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## The Evaluation of the English Language Teacher Education Program in Turkey\*

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**Abstract:** This study aims to evaluate the English language teacher training program which was put into practice in 2006, according to the views of lecturers and English teachers. This study aims to contribute to the studies on foreign language teaching by presenting an evaluation of teacher education, which is an important dimension of English as a foreign language teaching. The qualitative method was used in the study, which was designed in a descriptive survey model. The population of the research consists of 35 lecturers working at the English Language Teaching Department of different Education Faculties in the 2016-2017 academic year and 11 English teachers working in public schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education and who have not completed 5 years in the profession. NVIVO-11 program was used in the analysis of the data. The results of the study were compared with the 2018 English teacher education program renewed by the Council of Higher Education. English teachers and lecturers think that the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and general culture courses in the teacher training program are insufficient. According to English teachers and lecturers the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and general culture courses in the English language teacher education program are insufficient. Furthermore, English teachers stated that they could not apply what they learned during their training to real-life conditions. Therefore, they propose that the English language teacher training program should be revised considering the current conditions.

**Keywords:** Curriculum evaluation, EFL teacher education program, teacher education.

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### Introduction

With the increasing need for foreign language teaching in line with the needs of the globalizing world, traditional paradigms in foreign language teaching, and language learning tendency through translation are insufficient to meet today's needs. Foreign language has turned into a tool for acquiring knowledge through intercultural communication, and as a result, serious changes have been observed in foreign language learning and teaching methods (Huhn, 2012).

Students should have sociolinguistics, communication, and interaction competencies in order to be able to communicate with different language communities beyond the classroom (Schick & Nelson, 2001). In order to train students in this new paradigm, teachers need to employ teaching practices that will enable students to use language as a communication tool. Methods based on the communicative approach require the teacher to constantly speak the target language in the classroom, which makes it mandatory for teachers to have advanced language proficiency, unlike the traditional approaches. In addition to a good language proficiency, teachers are expected to be familiar with cultural elements in the target language, learn to teach and have good command of technology applications in language teaching (ACTFL, 2015; Peyton, 2005; Lafayette, 1993). Training a foreign language teacher in this changing paradigm means more than seeing him/her as someone who employs mechanical language practices in the classroom (Huhn, 2012). Today's foreign language teachers are required to guide their students in communicating with communities inside and outside the classroom and provide feedback that allows students to monitor their own improvement (Schrum & Glisan, 2000). By the changing paradigm, teacher education programs should be organized with the most comprehensive approaches which ensure that a teacher enters the classroom equipped with the necessary competencies (Huhn, 2012). Apart from

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this, many studies have shown that teacher training has a significant impact on students' success and teacher qualification (Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Rivkin, et al., 2005).

There are some difficulties that foreign language teachers have to overcome unlike teachers in other branches. These are; improving foreign language proficiency, teaching in different cultural environments apart from the geography where the target language is used, applying current studies of the field in the classroom, and ensuring the continuity of their professional development (González, 2000). For teachers to overcome these difficulties, they need to be able to use their foreign language knowledge, pedagogical practices and learning theories in the educational environment.

Considering these difficulties faced by teachers, questions about how foreign language teacher education should be organized and what content should be thought become important. Lafayette (1993) stated that the knowledge or content of foreign language teacher education should be in a structure that covers language proficiency and grammar, as well as literature and cultural knowledge. In this context, he deals with 3 areas that form the basis of knowledge; language proficiency, civilization, culture, and language analysis. Day (1991), on the other hand, examines the knowledge/content base that should be gained in foreign language teacher education under four categories: content knowledge, general pedagogic knowledge, pedagogic content knowledge, and support knowledge (knowledge of interdisciplinary interactions such as psycholinguistics, research methods, linguistics and so forth). In addition to Day, Richards proposed a six-dimension content base for the program. These are teaching theory (the theoretical basis for teaching approaches and practices), teaching skills (essential dimension for all teachers), communication and language proficiency (competence in communication and language use), subject matter knowledge (special content knowledge of language teaching), pedagogical inquiry and decision making (mixed cognitive and problem-solving skills for teaching practice), context knowledge (includes education and language policy as well as institutions, students and programs). Technological, pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) which has been extensively researched recently, is considered an important component in teacher education. This theoretical framework has been adopted by different researchers in a multitude of educational areas and is considered to have shown promising results in integrating technology in teachers' practices (Gür & Karamete, 2015). Given the fact that several governments are investing in educational technologies, teacher education programs should equip their graduates accordingly. Technology can be used to improve student learning, support students and parents, make the school more engaging and relevant for the learners, provide equal opportunities for the disadvantaged students, allow for and support teacher professional development (Zuker, as cited in Ersanlı, 2016). Preparing teachers for the changes in teaching is a great challenge that teacher educators have to face. New technologies accelerated especially after covid force teachers to use new in-class technologies. Previously, language teachers using technology often had to introduce the technology itself to students and options for incorporating that technology were limited by the routine use of technologies for contemporary social practices. Many teachers and students are users of at least some of the plethora of new tools, resources, and practices that may be beneficial in the language teaching. Various approaches to computer-assisted language learning are discussed in terms of their merits, and these all take inspiration from research suggesting that technology integration can contribute to increases in students' engagement, motivation and getting access to authentic language. Furthermore, language teacher education also needs to accommodate enhancements in tracking student behavior, individualizing instruction, and training learners to be more autonomous (Kessler & Hubbard, 2017).

As Tütüniş and Yalman (2020) mentioned generation Z students are in schools today and they are smarter than previous generations and they possess skills and knowledge better than the others. Therefore, the aim of education should not be to transfer our knowledge only but to empower students to become global citizens who embrace lifelong learning.

Language teachers' competencies and strategies have a different quality from other teaching strategies in a subject like mathematics. As foreign language teachers need specific competencies to create stimulating communicative learning environments and opportunities for developing content-related skills. They are also required to have a high level of language awareness and intercultural competencies (König et al., 2016).

In Turkey, curriculum evaluation studies in English language teaching started with the evaluation of foreign language teacher education certificate programs outside the undergraduate program and the courses taught in preparatory classes. Daloğlu (1996) evaluated the COTE (Certificate for overseas teachers of English) certificate program offered to foreign language teachers at the university; Kanatlar's (1996) study is on TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) program; Seferoğlu (2006) and Erozan (2005) evaluated the 1998 English Language Teacher Education program. There are also studies on the evaluation of the 2006 English Language Teacher Education program in Turkey. (Alagöz, 2017; Coşkun & Daloğlu, 2010; Gürsoy, 2013; Hismanoğlu, 2012; Karakaş, 2012; Kızıltan, 2011; Küçüköğlu, 2015; Long 2013; Red, 2011; Yavuz & Topkaya Zehir, 2013). While some of these studies consist of evaluations for the general program, some of them are in the form of examining the main courses in the program. Evaluation studies on the English Language Teacher Education program in Turkey gained momentum after the changes made by the Higher Education Council in 2006.

Within the framework of the research problem, English language teacher education programs which was put into practice by the Council of Higher Education in 2006 according to the views of the faculty members and English teachers. In addition, the study results were examined comparatively with the program renewed in 2018. Teachers should have new

competencies different from the traditional understanding in order to implement the curricula in which the communicative approach is employed in schools. It is considered important to carry out studies with English teachers on the effectiveness of teacher training programs in a real school environment. The studies on English language teacher training programs in Turkey were conducted either on lecturers or prospective teachers' views about the program, however, this study focused both on lecturers and English teachers who were trained with this program. Furthermore, this study was carried out with participants from 9 different universities, that was selected by stratified sampling method and English teachers. This variety in sample selection provides a detailed picture of both practical and theoretical dimensions of the teacher training program. The lecturers from 9 different universities in Turkey and English teachers were interviewed individually by the researchers. This is considered very crucial to draw a realistic picture of the current program and its applications. The Council of Higher Education introduced a new teacher training curriculum in 2018 and the results of the study were also examined together with the new program. The study is considered important in that it sheds light on the foreign language teaching problems encountered in Turkey based on teacher education and contributes to the evaluation of our English teacher education programs with examples from abroad.

