

T.C.
UNIVERSITY OF GAZİANTEP
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

THE ORGANIZATION OF 8TH GRADE LEARNERS'
BELIEFS RELATED TO LEARNING ENGLISH AS A
FOREIGN LANGUAGE

MASTER'S OF ART THESIS

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**The Organization of 8th Grade Learners' Beliefs Related to Learning English as
a Foreign Language**

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ABSTRACT**THE ORGANIZATION OF 8TH GRADE LEARNERS' BELIEFS RELATED
TO LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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The primary concern of this study was to investigate the organization of 8th grade Turkish learners' beliefs about learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in Turkey with gender and school status (private vs. public) as determining variables. The Language Learning Beliefs Scale (LLBS), newly developed by the researcher, was administered to 738 students. As a result of an exploratory factor analysis, eight factors were identified as the underlying constructs of subjects' language learning beliefs. Among these factors, six were explained by gender and school status. The three LLBS factors were found to be significantly predicted by only gender; "self-efficacy and confidence", "threat to personality", and "error correction and age factor". More specifically, our results indicated that, female learners appear to have more self-confidence and yet feel more timid in speaking the language, and are more likely than males to believe in the importance of age factor and the necessity of error correction in language learning. School status, on the other hand, determines learners' beliefs related to the importance and status of learning English as a foreign language in their country. The results revealed that the students of private schools are more likely than the students of state schools to believe in the importance of the learning context in language learning. As the third category of our findings, both gender and school status affect learners' beliefs regarding foreign language learning and communication strategies, and oral communication. Overall, our findings suggest that such variables as gender and school status are significant predictors of learners' beliefs about learning English as a foreign language.

Key words: Foreign language learning, Learning English as a foreign language, Learners' beliefs about foreign language learning, Gender

ÖZET

SEKİZİNCİ SINIF ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN İNGİLİZCEYİ YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRENMEYE İLİŞKİN İNANÇLARININ YAPILANMASI

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Bu tezin temel amacı Türkiye’deki sekizinci sınıf öğrencilerinin İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenmeye ilişkin inançlarının yapılanması ve bu oluşumda cinsiyet ve okul türü (özel veya devlet) gibi bağımsız değişkenlerin etkisini araştırmaktır. Araştırmacı tarafından yeni geliştirilmiş olan Dil Öğrenme İnançları Ölçeği 738 öğrenciye uygulandı. Betimleyici bir faktör analizi sonucu olarak, katılımcıların dil öğrenme inançlarının temelini oluşturan sekiz faktör tespit edildi. Bu faktörlerden altısı cinsiyet ve okul statüsü tarafından açıklandı. Cinsiyetin, Dil Öğrenme İnançları Ölçeği’nden elde edilen üç faktörün anlamlı bir yordayıcısı olduğu tespit edildi: “öz yeterlilik ve güven”, kişiliği tehdit” ve “öğrenmede hata düzeltme ve yaş faktörü”. Başka bir deyişle, bulgular kız öğrencilerin erkeklere oranla kendilerine daha fazla güvenlerinin olduğunu, fakat dili konuşmada çekingen olduklarını, ve kız öğrencilerin dil öğrenmede yaş faktörünün önemiyle hata düzeltmenin gerekliliğine daha çok inandıklarını göstermektedir. Öte yandan, okul türü öğrencilerin ülkelerinde İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğrenilmesinin önemi ve konumuna ilişkin inançlarını belirlemektedir. Sonuçlar, özel okullardaki öğrencilerin devlet okullarındaki öğrencilere oranla öğrenme bağlamının dil öğrenmedeki önemine inanmaya daha yatkın olduklarını göstermiştir. Bulgularımızın üçüncü başlığı altında hem cinsiyetin hem de okul statüsünün öğrencilerin yabancı dil öğrenme ile ilgili iletişim stratejilerini, ve sözlü iletişim ile ilgili görüşlerini etkilediği görülmüştür. Sonuçları özetleyecek olursak, cinsiyet ve okul türü gibi değişkenler öğrencilerin İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenmeyle ilgili inançlarının önemli yordayıcılarıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yabancı dil öğrenimi, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenme, Öğrencilerin yabancı dil öğrenmeyle ilgili inançları, Cinsiyet

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Presentation

This chapter includes introduction, background information to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, statement of research questions, assumptions, scope and limitation of the study, definition of the terms, and abbreviations.

1.2. Introduction

With rapidly changing sociological and political issues, our educational system has been reformed day by day in the sense that the focus of the education has shifted from teacher-centered to learner-centered education in Turkey. In terms of foreign language teaching, following the Educational Reform in 1997, the age at which English began to be taught at the primary level was lowered to grades 4 and 5 and English as a foreign language became a compulsory school subject. That radical reform led researchers to focus on foreign language learning and young learners.

According to researchers, the role and importance of some affective factors in foreign language learning has been the focus of language education since the 1980s. Affective factors, which are thought to play a crucial role in the language learning process, include attitudes, motivation, anxieties, and beliefs. Among these factors, learners' beliefs have been the focus of recent research studies. It has been held that foreign language learners learn another language in different ways "according to various beliefs or notions they hold about language learning" (Horwitz, 1987). The term *beliefs* has been described as personal and subjective understandings which individuals hold and which often become resistant to change (Alexander and Dochy, 1995, cited in Riley, 2006). It is claimed that learners will bring to the learning situation different beliefs and attitudes about the nature of language and language learning and that these beliefs and attitudes should be taken into consideration in language teaching (Nunan, 1991).

With the developments of cognitive psychology, which assumes that learning attitudes and behaviors are conditioned by mental representations concerning the nature of language and language learning, research into learner thinking and learner beliefs has gained ground. If learners believe that the best way to learn a foreign language is to memorize its component parts, it seems likely that they will hold positive attitudes towards grammar and vocabulary learning and that they will be predisposed to adopt a range of strategies involving analysis, memorization and practice. If learners believe that the best way to learn a foreign language is to absorb it in natural contexts of use, it is likely that they will hold positive attitudes towards communication with speakers of the language and that they will be predisposed to adopt a range of social and communication strategies (Benson & Lor, 1999:459). As a result of the influence of cognitive psychology, language learners are today seen as active and responsible participants who learn from their own experiences, make their own choices and respond to events as they perceive them (Meskill & Rangelova, 2000; Williams & Burden, 1997, cited in Gabillon, 2005). From this perspective, it can be said that efficient learning could not be accomplished without understanding learners and their interpretations of their personal learning experiences.

In summary, starting from a young age, learners are exposed to educational traditions and consciously or unconsciously they develop some beliefs about what learning and teaching is or should be and what the roles of learners and teachers are or should be. Moreover, at this stage learners have day to day experience in learning and they construct or reconstruct beliefs based on these experiences and internalize them, embedding them in other relevant beliefs in their belief repertoires (Gabillon, 2005). It is, therefore, important to discern what conceptions learners have about learning in general. This knowledge together with learners' conceptions of foreign language learning would help us to make comparisons, and perhaps understand why learners choose to do certain tasks and ignore others, why they resist or participate, why they show interest or lack of interest, and why they fail or succeed.

In spite of the growing number of studies investigating beliefs about language learning of different age groups of EFL learners from various cultural backgrounds, it seems that no study has yet explored the beliefs about language learning of Turkish EFL students specifically in primary schools. Hence, the primary purpose of this study is to further our understanding of an affective variable (namely, learner beliefs of primary school children) in foreign language learning in Turkey,

and to investigate how these beliefs are organized; the secondary purpose of this study is to find out whether there are significant differences in the belief systems among learner groups according to variables such as the official status of the school (as state and private) and gender. With the aim of assessing and investigating how these beliefs are organized, the researcher adapted an existing questionnaire, The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) (see, Appendix A), developed by Elaine Horwitz in 1988, and made the necessary adaptations and additions to make it suitable for the 8th grade subjects in the Turkish learning context. This preliminary measure was piloted to a smaller group to assess its reliability and soundness of the items.

1.3. Background Information to the Study

In the field of foreign language learning, beliefs have been of interest only since the mid of 1980s in Applied Linguistics even though beliefs have been the main focus in Anthropology, Psychology, and Education for quite some time. According to Kalaja (2003) and Barcelos (2003), this recent interest is the result of a shift in focus to learners and their contributions to learning a foreign language that originates from an even earlier discussion of what characterizes good language learners, including such traits as motivation, aptitude, personality, cognitive styles, and learning strategies.

There are a lot of terms used for beliefs such as *philosophy of language learning* (Abraham & Vann, 1987), *culture of learning* (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996), *folk linguistic theories of learning* (Miller & Ginsberg, 1995, cited in Barcelos, 2000), *learner representations* (Holec, 1987, cited in Barcelos, 2000:42), *metacognitive knowledge* (Wenden, 1987) and *language learning beliefs*. Besides these terms, beliefs are broadly defined as opinions and ideas that learners and teachers have about the task of learning a foreign language. The variety of terms and definitions points to the importance of the concept in Applied Linguistics.

As mentioned before, in the past decades, the body of research literature on language learning beliefs has grown greatly. As these studies have been investigated within various research paradigms, researchers have recently attempted to classify them. Benson and Lor (1999), for example, organize them according to the enquiry methods employed by investigators. A typical research strategy involves completing an inventory of different belief statements, to which learners indicate their degree of

agreement or disagreement (Horwitz, 1987). Another popular strategy employs interviews and focus group discussions (Wenden, 1987). Kalaja (2003) refers to these approaches as "mainstream" and "alternative." Barcelos (2003) offers an interesting perspective on the investigation of beliefs. She recognizes three approaches related to language learning beliefs: the normative approach, which infers beliefs from a pre-determined set of statements; the metacognitive approach, which infers beliefs from students' self reports and interviews; and the contextual approach, which uses ethnography, narratives, and metaphors to investigate language learning beliefs.

As for the learning and teaching context, most of the language educators and researchers have focused on the importance of learner beliefs about foreign language learning and have criticized those who underestimated the role of language learning beliefs of learners. Although it is recognized that learners have their own views about language learning, their theories are still considered less valuable than scientific theories.

According to Riley (2006), teachers, researchers, and theoretical linguists discount the importance of students' beliefs. He argued that the important point should be not to find "*the truth*" but students' subjective reality, "their truth," as it is their beliefs more than anyone else's that will influence their learning (p.127). Similarly, Barkhuizen (1988) argued that students are almost never asked overtly and systematically about their learning experiences. Allwright (1984, cited in Barkhuizen, 1998) says that "very many teachers seem to find it difficult to accept their learners as people with positive contribution to make to the instructional process". Riley (2006) argues that some beliefs about language and learning are culture-specific. That's why, understanding students' beliefs means understanding their world and identity.

According to Hsieh (2004), beliefs have a special, particular meaning referring to learners' preconceived notions or assumptions about the nature of language learning process. Because students' beliefs about language learning seem to have obvious relevance to the understanding of student expectations of, commitment to, success in, and satisfaction with their language classes, Horwitz (1988) argued that language teachers need to understand learner beliefs about language learning. Horwitz concluded that language learners enter the classroom with 'definite preconceived notions' of how a foreign language is learned, and that certain

erroneous beliefs can be an impediment to successful language learning. As for Rokeach (1968, cited in Barcelos, 2000), assessing beliefs that language learners bring to the language classroom is important for both language instructors and curriculum designers because “beliefs are predispositions to action”.

Similarly, educational psychology supports the importance of beliefs that learners hold as a defining factor of their learning behavior. Pintrich and DeGroot (1990) assume that the students who consider their study interesting and important are more actively engaged in the learning process and more persevering in their academic work. In addition, instructors need to know their audience in order to arrange the classroom procedure in the most effective way for learning.

After the importance of learner beliefs and their roles in foreign language learning were realized, so many researchers and educators have attempted to deal with learner beliefs from different angles, such as social and cultural backgrounds, anxiety, motivation, gender, and proficiency, etc. In terms of social and cultural backgrounds, it seems that different social settings and cultural backgrounds have a bearing influence on learners’ cognitions of language learning. Horwitz (1987), as the pioneer researcher of the field of learner beliefs, developed a survey instrument, *the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory* (BALLI) in order to find out the beliefs of 32 ESL students from different cultural backgrounds. Similarly, other researchers (Tumposky, 1991; Siebert, 2003; Bernat, 2006) wondered about the influence of social context and cultural background on learner beliefs and found that social contexts of language learning influence learner beliefs and that there are cultural differences among learners of distinct cultural backgrounds.

With respect to belief-anxiety relationship, researchers hypothesized that there would be a significant relationship between learner beliefs and the levels of foreign language learning anxiety and they focused on this topic. Kuntz (1997) reported a significant relationship between “self-efficacy/confidence in speaking” and foreign language anxiety. Banya and Cheng (1997) argued that anxiety was negatively related to learners’ beliefs in their study with 224 Taiwanese EFL learners. Coulombe (2000) found that beliefs about negative experiences were the best predictors of anxiety levels and final marks. It was reported that among 250 French participants, 13% reported feeling some anxiety and, very recently, Tsai (2004) found that learners did experience a high level of foreign language anxiety.

Some researchers (Bacon and Finnemann, 1992; Aktaş, 2001; Siebert, 2003; Tercanlioğlu, 2005; Öz, 2005; Bernat and Llyod, 2007) investigated the impact of gender on learner beliefs. All of these researchers had different results from their studies within different contexts. Bacon and Finnemann (1992) found out that female learners reported more motivation and use of strategy in language learning than male learners. On the other hand, Aktaş (2001) found out that male learners had more positive feelings towards English than female learners. In addition, Siebert (2003) reported a number of significant differences in beliefs among male and female language learners in relation to language learning and strategy use. Tercanlioğlu (2005) studied the Turkish context and did not find any significant difference between belief categories and gender. However, Öz (2005) found significant differences between the beliefs of males and females in the sense that female learners put much value on vocabulary and they were more likely than male learners to believe that women are better than men in foreign language learning. According to Bernat and Llyod (2007), overall males and females held similar beliefs about language learning with the exception of two items. Female learners are more likely to think that intelligence plays a greater role in language learning than males, and females are less likely than males to enjoy practicing English with the Australians they meet.

Few studies investigated the relationship between learner beliefs and language proficiency. Mantle-Bromley (1995) found that many young learners bring to the language classroom misconceptions likely to impede their learning process. Likewise, Wen and Johnson (1997) reported strong and consistent influence of beliefs on strategies, and so on learners' success. In her study of examining 187 college students learning Japanese as a foreign language, Mori (1999a) found some evidence for relationships between learners beliefs and achievement in a foreign language.

Some researchers (Abraham and Vann, 1987; Horwitz, 1987, 1988; Wenden, 1986a, 1987; Victori & Lockhart, 1995) investigated the behavioral impact of learners' beliefs and conducted studies suggesting that there are links between students' metacognitive knowledge, or language learning beliefs, and their use of selected strategies. Similarly, Abraham and Vann (1987) found that learners' beliefs or preconceptions about language learning might affect the variety and flexibility of the language learning strategies they utilize. Horwitz (1987, 1988) asserted that

preconceptions of learners may limit students' variety of strategy use. In another study, Wenden (1987) found that there was a consistency between learners' selection of learning strategies and their descriptions of explicit prescriptive beliefs about language learning. Kuntz (1996) reported that what learners' think of language learning significantly influences their use of strategies. Yang (1999) demonstrated a strong relationship between students' self-efficacy beliefs about learning English and their use of all learning strategies.

The above mentioned studies show that researchers have spent a lot of effort on the cognitive aspects of language learning. They have wondered what causes students to approach language in different ways and they have found the answer in learner perceptions. According to Altan (2006), as we are what we believe in, researchers have increasingly focused on students' beliefs about the nature of language learning, the strategies they use, the relationship between learner beliefs and affective scales such as motivation and anxiety.

It is clear that learner beliefs of language learning --- including beliefs about the right age to start language learning, the time needed to improve fluency, the relative difficulties of languages, the roles of grammar, vocabulary and communication in language learning, and other aspects of the learning process --- are of critical importance to the success and failure of any student's efforts to learn a foreign language as Huang (2006) states. So an investigation into language learners' beliefs may produce important pedagogical implications that language educators can employ to enable learners to have a good understanding of their language learning process. It is useful to investigate learner beliefs so that language teachers can be provided with an awareness of various types of learners in their teaching process and may further learners success in foreign language learning by taking into consideration learner beliefs.

1.4. Statement of the Problem

Throughout my years of teaching a foreign language in primary school I often asked myself questions like: Am I an unsuccessful teacher?; Why do the majority of my learners get low marks?; Do my learners like English?; Do I have adequate teaching materials?; Are my students motivated enough to learn a foreign language?; and lastly, the question that most intrigued my mind was "What do my learners think about learning English?". These questions led me into questioning what kind of

beliefs my learners held about EFL, how these beliefs are organized, and whether there are significant differences in the belief systems of different learner groups according to such variables as gender and school status (private or state school). My library research into academic studies in Turkey showed me that there was no research carried out on this topic with 8th grade learner groups, and that, my study could hold light to this issue. Since language learning in primary schools has only recently become a phenomenon in Turkey, more attention needs to be given to these issues. From that point on, I decided to examine learner beliefs of young learners about learning a foreign language, particularly English as it is the major foreign language being taught in state and private schools in Turkey.

In recent years, an increasing number of researchers have stressed the influence of learners' beliefs in foreign language learning and many studies have focused on the nature of these beliefs. Unfortunately, previous studies mostly focused on university students' beliefs and ignored what kind of beliefs primary school students may be holding about foreign language learning.

Horwitz (1987, 1988) was the first to systematically identify learners' beliefs about language learning. She wrote: "in 1987 and 1988, I argued that it was important to understand learner beliefs about language learning in order to understand learner approaches to and satisfactions with language instruction and offered an instrument, the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), to collect these beliefs systematically" (Horwitz, 1999:557). The BALLI was developed based on the results of free recall activities and group discussions with both foreign language and ESL learners and teachers. The BALLI has become a popular instrument for investigating beliefs about language learning. Although the BALLI and its modified versions have been used in eliciting learners' beliefs related to language learning in studies of foreign language learners in the U.S and ESL learners in English speaking countries, to date there is no comparable study of EFL learners studying English in primary schools in Turkey.

Wright (1988, cited in Halaçoğlu, 1999:3) investigated the roles of teachers and learners in language learning and stated that learners, as well as teachers, have their own attitudes and beliefs which are likely to influence the way they set their roles. He claims that a teacher can be a mother, father, judge, salesman, technician, librarian, and within this role, beliefs and attitudes deeply influence the whole educational process.

As foreign language researchers noted, beliefs provide important pedagogical implications for language educators and exploring what kind of beliefs learners hold about foreign language learning enables foreign language teachers to develop effective teaching strategies according to their learners' beliefs. Thus, on the basis of these claims and findings, the primary concern of this study has been to find out how the beliefs of Turkish primary EFL students are organized and to find out whether there are significant differences between learner beliefs according to such variables as gender and the school status (private and state).

1.5. Purpose of the Study

In the field of language learning, beliefs have a special, particular meaning referring to learners' preconceived notions or assumptions about the nature of language learning process (Hsieh, 2004). Because students' beliefs about language learning seem to have obvious relevance to the understanding of student expectations of, commitment to, success in, and satisfaction with their language classes, Horwitz (1988) argued that language teachers need to understand learner beliefs about language learning. It is clear that when language classes do not meet student expectations, learners' ultimate achievement can be limited. Since a large proportion of language learning goes on outside of the classroom, student beliefs can have a strong impact on students' success even if these beliefs do not manifest themselves overtly in class.

The primary concern of this current study is to explore what kind of beliefs 8th grade learners hold about learning EFL in Turkey and how these beliefs are organized. The study employed a newly developed scale titled "Language Learning Beliefs Scale "(LLBS) consisting of 41 items in its final format. Previous research has revealed that the socio-cultural context of different schools and students' gender play an important role in determining learners' beliefs. What's more, students in private schools start taking at least one, and usually two, foreign language class as a compulsory part of the school curriculum. These students may have developed more clear-cut and may be more positive opinions and beliefs related to the language learning experience. Thus, the second focus of this study will be to investigate whether there are significant differences in the belief systems of different learner groups according to such variables as school status (private and state) and gender

through regression analysis, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and crosstabs procedures.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The present study is hoped to be of significance and value to our daily teaching practice and yield insightful practical implications. Firstly, the researcher developed culturally adapted questionnaire that reflects the native culture of learners. In other words, learners' opinions were collected as first hand information. Secondly, getting knowledge of learner beliefs may enable teachers to devise learning strategies that support and improve students' proficiency as the students' beliefs have an impact on their use of effective language learning strategies (Horwitz, 1987). Thirdly, the process of exploring their beliefs may lead students to a better understanding of their roles in the learning process (Oi & B. Ed, 2002). Ideally, this can be the best way to produce more effective learning behaviors inside and outside the classroom, as well as greater self-knowledge and autonomy (Horwitz, 1987, 1988).

