(Translation: “I prefer English for academic readings, not because I feel more comfortable with the language—of course, I know Turkish better—but because the data and resources in English are much more qualitative and richer.”)

This excerpt highlights the effect of content quality over language familiarity in shaping their academic reading language preferences.

Academic writing was another significant aspect that brought about several challenges encountered by ECRs with different MOI backgrounds deriving from mainly linguistic barriers, educational backgrounds, and lack of experience and knowledge. A prominent challenge was the self-expression difficulty due to the lack of vocabulary knowledge, which impeded the communication of ideas. E.T2 shared her experience with the following words:

“Mesela bir çok güzel bir şey geliyor aklımdan, bir fikir geliyor ama o fikri dökmen için bir kelimeye ihtiyacım var. O cümle tamamen gidebiliyor. O konuda sıkıntı yaşıyabiliyordum.”

(Translation: “For instance, I might think of a great idea, but I need a specific word to express it. Without that word, the entire sentence can fall apart. I used to struggle with that.”).

Another challenge as reported by E.T1 was English grammar in academic writing, which he attributes it to the grammar-focused rote learning during prior education:

“Gramer sorunumun sebebinin de 12 yıllık eğitim olduğunu düşünüyorum. Çünkü sürekli bir gramer odaklı eğitim vardı ve ezbere yönelik bir eğitim vardı mantığını anlatmadan. Benim de kafam mantığa çalışıyor.”

(Translation: “I think the reason for my grammar issues is the 12 years of education I received. It was always grammar-focused and rote-based without explaining the reasoning behind it. My mind works more based on logic.”).

Beyond grammar, participants faced difficulties in writing regarding achieving coherence, smooth transitions, and using conjunctions. One participant (E.T2) noted experiencing anxiety about establishing a logical flow and managing the level of elaboration in her writing and she expressed the difficulty of connecting different concepts describing the situation with the following words:

“Sağlamaya, sağlayamakta zorlanabiliyorum akışı sağlamakta. Neyle işleyeceğim? Çok mu genel başladım? Çok mu detaylı, spesifik oldum? Akış sağlama bağlaçlar vesaire geçiş yapmalarda sıkıntı yaşıyabiliyorum.”

(Translation: “I sometimes struggle to maintain the flow. How should I proceed? Did I start too broadly? Was I too detailed or specific? I have difficulties with ensuring a smooth flow, like using connectors and transitions.”)

“Konular arası hani atıyorum ilk başta. Erken çocukluğunun önemini yazdım. Sonra işte dış mekan oyuna nasıl geçiş yapacağım? Nasıl bağlayacağım?”

(Translation: “For instance, let’s say I wrote about the importance of early childhood first. Then, how will I transition to outdoor play? How will I connect them?”).

Paraphrasing was identified as another challenge in English academic writing with participant highlighting the efforts required to avoid direct copying and selecting appropriate synonyms. E.T2 explained this experience with the following words:

“Ama İngilizce yazınca onu direkt kopyala yapıştır yapmaman lazım ya, paraphrase etmem lazım. O konuda çok daha böyle kararlı düşünmem gerekiyor. O kelimenin eş anlamlısına bakıyorum mesela. Theasarus nasıl

okunduğunu bilmiyorum. Eş anlamlar sözlüğünden arıyorum. Biraz daha zor olabiliyor yani o konu.”

(Translation: “But when writing in English, you can’t just copy-paste; you must paraphrase. I must think much more deliberately about that. For instance, I look up synonyms for a word. I don’t even know how to pronounce ‘thesaurus.’ I search using a synonym dictionary. So, it can be a bit more challenging in that sense.”)

Despite these difficulties, E.T1 recognized that EMI at undergraduate level contributed to improving his writing skills through regular practices and engagement in research, reflecting on this issue with these words and adding that he currently prefers English language in academic writing:

“Büyük ihtimalle lisans eğitimim yazmamı geliştirdi, çok geliştirdiğini düşünüyorum. Çünkü ödevlerimizi dediğim gibi hep İngilizce bir şekilde yazıyorduk. Araştırmamızı İngilizce yapıyorduk. Şimdi de aynı şekilde araştırmalarımızı İngilizce yazıyoruz genelde.”

(Translation: “My undergraduate education most likely improved my writing skills significantly. Because, as I said, we always wrote our assignments in English and conducted our research in English. Even now, we generally write our research in English the same way.”).

He also noted that the development of technology such as AI tools and digital translation tools offered support in addressing the writing challenges. Regardless of the experienced challenges, the participants identified their preference of English language in academic writing and the underlying reason for this preference as the abundance, variety of resources and the high-quality of these resources in the field literature in English while emphasizing the limited resource in Turkish academic literature with the following words:

“İngilizce çalışmak daha keyifli geliyor açıkçası. Türkçe yazmaktan daha keyifli geliyor. Okumalar da o şekilde. Bir de dediğim gibi gerçekten çok geniş bir kaynak var İngilizce. Türkçe kaynak çok sınırlı. Türkçe kaynak çok kendini tekrar ediyor. Öyle bir sıkıntı var.” (E.T1)

(Translation: “Honestly, working in English feels more enjoyable. Writing in English is more enjoyable than writing in Turkish. The same goes for reading. As I mentioned, there is such a wide range of resources in English. Turkish resources are very limited and tend to repeat themselves a lot. That’s an issue.”)

These reflections highlight the complex challenges faced by early career researchers as they navigate academic writing in EMI and Turkish-medium instruction (TMI) contexts.

As for speaking skills in academic contexts, participants reported significant challenges. The challenges derived from language barriers and public speaking anxiety. Participants

reported experiencing challenges in terms of self-expression and fluent speaking in English. Furthermore, one participant (E.T1) reported increased anxiety levels regarding the paper presentations and Q&A sessions in academic conferences along with self-expression difficulties while speaking and answering questions. However, he also noted that proactive preparations for paper presentations and public speaking alleviated his anxiety and stress with the following words:

“İngilizce konuşma tecrübem olmadığı için sunum öncesinde hazırlık yapmadan çıkarsam cümle kurmada sıkıntı yaşıyordum. İngilizce cümleler kurmada kendimi ifade etmede.”

(Translation: “Since I didn’t have much experience speaking English, if I went into a presentation without preparation, I struggled to form sentences and express myself in English.”)

“İngilizce konuşmak benim için şu anda çok O zaman da çok stresli bir şeydi. Zaten sunum stresi var. Üstüne bir de acaba doğru bir şekilde ifade edebiliyor muyum stresi de oluyordu.” (E.T1)

(Translation: “Speaking English was very stressful for me back then, and it still is now. There’s already the stress of giving a presentation, and on top of that, I would worry about whether I was expressing myself correctly.”)

He also noted his public speaking anxiety and stage fright experiences, describing the overwhelming process with the following words:

“Benim bir sahne korkum var maalesef...Ama yine de sunuma gidip, oraya oturup sıramı beklerken, sıram gelene kadar ve tahtaya çıkana kadar çok aşırı stres yaşıyorum. O stres beni yoruyor.”

(Translation: “Unfortunately, I have stage fright... But still, when I go to the presentation, sit there, and wait for my turn, I experience extreme stress until it’s my turn and I step up to the board. That stress exhausts me.”)

International academic events were pointed out as a more stressful environment for E.T1 due to the language of the event along with the overall stress and anxiety of public speaking. In addition to the public speaking anxiety, the fact that the language of the academic conference and presentations being English led to a higher-level of stress for E.T1. Additionally, he noted experiencing self-expression anxiety when asked questions in these academic events. He reported these experiences with the following words:

“Bu zaten stresli bir durum. Bir de İngilizce olunca cevabını biliyorum, bilmiyorum, bildiğimi ifade edebilecek miyim? Edemeyecek miyim? Onun stresi de ekleniyor. Bu şekilde bir zorluk yaşıyorum açıkçası.”

(Translation: “This is already a stressful situation, and when it’s in English, the additional stress of questions like, ‘Do I know the answer? Can I express

what I know? Or will I fail to express it?' also comes into play. Honestly, I face challenges in this way.”)

“Ama işte İngilizce sunum yapıyorsun. Hakimsin ama yine de İngilizce yapıyorsun. Konuşmanın dili. Ve sonrasında sana soru soruyorlar. Ve onları İngilizce cevaplaman gerekiyor. Uzun zamandır da konuşmadığım için onun bir ciddi stresini yaşamıştım.”

(Translation: “But, you know, you're giving a presentation in English. You're knowledgeable, but still, you're doing it in English—that's the language of the presentation. And afterward, they ask you questions, and you have to answer them in English. Since I hadn't spoken English for a long time, I experienced significant stress because of that.”)

While E.T1 remarked on experiencing anxiety-related challenges in terms of public speaking, paper presentations, and international academic events, E.T2 did not report on experiencing such challenges in academic contexts. However, she indicated not being able to speak English spontaneously and that it required a cognitive effort to speak in English, illustrating her non-native speaker and self-expression challenges. She also implied experiencing self-doubt in terms of accuracy and pronunciation while speaking English which might be an indication of low self-confidence. E.T2 uttered the following words on the issue:

“Evet, zorluklar yaşadım çünkü Türkçedeki gibi direkt spontane konuşamıyorsun. Şimdi Türkçede bir şey geliyor adına pat diye söylüyorsun. İngilizcede Biz cümleyi kurana kadar baya kafamda kuruyordun. Doğru mu, yanlış mı? Pronunciation doğru mu? Hani daha çok kısıyorsun. Bunlara da çok daha fazla dikkat etmem gerekiyordu. Türkçedeki kadar rahat değildim tabii ki de.”

(Translation: “Yes, I faced difficulties because you can't speak spontaneously in English like you do in Turkish. In Turkish, something comes to mind, and you say it immediately. But in English, I had to build the sentence in my headfirst—Is it correct or wrong? Is the pronunciation accurate? ‘You overthink it more. I had to pay much more attention to these aspects. Of course, I wasn't as comfortable as I am in Turkish.”)

Despite these experienced difficulties, E.T1 acknowledged the importance of improving their English-speaking skills for the benefit of their academic journey. He expressed his thoughts and preference of English language in academic presentations with the following words:

“Türkçede çok rahat yapıyorum. Ama kendi geleceğimi, akademik kariyerimi düşünürsem ne kadar zorlarsa zorlasın o güvenlik çemberinden çıkıp İngilizce sunumda da birazcık daha rahatlamak isterim açıkçası. O yüzden her ne kadar beni mahvetse de İngilizce sunumu yapmak isterim.”

(Translation: “I’m very comfortable doing it in Turkish. But when I think about my future and academic career, no matter how challenging it is, I’d like to step out of that comfort zone and feel a bit more at ease during English presentations. That’s why, even though it exhausts me, I’d still prefer to give presentations in English.”)

This excerpt demonstrated a motivation to move beyond the comfort zone, recognizing English speaking is crucial for academic progress, although it presented a significant source of stress. In summary, these results highlight the academic speaking challenges ECRs with different MOI backgrounds who transitioned from EMI to TMI experienced. These challenges include English speaking anxiety, public speaking anxiety, non-native speaker challenges, and self-expression difficulties.

Theme 3: Research

Further analysis revealed significant challenges in research aspects experienced by ECRs who transitioned from EMI undergraduate education to TMI graduate education mainly themed around lack of experience and knowledge in research, methodological, availability and quality of resources, academic conventions, and lastly publication challenges. Participants described facing certain challenges during their initial experiences with academic research. These challenges often stem from unfamiliarity with academic writing and the overall research process, which were followed by a lack of guidance. E.T2 remarked:

“İlk olduğu için neyi bilmediğimi bile bilmiyordum. Birinin bana yol göstermesi lazım, tek başına yapamazdım. Beraber ortak çalışmalar yapıyordum o yüzden. Her bir adımda bana ne yapılması gerektiğini tek tek söylenmesini bekledim.”

(Translation: “Since it was my first time, I didn’t even know what I didn’t know. I needed someone to guide me; I couldn’t do it on my own. That’s why I worked on collaborative projects. I expected to be told step by step what needed to be done at every stage.”)

emphasizing a need for external guidance and support in research processes. E.T1 also mentioned the same challenge with these words:

“Zorlukları işte akademik bir yazım yapıyoruz. nasıl yazmalıyız, neler yapmalıyız. Bu biraz zorluyordu.”

(Translation: “The challenges were in academic writing—how should we write, what should we do? That was a bit difficult for me.”)

However challenging, the participants claimed that these early experiences contributed to their personal and professional development with the following words:

“Benim için güzel bir süreçti. Tabii ki de ilk olduğu için zorlayıcı oldu. Ama her bir aşamada daha çok ilerlediğimi fark ettim.”

(Translation: “It was a good process for me. Of course, it was challenging because it was my first time, but I realized I was making progress with each step.”)

These experiences demonstrate the need for mentorship and structured guidance to support ECRs at initial stages of their careers as they become independent researchers.

As for methodological challenges encountered during research processes, only one participant (E.T1) reported experiencing challenges in conducting and presenting research. The challenges E.T1 experienced primarily were about the vast amount of academic literature, finding a gap and a research topic, establishing a theoretical framework, and effectively reporting results along with discussing them with the existing literature. Like other ECR groups, E.T1 also experienced a cognitive overload and the sense of being lost in the vast amount of academic literature, describing it as ‘torture’:

“Literatür okuması... Şöyle... Literatür okuması uzun bir süreç açıkçası. Ve literatür geniş dediğim gibi. O yüzden literatür okumasında bir tık zorlanıyorum. Genelde bilgisayarın başına geçip bir şey okumak bana eziyet gibi geliyor açıkçası.”

(Translate: “Literature reading... Well, it’s a long process, honestly. And as I mentioned, the literature is extensive. That’s why I struggle a bit with reading literature. Sitting in front of the computer to read something generally feels like a burden to me, to be honest.”)

and adding,

“Çok geniş bir literatür ve bana biraz şey geliyor böyle Neyi okuyacağım? Okuduğumdan ne çıkaracağım? O kısım biraz zorluyor.”

(Translation: “The literature is so extensive, and it feels a bit overwhelming—like, what should I read? What should I take away from what I read? That part is a bit challenging for me.”)

Following the literature review phase, he indicated having difficulty in finding a research gap and deciding on the research topic with the following words: *“literatürü okuyup işte konu belirlemek benim için çok zor.”* (Translation: “Reading the literature and then deciding on a topic is very difficult for me.”). Additionally, he emphasized the importance of studying an original research topic: *“Özgün bir konu bulmak önemli.”* (Translation: “Finding an original topic is important.”).

Another challenge E.T1 noted was keeping up with the recent academic literature, which was crucial for doing relevant and powerful research and being present with the developments in the field:

“Sadece güncel kalmakta zorluk yaşıyor olabilirim. Yeni yayınları takip etmek gerekiyor.”

(Translation: “I might only struggle with staying up to date. It’s important to keep track of new publications.”)

Additionally, E.T1 noted experiencing challenges in writing certain sections of research. For example, he highlighted the challenges of establishing a well theoretical framework and writing the introduction section, stating that writing these sections clearly and coherent also posed a challenge for him:

“Giriş yazmakta işte kuramsal altyapıyı güzel kurmak gerekiyor ve akışı da anlaşılır, sade ama aynı zamanda içerik anlamında zengin bir şekilde yapmanız lazım. Bu biraz beceri gerektiriyor. Orada biraz zorlanabiliyorum.”

(Translation: “When writing an introduction, you need to establish a strong theoretical foundation and ensure the flow is clear and straightforward, yet rich in content. This requires a certain skill, and I sometimes struggle with that part.”)

Nevertheless, E.T1 identified writing the discussion section as the most challenging aspect of research, attributing it to the difficulty of presenting results in a well-structured way and supporting the existing academic literature:

“En zorlandığımda discussion oluyor genelde. Çünkü elinizde bir bulgu var ve bu bulguyu literatür çerçevesinde de sunmanız gerekiyor. Ve onu güzel bir akış şeklinde yapmanız gerekiyor. Tartışma kısmı biraz zorluyor beni.”

(Translation: “The part I usually struggle with the most is the discussion. Because you have a finding, and you need to present it within the framework of literature. And you must do it in a well-structured flow. The discussion section is a bit challenging for me.”)

“Ama işte nasıl bulduğum sonuçları sunabilirim, nasıl destekleyebilirim literatürde, bu biraz zorlayabiliyor bazen.”

(Translation: “But figuring out how to present the results I found and how to support them with the literature can sometimes be challenging.”)

Lastly, another experienced challenge regarding the methodological aspect of research was justification. The participant (E.T1) particularly reported struggling with justifying the decisions made in the research process and findings in line with the academic literature with the following words:

“Daha sonra da diyorsunuz ki ben böyle bir sonuç buldum. Bunun da sebepleri şunlar olabilir. Yani ona bir justification yapmanız gerekiyor. Sadece sonucu bulmak yeterli olmuyor. O bazen zorlayabiliyor.”

(Translation: “Then you have to say, ‘I found this result, and the reasons for it could be these.’ In other words, you need to provide justification. Simply finding the result is not enough, and that can sometimes be challenging.”)

“Tamam ben bir şey uyguladım ve etkilendi ama uyguladığım şeyin neden onun tutumunu etkilediği açıklamak gerekiyor. O biraz zorlayabiliyor. Justify etmek, o bulguyu gerekçelendirmek gerekiyor.”

(Translation: “Okay, I applied something, and it had an effect, but I also need to explain why what I applied influenced their attitude. That part can be a bit challenging. You need to justify and provide reasoning for the finding.”)

Further analysis revealed a challenge regarding the availability and quality of Turkish academic resources. Having preferred reading and writing academically, both participants noted a significant challenge in terms of Turkish academic resources, stating that Turkish academic studies are limited in number and repetitive in content and quality.

“Yani İngilizce çalışmak daha keyifli geliyor açıkçası. Türkçe yazmaktan daha keyifli geliyor. Okumalar da o şekilde. Bir de dediğim gibi gerçekten çok geniş bir kaynak var İngilizce. Türkçe kaynak çok sınırlı. Türkçe kaynak çok kendini tekrar ediyor. Öyle bir sıkıntı var.” (E.T1)

(Translation: “Honestly, working in English feels more enjoyable. Writing in English is more enjoyable than writing in Turkish. The same goes for reading. As I mentioned, there’s a much wider range of resources in English. Turkish resources are very limited and tend to repeat themselves a lot. That’s an issue.”)

“Kullanıyorum ama yabancı literatür kadar değil. Daha zayıf olduğunu düşündüğüm için. Türkçe’yi daha az kullanıyorum.”

(Translation: “I do use it, but not as much as foreign literature. I think it’s weaker, so I use Turkish less frequently.”)

E.T1 shared an example situation concerning this challenge, expressing that his master’s thesis was about STEM and most studies were conducted in international contexts. Therefore, he indicated accessing these studies through his English knowledge and skills. In connection with this issue, E.T1 emphasized the limited number of high-impact journals, high-quality and original academic studies in the Turkish academic context, stating that the number of high-quality and original academic studies are higher in the international academic context:

“yüksek lisans tezim Stem üzerindeydi. Ve Stem Uzakdoğu’da Kore’de çok aktif kullanılan bir yaklaşım. O yüzden o çalışmalara ulaşma şansım İngilizce sayesinde oluyordu. Çünkü Türkiye’de neredeyse hiç çalışma yoktu Stem

konusunda. Uluslararası literatüre ulaşabiliyoruz. Onun dışında dediğim gibi kaliteli dergiler, kaliteli ve özgün yayınlar genelde yurt dışı kaynaklı oluyor ve İngilizce oluyor.”

(Translation: “My master’s thesis was on STEM, and STEM is a very actively used approach in East Asia, particularly in Korea. That’s why I had the opportunity to access those studies thanks to English, as there were almost no studies on STEM in Türkiye. We can access international literature. Besides, as I mentioned, high-quality journals and original publications are usually from abroad and are in English.”)

“Türkiye’de kaliteli üniversitelerdeki gerçekten özgün yayınlar çıkaran araştırmacıların hepsi İngilizce yayın çıkarıyor. Türkçe’ye kaliteli yayına ulaşmak çok kolay olmuyor.”

(Translation: “In Türkiye, researchers at top universities who produce truly original publications all publish in English. It’s not very easy to access high-quality publications in Turkish.”)

The reflexive thematic analysis revealed two main challenges ECRs who transitioned from EMI undergraduate education to TMI graduate education experienced in terms of academic conventions. The challenges in relation to speaking and presentations in academic contexts were provided to you in Theme 2: Academic Skills. In addition to the reported challenges in Theme 2, the difficulties in academic conventions included the fear of negative academic criticism and judgment, and the language of the convention. While E.T2 disclosed no challenges in academic events, E.T1 pointed out his fear of receiving negative academic criticism and judgment during these events with the following words:

“Ama genelde Türkçesinde de İngilizcesinde de genel korku şu şekilde oluyor. Sorulan sorunun cevabını biliyor muyum? Korkusu var. Çünkü sahnenin karşısındasınız ve karşınızda bir sürü akademisyen var. Ve çoğu da sizin kadronuzun üstünde olan akademisyenler.”

(Translation: “But generally, whether it’s in Turkish or English, the main fear is this: ‘Do I know the answer to the question being asked?’ There’s that fear because you’re standing on stage, facing a group of academics, most of whom are more senior than you.”)

Moreover, he expressed his increased stress levels due to the academic conventions held entirely in English which might be attributed to the self-expression difficulties in English academic speaking. As mentioned previously in Theme 2, he also encountered challenges and anxiety in expressing his ideas in English. He shared his thoughts with these words:

“Gösteriyor. İngilizce olması daha fazla strese soktu.”

(Translation: “It shows. The fact that it’s in English made it even more stressful.”)

“Bir şekilde bir şeyler söylemelisiniz ve İngilizce söylemelisiniz. Onun stresi oluyordu.” (Translation: “You have to say something somehow, and you have to say it in English. That was stressful.”)

The last challenge identified under Theme 3 was publication challenges. Only one participant (E.T1) mentioned challenges faced in the research publication procedure. The aspects he had difficulties were finding a proper journal, adjusting the manuscript to the journal’s criteria, and the whole process being carried out in English. While E.T2 did not identify any challenges, E.T1 uttered these words in relation to this issue:

“Bunun dışında yayınlanma süreci çok zorlamıştı. Dergi bulduk, derginin bir formatı var ve İngilizce ilerliyor süreç. Onlar biraz bizi zorlamıştı. Bu şekilde başka bir zorluk yaşamadım.”

(Translation: “Aside from this, the publication process was very challenging. We found a journal, it had a specific format, and the process was conducted in English. Those aspects were a bit difficult for us. Other than that, I didn’t face any other major challenges.”)

Theme 4: Professional and Systemic

The reflexive thematic analysis of the data demonstrated several professional and systemic challenges experienced by ECRs who shifted from EMI undergraduate education to TMI graduate education during their academic journey, involving teaching assistantship-related, systemic, and institutional challenges. As regards teaching assistantship, E.T2 encountered challenges about the instructional materials in the classroom environment in higher education contexts. In her own context of teaching and field of specialization, which is primary education, she noted that there was a lack of Turkish resources and students tended to stick to Turkish resources and materials. To be more specific, in the field of primary education pre-service teachers (PTs) are required to develop materials for teaching frequently. Therefore, E.T2 expressed her thoughts with the following words:

“Hem literatür olarak hem de Pinterest'te falan yabancı aratınca daha güzel şeyler çıkıyor. Ya da aktiviteler aratınca, Google'da yine aynı şekilde. Ama onlar genellikle Türkçe kaynağa takılı kaldıkları için çok yaratıcı etkinlikler çıkarmıyorlar. O konuda bilmelerini isterdim yani.”

(Translation: “Both in terms of literature and on platforms like Pinterest, searching in foreign languages yields better results. The same goes for searching for activities on Google. But since they mostly rely on Turkish sources, they don’t come up with very creative activities. I wish they were aware of that.”)

Furthermore, she attributed this challenge to PTs' low level of English language proficiency and emphasized the lack of field-specific Turkish academic resources in the literature for PTs to benefit from:

“Öğrenciler Türkçe bildiği için Türkçe kullanıyorum ama şeyde sıkıntı yaşıyorum. Mesela çok güzel bir kaynak görüyorum. Benim aydınlanmamı sağlamış tabiri caizse. Onlara yolluyorum okumalarını istiyorum ama yabancı bir kaynak olduğu için okumuyorlar tabii. Diyorum ki çevirip okuyun. Haklılar yani çok da sallamıyorlar. O konuda sıkıntı yaşıyorum. Direkt Türkçe kaynak yok, yabancı şeyi de yolladığımda aynı dili konuşmuyor gibi oluyor.”

(Translation: “I use Turkish because the students know Turkish, but I face a challenge in this: for example, I come across a great resource that, so to speak, has enlightened me. I send it to them and ask them to read it, but since it's in a foreign language, they don't read it, of course. I tell them to translate and read it. They're not wrong; they don't really care much about it. That's a challenge for me. There aren't direct Turkish resources, and when I send them foreign ones, it feels like we're not speaking the same language.”)

Further analysis demonstrated a certain challenge faced by the participants regarding the system of higher education in Türkiye. As previously reported in Theme 2 and 3, the participants indicated preferring the English language in academic writing attributable to more visible research in the global context and Higher Education Council's academic rank promotion criteria, E.T2 stating:

“...Bir de daha görünür olunca yabancı dil olunca sadece Türkiye'ler görmüyor herkes görüyor.”

(Translation: “... Also, when it's in a foreign language, it becomes more visible—not just people in Türkiye, but everyone can see it.”)

