

## Trainees' Perspective on Language Teacher Preparation

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### ÖZET

*Bu çalışmada İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının kendilerini öğretmenlik mesleğine hazırlayan eğitim programı konusundaki değerlendirmeleri incelenmektedir. Özellikle bu değerlendirmelerin öğretmen adaylarının cinsiyetine, mezun olduktan sonra öğretmenlik yapmak konusunda ne kadar kararlı olduklarına ve derslerin türüne göre değişip değişmediği araştırılmaktadır.*

*Bu amaçla üniversite son sınıftaki 58 öğretmen adayı öğrenciye verilen ankette öğrencilerden programda yer alan derslerin her birini öğretmenliğe hazırlamadaki katkısı açısından 5'li ölçek kullanılarak değerlendirmeleri istenmiştir.*

*Analiz sonuçları öğrencilerin İngilizce yeterlik dersleriyle yöntem derslerini çok gerekli gördüklerini, buna karşın mesleki formasyona 'doğrudan' bir katkısı olmayan İngiliz Edebiyatı ve (İkinci) Yabancı Dil gibi derslerin çok önemli görülmediğini göstermiştir. Dilbilim dersleri ise orta derecede önemli görülmektedir. Ayrıca, veriler İngilizce'nin araç dil olarak kullanıldığı derslerin genelde böyle olmayan derslerden daha yararlı görüldüğünü göstermektedir. Bu fark İngilizce ve Türkçe yöntem dersleri arasında da söz konusudur. Öte yandan, cinsiyetin ve öğretmenlik yapma konusundaki kararlılığın önemli bir etkisi olduğu tespit edilememiştir.*

*Çalışmada bundan başka bütün Türkiye'deki Eğitim Fakültelerinde yeni yürürlüğe girmiş olan lisans programı (Paket Program) konusundaki görüşler de benzeri bir anket verilerek araştırılmıştır. Ankette, öğrencilerden paket programdaki derslerden mevcut programdan farklı olanlarını yine 5'li ölçek üzerinden değerlendirmeleri istenmiş, yapılan değerlendirme sonucu yöntem derslerindeki çeşitliliğin çok olumlu karşılandığı görülmüştür.*

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*Bunlara ilave olarak, öğrenciler İngilizce yeterlik derslerinden bazılarının (özellikle Gramer ve Konuşma) ders saatlerinin artırılması, Çevirinin ders saatlerinin ise azaltılması gerektiğini belirtmişlerdir.*

## ABSTRACT

*EFL teacher trainees' judgements on various courses in the current training programme as well as in the new programme were elicited by means of two questionnaires. The results suggested that proficiency courses in the current programme were regarded to be most useful followed by methodology courses. Courses not directly related to the English language and language teaching such as English Literature were viewed less positively. The medium language of the courses was also important: courses conducted in English were, on the whole, regarded more positively than non-English courses. English Methodology courses were also valued more than more general methodology courses conducted in Turkish. Trainees welcomed the various English methodology courses introduced in the Package Programme. They expressed demands for more courses on speaking and grammar and less on translation. The effects of sex and commitment to the teaching career were not statistically significant.*

### 1.0. Introduction

It should not at all be disputable that the curriculum in teacher-preparation programmes exerts a direct influence on the kind of qualifications student teachers come to acquire at the start of their profession. It is, therefore, of uttermost importance to try and improve the curricula for the better education of teachers of all subjects. It is towards that end that the Higher Education Institute, YÖK, has decided to replace the existing curricula with the new in the teacher-education faculties throughout the country. In this paper, we try to get the student teachers' perspective in the old and new curricula for the education of EFL teachers.

Student teachers are, in a sense, the consumers of the curriculum and we consider it very important that curriculum developers should receive some feedback on how the curriculum they designed is being received. A favourable opinion of the curriculum will increase receptivity and motivation in student teachers and will lead to greater success of the programme. This is not to say, however, that we should develop programmes based entirely on students' wishes as curriculum development requires expert knowledge which is clearly lacking in the student teachers. What we do say is that curriculum developers need to make the curriculum more appealing and meaningful for the students; and this can only be done by getting to know their opinion of the subject.