The present study will be the first to explore 8th grade learners beliefs about learning English as a foreign language in Gaziantep. Previous studies on the belief systems of foreign language learners have largely focused on university level students in varying learning contexts. The next chapter will present the related literature review.

1.7. Statement of Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is the nature of 8th grade learners' beliefs related to learning English as a foreign language in Turkey?

Research Question 2: What is the organization of 8th grade learners' beliefs related to learning English as a foreign language in Turkey?

Research Question 3: What is the relative contribution of gender and school status to the belief constructs identified in the study?

1.8. Methodological Assumptions of the Study

- 1) Within the scope of this current study, 8th grade students will be assumed as young learners of English.

- 2) Students will respond honestly and sincerely to the items stated in the questionnaire.

1.9. Scope and Limitations of the Study

Data have been collected from 738, eighth grade learners. The students are between 13-14 years old. Data were collected from all the targeted schools and students. For the current study, 20 state and 4 private schools were chosen from one of the municipality districts (Şahinbey) of the main city of Gaziantep. However, there is imbalance between the numbers of the state schools and private schools participated in the study. As the numbers of state schools were more than the private schools, imbalance was occurred in sampling. That's why, 15% of the state schools and 36% of the private schools in one municipality of Gaziantep were chosen as representative samples by the researcher. Moreover, students of private schools were exposed to more of the target language; more specifically, they had been studying English for approximately 7-8 years at the time of the study while students in primary schools had been exposed to the target language since 4th or 6th grade. So, one limitation of the study is that the total number of years of English classroom learning experience was not identified for each school or student. This indicates that there may not be any uniformity between our subjects in terms of their foreign language levels and experiences. This lack of uniformity may have yielded differences in subjects' understanding of and responses to some items, and therefore, affect the reliability and validity of research measurement tool. Another limitation of the study is that the socio-economic conditions of the school districts and students' families were not accounted for as it was not one of hypothesis of this study.

To conclude, the results obtained from the chosen population can be safely generalized only to the given population. It was the wish of the researcher to investigate the relationship between subjects' belief constructs and their school success, and performance on the standardized national examination of SBS (level determination examination), which is a nation-wide examination including a section on EFL; however, the great number of the research population and the anonymity requirement of survey questionnaires did not allow the researcher to collect information on the subjects' language proficiency levels and associate it with their language learning beliefs.

1.10. Definition of the Terms

The following definitions pertain to the context of the study.

Beliefs: They are part of our interpretive ability of making sense of our social world and responding to the problems we face (Dewey, 1933, cited in Barcelos, 2003).

According to Kuntz (1999) beliefs are “notions that language learning that adolescents have acquired before receiving instruction and may have changed while continuing their instruction”.

Learner Beliefs: Learner beliefs, according to Richardson (2006, cited in Peacock, 2001) are “Psychologically held understandings, premises or propositions about the world that are felt to be true”.

EFL-English as a Foreign Language: “The role of English in countries where it is taught as a subject in schools but not used as a medium of instruction in education nor as a language of communication (e.g. government, business, industry) within the country” (Richards, et al., 1992:123-124). English is taught as a foreign language in Turkey.

BALLI: The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory, developed by Elaine K. Horwitz, to assess student opinions on a variety of issues and controversies related to language learning. The instrument comprises of 34 Likert-type scale items that the researcher of the current study adapted and modified items of it in order to develop her own scale.

LLBS: The Language Learning Beliefs Scale, developed by the researcher of the current study, is the instrument used in this study. In this inventory, there are 41 Likert-type scale items to assess Turkish 8th grade students’ opinions on a variety of issues and controversies related to learning English as a foreign language.

SBS: The Level Determination Examination, which is taken at the end of each educational year (6th, 7th, 8th grades) in primary education in order for students to enter a high school according to their points in Turkey. The students are responsible for such fields as Maths, Turkish, History and English in this examination.

Young Learners: It means children from the first year of formal schooling (five or six years old) to eleven or twelve years of age (Philips, 1993).

1.11. Abbreviations (In Alphabetical Order)

BALLI: The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

LLBS: The Language Learning Beliefs Scale

SBS: Level Determination Examination

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Presentation

This chapter presents the titles of defining beliefs, learner beliefs and foreign language learning, English as a foreign language in Turkey, approaches to the investigation of language learning beliefs, Horwitz Model, Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), related studies based on the Horwitz Model abroad, related studies based on the Horwitz model in Turkey and other studies (Non-BALLI) related to language learning beliefs.

2.2. Definition of the term “Beliefs”

Learner beliefs have been treated differently within the research community, depending on varying theoretical orientations. As Foss and Reitzel (1988) indicated beliefs originate from cultures and families, and are also developed from life experiences.

In cognitive psychology, learner beliefs about the nature of knowledge and learning, or epistemological beliefs, have been investigated with the idea that they are part of the underlying mechanisms of meta-cognition (Flavell, 1987, cited in Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005) and are a driving force in intellectual performance. From this perspective, beliefs about language learning are viewed as a component of meta-cognitive knowledge (Flavell, 1987, cited in Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005), which includes all that individuals understand about themselves as learners and thinkers, including their goals and needs. Flavell (1979) emphasizes the study of meta-cognitive knowledge in language learning and focuses on the person. He calls this "person knowledge." Person knowledge is knowledge learners have acquired about how cognitive and affective factors such as learner aptitude, personality, and motivation may influence learning. In addition, it includes specific knowledge about how the above factors apply in their experience. For example, is it the learners' beliefs that they do, or do not, have an aptitude for learning another language or, that their particular type of personality will inhibit or facilitate language learning

(Wenden, 2001). Another cognitive researcher, Abelson (1979) characterized belief systems as episodic, namely, relying on episodes either from personal experience, folklore, or propaganda and evaluative.

According to Wenden (1999), meta-cognitive knowledge makes up "a system of related ideas, some accepted without question and other validated by their experience" (p. 436). She views beliefs as separate from meta-cognitive knowledge, because beliefs are "value-related and tend to be held more tenaciously." Wenden also distinguishes meta-cognitive knowledge from meta-cognitive strategies and refers to the former as information, which learners acquire about learning, while the latter consists of general skills that allow learners to "manage, direct, regulate, and guide" the learning process" (p.436). Wenden (2001) provides further insight on the function of language learners' meta-cognitive knowledge in learning. She focuses on the nature of the interaction that defines the relationship between what learners know and how they self-direct their learning. Following Flavell's (1979) classification of meta-cognitive knowledge, Wenden (2001) emphasizes three categories of knowledge: person, task and strategy (p. 46), based on eight selected excerpts of language learners' accounts, which were analyzed to illustrate how this knowledge performs in the self-regulation of language learning. Wenden points out that the foundation for the development of learner autonomy is planning, monitoring and evaluating.

Based on the literature review, beliefs have been defined and characterized as:

- o Mini-theories (Hosenfeld, 1978, cited in Barcelos, 2000) of foreign language learning which shape the way they set about the learning task. These theories are made up of beliefs about language and language learning. Such beliefs are dynamic and situated rather than stable and trait-like.
- o They guide action, but they are also influenced by action (Richardson, 1996, cited in Barcelos, 2000).
- o "General assumptions that students hold about themselves as learners, about factors influencing language learning, and about the nature of language learning and teaching" (Victori & Lockhart, 1995:224).
- o They are more difficult to change (Pajares, 1992).

- o Culture of learning (Contazzi & Jin, 1996:230); “the cultural aspects of learning and teaching; what people believe about ‘normal’ and ‘good’ learning activities and processes where such beliefs have a cultural origin”.
- o They are dynamic (Furhan, 1988, cited in Barcelos, 2000). According to Furhan, “beliefs not only change over time, but may be expressed differently in different situations” (p.10).
- o They are socially constructed and culturally transmitted (McAlpine, EriksBrophy & Crago, 1999).
- o They are experienced-based and context-based (Dewey, cited in Barcelos, 2000)
- o “Opinions which are based on experience and the opinions of respected others, which influence the way (students) act” (Wenden 1986:5).
- o Learner representations (Holec, 1987, cited in Barcelos, 2000:43); “learners’ entering assumptions about their roles and functions of teachers and teaching materials” (p.155).
- o Folk-linguistic theories of learning (Miller and Ginsberg, 1995, cited in Barcelos, 2000); “ideas that students have about language and language learning”.

Some researchers (e.g. Truitt, 1995; Kuntz, 1997) defined the term “beliefs” as any preconceived notions, ideas, views and opinions about language learning that learners have. Referring to psychological theories on attitudes, Mantle-Bromley (1995) mentions that students’ beliefs about the nature of language learning may constitute a serious impediment that could affect their language-related attitudes and behaviors.

In terms of the functions of beliefs, Barcelos (2000) asserts that beliefs (a) help people understand themselves and others and adapt to the world, (b) provide meaning, (3) help individuals to identify with another group and form groups and social systems, (4) provide structure, order, direction and shared values, and (c) reduce confusion and dissonance.

In summary, some researchers argue that beliefs are based on experience (Foss, & Reitzel, 1998; Abelson, 1979; Dewey, cited in Barcelos, 2000; Wenden, 1986), some refer to beliefs as preconceived notions and ideas about language

learning (Truitt, 1995 ; Kuntz, 1997; Miller and Ginsberg, 1995; Holec, 1987, cited in Barcelos, 2000; Victori & Lockhart, 1995) and others identify beliefs as culturally constructed ideas (McAlpine, EriksBrophy, & Crago, 1999; Contazzi & Jin, 1996).

2.3. Learner Beliefs and Foreign Language Learning

Foreign language learners certainly have some beliefs about the language that they are learning, the materials used, the methods applied, learning environment they are exposed to and also about their foreign language teacher. It is possible that they have some views about the best techniques for learning a foreign language, about what they feel in speaking to a tourist, the nature of language learning process, the right age to begin to study a language and so on. Horwitz (1988) states that “language students have probably been exposed to many common and some contradictory notions about language learning.” Hence, their beliefs are one of the key factors that affect their attitudes towards foreign language learning. Since learners’ beliefs about language leaning seem to have obvious relevance to the understanding of student expectations of, commitment to, success in and satisfaction with their language classes, Horwitz (1988) suggests that language teachers need to understand learner beliefs about language learning.

Huang (1997) mentions that while there are different understandings of learner beliefs, research studies do not really give a clear definition of learner beliefs of foreign language learning and they generally seek to identify learners’ preconceived notions about what is involved in learning a foreign language in order to predict expected conflicts that may contribute to students’ frustration, anxiety, lack of motivation, and in some cases ending foreign language study, and to help to facilitate the language learning and teaching process. In the past, many studies looked at student beliefs for foreign language learning and (Kern, 1995; Rifkin, 2000) similarly, suggested that these beliefs will interview with or facilitate language learning. As early as 1986, Wenden suggested that learners have meta-cognitive knowledge or beliefs about foreign language learning and that these beliefs will have influence on how learners approach the task.

Regarding the origin of learner beliefs, Horwitz (1987, cited in Diab, 2005: 81) states that previous experiences as language learners as well as cultural background are both likely to influence and shape learner beliefs about language learning. According to Horwitz (1987, cited in Tercanlioğlu, 2005) foreign language

learners hold different beliefs or notions about language learning, and an existing research suggests that learner beliefs have potential to influence both their experiences and actions as language learners.

With respect to learning strategies, Wenden (1987, cited in Oi & B.Ed., 2002) explores the connection between the beliefs and the students' language learning strategies. In a series of semi-structured interview with ESL adults enrolled in a part-time advanced level class, she finds that students describe language learning strategies consistent with their professed beliefs about language learning.

Abraham and Van (1987, cited in Öz, 2005:6) found that learners' beliefs or preconceptions about language learning may affect the variety and flexibility of the language learning strategies they utilize. Similarly, Fan (1999) investigated the relationship between the beliefs and the strategies of 529 undergraduates in learning English. Findings of the study revealed a consistent relationship between language learning beliefs and strategies.

Le (2004) mentions that learner beliefs about language learning are seen to be shaped by factors such as opinions from their parents, teachers, classmates, and friends; views from national cultures, and the prevalent culture in communities. She believes that peoples' awareness of their own academic learning abilities, particularly with respect to language learning and previous life experiences relevant to language learning also contribute to the formation of beliefs.

To conclude, beliefs play a crucial role in foreign language learning as understanding how students conceptualize language learning, studying what are the consequences of their beliefs and examining how these beliefs should be dealt with are of significant importance in improving language teaching and learning.

2.4. English as a Foreign Language in Turkey

English has been the most commonly used foreign language in Turkey. Unlike other languages such as French, Arabic and Germany, English enjoys great popularity not only among Turkish elite but also among ordinary Turks, especially among the Turkish youth, today. Even though there is no statistical data showing what percentage of Turkish people in general or the Turkish youth in specific use English, it is obvious from the English that one can see in the Turkish press, media and television that English has been increasingly used in Turkey. Many Turks, especially the young ones, speak a language, which is commonly called as *Tarzanca*,

a mixture of Turkish and English. Even in television, some speakers announce an art exhibition in *Tarzanca*. Instead of *başlamak*, to start they use *start almak*, which is neither Turkish nor English (Acar, 2004). Also, younger Turks commonly use English expressions, such as part-time, fulltime, prime time, art, cool, etc. According to Acar (2004), reasons for the increasing popularity of English in Turkey are closely related to the integration of Turkey into globalization process. Beginning from the 1980s, Turkey has increasingly become influenced by forces of globalization (Robins, 1996: 72, cited in Acar). In this, many factors played an important role: the growth of global media and communications, the mobility of populations (tourism and migration) the end of the cold war that brought a sense of engagement and mission. (Robins, 1996:73, cited in Acar, 2004).

From this point on, the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has become a nationwide endeavor pursued at all academic levels, from primary school education to university. The importance of English in Turkey can be demonstrated by several facts. First, the importance of English is evident from the fact that the high school entrance examination has been amended to include English as one of the major subjects. In order to enter a high school, the primary school students have to enter an examination titled as “Level Determination Examination” (SBS) at the end of each educational year. The 6th grade students are responsible for 13 questions, the 7th grades for 15 questions and the 8th grades are responsible for 17 questions in English part of SBS. Also, the master programs of universities demand English from the candidates. The third indicator is that good communicative competence in English is considered a crucial factor in job recruitment in Turkey.

With the emergence of Communicative Language Teaching, the importance of communicative competence was realized by the language educators, EFL teachers and they realized the deficiencies of traditional grammar-translation method and the audio-lingual method in developing students’ communication skills in English, and they started implementing the techniques of communicative language teaching into English classes.

Unfortunately, the implementation of communicative teaching approaches in a Turkish context is not as effective as educators have expected. Most of the students begin studying English at 10 in state schools and at 5-6 in private schools. By the time they graduate from the university, they have studied English for over 10 years. However, the result is awful. Many students can say nothing but simple phrases. The

causes of the unsatisfactory reform of English education in Turkey and the undesirable English learning results among Turkish students may be related to the following factors:

1. A Lack of Qualified Course Books: In foreign language education, it is rare to find teachers of English who do not use any course books in their classes. According to Pakkan (1997:7) the main reasons that make teachers prefer using course books are as follows:

- a) Course books are written by experienced and well-qualified people, and the material contained in them is usually carefully tested in pilot studies in actual situations before publication.
- b) Using a course book, to some extent, guarantees a degree of consistency in the courses that are taught by a number of different teachers who bring into classrooms different professional skills and personality traits.
- c) Teachers need a course book to help them bring the real world into the essentially artificial classroom situation so that they can relate the language items they are teaching to actual usage.
- d) Psychologically, a course book is also important to a student. It provides for the learner something concrete that gives a measure of progress and achievement as lessons are completed.

Generally speaking, the course book is one of the basic and most frequently used language teaching materials. However, not all of the English course books in our country are designed as the teachers of English have desired because almost all of the teachers do not become actively involved in the process of selecting language books to be used in the institutions where they work. In Turkey, the English course books are distributed without demanding any payment from the parents by the Turkish government. Because of limited financial sources or some other reasons, the government seems to underestimate the importance of the process of developing course books. However, the English course books should carefully be adapted, selected, developed and evaluated by language educators. Pakkan (1997) focuses on the fact that “the course book should be appropriate for the learners’ language level, level of education, age, social attitudes, intellectual ability, and level of emotional maturity, and the general goals of ELT in the country it is used. It should be relevant to the needs of the learners.” For instance, for primary school students, the course

books should include pictures, enjoyable activities, songs and games which draw learners' attention and make language learning process enjoyable.

As mentioned above, in Turkish Education system, different kinds of course books chosen by language educators are used in language classes. "Let's Speak English 8", one of these books, has been used to teach English to the 8th grade state school learners. When the book is evaluated it is realized that it is not motivating; it does not provide interesting and lively texts, enjoyable activities which employ the learners' thinking capacity, opportunities for the learner to use his existing knowledge and skills. Moreover, it includes listening texts that are too difficult and complex for the learners to comprehend. As a result, the students begin to be anxious about English and dislike it. This affects not only their attitudes but also their motivation and performance.

2. A Lack of Qualified Teachers:

Awareness of teaching is empowering. The more interest teachers have in gaining awareness of how we teach, the more freedom they will have to direct their teaching toward successful student learning.

Gerald Gephart (Cited in Karl, 1994: 7)

The teachers of foreign languages have much more responsibilities than the teachers of other courses in the sense that they try to teach a course that is different from the learners' mother tongue. Generally, the EFL learners seem to be anxious about English classes because they are not familiar with the language. Their attitudes toward English affect their performance and thus at this point the teacher feels that he/she has to create a lovely atmosphere for the students before starting the lesson. So the teachers of English find themselves with many parts to play: friend, manager, monitor, counselor, facilitator of learning, reliable informant on the language, social worker, model for the students, and so on (Karl, 1994:24).

One of the teachers' roles is to facilitate the communication process between all participants in the classroom, and between these participants and the various activities and texts (Richards, 1985). However, there are not enough opportunities for every English teacher in Turkey to study linguistic theories and theories of foreign language learning. In addition, due to limited governmental funding, only a small number of English teachers in Turkey can be funded to study or to get professional training in English speaking countries. Therefore, many English teachers in Turkey remain insufficient in teaching English.

3. **Learners' Negative Attitudes towards English:** In EFL classes, the learners are the language processors and their psychological situations play crucial role in processing language. Most members of the language teaching profession realize that their students' learning potential increases when attitudes are positive and motivation runs high (Elyıldırım and Ashton, 2006:2). For example, students' ability to learn a foreign language can be influenced by their attitudes towards the target language, the target language speakers and their culture, the social value of learning the foreign language, and also the students' attitudes towards themselves as members of their own culture.

As Brown (2000) points out, attitudes are cognitive and affective; that is, they are related to thoughts as well as to feelings and emotions. Attitudes govern how one approaches learning, which in the case of language requires exposure to a different culture and also to the difficult task of mastering a second language.

It is well known that negative attitudes towards the foreign language and group, which often comes from stereotypes and superficial contact with the target culture, can impede the learning of that language. Conversely, positive attitudes towards the foreign language increase language learning success. When students with positive attitudes experience success, the attitudes are reinforced, whereas students with negative attitudes may fail to progress and become even more negative in their language learning attitudes.

Besides the effect of the superficial contact with the target language, the attitudes of the teachers, their organization of the class and the language learning materials influence the learners' attitudes. Therefore, the language educators should not underestimate the importance of learners' both positive and negative attitudes. They should try to turn the negative attitudes of the learners to the positive ones in order to gain satisfactory results from their teaching.

To sum up, foreign language learning has been taken into consideration seriously by the language educators as language and communication have been at the heart of today's societies. Together with learners' beliefs, the specialists in Turkey should focus on other factors such as the quality of teachers and course books, etc. in language teaching and learning.

2.5. Approaches to the Investigation of Language Learning Beliefs

A considerable amount of research about language learning beliefs has been so far conducted. Barcelos (2000) approached learner beliefs in a different way and she realized three different approaches on the investigation of language learning beliefs. This classification is based on a definition of beliefs, research methodology, and the relationship between beliefs and other factors.

2.5.1. The Normative Approach

The term normative used by Holliday (1994, cited in Barcelos, 2003:45) refers to studies on culture that sees students' culture as explanation for their behaviors in class. Similarly, language learners' beliefs are seen as indicators of learners' future behaviors by the researchers of the normative approach.

The normative approach is characterized by the use of Likert-scale questionnaires in the investigation of learner beliefs. With the development of widely used questionnaire "Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory" (BALLI), Horwitz (1987) is generally considered to be a pionering researcher. Some researchers used the BALLI (Horwitz, 1987, 1988; Su, 1985; Tumplosky, 1991; Yang, 1992) in their studies, or adapted BALLI (Mantle-Bromley, 1995) with little modifications whereas others preferred to develop their own questionnaires (Kuntz, 1996; Mori, 1999; Sakui & Gaies, 1999) for their studies.

The use of questionnaires in this kind of studies has both advantageous and disadvantageous. They are advantageous because they are less threatening than observation and appropriate for the large numbers of respondents. On the other hand, they are disadvantageous as they ignore participants' own terms. The participants may also interpret the items very differently from what the researcher intended. Briefly, the studies in the normative approach use questionnaires to explore what they are intended to clarify.