The Higher Education Council emphasizes publications in high-impact journals indexed in international databases for academic rank promotion, which requires English academic skills during the process of research. Thus, participants evidently indicated that preferring the English language in research writing and publication processes, with E.T1 noting:

“Yükselme kriterleri diye bir şey var. Bu yükselme kriterlerinde de genellikle puanı yüksek dergiler tercih ediliyor... O yüzden büyük ihtimalle İngilizce'den daha ilerlemeyi tercih ederim. Yayınlarımı İngilizce yapmayı tercih ederim.”

(Translation: “There are promotion criteria, and within these criteria, journals with higher impact scores are usually preferred... That's why I'd probably choose to advance further in English. I'd prefer to publish my work in English.”)

and E.T2 adding:

“Yok yok sadece taranan indeksler İngilizce’de daha iyi şey olduğu için daha kaliteli indeksler olduğu için yayınevleri olduğu için İngilizce’yi tercih ederim.”

(Translation: “No, no, it’s just that indexed journals are better in English—they’re of higher quality, and the publishers are better—so I’d choose English”)

E.T1 also shared his English research publication motivations with the following words:

“Ya şimdi şöyle, bizim iki motivasyonumuz var. Birincisi tabii ki akademik anlamda bir şeyler katabilmek literatüre. İkincisi de yükselmek.”

(Translation: “Well, here’s the thing, we have two motivations. The first is, of course, contributing something to the literature academically. The second is career advancement.”)

Overall, these results illustrated the higher-quality academic output anxiety experienced by the participants to promote their academic careers and contribute to the academic literature.

Lastly, the institutional challenges involved the relationship with colleagues in academic settings identified from the data analysis. Only one participant (E.T2) shared her experience of difficulties in communicating with her colleagues. She emphasized their lack of exposure to diverse perspectives and innovations in their field which she attributed it to their low level of English proficiency and reliance solely on Turkish academic literature. However, she did not elaborate on the specific challenges in communication with colleagues:

“İletişim kurmakta... Evet, yani şöyle İngilizce bilmeyenler daha sınırlı bir kaynağa erişimleri oldukları için Düşünsene bir tane bilim var ortada, o konuyla alakalı ne yapılmış? Bizim olayımız bu. Ama o kişiler sadece bizim Türkiye’deki birkaç tane çok tehitli olmayan insanların çalışmalarını takip ettiği için vizyonları daha dar oluyor bence... Yabancı kaynağa erişemedikleri için çok daha küçük düşünüyorlar...”

(Translation: “When it comes to communication... Yes, I mean, those who don’t know English have access to much more limited resources. Think about it, there’s a field of science, and what’s been done in that field? That’s what we’re concerned about. But those people only follow a few studies by less reliable individuals in Türkiye, so I think their vision becomes narrower. Since they don’t access foreign resources, they tend to think on a much smaller scale.”)

The analysis of the data identified several overcoming strategies and utilized tools to alleviate the challenges experienced during the research processes as illustrated in Table 10.

Table 10

Applied Strategies and Research Tools of EMI-TMI Background ECRs

Area of Strategy Use	Tools & Strategies
Language	Digital Translation Tools AI (Artificial Intelligence) Dictionaries Exposure and Media Consumption Deduction from sentence Practicing Speaking and Pronunciation
Research	AI (Artificial Intelligence) Research Databases Referencing Software Exposure to Turkish research content Practicing before academic presentations

The utilized tools to alleviate the language-related challenges experienced by ECRs with different MOI backgrounds included digital translation tools such as DeepL and Google Translate “Çok problem yaşadığımda translate'e koyup Türkçe'ye çevirerek anlamaya çalışıyorum.” (E.T1) (Translation: “When I face significant problems, I try to understand by putting it into Translate and translating it into Turkish.”) along with dictionaries and ChatGPT. As for the overcoming strategies, the participants aimed to increase their proficiency levels through self-efforts such as exposing oneself to the English language and practicing speaking, as E.T2 noted:

“Evde bir ara arkadaşlarımızla şey demiştik. Yani arkadaşların bundan sonra ingilizce konuşacağız. İngilizce konuşmayan cezalandırılacak gibi böyle şakasına bir şey oluyor.”

(Translation: “At home, there was a time when we joked with our friends, saying, 'From now on, we'll speak only in English. Anyone who doesn't speak English will be punished.' It was just a playful idea.”)

Moreover, she mentioned utilizing different methods such as singing English songs and reading non-academic journals:

“Şarkı falan söylüyordum hani. şarkı ezberleyip daha kolay oluyor gibi.”

(Translation: “I used to sing songs, you know. Memorizing songs felt easier somehow.”)

“Orada dergiler vardı uçaklarda oluyor ya işte Sky bilmem ne. Orada bir sol tarafta İngilizcesi oluyor, sağ tarafta Türkçesi oluyor. Bire bir çeviri olduğu için. Hep böyle o yolda dergileri alıyordum eve. Bir Türkçesini, bir İngilizcesini okuyordum.”

(Translation: “There were magazines, like the ones you find on airplanes, you know, something like 'Sky' whatever. On one side, there was the English version, and on the other side, the Turkish version. Since it was a word-for-word translation, I used to take those magazines home from the trips. I would read one in Turkish and then the other in English.”)

To overcome the challenges caused by unknown vocabulary in both reading and listening, E.T2 indicated deducting the word’s meaning from the sentences: *“Zaten bir kelimeyi bilmesen bile çıkıyor hani o cümlemin anlamından çıkarıyorsun.”* *(Translation: “Even if you don’t know a word, you can figure it out—you deduce its meaning from the context of the sentence”)*. Moreover, E.T1 remarked using AIs (ChatGPT) and translation tools to mitigate the writing difficulties:

“İngilizce yazmam gerekiyorsa önce Türkçesini yazıyorum. Sonra kendim İngilizce çevirmek yerine Translate’e ya da işte başka bir yapay zekaya sokup nasıl daha güzel bir şekilde İngilizce yazar diye oraya atıyorum.”

(Translation: “If I need to write in English, I first write it in Turkish. Then, instead of translating it myself, I put it into Translate or another AI tool to see how it can be written more elegantly in English.”)

The utilized tools to overcome the research-related challenges were revealed to be AIs, reference management software, and research databases. When asked about the tools they utilize to mitigate the overall research challenges, the participants noted using ChatGPT to find academic resources on a topic:

“ChatGPT’yi bir asistan olarak kullandığınızda çok işinize yarıyor. Bir konu ile ilgili kaynakları önünüze çıkarabiliyor.”

(Translation: “When you use ChatGPT as an assistant, it’s helpful. It can bring up sources related to a topic right in front of you.”)

Apart from AI, they reported using research databases widely used and known in academic settings such as Google Scholar and Web of Science (WoS), E.T2 stating: *“Scholar’da da araştırma yapıyorum.”* *(Translation: “I also do research on Scholar.”)* and adding:

“Yayınlarıma genelde Web of Science’den ulaşıyorum öncelikle. Çünkü orada dediğim gibi kaliteli dergiler oluyor.” *(Translation: “I usually access publications through Web of Science first, because, as I mentioned, there are quality journals there.”)*

Moreover, the participants indicated exposing themselves to Turkish field and research knowledge through self-efforts to mitigate the methodological terminology complexities due to dual MOI backgrounds:

“Ben bu sefer Türkçe kaynak aldım. Onlar üzerinden çalıştım konulara.”
(Translation: “This time, I used Turkish sources and worked on the topics based on them.”)

Lastly, the participants aimed to overcome the anxiety experienced before academic presentations and public speaking through practicing, reading and re-reading:

“Pratik yaparak bir tık daha rahat oluyorum. Öncesinde eğer ben sürece hakim bir şekilde gidersem sınıfa, başlayana kadar çok stres yaşıyorum ama başladıktan sonra bir tık daha rahat ediyorum.” (Translation: “By practicing, I become a bit more comfortable. If I go into the class well-prepared and familiar with the process, I experience a lot of stress up until it starts, but once it begins, I feel a bit more at ease.”)

5.1.3 Research-Related Challenges, Attributions, and Overcoming Strategies of ECRs with Consistent MOIs Across Educational Levels

The study’s participants consisted of three groups of ECRs actively working as research assistants in the Faculties of Education at Turkish Universities. The first two groups included those who received their B.A. and M.A. education in the same language without changing MOIs between the two education levels (ENG-ENG, TR-TR). The other group included ECRs who experienced a shift of MOI from B.A. to M.A. All participants were given pseudo names which were provided to you in the overview of the participants section in parenthesis. Under this heading, research-related challenges experienced by ECRs with consistent MOI backgrounds and their attributions to these challenges will be reported. ECRs with consistent MOI background were referred to as EMI or TMI background ECRs.

Challenges, Attributions, and Applied Strategies of EMI Background ECRs - E.E1 and E.E2

The analysis of the semi-structured interview data regarding the research-related challenges experienced by ECRs who received both B.A. and M.A. Education in English are categorized into themes as seen in Table 11. These themes developed through inductive reflexive thematic analysis of the data.

Table 11

Key Themes of EMI Background ECRs' Experienced Challenges

Themes	Sub-Themes
Language and Content	Dual focus on content and language Language Barrier Increased Content Complexity with Educational Level
Academic Language Skills	Listening Reading Writing Speaking
Research	MOI-Related Cognitive Demands of Research Academic Conventions Methodological
Institutional and Professional	Mentorship Occupational Systemic

Theme 1: Language and Content

ECRs who have received both education levels (bachelor's and master's) in EMI reported challenges regarding both language and content simultaneously. Particularly, participant E.E1 reported experiencing content comprehension difficulties due to the EMI during her bachelor's education. E.E1 asserted that these difficulties resulted in time loss, low GPA, and incomprehension of field content, leading her to use digital translation tools for comprehension and focus on both language and content simultaneously. In other words, E.E1 attributed her content learning and comprehension challenges to the language medium itself with the words below:

“Fakat dersin İngilizce anlatılması çok daha farklı bir şey bence. Çok daha zor, çok daha doğal bir ortamda gerçekleşen bir şey. O yüzden böyle bayağı zorlanarak lisans hayatımın ilk iki yılı falan benim için bayağı zorlu oldu İngilizce yüzünden. not ortalamaları falan düşüktü yani. Ve bunun sebebi İngilizce olmasıydı aslında.”

(Translation: “However, teaching a lesson in English is a completely different thing, in my opinion. It's much harder and happens in a much more natural environment. That's why the first two years of my undergraduate studies were tough for me because of English. My GPA was low, and the reason for that was the English language.”)

“Aynı şekilde okuduğunu anlama da benim için zordu. Yine lisansımın ilk başlarında. Yani oturuyorum, fizik çalışıyorum işte. 2 saat fizik çalışıyorum. Bu 2 saatin 45 dakikası ben translate’de bir şeyleri çevirmişim. Hani bu şöyle bir zorluk yaratıyor bana. 2 saat çalışıyorum diyorum. Fakat 2 saatin sadece 1 saat 15 dakikası aslında fiziğe odaklanabilmişim.”

(Translation: “Similarly, reading comprehension was also difficult for me, especially at the beginning of my undergraduate studies. For example, I would sit down to study physics for two hours, and out of those two hours, I would spend 45 minutes translating things on Translate. This created a challenge for me—when I say I studied for two hours only about 1 hour and 15 minutes were actually focused on physics.”)

Both participants (E.E1 and E.E2) indicated that the level of content complexity gradually increased while moving towards the postgraduate level, which added an extra layer of difficulty to their academic journey. E.E1 added that more abstract and complex content was much more difficult to comprehend.

“Derste katılım beklentisi daha yüksek oluyor hocaların. Çünkü 5 kişi olduğumuz için her birimize düşen konuşma süresi en azından 15-20 dakikaya biz konuşuyorduk kişi başına diyebilirim. Okumaları daha yüklü oluyor yüksek lisansta ve doktora da tabii daha da artarak devam ediyor. O yüzden ders dışında dersler için ayırdığım zaman arttı.” (E.E2)

(Translation: “In smaller classes, like in my master's program, the professors' expectation for participation is higher. Since there were only five of us, I can say each of us would speak for at least 15–20 minutes individually. The readings are heavier in graduate studies and increase even more in doctoral programs. That’s why the time I dedicate to classes outside of the classroom has significantly increased.”)

“Ve tabi ki de hani kitapların içeriği daha ağırlaşıyor bence yüksek lisansla. Çünkü lisansta temel bazı bilgileri bildiğimiz varsayılıyor. O yüzden yüksek lisans biraz daha yüklü oluyor. O yüzden de okuma becerisinin de o açıdan gelişmesi gerektiğini düşünüyorum.” (E.E2)

(Translation: “And of course, I think the content of the books becomes more complex in graduate studies. In undergraduate programs, it’s assumed that we already know some basic information, so graduate studies are more intensive. That’s why I believe reading skills need to improve accordingly.”)

“Bu da mesela yüksek lisansla karşılaştığım bir zorluktuk çünkü o zaman da okuduğumuz metinlerin zorluk seviyesi daha çok artıyor. Çünkü orada bir vakayla bağlantı, teoritik bir framework varken onları anlamak daha zor oluyor.” (E.E1)

(Translation: “This was one of the challenges I faced in my master’s program because the difficulty level of the texts we read increased significantly.”)

Understanding them became harder, especially since they were connected to a case or involved a theoretical framework.”)

In addition to these challenges considering language and content, E.E1 expressed her experiences of self-expression difficulties in written exams and speaking during class discussions in undergraduate and graduate studies stating “*Evet yani kendimi ifade etmeden bir yetersizlik hissediyordum.*” (Translation: “Yes, I felt a sense of inadequacy when it came to expressing myself.”). However, E.E2 did not mention experiencing such self-expression or language barrier difficulties in her undergraduate, graduate studies, and academic career. E.E1 alluded to the notion of a language barrier in these words:

“Mesela bir soru var, sınavdayım. Bir translator kullanamam. Cevabı biliyorum. Nasıl bir cevap olduğunu da biliyorum. Mesela soru var, soruyu anlıyorum. Cevabını da biliyorum. Fakat birazcık da sınav stresıyla beraber herhalde şey oluyor yani yazarken şeyi hissediyorum. Ben yazdım ama bu benim tam olarak söylemek istediğim şey değil. Yani ben burada şu an Türkçe yazıyor olsaydım daha rahat bir şekilde kendimi ifade edebilirdim. Fakat şu an ifade edemiyorum. Hissettiğim bazı sınavlara dair böyle anılarım var mesela. Hani bu da benim lisansla yaşadığım zorluklardan bir tanesi.” (E.E1)

(Translation: “For instance, there’s a question, I’m in an exam. I can’t use a translator. I know the answer; I know what kind of response it requires. I understand the question, and I know the answer. But perhaps due to exam stress, I feel like; while writing, I wrote this, but it’s not exactly what I wanted to say.’ If I were writing in Turkish, I’d express myself more comfortably, but right now, I can’t. I have memories of certain exams where I felt this way. This was one of the challenges I faced during my undergraduate studies.”)

“Vardı insan bir çekiniyor yani ben çekiniyordum yani mesela ama bu genel olarak şeyin İngilizce olmasından mı yoksa benim konuşmaya kadar çekinmemle alakalı mıydı tam böyle ayırt edemedim şu an yani orada tüm context Türkçe olsaydı ben soruyu daha rahat sorar mıydım bilmiyorum ama sanıyorum ki İngilizce olması da muhakkak etkilemiştir belli bir noktaya kadar.” (E.E1)

(Translation: “There was this feeling of hesitation—I was hesitant, for instance. But I’m not entirely sure if it was because everything was in English or if it was just my general hesitation about speaking. I can’t say for sure if I would’ve asked the question more comfortably if the entire context had been in Turkish. But I believe that the fact that it was in English had some influence on a certain extent.”)

These results indicate that ECRs from EMI backgrounds experienced challenges regarding content and language. For instance, E.E1 focused on the challenges of dual focus on language and content simultaneously, stating that it caused impediments to content learning, concentration, time management, and academic success in her case and attributed these

challenges to the EMI. Both participants indicated that the increased complexity and difficulty of reading in graduate education posed a challenge in reading comprehension as the texts became more abstract and theoretical. E.E2 further mentioned the increased expectations of instructors from grad students, the heavier content of courses, and increased speaking time in class discussions. Although E.E1 alluded to experiencing language barrier difficulties regarding productive skills (speaking and writing) in written exams and in-class discussions, E.E2 did not mention any experienced challenges regarding language barrier or self-expression difficulties in undergrad or grad education.

Theme 2: Academic Skills

The second theme identified within the dataset of ECRs with an EMI background is academic exposure and production, which can be conceptualized as encompassing the four fundamental language skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing). Within the data collection procedures, the researcher investigated these four skills looking from an academic lens; and scrutinizing the participants' experiences in terms of academic speaking, reading, listening, and writing. It is evident that experienced research-related challenges accumulated in productive skills rather than receptive skills within this participant group of ECRs. The participants were asked about their experiences of fundamental four language skills in academic settings by providing example situations.

The analysis of the data revealed that participants generally did not experience significant challenges with listening skills in academic settings, if factors such as speaker's pronunciation, accent, language proficiency, or complicated language use did not act as hindrances. Additionally, E.E2 reported that if the content she was listening to did not attract her attention, she would lose focus eventually resulting in concentration problems. E.E2 commented on academic listening skills stating:

“Birincisi karşımdaki insanın dil kullanma yetkinliği. Çünkü o insan işte çok takılıyorsa ya da mesela çok komplike kelimeler kullanıyorsa bu benim becerimi çok etkileyecek bir şey. Bir de bir yandan da şey odaklanma. Yani çünkü hani hangi dilde dinleme yapıyor olursan ol eğer odaklanamıyorsan ya karşımdaki kişi bir şekilde ilgini çekemiyorsa kayboluyorsun. Yani onun dışında dinleme becerimin aslında genelde yüksek olduğunu söyleyebilirim.”

(Translation: “Firstly, the language proficiency of the person I’m talking to matters. If they’re hesitating a lot or using very complex words, it’s something that will significantly affect my ability. Secondly, there’s the issue of focus.

Regardless of the language you're listening to, if you can't focus on the person speaking fails to capture your interest, you get lost. Other than that, I'd say my listening skills are generally strong.")

Further analysis revealed that the participants encountered challenges in comprehension of more complex texts and advanced language use regarding academic reading skills, showing similar interconnected results with the first theme.

Regarding academic writing skills, the analysis of the interview data revealed that participants perceived a gradual increase in instructors' and supervisors' expectations for academic writing proficiency as they advanced in their academic journey. Furthermore, the participants reported challenges in using appropriate academic language and effectively paraphrasing. Despite their EMI background, they encountered challenges in terms of vocabulary knowledge and usage. A notable issue was the language barrier and self-expression difficulties which also appeared in Theme 1. Participants indicated having a hard time expressing their ideas effectively in academic writing followed by a feeling of inadequacy and low self-confidence, which impeded their academic writing skills.

Participants revealed a lack of familiarity and ineffective implementation of writing stages such as planning, drafting, and revising when asked about their writing process practices. However, one participant, E.E2, described her own approach to writing planning, involving the identification and organization of significant elements of the text, followed by drafting strategically starting with the most manageable parts. She also indicated that using item-by-item listing and diagramming helps the writing planning process. Even though E.E2 noted using a personal approach to writing planning, both participants further attributed their academic writing challenges to poor or no engagement with the stages of the writing process. Although E.E1 noted skipping the planning stage in academic writing and started writing directly, she also added that she would have an unstructured plan in her mind because of intensive readings done beforehand. Moreover, the slow pace of writing and application of writing stages were identified as obstacles to academic writing skills, mainly attributed to their limited experience and low confidence in steering the academic writing processes.

Lastly, the participants expressed their struggles and uncertainties with the appropriate level of elaboration and identification of how much detail to include in their academic work during the writing process. As E.E2 put it:

“Çok fazla deneyimim olmadığı için açıkçası şey var. Hani çok hızlı yapamıyorum bu aşamaları. Ve tabii ki de hani bu iyi mi? Yani çok özgüvenli hareket etmiyorum öyle diyeyim.”

(Translation: “Honestly, since I don’t have much experience, I can’t go through these steps very quickly. And, of course, is that good? I’d say I don’t act very confidently, to be honest.”)

She also commented on elaboration difficulties saying:

“İçerikte de detaylandırma kısmında ne kadar detaylandırmalıyım, bir şeyi ne kadar açık açık yazmalıyım ya da insanların bir şeyi ne kadar bildiğini varsaymalıyım kısmında zorlanıyorum.”

(Translation: “I struggle with how much I should elaborate on the content, how explicitly I should write something, or to what extent I should assume that people already know something.”)

The comment below illustrates the paraphrasing and vocabulary challenges E.E2 experienced:

“Açıkçası paraphrase etmemiz gerektiği için bizim de yüksek bir kelime haznesine sahip olmamız gerekiyor. Kendimi tekrar düşmek kısmı sıkıntılı olabiliyor. Mesela otomatik olarak gittiğim bazı kelimeler var onu fark ediyorum bir şey yazmaya çalışırken. Ve onun yerine alternatif üretmek, alternatif cümle kalıpları üretmekte zorlanıyorum en çok.”

(Translation: “Honestly, since we need to paraphrase, we also need to have a strong vocabulary. The issue of repeating myself can be problematic. For instance, I notice that I automatically rely on certain words when I try to write something. And the hardest part for me is coming up with alternatives—alternative words or sentence structures.”)

When asked about the academic writing stages and experienced challenges during these stages E.E1 uttered these statements indicating a lack of experience and self-confidence in academic writing in general:

“Çok öyle akademik yazma konusunda başarılı olduğumu düşünmüyorum. Hatta nasıl diyeyim? — diye bir konferans var yine bu da uluslararası bir şey. Geçen bir mail gelmiş akademik yazmayla alakalı. Dedim ben buna katılayım çünkü ben bu konuda eksik olduğumu düşünüyorum.”

(Translation: “I don’t think I’m very successful when it comes to academic writing. In fact, how should I put it? There’s an international conference on this topic. Recently, I received an email about academic writing, and I thought, ‘I should attend this because I feel I’m lacking in this area.’”)

Although the participants mainly experienced academic criticism and judgment anxiety in terms of speaking and presentations, E.E1 remarked that she also experienced this type of anxiety in her thesis writing process as well with these words:

“Yani diyorum ki işte atıyorum bir X hocası benim tezime açıp baktığında ya burayı nasıl yazmış bu? Ne saçma yazılmış. Demesi mesela benim için korkutucu bir şey. Bunu pek aşamadım yani aslında.”

(Translation: “I mean, I think to myself, for example, if Professor X opens and looks at my thesis, and says, ‘How has this been written? This is written so poorly,’ that would be a frightening thought for me. I haven’t been able to overcome this.”)

The data analysis showed several aspects of academic speaking challenges faced by ECRs with an EMI background. Reported challenges mainly revolve around English-speaking anxiety experienced during paper presentations, conference proceedings, and field-related discussions, and anxiety about receiving negative criticism and judgment which affected their fluency, confidence and effective self-expression. Concerning these issues, the language barrier was found as a difficulty in speaking English effectively as mentioned previously. Additionally, a lack of confidence and experience along with mental and physical exhaustion played a pivotal role in the academic speaking and communication challenges. The reported results emphasize the multifaceted and interconnected nature of ECRs’ academic speaking challenges. E.E1 reported that academic speaking at the undergraduate level and taking an active role in class discussions was difficult for her as she experienced content comprehension challenges as well with the following words:

“Lisansımın ilk yıllarında bahsettiğim gibi hocaların çok doğal bir şekilde konuştuğu İngilizceyi ben anlamıyordum özellikle matematik ve fizik gibi derslerde. Bu noktada speaking benim için çok zordu.”

(Translation: As I mentioned in the early years of my undergraduate studies, I couldn’t understand the English that professors spoke so naturally, especially in subjects like mathematics and physics. At that point, speaking was very difficult for me.”)

Additionally, for E.E1 diffidence was another aspect of academic speaking challenges as she described, adding that the underlying reason behind the diffidence might be class sizes, EMI, shyness in general, or speaking anxiety:

“Orada tüm context Türkçe olsaydı ben soruyu daha rahat sorar mıydım bilmiyorum ama sanıyorum ki İngilizce olması da muhakkak etkilemiştir belli bir noktaya kadar.”

(Translation: “I don’t know if I would have asked the question more comfortably if the entire context had been in Turkish, but I think the fact that it was in English definitely had an impact to some extent.”)

Considering class sizes, she commented on her feeling more confident in class discussions at the graduate level since the number of students was less than in undergraduate classes:

“Sınıf sayısı azaldıkça 20'lere, 10'lara ya da işte yüksek lisansta 5'lere düştüğünde falan ister istemez çok daha rahat bir şekilde konuşuyorsun.”

(Translation: “As the class size decreases to around 20, 10, or even 5 in a master's program, you inevitably find yourself speaking much more comfortably.”)

However, she indicated experiencing anxiety about her pronunciation and speaking in general:

“Orada da hani şey oluyor işte, ya kötü söylersem ve kötü telaffuz edersem gibi tabii ki benim de endişelerim oluyordu.”

(Translation: “In those situations, I also had concerns like, what if I say something wrong or mispronounce it?”)