## 2.0. Research Issues

Curriculum development has not, so far, received due attention in the literature of teacher-education in language teaching. The focus of research has been on the training of teachers in effective classroom behaviours in relatively short-term courses, e.g. how to ask questions that would generate greater verbal output from the learner (Long et.al., 1984 in Richards, 1990). However, the focus has started to shift from training to education and from specific behaviours to skills (e.g. classroom management skills) and to knowledge (of linguistics, for example) (Richards, 1990: 14), and a revival of interest can be expected in designing curricula for long-term teacher-education programmes. At its present state, however, the EFL teacher education literature does not provide us with enough clues as to the factors that might have an effect on the students' opinion of the curriculum and therefore, we will be guided largely by experience and common sense in our enquiry.

Our observation has been that student teachers in the ELT Department at Uludağ University do not regard all the courses in the curriculum in the same manner. They value some courses more than others and consider it more important to achieve higher grades in these courses. While the present authors have a hard time trying to convince their students of the utility of Linguistics courses, the issue simply does not arise for the Methodology course. The usefulness of Methodology seems to be self-evident and unquestionable.

We maintain that student teachers are aware of the different kinds of contribution courses make to their training and find some of these more relevant than others. Following Öztürk (1999), we suggest that a course may contribute to any one of the components that make up the body of knowledge and skills an ideal EFL teacher possesses. Öztürk (1999) claims that an ideal EFL teacher should be proficient in English, should have basic knowledge about the nature of language (which will come largely from a study of Linguistics), should be aware of the processes involved in learning a foreign language (which will require a study of the field of SLA) and finally, she / he should have the necessary skills and know the relevant techniques to teach English. While this ordering of the four components suggests an acquisitional order (L2 proficiency, linguistics, SLA and teaching skills), we hypothesise that student teachers will judge proficiency courses as the most important followed by methodology courses. Linguistics and SLA courses will not be regarded as important but more so than courses that are not directly relevant to language teaching like *English Literature*.

We are also going to consider sex as another variable that might have an effect on judgements. The teaching profession is often viewed as a women's profession, which might orient female trainees differently than males towards teaching as well as the programme that prepares them for it.

Trainees' degree of commitment to a teaching career in their plans for the future might also have an effect on how the student teachers evaluate the curriculum. While a certain degree of commitment is expected, some of the trainees could be more committed than others and see teaching as the only career option they want to take. Others might wish to keep other options open to them such as working in the tourism sector or in the banking business. We suggest that the former group will be more critical of the curriculum and value it less positively than the latter. As they have higher aspirations for teaching, they will expect more from the curriculum and be less happy with it when it fails.

It has been our observation that those courses conducted in Turkish and taught by the lecturers from other departments are less valued even though some of these are quite relevant to language teaching such as Educational Psychology, or Testing and Evaluation. In this paper, we seek to substantiate this observation.

We would also be checking to see if the changes introduced by the new Programme (i.e. the Package Programme from now on) will be welcomed by the trainees.

We will be seeking answers to the following questions:

1. Do the trainees consider some types of courses more relevant to their training than others?
2. Is there any difference between male and female trainees in their judgements of the curriculum?
3. Is it the case that those who are more committed to teaching as a career will be less positive about the curriculum than those who are not so committed?
4. Are courses conducted in Turkish viewed less positively than those conducted in English?
5. Will trainees' evaluation of the changes introduced in the Package Programme depend in any way on the type of course, the medium of teaching, trainees' sex and their commitment to teaching?

### **3.0. Method**

#### **3.1. Subjects**

The study consisted of two parts. Fifty-eight fourth-year students at the ELT Department of Uludağ University in their last month of study participated in the first part of the study. There were eleven males and forty-seven females. The same group of students participated in the second part. However, some of the students failed to be present in both, which led to discrepancy between the number of participants in the two parts (N=62 in

the second part, 12 males and 50 females). This, however, did not matter too much, since the two parts of the study were largely independent of one another.

The reason for using fourth-year students as subjects in the study is that these students, being in their last year of study, have experienced the whole of the present curriculum. They have also been to teaching practice and had the opportunity to put the theoretical knowledge they have acquired during their training into practice. Thus, they are in a position to evaluate how well the curriculum prepares them for their future jobs and to what extent the proposed changes will improve the present curriculum.