### Methodology

#### *Research Design*

The qualitative method was used in the study. Qualitative research is an approach to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2013). This qualitative study collected data from the sampled participants using face-to-face, semi-structured interview techniques. The semi-structured interview technique was used to obtain detailed data about lecturers' and prospective teachers' views of the English language teacher training program introduced in 2006 by the Higher Education Council of Turkey.

#### *Sample and Data Collection*

The universe of this research consists of lecturers in English Language Teaching departments at the Faculties of Education in the 2016-2017 academic year and English teachers who work in public schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education and who have not completed their five years in the profession. Purposive sampling was used in the study. 35 lecturers from English language teaching departments of 9 universities were included in the study.

*Table 1. Profiles of the University Lecturers*

Participant	University	Academic Degree
P1	Çanakkale 18 Mart University	Associate Professor
P2	Çanakkale 18 Mart University	Lecturer Phd
P3	Çanakkale 18 Mart University	Assistant Professor
P4	Çanakkale 18 Mart University	Assistant Professor
P5	Abant İzzet Baysal University	Assistant Professor
P6	Abant İzzet Baysal University	Assistant Professor
P7	Abant İzzet Baysal University	Lecturer Phd
P8	Anadolu University	Associate Professor
P9	Anadolu University	Assistant Professor
P10	Anadolu University	Instructor
P11	Anadolu University	Instructor
P12	Anadolu University	Assistant Professor
P13	Anadolu University	Professor
P14	Atatürk University	Assistant Professor
P15	Atatürk University	Associate Professor
P16	Atatürk University	Assistant Professor
P17	Hacettepe University	Assistant Professor
P18	Hacettepe University	Assistant Professor
P19	Hacettepe University	Research Asst.
P20	Ortadoğu Teknik University	Research Asst.
P21	Mustafa Kemal University	Lecturer
P22	Mustafa Kemal University	Assistant Professor
P23	Mustafa Kemal University	Assistant Professor
P24	Necmettin University	Lecturer
P25	Necmettin University	Assistant Professor

Table 1. Continued

Participant	University	Academic Degree
P26	Necmettin University	Assistant Professor
P27	Uludağ University	Lecturer
P28	Uludağ University	Assistant Professor
P29	Uludağ University	Assistant Professor
P30	Uludağ University	Lecturer Phd
P31	Uludağ University	Assistant Professor
P32	Uludağ University	Associate Professor
P33	Van Yüzüncü Yıl University	Instructor
P34	Van Yüzüncü Yıl University	Assistant Professor
P35	Van Yüzüncü Yıl University	Professor

The first study group consists of 35 lecturers working in the English language teaching department of the universities. As can be seen from the table, first group of participants of the study consisted of 9 different public universities in Turkey. 2 professors, 4 associate professors, 18 assistant professors, 6 lecturers, 2 instructors and 2 research assistants took part in the study. The participants all gave lectures for undergraduate programs and they were all familiar with the programs and its components.

Table 2. Profiles of the English teachers

Teachers	Year of experience	Province of School
T1	1	Van-Tuşba
T2	3	Van-İpekyolu
T3	1	Van-İpekyolu
T4	2	Van-Tuşba
T5	4	Van-Edremit
T6	3	Van-Tuşba
T7	2	Van-İpekyolu
T8	1	Van-Edremit
T9	4	Van-Edremit
T10	4	Van-Tuşba
T11	1	Van-İpekyolu

The second group of participants consists of 11 English teachers who have not completed their 5 years at teaching. The purpose of this was to ensure that teachers' knowledge and experience about the program they graduated from is up-to-date. It can be seen from the Table 2, the 11 English teachers are from 3 main districts of Van province and their teaching experiences ranges from 1 to 5 years. In the study, two interview forms were developed for the interview with the lecturers and English teachers. In order to determine the intelligibility of the lecturers' interview form and whether it serves the purpose of the research, the opinions of 4 experts were taken and some problems were adjusted in line with their opinions. In order to test the clarity of the questions in the English teacher interview form and their suitability for the purpose of the study, opinions were taken from 4 experts and the corrected form was examined by interviewing 4 teachers within the scope of the pre-trial study. As a result of the interview, it was determined that the interview questions in the form were understandable.

#### Analyzing of Data

Qualitative data within the scope of the research were recorded with the permission of the participants. The recordings of interviews with 35 lecturers and 11 English teachers were deciphered by the researcher. A reliability study was carried out at the beginning of the coding process of the interviews with 35 academicians. Qualitative data obtained from 9 people, who constitute 25% of the total 35 participants, were randomly selected within the scope of the reliability study and analyzed and coded by the researcher and another expert. The coding made by both coders was compared and a consensus was reached on the coding made. Then, the number of themes with "Agreement" and "Disagreement" was subtracted and the reliability was calculated with the reliability formula of Miles and Huberman (1994) (Reliability = Consensus / (Agreement + Disagreement)). As a result, the reliability of the lecturer interview data in this study was found to be 88.9%. Miles and Huberman (1994) state that if the reliability value is over 70%, it will be considered reliable. Therefore, it can be stated that the result obtained in this study is reliable. NVIVO-11 qualitative data analysis program was used to obtain faster and more reliable data with the coding and themes determined as a result of the reliability study.

## Findings / Results

*Results regarding the lecturers' views about the program*

The following questions were asked to the lecturers: "Do you think that your faculty/university is sufficient in terms of technical infrastructure for the effective implementation of the English language teaching undergraduate program? What deficiencies do you observe? How should it be?" The themes related to the answers given by the instructors are included in the model below.

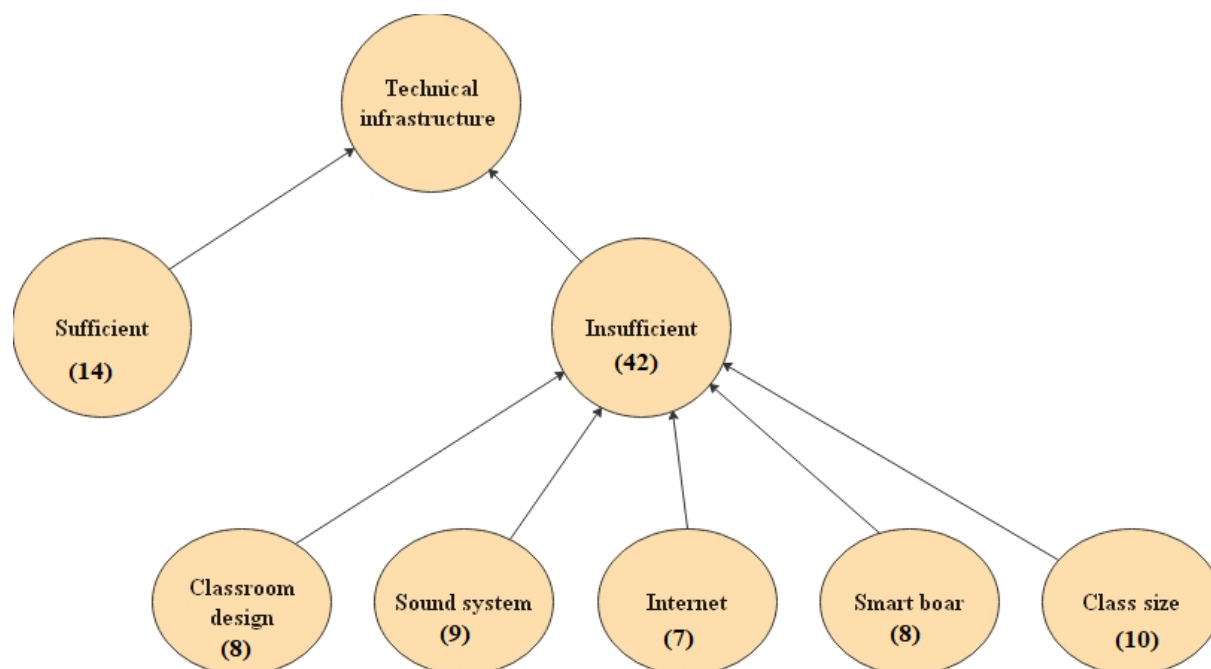


Figure 1. Model for Technical Infrastructure Status<sup>†</sup>

According to the model, the themes of sufficient and insufficient were created. The sub-themes and the frequencies are as follows: *class size*, *sound system*, *smart board*, *classroom layout*, and *internet*. It is clear from the Figure 1 that 14 people stated that the technical infrastructure of their faculties/universities is sufficient for the effective implementation of the undergraduate program. The faculty members who find the technical infrastructure adequate, attribute the reason why they do not have any problems in this regard, to the fact that the faculty buildings have been newly built and the efforts of the university administration in this regard.