As for E.E2, she noted struggling to achieve and maintain fluency during academic presentations and conference proceedings when faced with questions for which she was unsure of the answers:

“Akıcı olması konusunda zorlayabiliyor. Açıkçası. Ya da bir soru geldiğinde o soruyla ilgili mesela kendinden çok emin değilsem daha çok teklilerim konuşurken”

(Translation: “It can be challenging in terms of fluency, honestly. Or when a question is asked, if I'm not very confident about the topic, I tend to hesitate more while speaking.”)

Moreover, she also mentioned that when was physically and mentally exhausted, speaking English fluently and simplifying the language became much more challenging in her teaching practices with these words:

“Karşımdakilerin de anlayacağı şekilde daha basitleştirerek anlatmaya çalışıyorum. Bu zorlayabiliyor bazen. Ya da fiziksel olarak yorgunsam ve hani artık kafam yorulduysa başka bir dilde daha akıcı konuşmak daha zor oluyor.”

(Translation: “I try to explain things more simply so that the students can understand, and this can be challenging at times. Or if I'm physically tired and mentally drained, speaking fluently in another language becomes even more difficult.”)

As mentioned in Theme 1: Language and Content, the challenges regarding the language barrier and self-expression difficulties are prevalent under the academic speaking challenges as well.

Lastly, the data analysis illustrates the participants' anxiety about receiving negative criticism and academic judgment as a barrier during these academic conventions which affected their willingness and confidence to engage in academic public speaking. The

participants experienced this type of anxiety while presenting their results at academic conventions, defending research ideas in front of peers and experts. Participants indicated experiencing low self-confidence about their research contributions and fear of being judged or criticized harshly in front of other academics which leads us to anxiety. Both participants expressed their feelings about the issue with the following words:

“Tabii. Ya da başkaları ne düşünecek, araştırmamı beğenecekler mi gibi kaygılar, zorluyor aslında en çok.” (E.E2)

(Translation: “Of course. Concerns like ‘What will others think?’ or ‘Will they like my research?’ are the most challenging.”)

“Öyle ya da böyle, şunu düşünüyorum yani, ya işte orada beni dinleyenler bana bunun için kötü bir şey söylerlerse, yani bunu mu sundun derlerse, Acaba başkaları benim şeyimi beğenecek mi, saçma bulacak mı? Böyle bir concernüm oluyor.” (E.E1)

(Translation: “One way or another, I think to myself, ‘What if the people listening to me there say something negative about this, like, is this what you presented?’ I have this concern about whether others will like my work or find it silly.”)

Theme 3: Research

The analysis revealed four main research-related challenges encountered by ECRs with EMI backgrounds: MOI-related challenges, cognitive demands of research, challenges related to academic conventions, and methodological complexities. MOI background surfaced as an important factor affecting research-related experiences, causing confusion and complexities in Turkish equivalents of research and field terminologies. This challenge was attributed to their early exposure to research and field content primarily in English. E.E1 expressed the challenges regarding this issue in these words:

“Bunlara dair yaşadığım zorluklardan bahsetmek gerekirse sanırım metot kısmını anlamakla ilgili bazen şey oluyor... Örneğin convenient sampling. Bunun Türkçesi ne? Falan oluyorum yani. Mesela okuyorum işte bir şeymiş. Bir terminoloji kullanıyor mesela. Şey diyorum yani bu şimdi ne?”

(Translation: “If I were to talk about the difficulties, I’ve experienced with these, I think sometimes it’s about understanding the methodology section. For example, convenient sampling—what is that in Turkish? I find myself asking things like that. For instance, I read it, and it turned out to be something. They use a term, and I’m like, ‘What does this mean now?’.”)

E.E2 said the following about the same topic in line with E.E1’s statements:

“İkincisi zaten hep eğitim İngilizce aldığım için benim kafamdaki işte terimler, Yani kavramlar, teoriler vs. hani İngilizce öğrendim ben bunları. O yüzden Türkçe'ye çevrilmiş halini bazen garipsiyorum açıkçası. Hani ana dilim olmasına rağmen bunu söylemek çok garip geliyor.”

(Translation: “Secondly, since I’ve always received my education in English, the terms, concepts, theories, etc., in my mind—I learned them in English. That’s why I sometimes find their translated versions in Turkish strange, to be honest. It feels odd to say this, even though it’s my native language.”)

E.E2 shared an anecdote with the researcher regarding this issue:

“Ama bunu tamamen İngilizce öğrendiğimde bazı kelimelerin Türkçelerini gördüğünüzde bu ne demek? Yani mesela yordamak kelimesi mesela. Hiç unutamadım ben onu. Bir kongrede duydum. Bir şey yorduyor dediler ve biz 2-3 kişi görüp birbirimize baktık. Ne diyor bu diye yani.”

(Translation: “But when you learn something entirely in English, and then you see the Turkish equivalents of some words, you’re like, ‘What does that mean?’ For instance, the word yordamak (predict) I’ll never forget it. I heard it at a conference. Someone said, ‘It predicts something,’ and two or three of us looked at each other, wondering, ‘What are they talking about?’”)

The cognitive demands of research conducting were identified as a significant challenge, involving tasks such as academic reading, understanding concepts, making inferences, and integrating inferences into one’s work, etc. Participants noted that these complex tasks required advanced skills in maintaining concentration and managing cognitive load. Previous results on heavy content academic reading in Theme 1 and results on cognitive demands under this theme complement each other since heavier academic reading load complicates the comprehension of the text and concepts, the process of inferencing, and the integration of inferences to one’s study. Talking about this issue, E.E1 said:

“Çünkü bir sürü şeye bakıyorsunuz. Bir sürü şeyi anlamaya, onu farklı şekilde ifade etmeye çalışıyorsunuz. Onlardan bir sonuç çıkarmaya çalışıyorsunuz. Daha önceki araştırmacılar ne yapmış? Ben onlardan farklı olarak ne yapmaya çalışayım gibi endişelerimiz var. Tüm bunlar gerçekten bence üzerine bayağı odak isteyen, bayağı düşünme isteyen bir şey ve komple bir süreç çok zor.”

(Translation: “Because you’re looking at so many things, trying to understand them and express them in different ways. You’re trying to draw a conclusion from them. Questions like, ‘What have previous researchers done? What should I try to do differently from them?’ are on our minds. All of this, in my opinion, really requires a lot of focus and thought, and it’s a very complex and challenging process.”)

Furthermore, another challenge found concerning research was academic events such as conferences, seminars, and congresses. One of the participants (E.E2) described the initial

experience of attending an international academic conference as ‘göz korkutucu’ which means ‘intimidating’ since it was her first attendance at an international academic event, and she was there to do a poster presentation of her paper which she was unfamiliar with the procedures. She commented on the academic event challenges saying:

“Yani her şeyin yeni olması zaten başlı başına zorlayıcı. Genelde aslında yaşadığımız zorluk kısmı çok psikolojik kalıyor.”

(Translation: “I mean, the fact that everything is new is already challenging. Generally, the difficulties we experience tend to be very psychological.”)

In contrast to E.E2, E.E1 noted positive experiences at international conferences, stating that networking opportunities and seeing different academic studies motivated her. In addition, the analysis showed that the participants experienced anxiety about other academics’ thoughts and opinions of their research in the abovementioned academic events. As proof of this, two participants expressed the following words about their academic criticism and judgment anxiety. E.E2 stated that: *“Tabii. Ya da başkaları ne düşünecek, araştırmamı beğenecekler mi gibi kaygılar, zorluyor aslında en çok.”* (Translation: *“Of course. Concerns like ‘What will others think? Will they like my research?’ are actually the most challenging.”*) and E.E1 added: *“Öyle ya da böyle, şunu düşünüyorum yani, ya işte orada beni dinleyenler bana bunun için kötü bir şey söylerlerse, yani bunu mu sundun derlerse...”* (Translation: *“One way or another, I find myself thinking, what if the people listening to me there say something negative about this? Like, ‘Is this what you presented?’.”*) As E.E1 reported that she experienced anxiety about negative academic criticism and judgment in academic events, she uttered these words: *“Ama hani şey oluyordur, başkaları birinin beni nasıl yargılayacak falan diye düşünüyor, oluyorum.”* (Translation: *“But, you know, I do sometimes think about how others might judge me.”*)

If we now turn to methodological challenges, the participants reported experiencing challenges in terms of various aspects of research methodologies. In particular, the participants E.E1 and E.E2 stated that the literature review was a challenging aspect of research as there is a vast number of studies, which led to the sense of being lost and experiencing information overload. E.E2 commented on literature review processes and added her further comments on the expectations of other academics, noting that literature review sections have a demanding nature regarding the synthesis of multiple sources and are often expected to be extensive and long with these words below:

“Literatür, içinden çıkması benim için en korkunç yer literatür yani. Çünkü öyle derya bir bilgi var ve onun sentezi isteniyor ve Türkiye’de bence literatür için çok uzun uzadıya şeyler bekleniyor... gerek yok ben hiç sevmem uzatamam ruhum sıkılır benim şahsen o yüzden literatür beni zorluyor.”

(Translation: “The literature is, for me, the most daunting part to navigate. Because there’s such a vast sea of information, and you’re expected to synthesize it. In Türkiye, I think there’s an expectation for the literature to be very extensive... which I think is unnecessary. Personally, I don’t enjoy dragging things out; it drains my spirit. That’s why the literature review is challenging for me.”)

E.E1 identified finding a research gap in the literature and figuring out how to report it was a challenge in research processes but did not further elaborate on the issue:

“Bir gap bulmaya çalışmak çok zor. Gap’i buldun, bir introduction’a nasıl yazılacağına bakıyorsun çok zor.”

(Translation: “Trying to find a gap is very difficult. Once you find the gap, figuring out how to write it in the introduction is also very challenging.”)

Followed by the challenges regarding the discussion section E.E1 commented on the issue with these words stating that there is a vast number of studies to go over; therefore, she experienced a sense of being lost in the process:

“Sonra discuss etmeye çalışıyorsunuz. Discuss etmek zaten tamamen ayrı bir zorluk. Niye zorluk diyorum? Çünkü...o kadar fazla şey var ki hepsine bakmaya çalışmak... İnsan kayboluyor. Ben kendimi zaman zaman çok kaybolmuş hissediyordum bu süreçlerde.”

(Translation: “Then you try to discuss it. Discussing is already a separate challenge. Why do I call it a challenge? Because...There’s so much to look at, and trying to go through all of it... You end up feeling lost. I often felt very lost during these processes.”)

Another key aspect of research is establishing an appropriate research design and methodology that surfaced as a challenge from the data analysis. For example, E.E2 mentioned experiencing difficulties in developing research designs with the following words with no further explanations: *“Ama hani metot o açıdan tamam zorlayıcı bir şey ama özellikle araştırma, dizaynım da zorlayıcı bir şey.”* (Translation: *“But, you know, the method is challenging in that sense, but especially my research design is also a challenging aspect.”*) Even though E.E2 highlighted her experiences in terms of research design development, E.E1 did not mention any aspect related to research design when asked about her research-related challenges and experiences.

Furthermore, both participants noted challenges in data collection procedures regarding the data collection tools, finding participants, and gathering reliable or useful data. The analysis

of the data revealed that participants had a difficult time deciding on a data collection tool, ensuring the tool's quality, finding individuals who were willing to take part in their studies, and trusting in the reliability and usefulness of the obtained data. Participant E.E1, for example, put these experienced challenges in this way:

“Instrument'ine karar vermeye çalışıyorsun çok zor. Oradan geçtin, veri toplayacağım diye veri toplarken insanlar bana veri vermek isteyecekler mi? ne kadar motiveler, bu insanlara ben ne yapsam bana daha iyi veri verirler gibi endişeleri çok yaşadım.”

(Translation: “Trying to decide on the instrument is very difficult. Once you get past that, you start thinking about data collection: Will people even want to provide me with data? How motivated are they? What can I do to get better data from them? I experienced these concerns a lot.”)

She further commented on her experienced challenges regarding participants' willingness to take part in her studies with these words:

“Eğer konfor zonundan çıkmayı böyle pek benim gibi sevmeyen bir insansanız işte bu süreçlerin tamamı aslında çok böyle konfor zonunuzdan çıkmanızı gerektirecek bir şey. Çünkü işte veri toplamaya gideceksiniz. İnsan şey diyebilir yani ben buna veri vermek istemiyorum. Hani ben böyle bir şeyle karşılaşmak istemiyorum yani mesela bana ben veri vermek istemiyorum diyen biriyle. Bunlar çok mümkün yani.”

(Translation: “If you're someone like me who doesn't really enjoy stepping out of your comfort zone, then all these processes require you to do exactly that. For example, you must go and collect data. Someone might say, 'I don't want to provide data for this.' I really don't want to face such situations, like someone telling me, 'I don't want to give you data.' These things are very possible.”)

While E.E1 shared her experiences with data collection procedures in detail, E.E2 only mentioned it briefly in these words: *“İşte kişi sayısını tutturma, işte ölçüm aracının ne kadar iyi olduğu vesaire gibi.”* (Translation: *“Things like meeting the required number of participants and how good the measurement tool is, and so on.”*). Following the data collection procedures, participants reported challenges with data analysis particularly the time-consuming process of learning and employing both qualitative and quantitative data analysis since they are in the early stages of their careers. Therefore, they attributed their data analysis-related challenges to their lack of familiarity, knowledge, and experience in this matter. The attributions of their research-related challenges to the lack of familiarity, knowledge, and experience may indicate a novelty effect. The novelty effect in psychology refers to the individual's tendency to show the highest stress reaction during their first

experience with a potentially threatening situation (first research/thesis experience in our case), decreasing with the following experiences.

Theme 4: Institutional and Professional Challenges

The participants' working positions as research assistants at Turkish universities are three-fold requiring independent research, teaching assistantship, and institutional paperwork. To fulfil these duties, research assistants have three different identities: researcher, teacher assistantship, and civil servant. Furthermore, securing a research assistant position requires enrolment in a master's program. Consequently, research assistants should complete their degrees while fulfilling their duties to maintain their positions. Many ECRs pursue their master's degrees while working as research assistants. During this process, ECRs need to be in contact with their thesis supervisors, colleagues (academics in or out of the department), administrative staff, etc. Theme 4 covers the challenges experienced regarding these institutional and professional aspects. The qualitative data analysis revealed further results on ECRs' experiences regarding the institutional and professional challenges. These experiences mainly involve mentorship and occupational and higher education system-related challenges. Firstly, the challenges are concentrated on the mentorship aspect of the thesis writing process. The reported experiences concerning mentorship challenges primarily belong to one participant, E.E1. The aspects in which E.E1 struggled with mentorship include the dynamics of working together on the thesis, the relationship and communication with the supervisor, the lack of feedback, and the lack of guidance and support. The results demonstrated that the relationship and communication with the supervisor posed significant challenges for E.E1 during the thesis writing process.

Relational and communicational problems with thesis supervisors encompass some of the other mentorship-related challenges and have the potential to influence each other. If we were to think of Relationship and Communication challenges as a main heading, the subheading would be ineffective supervisory communication consisting of other subheadings such as lack of clarity and responsiveness in communication along with lack of support and guidance, lack of a role model, lack of feedback and thesis planning strategies. All of these aspects had significant effects on E.E1's overall thesis writing process in addition to the dynamics of working together with the supervisor on research. Even though E.E1 mentioned the working dynamics, she did not explain what she meant by this phrase.

The participant (E.E1) asserted experiencing challenges with their supervisor due to ineffective supervisory communication with these words:

“Ne hocanın tam ne bir şey söylediği belli. Ne sen bir soru soruyorsun, doğru cevap alabiliyorsun. Öyle bir süreçti.”

(Translation: “Neither was it clear what the professor was saying, nor could you ask a question and get a proper answer. It was that kind of process.”)

She also added that she sometimes encountered unanswered or late replies to e-mails which led to loss of motivation:

“Mail atıyorsun cevap gelmiyor, bu seni demotive ediyor. İki hafta sonra mail geliyor, sen o iki haftada ne yaptın, ne ettin, bazı şeyleri unuttun, askıya kaldırdın.”

(Translation: “You send an email and don’t get a response, which demotivates you. Then two weeks later, you get a reply, but during those two weeks, what did you do? You forgot some things, put them on hold.”)

E.E1 refers to the lack of clarity in communication where the supervisor offers inadequate guidance, and the supervisee strives to get clear answers to their questions regarding their research, making the thesis process much more challenging and causing stress. Thus, ineffective supervisory communication between the thesis supervisor and supervisee had negative consequences in different aspects of the process such as the planning of the thesis writing process, insufficient feedback provision and guidance, and lack of role models. Apart from these challenges, the participant (E.E1) also referred to the dynamics of working together with the thesis supervisor with these words:

“Aynı zamanda danışmanıyla çok iyi anlaşılan bir birey olmadığım için yani en azından birbirimizle bizim çalışma dinamiklerimiz uymuyor. Bu yüzden de yüksek lisans benim için çok daha zorlayıcı. Artık yani Allah belasını versin bitsin dediğim bir süreç haline geldi.”

(Translation: “At the same time, since I’m not someone who gets along very well with my advisor—at least our working dynamics don’t align—this has made the master’s program much more challenging for me. It has reached a point where I just want it to be over, thinking, ‘I’m so done with this’.”)

Moreover, E.E1 shared her negative experience with her thesis supervisor in her first academic paper presentation illustrating a lack of support with the following words:

“İlk konferansımda, hani tez hocamla beraber yazmıştım. Tez hocam hiçbir yere gelmedi yani. Zoom'a da gelmedi, şeye de gelmedi. Keşke gelseydi.”

(Translation: “At my first conference experience, I had written the paper together with my thesis supervisor. My supervisor didn’t show up anywhere, not even on Zoom or in person. I wish they had attended.”)

The lack of planning in the thesis stage led E.E1 to a more ‘self-motivated’ process as she described. E.E1 experienced challenges associated with ineffective supervisory communication and inadequate planning of the thesis writing process, as previously mentioned, and shared her experiences in the following words:

“Deadline olduğu zaman o deadline’ı her türlü düşünerek hareket eden bir insanım. Öyle ya da böyle belli tarihler vardır ve o deadline’lara göre siz kendinizi uyarlıyorsunuz. İşte ödevinizi yaparsınız, paper’ınızı göndersiniz falan filan. Ama hani yüksek lisansın tez dönemi pek öyle değil ya. Yani en azından ben ve tez hocam bunu böyle tecrübe etmedik.”

(Translation: “When there’s a deadline, I’m the kind of person who always acts with that deadline in mind. One way or another, there are specific dates, and you adjust yourself accordingly—you complete your assignments, submit your paper, and so on. But the thesis phase of the master’s program isn’t really like that. At least, that’s not how my thesis advisor and I experienced it.”)

“O deadline’lar pek olmadığı için. Yani deadline şeydi tezin en son savunma günü falan yani deadline. Öyle bir deadline var. Diğer türlü deadline yok yani.”

(Translation: “There weren’t really any deadlines. I mean, the only actual deadline was the final thesis defense date. Other than that, there weren’t any.”)

“Hani işte ya da ne bileyim hani şu tarihe kadar bunu yapalım. Bu tarihten sonra da şuna bakalım denilen bir süreç değildi bizimki. Böyle... O yüzden de şey oldu yani... Ben sürekli kendimi motive edip devam etmeye çalıştığım bir süreç içinde. O yüzden ben self-motivated dedim.”

(Translation: “Our process wasn’t one where, for example, we’d say, ‘Let’s finish this by this date and then focus on that after this date.’ It wasn’t like that. So, it turned into a situation where I constantly had to motivate myself and try to keep going. That’s why I called it self-motivated.”)

ECRs working as research assistants have diverse occupational experiences as they navigate through the academic environment. The shift from graduate studies to the research assistant position, which is more professional, includes adapting to new responsibilities, institutional and systemic expectations, and professional demands while developing research proficiency. In other words, ECRs need to fulfil the duties of the department and faculty, be teaching assistants, and become independent researchers. Analysis of the interview data revealed challenges regarding EMI background ECRs’ occupation. Both participants are teaching assistants, adding an extra layer of responsibility to their already demanding workload. One participant (E.E1) reported experiencing challenges in her teaching due to the MOI of her institution. As mentioned in the participant’s overview, E.E1 has an EMI background;

therefore, she has a good command of content/field knowledge in English. However, the institution she works at adopts a TMI, and she should be teaching using the Turkish language. E.E1 noted that teaching English-learned field knowledge using TMI posed certain challenges. As she further explained, although she referred to English terms while teaching, she was aware of the students' English proficiency levels and adapted her teaching techniques accordingly. This mostly involved proactive overcoming strategies with Turkish materials and resources. As for E.E2, she did not report any challenges experienced during her teaching assistantship other than physical and mental exhaustion. Given that she has an EMI educational background, this situation might be attributed to her working at an EMI university as well. These excerpts from the interviews illustrate the teaching challenge and her proactive overcoming strategy of E.E1:

“Terminolojileri ya da dersi nasıl anlatacağımla alakalı sıkıntı oluyor. Yani bazen aklıma söyleyecek cümle gelmiyor orada”

(Translation: “I have difficulties with the terminology or how to lecture. Sometimes, I just can’t think of a sentence to say there.”)

“O yüzden ders içindeki notlarımı, laboratuvarıda ne yapacağımı falan Türkçe alıyorum. Çok büyük oranda. 1,5 yıldır falan laboratuvara hazırlandığım şeyler Türkçe olur benim. Çünkü orada Türkçe bir ders veriyorum. Orada aa bu ne demekti, bu nasıl bir şeydi falan diye takılıp kalmak istemediğim için o da.”

(Translation: “That’s why I take my notes for classes and what I’ll do in the lab mostly in Turkish. For about 1.5 years, the materials I prepare for the lab have been in Turkish because I teach a class in Turkish. I don’t want to get stuck thinking, oh, what did this mean? How does this work?”)

As previously mentioned, the research assistant position requires interaction with the thesis supervisor and colleagues within and outside the department including the faculty and administrative staff. The analysis identified a certain challenge related to communication with colleagues. However, E.E2, working at an EMI university and sharing similar MOI backgrounds, reported not experiencing any challenges in her interactions with colleagues. In contrast, further analysis revealed that E.E1 experienced difficulties in interactions with her colleagues since she works at a TMI university with colleagues with TMI backgrounds. E.E1 noted that she sometimes uses English terminologies while speaking with her colleagues since she has an EMI educational background. However, her colleagues' English language proficiency does not match hers, leading to communication breakdowns between them and E.E1's fear of being perceived as arrogant because she has a higher English language proficiency. E.E1 shared this experience with the following words:

“Bazen evet, bunu şöyle hissediyorum. Mesela Örneğin X Üniversitesindeki bazı hocalarımızın İngilizcesinin iyi olmadığını biliyorum. Hani bu Y üniversitesinde benim tecrübe ettiğim bir şey değil.”

(Translation: “Sometimes, yes, I feel this. For example, I know that some professors at X University don’t have strong English skills. This isn’t something I experienced at Y university”)

“Mesela bana bir soru geliyor. Şu tezde ne yaptın, sen ne çalıştın gibi bir şey. Ben orada mesela... İngilizce bir terminoloji, bir şey yapmışım. Yine convenience sampling aklıma geldi. Hani ben bunu yaptım diyorum. Orada sıkıntı şey oluyor mesela. Burada ben convenience sampling dedim de hani bunu karşımdaki insan büyük ihtimalle nasıl algıladı yani. Onun Türkçesi neydi?”

(Translation: “For example, I get a question like, ‘What did you do in your thesis? What did you work on?’ And in that moment... I’ve used an English term, like convenience sampling comes to mind again. I say, ‘This is what I did,’ but the issue arises when I start wondering how the other person interpreted it—like, what was the Turkish equivalent of that?”)

“Evet, diyebiliriz. Zorlanmama sebep oluyor ve bende şey sorusunu oluşuyor. Yani şunu klemek istiyorum. Bunu bilmiyorlar. Ben biliyorum. Sonra ben söylüyorum. Acaba kaba mı oldu? Acaba işte burnu büyüklük mü oldu gibi düşünüyorum.”

(Translation: “Yes, we can say that. It causes me to struggle, and it raises a question in my mind. I mean, I want to add something like, ‘They don’t know this, but I know it.’ Then when I say it, I start wondering, ‘Was that rude? Did it come off as arrogant?’”)

E.E1 also emphasized the lack of a cooperative environment and a role model in her academic environment, which exacerbated her academic experiences and challenges. The difficulties she experienced related to research, the institution and professionally might be attributed to the lack of a cooperative environment and a role model. However, she also mentioned that there are people in her life who support her socially and make these processes easier.

“Çok böyle rol model olacak ya da işte bir cooperation ortamına sahip değilim ben pek. Kendi alanımda ya da işte. Yine belli karakterler var hayatımda bana yardımcı olan bu süreçleri kolaylaştırmak için. Ama hani tam bir kooperasyon ortamındayım gibi hissetmiyorum hala. Bu da tabii ki bu süreçleri çok daha zorlaştırıyor.”

(Translation: “I don’t really have a role model or a cooperative environment in my field. There are certain people in my life who help me and make these processes easier, but I still don’t feel like I’m in a fully cooperative environment. Of course, this makes these processes much more difficult.”)

In addition to these challenges, E.E1 noted facing challenges in the institutional processes and requirements for thesis submission, especially regarding the layout of the thesis document which caused feelings of exhaustion in general with these words:

“Enstitüye gönder. Yok, formatı düzgün mü? Yok, sayfası 4 santim içeri mi kayık, 5 santim yukarı mı kayık gibi belli başlı şeyler. Bir sürü bir sürü bir sürü şey var ve tüm bunların hepsi gerçekten çok yorucu kontrol etmek.”