2.5.2. The Meta-cognitive Approach

The meta-cognitive approach in the area of language learning beliefs derives from meta-cognitive knowledge. The term *meta-cognitive knowledge* originates from Flavell's meta-cognitive theory and refers to the individual's beliefs or knowledge (cognitions) about (his or others') cognitive processes (Flavell, 1979). This knowledge, in return, is used by the individual to guide his/her cognitive activities. The studies in the meta-cognitive approach attempted to infer beliefs from students' self reports and interviews and rejected to use questionnaires. The main idea in this

approach is that students' meta-cognitive knowledge also constitutes their "theories in action" that help them to reflect on what they are doing and to develop their potential for learning (Wenden, 1987, cited in Barcelos, 2003:56-57). Wenden (1987) conducted important studies within this framework, and described beliefs as stable.

This approach has also both advantages and disadvantages. It is advantageous in the sense that the use of interviews provides learners the opportunity for elaborating and reflecting on their experience. It also recognizes beliefs as knowledge. This means that learners' beliefs are part of learners' reasoning. This approach is disadvantageous in the sense that it sees beliefs as knowledge. In other words, to see beliefs as knowledge implies that beliefs are abstract entities inside learners' minds.

In her study, Barcelos (2003) criticized the meta-cognitive approach as the studies in meta-cognitive approach fail to explain the functions that beliefs play in students' contexts. She also argued that beliefs are not inferred from actions, but from intentions and statements only. Rather than accepting beliefs as abstract entities, some researchers (Kalaja, 2003; Barcelos, 2003) define them as part of experience.

2.5.3. The Contextual Approach

A number of research studies have employed the contextual approach to explore language learning beliefs (Allen, 1996). Some studies employ questionnaires or define beliefs as meta-cognitive knowledge. In this approach, beliefs are viewed as embedded in students' contexts. In other words, the basic idea behind this approach is combining different methods to interpret students' beliefs in their contexts. The studies in the contextual approach use ethnography, narratives and metaphors to investigate language learning beliefs.

Barcelos (1995, cited in Barcelos, 2003:66) attempted to understand students' language learning beliefs through the characterization of their culture of learning languages. The participants were 14 senior EFL undergraduate students in Brazil. In the study, she used semi-structured interviews and the technique of observation together with open-ended questionnaires. The results of the study showed that students' previous language learning experiences exerted strong influence on their language learning beliefs.

Similarly, Miller and Ginsberg (1995, cited in Barcelos, 2003:66) used learner diaries, teacher and student interviews and document analysis in order to understand the influence of teachers' beliefs on learners' language beliefs with the only participant-Libyan ESL intermediate student- in Canada. As a result, the learner changed his beliefs about language learning during the ESL course.

The contextual approach is advantageous as it proposes a different methodology to investigate beliefs. According to Woods (1997, cited in Barcelos, 2000), investigating language learning beliefs in context means knowing why learners hold particular types of beliefs, how their beliefs fit with others that they have, how their beliefs are related to their actions. On the other hand, it is disadvantageous to use this approach with large samples as the rate samples should be low because this approach looks at beliefs in depth.

In summary, different approaches to the investigation of language learning beliefs can be found as learner beliefs have been the focus of educational psychology. The preference of these approaches depends on the purpose of the researcher and the content of his/her study.

2.6. Horwitz Model: Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)

In the early 1980s, Elaine Horwitz created an instrument called the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) in order to identify learner beliefs about language learning. Three types of BALLI were developed by Horwitz to assess language learning beliefs. These are: (1) BALLI to measure the beliefs of the students studying commonly taught languages (CTL) in the U.S (English as a second language (ESL BALLI); (2) BALLI to explore beliefs held by foreign language teachers (teachers BALLI); and (3) BALLI to assess beliefs of students learning foreign languages (foreign language BALLI).

Several groups of people contributed to the creation of the BALLI. As Kuntz (1996) maintains, Horwitz's BALLI evolved as a result of a brain-storming session that she had with 25 language teachers. Horwitz then compiled a teacher-generated list of beliefs that students might have about language learning and worked with specialists in cognitive science and psychology in rephrasing the statements. Subsequently, she piloted the instrument among 150 first-year language students at the university of Texas-Austin.

The ESL BALLI consisted of 27 statements and was used to assess beliefs of immigrants learning English as a second language in Texas. The second BALLI focused on the beliefs held by teachers of foreign languages; it consisted of 27 statements. The third BALLI comprised 34 statements and was employed by Horwitz to gather the opinions of students learning French, German and Spanish at the University of Texas at Austin. All the different versions of BALLIs employed a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”.

To give the instrument a structure, questions in the BALLI were divided into groups according to their theme or topic. Initially, Horwitz’s BALLIs (Horwitz, 1981, cited in Kuntz, 1996a) comprised four themes, i.e. (1) foreign language aptitude, (2) difficulty of language learning, (3) nature of language learning, and (4) language learning strategies. Then Horwitz modified the fourth theme to “learning and communication strategies” and added “motivation and expectation” to her instrument (Horwitz, 1987). The final BALLI (Horwitz, 1988) to assess beliefs about foreign language learning had this structure.

Despite the fact that Horwitz’s BALLIs have been principal tools for extensive research into the subject of language learners’ beliefs, Kuntz (1996) raised several issues concerning the instrument’s validity. Firstly, statements dealing with learners’ beliefs were generated from the opinions of language teachers rather than from the opinions of learners themselves. Secondly, Horwitz did not form themes under which student beliefs are organized based upon statistical analysis such as factor analysis, correlations, etc. As Nikitina & Furuoka (2006) maintain, the choice of those themes and their labeling were never explained. In other words, as Kuntz (1996:4) observes, “the five present themes represent a belief structure that teachers think students hold and not one that the sample of students actually revealed”. Lastly, Horwitz research employed only descriptive statistics. This may attest to researchers’ general agreement with the separation of beliefs into different areas as proposed by Horwitz.

As a result of these lacking points of BALLI, this present study prefers to develop a questionnaire based on BALLI rather than using its original version in order to identify learner beliefs about learning EFL in Turkey.

2.7. Related Studies Based on the Horwitz Model Conducted Abroad

Horwitz's work generated considerable research interest in the nature of beliefs held by language learners. So many scholars have used BALLI or variation of it as an instrument in their studies related to beliefs about language learning-teaching. Only the studies used BALLI or variation of it will be reviewed in this section.

Two colleagues of Horwitz, Smith and Nummukoski (1989, cited in Kuntz, 1996) repeated her study with students of Russian at the University of Texas-Austin. Their results showed that students of Russian agree that every one can learn a foreign language including people who are good at mathematics and science. The results indicated that these students considered themselves good language learners and sought to learn Russian well so that they could speak with Russian nationals. This study was important in that it was the first one to go beyond Horwitz's work with students of the commonly taught languages (Kuntz, 1996).

In contrast to Horwitz' BALLI comprising 34 statements, Bacon and Finnemann (1990) conducted a survey consisting of 109 statements of beliefs with 1000 first-year students of Spanish at two American universities. Using factor analysis, they classified the 109 statements into 11 factors upon the basis of the two pilot studies. The results of the study show that students strongly agreed with the statements that referred to anxiety about activities involving performance. Students in both groups disagreed that foreign language learning is a matter of memorizing grammar rules and vocabulary. In addition, both groups stated that they would guess at meaning as a communication strategy. Based on the findings, Bacon and Finnemann concluded that student beliefs "shed light into how individual students anticipate their reactions to components of foreign language curriculum". They recommend that it is equally important for curriculum planners and textbook writers to know students' attitudes towards language learning and be aware of what students expect from the foreign language course curriculum.

At the U.S Air Force Academy, Campbell and Ortiz (1991, cited in Kuntz, 1996) incorporated five additional statements into a larger survey in order to identify the beliefs held by military recruits about foreign language learning. However the results of this initial study were inconclusive. In another study, Campbell (1993, cited in Kuntz, 1996:12) redesigned the study and condensed the Horwitz's instrument to seven statements followed by a write-in section. The new instrument, Beliefs about Language Learning (BLL) followed the 5-scale Likert format. Three

items dealt with grammar, two with language aptitude, one with fluency, and one with pronunciation. Although no pilot testing took place, a panel of scholars judged this abbreviated instrument as being reliable and valid. Seventy first-month students of French and Spanish from two mid-western universities participated in this survey. Over half wrote additional remarks. The results indicated that more than %60 of Campbell's students disagreed that foreign language is mostly a matter of learning grammar rules.

Research by Tumposky (1991) utilized Horwitz's BALLI in order to survey two groups of undergraduate students from different cultural settings: U.S students of French and Spanish were compared with the soviet students of English. Both groups of students previously had studied another foreign language. The soviet students had studied English for several years as a condition for passing a TOEFL examination. Tumposky compared the groups simply by frequency of responses. Tumposky's results supported the impression that monolingualism is favored in the U.S in contrast to multilingualism in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The Soviet students indicated high agreement for learning a language to "know" a speaker of English. Furthermore, the students enjoyed practicing English with people proficient in the language or with language types. Soviets also indicated that it was easier to read and write (recursive skills) a foreign language than to speak and understand (spontaneous skills) it. So, Tumposky's research suggested that cultural differences were related to motivation and specific learning strategies.

Yang's (1992) research on 505 Taiwanese students studying English as a foreign language (EFL) substantially expanded the results of belief research. On the basis of Horwitz's initial work with students of French, German and Spanish, Yang designed her research to examine different culture (Taiwanese), non-beginner students (6 or more years of language study), multiple states (six universities), a different language (English), and a different set of measures (inferential statistics). She translated the BALLI into Chinese to enable students respond easily and added one open-ended question to the BALLI. Using principal component and factor analysis, Yang divided the 34-statement BALLI into four new groups based upon factor loadings; (1) self-efficacy and expectation; (2) value & nature of learning spoken English; (3) foreign language aptitude; and (4) formal, structured study.

The majority responses from Taiwanese students indicated that foreign language learning is important and should be acquired correctly and thoroughly.

These beliefs reflected Taiwanese culture that values English skills and proficiency in its citizens. Also responses of most of these students showed a preference to learn English (target language) in a target language country. Likewise, the majority responses for Taiwanese students indicated speaking the language would result in many opportunities and that the citizens of Taiwan want to learn English (foreign language). Yang's research design expanded the Horwitz research model by drawing a student sample from many universities, by obtaining a large sample size for one language, and by using inferential statistics of the parametric type for analysis. Her study became a model for Park (1995) and Truitt (1995) in their research of Korean students of English.

Fox (1993) incorporated parts of the Horwitz's BALLI to identify beliefs held by teaching assistants (TA) of first-year students of French in New York. Fox utilized 26 items from BALLI. Her study showed that the following beliefs were most commonly held by the TA: (1) Everyone can learn a foreign language; (2) Women are not better language learners than are men; (3) Mistakes are not hard to correct later; and (4) Students may learn the language well. Fox concluded that instructor's knowledge of both student beliefs and their own beliefs is important for successful foreign language teaching and learning. Comparison of beliefs between students and instructors disclosed goals and possible misunderstandings by between teachers and students in learning situations.

At the University of California, Kern (1995) sampled students of French and their teachers. Like the Fox's study, Kern's project sampled students only at one university and did not classify statements by Horwitz's themes. After analyzing results from first-semester students and teachers, he conducted a follow-up on the same students during the second semester of their first year. He then determined any changes in their initial beliefs as a result of influences from the teacher, textbooks, course content, and/or peer attitudes. Individual students frequently changed their responses following the second semester of the study. Kern found that initial responses for some beliefs (learning overseas, length of time for achieving fluency) did not change overtime while some responses (learning grammar rules, self-consciousness) became even more negative (opposing adult language learning and grammar/vocabulary focus) than reported by the beginning students. Lastly, Kern's study showed that the teachers' beliefs did not influence second-semester students as much as other elements in the learning environment.

Truitt (1995) employed the 34-statement foreign language beliefs BALLI with additional open-ended questions to assess the beliefs of 204 students learning English as a foreign language at a Korean University. He conducted factor analysis with BALLI. Though 25 statements (out of a total of 34) were retained in Truitt's study after the factor analysis, the researcher did not offer a systematic explanation of the method of reduction of the BALLI items. Five themes that had been discerned as a result of the factor analysis were labeled by Truitt as: (1) value and nature of learning English; (2) self-efficacy/confidence in speaking; (3) the importance of correctness/formal learning; (4) ease of learning English; and (5) motivation. It should also be noted that in Truitt's study each of the factors contained statements that had been placed in different themes by Horwitz. For example, the "value and nature of learning English" factor included items from Horwitz's "aptitude", "strategy", "nature of learning", and "motivation" themes.

Similarly, Park (1995) carried out a study at Korean universities and involved 338 students learning English as a foreign language. Park used the 27-statement ESL BALLI with 10 additional statements. As a result of statistical analysis, the following four themes were identified: (1) motivation and formal English (BALLI statements (16, 20, 23, 26, 30, 31, 32); (2) self-efficacy and social interaction (4, 6, 8, 12, 15, 18); (3) learning spoken English (7, 9, 11, 13); and (4) foreign language aptitude (2, 3, 22, 29). Similar to Yang's results, statements related to foreign language aptitude were strongly marked in Park's study.

Su (1995, cited in Barcelos, 2000) investigated the relationship between language learning strategies and learning styles of 369 Chinese university students and their cultural beliefs about learning and teaching English in a formal situation. The findings suggested that beliefs were not related to learners' preference of strategies.

More recently, Mantle-Bromley (1995) conducted a study with 94 high school students of French and Spanish. She utilized the BALLI to identify learners' attitudes towards languages and culture in their first language class. Mantle-Bromley deleted four statements from the BALLI associated with the theme "Motivation and Expectation". Therefore, the total number of the BALLI was 29. Her results indicated that students believed Spanish and French were easy and could be learned in less than two years. They also believed that some people had a special ability to

learn languages, that learning was mostly learning vocabulary and words, and that cultural understanding was not necessary to learn languages.

Kuntz (1996) expanded the BALLI and created the Kuntz-Rifkin Inventory because she claims that BALLI has some lacking points. However, his instrument incorporated so many of BALLI items. She investigated language learning beliefs held by 113 students of commonly taught languages in the USA, such as ESL, German, Spanish, and French and compared them with the beliefs of students of Swahili. Kuntz explained that the students of less commonly taught languages such as Swahili require more time to achieve the minimal level of proficiency. Her results showed that both groups believed in the importance of practice and repetition. Swahili students disagreed most strongly that one does not need to speak until one can say it correctly, whereas students of commonly taught language disagreed that one needs to know all the words in order to read in a foreign language.

With respect to the belief-anxiety relationship, Kuntz (1997, cited in Öz, 2005) employed BALLI as a research instrument and explored the relationship between the beliefs about language learning of Turkish-speaking university students of EFL and their foreign language anxiety levels. For anxiety, Kuntz reported a significant relationship between “self-efficacy/confidence in speaking” and foreign language anxiety. Namely, Turkish EFL learners with confidence in English ability held less foreign language anxiety.

Similarly, Wang (2005) investigated the relationship between foreign language anxiety and the beliefs about language learning of university students learning EFL in mainland China. A total of 175 first and second year university students participated in the study. BALLI was translated into Chinese before it was administered to the participants. The Chinese subjects in this study reported higher levels of foreign language anxiety than the subjects in previous studies. Two BALLI factors were found to be significantly correlated with foreign language anxiety: "the difficulty about language learning" ($r = .544$, $p < .01$) and "beliefs about foreign language aptitude" ($r = -.255$, $p < .01$), suggesting that Chinese EFL students who believe English is not a very difficult language and perceive themselves as having higher language aptitude in language learning tend to have lower levels of language anxiety.

Extending on previous BALLI research, Banya & Chen (1997) have conducted one of the more extensive studies on the relationship of beliefs about

language learning and factors such as motivation, attitude, motivational intensity, strategy use, anxiety, and English achievement. Data from 224 Taiwanese EFL learners was collected for statistical analysis, based on subjects' responses to the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) (Horwitz, 1987); Motivation/Attitude Inventory for English Learning (MAIEL) (Chen, 1995, cited in Banya & Chen, 1997); Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (Oxford, 1990, cited in Banya & Chen, 1997); and, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986). Findings show that all above mentioned variables were influenced by students' beliefs, with attitude being the variable most greatly influenced by beliefs, while anxiety was negatively related to beliefs. In other words, students with positive beliefs about foreign language learning tend to have stronger motivation, hold favorable attitude and higher motivational intensity, use more strategies, are less anxious, and have better language achievement.

More recently, Mori (1999b) developed her own language learning questionnaire to assess the beliefs of 187 college students learning Japanese as a foreign language in the USA. The instrument contained 92 items separated into 17 themes. She acknowledged that the themes in her questionnaire were partially inspired by research on beliefs and pedagogical literature. This might explain why some of her themes bore strong resemblance to items in Horwitz's BALLI, e.g., "innate ability" ("language aptitude" in the BALLI), "language learning is the same" (BALLI's "nature of learning"), "Japanese is difficult" ("language difficulty" in the BALLI), etc.

In the large-scale systematic study of language learners' beliefs, Sakui & Gaies (1999) surveyed 1296 students of English at 2-year and 4-year higher education institutions in Japan. Based on BALLI, they developed combined certain original items specific to learners in Japan, and was developed through a system of translation, back translation, piloting and consultation with teachers and graduate students in Japan. The development of this questionnaire was driven by three priorities. These were the need for an instrument relevant to learners in Japan, the importance of an instrument in Japanese (the students' first language), and the importance of multi-stage outside review of such an instrument. Analysis of responses to their questionnaire identifies four factors underlying learners' responses: (1) contemporary orientation to learning English; (2) traditional orientation to learning English; (3) beliefs about the quality; (4) sufficiency of classroom

instruction for learning English and beliefs about foreign language aptitude and difficulty.

In order to find out how far learner beliefs differ from those held by EFL teachers, and to learn whether those differences affect language learning, Peacock (1999) administered BALLI to 202 students in ten EFL classes and 45 teachers in the department of English, at the City University of Hong Kong. To collect data, together with BALLI, interviews with learners were made, proficiency tests were applied and essays were collected from participants. Results indicated that students' responses differed from common teacher perceptions on the same items. Results of this study made Peacock suggest that EFL teachers explain course objectives to learners, in order to reduce learner misunderstanding, dissatisfaction and opposition to teachers and teaching.

With the aim of surveying 68 Taiwanese pre-service English elementary teachers, regarding their beliefs about language learning and teaching, Yang (2000) developed a questionnaire and adapted some items from BALLI. The survey examined their beliefs in five areas: (1) child development; (2) teaching English to children; (3) the nature of language learning; (4) self-efficacy and (5) expectations. Data analysis indicated that the respondents shared several beliefs about child development (e.g., children's first language development is related to their second language development). Most respondents believed that in learning English, younger is better, and more than half believed that people acquire language knowledge by repeatedly understanding expressions in the language that are a little beyond their current level of competence. In general, Yang found that participants had strong motivations and high expectations for becoming good elementary school teachers.

Oi & B. Ed (2002) used BALLI in order to explore the relationship between the beliefs about language learning held by 72 Hong Kong secondary four students and their level of oral proficiency. The results showed that roughly equal numbers of students belonged to three different groups (high, middle, low) on the basis of proficiency scores and had mixed beliefs of language learning. It was found that there was significant positive correlation between oral proficiency in relation to eleven out of thirty-four BALLI items. Of these one fell into foreign language aptitude, two into the nature of language learning aspects, and four into learning and communication strategies, and motivations and expectations respectively.

Siebert (2003) investigated the beliefs about language learning held by ESL students and teachers in an intensive English setting at institutions of higher education in the Northwest region of the U.S in order to explore similarities and differences, as well as the influence of national origin/ethnicity and gender on these beliefs. BALLI was administered to 181 participants: 156 students (91 males and 64 females) and 25 teachers. Students had an approximate TOEFL score of 425, and came from a variety of nationality backgrounds including Angola, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Laos, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, and Vietnam.

With respect to gender, Siebert (2003) found a number of significant belief differences among males and females in relation to language learning and strategy use. For example, findings revealed that male students were more likely than female students to rate their abilities highly and more likely to respond that they have a special ability for learning languages, and were much more optimistic about the length of time it takes to learn a language. There were also other significant differences between males and females with respect to the importance of grammar, and practicing with cassettes, videotapes or computers.

In addition, Siebert noted that national origin or ethnicity does have an affect on students' beliefs about language learning, with some of the most striking difference found in the areas of ability, length of time it takes to learn a language, and the difficulty of the English language. For example, Middle Eastern students tended to underestimate the length of time it takes to learn a language and were more likely to believe that they have special language abilities. The opposite was found in Japanese students, for example. Siebert also reported a number of statistically significant differences among teachers' and learners' beliefs on 16 BALLI items.