Within the scope of the research, the second question to the lecturers was "Do you think that the opportunities to gain experience abroad (Erasmus, Mevlana) provided by your faculty/university are sufficient for the effective implementation of the English language teaching undergraduate program? What deficiencies do you see? How should it be?" question was posed. The themes related to the answers given by the instructors are included in the model below.

<sup>†</sup> Since the model was created in Turkish in NVIVO analysis program, the same model was recreated for its English translation.

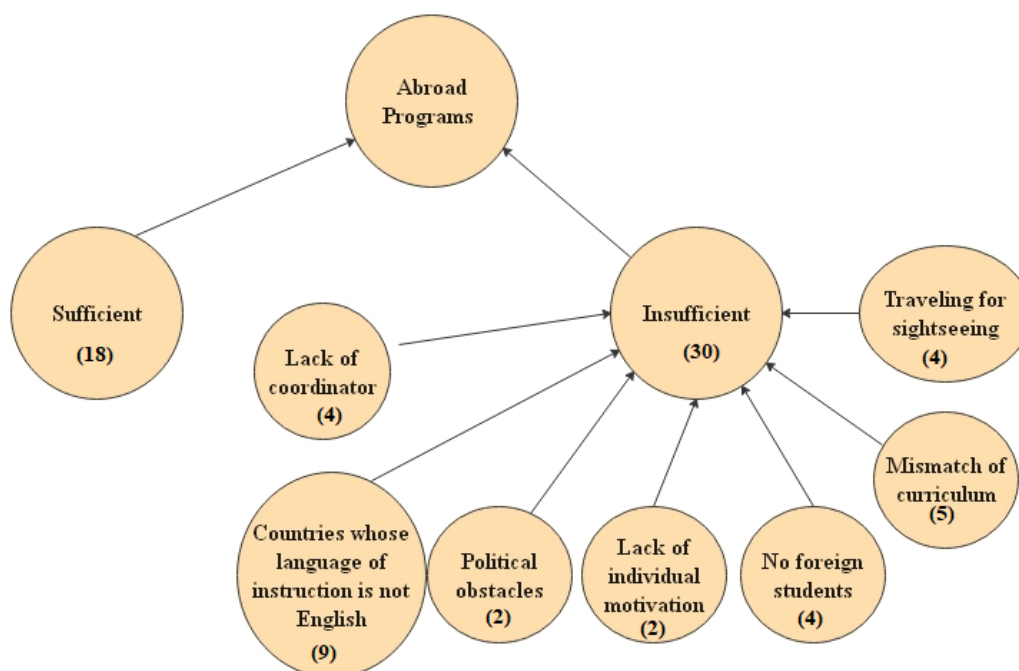


Figure 2. Model of Abroad Programs

The themes, the sub-themes and the frequencies are given in the model above. According to the model, sufficient and insufficient themes were created and the sub-themes are; *lack of coordinator*, *countries whose language of instruction is not English*, *political obstacles*, *lack of individual motivation*, *no incoming students*, *mismatch of curriculum*, and *traveling for sightseeing*.

When Figure 2 is examined, it is understood that 18 of the lecturers find the foreign programs provided by their faculties/universities (Erasmus, Mevlana) sufficient for the effective implementation of the program. They stated that in terms of abroad experience opportunities, their universities guide students in this field, provide sufficient quota and that there is a regular system in their universities to carry out the programs.

The third question was “Do you think that your faculty/university has sufficient access to foreign resources / scientific research opportunities for the effective implementation of the English language teacher education program? What deficiencies do you see? How should it be?” The themes are presented in the model below.

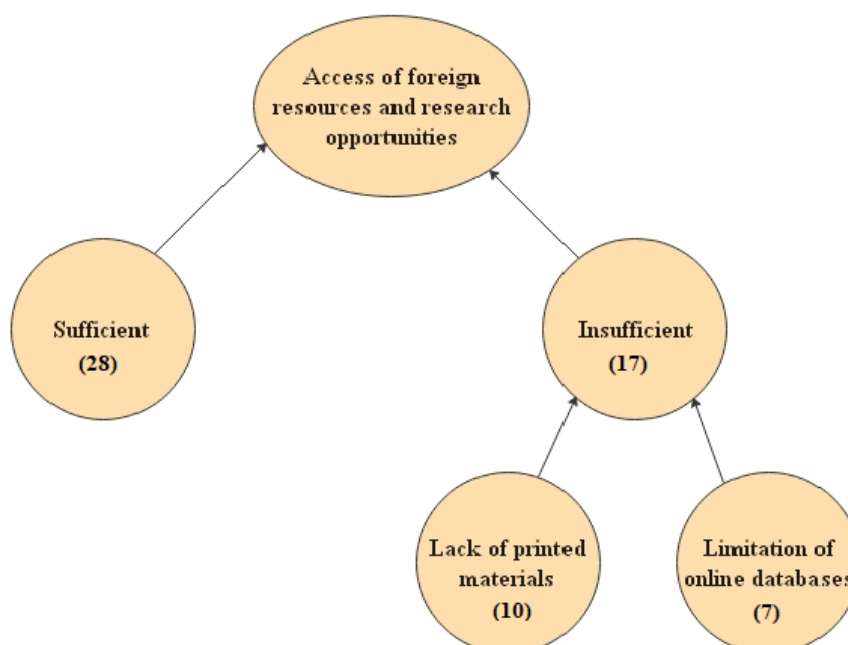


Figure 3. Model of Research Opportunities

The themes, the sub-themes and the frequencies are given in figure 3. As it is clear from the model, apart from the *sufficient* and *insufficient* themes, *lack of printed materials*, and *limitation of online databases* sub-themes were created. According to the model, lecturers find their universities sufficient in terms of access to foreign resources and scientific research opportunities, but insufficient in terms of printed materials and online databases. Most lecturers stated that it is sufficient for universities to access foreign resources / scientific research opportunities. Lecturers stated that their universities' databases are constantly updated and they do not have any problems in this regard. However, some lecturers stated that although their libraries are sufficient for printed materials, they lack access to online databases, while others state that they have sufficient access to the printed online databases in the library, but their printed materials are lacking.

The fourth question was "Do you think that the number and quality of the instructors in your department are sufficient for the effective implementation of the English language teaching undergraduate program? What deficiencies do you see? How should it be?" The themes related to the answers given by the lecturers are given in the model below.

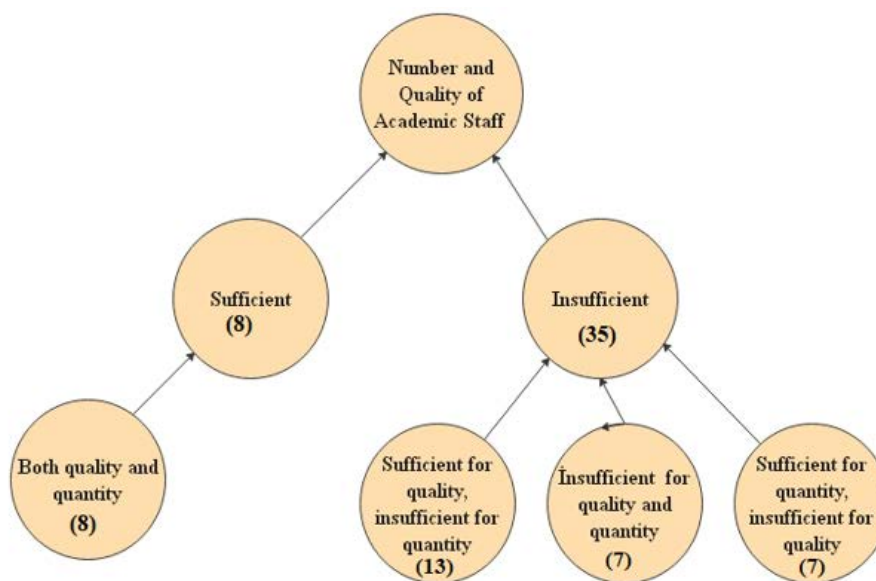


Figure 4. Model of Academic Staff

According to the model, themes, sub-themes and frequencies were created. Under the *sufficient* theme: *both quality and quantity* sub-theme and under *insufficient* theme: *sufficient for quality, insufficient for quantity*, *insufficient for quality and quantity*, *sufficient for quantity, insufficient for quality* sub-themes were created. As seen in Figure 1, some of the lecturers find the number and quality of the instructors in the department sufficient. However, while some lecturers stated that the number of lecturers in the department is sufficient, their qualifications are insufficient, others stated that their number is insufficient but the quality is sufficient, or they are insufficient in terms of both number and quality. 8 of the participants find the lecturers in the department sufficient in terms of both number and quality. However, 27 people stated that the number or quality of lecturers were insufficient. Since some of the participants who gave an *insufficient* as an answer on this question did not explain the reason, the total frequencies of the relevant theme and its sub-themes differed.