(Translation: “Send it to the institute. Then, is the format correct? Is the page shifted 4 centimeters inward or 5 centimeters upward? There are so many little things like this. Checking all of these is truly exhausting”)

Beyond the challenges of institutional thesis submissions, the higher education council's publication requirements for academic rank promotion present additional challenges. Related to this issue, when asked about her language preference for academic conferences, E.E2 particularly mentioned her higher level of trust in international academic work. As a reason for this trust, she claimed that international researchers receive more support for their academic studies, work on their studies more diligently and do science for the sake of science. Another reason as she noted is the publication criteria for academic rank promotion in the Turkish academic context and Turkish academics mainly focus on meeting the criteria rather than achieving the quality of the study. She expresses her higher level of trust in international academic studies with these words:

“İngilizce olursa dediğim gibi içeriğe daha çok güveniyorum ben. Yabancı biri yaparsa bunu, işte oralarda üretilen bilime daha çok güveniyorum galiba.”

(Translation: “As I said, if it's in English, I tend to trust the content more. If it's done by someone foreign, I think I trust the science produced in those contexts more.”)

As attributions to her trust, she asserted these words:

“Evet, çalışmalarının daha çok destek alması, daha çok önemsemeleri. Belki bir kriteri tutturmak için değil de gerçekten bilim yapmak için bilim yapmaları.”

(Translation: “Yes, their work receives more support and is given greater attention. Perhaps they conduct science not just to meet a certain criterion but to genuinely do science for the sake of science.”)

Regarding the criteria for academic rank promotion, she stated that constantly changing promotion criteria and pressure to meet these criteria led to the emergence of poor-quality academic works to be published. She explained this situation with these words:

“Çünkü burada sürekli bir şeylerin kriterlerini değiştiriyorlar. Doçentlik, profesörlük vesaire. İnsanları da anlıyorum. Çünkü hayatta kalma, hayatı idame ettirme gerçeği var. Ama bazen içeriği çok iyi olmayan ya da çok kaliteli olmayan şeyler burada daha hızlı ilerleyebiliyor.”

(Translation: “Because here, they are constantly changing the criteria for things like associate professorship or professorship. I understand people, too, because there’s the reality of survival and sustaining a livelihood. But sometimes, work that isn’t very substantial or of high quality can progress more quickly here”)

When asked if this situation in the Turkish academic context demotivates her, she indicated that it does since these criteria restrict the area of freedom by putting pressure on researchers such as herself:

“Açıkçası yaratıyor çünkü sürekli o kriterlerin doldurulmaya çalışılması ya da başka birilerinin ne yapmamız gerektiğini söylemesi bence özgürlük alanını çok kısıtlıyor.”

(Translation: “Honestly, it does create an issue because constantly trying to meet those criteria or having others tell us what we need to do significantly restricts the space for freedom, in my opinion.”)

The inductive reflective thematic analysis of ECRs with an EMI background revealed challenges across four key areas: Language and Content, Academic Skills, Research, and Institutional and Professional aspects. As a result, the potential outcomes of these challenges were reported as overall increased anxiety and chronic stress, the feeling of inadequacy/low self-confidence both in academic contexts and in general, demotivation in academic engagement, and the novelty effect.

Overall, the findings reveal an interplay between language background and researcher identity development. The participants' experiences suggest that the medium of instruction significantly shapes not just their academic capabilities, but their fundamental relationship with both languages. Particularly noteworthy is how EMI background researchers develop what one participant describes as an “educational persona” with English as its primary language, leading to unexpected challenges when engaging with their native Turkish in academic contexts. This phenomenon is further illustrated by another participant's experience with statistical terminology, where despite Turkish being their mother tongue, English terminology felt more natural due to their initial exposure to these concepts in English. This linguistic duality creates a unique professional identity where researchers may feel like foreigners in their native language within academic settings, while simultaneously

maintaining greater comfort with English in specific academic domains, as the participants expressed:

“Orada da sanki şey gibi ya, bir eğitim kişiliğimiz var ve o kişinin ana dili İngilizce. O yüzden de o farklı bir dil duyduğunda zorlanıyor gibi aslında.” (E.E2)

(Translation: “It feels like we have an educational persona whose native language is English. So, when it encounters a different language, it seems to struggle.”)

“İngilizcesini bildiğim terminolojinin Türkçesini bile böyle karşılaştırınca falan farklılıklar hissediyordum. Daha böyle yabancı bir şeymiş gibi gelirdi. Sanki ana dilim orada İngilizceymiş de. Türkçe’yi yabancıyormuşum gibi hissediyordum. Çünkü istatistiği ilk başta İngilizce öğrendiğim için.” (E.E1)

(Translation: “When I compared the Turkish versions of the terminology I knew in English, I would notice differences. It felt more foreign to me, as if my native language there was English, and I was unfamiliar with Turkish. This was because I initially learned statistics in English.”)

As demonstrated in Table 12 and 13, EMI background ECRs applied various strategies and tools to mitigate the challenges experienced in their academic journey from undergraduate to graduate studies.

Table 12 Applied Strategies of EMI Background ECRs

Applied Strategies of EMI Background ECRs

Area of Strategy Use	Strategies
Bilingual Academic Development	More exposure to academic content More exposure to Turkish academic content Self-efforts to learn Turkish research and statistics
Social and Psychological	Therapy Comparison with others Having a Supportive Partner Self-suggestions Cooperation with fellow researchers and colleagues
Proactive	Awareness of the limitations of the study Preparation of materials in Turkish before teaching Justification strengthening Practice before presentations
Physical and Cognitive Performance Enhancement	Caffeine Intake Exercising Taking Breaks Spending time outdoors

Table 13

Research and Academic Writing Support Tools of EMI background ECRs

Area of Use	Tools
Translation	Google Translate DeepL AI (ChatGPT)
Referencing	Zotero Scribbr
Writing	Quillbot Grammarly Academic Phrasebanks AI (ChatGPT)
Time Management	Google Calendar

4.2.4 Research-Related Challenges, Attributions and Applied Strategies of TMI Background ECRs - T.T1 and T.T2

The analysis of the semi-structured interview data regarding the research-related challenges experienced by ECRs who received both B.A. and M.A. Education in Turkish are categorized into themes as seen in Table 14. These themes developed through inductive reflexive thematic analysis of the data.

Table 14

Key Themes of TMI Background ECRs' Experienced Challenges

Themes	Sub-Themes
Academic Language Skills	Listening Reading Writing Speaking
Research	Methodological Academic Conventions
Institutional and Professional	High-Impact Turkish Academic Journals Transitioning between Different Academic Cultures

Theme 1: Language and Academic Skills

The analysis revealed that ECRs from TMI backgrounds encountered challenges regarding language and academic skills. These challenges consist of four main English language skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing which are vital to academic skills. Starting with receptive skills, TMI background ECRs experienced certain challenges regarding listening and reading skills. Even though T.T1 noted that he believed to be a good listener and did not experience challenges in Turkish, he found listening in English much more challenging, especially in academic events. He expressed these thoughts with these words:

“Türkçe olarak bakıldığında iyi bir dinleyici olduğumu düşünüyorum. Amaca yönelik dinlerim, notlarımı alırım. İlgimi çeken konu olduğunda ondan istifade etmeye çalışıyorum. Etkin bir dinleyici olduğumu düşünüyorum.”

(Translation: “When it comes to Turkish, I believe I’m a good listener. I listen purposefully, take notes, and try to benefit from topics that interest me. I consider myself an active listener.”)

Despite the English listening challenges, he favoured listening directly to the English speaker since he believed that simultaneous translation often lacked subtlety and stress on significant parts of the original speaker. He asserted these words regarding his listening language preferences:

“Mesela kongrelerde İngilizce dinlemeyi tercih ediyorum. Mesela sadece anlamın geçmesi yetmeyebiliyor.”

(Translation: “For example, I prefer listening in English at conferences. Just understanding the meaning isn’t always enough for me.”).

Additionally, he stated these words about the simultaneous translation tools in these academic conventions:

“Kulaklığı takıyorum mesela. Spontan çeviri yapılıyor. Evet. Hani anlatıyor. Çevriliyor ama hani o duyguyu alamıyorummesela oradan. Çok daha duygusuz bir çeviri olabiliyor. O hani vurgu yapıyor mesela bir yere. Önem veriyor. Onu anlayamayabiliyorum. Kulaklığı genelde çıkarıyorum. İşte karşımdakini dinliyorum.”

(Translation: “I put on the headset where simultaneous translation is being done. Yes, they translate as the speaker says, but I feel like I can’t get the full emotion from it. It’s often a more emotionless translation. For example, the speaker emphasizes something or gives importance to a point, and I might not catch that in the translation. So, I usually take off the headset and listen directly to the speaker.”)

Both T.T1 and T.T2 experienced challenges in English listening comprehension, derived from their inability to follow fast speech and a lack of vocabulary knowledge expressing these difficulties with the following words:

“İşte en son yine Kongre’de konuşmacıyı dinliyorum. Anlamadığım yer ama mutlaka oluyor yani anlattığında. kaçırdığım yerler olabiliyor. Bazen çok hızlı geçiyor. Bazen bilmediğim kelime çıkabiliyor.” (T.T1)

(Translation: “Still, there are parts I don’t understand, like in a recent conference where I was listening to the speaker. There are always things I miss—sometimes because they speak too quickly, and sometimes because there’s a word I don’t know.”)

T.T2, particularly reported that his colleagues utilized English terminology in daily communication both for academic subjects and other issues such as humor with these following words:

“Evet. Bazen çünkü onlar yaptıkları şakaları ya da söyledikleri fıkraları bazen İngilizce hızlı söylüyorlar.”

(Translation: “Yes, because sometimes they tell their jokes or anecdotes in English very quickly.”)

He had a difficult time adapting to his colleagues and understanding the topic of conversation fully. However, he utilized clarification requests and looking up unknown vocabulary as overcoming strategies. He added that he did not only experience these difficulties in daily conversations but also in academic-related conversations as well:

“Bir tane hocamız Amerika’dan yeni gelmişti. Ben onun dersini asiste edecektim. Dersle ilgili bir şey konuşacağız. Hocam şu şöyle, şu şöyle derken İngilizce anlatıyor süreci bana. Yani o kadar hızlı anlatıyor ki ben de okula yeni başlamışım. Hoca farkında değil ama İngilizce anlattığının.” (T.T2)

(Translation: “

One of our professors had just returned from the US. I was going to assist them in their class. We were going to discuss something about the lesson. While explaining the process to me, they were speaking in English—so fast that I had just started school and could barely keep up. The professor wasn’t even aware that they were explaining everything in English.”)

Further qualitative analysis of the semi-structured interviews illustrated academic reading challenges as well. According to the analyses, the lack of vocabulary knowledge, which was an underlying reason for listening challenges, is evident in reading challenges as well. Both participants reported that the lack of vocabulary knowledge and advanced vocabulary usage complicated the reading processes and acted as a challenge in English academic reading with the following words:

“Hatta Türklerin çalışmasına da denk geldim. Yani o kadar uçuk kelimeler kullanmışlar ki yani sade olarak verebilecekleri şeyler... Anadilindeki yabancılar bazen daha basit verirken bizim Türkler o kadar abartmışlar. Hiçbir şey anlaşılmıyor. Yani bağlam çok çabuk kopuyordu benim için.”
(T.T2)

(Translation: “I even came across studies by Turkish researchers. They used such over-the-top words for things they could have presented more simply. While native speakers of the language sometimes explain things more straightforwardly, our Turkish researchers exaggerate so much that nothing makes sense. I would lose the context very quickly.”)

While T.T1 reported that he did not experience any significant challenges in Turkish academic reading unless the text has overly dense descriptions in it, he noted experiencing challenges in English academic reading stemmed from the lack of vocabulary knowledge. He simply put his experienced challenges into these words: *“Şimdi İngilizce'yi düşündüğümde benim en çok zorlandığım kısım kelime eksikliğiyle ilgili kısım oluyor.”*
(Translation: “When I think about English, the part I struggle with the most is related to a lack of vocabulary”)

“Ama kelime bilmemek gerçekten zorluyor. Yani çok daha kısa metinde o kelimeyi bilmediğimizde anlayamıyorsunuz gerçekten yani. O en çok zorlandığım kısım o oluyor yani okuma yaparken. İngilizcede böyle oluyor.”
(Translation: “Ama kelime bilmemek gerçekten zorluyor. Yani çok daha kısa metinde o kelimeyi bilmediğimizde anlayamıyorsunuz gerçekten yani. O en çok zorlandığım kısım o oluyor yani okuma yaparken. İngilizcede böyle oluyor.”)

T.T1 and T.T2 utilized digital translation tools such as DeepL and Google Translate to facilitate the process of academic reading comprehension and found these tools very helpful: *“Google Translate, DeepL vs. Onları kullandığımız için iş kolaylaşıyor.”* (T.T1)
(Translation: “Using tools like Google Translate or DeepL makes things easier.”) Although T.T2 utilized these tools, he noted that some studies were written so advanced that he experienced comprehension challenges even with Turkish translated version. Yet, he did not mention the attributions to these challenges. However, having adopted a reflexive role in the analysis process the researcher believed that T.T2’s challenges might be attributed to his low proficiency in both English and Turkish academic language. T.T2 stated these experiences in these words:

“Bazı makaleler inanılmaz yukarıki seviyeden yazılmış ve ben çevirimi, yani okuduğumu anlamıyorum. Çevirip tekrar geri dönüyorum. Bu sefer bağlamdan kopuyorum. Tekrar baştan okuyorum, tekrar kopuyorum.”

(Translation: “Some articles are written at an incredibly advanced level, and I can’t understand what I’m reading. I translate it and then go back to it, but this time I lose the context. I start reading again, lose the context again, and the cycle repeats”)

Furthermore, T.T1 indicated that he preferred reading academic studies in Turkish since it’s his native language, which he is undoubtedly more proficient in, and he believed he is not proficient enough in English to carry out academic readings. Thus, he utilized digital translation tools for English academic content; however, he emphasized that he could not always rely on these tools for accuracy. He uttered these following words regarding his attribution to reading language preference:

“Anadili olması zaten başlıca neden. Ama diğer dilin de anadili kadar iyi bilinmemesi de ikinci bir neden.”

(Translation: “The fact that it’s my native language is the primary reason. However, not knowing the other language as well as the native one is a secondary reason.”)

His lack of reliability on digital translation tools:

“Ama şeyden çok endişeleniyorum. Çeviri yapınca da çeviriye güvenemiyorum. Çevirilerde de hata oluyor. Kontrollü gidiyorum mesela öyle olunca. Ama tercih et deseniz hani Türkçeyi tercih ederim.”

(Translation: “But I worry a lot about this. When I use translation, I can’t fully trust it. There are mistakes in translations as well. So, I proceed cautiously in those cases. But if you asked me to choose, I’d prefer Turkish.”)

Regardless of his MOI background and his current English language proficiency, T.T2 asserted that majority of his academic readings consisted of English-written studies with these words:

“Genelde İngilizce okuyorum. Çünkü güncel literatür orada. Türkçe... Çok nadir baktım tezim için biraz. Kavramlar nerede, kim ne yazmış diye.”

(Translation: “I usually read in English because that’s where the current literature is. I’ve rarely looked at Turkish sources, only a little for my thesis, to see where the concepts are and who has written what.”)

He stated that he would prefer English academic reading attributing it to the fact that quality journals and publications in the literature are mostly in English. In addition to this, he noted that the researchers who underpinned the concepts specific to his field of study were foreigners as well. Therefore, he is compelled to read English academic studies to be able to specialize in his field. On the other hand, he indicated that he read English academic studies for proficiency improvement:

“Yani zaten o kavramları dolduran insanlar yabancılar. Ve çok geniş kapsamda yazılmış çalışmalar var. O yüzden yani Türkler de yabancı yazıyor. Yani okuduğum çalışmalar içerisinde Türkler de var, onlar da yabancı yazmışlar. Kaliteli dergiler yabancı. Kaliteli makaleler yabancı. Biraz da o, yani bir de İngilizceyi geliştirmek için zaten yeni bir şey okuyacaksan yine oradan okuyacağım. O yüzden onları tercih ediyorum genel olarak.” (T.T2)

(Translation: “I mean, the people who develop those concepts are foreigners anyway, and there are very comprehensive studies written by them. That’s why even Turkish researchers write in English. Among the studies I’ve read, there are Turks as well, and they’ve also written in a English. High-quality journals are foreign, and high-quality articles are foreign. It’s also partly because of that. Plus, if I’m going to read something new, I’ll choose from there to improve my English anyway. That’s why I generally prefer them.”)

Moreover, the analysis on academic speaking challenges showed that both participants experienced either anxiety or low self-confidence in academic English public speaking, although they would prefer English language while giving academic presentations:

“Kendi istediğim için değil, ama deneyim olsun diye İngilizce’yi seçmek de istiyorum bazen. Ama orada da şu kaygım oluyor açık söyleyeyim, ben daha yapmadım ama hani, ben sunumu yaparım İngilizce, kendim hazırlayacağım için sunabilirim. Fakat sunu yaptıktan sonra bana karşı taraftan gelecek soruları Ne kadar anlarım? Anlayamadığım bir şekilde sorular gelebilir mi? Anlarsam ne kadar yanıt verebilirim buna? Kaygılarım oluyor.” (T.T1)

(Translation: “Not necessarily because I want to, but sometimes I also want to choose English just for the experience. However, I have this concern, to be honest, although I haven’t done it yet. I could present in English because I would prepare it myself and be able to deliver it. But after the presentation, how well would I understand the questions coming from the audience? Could there be questions I can’t understand? And if I do understand, how well could I respond to them? These are the concerns I have.”)

“Yüksek lisansın ilk yıllarıydı o zamanlar. Hatırlıyorum. O zamanlar çok zorlanmıştım ama şu an bunu toplum önüne çıkarak Biraz daha o duyguları törpüliyorum sanırım. İlk çıktığımda çok büyük heyecan var. Herkes bana pür dikkat dinliyor. Ama şu an onları biraz daha azalttım. Daha rahat konuya odaklanıp anlatabilirim.” (T.T2)

(Translation: “It was during the early years of my master’s program, I remember. Back then, I struggled a lot, but now I think I’ve managed to temper those feelings by presenting in front of an audience more often. When I first presented, there was a lot of nervousness—everyone was paying full attention to me. But now, I’ve reduced that anxiety a bit. I can focus more comfortably on the topic and explain it.”)

The underlying reason for T.T1’s preference was that he felt confident in speaking academic English to some extent. However, the Q&A section which is out of his control and requires spontaneous speaking skills causes speaking anxiety. In other words, he worries about

understanding the questions received from the audience and being able to respond appropriately to these questions although he believes that he could prepare and deliver a presentation in English. As for T.T2's English language preference in academic contexts, he noted that he experienced initial speaking anxiety during his graduate studies and teaching assistantship and had a fear of making mistakes while speaking English publicly. However, he sought to overcome these difficulties by changing his perspective and believed in the possibility of improving himself by learning from his mistakes and stated the following words:

“Korkuyordum, bilmiyordum. Bu yanlış yapma korkusu. Şu an yanlış yapsam da çok büyük bir problem değil. Sonuçta öğreneceğim diye bakıyorum biraz daha. Yani bakış açımı değiştirdim sanırım. Çünkü biraz da şey var yani bu şu an hata yapmazsam otuz yaşında da yapmayacağım. Otuz beşte de yapmayacağım. Kırk yaşında kesin yapacağım hata. Bu sefer de komik duracak.” (T.T2)

(Translation: “I used to be afraid; I didn't know what I was doing. It was the fear of making mistakes. Now, even if I make a mistake, I don't see it as a big problem. I look at it more as an opportunity to learn. I think I've changed my perspective. After all, if I don't make mistakes now, I won't know how to avoid them when I'm thirty, thirty-five, or even forty. And if I make a mistake at forty, it will look even more awkward.”)

The analysis revealed that ECRs utilize and prefer Turkish language in academic writing due to their TMI background and considerably low English language proficiency. Although they prefer Turkish language in academic writing, both participants know the visibility of your study increases when you publish it in English. Therefore, they both aim to publish in English either through translation or self-efforts to improve their English academic writing. One participant expressed his thoughts on academic writing language preference with the following words:

“Çünkü o düşünme noktası biraz farklı bir noktadır. İngilizce düşünmek, o gramer yapısını doğru kullanmak, akademik dili doğru kullanmak daha farklıdır. Onun için biz daha çok Türkçe kullanıyoruz yani projelerde, yayınlarda.” (T.T1)

(Translation: “Because that point of thinking is a bit different. Thinking in English, using the grammar correctly, and using academic language properly are more distinct processes. That's why we mostly use Turkish in projects and publications.”)

As for T.T2, he claimed that he preferred writing academic works in English because he aims for international doctoral education, and he felt compelled to write English academic works.

When asked about their experiences regarding academic writing, T.T1 and T.T2 noted diverse aspects for both English and Turkish academic writing. For example, T.T1 mentioned that he has always been sensitive about Turkish writing rules and used the language properly:

“Türkçeyi çok severim yani. Türkçeyi güzel kullanmaya çalışırım. Bu şeyde falan da takıntılarım olur yani. İşte bazen yazıyorlar ya şunu ayrı mı yazacağız, bitişik mi yazacağız falan. O konulara baya hassas olmaya çalışıyorum.”

(Translation: “I really love Turkish, and I try to use it well. I even have certain obsessions about it. You know how people sometimes wonder whether to write something separately or together? I try to be quite meticulous about those things.”)

Moreover, he mentioned experiencing challenges in narrowing down the topic and deciding what to include or exclude in the academic writing process along with adapting to journal-specific writing standards and concise writing. These included aligning writing style and structure with the expectations of specific journals, particularly international ones:

“Biz biraz da kendi izlediğimiz yol ayrı, onu uygulamamız gerekiyor. Biraz da derginin beklediği yol, nasıl denir ona, anlayışa uygun hale de getirmemiz gerekiyor. Buralar da zorlaştırabiliyor süreci.”

(Translation: “We also must follow our own approach, but at the same time, we need to adapt it to align with the expectations and approach of the journal. These aspects can make the process more challenging.”)

He also indicated that he had weaknesses in terms of grammar, and he was aware of them:

“Gramer açısından da fena değil. Eksik olduğum yerler olmuştur.”

(Translation: “In terms of Grammar, it’s not too bad either. There have been areas I have weaknesses.”)

T.T1 preferred academic writing in Turkish, but he translated his work to English to get it published in high-impact journals. While T.T1 experienced certain challenges in adapting studies to journal standards, T.T2 reported receiving much feedback on his Turkish academic writing and pieces of advice on taking Turkish academic writing courses from his supervisor, highlighting the gap between T.T2’s prior knowledge and the expectations of academic writing at his institution:

“Danışmanımın notlarını görünce farkediyordum orada. Yani bana çok fazla akademik yazma dersi almalısın. Ben hiçbir farketmiyorum. Ben çok güzel yazdığımı düşünüyorum işte. Ama danışmanımın yorumunu... Her ben düzeltme yaptığımda 100 tane düzeltme alıyorum.”

(Translation: “I realized it when I saw my supervisor's notes. They would tell me that I really needed to take more academic writing lessons. I didn't notice anything myself; I thought I was writing well. But every time I made corrections; I'd get 100 more corrections from my supervisor.”).

Having received extensive feedback on his academic writing indicates weaknesses in this matter. Another significant point T.T2 mentioned was procrastination which might be the result of unexpressed challenges and lack of proficiency in academic writing:

“Planlamada sorun yaşıyorum, taslak konuşturmada sorun yaşıyorum. Sorun yaşadığım kısım son kısım oturup yazma aşamasını kendim bir kesin saat tarih belirlemem lazım. Spesifik bir time belirlemediğim zaman sürekli erteliyorum akşam yaparım yarın sabah zihnim boş olacak daha iyi yaparım yarın sabah oluyor işte. kesinlikle şunu belirleyip ne olursa olsun yazacağım demem lazım yani zorluğu en son kısımda yaşıyorum.”

(Translation: “I don't have trouble with planning or drafting. The issue I face is in the final stage—sitting down to write. I need to set a specific time and date for myself. If I don't set a specific time, I keep postponing it, thinking, ‘I'll do it tonight,’ or ‘Tomorrow morning, my mind will be clearer, and I'll do it better.’ But tomorrow morning comes, and it's the same. I absolutely need to decide, ‘No matter what, I'm going to write at this time.’ So, the difficulty comes at the very last stage.”)

“Benim tezim de akademik erteleme ile ilgili. Ben bunu yoğun derecede yaşıyorum. Çok biliyorum. Arkasında yatan sebepleri biliyorum. Neden olduğunu biliyorum. Sonuçlarının ne olacağını biliyorum erteleme ama yapıyorum.”

(Translation: “My thesis is about academic procrastination, and I experience it intensely myself. I'm very familiar with it. I know the underlying reasons why it happens, and what the consequences will be. Yet, I still procrastinate”)

Furthermore, both participants reported employing the writing planning stages in their own contexts and T.T1 added that if he did not follow a systematic approach while writing, he would be lost in the writing process:

“Sistematik gitmeye çalışırım kaybolunuyor çünkü diğer türlü hani hangi değişkenlere nerede değinecektik işte nereye kadar bunu ele alacaktık falan gibi Böyle şey yapmam yani, kural budur, bunu yap gibisinden değil ama kendi zihnimdekini sistematik bir şekilde yazmaya çalışıyorum.”