All of the subjects were reasonably willing to become language teachers in the future. Forty-seven of them had intentions to pursue a teaching career. Eleven of them were not so sure. Only three of them had other plans and did not want to go into teaching at all. These were dropped from the study as their number was so small.

### **3.2. Materials**

Two questionnaires were given to elicit judgements on various courses. Each is described below.

#### **Questionnaire I**

Questionnaire I elicited judgements on the curriculum presently in use in the ELT Department of Uludağ University. We assume it to be fairly typical of the ELT curricula across ELT departments in our universities. It has undergone many changes through the years as the staff changed in size as well as qualifications. These changes were not necessarily systematic and principled. The original form of the curriculum and the underlying principles in its design are largely lost.

Questionnaire I consisted of 21 items, one for each course in the curriculum. All courses in the curriculum were covered regardless of the number of class hours. Subjects with introductory and advanced courses were represented once. For instance, there was only one item for Linguistics although it is offered for four terms over two years. Both Turkish and English names of the courses for departmental subjects were given. English names preceded Turkish names as the students were more familiar with these.

Subjects were instructed to rate each course on a five-point scale according to how useful they see it for a teaching career as *gereksiz* (useless), *pek gerekli değil* (not very useful), *gerekli* (useful), *çok gerekli* (very useful), *şart* (essential). Subjects also indicated their sex and future career plans on the questionnaire. The latter was elicited with the question "Do you intend to follow a teaching career?", to which the subjects responded as *yes*, *no* or *perhaps* (*subjects have been described on these variables in 3.1*). Space was also provided for further comments on the curriculum.

## Questionnaire II

Questionnaire II involved only those courses in the Package Programme that are different from the present curriculum. There were twenty-two items in the questionnaire. Only Turkish names of the courses were given as all the courses had Turkish names in the Package and no established departmental names as the new programme has not yet gone into full effect.

Subjects rated the new courses on a five-point scale according to how much they would have wanted a course to be in the curriculum. The points on the scale were *kesinlikle istemezdim* (definitely not), *fazla istemezdim* (not so much), *isterdim* (I would), *çok isterdim* (very much), *mutlaka isterdim* (definitely I would).

It was suspected that the judgements might be impeded by the unfamiliarity of the trainees with the courses. As the contents of the courses might not always be obvious from their titles alone, either, descriptions of the courses were provided to the subjects as a separate document for reference during the completion of the questionnaire. During the data collection it was observed that the subjects indeed consulted the course descriptions every now and then before making a judgement. The course descriptions were copied directly from the Package Programme to avoid any misinterpretations on our part.

The questionnaire contained questions on sex and career plans as in the other questionnaire. Subjects were also given space to suggest new courses themselves in the comments section of the questionnaire.

### 3.3. Procedure

The questionnaires were administered in two adjacent sessions during the usual class hour by one of the authors of this paper. Each questionnaire took 10-15 minutes to complete.

The subjects were not required to write their names on the questionnaires in order to encourage honesty. It was observed that the subjects were enthusiastic about completing the questionnaires and quite pleased with their opinion being asked. Not a few subjects have written in the comments section of either questionnaires.

### 3.4. Scoring

#### Questionnaire I

Each answer on the questionnaire was given a score from 1 to 5. The lowest score (1 point) was given to the response marked "useless". "Essential" received the highest score (5 points) and others in between. The score for a given course was computed as the average of the individual scores on the corresponding item in the questionnaire.

Courses were also coded according to the types in Öztürk (1999). Each subject was then given a score for each “course type” computed as the average of his ratings on courses of a given type. There were five types: *Proficiency courses*, *Linguistics courses*, *SLA courses*, *Methodology courses* and *Other courses*. The SLA type had to be dropped from the analysis, however, as there was no course corresponding to this component in the current curriculum. “Other courses” were those that did not fit into any of the other categories. The following lists emerged from the coding:

***Proficiency (6 courses):*** Speaking, Reading, Writing, English Grammar, Translation (English to Turkish), Translation (Turkish to English)

***Linguistics (3 courses):*** Linguistics, Contrastive Linguistics, Turkish Grammar

***Methodology (9 courses):*** English Teaching Methodology, Teaching Practice, Introduction to Educational Studies, Educational Sociology, Educational Psychology, Testing and Evaluation, Psychological Counselling and Guidance, Teaching Principles and Methodology, Educational Management.