Le (2004) investigated the affective characteristics of American college students studying Chinese in China, including their reasons for learning Chinese and studying abroad, their beliefs about language learning and their foreign language anxiety. A total of 133 American students enrolled in Chinese programs in seven key universities in China participated in this study. For this study, Le used three survey instruments together with BALLI. The students were divided into three groups based on their ethnic heritage. Findings of the study identified several significant demographic differences among the three ethnic groups in a variety of areas. Also,

important differences among the three ethnic groups in their reasons for learning Chinese and studying abroad, their beliefs about language learning and their foreign language anxiety were found.

Bernat (2004) investigated beliefs about language learning among 20 adult Vietnamese ESL learners for the purpose of informing syllable design and teacher practice. The secondary purpose of Bernat's research was to discover whether there was a link between learners' motivation for language learning and their beliefs. In order to achieve this aim, she used BALLI as an instrument. The results indicated that the students' motivation was high. 100% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the item (29) that is "If I learn English very well, I will have better job opportunities". The results also showed that the participants were very optimistic for their future language learning process and showed high levels of motivation because they had poor prospects of employment, low socio-economic status, low English proficiency and had a number of negative beliefs. Hence, links established between motivation beliefs about language learning in that pilot study. On the contrary, despite a number of negative beliefs, 70% of respondents believed that they will learn to speak English very well.

In her another study, Bernat (2006) investigated beliefs held by 262 English for Academic Purposes (EAP) language learners at an Australian university. The results of the BALLI produced some interesting findings, which gave insight into the learners' beliefs about the nature of the English language including its difficulty, the existence of language aptitude, learning and communication strategies, and motivation to succeed. It was concluded that despite a small number of inter-group differences, it seemed premature to conclude that beliefs about language learning vary by contextual setting. Rather, they are due to the effects of individuals' complex meta-cognitive structure (as affected by a number of social, cultural, contextual, cognitive, affective, and personal factors) that is responsible for the nature and strength of these beliefs.

Hsieh (2004) examined the general question of the relationship between foreign language learners' attribution, self-efficacy beliefs, general language learning beliefs, and their achievement in foreign language classes. Participants were 500 undergraduates enrolled in Spanish, German and French classes. Results indicated that self-efficacy correlated positively with internal, personal, and stable attributions and negatively with external attributions. Results also indicated that students who

made internal or stable attributions for success had higher self-efficacy beliefs than students who made external or unstable attributions.

Tsai (2004) employed BALLI in order to explore foreign language anxiety and beliefs about language learning of 388 first and second year college students learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in Taiwan. The findings revealed that the participants did experience a high level of foreign language anxiety.

More recently, Diab (2005) explored the beliefs about language learning of Lebanese English as a foreign language university students, compared their beliefs about learning different target languages, namely, English and French. In this study a modified version of BALLI was administered to 284 students in three universities in Lebanon. Finding of the study revealed that the students hold a variety of beliefs about learning English and French, many of which seem to be related to the political and socio-cultural context of foreign language education in Lebanon. The students in the study viewed English as an easy language and French as a difficult one. Besides these, most students agreed that it is important to learn English than French.

Another Japanese researcher, Riley (2006) employed the Japanese language questionnaire developed by Sakui and Gaies (1999) in his study in order to investigate the beliefs about language learning of 661 first year university students and 34 of their class teachers in Japan. In addition to describing student beliefs, the study explores differences between student beliefs and teacher beliefs, change in student beliefs during a course of study, and the relationship between student beliefs and second language proficiency. The results indicated significant differences between student responses and teacher responses for more than half of the questionnaire items, with the four main areas of difference relating to translation, error correction, the difficulty of language learning and motivation.

Nikitina & Furuoka (2006) conducted a different research as it looked at the nature of the language learners' beliefs in a multilingual setting, such as Malaysia. Their study aimed to ascertain whether Horwitz's choice of themes could be backed by inferential statistical analysis and employed factor analysis for this purpose because there have been criticisms regarding the validity of the instrument, especially the delineation of its themes into foreign language aptitude, the difficulty of language learning, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivation and expectations. Participants were 107 students learning the Russian language at University Malasia Sabah (UMS). As a result of statistical

tests, the following four factors were extracted: (1) motivation, (2) aptitude, (3) strategy, and (4) ease of learning. The participants in the study were motivated to learn Russian as they believe that knowledge of a foreign language will enhance their job prospects. Also, they were keen to learn the language in order to meet native speakers of the Russian language. These results may indicate that “language aptitude” and “motivation” could be viewed as universal language learning beliefs. However, prominence of a particular theme may be determined by the socio-linguistic environment where language learning takes place. Overall, these results allowed them to conclude that Horwitz’s instrument is a suitable tool for research on language learning beliefs in various socio-linguistic settings regardless of the language being learned.

Bernat & Lloyd (2007) administered BALLI to 155 female and 107 male English as foreign language learners enrolled in an Academic English program at an Australian university in order to investigate the relationship between beliefs about language learning and gender. Results indicated that males and females in this study seem to respond in a similar fashion in terms of their beliefs about foreign language aptitude, the difficulty they perceive when learning a foreign language, the nature of language learning, strategies in learning and communication, and their motivations and expectations. However, there were two items on which responses of females and males differed. One concerned with the relationship between speaking more than one language and intelligence with females being more likely to view that intelligence plays a greater role in language learning than males. Another difference was found in an item that concerned the degree of enjoyment both males and females reported in practicing English with native speakers, with males being more likely to enjoy the experience than females.

2.8. Related Studies Conducted in Turkey

Very few studies to date have investigated the language learning beliefs of Turkish learners of English. One of the few studies was by Halaçoğlu (1999) who investigated the beliefs of the students at Foreign Language Centre of Çukurova University about language learning in order to find out the effects of learners’ beliefs on their language success. Halaçoğlu modified BALLI and administered it to the 268 students. The study did not indicate a statistically significant relationship between learners’ beliefs about language learning and their success.

Aktaş (2001) conducted a study by administering BALLI to 1004 students and 59 teachers at Anadolu University, School of Foreign Languages, English Preparatory Program in order to investigate what beliefs teachers and students held about foreign language learning and whether there were any mismatches between learner and teacher beliefs. In her study, Aktaş also investigated whether these beliefs varied according to gender, major, educational background, English proficiency level of learners and teaching experience of teachers. The findings of the study identified both similarities and differences between learner and teacher beliefs. Also, it was found out that only the results dealing with the proficiency level of English revealed highly significant differences and a significant difference was observed between males and females related to language learning beliefs with a few items.

Öz (2005) investigated beliefs about language learning of 470 EFL learners in secondary education to explore what kinds of beliefs they held about learning EFL, how their beliefs were organized, and whether there were significant differences in belief systems among learner groups according to variables such as social and school contexts, gender, age and grade level. In order to collect data BALLI was administered to the learners. The results of the study demonstrated that Turkish EFL learners have a broad range of conceptions both similar to and different from those reported in the current literature.

Not long ago, Tercanlioğlu (2005) investigated 118 EFL teacher trainees' beliefs and the relationship between beliefs and gender by using BALLI. She demonstrated that categories or dimensions of students' beliefs were strongly correlated and that motivations and expectations were more important among other things. However, she did not find any significant difference between belief categories and gender, assuming that may be the similarity between male and female beliefs indicates "recent educational practices that tend to give emphasis to education of females" (p.158) in Turkish context.

More recently, Altan (2006) carried out a study of 248 foreign language major university students at five universities in Turkey. The BALLI instrument was administered to those students. The participants were in the departments of English, German, French, Japanese and Arabic and they were all candidate teachers of the language they were learning. The findings of the study identified similarity of beliefs among the different target language groups. The study indicated that students hold a

range of beliefs e.g., “some people are born with a special ability to learn a foreign language” or “it is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language” with varying degrees of validity. His article also identified some discrete beliefs held by foreign language major university students. Thus the findings confirmed that pre-service teachers arrived at the task of language learning with definite preconceived notions of how to go about it.

2.9. Other Studies (Non-BALLI) Related To Language Learning Beliefs

Using semi-structured interviews with thirty-four adult L2 learners in USA, Wenden (1986a) explored learners’ explicit beliefs about how to learn a second language and reported that those beliefs influenced adult learners’ personal attempts at helping themselves to learn. Furthermore, Wenden (1986b) explored and categorized learners’ meta-cognitive knowledge related to their language learning experiences through interviews with 25 adult learners of English as second language (ESL) about their learning in different social settings, i.e. multiethnic communities in the USA.

Luppescu and Day (1990) carried out a study of 31 teachers of English and 84 high school and university students of English in Japan. Their stated goal was to develop a questionnaire instrument, which would allow researchers to determine a set of critical factors for the successful teaching and learning of English. The questionnaire consisted of 77 items in nine categories. Results of the study showed that the teachers’ responses tended to follow an orientation path. Teachers generally either agreed with the classical items or disagreed with the contemporary items, or vice versa. Students’ responses to the questionnaire items, however, tended to be inconsistent, and failed to follow either orientation path. Researchers concluded that the learners in their questionnaire study lacked the meta-knowledge about language teaching and learning necessary to participate in such a study, and seemed to possess no coherent beliefs about English language learning.

In another study, Rifkin (2000) used Kunz-Rifkin Instrument (KRI) to investigate, over a three -year period, the language learning beliefs of 1,004 students enrolled in courses for 10 different languages in three different institutions in the United States. His aim was to investigate whether learners at the first year level of instruction hold beliefs similar to those held by learners at other levels of study, whether learners of more commonly taught languages hold similar beliefs to those of

learners of less commonly taught languages and whether learners at large universities hold beliefs similar to those held by learners at small liberal art colleges. Rifkin (2000:405) found relationships between learner beliefs and level of instruction, whether the language of study is a commonly or less commonly taught language, and the nature of institution. Rifkin concluded that “every learner has a concrete set of beliefs, some of which may be productive, others counter-productive, for the language learning enterprise”.

Barcelos (2000) investigated the relationship between the beliefs about language learning of three American ESL teachers and three Brazilian students at an English Language Institute in the southern United States. This study examined not only how teachers’ beliefs may influence students’ beliefs, but also how students’ beliefs and actions may influence the teachers’ actions and beliefs. The findings of her study indicated that the students and teachers’ language learning beliefs and actions shape context and are shaped by it. According to Barcelos, few studies have examined how teachers and students’ beliefs interact. The few studies that have investigated this relationship have used questionnaires and interventions. “The use of this kind of instrument makes it difficult to understand the process from an ethic perspective” (Barcelos, 2003:3). That’s why she made interviews with students and teachers also used classroom observation for this study

2.10. Conclusion

All in all, the belief literature has dealt with a great many aspects of foreign language learning beliefs. The previous studies have all complemented to the growing body of knowledge on this area. In fact, there are so many studies which have dealt with learner beliefs about foreign language learning and have investigated the relationships between learners’ beliefs and anxiety, motivation, success, and oral proficiency, etc. However, these studies have focused on learners’ beliefs about foreign language learning at university level or secondary education level. What is left behind is about the organization of the learners’ beliefs in primary education. The current study will deal with 8th grade learners’ beliefs and the relationships between these beliefs and such variables as gender and school status. The following sections of this thesis will first describe the methodology of this study and then primarily focus on learners’ beliefs about learning EFL, the organization of these

beliefs, and the relationships between these beliefs and such variables as gender and school status.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Presentation

This chapter presents research design, population and sampling, data collection instrument, development of research instrument, pilot study, the procedure of data collection, and data analysis and statistical procedures conducted in the current study.

3.2. Research Design

The current study is a descriptive analysis of the organization of 8th grade learners' beliefs about learning EFL in Turkey. The study will have two parts. The former will deal with identifying 8th grade learners' beliefs about learning EFL and how these beliefs are organized. The latter part of this thesis will provide information on the possible differences between learner beliefs and such variables as gender and school status.

Ekmekçi (1997:62) gives the purpose of and an example to descriptive research. A descriptive study aims at “describing systematically the facts and characteristics of a given population or area of interest, factually and accurately” (Isaac & Michael, 1997: 18, cited in Ekmekçi, 1997:62). According to Ekmekçi, a survey reporting the results of Master's Degree graduates in English from the University of Hawaii, would be considered a descriptive study because a study of this kind involves collecting data that test the validity of hypotheses regarding the present status of the subjects of the study. Public opinion surveys, fact-finding surveys and reports can be cited as examples of a descriptive research.

3.3. Research Population and Sampling

The population of this research consisted of 738 eighth grade students drawn out of the 24 primary schools in one of the municipalities (Şahinbey) of Gaziantep in Turkey. The researcher had to reduce the size of the population to manageable numbers. Therefore, only Şahinbey municipality for sampling was chosen because it

was assumed that schools in this district had a longer history of establishment and were more fully equipped with English teaching staff. As mentioned in the first chapter of the study as a limitation, the samples chosen amongst the state schools may not yield to uniformity in terms of their background in learning EFL. In other words, some students may have had longer exposure to the target language whereas others may have had less. On the other hand, it is possible to say that learners in private schools have been exposed to the target language longer than the learners in state schools since they have been studying English for at least 7 or 8 years. In terms of the number of hours of English learning per week, private school students study 8 or 9 hours whereas state schools students study only 4 hours of English.

There are several reasons for choosing 8th grade learners for this study. First, my literature survey suggested that the foreign language learning beliefs of this age group had been neglected by previous studies because young learners are considered to be consciously unaware of the kind of beliefs they hold about foreign language learning. Second, rather than 6th or 7th grade students, the present study chose 8th grade students as they had been studying EFL for at least three years. It was assumed that eighth year students would be better able to identify and express their beliefs about foreign language learning by virtue of having accumulated more experience in EFL than 6th or 7th graders.

As for the sampling of the study, cluster random sampling was applied in the current study. In the Şahinbey Municipality, there were 134 state and 11 private schools. Since our study was descriptive, 15% of the state schools and 36% of the private schools were chosen randomly which exceeded the minimum necessary of 10%. As a result, 20 schools among the 134 state schools and 4 schools among the 11 private schools participated in the study. In these schools, the questionnaire was administered to only one class which was chosen upon negotiation with the school principle. The number of students in these classes ranged from 19 to 40 (see, Appendix B). Table 3.1 and Table 3.2 give necessary information about the population of the study.

As shown in Table 3.1, the state-private school ratio was 614:124; namely, 83.2% of the participants were from state schools and 16.8% of the participants were from private schools.

Table 3.1. Total and Percentage of the Subjects by the Status of the School (N=738)

Status of the School	n	Percentage
State	614	83.2
Private	124	16.8
Total	738	100

As shown in Table 3.2 below, the male-female ratio was 374:364; namely, 50.7% of the participants were male and 49.3% of the participants were female.

Table 3.2. Total and Percentage of the Subjects by Gender (N=738)

Gender	n	Percentage
Male	374	50.7
Female	364	49.3
Total	738	100

3.4. Data Collection Instrument

The main instrument for this study was the questionnaire developed by the researcher in 2008. This 41-item instrument was developed in Turkish, specifically for young learners of English. Although based on an existing instrument, with many similarities to Horwitz's BALLI (Horwitz, 1988), the researcher of this study created original items specific to young learners in Turkey, and developed this instrument through a process of translation, back translation, piloting and consultation with Turkish language teachers and English teachers, and 8th grade young learners of English. The items were answered on a five-point Likert-type scale, with the answer options of: strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, or strongly agree. For data analysis purposes, these responses were numerically coded as one, two, three, four, and five, respectively. The Cronbach's alpha value of the newly developed scale is .79 for the current study. The Turkish version of this questionnaire instrument administered to the students can be found in Appendix C.

3.4.1. The Development of the Research Instrument

The researcher developed a questionnaire based on an existing instrument (BALLI by Horwitz, 1988). The development of the questionnaire used in this study was guided by some priorities: 1) the need for a context-sensitive instrument (i.e. one which would tap beliefs most relevant to the learning of English in Turkey); and 2)

the importance of an instrument written in the students' first language (Wen and Johnson, 1997, cited in K.Sakui & S.J, 1999:477).

Having observed these priorities in developing the questionnaire of the study, the first step that the researcher took was to review the literature to find out whether there were existing questionnaires used in assessing learner beliefs about foreign language learning. Based on literature review, the researcher obtained an instrument titled Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), created by Elaine Horwitz in 1988 (see Appendix A). Together with BALLI, other instruments developed by other researchers (Kuntz, 1997; Sakui & Gaies, 1999) were also found. However, these other instruments were not modelled since they were merely developed through some modifications of the BALLI items. Thus, the only original inventory in the literature belongs to Horwitz.

The second step was to examine the items in the existing instruments dealing with beliefs, attitudes, and other individual factors in language learning. The researcher decided to do what Horwitz neglected in developing her instrument; that is, to explore the opinions of the learners who study EFL in addition to those of the teachers. In order to fulfill this aim, the researcher asked the learners in her own classes what they thought about learning English as a foreign language and used the technique of brainstorming by directing questions to the learners to make them ponder over the issue seriously. Some students said that "English cannot be learned through memorization."; others suggested that "If my English teacher were a native speaker of English, I would be more successful"; and some of them said that "To have relatives who know English makes it easier for me to learn English" and similar opinions were included into the questionnaire, as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3.Items Contributed by Learners

3. To have relatives who know English makes it easier for me to learn English.
13. English cannot be learned through memorization.
14. It is a privilege to be able to speak English in our country.
23. If my teacher were a native speaker of English, I would be more successful.
28. Speaking English increases one's self-confidence.
34. If my teacher taught English well, I could learn it better.
35. To like English makes it easier to learn.

In the next stage of the collection of the items on learner beliefs, the researcher juxtaposed the selected BALLI items, modified versions of some items, together with additional items which the researcher wrote based on opinions obtained

from learners. This version of the instrument was given to a number of English teachers working at different educational levels (i.e. instructors at the local university, English teachers in high schools or primary schools) and they were asked to: 1) judge the relevance of the items for primary school English education in Turkey; and 2) suggest additional ideas for items.

The fourth step was to examine additional ideas and items suggested by those teachers and to utilize some of those items in order to write new items in place of the omitted items from the original BALLI. Except for ten items (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 10, 16, 17, 20 and 20), all items in BALLI were either modified or rephrased. For instance, in Horwitz's BALLI, the word "women" was modified as "girls" and the word "men" was modified as "boys" in item 22, etc. Also some of the items (3, 13, 14, 23, 28, 34) seemed to be irrelevant or unanswerable for Turkish students and so they were omitted. Item 14 (see, Appendix A) also seemed not to be convenient as a response format for the learners' age group to answer.

Afterwards, the total pool of items was examined to eliminate duplication and any overlaps. Each of the remaining items was then written in English, in most cases with relatively few slight alterations in wording or with alternative wordings of the same proposition (see, Table 3.7). The omitted items from the original instrument are shown in Table 3.4, the items re-written are shown in Table 3.5 and additional items are shown in Table 3.6.

Table 3.4. Omitted Items from the Original Questionnaire

3. Some languages are easier to learn than other.
13. It is okay to guess if you do not know a word in the foreign language.
14. If someone spent one hour a day learning a language, how long would it take him/her to become fluent?: (a) less than a year; (b) 1-2 years; (c) 3-5 years; (d) 5-10 years; (e) you can't learn a language in 1 hour a day.
23. If I speak this language very well, I will have many opportunities to use it.
28. It is easier to use to read and write this language than to speak and understand it.
34. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.

Table 3.5. Items Replacing the Omitted Items

3. To have relatives who know English makes it easier for me to learn English.
13. English cannot be learned through memorization.
14. It is a privilege to be able to speak English in our country.
23. If my teacher were a native speaker of English, I would be more successful.
28. Speaking English increases one's self-confidence.
34. If my teacher taught English well, I could learn it better.

Table 3.6. Additional Items of the Researcher

36. The best thing to do in English classes is to sit at one's desk without being noticed.
37. People can be ridiculed in English classes.
38. Learning English is not meant for shy students.
39. The only important thing for me is to get a good grade in English.
40. I feel inhibited about speaking English in front of my classmates.
41. The English education I receive at school is adequate.

These items were added based on the contribution of opinions from other teachers because they reflected upon the nature of foreign language learning for Turkish learners in the Turkish education system.

As the for the next step, the items were translated into Turkish first by the researcher, and then, by a certified translator of English to confirm the accuracy of the translation; next, the items were distributed to a few English teaching colleagues to check for accuracy of expression, and finally the questionnaire took its final shape under the supervision of the advisor of the study. These people were instructed to translate all items into Turkish by taking into consideration the idea of context-sensitiveness. In other words, they were told that the items would be administered to the students whose age ranged from 13 to 14 years and were asked to be careful about their word choice and sentence structures to make them suitable to the learners' cognitive level. Having prepared the Turkish version of the questionnaire, the researcher administered it to five 8th grade learners in the pilot school through reciprocal conferencing in order to check whether there was any ambiguity of meaning or misunderstandings. The students commented that a few items were unclear. Then the researcher asked two Turkish teachers to check those items for clarity of expression and meaning and minor improvements were made to give its final shape to the measurement tool. The researcher titled this newly developed instrument as "The Language Learning Beliefs Scale (LLBS)" (see Table 3.7).