(Translation: “I try to work systematically because otherwise, you get lost—like, which variables were we going to address and to what extent were we going to discuss this? I don't follow a rigid 'this is the rule, do this' approach, but I try to write down what's in my mind in a systematic way.”)

Despite their current writing planning practices, T.T2 mentioned that he was not aware of such planning strategies at the initial stages of his career and graduate studies and

complained that none of his instructors or fellow researchers informed him about the writing planning stages:

“Çünkü bilmiyordum. Yani hocalar sanırım herkesi bilerek geliyor sanıyor. Hocaların tecrübesi yüzünden herkesi çevresindeki gibi görüyor. Yeni gelen herkesi. O yüzden kaynaklanıyor bence. Ve öğretmiyorlar. Yani ben de bilmiyordum yakın zamana kadar. İşte taslak oluştur. Başlıkları oluştur ve sadece o başlıkların altını doldurmaya çalış.”

(Translation: “Because I didn’t know. I think the professors assume that everyone already knows what they’re doing. Due to their experience, they see everyone as being like the people in their circle, including newcomers. I think that’s where the issue stems from. And they don’t teach. I mean, I didn’t know either until recently. For example, create an outline, draft your headings, and just focus on filling in those headings.”)

The lack of knowledge led to the sense of being lost and challenges in the writing process, as he claims. Additionally, T.T2’s complaint about not being guided in terms of academic writing by his experienced instructors and fellow researchers might indicate a lack of communication, a cooperative environment, and institutional support in his academic context. However, he also noted that he learned to employ the writing stages in the process on his own with these words:

“Yazmaya başladım. Kayboldum zaten. Neredeyim ben? Nereye döneceğim? Yazdım yazdım sonra en son taslak oluşturdum. Sonra onların altını doldurmaya başladım. Biraz karmakarışık bir şey oldu. Yani çok öğrendim ama.”

(Translation: “I started writing and got lost right away. I was like, ‘Where am I? Where should I go back to?’ I wrote and wrote, then finally created an outline. After that, I started filling in the sections under it. It turned out to be a bit of a mess, but I learned a lot from the process.”)

Theme 2: Research-Related Challenges

Further analysis revealed that ECRs encountered diverse challenges about research aspects in their academic journeys which can be categorized into research scope and originality, academic writing, methodological, and academic convention difficulties. One of the significant challenges revealed was research scope and originality which refers to the challenges of determining and narrowing down broad research topics. T.T1 emphasized the vast amount of accessible literature and reported feelings of being uncertain about how to define the scope of the research. T.T1 stated this difficulty, stating:

“Yani çok geniş bir alan yazın. Önceden zor ulaşılan kaynaklar varken şimdi çok fazla kaynak var ama bu sefer nasıl sınırlandırmak gerekiyor? Yani bu kaynakları o açıdan biraz zorluk yaşanabiliyor.”

(Translation: “It’s a very broad body of literature. In the past, resources were hard to access, but now there are so many sources that the challenge becomes how to narrow them down. This abundance of resources can make it a bit difficult in that sense.”)

“Daha araştırma kapsamını belirlemek bile zor oluyor hani. Konu başlığını belirlemek hani. Herkes hemen hemen yaşıyordur hani bunu. Çok genel başlıklar ele alınıyor.”

(Translation: “Even defining the scope of the research becomes difficult, like determining the topic itself. I think almost everyone experiences this to some extent. Very broad topics are often chosen.”)

The challenge of defining the research scope extended to identifying gaps in the literature as T.T1 reported:

“En en zor kısım bence orası oldu yani konuyu belirleyip sınırlandırmak ve o alan yazındaki o boşluğu görmek zor oluyor ilk yayınlarda orada çok zorlanmıştım orada tabi danışmanlık faaliyetleri devreye girdi danışman hocalarımızla beraber daha çok sınırlandırdık.”

(Translation: “I think the hardest part was determining and narrowing down the topic, as well as identifying the gap in the literature. In my first publications, I struggled a lot with that. That’s when advisory support came into play. Together with my advisors, we managed to narrow it down further.”)

In addition to these challenges, T.T1 noted that establishing the originality of the research and distinguishing it from the existing literature presented him challenges in the research processes, stating:

“İu işte onun özgünlüğünü ortaya koymak hani alan yazındaki diğer çalışmalardan farkını ortaya koymak işte ilk etapta zor olabiliyor.”

(Translation: “Umm, showcasing its originality and highlighting how it differs from other studies in the literature can be challenging at the initial stages.”)

While T.T1 reported experiencing challenges in research scope, identifying gaps in the literature, establishing originality of the research, T.T2 did not mention experiencing such challenges in research processes.

In Theme 2, the academic writing language preferences and their challenges were explained in detail. However, academic writing was identified as a significant challenge in Theme 3 as well, since the two concepts are interrelated. As reported in Theme 2, both participants remarked using and experiencing challenges in Turkish academic writing. However, they

also preferred publishing academic studies in English. For this purpose, the participants utilized translation tools instead of directly writing in English due to their low self-confidence and low level of proficiency. While T.T1 experienced challenges in concise writing, T.T2 expressed his lack of self-confidence about the quality of his writing noting his experiences with the received frequent feedback from their supervisor with the following words:

“Tez yazarken baya kötüydüm... hocam bana ünlemler soru işaretleri ve sürekli şey yani bunu sen mi yazdın buraları niye değiştirdin?”

(Translation: “I was bad at writing my thesis... My supervisor kept leaving exclamation points and question marks, constantly asking things like, 'Did you write this? Why did you change these parts?’”)

He indicated not noticing the flaws in his writing until his supervisor provided feedback:

“Ben hiçbir farketmiyorum. Ben çok güzel yazdığımı düşünüyorum işte. Ama danışmanımın yorumunu... Her ben düzeltme yaptığımda 100 tane düzeltme alıyorum.”

(Translation: “I didn’t notice anything myself; I thought I was writing well. But every time I made corrections; I’d get 100 more corrections from my supervisor”).

As for the scope of the feedback provided by the supervisor, T.T2 mentioned receiving feedback on interpretation of graphs, linking of sentences, and writing in a daily language, etc., stating:

“Yani grafiklerin yorumlanması, cümlelerin birbirine bağlanması, cümlelerin bitirilişi. Ben sanırım günlük dilde yazıyordum.... Yani bir de 3. bilinmeyen şahısla ilgili değil de kendim biz böyle yaptık gibi yazıyordum sanırım şu an hatırlamıyorum ama çok fazla şey vardı.”

(Translation: That is, interpreting the graphs, connecting the sentences to each other, completing the sentences. I think I was writing in a more conversational tone... And I think, instead of writing with a third unknown person, I was writing more like 'we did this.' I don’t remember exactly now, but there were quite a lot of things.”)

Furthermore, T.T2 described challenges to synthesize ideas, ensuring a logical flow in discussing other studies, and establishing a coherence between different concepts with these following words:

“Kavramların tanımlanması, farklı yerlerden bunların bir araya getirilmesi sonra o farklı mesela akademik erteleme ile öğrencinin akademik başarısı bunların iki farklı kavram fakat yazarken bunların birbiriyle arasında ilişkisi yani bir ahenk içinde dans etmesi lazım ama benimkiler öyle olmuyordu.”

(Translation: “The definition of concepts, bringing them together from different sources, for example, academic procrastination and a student's academic success—these are two different concepts, but when writing, there needs to be a relationship between them, like they are dancing in harmony. But mine weren't like that.”)

Further analysis revealed several challenging methodological and procedural aspects identified by ECRs which involved literature review, ethical approval, data collection and analysis procedures, reporting and discussion of results, inconsistency of Turkish methodological terms, and referencing. Participants highlighted significant methodological and procedural challenges in research. One participant, T.T1, reported that reviewing the literature and being able to identify gaps were the most challenging aspects due to the vast number of studies causing a sense of being lost:

“En çok alan yazını taramada zorlanıyordum yani kayboluyordum...konuyu belirleyip sınırlandırmak ve o alan yazındaki o boşluğu görmek zor oluyor”
(Translation: “I struggled the most with the literature review; I mean, I was getting lost in it...It's difficult to identify and narrow down the topic and to spot that gap in the literature.”)

Yet, he was able to overcome this challenge through thesis supervisor's guidance:

“...orada tabi danışmanlık faaliyetleri devreye girdi danışman hocalarımızla beraber daha çok sınırlandırdık.”
(Translation: “That's where the supervisory process came into play; we narrowed it down further together with our academic supervisors.”)

Additionally, extended waiting periods for ethical approvals contributed to T.T2's frustration, creating procedural delays in the research process even though T.T1 did not mention such challenge. T.T2 described his experience with prolonged ethical approvals, noting:

“Yani beni çok beklettiler. 6 ay bir üniversite bekletti, 6 ay diğeri bekletti. Yani böyle size yani birini bulup yapmanız lazım ve ben illallah etmişim oradan.”
(Translation: “I mean, they made me wait a lot. One university kept me waiting for 6 months, and another one for another 6 months. So, you really need to find someone and get it done, and I was completely fed up with that”).

These ethical approval delays not only hindered the research progress but also affected his motivation and approach to data collection to avoid ethical committee:

“...o yüzden biraz da şeye kaymaya başladım. Yani beni belki de yönlendirdi. Dijital verilerle analiz yapıp makale yazmak. Hem günümüzün konusu hem daha kolay hem daha anlamlı popüler yani böyle bir sürü sebep sayabilirim.”

(Translation: "...that's why I started leaning towards something else. I mean, it perhaps guided me to analyze digital data and write articles. It's both a current topic, easier, more meaningful, and popular—I could list many reasons like these.").

Concerning the data collection procedures, while T.T1 did not report any challenges, T.T2 emphasized the difficulty of participant finding, stating that many potential participants did not want to take part in his studies which created a feeling of frustration:

"Evet yani nefret ediyorum. Yani şu akademik yeni başlarken nefret etmeye başladım. Çünkü öğrenciler nazlı. Veri vermek istemiyorlar. Yani çok önemli bir şey değil. Ama onlar kendilerine inandırmışlar. Zamanları önemli ama 5 dakika Ne yapabilirsin bu 5 dakikada? Bazı öğrencilerine veri toplamak bana işkence gibi geldi."

(Translation: "Yes, I mean, I hate it. I started to hate it when I was just starting in academia. Students are so reluctant. They don't want to provide data. It's not even something very significant, but they've convinced themselves it is. Their time is important, but what can you really do in 5 minutes? Collecting data from some students felt like torture to me.")

"Ama öğrencilerle görüşme aşaması en zordu. Şunları soracağım. 10 dakika sürecek. Ama kimse yanaşmıyordu o şeylere. Beni çok zorladı."

(Translation: "But the interview stage with the students was the hardest. I'd say, 'I'll ask these questions, it'll take 10 minutes,' but no one was willing to participate in those things. It was really challenging for me.")

Analyzing qualitative data was particularly challenging, with one participant, T.T1, expressing concerns about the accuracy of their coding and theme identification:

"Analiz ettim ama doğru mu? işte kodlamayı doğru yaptım mı? temalaştırabildim mi? falan daha iyi yapılabilir mi? hani her zaman daha iyisi yapılabiliyor çünkü hani nitel veri analizinde öyle zorluklar."

(Translation: "I analyzed it, but was it correct? Did I code it correctly? Was I able to create themes? Could it be done better? You know, there's always room for improvement because that's the kind of challenges qualitative data analysis has.")

While reporting and discussing the results of the study, the participants reported encountering certain challenges regarding clear and concise writing, which is interconnected with academic writing challenges, along with finding resources to discuss the results and coherently discussing them. Specifically, T.T1 found it particularly challenging to report the results concisely to prevent writing lengthy texts and struggling with shortening without losing any meaning with the following words:

“Raporlaştırmada da bizim en çok zorlandığımız konu çok uzun yazıyoruz biz genelde çok uzun oluyor kısaltmak zor geliyor sonrasında bize...Sonra onu kısaltmak, kısaltırken anlamı kaybetmemesi gerekiyor.”

(Translation: “In reporting, the most challenging part for us is that we tend to write very long texts, and shortening them becomes difficult for us afterwards... Then, shortening it without losing its meaning is the real challenge.”)

Beyond the reporting challenges, T.T2 noted having difficulty finding resources to discuss: *“çünkü kaynakları bulamıyorum yani istediğim cümleler o kaynaklarda yok belki de tamamlayamadım ben var ama bulup da onu oraya koyamadım.”* (Translation: *“Because I can’t find the sources. I mean, the sentences I want might not be in those sources, or maybe I couldn’t find them. They exist, but I couldn’t find them to put them in the discussion section.”*) and writing a coherent discussion section. Moreover, T.T2 attributed these challenges to his lack of experience in research, stating:

“Literatür kısmında yoktu fakat tartışmada çok sorun vardı. Yani baya sorun vardı. Ama kötü de yazdım bence. Çünkü ben çalışmaları okuyunca çok güzel birbirlerine bağlıyorlar. Yani o bence de biraz tecrübeyle alakalı.”

(Translation: “There weren’t any issues in the literature section, but there were a lot of problems in the discussion part. I mean, quite a lot. And I think I wrote it poorly. Because when I read other studies, they connect everything so well. I think that’s somewhat related to experience.”)

A significant challenge T.T1 reported encountering was the inconsistencies in Turkish research methodology terminology. T.T1 noted that methodological concepts are clearer and more standardized in English, while Turkish translations often vary and carry different meanings. This inconsistency leads to confusion in trying to align the concepts between the two languages. The participant provided the example of ‘case study’, which is translated as ‘durum çalışması’ in Turkish but is also referred to as ‘örnek olay tarama’ in some contexts, stating:

“Türkiye’de yöntem kavramlarda da çok ortaklık yok yani. İngilizcede daha net mesela. İngilizcede daha belirgin kavramlar. Ama Türkçe’ye çevrilirken hem farklı şekilde çevrilebiliyor hem de farklı anlam yüklenebiliyor. Mesela durum çalışması diyelim. Case study’dir mesela diyelim. Case study, durum çalışması. Ama örnek olay tarama diye bir çeviri de var mesela... Case diyorsun tarama değil. Bu sefer kafa karışabiliyor mesela. Orada öyle bir durum ortaya çıkıyor.”

(Translation: “When it comes to methodology, in Türkiye, there isn’t much consistency in the concepts. In English, it’s clearer, for example. The concepts in English are more distinct. But when they are translated into Turkish, they can be translated in different ways and carry different

meanings. For instance, let's take the 'case study.' In English, it's 'case study,' but in Turkish, it can be translated as 'durum çalışması.' However, there's also another translation like 'örnek olay tarama,' ... which still refers to 'case.' But you think, 'case isn't tarama (survey).' So, it creates confusion. That's the kind of issue that arises there."

As for citing the sources, T.T1 indicated that it was a challenge on its own. However, he specifically mentioned his struggles in adapting one style of referencing to another according to an academic journal's standards with the following words:

"Kaynak gösterimi ayrıca bir zorluk yani. O aşamada düşündüğünde orada apa 6'ya göre yapıyorsun. Başka bir dergiye gönderiyorsun. Başka bir şey istiyor mesela senden bu sefer. Üniversitenin de yazım kuralı farklı. Tüm kaynakçayı değiştirmek gerekiyor...Özetle böyle söyleyebilirim."

(Translation: "Referencing is another challenge. At that stage, you format it according to APA 6, for instance. Then you submit it to another journal, and they want something different from you. The university's writing guidelines are also different. You end up having to change the entire bibliography...In summary, that's how I would explain it.")

Further analysis revealed certain challenges in the aspect of attendance at academic events as well. These challenges might be categorized into presentation time limitations, fear of academic judgment and negative criticism, and public speaking anxiety. For example, T.T1 expressed his thoughts on the presentation time limitations with the following words:

"Bir bildiri sunmak da ayrıca bir deneyimdi yani ilk kez bir bildiri sunmuştuk mesela orada ne kadar sınırlandırmak gerekiyor hani 10 dakika diyorlar mesela işte yazmışsınız 20 sayfa bir şey yani 10 dakikada nasıl anlatılabilecek falan hani paylaşılabilecek gibi zorluklar yaşıyorduk."

(Translation: "Presenting a paper was also quite an experience. For instance, it was the first time we presented a paper, and there were challenges like figuring out how much to condense it. They said for 10 minutes, but we had written a 20-page document. How can that be explained or shared in just 10 minutes? Those were the kinds of difficulties we faced.")

Moreover, T.T1 reported experiencing fear of academic judgment and negative criticism, emphasizing that the questions asked, or the evaluations made in such academic events were not development-oriented but negative-criticism-oriented which resulted in his anxiety about paper presentations: *"orada sorulan sorular ya da yapılan değerlendirmeler çok fazla geliştirme odaklı değil de eleştiri odaklı yani olumsuz eleştirmek odaklı geliyor."* *(Translation: "The questions asked, or the evaluations made there seem to be more criticism-oriented rather than focused on development—more about negative criticism.")*

"Mesela böyle olduğunda kaygılandırabiliyor yani kişileri. Ben kendim bizzat bir sıkıntı yaşamadım ama kendi bulunduğum bazı oturumlarda gerçekten"

çok farklı boyutlara çekmeye çalışan akademik, nasıl diyelim, belki bir yarış, belki bir çatışmanın yansımalarını gördüğünüzde Beni zorlayabiliyor yani.”

(Translation: “For example, when it’s like that, it can cause anxiety for people. I personally didn’t have any issues, but in some sessions, I attended, seeing the reflections of what you might call an academic competition or perhaps a conflict, where people try to take things in very different directions, could be challenging for me.”)

While T.T1 noted experiencing challenges regarding the criticisms in paper presentations, T.T2 reported experiencing public speaking anxiety and fear of making mistakes in front of people which might be attributed to the lack of knowledge and experience in paper presentations. He specifically shared his fear of not being able to answer the questions asked in these academic events, also highlighting that he was aware of his exaggerated negative thoughts:

“Şundan soru soracaklar. Ben bilemeyeceğim işte. Hep böyle olumsuz şeyleri çok büyütüyordum. O yüzden o da korkuya dönüşüp daha çok hata yapmama sebep oluyordu.”

(Translation: “They’re going to ask about this, and I won’t know the answer. I would always blow these negative thoughts out of proportion. That’s why it would turn into fear and cause me to make even more mistakes.”)

Although T.T2 experienced these public speaking challenges, the realization that these fears were often unfounded suggests a shift in his perception over time:

“Ama ben sunumdan önce ya da daha öncesinde korkuyordum işte ya yanlış yaptıysam ya da anlatamazsam. Onlar çok büyük bir soru sorup işte beni ters köşe yaparlarsa ne olacak gibi düşünüyordum. Ama öyle olmuyormuş.”

(Translation: “But before the presentation, or even earlier, I was afraid—what if I did something wrong, or what if I couldn’t explain it? I kept thinking, what if they ask a tough question and catch me off guard? But it turns out, it wasn’t like that.”)

To overcome these challenges, ECRs adopted a range of strategies. For instance, T.T1 implemented a systematic framework to refine research topics and conduct literature reviews, explaining, “Konuyu belirleme, sorunu sınırlama, kaynakları tarama, sayıtları belirleme... bunların hepsinin ilk iki harfini kodlamıştım.” (Translation: “Defining the topic, narrowing down the problem, reviewing the literature, identifying assumptions... I had coded all of these using their first two letters.”). Preparation strategies for presentations included repetitive reading and articulation exercises, as T.T2 explained: “Sunumu sürekli okudum... kelimeler aklımda kalsın diye.” (Translation: “I kept reading the presentation over and over... so the words would stick in my mind.”) Finally, procedural challenges in

data collection led T.T2 to explore alternative methods, such as digital data collection, which they found more efficient and aligned with current academic trends: “*Dijital verilerle analiz yapıp makale yazmak... hem günümüzün konusu hem daha kolay.*” (Translation: “Analyzing digital data and writing articles... it's both a contemporary topic and easier.”) These findings highlight the complex and interconnected nature of challenges faced by TMI background ECRs and underscore the adaptive strategies they employ to navigate these difficulties.

Theme 3: Institutional and Professional Challenges

The analysis revealed that ECRs from TMI backgrounds encountered institutional and professional challenges which can be categorized into scarcity of high-quality Turkish-language academic journals, and the transition between different academic cultures. Participants identified the limited availability of high-quality Turkish-language academic journals as a significant challenge. One participant (T.T1) emphasized a preference for publishing in Turkish but noted the scarcity of high-quality options, stating:

“Ama Türkçe yazıp yayınlayacağımız dergiler sınırlı olduğu için. Bir de dergilerin bizim için biliyorsunuz hani indeksleri de önemli oluyor, nitelikleri önemli oluyor.”

(Translation: “But since the journals we can publish in Turkish are limited, and as you know, the indexes of the journals are important for us, as well as their quality.”)

This limitation often forces researchers to publish in English to meet academic standards and indexing criteria. Another participant linked the slow growth of Turkish academic publishing to the lack of high-impact Turkish journals and the dominance of English in global academia, commenting, and T.T2 added these words:

“Yani şöyle iyi bir dergi yok bir kere Türkçe. En büyük sebeplerden biri Türkçe neden yayın artmıyor? Önce iyi bir dergi yok. Kimse Türkçe yazmıyor zaten.”

(Translation: “Why is Turkish publishing not increasing? First, there are no quality journals... the global literature is driven by English.”)

These insights highlight how structural barriers in Turkish academic publishing push researchers toward high-impact English-language journals, despite their preference for writing in Turkish.

The transition between undergraduate and graduate studies presented certain challenges for participants, particularly in adapting to differing academic cultures and expectations as reflected in their experiences. There is a prominent discrepancy between both universities and education levels. Participants reported a notable increase in academic rigour and workload from undergraduate to graduate education such as in-depth research, presentations, and process-based assessments. As for undergraduate education, participants noted that the student's competency in a subject might be assessed through midterm and final exams, T.T2 stating:

“Yani lisans da yüksek lisans biraz farklı olduğu için...Ama X üniversitesinde vize ve final vardı. Yani onları yapabiliyorsan ya da o zaman geçebilme şansın varsa O derste yetkin oluyordun ama burada öyle bir şansın yok.”

(Translation: “I mean, undergraduate and graduate studies are a bit different... But at X University, there were midterms and finals. If you could handle those or had a chance to pass at the time, you would be considered competent on that course. But here, you don't have that kind of opportunity.”)

T.T1 added the following words, expressing the adaptation process to a new academic culture and emphasizing that undergraduate education could be completed in one way or another, but graduate education was process-based and high in demands:

“İlk etapta o kültüre alışmak da zor oluyor. Daha önce dediğim gibi lisansta bir şekilde geçebiliyor ama yüksek lisansta her hafta, her hafta...”

(Translation: “At first, adapting to that culture is also difficult. As I mentioned before, in undergraduate studies, you can somehow get through, but in a master's program, it's every week, every week...”)

However, it is worth remembering that this may vary between institutions. Moreover, T.T1 emphasized the challenge of connecting theoretical content with practical application, adding that the lack of prior exposure to practical aspects of research made the transition more challenging: *“Uygulamayla da bir bağlantısı olması gerekiyor hani o uygulamayı görmemiş olmak beni yüksek lisansta biraz zorladı.”* *(Translation: “It also needs to have a connection to practice, and not having seen that practical aspect made things a bit challenging for me during my master's studies.”)* Reflecting on the graduate-level coursework, with participants required to prepare and present research-intensive topics weekly, T.T1 shared his experience with the following words:

“Dönemde yedi kere sunum yaptım mesela. Her biri de ayrı bir araştırma gerektiriyordu.”

(Translation: “During the semester, I gave seven presentations, for example. Each one required separate research.”)

These experiences of T.T1 illustrate the steep curve of transitioning to a more demanding academic environment that requires deeper engagement and sustained effort.

Another significant point to consider is the Turkish higher education system. Even though there is a curriculum, each university has autonomy, allowing them to adapt the programs to their specific context. This flexibility leads to variations in the quality and scope of education provided across universities. T.T2 expressed this variation with an example from his experience:

“Lisansta bir iki tane hocam dışında yetkin hocaların sayısı azdı. Yüksek lisansta X üniversitesi eğitim gerçekten iyi.”

(Translation: “In undergraduate studies, apart from one or two professors, the number of competent instructors was quite low. In the master's program at X University, the education is good.”)

While research courses are included in undergraduate programs within education faculties, the content and depth of these courses can differ significantly. For example, although T.T1 noted that his undergraduate university was a research-oriented one, stating:

“X Üniversitesi lisans eğitiminde dahi olsa biraz daha araştırma yönelik bir üniversite. Mesela meslek sınıf öğretmenliği, evet mesleğe hazırlıyor ama mesleğin yanında, ötesinde diyelim, araştırmaya odaklanıyor. Araştırmaya daha fazla önem veriyor.”

(Translation: “Even at the undergraduate level, X University is somewhat more research oriented. For example, the primary education teaching program prepares students for the profession, yes, yet beyond that, let’s say, it focuses on research. It places greater emphasis on research.”)

He indicated that the first time he engaged in research was the master’s level with the following words:

“İlk defa yüksek lisansta yapıyorsun. Her biri büyük konular. Onları araştırıp sunuyorsun falan. Onlar biraz zorlamıştı.”

(Translation: “You’re doing it for the first time in a master’s program. Each one is a major topic. You research them, present them, and so on. Those were a bit challenging.”)

Given these results, the transition challenges experienced by ECRs with TMI background might be attributed to the discrepancy between the level of focus on research at undergraduate and graduate education.