***Other (3 courses):*** English Literature, Computing, Foreign Languages.

The subjects were also given a score each for courses conducted in English and for those conducted mainly in the students’ native language. The coding of courses for medium language yielded the following lists:

***Non-English (10 courses):*** Introduction to Educational Studies, Educational Psychology, Educational Sociology, Turkish Grammar, Education Management, Psychological Counselling and Guidance, Teaching Principles and Methodology, Computing, Testing and Evaluation, Foreign Languages.

***English (11 courses):*** English Teaching Methodology, Teaching Practice, English Grammar, Contrastive Linguistics, Translation (Turkish to English), Translation (English to Turkish), Writing, Reading, Speaking, Linguistics, English Literature.

## **Questionnaire II**

Answers to Questionnaire II were also scored over a maximum of 5 points. The lowest and highest scores were given to the choice “Definitely

not” (Kesinlikle istemezdim) and “Definitely I would” (Kesinlikle isterdim) respectively. The score for a given course was computed as the average of all scores on the corresponding item.

Each subject was given a score for a course type as in Questionnaire I. The courses were also coded in the same way. The following lists emerged:

**Linguistics (2 courses):** Türkçe Ses ve Biçim Bilgisi, Türkçe Tümce Bilgisi ve Anlambilim

**SLA (2 courses):** Dil Edinimi, Gelişim ve Öğrenme

**Methodology (11 courses):** Okul Deneyimi I, Okul Deneyimi II, İngilizce Öğretiminde Yaklaşımlar, Öğretim Teknolojileri ve Materyal Geliştirme, Çocuklara Yabancı Dil Öğretimi, Sınıf Yönetimi, İngilizce Sınav Hazırlama ve Değerlendirme, Materyal Değerlendirme ve Uyarlama, Konu Alanı Ders Kitabı İncelemesi, Öğretmenlik Mesleğine Giriş, Öğretimde Planlama ve Değerlendirme.

**Other (7 courses):** Türkçe I: Yazılı Anlatım, Türkçe II: Sözlü Anlatım, Kısa Öykü İncelemesi ve Öğretimi, Araştırma Becerileri, Roman İncelemesi ve Öğretimi, Drama (oyun) İncelemesi ve Öğretimi, Şiir İncelemesi ve Öğretimi.

No proficiency course was included because the Package Programme did not provide for proficiency skills that are different from those in the present programme. English / non-English distinction did not apply, either. Since the Package Curriculum is being introduced gradually, many of the courses have not yet started and the medium language is as yet unknown.

## 4.0. Results

### 4.1. Questionnaire I

The courses in the present curriculum are rank ordered in Table I according to judgements of usefulness in Questionnaire I. The mean score for each course is also provided. The results for course type, sex and career commitment are given in Table II. These results were analysed using one-within two-between repeated measures ANOVA. The within-subjects variable was “course type” and between-subjects variables were sex and career commitment. The results of this analysis are given in Table III.

The only significant effect was that of course type ( $F_{.05} (3, 162) = 14.681, p < 0.00000$ . HSD multiple comparisons for unequal numbers among



these means (see Table IV) revealed five of the six differences significant. The only non-significant difference was between proficiency and methodology types (critical difference = 0.1008,  $p < .05$ ).

**Table I**  
**Rank order of courses in the present curriculum according to usefulness**

Course		Mean	SD
1	Teaching Practice	4.775	0.795
2	English Grammar	4.649	0.667
3	English Teaching Methodology	4.614	0.839
4	English Speaking	4.568	0.728
5	English Writing	4.051	0.886
6	Educational Psychology	3.965	0.954
7	Reading	3.672	1.082
8	Testing and Evaluation	3.431	1.201
9	Linguistics	3.421	1.209
10	Translation to Turkish	3.327	1.129
11	Translation to English	3.310	1.111
12	Psychological Counselling .& Guidance	3.275	1.225
13	Contrastive Linguistics	3.206	1.224
14	Introduction to Educational Studies	3.172	1.171
15	Teaching Principles & Methodology	3.107	1.139
16	Turkish Grammar	3.070	1.193
17	Educational Management	2.913	1.128
18	Foreign Languages	2.948	1.248
19	Educational Sociology	2.839	1.108
20	Computing	2.741	1.318
21	English Literature	2.603	1.024