The fifth question was "How do you evaluate the English teacher education program in terms of being updated? What are your suggestions?" The themes are shown in the model below.



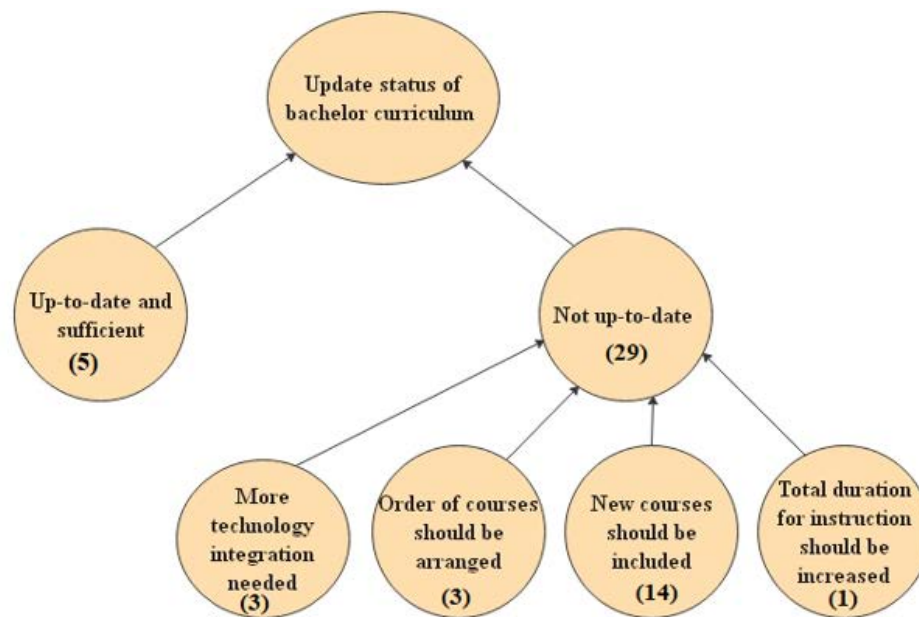


Figure 5. Model of Update Status of the Program

According to the model, 2 main themes of the program are up to date & sufficient and not up-to-date were created. Sub-themes as follows: *The total duration of instruction should be increased, more technology integration is needed, the order of courses should be arranged, and new courses should be included.* As it clear from the model, most lecturers did not find the program up to date. The suggestions proposed by the lecturers are; adding new courses where students can improve their language proficiency, increasing the technology-integrated courses, increasing the field knowledge courses besides the theory, having diction courses, more elective courses, and having a more flexible curriculum. Since some of the participants who gave an insufficient answer to this question did not explain the reason, the total frequencies of the relevant theme and its sub-themes differed. The sixth question to the lecturers was “How do you evaluate the English language teacher education program in terms of meeting the interests and needs of the students? What are your suggestions?”. The themes related to the answers given by the lecturers are shown in the model below.

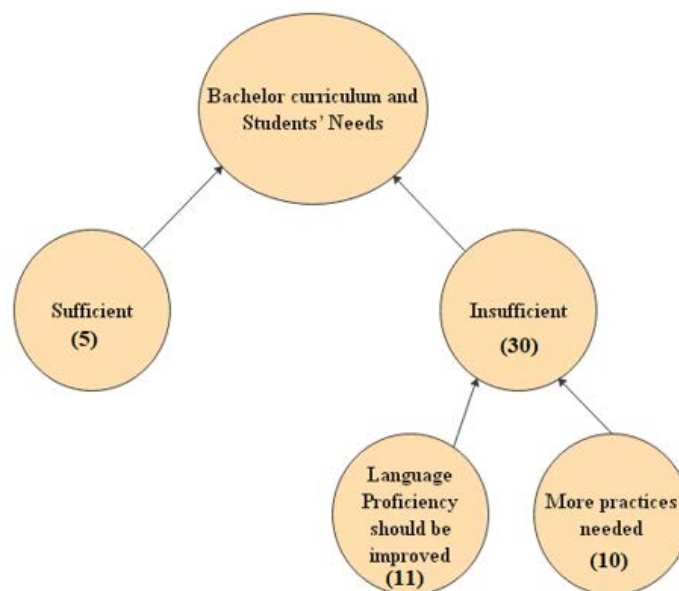


Figure 6. Model of Students' Needs and the Program

According to the model, the themes and sub-themes of *sufficient, insufficient, more practices needed, and language proficiency should be developed* were created. As can be seen from Figure 6, 5 lecturers stated that the program is sufficient. Most lecturers thought that the English language teacher training program is insufficient in answering the students' needs. Some lecturers stated that the program is insufficient in terms of language proficiency courses and therefore should be revised. The lecturers also stated that the students could not learn English well during their secondary school education and therefore the teacher education program should be reorganized in order to improve the language proficiency of the students. In addition, 10 lecturers stated that the theory courses were sufficient, but the



program was insufficient in terms of practice. Since some of the participants who gave an *insufficient* answer to this question did not explain the reason, the total frequencies of the relevant theme and its sub-themes differed. For the seventh question; "How do you evaluate the English language teacher education program in terms of theory and practice balance? What are your suggestions?" were asked and the themes related to the answers are given in the model below.

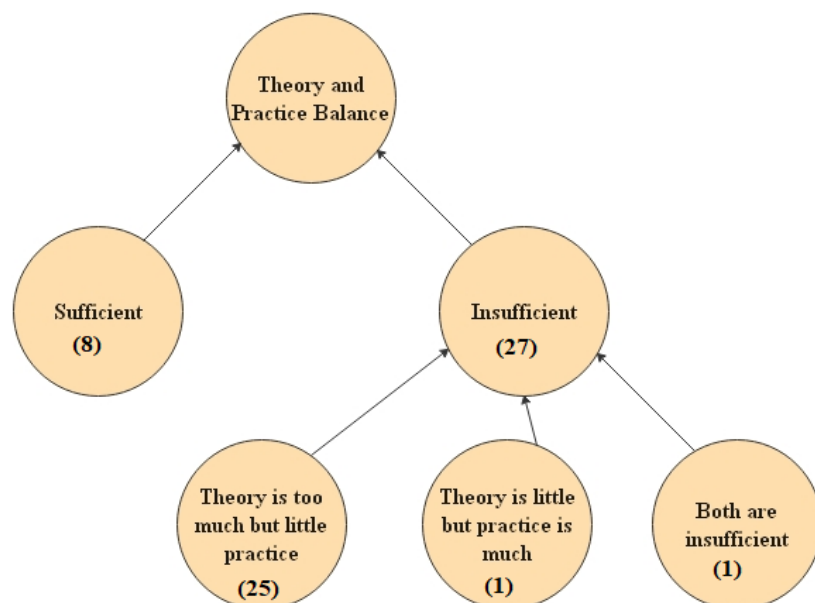


Figure 7. Model of the Theory and Practice Balance of the Program

According to the model, the themes and sub-themes of *sufficient*, *insufficient*, *the theory is too much but little practice*, *the theory is little but the practice is much* and *both are insufficient* were formed. 8 of the lecturers stated that the program was sufficient. Most lecturers stated that the theory courses are more however the practice courses are not enough. In this respect, it has been stated that the program is not sufficient to respond to the interests and needs of the students. However, lecturers at universities which made various adaptations to the program stated that universities have the opportunity to make changes in the program, but when the program is changed, problems arise in exchange programs such as Farabi. The eighth question to the lecturers was "How do you evaluate the content of the courses in the English language teaching undergraduate program and their order in the program (priority-after-repetition, etc.)? What are your suggestions?". The themes related to the answers are shown in the model below.