Lastly, the Turkish and English versions of the LLBS were prepared. In this instrument, the individual is asked to read a statement, such as "English is a difficult language", and is asked to decide if he or she (1) strongly disagrees, (2) disagrees, (3) neither agrees or disagrees, (4) agrees, or (5) strongly agrees with the statement. Because the tool was designed to assess learners' beliefs about language learning, subjects were told that there were no right or wrong answers to the items. The final instrument used in the study is shown in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7. The Language Learning Beliefs Scale

1. It is easier for children than adults to learn English.
2. Some people are born with a special ability which helps them learn English.
3. To have relatives who know English makes it easier for me to learn English.
4. English is a difficult language.
5. English is structured in the same way as Turkish.
6. I believe I will be able to speak English very well.
7. It is important to speak English with a proper accent.
8. It is necessary to know about English-speaking cultures in order to speak English well.
9. I say nothing in English until I can say it correctly.
10. It is easier for someone who already knows a foreign language to learn another one.
11. It would be easier to learn English in an English-speaking country.
12. If I met a tourist of my age speaking English, I would go up to him/her in order to practice speaking the language.
13. English cannot be learned through memorization.
14. It is a privilege to be able to speak English in our country.
15. I think I am good at learning English.
16. Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary items.
17. It is important to practice repeatedly what has been learned in English classes.
18. To learn English makes a person feel better.
19. If I am allowed to make errors at the beginning, it will be hard to correct them later.
20. Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules.
21. It is important to practice with materials such as cassette players or video tapes in learning English.
22. Girls are better than boys at learning English.
23. If my teacher were a native speaker of English, I would be more successful.
24. It is more difficult for me to speak English than to understand what is spoken.
25. English calls for learning strategies different from those required by other academic subjects.
26. I usually try to figure out the Turkish meanings of everything I learn English.
27. I believe that learning English will provide better job opportunities.
28. Speaking English increases one's self-confidence.
29. People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning English.
30. People in our country think that it is important to know a foreign language.
31. I would like to learn English so that I can get to know English speakers better.
32. One has to be intelligent in order to be able to learn more than one language.
33. The people of my county are good at learning foreign languages.
34. If my teacher taught English well, I could learn it better.
35. To like English makes it easier to learn it.
36. The best thing to do in English classes is to sit at one's desk without being noticed.
37. People can be ridiculed in English class.
38. Learning English is not meant for shy students.
39. The only important thing for me is to get a good grade in English.
40. I feel inhibited about speaking English in front of my classmates.
41. The English education I receive at school is adequate.

3.5. Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted in order to investigate the validity and reliability of the LLBS and to observe such details as the time it takes to complete the questionnaire, the difficulties students may have with the answering format, etc. The participants comprised of 65 eighth grade students who were studying EFL in a primary school located in Şahinbey Municipality of Gaziantep.

The Cronbach's alpha value obtained from the pilot study was .78, which showed that the questionnaire would serve the purpose of the study. The reliability of the BALLI by Horwitz (1988) was tested by previous studies (Yang, 1992; Truitt, 1995; Kuntz, 1998), and similar Cronbach's alpha coefficients were reported, ranging from .61 to .69. Compared to those studies, the LLBS yielded a more acceptable Cronbach alpha value.

After the reliability analysis, the researcher further examined the tool to look for items which might have low corrected-total item correlation values. As a result, item 32 "People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent" which had a negative corrected-item total value ($\alpha = -.058$ was) was rephrased as "One has to be intelligent in order to be able to learn more than one language" because multi-lingual individuals is not a linguistic phenomenon in the learners' community.

3.6. Procedure of Data Collection

Permission was obtained from the Ministry of National Education to conduct this research in 20 state and 4 private schools (see, Appendix D). The English teachers of the destined classrooms suggested administering the questionnaire at a time appropriate to the teaching schedules. Therefore, the researcher explained explicitly to the English teachers the purpose of the study, and asked them to make a similar explanation to the participants in their classes. The teachers were also asked to read aloud the instructions on first page of the questionnaire and go over the sample item.

3.7. Data Analysis and Statistical Procedures

Having collected all the data required for the investigation within one week, the researcher entered the data into SPSS 15.0, which is a package program for statistical analysis in social sciences. The first step was to provide information on the reliability coefficients. Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α) was calculated in order to assess the internal reliability of the LLBS. Before the statistics program was run, nine items (4th, 9th, 24th, 29th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th and 40th) were reverse-coded because these items expressed negative attitudes and beliefs towards EFL. According to Hughes (2003), the ideal reliability coefficient is 1 and the newly developed scale comprised of 41 items yielded a moderate but acceptable reliability coefficient of .77. Next, items with low corrected item-total correlation values (Item-total

correlation values for the newly developed LLBS are presented in the Appendix E) were suppressed as suggested by Pallant (2001, cited in Kılıç, 2007:55). Particularly, 2nd, 5th, 8th, 9th, 22nd, 23rd, 32nd, 33rd, and 41st items had very the low corrected item-total values; namely, their values were below the minimum acceptable .15, which revealed that those items did not serve the purpose of the current study's data collection tool. On the other hand, item 38 also had also corrected item-total value (.135) below .15, but it was not eliminated from the study since it was not very below .15 like other items. The new Cronbach's Alpha raised to .83 with the remaining 32 items. After this analysis, there were no items lower than .15 except from item 38 and the scale was ready for inferential analyses.

The second step was to conduct an exploratory factor analysis on the data using SPSS 15.0 to investigate the organization of students' responses to the questionnaire. Factor analysis is a technique which allows a large number of variables to be clustered into a small number of sets, or factors. This, in turn, allows for greater insight into the subject matter (Kachigan, 1986, cited in Riley, 2006:42). Exploratory factor analysis is concerned with the determination of how many factors are necessary to explain the relationships between a set of items and to estimate these relationships in terms of factor loadings. This is done without an explicit model or hypothesis regarding the structure. As Tinsley and Tinsley (1987, cited in Kimberly, 1997:3) noted:

Factor analysis an analytic technique that permits the reduction of a large number of interrelated variables to a smaller number of latent or hidden dimensions. The goal of factor analysis is to achieve parsimony by using the smallest number of explanatory concepts to explain maximum amount of common variance in a correlation matrix (p.414).

A principal components factor analysis was conducted, with Varimax rotation. Factor analysis is only appropriate for large-scale studies; Hatch and Lazaraton (1991, cited in Kılıç, 2007) suggest a minimum of 200 participants; Kachigan (1986, cited in Riley, 2006:42) suggests that the number of subjects involved in the study should be ten times the number of variables. The current study satisfies both of these criteria as there are 738 participants.

The third step was to carry out multiple linear regression analysis which is a statistical procedure used to analyze the relationship between a single dependent variable and a few independent variables. Unlike correlation analysis, which usually assesses and measures the strength of association between two variables, regression

analysis quantifies the relationship between the expected, or average, value of one variable (often called the dependent variable) and the other variables (often called the independent variables). In the current study, the factors that result from factor analysis would be identified as dependent variables and the two variables of gender and school status would be identified as independent variables. The researcher carried out multiple linear regression analyses separately for each factor in order to determine the relative contribution of gender and school status to each of the language learning belief constructs.

The next step was to carry out a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) which is a special case of analysis of variance in analyzing the data with more than two independent variables. According to Stevens (1996, cited in Hsieh, 2004), the strength of using a MANOVA over separate univariate analyses include (a) the control of the overall α level; and (b) the greater sensitivity for detecting differences. The researcher of the study carried out MANOVA in order to examine the mean differences between males and females and between students of state and private schools by referring the regression analyses.

Lastly, the researcher conducted crosstabs which is an SPSS procedure that cross-tabulates two variables, displaying their relationship in tabular form. The researcher conducted crosstabs in order to obtain further details about the differences between male and females and between the students of state and private schools based on the information obtained from MANOVA. In crosstabs, gender and school status were computed in rows as independent variables and items of the factors which revealed significant results were computed as dependent variables in columns. The researcher gave information only about the items which revealed significant chi-square (χ^2) values.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Presentation

This chapter presents the results of major analyses conducted on the data obtained from the study. This chapter will try to answer the research questions using descriptive and inferential analyses. The first step will be to provide information on descriptive analysis for the newly developed LLBS. The second step will be about the factor analysis done with the LLBS. Next, multiple regression analysis will be run in order to give information about the existing differences between gender and school status. Afterwards, MANOVA will be carried out in order to examine the mean differences between males and females and between students of state and private schools. Lastly, crosstabs will illustrate the differences between males and females and between students of state and private schools related to language learning belief items.

4.2. Descriptive and Inferential Analyses

Under this section, the data will be analyzed separately for each research question.

Research Question 1: What is the nature of 8th grade learners' beliefs related to learning English as a foreign language in Turkey?

In order to find answer to this research question, the researcher conducted descriptive statistics including frequency distribution of learners' responses for each item in the scale. Although some of the items were suppressed and 32 items remained from the LLBS as a result of the reliability analysis, the researcher looked for frequency of learners' responses for 41 items in the LLBS in order to have the nature of 8th grade learners' beliefs regarding to learning EFL in Turkey.

Frequency of responses to 41 items are displayed in order to explore the items which indicate the strongest agreements (80% and over of the total responses), neutrality (even distribution among agreement, disagreement and undecidedness) and the strongest disagreements (40% and over of the total responses) among the

participants. In other words, in the discussion below, for ease of reviewing, the LLBS item ratings were collapsed into three categories, representing agree, neutral and disagree. Responses to the items are reported in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Frequency of Responses (in %) to Items in the LLBS

STATEMENTS	1	2	3	4	5
1. It is easier for children than adults to learn English.	4.5	9.3	19.5	39.7	27
2. Some people are born with a special ability which helps them learn English.	19.1	24.7	20.6	26.2	9.5
3. To have relatives who know English makes it easier for me to learn English.	2.2	6.2	7	38.6	45.9
4. English is a difficult language.	13.4	19.8	21.4	26.6	18.8
5. English is structured in the same way as Turkish.	19.2	26.3	19.8	28.5	6.1
6. I believe I will be able to speak English very well.	5.3	10.8	37.1	29.8	16.9
7. It is important to speak English with a proper accent.	2	6	8.5	42	41.5
8. It is necessary to know about English-speaking cultures in order to speak English well.	16.1	25.5	20.5	26.7	11.2
9. I say nothing in English until I can say it correctly.	10.8	27.9	19.1	24.7	17.5
10. It is easier for someone who already knows a foreign language to learn another one.	8.1	18.3	20.3	40.9	12.3
11. It would be easier to learn English in an English-speaking country.	7.9	14.4	12.2	32.4	33.2
12. If I met a tourist of my age speaking English, I would go up to him/her in order to practice speaking the language.	7.5	9.6	16.7	40.8	25.5
13. English cannot be learned through memorization.	11.8	15.7	16.5	31.2	24.8
14. It is a privilege to be able to speak English in our country.	8.7	16.4	19.1	33.5	22.4
15. I think I am good at learning English.	7	11.4	33.9	33.7	14
16. Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary items.	3.5	8.1	13.4	45.5	29.4
17. It is important to practice repeatedly what has been learned in English.	1.7	3.7	5.3	38.9	50.4
18. To learn English makes a person feel better.	16	16.4	34.4	23.3	9.9
19. If I am allowed to make errors at the beginning, it will be hard to correct them later.	10.4	14	16	28	31.6
20. Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules.	6.4	13.1	27	36.7	16.8
21. It is important to practice with materials such as cassette players or video tapes in learning English.	7.2	12.1	15.6	40.2	24.9
22. Girls are better than boys at learning English.	30.1	15.2	19.2	15.9	19.6
23. If my teacher were a native speaker of English, I would be more successful.	20.1	24.5	21.1	21.1	13.1
24. It is more difficult for me to speak English than to understand what is spoken.	9.8	21.8	28.9	23.2	16.8
25. English calls for learning strategies different from those required by other academic strategies.	6.2	10.2	15.2	41.5	27
26. I usually try to figure out the Turkish meanings of everything I learn English.	3	4.7	9.9	44.2	38.2
27. I believe that learning English will provide better job opportunities.	2.8	5.3	15.2	33.2	43.5
28. Speaking English increases one's self-confidence.	7.9	11.9	22.5	35.9	21.8
29. People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning English.	5.1	8.5	18.3	26.4	41.6
30. People in our country think that it is important to know a foreign language.	6	8.8	20.6	43	21.7

Note: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= undecided, 4= agree, 5= totally agree

Table 4.1. (cont.)

STATEMENTS	1	2	3	4	5
31. I would like to learn English so that I can get to know English speakers better.	6	6.9	12.3	38.1	36.7
32. One has to be intelligent in order to be able to learn more than one language.	15.3	21.7	16.1	28.5	18.4
33. The people of my county are good at learning foreign languages.	10.7	19	43	22.1	5.3
34. If my teacher taught English well, I could learn it better.	4.9	8.8	12.7	38.9	34.7
35. To like English makes it easier to learn it.	2.8	5.1	7.6	29.8	54.6
36. The best thing to do in English classes is to sit at one's desk without being noticed.	4.7	5.8	8.3	22.8	58.4
37. People can be ridiculed in English classes.	8.8	21.7	18.4	22.2	28.9
38. Learning English is not meant for shy students.	6.6	13.7	22.2	26	31.4
39. The only important thing for me is to get a good grade in English.	8	12.9	10.8	31.3	37
40. I feel inhibited about speaking English in front of my classmates.	6.1	14	15.9	28.6	35.5
41. The English education I receive at school is adequate.	10.4	14	21.1	27.1	27.4

Note: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= undecided, 4= agree, 5= totally agree

The items on the scale that point to the highest degree of agreement among learners were as follows; an overwhelming majority of the students (89.3%) attach the greatest importance to the traditional learning strategies of repetition and practice (item 17). Similarly, majority (85%) of the subjects believe that to have relatives who know English makes learning English easy (item 3), indicating the importance of practicing English in daily life. Intrinsic motivation for foreign language learning is also important for the subjects, as majority (84%) of the subjects believe that to like English makes it easier to learn it (item 35). Moreover, the students put much value on oral skills in foreign language learning as 83.5% of them think that speaking English with a proper accent is important (item 7). These learners also seem to use translation as a language learning strategy because 82.4% of them try to find Turkish meanings of what they have learned in English class (item 26). On the other hand, most of the learners (81.2%) believe that the best thing to do in English class is to sit at one's desk without being noticed (item 36). When compared to other items, the rate of this response seems to be confusing as it has negative implications related to English (see, Table 4.1).

The items on the scale that point to the highest degree of neutrality among learners were as follows; nearly half of the students (43%) neither agree nor disagree with the statement that "The people of my country are good at learning foreign languages" (item 33). They seem not to be sure about the capabilities of people from their country about learning EFL. Actually, it is not surprising to see this result

because the students do not have any opportunities to practice what has been learned in the informal context and so they are not sure about peoples' capabilities about foreign language learning in their country. Similarly, 34.4% show neutrality about the effect of learning English on their psychological situation (item 18). Namely, they are not sure whether learning English makes people feel better or not (see, Table 4.1).

The items on the scale that point to the highest degree of disagreement among learners were as follows; nearly half of the learners (45.5%) show strongest disagreement with the statement related to the similarities of English and Turkish in terms of their structure (item 5). This indicates that the learners are aware of the fact that structure of Turkish is different from English's. Similarly, 45.3% of learners disagree with the idea that girls are better than boys at learning English (item 22), indicating that there is no difference between the abilities of girls and boys related to learning EFL. Moreover, it is not important for participants to have a teacher who is a native speaker of English in order to be more successful in learning EFL (item 23) because 44.6% show strongest disagreement with this opinion. Similarly, 41.6% of these learners disagree with the idea about knowing about English-speaking cultures in order to speak English well. The students' responses to this item might be an encouraging sign to the teachers in Turkey because the more language learners understand that exposure to target language is essential in learning a foreign language, the more likely they will try to find many opportunities (see, Table 4.1).

To sum up, the strongest uniformity in subjects' beliefs to all items were observed with items 17, 3, 35, 7, 26 and 36; the most common state of neutrality in their beliefs was observed with items 33 and 18; and finally, the strongest sense of disagreement was observed with items 5, 22, 23, and 8.

Research Question 2: What is the organization of 8th grade learners' beliefs related to learning English as a foreign language in Turkey?

In order to find answer to this research question, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted in order to summarize the items within valid and plausible components. As mentioned in the methodology part, factor analysis is a variable reduction technique, which allows the researchers to simplify their data by combining numerous variables into a much smaller set of synthetic variables called factors (Kimberly, 1997). Factor analysis is "designed to identify factors, or dimensions, that underlie the relations among a set of observed variables"

(Pedhazur&Schmelkin, 1991:6, cited in Kimberly, 1997:3). Items that did not serve the purpose of the whole scale were eliminated through this analysis in the current study. Then, a principal components factor analysis was conducted as the extraction method since it is more popular in the research area and easier to interpret (Pallant, 2001, cited in Kılıç, 2007:55). Inter-item correlations were checked for individual factors and Varimax with Kaiser Normalization was preferred for rotation as suggested by Field (2000, cited in Kılıç, 2007).

The newly developed LLBS comprised of 32 items as a result of reliability analysis which revealed a value of .83 which was acceptable. In order to assess the factoring of these items under different constructs, principal component analysis was conducted using SPSS 15.0 for Windows. First of all, the suitability of data for factor analysis was checked. The first concern was the sample size. Kass and Tinsley (1979) suggest having between 5 and 10 subjects per items of the scale up to a total of 300. If the number reaches up to 300, test parameters tend to be stable regardless of the subject to variable ratio. Field (2000, cited in Kılıç, 2007) and Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) agree that it is appropriate to have at least 300 cases for factor analysis. Comrey and Lee (1992) believe that 100 is poor sample size, 300 can be considered as good, and 1000 and more is excellent. Finally, Pallant (2001, cited in Kılıç, 2007) suggests that researchers should be cautious if they have less than 150 participants. The current dataset had 738 participants which meant that the dataset was very suitable for factor analysis.

Even though the sample size was acceptable, further inspections were conducted as suggested by Pallant (2001, cited in Kılıç, 2007). Thus, the next step was to check the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy is calculated for individual and multiple variables and represents the ratio of the squared correlation between variables to the squared partial correlation between variables (Field, 2000, cited in Kılıç, 2007). The KMO value varies between 0 and 1. A value of 0 indicates that the sum of partial correlations is large relative to the sum of correlations, whilst a value close to 1 indicates that patterns of correlations are compact, and so factor analysis will yield reliable factors. Kaiser (1974, cited in Kılıç, 2007) suggests that values greater than 0.5 should be accepted. Pallant (2001, cited in Kılıç, 2007) claims that the KMO statistics should be larger than 0.6. Hutcheson and Sofroniou (1999) suggest that values between 0.5 and 0.7 are normal, values between 0.7 and 0.8 are

good, values between 0.8 and 0.9 are great, and values above 0.9 are superb. The initial solution of the factor analysis revealed a KMO value of 0.868, which was far above the acceptable value.

The next concern is that Bartlett's Test of Sphericity should reach a significant value to support the factorability of the correlation matrix obtained from the items (Pallant, 2001, cited in Kılıç, 2007). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity revealed an ideal Approx. Chi-Square value ($\chi^2=3834.676$) with a significance value of .000, which meant that the factorability of the correlation matrix was proper.

The principal component analysis revealed 9 factors with eigenvalues exceeding 1 in the initial factor solution, which explained 49.429% of the total variance. There are studies claiming that the limit for factor loadings should be between 0.30 and 0.40 (Coombs & Schroeder, 1988; Duntzman, 1989, cited in Kılıç, 2007:58). Tabachnick and Fidel (1996) claim that 0.32 is appropriate as a minimum loading. The current research considered 0.35 as the limit to create robust and conservative results. So, as the next step of the analysis, items with factor loadings below 0.35 were examined in the rotated component matrix. As a result of this analysis, items 21 and 34 (.30, .34, respectively) were eliminated since they had factor loadings below 0.35. After eliminating items with low factor loadings, complex items were examined in the component matrix to prevent multicollinearity. More specifically, items having close loadings under several factors were eliminated as they were ambiguous items contaminating the factor structure. Only items 25 and 27 were eliminated from the scale as they had close loadings under two factors as .434 (Factor 4) and .428 (Factor 6) for item 25 and as .373 (Factor 1) and .378 (factor 2) for item 27. On the other hand, item 14 also had close loadings under two factors but it was not eliminated as it was logically essential for and coherent with items in Factor 5, and raised the alpha value of this factor (see, Appendix F for Rotated Component Matrix). As the next step of the analysis, items which were not in coherence with other items under the same factors were eliminated from the scale. So, items 29 and 28 were eliminated from the study since they were not coherent with other items.

After eliminating these items with low and complex factor loadings, and items which were incoherent with other items, the Cronbach's Alpha was .79. A new factor analysis was conducted with this final set of items. The new KMO value was .844 with an ideal Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p<.000$). The Principal component

analysis revealed 8 factors which explained 51.107 percent of the total variance. In brief, after all the corrections, the new scale explained more variance with fewer factors, which was an ideal condition (Pallant, 2001, cited in Kılıç, 2007). In other words, it is important to explain as much variance as possible with fewer numbers of factors. Based on a) explained variance changes for each component, b) eigenvalue changes, c) the screeplot provided in Figure 4.1., the number of factors was determined as 8 for further extraction and rotation.