**Table II**  
**Results of judgements on the present curriculum for course type, sex and career commitment**

		Proficiency		Linguistics		Methodology		Other		Total	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Sex	Male	4.000	0.591	3.121	1.213	3.747	0.763	2.727	1.041	3.584	0.509
	Female	3.906	0.691	3.241	0.824	3.522	0.646	2.773	0.828	3.488	0.386
Career	Yes	3.945	0.601	3.241	0.886	3.572	0.629	2.780	0.811	3.522	0.383
	Maybe	3.833	0.939	3.121	0.991	3.534	0.852	2.696	1.100	3.438	0.521
Total		3.924	0.669	3.218	0.899	3.565	0.668	2.764	0.862	3.506	0.409

**Table III**  
**Results from one-within two-between repeated measures ANOVA**  
**on the present programme**

	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p-level
Sex	1	,491867	54	,967756	,50826	,478965
Career	1	,025544	54	,967756	,02639	,871546
Course Type	3	7,705357	162	,524820	14,68189	,000000*
Sex by Career	1	,901433	54	,967756	,93147	,338785
Sex by Course	3	,263327	162	,524820	,50175	,681601
Career by Course	3	,019997	162	,524820	,03810	,990027
Sex by Career by Course	3	,136395	162	,524820	,25989	,854199

**Table IV**  
**Results of HSD multiple comparisons on course type in the**  
**present programme**

	Proficiency (3.917)	Methodology (3.609)	Linguistics (3.155)	Other (2.731)
<b>Proficiency</b> (3.917)	—	0.1008	0.000008*	0.000008*
<b>Methodology</b> (3.609)		—	0.0040*	0.000008*
<b>Linguistics</b> (3.155)			—	0.0089*
<b>Other</b> (2.731)				—

The effect of the medium language was separately analysed. The mean for courses conducted in English was 3.830 (SD = 0.554) and for non-English courses was 3.142 (SD = 0.592). T-test for dependent samples revealed the difference between the two means significantly different ( $t_{0.05}(57) = 6.569, p < .00000$ ).

#### 4.2. Questionnaire II

The rank order of the new courses in the Package Programme based on mean ratings of usefulness is given in Table V.

**Table V**  
**Rank order of the “new” courses according to usefulness**

	<b>Course</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	Okul Deneyimi II	4.516	0.824
2	İngilizce Sınav Hazırlama ve Değerlen.	4.500	0.844
3	Çocuklara Yabancı Dil Öğretimi	4.426	0.784
4	Sınıf Yönetimi	3.693	1.049
5	Öğretimde Planlama ve Değerlendirme	3.596	0.895
6	Öğretmenlik Mesleğine Giriş	3.476	1.066
7	Okul Deneyimi I	3.338	1.481
8	Konu Alanı Ders Kitabı İncelemesi	3.316	1.185
9	Türkçe II: Sözlü Anlatım	3.258	1.129
10	Gelişim ve Öğrenme	3.237	1.149
11	Materyal Değerlendirme & Uyarlama	3.209	1.147
12	İngilizce Öğretiminde Yaklaşımlar	3.180	1.322
13	Öğretim Teknolojileri & Materyal Gel.	3.050	0.964
14	Kısa Öykü İncelemesi & Öğretimi	2.983	1.108
15	Araştırma Becerileri	2.951	1.015
16	Dil Edinimi	2.951	1.220
17	Türkçe Tümce Bilgisi & Anlambilim	2.672	1.106
18	Türkçe I: Yazılı Anlatım	2.672	1.165
19	Roman İncelemesi & Öğretimi	2.419	1.167
20	Drama İncelemesi & Öğretimi	2.403	1.151
21	Şiir İncelemesi & Öğretimi	2.327	1.060
22	Türkçe Ses ve Biçim Bilgisi	2.258	0.939

The results for course type, sex and career commitment in Questionnaire II are given in Table VI. These results were analysed with one-within two-between repeated measures ANOVA, sex and career being the between-subjects variables (see Table VII). The only significant effect was that of course type ( $F_{.05}(3, 174) = 13.361, p < 0.00000$ ).