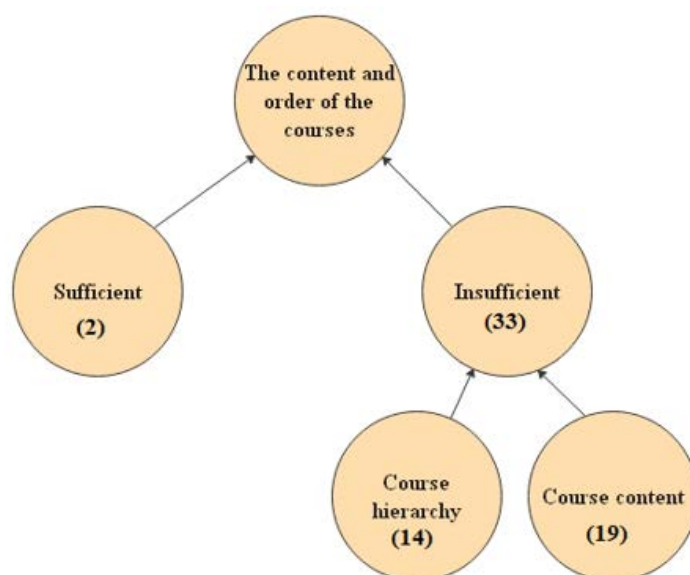


Figure 8. Model of the content and order of the courses in the program

According to the model, the themes and sub-themes of *sufficient*, *insufficient*, *course contents*, and *course hierarchy* were formed. 2 lecturers stated that the program was sufficient in terms of the content of the courses and their sequence in the program. However, these lecturers did not apply the program directly, instead, they rearranged the course contents according to the students' needs. The majority of the lecturers stated that the contents of the courses were similar and therefore there were repetitions among courses. The tenth question to the following questions were asked: "Do you think

that the field/content knowledge courses in the English language teacher education program are sufficient to train qualified English teachers? If you don't think it's enough, can you explain why? What courses should be added or removed?". The themes related to the answers given by the lecturers are included in the model below.

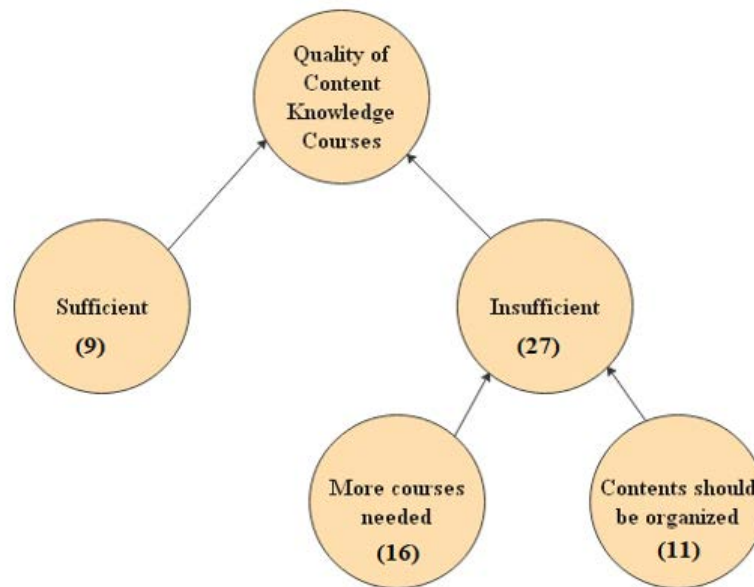


Figure 9. Model for the quality of the field/content knowledge courses

According to the model, for the quality of the content knowledge courses in the program; the themes and sub-themes of *sufficient*, and *insufficient* courses should be added and course contents should be arranged were created. 9 lecturers found the field knowledge courses sufficient. However, they also stated that this is a result of the arrangements they made with their colleagues on the program. The majority of the lecturers found the current field knowledge courses insufficient. Lecturers suggested that some field-specific courses should be added to the program such as advanced reading and writing in English, language proficiency for English, classroom management in ELT, computer-assisted English language teaching, teaching English for different ages, effective communication skills, socio-linguistics, literature and teaching practice. As the tenth question to the lecturers; "Do you think that the pedagogical knowledge courses are sufficient to train qualified English teachers? If you don't think it's enough, can you explain why? What courses should be added or removed?" questions were posed. The themes related to the answers given by the lecturers are included in the model below.

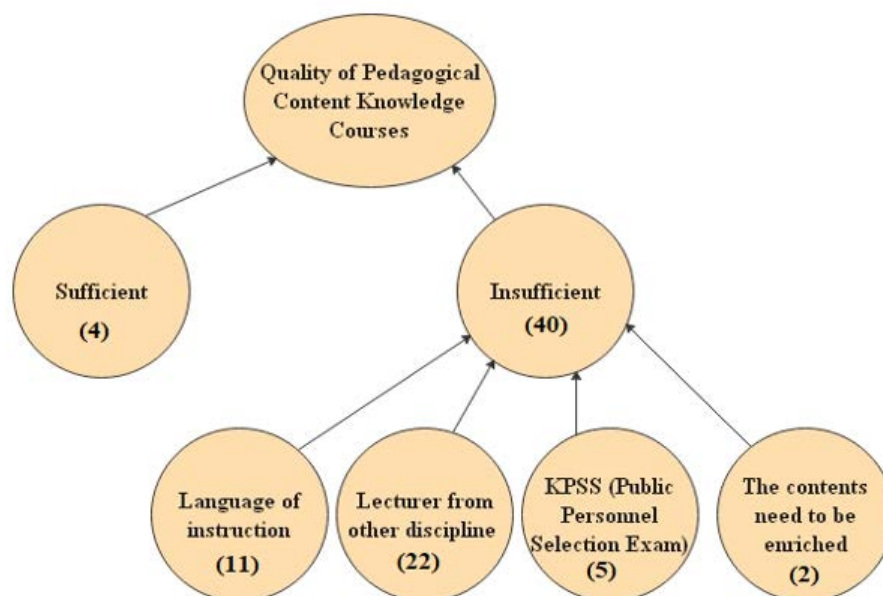


Figure 10. Model for the quality of the pedagogical knowledge courses

According to the model, the themes, sub-themes and the frequencies were created. Under the themes of *sufficient*, *insufficient*, the sub-themes of *lecturer from another discipline*, *language of instruction*, *KPSS (Public Personnel Selection Exam)*, and *enriching the course content* were formed. As it is clear from the model, the majority of the lecturers state that

it should not be given by the lecturers who are out of the ELT department as these courses should be designed according to the requirement of the department. For example, they stated that the classroom management course should be specific to the field. 11 lecturers stated that teaching pedagogical knowledge courses in Turkish is an obstacle to training prospective English teachers. For the eleventh question, "Do you think that the general culture courses in the program are sufficient to train qualified English teachers? If you don't think it's enough, can you explain why? What courses should be added or removed?" were posed to the lecturers. The themes related to the answers are included in the model below.