Table 15

Applied Strategies and Utilized Research Tools of TMI Background ECRs

Area of Use	Tools & Strategies
Language	Dictionaries Translating Tools and Resources Media Consumption Practicing Speaking Clarification Request
Research	Writing Process Management Strategies Note-taking Systems Analysis Tools Reference Management Tools Conference Networking Tongue Twisters (to avoid stuttering) Re-reading Presentation

Based on the analysis results, both participants utilize several strategies to overcome the language-related and research-related challenges as shown in Table 15. Regarding the language-related challenges, the participants mainly depend on digital translation tools, AI, and dictionaries. These tools involve Google Translate, DeepL, Tureng, and Longman Dictionary. One of the participants aimed to enhance his language skills by exposing himself to English language through watching/listening to English content with Turkish subtitles.

“Şimdi şöyle ben kendimi sınıflandırarak da anlatabilirim. Belki hani dil açısından düşündüğümüzde Translate, Deepel'i kullanıyorum ama bazen eş anlamlı kelimeler falan da aradığımızda Tureng'i de kullanıyoruz mesela.”(T.T1)

(Translation: “Well, I can explain this by categorizing myself. When it comes to language tools, for example, I use Translate and DeepL, but sometimes, when looking for synonyms or similar words, I also use Tureng.”)

“Böyle şey oluyordu tamamen lisans eğitiminden bağımsız kendim bazen dizi film izlerken işte İngilizce ya İngilizce açıp altı yazı Türkçe izliyordum.” (T.T1)

(Translation: “Sometimes, completely unrelated to my undergraduate education, I would watch shows or movies in English with Turkish subtitles on my own.”)

In terms of research-related applied strategies, T.T2 sought to manage his academic writing process through visual reminders and setting strict deadlines to overcome his procrastination challenges, utilizing digital note-taking tools such as Google Keep, Apple Notes, and Microsoft Word:

“Her yere yazmaya başlıyorum. Bu sefer beyaz tahtama yazıyorum. İşte önüme not alıyorum. Alarm kuruyorum.”

(Translation: “I start writing everywhere—on my whiteboard, taking notes in front of me, and even setting alarms.”)

“Şu an için Keep kullanıyorum, Google’ın. Keep sanırım. Apple’ın notes’u var. Fixable gibi bir şey olması lazım. Freeform var.”

(Translation: “Right now, I’m using Google Keep—I think it’s called Keep. Apple has Notes, and there’s something like Fixable. There’s also Freeform”)

On the other hand, T.T1 utilized research tools for data analysis such as MaxQDA and SPSS. Although he utilized reference management tools like Mendeley before, he reported preferring manual referencing strategies currently.

“Sonra analiz açısından baktığımızda, nitel verilerde ben MaxQDA’yı kullanıyorum. Nicel verilerin analizinde SPSS hala devam ediyorum.”

(Translation: “When it comes to analysis, for qualitative data, I use MaxQDA. For quantitative data analysis, I still rely on SPSS.”)

“Bir dönem referans yönetimi için Mendeleyi kullandım. Son zamanlarda çok kullanmıyorum.”

(Translation: “I used Mendeley for reference management for a while, but I haven’t been using it much recently.”)

Additionally, T.T1 and T.T2 participated in academic conferences not only to present their paper but also to build professional networks and learn from more experienced researchers, stating: *“En büyük katkısı da belki o ağını genişletmek olabilir.”* (Translation: “Perhaps its biggest contribution could be expanding your network.”) and adding: *“Aklında olan soruları sorabiliyorsun.”* (Translation: “You can ask the questions that are on your mind.”) Particularly, T.T2 noted re-reading his presentation content and utilizing tongue twisters to overcome stuttering during the presentations:

“Sunumu sürekli okudum yani hiçbir anlamı yok yani ezberlemek için okumadım sadece kelimeler aklımda kalsın diye okudum.”

(Translation: “I kept reading the presentation repeatedly—not to memorize it, but just to make the words stick in my mind.”)

These applied strategies illustrate ECRs’ personalized overcoming strategies for academic challenges.

“Onun kendi akademik serüveninde nasıl yol izlediğini görebiliyorsun. Yani yazılı olmayan birçok şey kongrelerde bence öğreniliyor, farkediliyor. Hani doğrudan deneyimleniyor.”

(Translation: “You can see how someone has navigated their own academic journey. I think a lot of unwritten things are learned and noticed at conferences—they are directly experienced.”)

“Bunun dışında yeni yöntemler öğreniyorsunuz. Mesela yeni yöntemler, teknikler. Uluslararası katılımcılar geliyorlar yeni paylaşımlarda.”

(Translation: “Apart from this, you learn new methods, for example, new techniques and approaches. International participants attend and share fresh insights”)

“Çünkü ileride de yine katılacağız. Yani hatta birlikte çalışma da yapabiliriz. Yani o yüzden benim kafamda işte onlarla tanışıp hangi alanlarda da... Yani ben onların alanlarını biliyorum ama ben neler yapabilirim onlara aktarabilirim. Onların projeleri ya da makaleleri varsa kafasında onlara katılabilirim gibi onlarla iletişim kuruyordum biraz daha.”

(Translation: “Because we’ll participate again in the future. In fact, we could even collaborate. So, in my mind, it’s about meeting them and figuring out in which areas... I know their fields, but I was thinking about what I could contribute to them. If they have projects or articles in mind, I could join them. I was trying to communicate with them a bit more in that way.”)

5.1.4 Language Preferences and Underlying Reasons

Language Preferences and Underlying Reasons

Answering the third and last research question, the language preferences and their underlying reasons of ECRs with diverse MOI backgrounds were presented in this section. For a visual understanding, the language preferences and the underlying reasons were tabulated with brief explanations and according to each participant group separately.

EMI Background ECRs’ Language Preferences and The Underlying Reasons

One of the three participant groups in this study included ECRs with EMI backgrounds in higher education consisting of both undergraduate and graduate education. The participants with EMI backgrounds in undergraduate and graduate education included two participants named E.E1 and E.E2. For better insight, the overview of the participants section provides additional information on their educational backgrounds. To understand their language preferences in academic settings, several questions were asked regarding academic reading, conferences and presentations, research writing and publication, and note-taking.

According to the data analysis EMI background ECRs preferred English in all areas of research reading, conducting, writing, publishing, and presenting apart from notetaking. The participants explained that their note-taking language preferences vary according to the output language of the research. When asked about their thoughts about writing and publishing in their native language, both participants emphasized that they would eventually consider writing and publishing in Turkish emphasizing that they would use primarily ERPP. These preferences might be attributed to their MOI background. As for the underlying reasons to these preferences, E.E1 and E.E2 preferred English language in academic reading due to their EMI background, highlighting that they mastered her field and research knowledge in English. Additionally, E.E2 emphasized her higher trust in international academic literature. Although both E.E1 and E.E2 preferred English language in conferences and presentations, they offered different reasons for these preferences. While E.E1 preferred English language in conferences due to her MOI background again, E.E2 noted that she trusted more in the international academia and its content. As drawn from the data analysis, E.E2's more trust in the international academia might derive from the Turkish higher education council's academic degree promotion criteria and Turkish academics' publishing low quality academic work solely to meet the standards and be promoted. In terms of research writing and publication, the participants preferred English language for visibility in global academic literature. See Table 16

Table 16

Language Preference Areas of EMI background ECRs

MOI	Participant	Preference Area	Language	Reason
EMI	E.E1	Academic Reading	English	MOI Background
		Conference and Presentation	English	MOI Background
		Research Writing and Publication	English	Global Visibility
		Note-Taking	Mostly English	Output Language of Research
	E.E2	Academic Reading	English	MOI Background Credibility of International Academic Literature
		Conference and Presentation	English	Credibility of English Content
		Research Writing and Publication	English	Global Visibility
		Note-Taking	Mostly English	Output Language of Research

TMI Background ECRs' Language Preferences and The Underlying Reasons

Another participant group in this study included ECRs with TMI backgrounds who received their both undergraduate and graduate education in Turkish. The participants with TMI backgrounds in undergraduate and graduate education included two participants named T.T1 and T.T2. To gain a deeper understanding of the participants, the overview of the participants section provides additional information on their educational backgrounds. To understand their language preferences in academic settings, several questions were asked regarding academic reading, conferences and presentations, research writing and publication, and note-taking.

The data analysis revealed that TMI background ECRs had diverse language preferences in different aspects of research. For instance, T.T1 noted preferring Turkish in academic reading, presenting papers, research writing, and note-taking. While he mentioned these preferences, he specifically added that he had a desire to make presentations in English at times just to have an experience and for professional development purposes. In addition to this, he preferred English language as a listener at the academic conventions to enhance his English listening skills through exposure. Additionally, he preferred publishing in English through extra translation services although he preferred writing research in Turkish which might be attributed to his lack of English proficiency. The underlying reasons for his preference to publish in English is the visibility in global academic literature similar to EMI background ECRs' preferences, along with the scarcity of high-quality academic journals in the Turkish context. As for T.T2, he reported preferring English in academic reading, conferences, research writing, and publication. He preferred English language in academic reading stating the reasons such as a broader perspective on academic literature, higher-quality and richer content, and the English dominance in academia. To elaborate on English dominance in academia, he stated that the well-established and fundamental academic studies in his field were primarily international, remarking that he was compelled to resort to international academic literature. Moreover, he preferred English language for research writing and publication, academic conferences both as a listener and a speaker, since he had a future ideal of going abroad for academic career and professional development. Other reasons for English preference to research writing and publishing were to meet the academic degree promotion standards, scarcity of high-quality academic journals in Turkish context which was in line with T.T1's reason, and the English dominance in Academia. Lastly, he

utilized a mixture of Turkish and English while taking notes from his readings. Yet the language varies according to the output language of the research. See Table 17.

Table 17

Language Preference Areas of TMI background ECRs

MOI	Participant	Preference Area	Language	Reason
TMI	T.T1	Academic Reading	Turkish	Low English Proficiency
		Conference Language (as a listener)	English	Enhancing English Proficiency
		Presentation	Turkish	Low English Proficiency
		Research Writing	Turkish	Low English Proficiency
		Publication	English	Global Visibility Scarcity of High-Quality Turkish Academic Journals
		Note-Taking	Turkish	Low English Proficiency
	T.T2	Academic Reading	English	Broader Perspective High-quality and rich content English Dominance in Academia
		Conference and Presentation	English	Professional and Self-Development Future Academic Ideals Abroad
		Research Writing and Publication	English	Academic Degree Promotion Scarcity of high-impact Turkish Academic Journals
		Note-Taking	Mixture	English Dominance in Academia Output Language of Research

EMI-TMI Background ECRs' Language Preferences and The Underlying Reasons

The last participant group of this study consisted of ECRs who had varying MOI backgrounds across undergraduate and graduate education, particularly those who received EMI undergraduate education shifting to TMI graduate education during their academic journey. The participants with varying MOI backgrounds, EMI undergraduate to TMI graduate education, included two participants pseudo named E.T1 and E.T2. The detailed backgrounds of the participants were provided in the section for an overview of the participants for deeper insights into each participant. To gain insights on their language preferences in academic settings, several questions were asked regarding academic reading, conferences and presentations, research writing and publication, and note-taking.

Further analysis on EMI-TMI background ECRs language preferences revealed that they tended to choose mostly English over Turkish in their research practices. To exemplify, E.T1 remarked preferring English in academic reading, attributing it to the limited Turkish

academic literature and the broader perspective, more rich content of international academic literature. Like E.T1, E.T2 mentioned that she believed that international academic literature was higher in quality and richness, and she had more trust in international academic literature. In terms of conference language preferences, while E.T2 noted that she preferred Turkish since she could express herself better in Turkish, E.T1 indicated preferring English. Beyond the preference of E.T1, there was a wish to leave the comfort zone and develop professionally in their academic journey even though he believed he would present way better in Turkish. Lastly, the participants with EMI-TMI backgrounds favored English in research writing and publication due to global visibility and academic degree promotion reasons. As for note-taking language preferences, they did not express a preference since one of them utilized highlighting instead of notetaking, and the other participant used copy-paste approach to go over them later. See Table 18.

Table 18

Language Preference Areas of EMI-TMI background ECRs

MOI	Participant	Preference Area	Language	Reason
EMI-TMI	E.T1	Academic Reading	English	Broader Perspective on International Academic Literature
		Conference and Presentation	English	Leaving the Comfort Zone Professional and Self-development
		Research Writing and Publication	English	Global Visibility Academic Degree Promotion
		Note-Taking	-	-
	E.T2	Academic Reading	English	Credibility in International Academic Literature High-quality and Rich Content
		Conference and Presentation	Turkish	Better Self-Expression
		Research Writing and Publication	English	Global Visibility Academic Degree Promotion
		Note-Taking	-	-

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter combines the results of the study considering the research questions and the existing literature, concluding summary, implications, and suggestions for future research.

6.1.1 Discussing Academic Skills-Related Results

The struggle to employ an academic tone reflects a difficulty that is present across all the participant groups, suggesting a problem that is outside the scope of language proficiency. The use of tools like academic phrase banks and AI indicates an effort to bridge this gap, providing insight into digital aids in academic skill development. Another prominent challenge that was identified among ECRs in terms of academic writing was vocabulary. Each group reported experiencing challenges with limited vocabulary knowledge. The participants tended to alleviate these vocabulary-related challenges using digital tools such as Thesaurus, Longman, Tureng, etc. Additionally, EMI and EMI-TMI researchers reported difficulties in the scope of writing alongside paraphrasing.

These challenges experienced by ECRs across different MOI backgrounds can be interpreted through Bourdieu's (1986) concept of capital and Hornberger's continua of biliteracy. As a form of embodied cultural capital, linguistic capital encompasses not only grammatical competence but also the ability to utilize appropriate language in specific contexts. The findings revealed that all groups experienced challenges in setting the academic tone and using appropriate vocabulary in writing regardless of MOI backgrounds, indicating a challenge in acquiring the linguistic capital necessary for academic success. The reported challenges in using appropriate vocabulary, paraphrasing, setting the academic tone could stem from limited vocabulary knowledge. To overcome these challenges, participants reported utilizing digital tools such as Thesaurus, dictionaries, AI, and translation tools. These tools represent what Bourdieu might call technological intermediaries, allowing ECRs to access linguistic resources. Through Hornberger's framework, vocabulary-related

difficulties can be interpreted in relation to media of biliteracy continuum. Considering the structural differences between Turkish and English, ECRs who transition between these languages might encounter difficulties in achieving academic biliteracy. For example, participants noted that translation as an overcoming strategy often failed to convey nuanced academic concepts, demonstrating the difficulties of navigating dissimilar linguistic structures. However, different strategies, such as more exposure to academic content in both languages align with Hornberger's (2004) idea that biliteracy develops most effectively when individuals interact with a wide range of linguistic experiences rather than being limited to the one end of the continuum.

Another academic writing challenge was found between the EMI-TMI and TMI groups in areas of grammar, coherence, and cohesion. Primarily, participants attributed their grammar challenges in academic writing to their prior ineffective grammar-focused learning experiences. As for coherence and cohesion in academic writing, the EMI-TMI and TMI background ECRs reported struggling to maintain a logical flow, synthesize data from different sources, and connect ideas. These challenges with grammar and coherence reflect the gaps in institutionalized linguistic capital. Participants' attribution of grammar difficulties to past educational experiences aligns with Bourdieu's argument that educational institutions play a critical role in validating forms of linguistic expression. However, the fact that TMI background ECRs struggled more with English grammar while EMI-TMI participants encountered difficulties in both languages illustrates how linguistic capital is context-specific and linked to educational backgrounds. From Hornberger's perspective, the writing challenges in coherence, cohesion, and logical flow refer to the reception-production continuum of development dimension. Many participants reported stronger receptive skills than productive skills in English academic language, aligning with Hornberger's argument that receptive and productive skills develop unevenly and do not follow a linear progression. The strategies utilized by the participants, such as extensive reading to improve writing coherence, represent movements along this continuum that promote more balanced biliteracy development.

Moreover, EMI and EMI-TMI ECRs reported challenges in accent intelligibility. When listening to strong accents and unfamiliar pronunciation, the participants experience comprehension issues. This may result because of the listener's perception of the speaker. Baese-Berk et al. (2020) point out that non-native speakers are less perceptive while listening

to non-native speakers. Hendriks et al. (2021) support this where non-native speakers are negatively evaluated by non-native listeners compared to native listeners. Furthermore, participants noted that listening and comprehension became much more difficult when the accent is unintelligible. These accent intelligibility challenges can be interpreted through Bourdieu's (1991) concept of symbolic power in language, where certain accents and speaking styles are privileged over others. The difficulties experienced regarding the non-native speakers' accents reflect the participants' internalized dispositions towards language shaped by their past experiences, that is, their linguistic habitus. On the other hand, Hornberger (2004) argues that richer and more diverse language experiences across the continua better support the biliteracy development.

The analysis revealed certain listening and reading challenges common in all groups regarding comprehension. Like writing, listening and reading comprehension challenges stemming from advanced language and vocabulary use are a common occurrence. In addition to the advanced language use, the participants reported that low proficiency also affects their ability to comprehend. In terms of reading skills, like writing and listening, limited vocabulary results in challenges along with overly complex or advanced academic language used in texts. It is reported that extended texts with advanced vocabulary are particularly challenging to comprehend.

These difficulties refer to the form of cultural capital, which Bourdieu (1986, p. 244) claims demands "*an investment, above all of time*" to acquire. Compared to ECRs with EMI backgrounds, TMI background ECRs' greater struggles with English reading and listening comprehension exemplify how cultural capital is shaped by educational backgrounds and time invested in biliteracy development. Hornberger's perspective, on the other hand, indicates that biliteracy develops across multiple skills simultaneously rather than in isolation. Moreover, the participants with EMI backgrounds reported aiming to overcome these comprehension challenges by exposing themselves to English content more often, demonstrating their efforts to proceed towards a more balanced biliteracy development.

In terms of academic reading, both vocabulary and conceptual knowledge is necessary, aligning with Bourdieu's (1986) concept of cultural capital. Regardless of educational backgrounds, participants reported experiencing reading comprehension difficulties which shows that past experiences (habitus) and other forms of capital do not always determine success in academia and literacy in multiple languages. On the other hand, Hornberger's

framework illustrates multiple continua considering the reported reading comprehension challenges. Hornberger (2004) argues that decontextualized academic texts pose certain challenges for biliteracy development, with contextualized ones generally being more straightforward to comprehend. This argument reflects the challenges experienced by the participants in comprehending the complex English concepts. However, many participants displayed a preference for academic reading in English instead of their native language despite potential language barriers and incomprehension. Additionally, participants attributed their preference for English in academic reading to its dominance in academia and their perception that international academic literature is more credible, richer and of higher quality. This preference of participants reflects Hornberger's (2004) minority-majority continuum within the content dimension, highlighting the higher perceived value of English academic materials due to its global dominance in academia. This power dynamic affects how ECRs engage with and value academic content across languages.

These issues in writing, listening, and reading, which are semi-related to language proficiency, can also be seen in the literature. In their study, Amano et al. (2023) reports that non-native researchers spend more time reading and are asked more frequently to revise their writing during the publication process. In addition, non-native researchers are more likely to ask for proofreading or 'favors' from their peers with higher language proficiency. Similarly, Hanauer et al. (2018) reported that ESL writers feel more burden and stress during writing, accompanied by higher perceived difficulty, dissatisfaction, and anxiety. Lastly, Ramírez-Castañeda (2020) reports that writing requires more time investment, writing discussions are more challenging, rejections or revisions are more frequent, and reading comprehension is at a disadvantage. The writing challenges are divided into two as surface or local level which involves vocabulary, grammar, and syntax issues; and discourse or global level which concerns the organization of the writing, conceptualization of ideas, and considering the reader needs (Huang, 2010). The findings of Huang's (2010) agree with the findings of the current study regarding the discourse-level challenges graduate students experience during academic writing. Additionally, similar challenges have been reported in grammar and vocabulary use which creates challenges for non-native English graduate students (Keck, 2014; Yahia and Egbert, 2023). Lastly, challenges related to establishing an academic tone have been identified in the literature (Hinkel, 2011). The results of the current study also revealed that ECRs reported using different strategies to manage the academic writing

difficulties such as extensive reading, planning writing, use of dictionaries, and digital tools which align with the existing literature (Lin and Morrison, 2021).

The challenges reported in the literature are consistent with Bourdieu's concept of linguistic capital inequality within academic fields. The findings that non-native English researchers spend more time on reading and writing, undergo revisions more often, and need additional support reflects the unequal distribution of linguistic capital. The inequality results in what Bourdieu (1991, p. 23) refers to as "symbolic violence" where non-native speakers experience structural disadvantages despite the appearance of equal academic publication opportunities. The psychological effects (anxiety, stress, and depression) of this symbolic violence are often reported in the literature (Aydin et al., 2023; Drosou et al., 2020).

Additionally, EMI-TMI and TMI researchers indicate that despite being more accustomed to Turkish in academic writing, they opt for publishing in English because of the opportunities for visibility it offers in the global context, despite their low proficiency and low self-confidence in English academic writing. This signals the domination of English in academic literature and its effects on researchers. Similarities can be seen in Ramírez-Castañeda's (2020) study, as despite the reading challenges, reading in English is more favoured and seen as an obligation by the researcher. Additionally, the literature reports that researchers depend on publishing in English because of the benefits despite their preferences (Bakla and Karakaş, 2022; Cui et al., 2023; Canli and Yağız, 2024).

All participants' preference for publishing in English despite experiencing language-related challenges can be interpreted through Bourdieu's concept of capital. Publishing in English is perceived as a means of acquiring symbolic and social capital in the academic field, which can be converted into economic capital through enhanced career prospects. Some participants' deliberate efforts to publish in English despite feeling more confident in their native language demonstrate a strategic decision to maximize returns on their academic investment. Bourdieu (1986) suggests that individuals make calculated choices regarding which forms of capital are most advantageous in particular fields. Bourdieu's suggestion is validated in the results of the current study as participants attributed their English-language publication preference to global visibility, more citations, and stronger career advancement opportunities. As for Hornberger's perspective, the tendency to publish in English despite possible language barriers demonstrates the content dimension's minority-majority continuum. English language takes up a dominant or majority status in global academic

discourse, even though it is not the native language for many researchers. This dominance results in increased pressure to publish in English, disregarding the personal linguistic preferences. This dynamic between research publication and English language supports Hornberger's (2004) assertion that power relations shape biliteracy practices, with agents (institutions and individuals) valuing English language over others. In response to these pressures, participants utilized adaptive strategies such as using translation tools, receiving translation services, and collaborating with colleagues who are more proficient in English.

Self-confidence further shapes how ECRs report their writing challenges. Across EMI and TMI backgrounds, participants reported anxiety about their proficiency, leading them to use digital tools like Google Translate, DeepL, and Grammarly. This effect on self-confidence can be seen in Amano et al.'s (2023) study where non-native researchers needed to ask more 'favors' for proofreading and faced increased costs of tools for proofreading. The reported low self-confidence of ECRs refer to Bourdieu's concept of habitus, which explains the internalized dispositions that influence how individual perceive themselves and their abilities. Bourdieu identifies anxiety about and low self-confidence in language proficiency as linguistic insecurity, deriving from their awareness of a gap between their current linguistic capital and the one that are institutionally valued. Their dependence on digital tools and peer support can be viewed as strategies to compensate for these perceived weaknesses. However, the fact that even participants who claimed to have strong academic language skills reported experiencing confidence issues emphasizes the lasting effects of habitus on self-perception, as Bourdieu (1984) notes, an effect that can remain even when circumstances improve. From another perspective, participants expressed higher confidence in receptive skills (reading and listening) compared to productive skills (writing and speaking) in their less dominant academic language, aligning with Hornberger's (2004) view that receptive and productive skills do not necessarily develop at the same level in biliteracy contexts. The strategies utilized by the participants, such as consistent practice, seeking feedback, and leaving the comfort zone, represent their conscious efforts to enhance their biliteracy skills both in receptive and productive domains.

Speaking anxiety is another common challenge across all groups, with participants struggling both in academic and social contexts. This anxiety often resulted from concerns about accuracy, pronunciation, self-expression, and speaking in public. Notably, EMI and EMI-TMI participants shared difficulties in fluency and clarity, suggesting that despite the

reliance on English, speaking is still an area of improvement. Both Ramírez-Castañeda (2020) and Amano et al. (2023) report supporting findings where non-native researchers experience more anxiety and stop attending in the case of mandatory English presentations. The speaking anxiety ECRs experienced aligns with Bourdieu's (1991) concept of internalization of linguistic norms and fear of violating these norms. Even ECRs with EMI backgrounds reported experiencing English-speaking anxiety in academic fields where language performance is linked to professional credibility, illustrating the deeply ingrained linguistic insecurity in their habitus. Thus, ECRs' fear of being judged by others reflects Bourdieu's idea that power structures naturally influence language use which is never neutral. ECRs reported utilizing extensive preparation and practising beforehand to overcome the public speaking anxiety in formal academic settings, such as academic conferences and presentations, which shows their efforts to adapt to the contextual demands and improve their biliteracy skills in academic settings.

6.1.2 Discussing Research-Related Results

In the analysis, several research-related challenges have been identified across the EMI, EMI-TMI, and TMI groups. These challenges were related to finding research gaps and originality, synthesis and discussion, literature review, and conference anxiety.