**Table VI**  
**Results of judgements on the new courses in the Package Programme**

		Linguistics		SLA		Methodology		Other		Total	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Sex	Male	2.458	0.890	2.666	1.302	3.416	1.083	2.903	0.725	3.131	0.516
	Female	2.470	0.816	3.020	1.203	3.640	0.851	2.842	0.545	3.216	0.443
Career	Yes	2.448	0.805	2.938	1.162	3.469	0.819	2.836	0.559	3.182	0.472
	Maybe	2.538	0.923	3.000	1.471	4.076	1.037	2.919	0.667	3.266	0.394
Total		2.467	0.824	2.951	1.220	3.596	0.895	2.854	0.578	3.200	0.455

**Table VII**  
**Results from one-within two-between repeated measures ANOVA**  
**on the Package Programme**

	df Effect	MS Effect	df Error	MS Error	F	p-level
Sex	1	1,304387	58	1,463704	,89115	,349081
Career	1	2,122686	58	1,463704	1,45022	,233385
Course Type	3	8,352468	174	,625101	13,36178	,000000*
Sex by Career	1	,001634	58	1,463704	,00112	,973465
Sex by Course	3	,653861	174	,625101	1,04601	,373645
Career by Course	3	,427350	174	,625101	,68365	,563162
Sex by Career by Course	3	,351645	174	,625101	,56254	,640429

HSD multiple comparisons for unequal numbers on these means revealed only one non-significant difference. The difference between "SLA" type and "other" courses was not statistically significant (critical difference = 0.999,  $p < .05$ ). The results of the HSD are given below:

**Table VIII**  
**Results of HSD multiple comparisons on "course type" for the new**  
**courses in the Package Programme**

	Methodology (3.690)	Other (2.878)	SLA (2.874)	Linguistics (2.485)
Methodology (3.690)	-	0.1008	0.000008*	0.000008*
Other (2.878)		-	0.0040*	0.000008*
SLA (2.874)			-	0.0089*
Linguistics (2.485)				-

## 5.0. Discussion

### 5.1. Present Curriculum

The rank order of courses has shown that *Teaching Practice* has received the highest rating among the courses in the current curriculum while *English Literature* has received the lowest.

The significant main effect of "course type" suggested that student teachers did not view the curriculum as homogeneous. They were aware of the different types of courses that made up the curriculum and these types largely corresponded to the types identified in Öztürk (1999).

Proficiency and Methodology courses were rated significantly higher than the other types suggesting that trainees viewed these course types as more useful than Linguistics (mean=3.15) and "other" courses (mean=2.73) which included *English Literature* and *Foreign Languages*. Linguistics courses were also considered fairly useful but less so than proficiency and methodology courses (mean=3.91 and 3.60 respectively).

The positive evaluations of proficiency and methodology courses were not unexpected. Both types of courses have practical value for language teachers. Proficiency in the L2 is essential as one cannot teach what one does not know well. Proficiency would not be enough by itself, though, as one needs to know how to teach what one knows. A knowledge of teaching methodology should, therefore, accompany L2 proficiency.

The scores on proficiency and methodology were not, however, as high as one would expect. We would expect scores to be closer to 5 rather than to 4 as these relate to the most important component of a language teacher's profile. The mean for methodology courses might have been pulled down by the methodology courses conducted in Turkish. In seven of the nine methodology courses the medium language was Turkish. The average mean for Turkish medium Methodology courses is 3.237 (SD = 0.785). The means for the two English medium courses, however, are considerably higher: 4.614 (SD = 0.839) for *English Teaching Methodology* and 4.775 (SD = 0.795) for *Teaching Practice*. These differences were statistically significant: ( $t_{.05} (56) = 12.326, p < .000000$ ) for Turkish Methodology courses and *English Teaching Methodology* and  $t_{.05} (57) = 10.985, p < .000000$  for *Teaching Practice* and Turkish Methodology Courses. Another explanation for the lower scores in Turkish medium methodology might be that they are more general in scope and therefore not directly applicable to the area of language teaching.