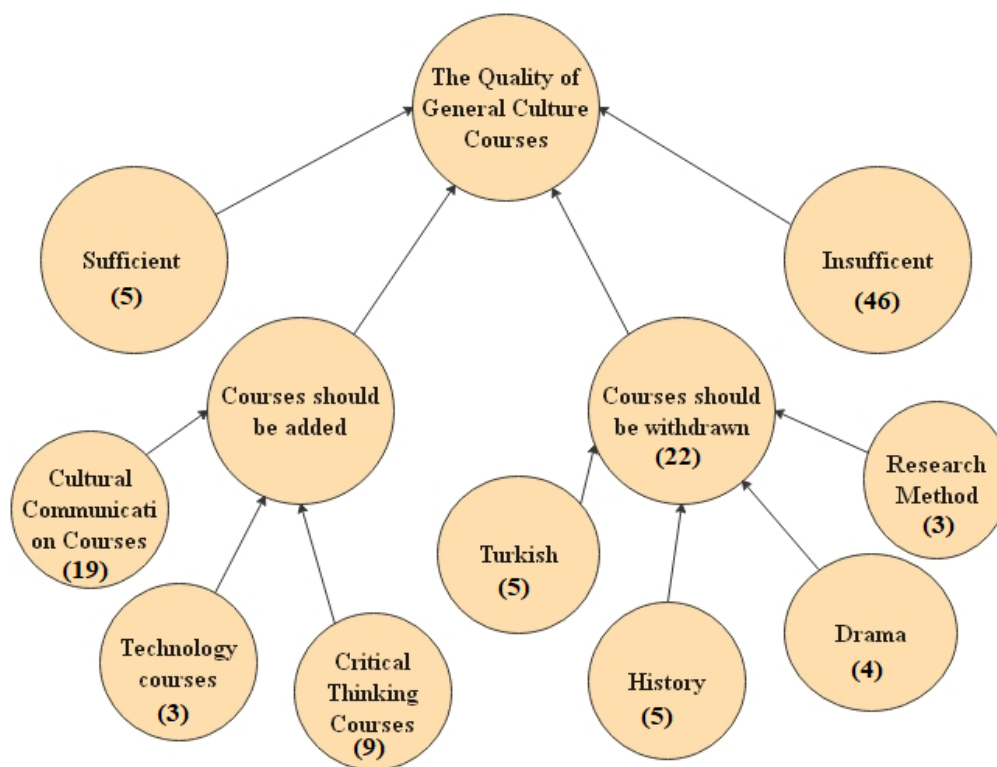


Figure 11. Model for the quality of the general culture courses

According to the model, the themes and sub-themes of *sufficient*, and *insufficient* courses should be added and courses should be taken out were created. 5 lecturers found the quality of the general culture courses sufficient. However, the lecturers, who stated that these courses were sufficient stated that they were making changes to the program framework proposed by Higher Education Council. Some lecturers stated that drama, scientific research methods, history, and Turkish courses should not be given within the framework of general culture courses. The majority of the lecturers stated that more courses should be added to the general culture courses. Regarding this, lecturers stated that critical thinking skills (9), and intercultural interaction (19) technology-integrated courses (3) should be included in general culture courses. Since some of the participants who gave an *insufficient* answer to this question did not explain the reason, the total frequencies of the relevant theme and its sub-themes differed.

#### Results regarding the English teachers' views about the program

The second research question is related to the evaluation of the program in terms of English teachers' views. 6 questions were asked of 11 English teachers by using a semi-structured interview form. The interviews conducted within the scope of the research were analyzed under each question in the semi-structured interview form. The first questions were "Can you apply what you learned in the English language teacher education program in the current conditions you teach? If your answer is no, what are your reasons for not being able to apply? The themes related to the answers are included in the model below.

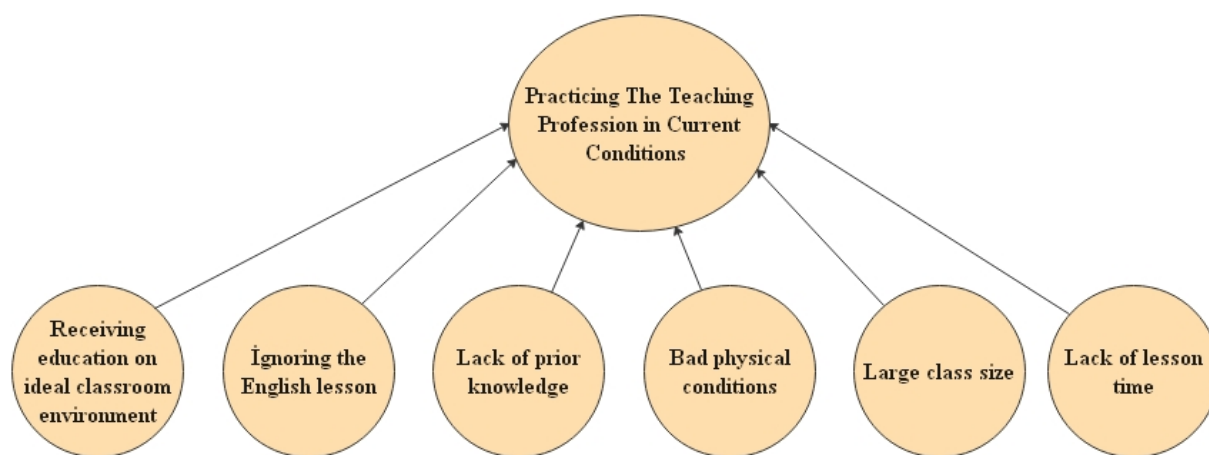


Figure 12. Model of Practicing the Teaching Profession in Current Conditions

According to the model, the themes of *receiving education according to the ideal classroom environment*, *ignoring the English lesson*, *lack of prior knowledge*, *bad physical conditions*, *large class size*, and *lack of lesson hours* were formed. All the teachers participating in the research stated that they could not apply what they learned during their undergraduate program. Teachers stated that they were trained according to ideal classroom environments and schools they are working at are generally comprised of disadvantaged students and they experienced difficulty in answering students' needs. As the second question to the teachers: "Do you think that the English language teacher education program contributes to your training as a qualified English teacher? If you don't think so, state the reasons." questions were posed. The themes related to the answers given by the teachers are included in the model below.

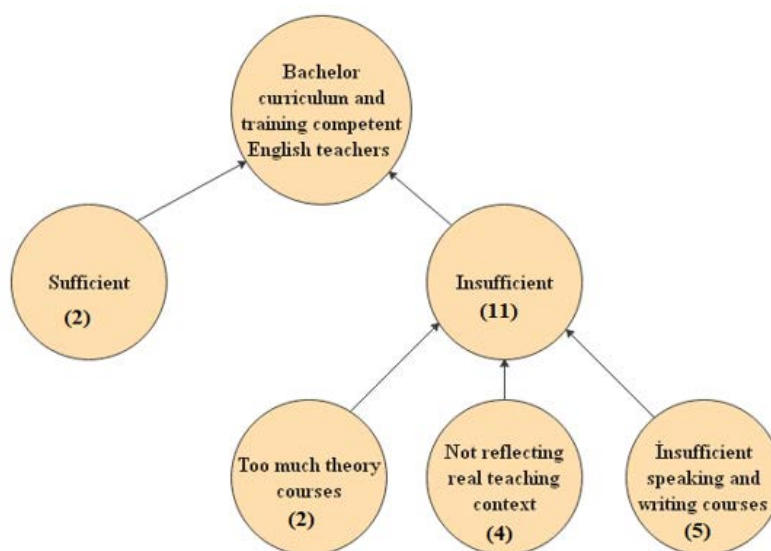


Figure 13. Model of Qualified English Teacher Training Status of the Undergraduate Program

According to the model, in addition to the main themes of *sufficient* and *insufficient*, teachers also created sub-themes of *too many theory courses*, *lack of speaking and writing practices*, and *not reflecting real teaching context*. Most of the teachers found the program insufficient in terms of training qualified teachers. The main reasons are insufficient practice hours and language proficiency courses. As the third question to the teachers is, "Do you think that the field/content knowledge courses in your undergraduate program contribute to your being a qualified English teacher? If you think it doesn't, can you explain why? What courses should be added or removed?" questions were posed. The themes related to the answers given by the teachers are included in the model below.

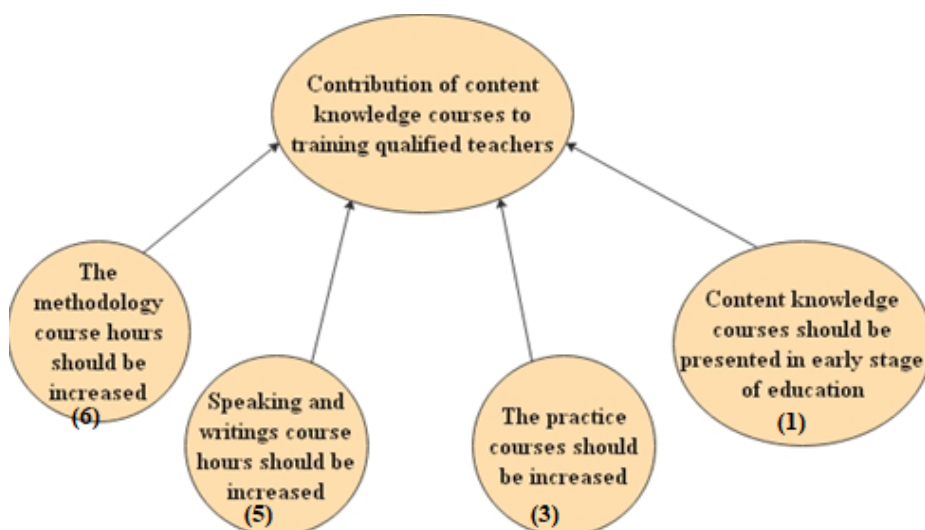


Figure 14. Model of Training of Qualified English Teachers and Content Field Knowledge

All the teachers found the program insufficient in terms of content-knowledge courses. The themes and frequencies are given in the Figure 14 above. As it is clear from the model, all the teachers stated that content knowledge courses in the undergraduate program were not sufficient for the training qualified English teachers. The majority of teachers think that more courses should be included in the content knowledge group to improve their English language proficiency.