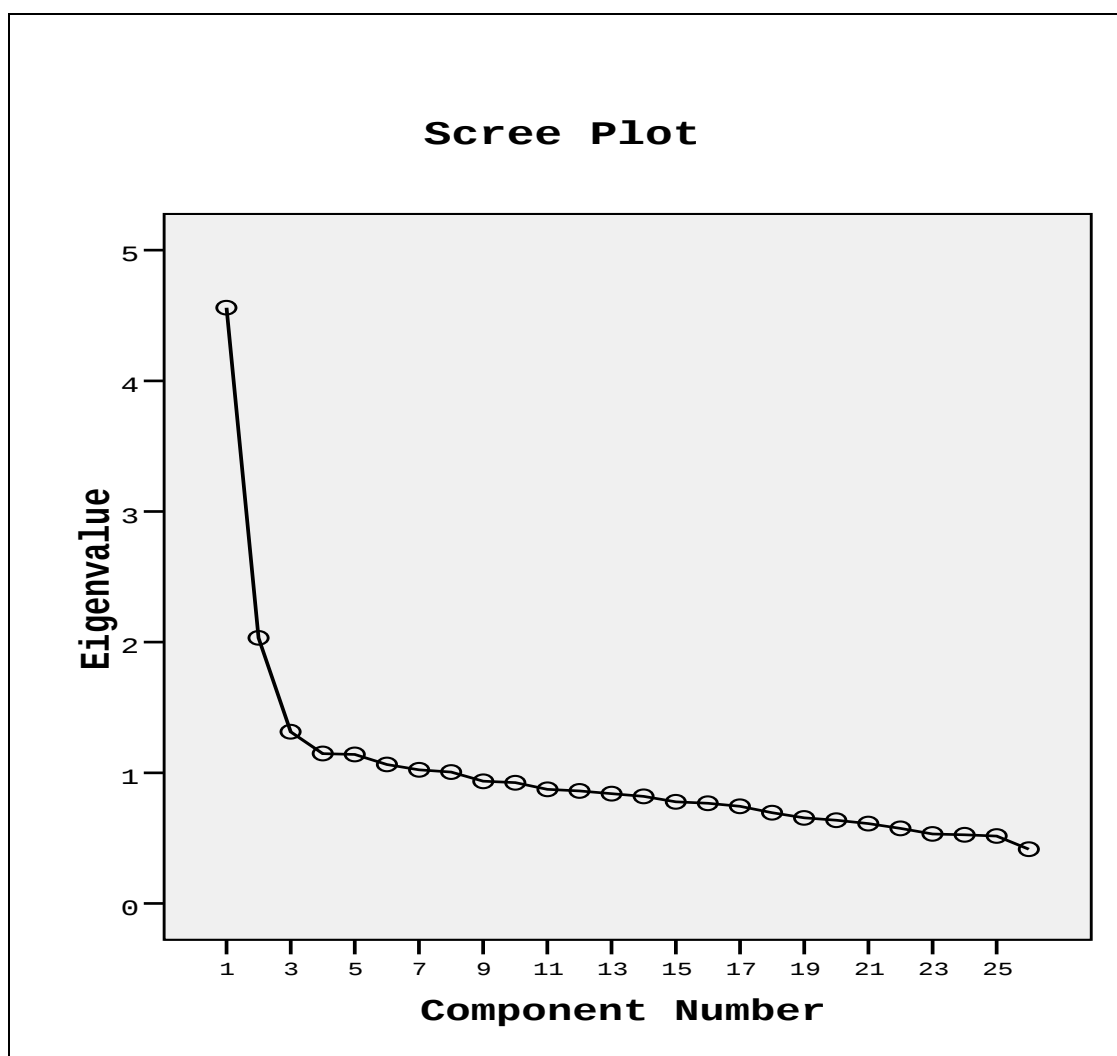


Figure 4.1. The screeplot regarding the final factor analysis

The total number of questions for eight factors was determined as 26, which meant that a total of 15 questions were eliminated from the scale, since they did not belong to any construct that could be explained as a learner belief. KMO and Bartlett of the values were ideal as provided in Table 4.2:

Table 4.2. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	.844
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	
Approximate X^2	2796.154
Df	325
Sig.	.000

The analysis with eight factors and 26 indicators explained 51.107 % of the total variance. The variance explained can be considered above the acceptable limits based on the suggestion of Dunteman (1989, cited in Kılıç, 2007:59). Variance explained by each component is illustrated in Table 4.3:

Table 4.3. Total variance explained

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	%of Variance	Cumulative	Total	%of Variance	Cumulative
1	4.560	17.53	17.537	2.966	11.407	11.407
2	2.033	7.818	25.336	2.332	8.969	20.376
3	1.315	5.056	30.412	1.506	5.793	26.168
4	1.148	4.414	34.825	1.442	5.546	31.714
5	1.141	4.387	39.212	1.374	5.286	37.000
6	1.064	4.091	43.304	1.305	5.019	42.019
7	1.023	3.934	47.237	1.226	4.716	46.735
8	1.006	3.870	51.107	1.137	4.373	51.107
9	.936	3.599	54.706			
10	.925	3.556	58.262			
11	.874	3.362	61.624			
12	.862	3.314	64.938			
13	.841	3.233	68.171			
14	.820	3.155	71.326			

Extraction Method: Principal Component
(Subsequent rows are deleted to save place)

The eight factors were labeled as follows: 1) Foreign language learning and communication strategies, 2) Self-efficacy & confidence, 3) Threat to personality, 4) Error correction and age factor in learning, 5) The status of learning a foreign language and the learning context, 6) Learning English in the classroom context, 7) Oral Communication, and 8) Learnability. Items included under each label, reliability coefficients, item means and standard deviations, Varimax rotation loadings and communalities are provided in Table 4.4:

Table 4.4. Means, standard deviations, Alpha Coefficients, Varimax rotation Loadings and Communalities (h²)

Items and Factors		Mean	SD	Varimax factor Loadings	h ²
<i>Factor I: Foreign Language Learning and communication Strategies (a= ,691)</i>					
26	I usually try to figure out the Turkish meaning of everything I learn in English.	4.098	.964	.648	.46
17	It is important to practice repeatedly what has been learned in English.	4.325	.870	.636	.48
16	Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary items.	3.891	1.029	.564	.54
3	To have relatives who know English makes it easier for me to learn English.	4.199	.967	.558	.43
7	It is important to speak English with a proper accent.	4.149	.948	.55	.45
35	To like English makes it easier to learn it.	4.281	1.00	.545	.46
12	If I met a tourist of my age speaking English, I would go up to him/her in order to practice speaking the language.	3.672	1.171	.521	.44
31	I would like to learn English so that I can get to know English speakers better.	3.981	1.864	.400	.52
<i>Factor II: Self-efficacy and confidence (a= ,653)</i>					
6	I believe I will be able to speak English very well.	3.422	1.057	.734	.63
4	English is a difficult language. (reverse coded)	3.176	1.313	.691	.56
15	I think I am good at learning English.	3.361	1.077	.671	.53
18	To learn English makes a person feel better.	2.947	1.196	.562	.46
<i>Factor III: Threat to personality (a= ,45)</i>					
38	Learning English is not meant for shy students. (reverse coded)	3.619	1.240	.734	.57
37	People can be ridiculed in English classes. (reverse coded)	3.406	1.335	.650	.51
<i>Factor IV: Error correction and age factor in learning (a= ,36)</i>					
19	If I am allowed to make errors at the beginning, it will be hard to correct them later.	3.563	1.336	.653	.54
1	It is easier for children than adults to learn				

	English.	3.753	1.087	.524	.46
<i>Factor V: The status of learning a foreign language and the learning context ($\alpha=.34$)</i>					
11	It would be easier to learn English in an English-speaking country.	3.687	1.280	.669	.53
30	People in our country think that it is important to know a foreign language.	3.658	1.093	.624	.54
14	It is a privilege to be able to speak English in our country.	3.444	1.242	.496	.44
<i>Factor VI: Learning English in the classroom context ($\alpha=.335$)</i>					
39	The only important thing for me is to get a good grade in English. (reverse coded)	3.764	1.288	.615	.59
36	The best thing to do in English classes is to sit at one's desk without being noticed. (reverse coded)	4.242	1.126	.588	.52
20	Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules.	3.444	1.108	-.394	.46
<i>Factor VII: Oral communication ($\alpha=.30$)</i>					
24	It is more difficult for me to speak English than to understand what is spoken. (reverse coded)	3.158	1.218	.742	.62
40	I feel inhibited about speaking English in front of my classmates. (reverse coded)	3.734	1.245	.476	.47
<i>Factor VIII: Learnability ($\alpha=.152$)</i>					
13	English cannot be learned through memorization.	3.414	1.327	.747	.61
10	It is easier for someone who already knows a foreign language to learn another one.	3.310	1.147	.373	.41

(Extraction: Principal Component; Rotation: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.)

In Table 4.4, alpha coefficients (α) are provided for each factor. It is common to see factors with alpha values lower than .70 due to the small number of indicators in those factors. This situation does not mean that given factors were not reliable. As mentioned before, it is usual to see low alpha values for measurement tools involving less than ten indicators (Pallant, 2001, cited in Kılıç, 2007). Corrected-item total correlations should be checked in these situations to be sure about the quality of the items within a specific factor. As mentioned before, items with low corrected-item total values were already removed from the analysis.

Corrected-item total values of items of the final form of the scale ranged between .151 and .486 which meant that the reliability assumptions of factors are met.

The analysis created a scale comprising of 26 items with a theoretical range of 26 and 130. The descriptive statistics for the newly developed language learning beliefs scale after the principal component analysis are given in Table 4.5:

Table 4.5. Descriptive Statistics for the LLBS

	Statistic	Std. Error
Mean	95.706	.4437
Median	96.000	
Variance	145.350	
Std. Deviation	12.056	
Minimum	50	
Maximum	135	
Range	85.00	
Skewness	-.277	.090
Kurtosis	.399	.180

In this study, the total scores for the language learning beliefs scale ranged from 50 to 135 with a mean of 95.706 and with a standard deviation of 12.056. The skewness and kurtosis values were in the acceptable limits. The Cronbach's alpha was .79 for language learning beliefs scale after factor analysis was run.

Research Question 3: What is the relative contribution of gender and school status on each factor in language learning beliefs scale?

In order to answer this research question, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted in order to analyze the relationship between a single dependent variable and several independent variables. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), the goal of multiple linear regression analysis is to use the independent variables to predict the value of a single dependent variable. As a first step, multiple linear regression analyses were carried out in order to determine the influence of each independent variable identified as gender and school status on the eight factors identified as dependent variables in the LLBS. The researcher computed eight separate regression equations for eight factors. Next, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was carried out in order to examine the mean differences as a function of gender and school status related to all the factors in the LLBS. Lastly, the researcher employed crosstabs which is a procedure that cross-tabulates two variables, displaying their relationships in tabular form. In contrast to Frequencies, which summarizes information about one variable, crosstabs generates information

about *bivariate* relationships. Crosstabs was carried out with only Factors 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 as they revealed a significant relationship with gender and school status in the multiple linear regression analyses. These analyses will be documented for each factor separately under the relevant subheadings.

3a. The relative contribution of gender and school status to learners' foreign language learning and communication strategies (Factor 1):

In order to answer this question, as a first step, multiple linear regression analysis was carried out with Factor 1 and two independent variables (gender and school status). For Factor 1 (Foreign language learning and communication strategies), the two predictors together explained .09% ($r^2 = .085$) of the variance in Factor 1, $F(35.140) = 12.00$, $p < .001$. Table 4.6 shows standardised coefficients for the regression equation predicting Factor 1. The results indicated that gender ($\beta = -.29$, $p < .001$) and school status ($\beta = .08$, $p < .05$) predicted Factor 1. Gender uniquely explained -.29% of the variance whereas school status uniquely explained .05% of the variance.

Table 4.6. The Predictive Power of Independent Variables over Foreign Language Learning and Communication Strategies (n= 738)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SEB</i>	β	<i>r</i>
Gender	-.36	.043	-.29***	-.291
School Status	.13	.058	.08*	.051
R ²			.09***	

Note: * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$; gender: 1-females, 2-males; school status: 1-state, 2-private

In order to look at the mean values for gender and school status, MANOVA was run for Factor 1. As indicated by the regression analysis, gender and school status played a significant role in subjects' responses. As for gender, females ($M = 4.27$) appeared to score higher on the scale and expressed higher rates of agreement with the belief statements than males ($M = 3.93$), $F(34.214) = 11.70$, $p < .001$; as for school status, private schools ($M = 4.16$) appeared to score higher on the scale and expressed higher rates of agreement with the belief statements ($M = 4.04$), $F(4.300) = 1.47$, $p < .001$, but no gender-by-school status interaction was observed, ($p > .10$).

Finally, crosstabs procedure was carried out in order to obtain further details on the differences between male and female learners and between students of state and private schools. Gender and school status were computed as independent variables in rows and items in Factors 1 were computed as dependent variables in

columns. A significant difference was found between female and male learners' responses related to all items in Factor 1 whereas no significant difference was observed between students of state and private schools for the stated factor. Therefore, the researcher focused on only gender in this part.

For item 26, 90% of the female participants agreed to the statement "I usually try to find Turkish meanings of everything I learn English" whereas only 76% of the male participants agreed to this item. Therefore, female learners appear, more than males, to have tendency for using translation method as a learning strategy in learning English ($\chi^2= 39.982$, $p<.001$).

For item 17, "It is important to practice repeatedly what has been learned in English" ($\chi^2= 39.220$, $p<.001$). 95% of the female learners agreed to this statement whereas only 85% of the male learners did so. It can be said that females are more likely to believe that repetition and practice play a significant role in foreign language learning. Although the majority of males and females seem to share this belief, the difference, yet appears as significant.

For item 16, the results indicated a significant difference between female and male learners related to the statement, "Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary items" ($\chi^2= 24.132$, $p<.001$). 82% of the female learners agreed to item 16 whereas only 68% of the male learners agreed to this item. It can be said that females are more likely to believe that learning new words play a crucial role in foreign language learning than boys.

For item 3, the results revealed a significant difference between male and female learners related to item 3 that is "To have relatives who know English makes it easier for me to learn English". 91% of the female participants agreed to item 3 whereas only 78% of the participants agreed to item 3. The results showed that it is more likely for females than males to believe that social interaction as a communication strategy facilitates foreign language learning.

For item 7, a significant difference was found between male and female learners related to item 7 that is "It is important to speak English with a proper accent". 88% of the female learners agreed to item 7 whereas only %79 of the male learners showed agreement with this item. Thus, it is more likely for females than males to believe that speaking English with proper pronunciation played a significant role in language learning.

For item 35, a significant difference was found between male and female learners related to item 35 that is “To like English makes it easier to learn it”. 91% of the female learners agreed to item 35 whereas only 78% of the male participants agreed to this item. Thus, it can be said that females are more likely to believe that to like English had a significant influence on facilitating EFL learning.

For item 12, a significant difference was found between male and female learners related to item 12 that is “If I met a tourist of my age speaking English, I would go up to him/her in order to practice speaking the language”. 73% of the female learners agreed to item 12 whereas only 60% of the male learners agreed to this item. This result signified that females are more likely to be eager to improve their pronunciation by practicing native speakers than males.

For item 31, a significant difference was found between male and female learners related to the statement, “I would like to learn English so that I can get to know English speakers better”. 82% of the female participants agreed to item 31 whereas only 67% of the male participants agreed to this item. The results indicated that females tended to believe the necessity of learning English in order to know more about its speakers.

3b. The relative contribution of gender and school status to learners' self-efficacy and confidence (Factor 2):

To answer this question, another regression analysis was carried out with Factor 2 (Self-efficacy and confidence) and two predictors (gender, school status). Table 4.7 shows that only gender ($\beta = -0.18$, $p < .001$) predicted Factor 2. This variable uniquely explained -.18% of the variance. The two predictors together explained .03% ($R^2 = .033$) of the variance in Factor 2, $F(12.429) = 10.42$, $p < .001$.

Table 4.7. The Predictive Power of Independent Variables over Self-efficacy and Confidence (n= 738)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SEB</i>	β	<i>r</i>
Gender	-.34	.07	-.18***	-.18
School Status	.07	.09	.03	-.03
R^2			.03***	

Note: *** $p < .001$; gender: 1-females, 2-males; school status: 1-state, 2-private

MANOVA for Factor 2 gave further details on mean differences for gender and school status. As indicated by the regression analysis, gender had a significant influence on subjects' responses; girls ($M = 3.58$) agreed to score higher on the scale

and experienced higher rates of agreement with the belief statements than boys ($M=3.26$), $F(12.318)=10.34$, $p<.001$. As for the school status and gender-by-school status interaction, no significant results ($p>.10$) were observed.

As a last step, the researcher carried out crosstabs so as to obtain further details on the differences between male and female learners. Factor 2 comprised of four items and a significant difference was found between male and female learners' responses related to items 6($\chi^2=16.155$, $p<.01$), 4($\chi^2=25.885$, $p<.001$) and 15($\chi^2=25.665$, $p<.001$) in Factor 2. Females tended to believe that they will be able to speak English very well (52%), "English is a difficult language" (52%) and that "they are good at learning English" (55%) more than males (42%, 38%, 41% respectively).

3c. The relative contribution of variables such as gender and school context to learners' threat to personality (Factor 3):

Another multiple linear regression analysis was conducted for Factor 3 (Threat to personality) to find an answer to the research question above. The two predictors together explained .016% of the variance in Factor 3, $F(6.042)=5.90$, $p<.01$. The results revealed that only gender predicted Factor 3, ($\beta=-.13$, $p<.01$). This variable uniquely explained -.13% of the variance. Table 4.8 shows the results of the regression analysis for Factor 3:

Table 4.8. The Predictive Power of Independent Variables over Threat to Personality (n= 738)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SEB</i>	β	<i>r</i>
Gender	-.25	.07	-.13**	-.13
School Status	-.003	.010	-.001	-.001
R ²			.016**	

Note: ** $p<.01$; gender: 1-females, 2-males; school status: 1-state, 2-private

For Factor 3, MANOVA was run in order to obtain further details related to mean differences for gender and school status. The results of the regression analysis indicated a significant difference for only gender; girls ($M=3.42$) expressed higher rates of agreement with the belief statements than boys ($M=3.08$), at $F(11.789)=11.51$, $p<.01$, but no significant results ($p>.10$) were observed for school status and gender-by-school status interaction.

Finally, the researcher carried out crosstabs so as to obtain further details on the differences between male and female learners. Factor 3 comprised of 2 items and a significant difference was found between male and female learners' responses

related to items 38 ($\chi^2= 17.738$, $p<.01$) and 37 ($\chi^2= 33.498$, $p<.001$) in Factor 3. Females tended to believe that “learning English is not meant for shy students” (63%) and “people can be ridiculed in English classes” (57%) more than males (52%, 45% respectively).

3d. The relative contribution of gender and school status to learners’ error correction and age factor in learning (Factor 4):

In order to answer this research question, another regression analysis was run for Factor 4 (Error correction and age factor in learning). Table 4.9 shows that the two predictors together accounted for a significant portion of the variance, .02% ($R^2=.02$), in Factor 4, $F(7.557)= 6.72$, $p<.01$. Only gender ($\beta= -.14$, $p<.001$) predicted Factor 4. This variable uniquely explained -.14% of the variance.

Table 4.9. The Predictive Power of Independent Variables over Error Correction and Age Factor in Learning (n= 738)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SEB</i>	β	<i>r</i>
Gender	-.27	.07	-.14***	-.14
School Status	.09	.09	.04	.04
R^2			.02**	

Note: ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$; gender: 1-females, 2-males; school status: 1-state, 2-private

MANOVA was run so as to examine the mean differences for gender and school status for Factor 4. Females ($M= 3.75$) tended to score higher on the scale and expressed higher rates of agreement with the belief statements than males ($M= 3.60$), $F(2.819)= 2.50$, $p<.001$, but no significant results ($p>.10$) were observed for school status and gender-by-school status interaction.

Finally, the researcher looked at crosstabs for information on the differences between male and female learners related to Factor 4, which comprised of 2 items. A significant difference was found between male and female learners’ responses related to items 19($\chi^2= 13.619$, $p<.01$) and 1($\chi^2= 14.154$, $p<.01$) in Factor 3. Females tended to believe that errors should be corrected on time. Otherwise, it will be difficult for them to correct these errors later (65%) and it would be easier for them to learn English if they were younger (71%) more than males (55%, 62% respectively).