Participants reported difficulty narrowing down research topics, identifying research gaps, and developing original work. These challenges likely arose from their struggles with literature review, where ECRs had trouble finding relevant sources and felt overwhelmed by the volume of academic literature. Considering the literature, a certain pedagogy of journal club is suggested by Chen et al., (2016), Golde (2007), and Hemmings (2012), highlighting its importance on research confidence, community of practice, and critical thinking along with presentation and discussion skills. We can see similarities in literature as ECRs face significant challenges in conducting literature reviews, including developing practical review approaches, creating effective search strategies, finding relevant sources, and determining the appropriate scope for their reviews (Bussell, 2023; Chen et al., 2016; Daniel, 2022; Cennetkuşu, 2017; Walter and Stouck 2020). Graduate students particularly struggle with managing and interpreting large volumes of research data when conducting literature

reviews (Walter and Stouck, 2020). Additionally, some participants struggled to synthesize topics, analyze their data; report, and create coherent discussions of their findings, which are also present in the literature (Sala-Bubaré et al., 2021). Moreover, Choy and Lee (2012), Davis (2013), Keck, (2014), and Hyland, (2016) report issues in paraphrasing and source usage which are also present in this study.

These research-related challenges, including identifying research gaps, conducting literature reviews, managing large volumes of literature, and synthesizing findings for discussion, illustrate the shortcomings in institutionalized cultural capital since such research practices go beyond language proficiency and involve familiarity with discipline-specific research knowledge, key debates, and methodological approaches valued in the academic community. According to Bourdieu (1986), institutionalized cultural capital refers to the formal research training, academic qualifications, and degrees that grant legitimacy in academic fields. The fact that these challenges were prevalent across all groups indicates that undergraduate and/or graduate level research and academic training may be insufficient, regardless of MOI. However, embodied cultural capital develops through sustained experience and efforts rather than through formal instruction alone. Participants' challenges in critically engaging with the literature, structuring academic arguments, and formulating and identifying meaningful research questions reflects the complex and demanding nature of this form of cultural capital. Acquiring such capital necessitates active and continuous engagement in research practices. this process can also be supported through structured guidance and well-designed support systems. Applied strategies such as seeking mentorship and participating in peer support groups show their efforts to build and internalize the embodied form of cultural capital.

On the other hand, Hornberger's framework offers further insight into these challenges, highlighting the need to develop research literacy along with language literacy. Academic literature is often decontextualized, demanding readers to connect ideas from various sources and situating them in broader academic discussions. Participants' difficulties in synthesizing literature and identifying research gaps illustrate the challenges of navigating decontextualized content, which Hornberger (2004) notes is especially challenging in biliteracy contexts. To address these difficulties, some participants adopted a structured note-taking strategy to contextualize the material and make it easier to understand.

Academic events, especially conferences, caused anxiety among ECRs. They were particularly stressed about Q&A sessions, fearing they wouldn't be able to answer questions

properly due to low confidence in their speaking abilities or research knowledge. ECRs also worried about receiving negative criticism and judgment about their work during these events. As also reported by the literature, ECRs experience considerable anxiety about the publication process, manifesting as fear of rejection, lack of confidence in their work, and uncertainty about publication procedures Aydin et al., 2023; Cheung, 2010; Drosou et al., 2020; Hajizadeh, 2023; Kuzambayeva et al., 2022; Shamsi and Osam, 2022). This anxiety extends to what researchers describe as the challenge of breaking through the “glass wall” separating novice researchers from successful publications (Drosou et al., 2020, p. 346). The anxiety experienced by participants in relation to academic events and publications can be explained with Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic capital, which refers to the recognition and prestige gained through active engagement in academic discourse. Academic events and publications offer vital opportunities to acquire symbolic capital; therefore, making these opportunities high-pressure contexts for ECRs. Participants’ anxiety about Q&A sessions and receiving negative criticism signal the symbolic devaluations in Bourdieu’s terms. Symbolic devaluation refers to the fear of one’s academic credibility being undermined publicly. This anxiety was prominent among ECRs whose linguistic capital did not fully align with the dominant language of the academic environment, whether English at international conferences or Turkish in national contexts. However, the participants showed efforts to gain familiarity and confidence in different academic settings through extensive preparation and attending conferences as listeners.

EMI and EMI-TMI researchers shared a common challenge with research design. Both groups struggled to establish theoretical frameworks and develop research designs, suggesting a fundamental gap in research skills. However, the fact that EMI and EMI-TMI researchers experienced common difficulties in establishing theoretical frameworks and developing appropriate research designs indicates that linguistic factors may further complicate methodological learning, particularly when research training is received in multiple languages. Participants were required to develop specialized knowledge of research and foundational theories along with managing the linguistic demands across different languages. This supports Hornberger’s (2004) and Palfreyman and Van Der Walt’s (2017) view that biliteracy development occurs across multiple interconnected dimensions, emphasizing the parallel growth of research and language literacy. Additionally, literature shows ECRs face three primary obstacles in their research journey: understanding and

applying appropriate research methodologies, grasping conceptual frameworks, and managing self-perception issues related to their research capabilities (Chen et al., 2016).

Both EMI and EMI-TMI groups faced challenges with research and field terminology due to their MOI backgrounds. Their difficulties arose from initially learning research concepts in English during undergraduate studies. They particularly struggled with Turkish research terminology since they had first learned these concepts in English. EMI-TMI students faced additional adaptation challenges due to switching between English and Turkish instruction, yet the occurrence of similar challenges in EMI suggests that ECRs, regardless of their MOI, were exposed to Turkish terminology and thus experienced similar challenges. Similar challenges with unfamiliar terminology and vocabulary are also present in the literature (Othman, 2024). Meaningful participation in academic discourse involves mastery of research and field-specific terminology. As participants with EMI and EMI-TMI backgrounds initially learned these terms in English, they reported struggling with Turkish research and field-specific terminology. This mismatch became problematic when engaging with Turkish academic contexts, where their existing linguistic capital did not fully align with the dominant language in these contexts. However, even participants with TMI backgrounds who had not experienced a change in MOI reported difficulties with Turkish research terminology due to not agreed upon terminology equivalents. From Hornberger's perspective, the development dimension of biliteracy is relevant to understanding the fluid relationship between participants' L1 and L2 development. For EMI background ECRs, their academic language development in English preceded development in Turkish for specialized terms, challenging the traditional views that L1 proficiency precedes L2. This aligns with Hornberger's (2004) argument that biliteracy skills can develop in multiple directions across languages. For example, E.E2 noted facing challenges with the Turkish terminologies such as "yordamak", despite Turkish being her native language. This situation exemplifies how simultaneous versus successive exposure to academic concepts affects language use, supporting Hornberger's view that chronology and similarity of language exposure affects biliteracy development. Additionally, research terminology often lacks direct equivalents between languages, which causes participants to encounter difficulties in transitioning between English and Turkish academic discourse. For instance, T.T1's experience with the term "case study" which has multiple Turkish equivalents demonstrates the complicated nature of navigating different languages in academic settings, aligning with Hornberger's

idea that structural relationships between languages have a significant role in biliteracy development.

EMI and TMI researchers both encountered challenges with data collection procedures. Their primary difficulties centred on participant recruitment and the selection of appropriate data collection tools, including validating these tools' reliability. Although they could identify suitable participants, many individuals declined to participate, which significantly complicated their data collection efforts. Hajizadeh et al., (2023) support this by reporting that ECRs face two significant practical challenges in their research process: securing adequate participant engagement for their studies and managing time effectively while conducting research. ECRs' challenges in participant recruitment for research can be understood through Bourdieu's concept of social capital, which involves the resources accessible through professional networks and interpersonal relationships. Participant recruitment necessitates trust and meaningful connections. However, many ECRs may still be developing their academic trajectories and may have limited access to these social relationships. Furthermore, ECRs reported experiencing difficulties in selecting appropriate data collection tools, which illustrate shortcomings in both cultural capital and social capital. Cultural capital is necessary in terms of knowing which methods are appropriate for certain research questions, while social capital is necessary to access methodological guidance from experienced researchers and peers.

EMI researchers faced unique challenges due to working primarily with English academic content. They experienced increased cognitive load from simultaneously processing both language and content while reading, along with additional difficulty comprehending complex concepts in English. This higher cognitive load could be evidenced by the higher reading challenges that non-native researchers experience (Amano et al., 2023; Ramírez-Castañeda, 2020). Initially increased cognitive load of EMI background ECRs when processing both language and content simultaneously reflects the challenges of acquiring embodied cultural capital. In the biliteracy continuum context, cognitive load challenges refer to the development dimension of biliteracy. ECRs were required to develop academic language proficiency in English while simultaneously mastering complex disciplinary content. This dual focus created extensive cognitive demands in the early stages of their academic careers, aligning with Hornberger's (2004) idea that biliteracy development encompasses complex interactions between language and content knowledge. The

participants utilized translation tools and dictionaries in managing both content and language.

6.1.3 Discussing the Professional-Related Results

The findings reveal several challenges faced by ECRs in the Turkish academic context. One reoccurring challenge stem from the institutional requirements for academic promotion. Primarily universities, but also the Higher Education Council, establish specific promotion criteria that faculty members must meet, creating an environment where researchers need to adapt to varying requirements across institutions and departments. While these criteria generally emphasize publishing in high-impact journals, other requirements could also be introduced, such as conducting research projects. The limited availability of high-impact Turkish journals presents an obstacle. This situation creates pressure on ECRs to produce high-quality academic output in Turkish while potentially limiting their academic freedom in research publication. In the literature, such pressure on the researchers has been identified and potentially results in publishing in predatory journals (Aydın Turan, 2019; Bielczyk et al., 2020; Öztürk, 2023; Shamsi and Osam, 2022; Yuan et al., 2020). Academic degree promotion is the formal recognition of researcher's contributions to their field, representing the symbolic capital. The criteria for academic degree promotion reflect the specific currencies of symbolic capital that researchers need for career enhancement, which involves English publications in high-impact journals. These criteria create pressure on researchers and lead to publications in predatory journals, illustrating the strategic responses to field demands. When legitimate routes to symbolic capital (publishing in reputable journals) are blocked due to linguistic or resource limitations, researchers pursue alternative strategic routes (publishing in predatory journals) that resemble these requirements without fully meeting the intended purpose. Although such strategies may undermine the field's objectives, such as the pursuit of high-quality research, individuals develop strategic responses to cope with structural limitations. On the other hand, the emphasis on English-language publications in promotion criteria demonstrates that majority content (English academic literature) is prioritized over minority content (Turkish academic literature), creating a pressure on ECRs to publish in English regardless of their language preferences or proficiency. The privilege of English over Turkish reflects broader power dynamics in

academic settings, which causes researchers to develop adaptive strategies such as using translation services and seeking international collaborations. However, these strategies also require access to specific forms of capital like economic, social and symbolic.

The scarcity of high-quality Turkish academic journals compared to English ones presents another significant challenge, particularly affecting EMI-TMI and TMI background researchers. This limitation often leads ECRs to rely on digital translation tools and AI for English publication, driven by the need for global visibility and meeting institutional promotion requirements. This situation creates additional costs for researchers who may lack confidence in their English writing abilities, both monetary and mental. Paid service use for reasons related to language has been reported in the literature as resulting in higher costs for non-native researchers (Amano et al., 2023; Ramírez-Castañeda, 2020). This lack of confidence and language proficiency also results in the researcher consulting third parties for proofreading and language-related revisions. Consequently, the dominance of English in academic publishing creates a disadvantageous setting for researchers who lack English language proficiency or prefer their native language, leading to Bourdieu's linguistic capital inequality and Hornberger's minority-majority continuum. Thus, high-quality Turkish academic journals, which are limited in number, come to the fore. The limited number of high-quality Turkish academic journals force researchers to invest extra time, effort, and financial resources to transform their existing cultural capital (content knowledge in Turkish) into more valued linguistic capital (publications in English). The extra monetary burden non-native researchers face when using language services illustrates Bourdieu's notion of unequal distribution of capital within academic fields. Turkish researchers who lack English language proficiency encounter additional hindrances to publication, necessitating them to invest their resources in translation and editing services. Bourdieu (1991) describes this situation as "symbolic violence", which refers to the normalized and internalized structural inequalities by those who experience them.

Another challenge is related to communication, particularly emerging in EMI and EMI-TMI groups. These difficulties often stem from varying levels of English language proficiency among colleagues, potentially creating barriers to effective academic discourse. This challenge was reported in the use of academic terminology, where some ECRs report using English terms due may be perceived as arrogant, as opposed to the Turkish equivalents, which they report to be unfamiliar with. Similarities with this phenomenon is present in the

literature related to intercultural communication between researchers (Pischke, 2017; Maximova-Mentzoni and Egeland, 2019). While these studies focus on researchers from different native languages interacting with each other, the challenges are still relevant since the researcher in this study presents a problem related to a lack of vocabulary in research terminology. Communication difficulties with colleagues due to linguistic backgrounds can be described as clashes between different linguistic habitus. Participants with EMI backgrounds demonstrate their internalized linguistic dispositions developed through educational experiences by using English terminology in daily or academic discussions. However, other researchers or colleagues whose linguistic habitus was initially formed in Turkish academic contexts may criticise it. EMI background ECRs' concern about being perceived as arrogant when using English terminology exemplifies the evaluative dimensions of language use (Bourdieu, 1991), where linguistic choices are subject to social judgement. Therefore, EMI background ECRs face a difficult situation in which they were more comfortable and familiar with English terminology yet concerned about the social implications of using it in Turkish academic settings. Such challenges illustrate Bourdieu's view of language as an indicator of social status and power dynamics. According to Hornberger's framework, the code-switching reported by EMI background ECRs illustrates the fluid movement across the monolingual-bilingual continuum. These participants employed strategies such as clarifying the language and adapting to the linguistic expectations and needs of the listener, demonstrating a high level of contextual adaptability in mitigating communication challenges.

Examining the challenges of ECRs, especially in crucial areas such as research development, draws an insufficient picture of support systems or mentorship. Considering the commonality of these issues in the literature, it is possible to say that these ECRs required guidance but were unable to obtain it. This claim is supported by literature as supervisor assistance tends to resolve these issues. Current research reveals a similar gap in formal mentorship structures and institutional support policies for early career researchers (Özmen and Aydın Güç, 2013; Koç, Demirbilek, and İnce, 2015; Cardilini, 2021; Christian et al., 2021; Mgaiwa and Kapinga, 2021). Studies emphasize that successful research careers depend heavily on three key factors: quality mentorship, sufficient resource access, and robust professional development support (Browning et al., 2017). Bielczyk et al., (2020) offer practical suggestions for ECRs to build a successful academic career, they also underline the importance of seeking mentorship and the value of collaboration. Furthermore,

Hemmings (2012) stresses that effective mentorship, cooperative environment, feedback from peers and superiors which contributes highly to a healthy academic environment provide support for all kinds of researchers to develop a strong researcher identity and confidence, helping them develop professionally. The overall idea that connection and writing issues might be addressed with the guidance of supervisors or experienced researchers in addition to the suggestions mentioned before. The findings of Odena and Burgess (2015) corroborate this perspective with their suggested model for academic writing development, emphasizing the importance of supportive feedback from superiors shaped according to the learner's needs, individual resilience and efficiency, and support network as can be seen in Figure 7. Mentorship represents a critical form of social capital that allows access to implicit knowledge, professional networks, and academic opportunities. The limited mentorship reported by the participants reflects the uneven distribution of social and cultural capital in academic environments, creating disadvantages for ECRs who lack access to guidance from more experienced researchers, such as their supervisors. The lack of mentorship noted by the participants portrays Bourdieu's (1986) concept of field reproduction, which suggests that existing patterns of advantage within a field tend to be sustained over time through existing structures. The participants developed strategies to overcome this issue, such as peer support networks and self-directed learning. Given that, the lack of guidance and mentorship in the process of becoming a researcher may impede biliteracy development along with research literacy.

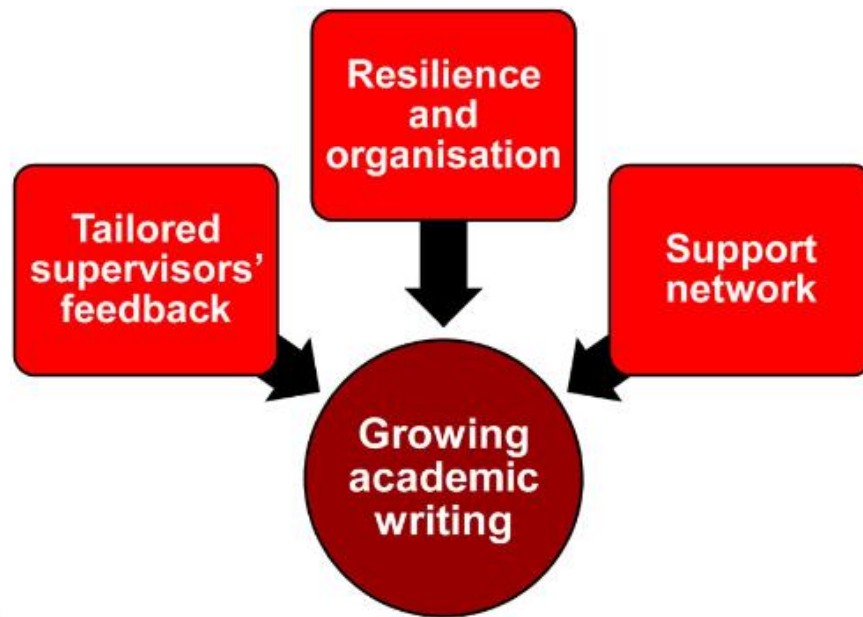


Figure 7. A generative model of academic writing development suggested by Odena and Burgess (2015)

Lastly, the TMI group reported the difficulty of associating theoretical knowledge with practical application in terms of research and teaching, which might be attributed to a lack of emphasis on research practices at the undergraduate level. Shamsi and Osam (2022) shed light on similar issues, suggesting that course phases in programs should be improved to better develop research skills. As mentioned before, Bourdieu's concept of embodied cultural capital refers to knowledge and skills internalized through lived experiences rather than formal education. TMI background ECRs reported greater difficulty in applying theory to practice, suggesting a gap in this form of capital. Therefore, hands-on research experience may be more crucial than formal instruction alone for developing embodied cultural capital necessary for academic success. In response, they adopted strategies such as gaining field experience and seeking mentorship to develop more comprehensive academic literacy that connects theoretical and practical knowledge.

6.2. Conclusion

The current study sought to uncover the challenges experienced by ECRs across different MOI backgrounds in the Turkish academic context, their overcoming strategies, and utilized tools to alleviate the challenges identified. Furthermore, the study aimed to compare these identified challenges across the MOI backgrounds and find out if the identified challenges have interrelatedness. To achieve these aims, the researcher adopted a qualitative phenomenological research design with the help of the literature, gaining better insights into ECRs experiences in research practices.

Examined through Bourdieu's theory of capital and Hornberger's continua of biliteracy, the results reveal complex interactions between language background, academic development, and researcher identity formation. ECRs, irrespective of their educational backgrounds, encounter various difficulties across different domains. These difficulties can be interpreted as difficulties in acquiring and effectively using different forms of capital (economic, linguistic, cultural, social, and symbolic) across different continua of biliteracy (context, development, media, and content).

The results indicate that ECRs encounter various challenges in research practices. Regardless of their educational backgrounds, they face challenges in terms of academic language skills, research writing and publication, and professional development which go hand in hand. Although language proficiency is essential, the challenges go beyond language skills. The results revealed difficulties in academic writing, speaking, reading, and listening. While academic writing challenges incorporate vocabulary limitations and establishing an academic tone, academic speaking challenges encompass public speaking and self-expression difficulties. ECRs also faced comprehension challenges in academic listening and reading due to accent intelligibility, advanced vocabulary, and language use, whether stemming from their own proficiency or that of the speaker or writer. The hegemony of English in academic publishing escalates these challenges, as researchers are often expected to publish in English despite the language limitations. Thus, not only ECRs but also all researchers are somewhat bound to use strategies and digital tools to prevail over the difficulties in between research writing and publication processes. With the rise of artificial intelligence and several digital tools, the results revealed that ECRs mostly rely on them in their research practices to alleviate the difficulties. According to Bourdieu's theory, English

language proficiency representing a valuable form of capital in academic settings demonstrates the inequalities in linguistic capital distribution. As for Hornberger's framework, it illustrates the complex relationship between all four dimensions of biliteracy. ECRs are compelled to manage multiple languages across various contexts, develop multiple skills simultaneously, manage linguistic similarities and differences, and cope with power dynamics in academic settings.

The results pinpointed significant challenges in research practices, encompassing identifying research gaps, conducting literature reviews, and managing the data collection procedure. The results illustrated that while ECRs experienced these challenges in their research practices, the limited mentorship and lack of external support systems aggravated these issues. As for professional challenges which involved institutional requirements and the scarcity of high-quality Turkish academic journals, signify the need for better structured institutional support and opportunities for professional development even though digital tools and translation services offer short-term solutions. Moreover, the establishment of high-quality journals in Turkish for ECRs from different educational and MOI backgrounds to publish in will also help mitigate these challenges. Therefore, policymakers should implement initiatives to enhance the quality of Turkish academic journals while adhering to the international standards. Academic departments should encourage collaboration between experienced researchers and ECRs, providing support and creating a community of practice. These results are in line with Bourdieu's concept of field dynamics, where success is not only dependent on individual talent but also access to different forms of capital. The findings also support Bourdieu's idea that the structural circumstances shape individual possibilities within fields, referring to institutional challenges ECRs encounter including promotion criteria and limited high-quality Turkish journals. Moreover, the results emphasize that biliteracy can occur across multiple continua simultaneously, with advancement in one dimension often supporting development in others.

In essence, the current study illustrates that supporting ECRs necessitates addressing not only language proficiency but also the relationship between capitals and biliteracy dimensions that influence their academic experiences. To nurture more equitable and supportive environments for researcher development in multilingual academic settings, it is essential to consider how these factors interact across different MOIs and educational backgrounds.

6.3. Implications and Suggestions

The current study offers several key implications for higher education stakeholders, especially in the context of multilingual academic environments such as Türkiye. Drawing on Bourdieu's theory of capital and Hornberger's continua of biliteracy, the results emphasize the need for more integrated and inclusive support systems for ECRs. ECR development must go beyond discrete skill-building and focus on:

- *Linguistic and cultural capital:* Support academic discourse development in both Turkish and English; provide explicit training in research practices, publication norms, and field-specific conventions.
- *Social and symbolic capital:* Establish mentorship programs, collaborative research networks, and equitable recognition systems that value diverse contributions, including publications in both languages.
- *Biliteracy development:* Encourage flexible movement across Hornberger's continua by resisting the English-only, decontextualized, and written norms.

First and foremost, the current study will bridge the gap in the existing literature while guiding other researchers to future research ideas. Furthermore, the results of this study could offer insights and feedback to policymakers, curriculum developers, teacher educators, researchers, and other stakeholders on the enhancement of higher education systems, educational policies and practices, with the aim of fulfilling the needs of ECRs in Turkish context with diverse MOI, field, and institution backgrounds between educational levels. Considering the autonomy of universities in Türkiye, the current study could aid higher education institutions in improving support for ECRs who make a change of university, field, and MOI in between educational levels. Higher education institutions could develop effective support systems for ECRs nurturing a more flexible academic environment which will help ECRs to develop better researcher identities in their transition period from one institution to another or one MOI to another. To support ECRs transitioning between MOI, institutions, and disciplines, several actions could be taken:

- Implement *integrated academic support programs* that target both language and research skills.

- Establish *journal clubs* as communities of practice to promote academic discussion, literature engagement, and critical thinking (Golde, 2007).
- Provide *academic writing support* in both Turkish and English, focusing on discipline-specific discourse.
- Develop *structured peer mentoring systems*, guided by experienced researchers.

Along with academic writing, there seems to be insufficient emphasis on research skills as well. As Golde (2007) indicates, one of the journal club's primary purposes is to remain up to date with the literature. Other purposes include equipping and advancing every involved academic in the faculty with the necessary research and academic skills. The journal club practices might be employed to alleviate the literature review and discussion challenges ECRs face in their research practices to promote academic research skills and critical thinking of every other academic engaged in research. Moreover, the journal club practices might be implemented not only in Faculties of Education but also in other Faculties of universities.

On the other hand, Hurley et al., (2015) supports the idea that structured peer-support groups moderated by experienced researchers, institutional encouragement, and effective mentoring are elements that influence the research engagement and productivity, of which the existence will nurture a healthy academic environment; therefore, supporting the researcher identity development of ECRs, qualifying them with the necessary research and academic skills. Similar suggestions are observed in Kamler's (2008) study, who notes that the development of a mentorship culture through co-authorship with mentors may have significant positive effects on the enhancement of publication outputs and ECRs academic career journey. Given this information, the higher education institutions should establish formal mentorship programs, peer-support groups led by seniors, and journal clubs to emphasize research skills and academic writing, addressing the language and research needs of the researchers.

The results of this study will have potential to influence all stakeholders in different departments of the education faculties. The results of this study emphasize the insufficient emphasis on academic writing both in Turkish and English. Thus, several structured support systems promote research skills, biliteracy development, academic skills (reading, listening, writing, and speaking), academic engagement, and motivation tailored for discipline-specific discourses may be planned and put forward for ECRs who make changes of MOI, field, or institutions between educational levels:

- appropriate guidelines,
- workshops,
- courses,
- and training sessions.

These structured support systems should include not only English, but also Turkish as the results of this study reveal that ECRs with TMI backgrounds also face challenges in Turkish academic writing.