As the fourth question, “Do you think that the pedagogical knowledge courses in your undergraduate program contribute to your being a qualified English teacher? If you think it doesn't, can you explain why? What courses should be added or removed?” questions were posed. The themes related to the answers are included in the model below.

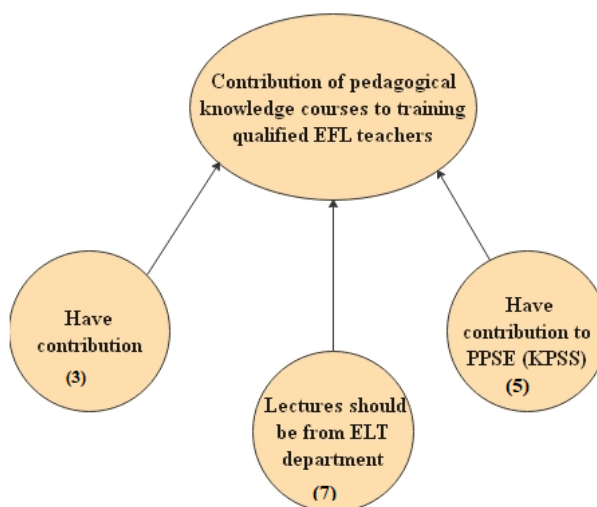


Figure 15. Model of Training of Qualified English Teachers and Pedagogical Knowledge Courses

The themes and the frequencies created from the answers are as follows: *have contributed* (3), *lecturers should be from the ELT department* (7), and *have contribution to KPSS* (5). Most teachers stated that lecturers from the English language teaching department should provide these courses instead of lecturers from the educational science department. Teachers stated that teaching the same course with the whole faculty by a single lecturer with the same content and similar methods does not contribute to the professional competencies of English teachers. 5 teachers stated that methodological knowledge courses were beneficial for them only in the KPSS exam.

As the fourth question to the teachers, “Do you think that the general culture knowledge courses contribute to your being a qualified English teacher? If you think it doesn't, can you explain why? What courses should be added or removed?” questions were posed. The themes related to the answers are included in the model below.



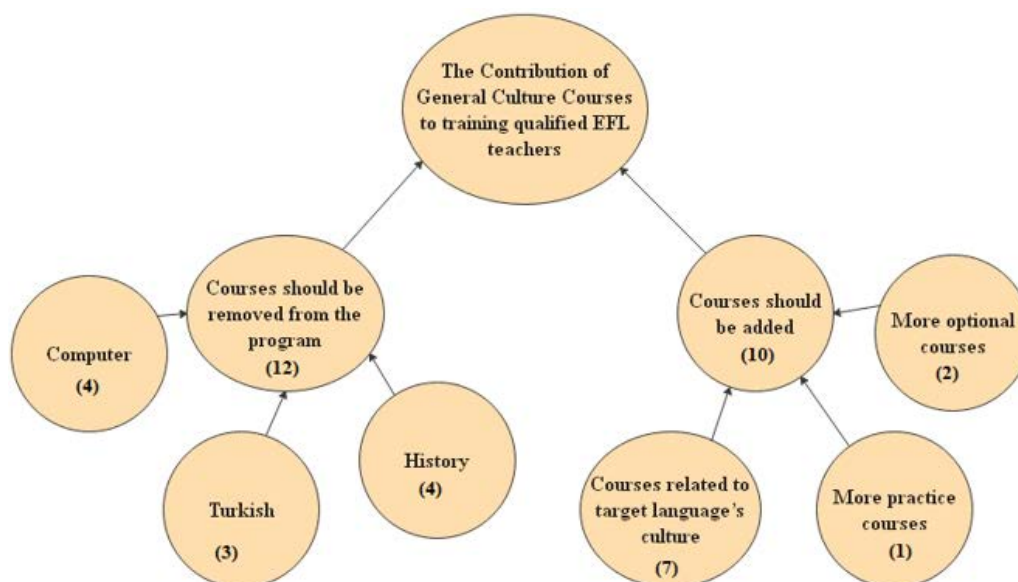


Figure 16. Model of Training Qualified Teachers and General Culture Courses

According to the model, the themes of *courses should be removed* and *courses should be added* were created. Under the main theme of *courses should be removed* *computer*, *Turkish*, and *history* sub-themes are located. Under the main theme of *courses that should be added*: *courses for target culture*, *practice*, and *elective courses* were created. As seen from the Figure 16, all the teachers stated that general culture courses in the undergraduate program are insufficient regarding the training of qualified English teachers. In this context, the answers of the teachers were presented under two main themes as *courses should be added* or *courses should be removed*. Teachers stated that *Turkish*, *history* and *computer* courses should be removed. They also emphasized that these courses did not contribute to their professional development and these courses could not reflect the purpose of the general culture lessons. 7 teachers stated that courses related to the culture of the target language should be added to the program. In addition, 2 teachers stated that the variety of elective courses should be increased and 1 teacher stated that teaching practice courses could be added.

As the last question to the teachers, "What are your suggestions for the English language teacher education program to be more effective?" questions were posed. The themes related to the answers are presented in the model below.



Figure 17. Model of Suggestions

According to the model, the teachers created the themes of *more training activities* (7), *pedagogical knowledge courses should be in English and content-oriented* (4), *training opportunities at disadvantaged schools* (8), and *class size should be reduced* (3). Teachers stated that they could learn the real experience by interacting with the students in the classrooms and therefore they should spend more time in schools. They also underlined that practice schools should not be chosen from the best schools in the province, but from schools that are disadvantaged in terms of the socio-economic status of the parents and the academic success of the school. Another theme pointed out by the teachers is that the pedagogical knowledge courses should be in English and their content should be subject-oriented. Teachers criticized that especially these courses are not subject-oriented and therefore some of these courses do not contribute to their teaching life.

Another theme mentioned by the teachers is a large number of classrooms. Teachers stated that classroom sizes should be reduced and environments, where lecturers can take care of the students individually, should be created. The majority of English teachers thought that the number of teaching practice courses in the undergraduate program should be increased and courses aimed at improving language proficiency should be increased. Teachers also stated that the undergraduate education program was prepared according to ideal classroom environments, but they could not use this information in real teaching situations.

### Discussion

The majority of the lecturers find the classes insufficient in terms of technical infrastructure. Mentioned deficiencies were; the absence of smart boards in the classrooms, the weak internet network, the inadequacy of the sound system, the fixed rows and the crowded classrooms. Teachers need to use educational technologies in order to enable students to access information, analyze and synthesize (Darling-Hammond, 2000). As Tütüniş & Yalman (2020) stated globalization in the 21st century entails major changes in our lives and the need for essential skills development emerge for better adaptation and teacher education programs throughout the world needs to go under a huge revision to bring the aspired quality in teaching and learning. In the study conducted by Özoğlu (2010) on teacher training problems in Turkey, it was stated that education faculties are generally inadequate in terms of both human resources and physical and technological infrastructure. Similarly, in the findings of Eret's (2013) study conducted with 1856 senior students studying in different departments of 7 faculties of education, the faculties were found to be inadequate in terms of the social and physical environment, classroom environment, and working opportunities. These findings reveal the necessity of reviewing the physical facilities of education faculties in order to train qualified teachers.