3e. The relative contribution of gender and school status to learners’ the status of foreign language and the learning context (Factor 5):

Another regression analysis (Table 4.10) showed the two predictors together explained .019% ($R^2= .019$) of the variance for Factor 5, $F(7.148)= 4.42$, $p<.01$. Only

school status ($\beta = .14$, $p < .001$) predicted Factor 5. This variable uniquely explained 14% of the variance.

Table 4.10 The Predictive Power of Independent Variables over the Status of Foreign Language and the Learning Context (n= 738)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SEB</i>	β	<i>r</i>
Gender	-.04	.06	-.02	-.02
School Status	.29	.08	.14***	.14
R ²			.019**	

Note: ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; gender: 1-females, 2-males; school status: 1-state, 2-private

For Factor 5, MANOVA was run in order to obtain further details related to mean differences. The results revealed that private schools ($M = 3.83$) expressed higher rates of agreement with the belief statements than state schools ($M = 3.55$), $F(13.051) = 8.06$, $p < .001$, but no significant differences ($p > .10$) were observed for gender and gender-by-school status interaction.

As a last step, crosstabs pointed to a significant difference between the students of state and private schools for only item 14 ($X^2 = 17.478$, $p < .01$). In other words, the students in private schools (62%) tended to believe that it is a privilege to be able to speak English more than the students in state schools (53%).

3f. The relative contribution of variables such as gender and school status to learners' oral communication (Factor 7):

Regression analysis for this factor revealed that the two predictors together accounted for a significant portion of the variance, .04%, in Factor 7 (Oral communication), $F(14.824) = 15.07$, $p < .001$. The results indicated that gender ($\beta = -0.17$, $p < .001$) and status of the school ($\beta = -.09$, $p < .05$) predicted Factor 7. Gender uniquely explained -.17% of the variance whereas school status uniquely explained -.09% of the variance (Table 4.11).

Table 4.11. The Predictive Power of Independent Variables over Oral Communication (n= 738)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SEB</i>	β	<i>r</i>
Gender	-.35	.08	-.17***	-.17
Status of School	-.23	.10	-.09*	-.09
R ²			.04***	

Note: *** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$; gender: 1-females, 2-males; school status: 1-state, 2-private

For Factor 7, MANOVA was run in order to examine the mean differences for gender and school status. The results revealed that females ($M = 3.00$) appeared to

score higher on the scale and expressed higher rates of agreement with the belief statements than males ($M = 2.70$), $F(8.776) = 8.93$, $p < .05$; for school status, state schools ($M = 2.98$) appeared to score on the scale and expressed higher rates of agreement with the belief statements than private schools ($M = 2.73$), $F(5.887) = 5.99$, $p < .05$; but no gender-by-school interaction was observed ($p > .10$).

Finally, based on crosstabs, a significant difference was found between female and male learners' responses related to items 24 and 40 in Factor 7, whereas no significant difference was observed between students of state and private schools for the stated factor. Therefore, the researcher focused on only gender in this part. So females tended to believe that speaking English is more difficult than understanding what is spoken (48%) and they feel inhibited speaking English in the classroom (69%) more than males (33%, 58% respectively).

Factor 6 and Factor 8 were also entered into the regression equation but they failed to meet the statistical significance criterion. In other words, the two predictors did not account for a significant portion of variance in Factor 6 (Learning English in the classroom context) and in Factor 8 (Learnability) ($p > .10$). Thus, the researcher does not display the results in tables. Students of both sexes and school types seem to carry the same beliefs about these two constructs.

4.3. Conclusion

This chapter has presented the results of quantitative analyses and qualitative analyses conducted in accordance with the research questions posed in the introductory part.

To sum up, it was found as a result of an in-dept factor analysis that there were eight subcomponents of LLBS. Among these factors, six (Factor 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7) were explained by gender and school status as a result of regression analyses. Following regression analysis, MANOVA and crosstabs were run and it was demonstrated that females appear to score higher rate of agreement than males with all the items and students from private schools appear to score higher rate of agreement with only one item compared to the students from state schools.

The next chapter will discuss the findings related to factor analysis and other quantitative analyses. The results will be discussed with reference to the previous studies in the related literature.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1. Presentation

The primary concern of the present study was to explore 8th grade Turkish learners' beliefs and the organization of their beliefs related to EFL in Turkey. Moreover, the study aimed at investigating whether there were significant differences in the belief systems of different learner groups according to such variables as school status (state and private) and gender.

First of all, the nature of 8th grade learners' beliefs related to EFL in Turkey was revealed through descriptive analysis. In other words, the researcher explored the beliefs with which the students expressed the strongest agreement, neutrality or the strongest disagreement by analyzing the distribution of these beliefs in a frequency table. Next, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted in order to find out the principal components of the Language Learning Beliefs Scale (LLBS). Afterwards, the researcher looked at the possible relationships between the factors resulted from factor analysis and such variables as school status and gender through regression analyses. The last step in the analysis was to obtain further details on the differences between different groups (females-males; state-private schools) based on the results of the regression analyses through MANOVA and crosstabs.

Based on the above analyses, this chapter will first discuss the findings gathered in the previous chapter. Then, the pedagogical implications of the findings will be discussed. Finally, recommendations for further research will be presented.

5.2. Discussion

The researcher first developed a new Likert-type scale titled as “the Language Learning Beliefs Scale (LLBS)” by adapting BALLI in order to investigate the general tendency of 738 eighth grade Turkish learners from 20 state and 4 private schools and the organization of their beliefs regarding foreign language learning in Turkey. The researcher did not adopt the BALLI since these items were not appropriate for 8th grade participants of the current study in terms of their age and

levels of English. Moreover, BALLI was not suitable for the Turkish context in terms of the content of some items. Thus, in the process of developing this new scale, the researcher not only adapted some items from the BALLI with some modifications but also made an interview with a group of 8th grade students from her school in the pilot study in order to elicit their opinions about learning EFL. The researcher also added her own ideas based on learners' opinions and her observations during her teaching experience in primary education. The purpose was to form items which reflect the opinions of 8th grade learners regarding EFL and to have items which were suitable for both the learners' age and the Turkish context. Briefly, LLBS with 41 items was used to collect data from 738 eighth grade Turkish EFL learners.

The participants' responses to the items in the present study were consistent with other EFL studies (Horwitz, 1988; Kuntz, 1997; Aktaş, 2001; Öz, 2005; Wang, 2005; Riley, 2006) in showing greatest agreement with the statement regarding the importance of repetition and practice in learning EFL. The results revealed that an overwhelming majority of the participants (89.3%) tend to believe that repetition and practice play a crucial role in language learning, seemingly a favorite strategy with learners. Without totally ignoring the value of language practice in the form of repetitions and drill practices, teachers should establish communicative goals for using English for authentic purposes. Students also believe that successful language learning depends on much effort and hard work, probably because there is no out-of-class reinforcement for learning the target language for this age group since these students live in a monolingual country with little or no contact with English speakers.

Besides repetition and practice, the participants in this study strongly support the concepts that "To have relatives who know English makes it easier for me to learn English" and "To like English makes it easier to learn it". It is important to know that these two items were contributed by the pilot group of 8th grade learners and supported by a great majority of the participants in the study. Both assertions seem to point to the need to compensate for the lack of linguistic input in the students' natural surroundings. Students are aware of the potential advantage of having someone (a resource person) to assist them in their attempts to learn the L2. Learners are also intuitively aware that when you get pleasure from the way you learn something, this will eventually lead to more learning. The implication of this for the language classroom is that young learners need to be involved in fun and

entertaining activities so that English will be learned as a by-product, also called peripheral learning.

Regarding the role of pronunciation, the responses of the students were consistent with other studies (Aktaş, 2001; Wang, 2005; Bernat&Lloyd, 2007) in showing agreement with the importance of speaking English with a proper accent. These students believe in not only the importance of speaking English but also speaking it with a proper accent. On the other hand, the participants of some other studies (Riley, 2006; Kuntz, 1996) did not attach much importance on accent in foreign language learning.

Translation into L1 also seems to have a crucial place in learning EFL for the learners since most of them appear to support the statement that “I usually try to figure out the Turkish meanings of everything I learn in English”. It can be said that learners prefer to use translation as a learning strategy to comprehend, remember, or produce a foreign language. On the other hand, this finding may indicate that grammar-translation method is still being used by the teachers as an indispensable part of foreign language learning despite the methodological reforms focusing on the communicative approach. When compared to other studies, some differences are to be observed. For example, only 28% of the students showed agreement with this statement in Öz’s (2005) study.

Finally, a great number of participants appear to be supportive of the proposition (contributed by the learners in the pilot study) that “The best thing to do in English classes is to sit at one’s desk without being noticed”. It is interesting that other items which the students showed greatest agreement reflect positive and meaningful sides about learning EFL, but this statement shows that most of the participants do not want to participate in English. It is possible to explain this by classroom practices which do not involve students physically, cognitively, and emotionally in the process of learning, and hence learning English becomes a boring activity. Such attitudes underestimate the learning capacity of learners and fall short of challenging the creative powers and energies of these students.

With respect to foreign language learning, students in general gave neutral responses to items 33 and 18. The responses of the participants like those in other studies (Aktaş, 2001; Riley, 2006; Wang, 2005) are neutral to the statement “The people of my country are good at learning foreign languages”. This may be a further indication of a lack of student confidence or the absence of an English speaking

community in their environment. Similarly, nearly half the students were neutral in response to the argument about the psychological effect of learning English. This supports my assumptions about the lack of activities which release the creative resources that students bear in themselves.

Besides items with strongest agreements and neutrality, the participants showed strongest disagreements to some of the items (5th, 22nd, 23rd, 8th, respectively). Nearly half of these students are aware of the difference between the structure of English and Turkish. Subjects are very conscious of the structural aspects of the L1 and L2, which points to the traditional methods of teaching L2 through the grammar of L1.

Regarding the effect of gender on language learning, the students like those in other studies (Aktaş, 2001; Wang, 2005; Riley, 2006) do not believe that girls are better than boys. On the other hand, in Öz's (2005) study, girls were believed to be superior to boys in learning a foreign language.

Moreover, the students show the strongest disagreement with the idea that "If my teacher was a native speaker of English, I would be more successful". These students like those in Aktaş's (2001) study, also disagree with the statement that "It is necessary to know about English-speaking cultures in order to speak English well", suggesting that they are not aware of the importance of culture in foreign language learning since the target culture does not occupy the center of attention for the majority of language classrooms.

Although some scholars adopted BALLI and utilized Horwitz's themes to discuss results in their studies, the researcher of the present study developed her own scale including items particular to learners' language learning context as mentioned earlier and conducted an exploratory factor analysis to determine the structure of student beliefs since it is important to identify factors which are "unique to each sample and enable researchers to recommend specific instructional changes" according to Kuntz (1996). Thus, the researcher conducted a factor analysis on LLBS and eight subcomponents were identified as reflecting 8th grade Turkish student beliefs about learning EFL. These factors were labeled as:

- 1) Foreign language learning and communication strategies,
- 2) Self-efficacy and confidence,
- 3) Threat to personality,
- 4) Error correction and age factor in learning,

- 5) The status of learning a foreign language and the learning context,
- 6) Learning English in the classroom context,
- 7) Oral Communication, and
- 8) Learnability.

The first factor is related to strategies used in foreign language learning and communication. The learners believe in the importance of repetition and practice, learning new words, grammar rules and translation in foreign language learning. As Horwitz (1988) indicated, these findings have implications for how learners' can employ certain strategies. Based on these beliefs, it is possible to argue that learners focus mainly on memorizing vocabulary and grammar rules, a strategy which can hinder their developing communicative competence. Moreover, they put much value on speaking with a native-like accent and believe that practicing English with a native speaker would improve their pronunciation. Also, they would like to learn English in order to know English speakers better. This is a very positive incentive for learning a foreign language and teachers should capitalize on this aspect already inherent in our students. Among the student responses analyzed by factor analysis, only two statements (item 7, having a good accent; and 12, voluntariness to speak with a foreign peer) that Horwitz classified as "language learning and communication strategies" actually loaded on the same factor in the current study. Similarly, these two statements loaded on the same factor in some other studies (Hsieh, 2004; Bernat & Lloyd, 2007). On the other hand, In Truitt's (1995) study, item 12 loaded on the factor titled as "self-efficacy and confidence", and item 7 loaded on the factor labeled as "value and nature of learning". Other 6 items loaded on different factors in other studies (Horwitz, 1988; Yang, 1991; Truitt, 1995; Hsieh, 2004; Wang, 2005).

The second factor relates to learners' self confidence and self-efficacy, which is defined by Bandura (1986, cited in Hsieh, 2004) as students' judgment of their capabilities. Language learners have self-confidence about speaking English despite the fact that they find English difficult. The labeling of this factor is consistent with Truitt's (1995) and Yang's (1992) studies (self-efficacy and confidence; and self-efficacy, respectively). However, only item 15 is under the same category in both studies. Other two items (4 and 6) loaded under the different factors labeled as "ease of learning" in Truitt's study; "perceived difficulty of English learning" in Wang's (2005) study; and "difficulty of language learning" in Hsieh's (2004) study.

The third factor, “threat to personality” relates to the psychological aspect of language learning. Language learners think that they can be ridiculed in English classes and that it is difficult for shy people to learn English. The reason behind these beliefs may be due to the way English is taught. The atmosphere in the classroom should be friendly and supportive, and lead to reduced anxiety. Learning activities should foster team spirit and collaboration rather than harsh competition. Students’ active participation does not need to be in the form of oral performance if the student does not feel too secure in his/her oral competence. Art and craft work, and other visual presentations and products can be accepted and evaluated as linguistic performance.

Fourthly, correction of errors (item 19) and age factor in language learning (1) play a crucial role for learners in foreign language learning. The learners want their teachers to correct their mistakes on time. They also believe that if they were younger, they would be more successful in English. These items loaded on different factors in other studies. For instance, studies by Horwitz’s (1988) and Hsieh’s (2004) showed that item 19 loaded on the factor labeled “learning and communication strategies” and item 1 loaded on the factor labeled “foreign language aptitude”; similarly, these items loaded on the factor labeled “foreign language aptitude” in Tumposky’s (1991) study; item 19 loaded on the factor labeled “correct and formal learning” in Truitt’s (1995) study. This indicates that learners of different cultures can factorize a certain item under different constructs, or maybe the some construct under a different name.

The fifth factor concerns the status of learning a foreign language and the learning context. Most of the learners believe that if they were in an English-speaking country, they would be more successful in learning English (item 11). Moreover, they believe that speaking English has a crucial role in their country (item 30) and they would feel privileged if they spoke English (item 14). The categorization of these items under this factor is different from the categorization in other studies. Items 11 and 30 loaded under “nature of language learning” and “motivation and expectation” in Horwitz’s (1988) and Hsieh’s (2004) studies. Similarly, these items loaded on the first factor “value and nature of learning” in Truitt’s study; again on the first factor of “foreign language aptitude” in Tumposky’s (1991) study; and finally on the second factor “nature of learning” in Yang’s (1992) study.

Another subcomponent of LLBS is related to learners' beliefs about learning English in the formal environment of the classroom. Some of the students participate in English class only because it is compulsory and they need to get grades on it. Some of them prefer to remain silent in class. On the other hand, some learners believe that if they knew grammar rules, they would learn English better (item 20). Most of them prefer to be invisible in the classroom, which may be due to the learner characteristic (i.e. lack self-confidence) or teaching methods which do not motivate and reward active contribution to classroom discourse. So, this factor reflects students' ideas about learning English in the classroom. This categorization seems to be different from the categorization of some other studies. For example, item 20 loaded on the third factor in Horwitz's (1988) and Hsieh's (2004) studies "nature of language learning"; on the fourth factor "importance of formal learning" in Wang's (2005) study; on the third factor "correct and formal learning" in Truitt's (1995) study; and on the fourth factor in Yang's (1992) study.

The seventh factor is associated with the oral skills of the learners. The participants believe that speaking English is more difficult than comprehending it (item 24). Since learners find speaking English difficult, most of them say that they feel inhibited about speaking English in front of their classmates (40). This may be due to the fear of making errors and the humiliation of being corrected each time. The categorization of this factor is different from the categorization in other studies (Horwitz, 1988; Tumposky, 1991; Yang, 1992; Truitt, 1995; Hsieh, 2004). For instance, item 24 loaded on the first factor (language difficulty) in Horwitz's (1988) and Hsieh's (2004) study; on the fifth factor (motivation) in Tumposky's (1991) study; on the fourth factor (formal structure) in Yang' (1992) study; on the second factor (self-efficacy and confidence) in Truitt's (1995) study.

The last factor is related to learnability of a foreign language. Most of the participants believe that memorization is not an effective way of learning a foreign language. In other words, although there are so many words and grammar rules to be memorized, the learners do not think that English can be learned through memorization. It appears that although learners believe strongly in the benefits of practicing the language through frequent repetition and drill exercises, they do not actually see this as memorizing the material to be learned but rather as increased opportunity to practice the language in similar and different contexts. Moreover, these learners believe that if they had already known a foreign language, it would be

easier for them to learn another one, namely, English (item 9). This categorization seems to be similar to the categorization in other studies. Although the titles of the factors are not totally the same, they seem to be related to each other. For instance, item 9 loaded on the fourth factor (learning and communication strategies) in Horwitz's (1988) and Tumplosky's (1991) studies; on the third factor (importance of formal learning) in Wang's (2005) study; on the third factor (correct and formal learning) in Truitt's (1995) study; on the second factor (nature of learning) in Yang's (1992) study.

Briefly, the categorization of beliefs in LLBS seems to be mostly different from the categorization in other studies. Only one or two items under different factors seem to be consistent with other studies. The reason of this inconsistency may be due to the fact that the researcher developed her own scale creating items particular to learners' language learning context and their age, unlike Horwitz who sufficed with the logically driven categories of the BALLI.

From the multiple linear regression analyses, it was discovered that among the eight LLBS factors, six (Factor 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7) were explained by gender and school status. Moreover, it was discovered that the second "self-efficacy and confidence", third "threat to personality" and fourth "error correction and age factor in learning" LLBS factors were significantly predicted by only gender. Gender uniquely explained for about -.45% of the total variance of factors 2, 3, and 4. On the other hand, the results revealed that the first (foreign language learning and communication strategies) and the seventh (oral communication) LLBS factors were significantly predicted by both gender and school status. Gender and school status together explained for about -.47.4% of the variance of the Factors 1 and 7. Furthermore, the results showed that the fifth LLBS factor "the status of learning a foreign language and the learning context" was significantly predicted by only school status. School status uniquely explained for about .14% of the variance of Factor 5. In order to obtain further details about these results, the researcher conducted first MANOVA and then crosstabs as mentioned above.

Results from the MANOVA gave further details on the main the differences in learner beliefs between female and male students in primary education. The results show that female participants tend to have significantly higher rate of agreements with all the statements in LLBS. For example, the results of crosstabs reveal that 95% of these female learners believe in the importance of repetition and practice in

learning EFL, 91% believe that if they had relatives who know English, they would learn English easily, and 90% believe the importance of translation from English to Turkish. Moreover, they tended to be more eager to learn English in order to know better its speakers (82%), and attach more importance to vocabulary as well as pronunciation. Although female learners seem to have more self-confidence (as more than half of them believe that they will be able to speak English well and that they are capable of learning English), majority of them (69%) appear to be intimidated about speaking English in front of other people. In a recent study into EFL teacher trainees' beliefs, Tercinlioğlu (2005) did not come across any difference between gender and belief dimensions. However, this study supports Bacon and Finnemann's (1992) prediction of foreign language beliefs interacting with gender in that female learners perceive themselves superior learners to their male counterparts, and with a stronger capability to learn spoken English. Similarly, in Öz's study (2005) prediction of beliefs of EFL learners by gender, in that female learners have stronger tendency to place value on vocabulary, shows that this study is supported by previous research despite differences in the age level of the populations.

Siebert (2003) also found a number of significant belief differences among males and females in relation to language learning and strategy use. Males in general tended have higher rate of agreements with the items compared to females unlike the findings of the current study. For example, findings revealed that male students were more likely than female students to rate their abilities highly and more likely to respond that they have a special ability for learning languages. Also, in Bernat & Lloyd's (2007) study, responses of males and females differed in that males were more likely to enjoy the experience of practicing English with native speakers. Similarly, in Aktaş's (2001) study with university students from different majors and educational background, significant differences were observed between the responses of male and female students in the sense that female learners were identified as more anxious language learners in the classroom. Moreover, males were found to be more optimistic than girls in foreign language learning since they did not find English difficult.