In addition to the contributions and implications to all stakeholders in the faculty of education, the results of this study may have significant implications in the field of ELT as well. Based on the results of the current study, several actions can be taken:

- Develop *academic English specialization tracks* in ELT departments both for undergraduate and graduate levels to prepare future teachers to support academic writing and research skills in both EMI and TMI contexts.
- Integrate *biliteracy-informed pedagogy* based on Hornberger's framework into ELT research and methodology courses, preparing teachers who can support fluid language development both in Turkish and English.
- Include courses on *cross-linguistic pedagogy* to prepare ELT professionals who can bridge language gaps in academic contexts.
- Integrating Hornberger's biliteracy framework into existing translation courses in the curriculum, tailoring them to meet the needs of multilingual academic contexts.

Furthermore, new professional roles can be put into practice for ELT graduates:

- Creating *academic English consultancy* positions where ELT specialists work with departments, research groups, and individual ECRs to support biliteracy development.
- Establishing *research support centers* staffed by ELT professionals with advanced academic language skills and field specialists to provide writing support, translation assistance, and language editing services tailored for discipline-specific academic needs.
- Developing *publication preparation services* where ELT specialists offer assistance language editing, translation quality assessment, and formatting for international publications.

To better support ECRs in multilingual academic settings, the ELT field should prioritize research and resource development that addresses the linguistic demands of academic work across disciplines with certain practices such as:

- Encourage research on *effective translanguaging practices* that could support ECRs navigating between Turkish and English academic contexts.
- Develop *discipline-specific academic language materials* that address specialized vocabulary and discourse patterns across fields.
- Create *terminology databases and translation resources* for academic language that bridge Turkish-English gaps in disciplinary terminology.

In terms of higher education policy, several implications can be suggested such as:

- Implementing *dual language academic writing courses* taught by ELT specialists that address both Turkish and English academic writing conventions.
- Assigning *ELT professionals to work collaboratively within academic departments*, rather than limiting language support to separate School of Foreign Languages or preparatory programs.
- Designing *integrated courses* that combine research methodology with academic language development, co-taught by ELT specialists and field experts.

The findings and implications on how different MOI backgrounds affect research practices and academic language preferences may also be applicable on a global scale, especially in countries which have multilingual higher education systems that intentionally or unintentionally promote academic biliteracy. While this study was conducted in the Turkish context, it offers opportunities for future research in global context, thereby expanding its impact and significance.

Lastly, revealing the strategies and practices ECRs use to overcome the challenges they encounter about their academic language proficiency, MOI backgrounds, and research experiences will surely guide and encourage other researchers to implement these strategies in their own academic contexts; hence having a positive impact on the professional development of other researchers. Thus, other ECRs and researchers will be able to apply the strategies found in this study to improve their academic language use, overcome the experienced challenges, and manage the course of their professional development. The

documented applied strategies and practices for overcoming language and research-related challenges will provide a practical guide for other researchers in similar situations.

This research advances our understanding of ECR challenges in multilingual academic contexts and provides a foundation for improved support systems and policies. The findings demonstrate the need for an integrated approach to supporting ECRs that address language proficiency, research competencies, and professional development. Implementing these recommendations can strengthen the development of early career researchers and enhance the academic community.

Through the theoretical framework of Bourdieu and Hornberger, effective support systems for ECRs must go beyond discrete skills training to address the complex interplay of capital forms and biliteracy dimensions. By implementing these recommendations, institutions can create more equitable, supportive, and healthy environments that recognize the value of linguistic diversity while providing clear pathways for researcher identity development in multilingual academic contexts.

This study points to several important areas for future research:

- Longitudinal studies tracking ECR development across different MOI backgrounds over time.
- Comparative studies examining the experiences of ECRs in different national contexts with multilingual academic environments.
- Action research testing the effectiveness of different support interventions based on the theoretical framework of the current study.
- Further exploration of how digital tools and AI are reshaping the landscape of academic biliteracy.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1. Ethical Permission from Sakarya University

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 05.07.2024-E.376336



T.C.
SAKARYA ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Etik Kurulu



Sayı : E-61923333-050.99-376336
Konu : 33/12 Mehlika KOLBAŞI

05.07.2024

Sayın Mehlika KOLBAŞI

İlgi : 28.06.2024 tarihli ve E--050.99-0 sayılı yazınız.

Üniversitemiz Eğitim Araştırmaları ve Yayın Etik Kurulu'nun 04.07.2024 tarihli ve 33 sayılı toplantısında alınan "12" nolu karar ile Mehlika KOLBAŞI'nın başvurusu **uygun** görülmüş ve karar örneği ekte sunulmuştur.

Bilgilerinizi rica ederim.

Prof. Dr. Murat İSKENDER
Eğitim Araştırmaları ve Yayın Etik
Kurulu Başkanı

Ek: Karar Yazısı (1 Sayfa)

Bu belge, güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.

Doğrulama Kodu : BS5L7V76ST Pin Kodu : 62282

Belge Takip Adresi : <https://turkiye.gov.tr/ebd?ek=5783&eD=BS5L7V76ST&eS=376336>

Adres: Esentepe Kampüsü 54187 Serdivan SAKARYA / KEP Adresi:
sakaryauniversitesi@hs01.kep.tr
Telefon No: 0264 295 50 00 Faks No: 0264 295 50 31
e-Posta: ozelkalem@sakarya.edu.tr Elektronik Ağ: www.sakarya.edu.tr

Bilgi için: Hanife Babacan
Unvanı: Birim Evrak Sorumlusu



Appendix 2. Expert Opinion Form Request E-Mails

Request for Expert Review of Data Collection Tool Harici

10 Haz Pzt 11:24 ★ ↩ ⋮

Dear Expert,

I hope you are doing well. My name is Mehlika, and I am pursuing my Master's Degree in the English Language Teaching Department at Sakarya University. I am writing to ask for your expert opinion on the data collection tool I have developed for my thesis.

My thesis titled "Early Career Researchers' Self-Perceived Effects of Different Medium of Instruction Background in the Academic Context. Challenges, Strategies, and Language Preferences" focuses on the early career researchers' self-perceived effects of different medium of instruction background in terms of the challenges they experience, strategies they utilize, and their language preferences in the academic context under the supervision of Asst. Prof. Dr. Elif Bozuygütlü. This thesis adopts a qualitative phenomenological research method and the qualitative data will come from in-depth semi-structured interviews. To ensure the reliability and validity of the data collection tool, I would like to share with you the expert opinion form regarding your experience in research.

***Participants will be asked about their preferred language for the interview which will be conducted in either English or Turkish based on their choice. The interview questions and the expert opinion form are provided in both languages in the form. Thus, your detailed feedback on both English and Turkish forms is crucial for the applicability of the data collection tool.

You will find the expert opinion form attached to this email. I would greatly appreciate it if you could review and provide your feedback in the spaces beside the questions as specified in the document. Your expertise and feedback will be invaluable and highly contributory to refining and enhancing the rigour of my thesis.

I am looking forward to your valuable feedback and am willing to make any necessary adjustments according to your feedback.

Thank you very much in advance for considering my request. Could you please let me know if you are willing to review the data collection tool? If you agree, I hope to hear from you by the 30th of May.

Yours Sincerely,

Mehlika Kolbaşı
Sakarya University

Bir ek • Gmail tarafından tarandı



Mehlika merhaba, Emailini aldım. Haftasonuna kadar donmeye calisacagim. Kolayliklar diliyorum, iyi gunler,

10 Haz Pzt 16:41 ☆

Alice: ben,

12 Haz Çar 01:40 ☆ ↶ ⋮

 Türkçe diline çevir

Mehlika merhaba,
Sorularına birkaç yorum yaptım (ekte). Hazırladığın sorular genel olarak iyi. Ama bence 'prefer' yerine 'experiences' kısımlarına daha çok odaklanabilirsin.
Basanlar diliyorum sana.
İyi günler,

...

Bir ek • Gmail tarafından tarandı



Dear Assoc. Prof. Dr.

Thank you very much for taking the time to provide your expert opinion on my data collection tool. Your insights were incredibly helpful and much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Mehlika Kolbaşı
Sakarya University

Dear Mehlika, Please kindly find the reviewed file attached. Best, Gonderen.

Gönderildi: 12 Haziran 2024 Çarşamba 11:21:22 Kime: MEHLİKA KOLBAŞI B

16 Haz Paz 21:48 (12 gün önce) ☆

Dear Asst. Prof. Dr.

Thank you very much for taking the time to provide your expert opinion on my data collection tool. Your insights were incredibly helpful and much appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

Mehlika Kolbaşı
Sakarya University

16 Haz 2024 Paz, 21:48 tarihinde şunu yazdı:

Yanıtla Yönlendir

Tez Çalışmasına Davet

🖨️ 📧

Tue 24 Sept, 10:14 ☆ 😊 ↩️ ⋮

Sayın Hocam,

Umarım iyisinizdir. Ben Mehlika Kolbaşı, Sakarya Üniversitesi'nde yüksek lisans eğitimime devam etmekteyim. Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Elif Bozyiğit danışmanlığında yürütülen tezimin veri toplama aşaması için değerli katkınıza ihtiyacım olduğu için size yazmaktayım. Size ön bilgi olması açısından birkaç açıklama yapma gereği hissediyorum.

"Kariyerinin Başındaki Araştırmacıların Akademik Bağlamda Farklı Eğitim Dili Geçmişinin Kendileri Tarafından Algılanan Etkileri: Zorluklar, Stratejiler ve Dil Tercihleri" başlıklı tezimin kariyerinin başındaki araştırmacıların farklı eğitim dili geçmişlerinin algılanan etkilerine, araştırma temelli yaşadıkları zorluklara ve bu zorlukları aşmak için kullandıkları stratejilere odaklanmaktadır.

Bu kapsamda, araştırmamın katılımcı kriterlerine uyacak genç araştırmacılara ulaşmaya çalışıyorum. Araştırmam için uygun bir katılımcı olup olmadığınızı anlayabilmek adına, kısa bir form hazırladım. Formu doldurmanız, katılımcı kriterlerine uyup uymadığınızı netleştirebilmem açısından önem arz etmektedir. Hazırladığım form, bilgilendirilmiş onam formu niteliğindedir. Katılımcı kriterlerini sağlayıp katılmayı kabul ederseniz, yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmenin zaman planlaması için tekrar sizinle iletişime geçeceğim.

Formu doldurmak için aşağıdaki bağlantıyı kullanabilirsiniz.

[Bilgilendirilmiş Onam Formu](#)

İlginiz ve ayırdığınız zaman için şimdiden teşekkür ederim. Katılımınız ve sağlayacağınız veriler son derece değerlidir. Araştırmam veya katılımınız hakkında herhangi bir sorunuz veya endişeniz varsa, lütfen benimle iletişime geçmekten çekinmeyiniz.

Saygılarımla,

Mehlika KOLBAŞI
Sakarya Üniversitesi

Tez Çalışmasına Davet Inbox x

🔍 🖨️ 📧

Wed 25 Sept, 11:27 ☆ 😊 ↩️ ⋮

Sayın Hocam,

Umarım iyisinizdir. Tez danışmanım Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Elif Bozyiğit aracılığı ile, *"Kariyerinin Başındaki Araştırmacıların Akademik Bağlamda Farklı Eğitim Dili Geçmişinin Kendileri Tarafından Algılanan Etkileri: Zorluklar, Stratejiler ve Dil Tercihleri"* başlıklı tezimin veri toplama aşaması için sizinle iletişime geçmekteyim. Tezimin veri toplama aşaması için katılımcılarla yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapmam gerekiyor ve bu görüşmelerin zaman planlaması ve onam formunun paylaşılması için size yazıyorum.

Bilgilendirilmiş onam formu ile beraber, yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmelerin planlanması için oluşturduğum zaman çizelgesini sizinle paylaşıyorum. Görüşmelere katılmayı kabul ettiğiniz takdirde, onam formunu doldurduktan sonra sizinle paylaştığım zaman çizelgesinde görüşmenin yapılabileceği en uygun zamanın olduğu kutucuğu adınız ve soyadınızın ilk harfi ile doldurmanız gerekmektedir.

İlginiz ve ayırdığınız zaman için şimdiden teşekkür ederim. Katılımınız ve sağlayacağınız veriler son derece değerlidir. Araştırmam veya katılımınız hakkında herhangi bir sorunuz veya endişeniz varsa, lütfen benimle iletişime geçmekten çekinmeyiniz.

[Bilgilendirilmiş Onam Formu](#)

[Zaman Çizelgesi](#)

Saygılarımla,

Mehlika KOLBAŞI
Sakarya Üniversitesi

Appendix 2. Informed Consent Form and Interview Schedule Document

<https://forms.office.com/r/CvRyne0mN4>

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1_FPIQjJgWCxzgdVEoUzJsqvvdRh-x5i6e9CnnFlQ2Uk/edit?usp=sharing

Appendix 3. Semi-structured Interview questions (English)

Background Information

- Can you tell me a little about yourself?
- What is your mother tongue?
- Do you speak any second or third language?
- How did your journey with English begin, and how has it continued? Where does English fit into your life?
- How about your journey with Turkish? Where does Turkish fit into your life?
- Have you taken any courses or training outside of school on language learning?
- Have you taken any courses or training outside of school on conducting research and writing projects?

Educational Background

- What was the transition between your B.A. and M.A. programs like for you? What challenges did you face, and how did you overcome them?
- What were the differences between the two education levels at the same university?
- How would you describe your experiences with the four language skills (listening, writing, speaking, and reading) during your studies?
- For example, what were your experiences with in-class presentations and oral interactions with instructors and peers?
- Did you face any challenges in these interactions? If so, what were they, and how did you overcome them?
- What about your experiences with written interactions, tasks, and academic writing?

Academic Preferences and Challenges

- Which language do you prefer when reading academic papers? Why?
- Do you face any challenges while reading academic papers in different languages? If so, what strategies do you use to overcome them?
- Do you take notes while reading academic papers? In which language?
- Do you use any digital tools or applications for notetaking? If so, which ones?
- What are your thoughts on your listening skills? Have you faced challenges, and how did you address them?
- Were there differences in your experiences with English and Turkish? If so, what were they?

Teaching Experience

- Do you teach classes as a research assistant? If yes:
- What is the language of instruction in these classes?
- Have you faced challenges as a beginning researcher in these classes? If so, what were they?
- What strategies or tools do you use to address these challenges?

Academic Writing and Publishing

- You have some publications and proceedings listed in your profile. Are these works all in English? Do you have any works in Turkish? Why or why not?
- Do you foresee publishing in both English and Turkish in the future? Why?
- Do you follow specific steps in your academic writing process (e.g., planning, drafting, revising)? If so, what challenges do you face at each step, and how do you overcome them?
- Do you face difficulties with academic language or content? How do you address these challenges?
- Have you encountered research-related challenges (e.g., establishing methods, writing sections, conducting research)? If so, what strategies do you use?

Conference Participation

- Have you participated in national or international academic conferences? If yes:
- What were your experiences as a listener and as a presenter?
- Did you face any challenges? If so, what were they, and how did you overcome them?
- Were there differences in the challenges faced at national versus international conferences?
- How was your interaction with other researchers in these conferences? Did you face challenges in terms of daily language, academic language, public speaking, or Q&A sessions?

Tools and Applications

- Are there any tools or applications (e.g., Grammarly, AI tools) that you find useful and plan to continue using in your research process?
- Closing Questions
- Considering that you are an early career researcher, can you describe your first experience of planning, conducting, writing, presenting, and publishing a research paper/project?
- Do you have any comments or suggestions that could contribute to this research process?
- Would you be willing to provide feedback on this interview?

Appendix 4. Semi-structured Interview questions (Turkish)

Genel Bilgiler

- Kendinizden biraz bahsedebilir misiniz?
- Ana diliniz nedir?
- Hangi yabancı dilleri biliyorsunuz veya hangi dillerde yetkinsiniz?
- İngilizce ile hikayeniz nasıl başladı ve devam etti? İngilizce hayatınızda nerede yer alıyor?
- Türkçe ile hikayeniz nasıl başladı ve devam etti? Türkçe hayatınızda nerede yer alıyor?

- Okul dışında dil öğrenimi veya araştırma/proje yürütme konularında herhangi bir kurs veya eğitim aldınız mı?

Akademik Geçmiş

- Lisans ve yüksek lisans programları arasındaki geçiş sizin için nasıl bir deneyimdi?
- Zorluklar yaşadınız mı? Neler hissettiniz?
- Bu zorlukları nasıl aştınız?
- İki eğitim seviyesi arasında farklar var mıydı? Varsa nelerdi?
- Konuşma, dinleme, okuma ve yazma becerileri açısından deneyimleriniz nasıldı?
- Ders içi sunumları ve sözlü iletişimlerde yaşadığınız zorluklar nelerdi? Nasıl aştınız?
- Yazılı iletişim, ödevler ve akademik yazılar hakkında deneyimleriniz nelerdi?

Akademik Tercihler ve Zorluklar

- Akademik okumaları hangi dilde yapmayı tercih ediyorsunuz? Neden?
- Okuma yaparken yaşadığınız zorluklar var mıydı? Nasıl çözdünüz?
- Not alırken hangi dili kullanıyorsunuz? Belirli dijital uygulamalar var mı?
- Dinleme becerileriniz hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz? Zorluklar var mıydı? Nasıl aştınız?
- Araştırma ve Yayın Deneyimleri
- Araştırma görevlisi olarak derslere giriyor musunuz? Bu derslerin dili nedir?
- Akademik yazılar yazarken hangi adımları izliyorsunuz? Herhangi bir adımda zorluklar yaşadınız mı?
- Akademik yazım dili ve içerik ile ilgili yaşadığınız zorluklar var mıydı? Çözüm stratejileriniz nelerdi?
- Google Scholar profilinize göre İngilizce makaleleriniz var. Türkçe çalışma yapmayı düşünür müsünüz? Neden?

Konferans Katılımı

- Ulusal ve uluslararası konferanslara katıldınız mı? Sunum veya dinleyici olarak deneyimleriniz nasıldı?
- Zorluklarla karşılaştınız mı? Neler hissettiniz?

- Akademisyenlerle iletişimde yaşadığınız zorluklar var mıydı? Günlük dil, akademik içerikli dil ve sunum gibi aşamalarda nasıl bir deneyim yaşadınız?

Araçlar ve Uygulamalar

- Araştırma süreci boyunca yararlı bulduğunuz herhangi bir dijital aracı (Grammarly, yapay zeka vb.) kullandınız mı?

Kapanış Soruları

- Kariyerinizin başındaki bir araştırmacı olarak ilk araştırma deneyiminizi anlatabilir misiniz?
- Bu görüşmeye ve araştırmayı geliştirmeye yönelik paylaşmak istediğiniz herhangi bir yorum veya öneriniz var mı?

Appendix 5. Expert Opinion Form

ENGLISH VERSION

<i>Section 1: Language Proficiency and Preferences</i>	<i>Acceptable</i>	<i>Unacceptable</i>	<i>Comments and Suggestions:</i>
1. Which language do you prefer when writing academic papers and publishing? Why/Why not?			
2. Which language do you prefer when reading research and academic papers? Why/Why not?			
3. In which language do you prefer the academic conferences you participate to be held? Why/Why not?			

4. Which language do you prefer when interacting with other scholars at conferences? Why/Why not?			
5. In which language do you prefer to make a presentation? Why/Why not?			
6. If you were to rate your competency in English, out of 10, how many points would you give yourself?			
7. What do you attribute this competency level to?			
8. If you were to rate your competency in Turkish, out of 10, how many points would you give yourself?			
9. What do you attribute this competency level to?			
10. Do you find it difficult to communicate/interact with your colleagues who are not proficient in English/Turkish?			
Section 2: Reading/Listening Academic Papers	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Comments and Suggestions:
1. Have you completed any courses or training in academic reading and listening?			

2. In which languages do you prefer to read/listen to academic publications?			
3. In which language do you feel more competent when reading/listening?			
4. What do you attribute this competency level to?			
5. In which language do you take notes considering the language of the study you are reading?			
6. What challenges do you experience while reading/listening to academic publications?			
7. What strategies do you use to overcome these challenges? Which tools do you use to overcome these challenges and to take notes?			
Section 3: Writing and Publishing Academic Papers	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Comments and Suggestions:
1. Have you taken a course or training on academic writing (any language) skills?			
2. In which languages have you conducted and written research?			

3. Which language do you prefer while writing academic papers?			
4. While writing academic papers, what challenges do you experience at different stages of writing? - Planning - Drafting/Prewriting - Revising - Rewriting - Editing - Language Related Aspects - Content Related Aspects - Research Related Aspects			
5. How do you overcome each of these challenges? Which tools do you use?			
Section 4: Speaking and Academic Conferences	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Comments and Suggestions:
1. What is the language of the academic conferences/seminars you attend?			
2. What challenges do you experience in these academic conferences/seminars in terms of speaking?			

- Daily Conversations - Academic Conversations - Public Speaking and Presentation - Q&A			
3. Imagine you attend an international academic conference; would these challenges differ?			
4. Which language would you prefer to present your study in, if they were to offer a choice?			
5. Which tools do you use while preparing or presenting your study for the conference/seminar? (Grammarly, translate, AI, etc.)			

TURKISH VERSION

<i>Bölüm 1: Dil Yetkinlikleri ve Tercihleri</i>	<i>Kabul Edilebilir</i>	<i>Kabul Edilemez</i>	<i>Yorumlar ve Öneriler:</i>
1. Akademik makaleler yazarken ve yayınlarken hangi dili tercih edersiniz? Neden?			
2. Akademik makaleler ve yazılar okurken hangi dili tercih edersiniz? Neden?			
3. Katıldığınız akademik konferansların hangi dilde			

yapılmasını tercih edersiniz? Neden?			
4. Akademik ortamlarda diğer akademisyenlerle etkileşim kurarken hangi dili tercih edersiniz? Neden?			
5. Akademik konferanslarda hangi dilde sunum yapmayı/çalışmanızı sunmayı tercih edersiniz? Neden?			
6. İngilizce yetkinliğinizi 10 üzerinden değerlendirecek olsaydınız, kendinize kaç puan verirdiniz?			
7. Bu yetkinliği nelere yoruyorsunuz/atfediyorsunuz?			
8. Türkçe yetkinliğinizi 10 üzerinden değerlendirecek olsaydınız, kendinize kaç puan verirdiniz?			
9. Bu yetkinliği nelere yoruyorsunuz/atfediyorsunuz?			
10. İngilizce/Türkçe’de yetkin olmayan meslektaşlarınızla iletişim/etkileşim kurmakta zorlanıyor musunuz?			
Bölüm 2: Akademik Yazılar Okuma/Dinleme	Kabul edilebilir	Kabul edilemez	Yorumlar ve öneriler:

1. Akademik okuma ve dinleme konusunda herhangi bir kurs veya eğitimi tamamladınız mı?			
2. Akademik yayınları hangi dillerde okumayı/dinlemeyi tercih ediyorsunuz?			
3. Hangi dilde okuma/dinleme yaparken kendinizi daha yetkin hissediyorsunuz?			
4. Bu yetkin hissetme durumunu neye/nelere yoruyorsunuz?			
5. Okuduğunuz çalışmanın dilini göz önünde bulundurarak hangi dilde not alıyorsunuz?			
6. Akademik yayınları okurken/dinlerken ne gibi zorluklar yaşıyorsunuz?			
7. Bu zorlukların üstesinden gelmek için kullandığınız stratejiler var mı? Varsa, bu stratejiler nelerdir? Bu zorlukların üstesinden gelmek ve notlar almak için kullandığınız belirli araçlar var mı? Varsa, bunlar nelerdir?			
Bölüm 3: Akademik Yazılar Yazma ve Yayınlama	Kabul Edilebilir	Kabul Edilemez	Yorumlar ve Öneriler:

1. Akademik yazma (herhangi bir dilde) becerileri üzerine bir kurs veya eğitim aldınız mı?			
2. Hangi dillerde araştırma yaptınız ve yazdınız?			
3. Akademik yazılar yazarken hangi dili tercih ediyorsunuz?			
4. Akademik yazılar yazarken, yazının farklı aşamalarında ne gibi zorluklarla karşılaşıyorsunuz? - Planlama - Taslak hazırlama/Ön yazım - Revize - Tekrar Yazım - Düzenleme - Yazım dili ile ilgili hususlar - İçerik ile ilgili hususlar - Araştırma yapma ile ilgili hususlar			
5. Bu zorlukların her birinin üstesinden nasıl geliyorsunuz? Hangi araçları kullanıyorsunuz?			
Bölüm 4: Konuşma Becerisi ve Akademik Konferanslar	Kabul Edilebilir	Kabul edilemez	Yorumlar ve Öneriler:

1. Katıldığınız akademik konferansların/seminerlerin dili nedir?			
2. Bu akademik konferanslarda/seminerlerde konuşma açısından ne gibi zorluklar yaşıyorsunuz? - Günlük Konuşmalar - Akademik içerikli konuşmalar - Topluluk önünde konuşma ve sunum yapma - Soru & Cevap			
3. Uluslararası bir akademik konferansa katıldığınızı düşünün; bu zorluklar farklı olur muydu?			
4. Eğer bir seçenek sunsalardı, çalışmanızı hangi dilde sunmayı tercih ederdiniz?			
5. Çalışmanızı konferans/seminer için hazırlarken veya sunarken hangi araçları kullanıyorsunuz? (Grammarly, Translate, AI, vb.)			