Another factor that significantly affects the service offered in undergraduate education is the number and quality of the lecturers in the department. In this context, the participants find the number of lecturers insufficient but sufficient in terms of quality. According to the lecturers, among the reasons affecting the quality of the academic staff are the high number of students and the work load; they cannot have sufficient time for their professional development. İnal and Büyükyavuz (2013) conducted a study at Dokuz Eylül University and 62.6% of prospective teachers stated that being in contact with the department contributed to their professional development, which reveals that it is important for the lecturers to spend time with students.

The lecturers find that the exchange programs offered by their universities such as Erasmus and Mevlana are sufficient. International mobility programs are effective in reaching the target culture and improving foreign language knowledge. Abroad experience is seen as a necessary component in foreign language teacher education, both in the commission report prepared by the European Union on foreign language teaching and by the American Board of Foreign Languages Teaching (ACTFL). In addition, a teacher who understands the importance of intercultural competence can use teaching materials more effectively, have the knowledge and power to analyze what purpose the materials serve and make changes in the material. For this reason, many countries have added an intercultural dimension to their foreign language teacher training programs (Kızılaslan, 2010).

The lecturers and the teachers did not find the program up-to-date, and suggested an increase for teaching practice, ensuring technology integration, redesigning the sequence of the courses, adding new courses, and increasing the total training time. Many studies similarly suggested that 2006 English language teacher training program should be updated in parallel with both the innovations in teaching English and technological developments (Coşkun & Daloğlu, 2010; Karakaş, 2012; Göktepe, 2015; Uzun, 2016). This program was renewed in 2018 and the courses in the field of education were simplified and the overlapping course repetitions were eliminated. Participants suggested more teaching practice hours and adding new courses for improving students' language proficiency. Similarly, English teachers suggested that the hours of the methodology and language proficiency courses to be increased. These findings are supported by the findings of studies conducted by Seferoğlu (2006) and Coşkun & Daloğlu (2010). Turkish learners start learning English in the second grade and have English lessons until they graduate from the university. This refers to a very wide age group however current curriculum offers only one course "Teaching English to Young Learners" which targets learners between 5 to 12 years old and this structure cannot be expected to meet the necessities of the teachers in dealing with the needs of their learners (Öztürk & Aydın, 2019). Therefore, the curriculum should offer courses to train prospective teachers for different age groups.

The purpose of education at schools should be to help learners to gain ways of thinking involving creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving and judgment in a collaborative way which will help them to become active and responsible citizens (Schleicher, 2018). Autonomous learners deserve autonomous teachers" (Kumaravadivelu, 2001), and to train autonomous teachers, teacher training programs should provide elective courses that support prospective teachers for creative and critical thinking skills. Teacher education (both pre-service and in-service) should be regarded as vital for the enactment of learner autonomy in teaching practice. The development of autonomous learning implies a change in the traditional role of the language teacher, who becomes a facilitator of learning rather than a transmitter of information that students have to memorize and be able to reproduce in an exam Teachers cannot promote autonomy in their classroom if they have not been previously trained to do so (Vázquez, 2018).



When other studies in the literature are examined, it is seen that the number of practical courses in the program is recommended to be increased (Erozan, 2005; Seferoğlu, 2006; Coşkun & Daloğlu, 2010; Karakaş, 2012; Göktepe, 2015; Uzun, 2016). In the renewed 2018 English language teacher education program, the total credits of the teaching practice course have been increased, but apart from this, the credits for almost all of the content knowledge courses have been reduced and the practice credits have been removed. Increasing the credits of the teaching practice course is a positive development, however, the lecturers suggest that the observation dimension of this course should be started earlier. The findings also show that both English teachers and lecturers did not find the program sufficient in terms of language proficiency course hours. Many studies have revealed that teachers have difficulties, especially in speaking, pronunciation, listening, and writing skills (Reves & Medgyes, 1994; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999). Language proficiency is an important component of foreign language teacher education, and it is seen as one of the indispensable elements in foreign language teacher education by both researchers (Lafayette, 1993; Day, 1991; Richards, 1998). Most English teachers in the world are not native speakers, and it is not necessary to have as much language proficiency as native speakers in order to teach English (Canagarajah, 1999). However, the fact that the information can be formulated by the teachers and presented in a way that the students can understand depends on the teachers' language proficiency (McNamara, 1991). English language proficiency forms the basis of the professional confidence of teachers whose mother tongue is not English (Lange, 1990). The inability to master the taught foreign language at the desired level can negatively affect teachers' self-confidence and professional status in the classroom environment. In addition, this situation may cause teachers to resort to simpler teaching methods in the classroom (Doff, 1987). English language proficiency also affects teachers' perception of general professional competence. Eslami and Fatahi (2008) found a significant relationship between English language proficiency and the self-efficacy of teachers teaching English as a foreign language in their study in Iran. Similarly, Chacon (2005) stated in his study that there is a positive and significant relationship between the language proficiency perceptions in the target language and the teaching self-efficacy of non-native English teachers working in Venezuela. Reves and Medgyes (1994) conducted a study with 325 English teachers from 11 different countries and investigated the differences between native English speakers and non-native English speakers. As a result of the study, it was determined that English teachers whose mother tongue is not English feel inadequate in different communication situations and at the point of using English simultaneously, and in these cases, native English speakers are more advantageous. English is taught as a foreign language in Turkey and foreign language teachers are expected to recognize the cultural elements of the language they teach and use them effectively in their lessons. Prospective teachers need to know the language system in order to be able to understand the different texts they read and to reveal the differences and similarities between the language taught and other languages. Therefore, linguistics, culture, and literature are important components in foreign language teacher education programs. However, when the 2006 curriculum is examined, it is seen that there are no courses for the culture of the target language. These findings are supported by the findings of the interviews with the lecturers. Lecturers stated that the courses in the cultural knowledge group should consist of courses aimed at recognizing the culture of the target language. Foreign language teachers act as intercultural bridges. In the renewed 2018 program, it is seen that no improvement has been made in these courses in the cultural knowledge group, other than offering elective courses.

Another important finding is that the courses in the pedagogical knowledge group do not consist of required course contents for teaching English and these are given in Turkish. The English teachers stated that these courses were only useful in the Public Personnel Selection Examination, but they did not contribute to the field practice. Teachers also recommend that these courses be given in English by the lecturers working in the ELT department. The findings obtained from the lecturers support this finding. The majority of the lecturers recommend that these courses be field-specific and given in English. In a study conducted by Uzun (2016) content knowledge courses which are given in English are found more effective, and this result supports the findings of the study. Furthermore, lecturers stated that pedagogical knowledge group courses are taught in all departments with the same context. In the findings of Coşkun and Daloğlu's (2010) study, students criticized that these courses are given ineffectively by using presentations. In the renewed 2018 program, the pedagogical knowledge courses were not rearranged as specific to the field, which shows that the desired improvement was not made in the study findings.

### Conclusion

The present study performed an evaluation of the English language teacher training program that was introduced by The Council of Higher Education. 35 lecturers from 9 different universities and 11 English teachers indicated their opinions and perceptions. Results suggested that the current program falls far short of meeting lecturers' and English teachers' expectations and satisfying prospective teachers' needs. The 2006 program was not applicable to the real-life teaching situation that most English teachers would work at. The most cited criticism is that the program lacks of English language proficiency courses. In accordance with the findings of the present study, it seems that there is a need for more courses that allow practice in real teaching situations. It was also notable that although the program was renewed in 2018, it still lacks to meet students' and teacher trainees' expectations.

### Recommendations

This study aimed to evaluate 2006 teacher training program according to the views of lecturers and English teachers. Comparative studies can be made regarding the renewed 2018 program. More comprehensive studies based on the experiences of English teachers can be included. Furthermore, approaches to foreign language teacher education in different countries can be evaluated mutually. Special in-depth studies can also be done for the courses included in the content of the teacher training program. Furthermore, each component of the teacher education program can be studied individually. The first prospective teachers with renewed 2018 program will graduate in a year and after their graduation, a comprehensive study can be carried out with their experience with the undergraduate program.

### Limitations

This study is limited to 35 lecturers working at the English Language Teaching Department of 9 universities in Turkey in the 2016-2017 academic year and 11 English teachers who work in the central districts of Van Province in the 2016-2017 academic year and have not completed 5 years in the profession. The data obtained is limited to the scope of the semi-structured interview form prepared by the researchers

### Ethics Statements

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by Van Yüzüncü Yıl University. The participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

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