The mean for proficiency courses (3.917) might have been decreased by the two translation courses. Translation skills may not be considered among basic language proficiency skills in the same way as reading or speaking would be by the trainees since translation is an indirect means of interaction in the target language through the native language. Furthermore, the translation classes are conducted in Turkish, and therefore may not be regarded as contributing to English language proficiency. The average mean of proficiency courses after the translation courses have been removed is 4.228 (SD = 0.602). This difference was statistically significant ( $t_{.05} (57) = 7.694, p < .000000$ ). This suggests that translation courses are valued less than other courses and translating is not considered as important as the other proficiency skills.

The medium through which a course is conducted also seems to be effective in trainees' judgements. English-medium courses were evaluated

more positively than those not conducted in English. This finding supports our informal observations. Whatever the objectives of a given course, the use of English to realise these objectives probably seems to make the course more meaningful and worthwhile. It is likely that trainees consider the improvement of English proficiency a secondary but an important objective of the courses in the curriculum and when this is missing the value of the course is decreased.

Our hypotheses for the other two variables of the study, sex and career commitment were not supported by the data. The non-significant results might be due to the small number of males<sup>11</sup> and small number of less committed trainees<sup>11</sup>. Significant results could have been obtained with higher numbers in both groups. It was not possible, however, to find more subjects of these types as most students in the department were female and the majority of the students were reasonably willing to become teachers.

## 5.2. The Package Programme

The judgements on the courses introduced for the first time in the package programme indicated what trainees view as missing or inadequate in the present curriculum. The most wanted course was Okul Deneyimi II (Teaching Practice) offered in the last year. Interestingly, Okul Deneyimi I in the first year ranked in the seventh place. This enhancement in the value given to Teaching Practice in later years suggests that Teaching Practice is more meaningful when the prospects of becoming a teacher are nearer. The least wanted course was Türkçe Ses ve Biçim Bilgisi (mean=2.25). Its companion Türkçe Tümcce Bilgisi ve Anlambilim did not come much higher, either. It ranked seventeenth (mean=2.67). The reduced value given to these courses could be explained by the fact that these courses, unless interpreted contrastively, are of relatively low relevance to an English Language teacher.

The analysis of results for course type suggests that Methodology type courses were wanted most and linguistics courses the least. In the present curriculum, English Methodology courses are offered over three terms and trainees go to teaching practice for one term. Although this could not be considered too little, it is no match for the variety in the package programme. Demand for such variety suggests that trainees are aware of various types of skills required in a language teacher.

The non-enthusiastic demand for linguistics could be attributed to the fact that both linguistics courses investigated related to the trainees' native language. Linguistics seem relevant to EFL teaching in so far as it is in and about English. The strong reactions of trainees we have observed in Linguistics courses to data and examples from unfamiliar languages also support this explanation.

Scores for the “other” courses were surprisingly higher than that would be expected. Trainees seemed to wish these courses to be in the curriculum significantly more than linguistics courses. Although the courses in the “other” category were proposed as being not directly related to language teaching, some of these might have considered relevant by the trainees. Among these are the six English literature courses which might have been interpreted as methodology courses because of the word “teaching” cited in the title, although no reference to teaching is made in the descriptions. Alternatively, the literature courses might have been considered relevant to gaining higher proficiency in the L2 as these imply the use of English in the lectures as well as course materials.

Although proficiency type courses were not included in Questionnaire II since proficiency courses were identical between the two programmes, trainees expressed demands in the comments section of either questionnaires for more class hours for certain proficiency skills. They asked for more speaking and grammar. On the other hand, they considered translation classes far too much in class hours although not altogether unnecessary. One term for Teaching Practice was also considered insufficient. Still, the first year seemed too early to begin.

## **6.0. Conclusion**

In this study, we provided trainees’ perspective on the curriculum currently in effect in the ELT Department of the Uludağ University as well as on the changes introduced by the Package Programme. The results suggested that trainees find most useful those courses in the current curriculum that are of most practical value to a language teacher such as proficiency training courses and methodology courses. Courses like English Literature that are not directly contributing to language teaching skills are viewed less positively.

The changes introduced by the Package Programme were received well on the whole. In particular, the trainees reacted very positively to the introduction of various methodology courses.

We maintain that curriculum design in teacher education would benefit much from knowing trainees’ opinion of their training programme. Designs will be more motivating and successful if they are accepted and supported by the trainees. One practical advise to be given to curriculum planners in ELT teacher education would be to make the curriculum as directly and specifically relevant to EFL teaching as possible.

## REFERENCES

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