The results from MANOVA gave further information on the main differences between the students of state and private schools. There is a general belief that the students of private schools and state schools would hold different beliefs about foreign language learning due to a number of differences, among which are the

socio-economic background of the students and their families, as well as the prosperity level of these schools. People also think that the students of private schools are better than the students of state schools in terms of foreign language skills because private schools provide better educational materials and settings such as language laboratories, and audio and audio-visual materials, as well as other opportunities for facilitating their L2 learning (i.e. sending students abroad, scheduling speaking classes with native speakers, increasing hours of language learning, etc.). Thus, it is possible to think that the students from private schools and state schools have different beliefs about learning EFL. However, the findings show that the participants from both state and private schools share similar beliefs because no statistically significant difference was observed between these schools except for one statement which is about the value of speaking English in their country. The results of crosstabs reveal that more than half of the students from private schools have higher rate of agreement with the statement that is “it is a privilege to be able to speak English in their country”. As foreign language learning classes focus mainly on communicative skills in private school education, it is inevitable to see this kind of rating. Similarly, in Aktaş’s (2001) study, a few items revealed significant differences among the responses of the students from Private High School, Anatolian High School and Normal State High School. Private and state school students differed in that students from private schools tended to believe that they have foreign language aptitude and tended to disagree with the statement that the structure of English was more difficult than the structure of Turkish.

To sum up, the researcher identified 8 factors from the LLBS and six of them were explained by gender and school status. Also, it was discovered that there is a significant difference between males and females related to learning EFL since female learners tend to have higher rate of agreement with all the items on the scale. They also have more self-confidence than male learners. Except for only one item, there was no difference between the students from state and private schools in their beliefs related to learning EFL. Thus, it can be said that the findings of the present study support the contention that background variables may be an important source for within group variation in learner beliefs and suggest that such variables, particularly gender, be taken into account in research studies examining learner beliefs about language learning. The next part will present pedagogical implications of the study and suggestion for further research.

5.3. Pedagogical Implications of the Study

The findings of this study raise several important pedagogical implications for foreign language teaching and learning.

First, as Nunan (1991) maintains, learners bring to the learning situation different beliefs and attitudes about the nature of language and language learning, and that these beliefs and attitudes should be taken into consideration in language learning. From this point of view, it can be said that teachers have great responsibility for shaping learners' beliefs in an intended way since "beliefs often become resistant to change" (Alexander and Dochy, 1995, cited in Riley, 2006). Moreover, it should be kept in mind that language learners today are seen as active and responsible participants who learn from their own experiences, make their own choices and respond to events as they perceive them (Meskill & Rangelova, 2000 and William & Burden, 1997, cited in Gabillon, 2005). In other words, if learners believe that the best way to learn a foreign language is to memorize its components parts, it is possible that they will be predisposed to adopt a range of strategies involving analysis, memorization and practice, as Benson & Lor (1999) maintain. For instance, almost all the students in this study believe in the importance of repetition and practice in English. Thus, materials and syllabi should be structured so as to recycle the new language points to give sufficient opportunity to learners to practice the language in different contexts and through the varying skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. On the other hand, it seems to be impossible for teachers in Turkey to have their own curriculum particular to their learners' needs and desires since they have to follow a given national curriculum. When the researcher used a course book and its workbook titled "Let's Speak English 8" with 8th grade students, she found that these books lack repetitive drills and practices. Thus, specialists responsible for developing materials such as course book and workbook should take into account the role that repetition plays in foreign language education and give place to classroom activities that repeat previous topics.

Second, the study characterizes learners' beliefs about language learning, which broadens the understanding of some major factors that prevent learners from reaching their desired goals of language learning. As Kumaravadivelu (1991, cited in Wang, 2005:113) claimed, "the more we know about the learners' personal approaches and personal concepts, the better and more productive our intervention will be". In the current study, Turkish students uniformly held a range of beliefs

about different aspects of foreign language learning and they are motivated to learn English well. It is interesting to observe that our learners want to speak English with a native-like accent and believe that they can learn English better if there are people around them who know English. A native-like accent and pronunciation can be achieved by enabling students to have access to audio-lingual and audio-visual materials. At the same time, students should be made to understand that the standards for native-likeness have been changed and relaxed in recent years and that with English becoming an international language speakers are not expected to model any specific accent belonging to any single nation. For an English-knowing environment, parents could be involved in assisting subjects' homework and be invited into the English classroom to share their children's language-learning experiences. On the other hand, most of the students have negative feelings towards English such as wishing to be "invisible in the English class". Therefore, teachers can draw on the findings of this study to "confront erroneous beliefs with new information" (Horwitz, 1987, cited in Wang, 2005:113) and help their learners develop more positive attitudes towards language learning.

Third, this study identified significant differences between males and females related to language learning beliefs. Female learners seem to be more eager to learn a foreign language. Moreover, they have more self-confidence in speaking English. Thus, teachers should try to identify the reasons and conditions which prevent male learners from being interested in learning a foreign language, and they should try to find ways of drawing males' attention to English.

Fourth, this study investigated the difference between the students of state and private schools related to language learning. Statistically significant differences were not observed between the students of these schools apart from only one perspective - the value put on speaking English in their country. Students from private schools believe that if they spoke English, they would be in a more privileged position in their country. So, it can be said that in state schools improvement of oral skills may have been underestimated by the teachers and so the students may not be aware of the importance of speaking English. Therefore, the teachers should focus more on speaking skills together with teaching grammar.

Another implication involves the necessity of opportunities to access the target culture since nearly half of the participants are unaware of the importance of the target culture in creating the wish to learn their language. In order for learners to

develop personal bonds with the target culture, they may need to be provided with opportunities to engage in authentic language practice and to access the target culture in the context of classroom. Teaching which focuses on developing sensitivity towards the target culture, and appreciation of the target culture might achieve this goal.

One other implication might involve creating opportunities in the EFL classroom settings for interaction with native English speakers so that they can develop oral skills and gain access to the target culture. The integration of these opportunities for interaction might work towards promoting self-confidence in speaking and use of the language for communicative purposes. The effective integration of technology into language teaching might be one way to promote those types of interactions where such opportunities are not readily available.

Consequently, as Horwitz (1988) concluded, teachers of English need to be aware of learners' beliefs in order to gain insight into the ways they can promote effective learning strategies. Teachers can remove students' misconceptions by providing knowledge or illustrations concerning the nature of and process of foreign language learning. Therefore, this study may be of help for teachers in identifying learners' beliefs so that English class may be organized in a manner which minimizes any negative feelings in learners' beliefs.

5.4. Recommendations for Further Research

There are several recommendations for further research. First, this study used a newly developed questionnaire in order to collect data from language learners. It is possible that the students might have completed the questionnaire without thinking carefully. In order to check whether the participants responded seriously and carefully, paraphrases of some of the items to the questionnaire could be added. In addition to questionnaires, interviews with a group of students could be carried out in order to more thoroughly explore and expound the subjects' beliefs about learning English as a foreign language. Moreover, as Keim (1996, cited in Riley, 2006) claims, actual behavior in the classroom is not always consistent with subjects' questionnaire responses. Further research could address the issue of consistency between reported beliefs and actual classroom behavior through observations in order to get more in-depth information.

Second, this study may be the first to explore learners' beliefs and the relationship between learners' beliefs and such variables as gender and school status at primary education level. Further research may include the socio-economic status of learners' families and its effect on learner beliefs. Moreover, the relationships between learners' beliefs and other variables such as motivation, attitudes and anxiety may be investigated at primary education level.

Third, the effect of 8th grade learners' beliefs on their success in English could be investigated. In a learning process, teachers' role is also vital. Thus, learners' beliefs can be compared with their teachers' beliefs in order to see whether there are (mis)matches between learner and teacher beliefs.

Lastly, researchers generally display learner beliefs and focus on the relationship between learner beliefs and affective factors. Rather than displaying learner beliefs, further research could try to find ways to trigger a change in learner beliefs through different approaches and methods.

Consequently, research into learner beliefs, particularly for primary school students, deserve further research in the sense that knowing beliefs of this age group could contribute positively to foreign language education. More specifically, in addition to teachers, both curriculum designers and specialists responsible for developing language teaching and learning materials could benefit from the results of this type of studies and they may be more effective in language teaching.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGE LEARNING INVENTORY (BALLI)

(Horwitz, 1988)

Students are asked to read each statement and indicate:

- (A) Strongly agree (B) Agree (C) neither agree nor disagree
(D) Disagree (E) Strongly Disagree

1. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.
2. Some people are born with a special ability which helps them learn a foreign language.
3. Some languages are easier to learn than others.
4. The language I am trying to learn is:

A= Very difficult B= Difficult C= Medium difficulty
D= Easy E= Very Easy
5. The language I am trying to learn is structured in the same way as English.
6. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak this language very well.
7. It is important to speak a foreign language with an excellent accent.
8. It is necessary to know the foreign culture in order to speak the foreign language.
9. You should not say anything in the foreign language until you can say it correctly.
10. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.
11. It is better to learn a foreign language in the foreign country.
12. If I heard someone speaking the language I am trying to learn, I would go up to them so that I could practice speaking the language.
13. It is okay to guess if you do not know a word in the foreign language.
14. If someone spent one hour a day learning a language, how long would it take him/her to become fluent?

A= less than a year
B= 1-2 years
C= 3-5 years
D= 5-10 years
E= you can't learn a language in 1 hour a day
15. I have a foreign language aptitude.

16. Learning a foreign language mostly a matter of learning many new vocabulary words.
17. It is important to repeat and practice often.
18. I feel self-conscious speaking the foreign language in front of other people.
19. If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it will hard to get rid of the later on.
20. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a many of grammar rules.
21. It is important to practice in the language laboratory.
22. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.
23. If I speak this language very well, I will have many opportunities to use it.
24. It is easier to speak than understand a foreign language.
25. Learning a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects.
26. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from English.
27. If I learn to speak this language very well it will help me get a good job.
28. It is easier to read and write this language than to speak and understand it.
29. People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.
30. Americans think that it is important to speak a foreign language.
31. I would like to learn this language so that I can get to know its speakers better.
32. People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.
33. Americans are good at learning foreign languages.
34. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.

APPENDIX B

THE DISTRIBUTION OF LEARNERS IN DIFFERENT SCHOOLS

School Name	n	Percentage (%)
1. Akyol Primary School	39	5.2
2. Büyükşahinbey Primary School	21	2.8
3. Can Alevli Primary School	34	4.6
4. Hayriye Osman Küleçi Primary School	39	5.2
5. Hanifi Şireci Primary School	28	3.7
6. Hatice Büyükmeşe Primary School	33	4.4
7. Mehmet Küçükparmak Primary School	28	3.7
8. Mehlika Alevli Primary School	39	5.2
9. Mustafa Necati Primary School	35	4.7
10. Mahmut Güleç Primary School	32	4.3
11. Naciye Mehmet Gençten Primary School	29	3.9
12. Nuripazarbaşı Primary School	26	3.5
13. Özel İdare Primary School	24	3.2
14. Vehbi Dai Primary School	39	5.2
15. Yunus Emre Primary School	40	5.4
16. 100. Yıl Primary School	38	5.1
17. 23 Nisan Primary School	34	4.6
18. 25 Aralık Primary School	36	4.8
19. 24 Kasım Primary School	20	2.7
20. 30 Ağustos Primary School	38	5.1
21. Bahçeşehir Private Schools	20	2.7
22. Çağdaş Bilgi Private Schools	23	3.1
23. Erdem Private Schools	19	2.5
24. Ted Private Schools	24	3.2
Total	738	100

APPENDIX C

TURKISH VERSION OF THE LLBS

Değerli Öğrenci Arkadaşım,

Bu anket “Sekizinci Sınıf Öğrencilerinin İngilizceyi Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğrenmeye İlişkin Görüşlerinin Yapılanması” konusunu araştırmayı amaçlayan bir çalışmada kullanılmak üzere hazırlanmıştır. İfadeleri okuduktan sonra, görüşlerinizi belirten alana lütfen bir çarpı (X) işareti koyunuz. Gerçek düşüncelerinizi paylaşmaya özen gösterdiğiniz için teşekkür ederim.

Saygılarımla,

Nagihan AKÇAKAYA
İngiliz Dili Eğitimi
Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi

Cinsiyetiniz: Kız () Erkek ()

Örnek:

Hiç katılmıyorum (X) Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

1. Çocuklar yetişkinlere oranla İngilizceyi daha kolay öğrenirler.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

2. Bazı insanlar İngilizce öğrenmelerine yardımcı olacak özel bir yetenekle doğarlar.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

3. Çevremde İngilizce bilen insanların olması öğrenmemi kolaylaştırır.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

4. İngilizce zor bir dildir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

5. İngilizce, cümle yapısı bakımından Türkçeye benzerlik gösterir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

6. İngilizceyi çok iyi konuşabileceğime inanıyorum.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

7. İngilizceyi düzgün bir telaffuzla konuşmak önemlidir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

8. İngilizceyi iyi konuşabilmek için İngilizce konuşan ulusların kültürlerini bilmek gerekir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

9. İngilizcede tam olarak öğrenemediklerimi kullanmaktan kaçınırım.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

10. Herhangi bir yabancı dili bilen kişinin diğer bir dili öğrenmesi daha kolaydır.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

11. İngilizcenin konuşulduğu bir ülkede, İngilizce daha kolay öğrenilir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

12. Yaşıttım olan bir turist görürsem, pratik yapmak için yanına gidip konuşurum.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

13. İngilizce ezber yapılarak öğrenilemez.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

14. Ülkemizde İngilizce konuşabilmek bir ayrıcalıktır.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

15. İngilizce öğrenmede yetenekli olduğumu düşünüyorum.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

16. İngilizcede asıl önemli olan birçok yeni kelime öğrenmektir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

17. İngilizcede öğrenilenleri uygulayarak tekrar etmek önemlidir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

18. İngilizce öğrenmek insanı rahatlatır.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

19. İngilizce öğrenirken başlangıçta yaptığım hatalar göz ardı edilirse, zamanla bunları düzeltmek daha zor olur.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

20. İngilizcede asıl önemli olan dilbilgisini iyi bilmektir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

21. İngilizce öğrenirken kasetçalar ve VCD gibi araç gereçler kullanarak pratik yapmak önemlidir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

22. Kızlar İngilizce öğrenmede erkeklere oranla daha iyidir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

23. İngilizce öğretmenimin ana dili İngilizce olsa daha başarılı olurum.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

24. Benim için İngilizce konuşmak İngilizceyi anlamaktan daha zordur.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

25. İngilizce dersi diğer derslerden daha farklı bir çalışma gerektirir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

26. İngilizce öğrenirken genellikle öğrendiklerimin Türkçe karşılığını bulmaya çalışırım.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

27. İngilizce öğrenmenin daha iyi iş olanakları sağlayacağına inanıyorum.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

28. İngilizce konuşmak insanın kendine olan güvenini artırır.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

29. Matematik ya da Fen Bilgisi derslerinde başarılı olanlar İngilizce öğrenmede iyi değildirler.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

30. Ülkemizde insanlar İngilizce bilmenin önemli olduğunu düşünürler.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

31. İngilizce konuşan insanları daha iyi tanımak için İngilizce öğrenmek isterim.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

32. Birden fazla dili öğrenebilmek için zeki olmak gerekir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

33. Ülkemiz insanı yabancı dil öğrenme konusunda yeteneklidir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

34. Öğretmenim İngilizceyi iyi anlatırsa ben de daha iyi öğrenebilirim.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

35. İngilizceyi sevmek öğrenilmesini kolaylaştırır.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

36. İngilizce dersinde yapılacak en iyi şey hiç konuşmadan bir köşede oturmaktır.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

37. İngilizce dersinde insanlar gülünç duruma düşebilirler.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

38. İngilizce öğrenmek çekingen öğrencilere göre değildir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

39. İngilizce dersinde benim için önemli olan sadece iyi bir not almaktır.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

40. Sınıf arkadaşlarımda önünde İngilizce konuşmaya çekinirim.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

41. Okulda aldığım İngilizce eğitim yeterlidir.

Hiç katılmıyorum () Katılmıyorum () Kararsızım () Katılıyorum ()
Tamamen katılıyorum ()

APPENDIX D

PERMISSION DOCUMENT FROM THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL
EDUCATION

T.C.
GAZİANTEP VALİLİĞİ
Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü

Sayı : B.08.4.MEM.4.27.00.090-010/2008 23.10.2008* 39306
Konu : Anket uygulama izni

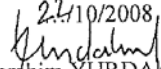
VALİLİK MAKAMINA

Gaziantep Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Ana Bilim Dalı Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi Nagihan AKÇAKAYA "8.sınıf Dil Öğrenimine İlişkin Görüşlerinin Yapılanması ve Bu Görüşlerin İngilizce Yabancı Dil Başarısıyla İlişkisi." konulu tez çalışmasını İlimiz Şahinbey ilçesine bağlı ilişik listede isimleri belirtilen resmi ve özel ilköğretim okullarındaki öğrencilere anket çalışmasını uygulamak istedikleri Gaziantep Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsünün yazılarında belirtilmektedir.

Bu nedenle, ilimiz Şahinbey İlçesi İlköğretim Okullarındaki 8. Sınıf öğrencilerine anket çalışması uygulaması yapılması, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Eğitimi Araştırma ve Geliştirme Başkanlığının 28.02.2007 tarih ve 311/1084 sayılı araştırma ve araştırma desteğine yönelik izin ve uygulama yönergesine göre, Müdürlüğümüz AR-GE bürosu bünyesinde oluşturulan komisyonun uygunluk raporu doğrultusunda söz konusu anketin yapılması Müdürlüğümüzce uygun mütalaa edilmektedir.

Makamlarınızca da uygun görülmesi halinde olurlarınıza arz ederim.


Süleyman ŞİŞMAN
Milli Eğitim Müdürü

OLUR
22/10/2008

İbrahim YURDAKUL
Vali a.
Vali Yardımcı



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APPENDIX E

ITEM-TOTAL STATISTICS FOR THE LLBS

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 1	140.5108	224.237	.358	.766
Item 2	141.4417	235.064	.010	.780
Item 3	140.0650	224.682	.395	.765
Item 4	141.0881	223.242	.309	.767
Item 5	141.4783	229.362	.130	.775
Item 6	140.8415	220.828	.481	.761
Item 7	140.1152	223.424	.449	.763
Item 8	141.3496	234.429	.027	.779
Item 9	141.1640	234.699	.018	.779
Item 10	140.9539	227.428	.241	.770
Item 11	140.5772	228.904	.169	.773
Item 12	140.5921	220.684	.432	.762
Item 13	140.8496	229.067	.155	.774
Item 14	140.8198	228.303	.192	.772
Item 15	140.9024	220.756	.473	.762
Item 16	140.3726	227.360	.279	.769
Item 17	139.9390	224.470	.454	.764
Item 18	141.3171	221.690	.392	.764
Item 19	140.7005	227.065	.204	.772
Item 20	140.8198	225.423	.313	.767
Item 21	140.6274	224.329	.320	.767
Item 22	141.4661	231.677	.068	.779
Item 23	141.4363	235.147	.004	.780
Item 24	141.1057	230.257	.145	.774
Item 25	140.5366	228.045	.223	.771
Item 26	140.1653	223.080	.453	.763
Item 27	140.1721	222.865	.431	.763
Item 28	140.7453	220.353	.437	.762
Item 29	140.3564	226.238	.265	.769
Item 30	140.6084	225.959	.302	.768
Item 31	140.3374	219.206	.491	.760
Item 32	141.1341	230.743	.012	.780
Item 33	142.3902	240.871	.070	.764
Item 34	140.3672	224.482	.337	.766
Item 35	139.9824	221.059	.503	.761
Item 36	140.0217	224.084	.347	.766
Item 37	140.8577	228.882	.159	.774
Item 38	140.6450	230.465	.135	.774
Item 39	140.5000	224.942	.271	.769
Item 40	140.5298	228.464	.187	.772
Item 41	141.7344	237.750	.059	.783

APPENDIX F

ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX FOR THE LLBS

Items	Components							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Item 26	.648							
Item 17	.636							
Item 16	.564							
Item 3	.558							
Item 7	.552							
Item 35	.545							
Item 12	.521							
Item 31	.400							
Item 6		.734						
Item 4		.691						
Item 15		.676						
Item 18		.562						
Item 38			.734					
Item 37			.650					
Item 19				.653				
Item 1				.524				
Item 14				.496	.389			
Item 11					.669			
Item 30					.624			
Item 39						.615		
Item 36						.588		
Item 20						-.394		
Item 24							.742	
Item 40							.476	
Item 13								.747
Item 10								.373

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Nagihan AKÇAKAYA was born in Mersin in 1984. She is a graduate of Gaziantep University – English Language and Literature Department - Faculty of Arts and Sciences (2007). She had worked as a teacher of English in Mustafa Marangoz Primary School in Gaziantep in 2007-2008. She has been working in Gürpınar 75. Yıl Cumhuriyet İlköğretim Okulu in İstanbul since 2009. She speaks English fluently. She has also basic German skills.

ÖZGEÇMİŞ

Nagihan AKÇAKAYA 1984 yılında Mersin’de doğmuştur. Gaziantep Üniversitesi – Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi - İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümünden mezundur (2007). 2007-2008 yıllarında Gaziantep’te Mustafa Marangoz İlköğretim Okulu’nda İngilizce öğretmeni olarak çalışmıştır. 2009 yılından beri İstanbul’da Gürpınar 75. Yıl Cumhuriyet İlköğretim Okulu’nda çalışmaktadır. İyi derecede İngilizce konuşmaktadır. Aynı zamanda temel Almanca bilgisine sahiptir.

