BİLİM VE SANAT MERKEZLERİNDEKİ ÖĞRENCİLERİN YABANCI DİLDE DEĞERLENDİRMEYE YÖNELİK ALGILARI

LEARNER PERCEPTIONS OF ASSESSMENT IN EFL CLASSES AT TURKISH SCIENCE AND ARTS CENTERS[1]

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Özet: Bu çalışma, Türk Bilim ve Sanat Merkezi (BILSEM) öğrencilerinin İngilizce dersinde yönelik değerlendirme algılarını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Kendi alanında özgün olan bu çalışma, BILSEM'deki yabancı dil sınıflarındaki üstün yetenekli öğrencilerini değerlendirmeye odaklanan daha fazla araştırmaya yol gösteren bir rol üstlenecektir. Bu çalışma kapsamında, Burdur ve Isparta'da bulunan BILSEM'de öğrenim gören 75 öğrenciden veriler elde edilmiştir. Verileri toplama aracı olarak Öğrencilerin Değerlendirme Kavramları Ölçeği (SCoA-VI) kullanılmıştır. Ayrıca öğrencilerin sınıf değerlendirme hakkındaki görüşlerini almak için Burdur ve Isparta BİLSEM'de okuyan öğrencilerle görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Çalışma sonuçları, öğrencilerin Öğrenci Yazılı Çalışma değerlendirme uygulaması ile değerlendirilmeyi tercih ettiklerini göstermiştir. Bunun ile birlikte, çoğu öğrenci sınıf değerlendirmelerinin eleştirel analiz ve eleştirel düşünme gibi üst düzey bilişsel becerilerini ölçtüğünü düşünmekte olduğu ortaya konmuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: yetenekli öğrenenler, yabancı dil değerlendirme, öğrenci görüşleri

Abstract: The current study aims to investigate students' perceptions of assessment in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom in a Turkish Science and Arts Centers (BILSEM) context. This study will be original in its field and undertake a pioneering role for illuminating further research focusing on assessing Gifted English language learners in EFL classrooms at BILSEM. In this study, the data were obtained from 75 English language learners at BILSEM in Burdur and Isparta. To collect the data, Students' Conceptions of Assessment Scale (SCoA-VI) was used. Also, to gather students' opinions on classroom assessment, interviews were held with the students studying at Burdur and Isparta BILSEM. The results of the study indicated that the students prefer to be assessed by means of Student Written Work assessment practice. Moreover, most students think that classroom assessments measure their higher order cognitive skills, such as analyzing and thinking critically.

Key words: gifted learners, foreign language assessment, students' conceptions.

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Introduction

In Turkey, educating gifted children who need different services or activities when compared to their peers is a fairly new concern in comparison to other countries (Şahin, 2015). Only recently, this issue has gained its own policy and programme makersø attention, and the significance of 'education of gifted children' has been understood. In our time, gifted pupils receive education at BILSEM in Turkey after their own regular school timetable.

BILSEM has not only its own curriculum, but also uses different assessment techniques. In these centers, mainly alternative assessment (self/peer assessment, portfolio, etc.) is used in EFL classrooms. Such assessment processes and practices influence learners in many aspects. For example; it influences studentsø self-image as well as the learning strategies they develop and studentsø motivation (Libman, 2010). Therefore, the extent of effectiveness and significance of alternative assessment used at BILSEM must be determined.

In Turkey, although there are several studies on how gifted children learn foreign languages and assessment has a vital role in foreign language education process, there is no study on gifted learnersøconceptions and opinions concerning assessment processes in BILSEM EFL classrooms. Especially, in the 2015-2016 educational year, with the publication of the first English activity book prepared for BILSEM, some unexplored issues pertaining to both the assessment sections of this activity book, revised and updated in the 2016-2017 educational year, and assessing gifted EFL learners at BILSEM in Turkey have come onto the stage. Therefore, exactly at this time, it is prominent to find answers to the questions related to the assessment of these special children, and how they perceive the assessment. Thus, this study will shed light on the assessment conceptions of gifted students.

This study aims to investigate the assessment conceptions of the learners at BILSEM in EFL classrooms. Also, it is aimed to find out these learnersø assessment choices. The research questions of the present study are as follows:

1- What are the English language learnersøperceptions of assessment in EFL classrooms at BILSEM in terms of; Accountability (School Accountability, Student Accountability),

Affect/Benefit (Class Environment, Personal Enjoyment), Improvement (Student Improvement, Teacher Improves Learning), Irrelevance (Bad, Ignore)?

2- What is the relationship among the four components of SCoA-VI?

3- What are the BILSEM English language learnersø choices of assessment practices?

Conceptual Framework and Related Studies

Since the general scope of the study is investigating into how gifted EFL learners at BILSEM in Turkey are assessed, and what kinds of assessment techniques are used, the studentsøperceptions and opinions about these assessment types are identified and analyzed in this study. Besides, the definitions of assessment and giftedness, studentsø conceptions of assessment are explained in this section.

Giftedness and Characteristics of Gifted Foreign Language Learners

One of the most important definitions of giftedness in the field of gifted education belongs to Renzulli. Renzulliøs (2012) Three-Ring Conception of Giftedness whose rationale is to draw on the anticipated social roles of persons with high potential õattempts to portray the main dimensions of human potential for creative productivityö (p. 153). His Three-Ring Conception of Giftedness consists of three interacting traits or characteristics: (1) Above Average Ability, which includes both general and specific performance areas and is õthe most constant of the ringsö; (2) Task Commitment representing õa non-intellective cluster of traits found consistently in creative productive individualsö; and (3) Creativity, a trait which includes õcuriosity, originality, ingenuity, and a willingness to challenge convention and traditionö (p. 153).

Kitano (1999) states that giftedness is genetic in origin, and, while perhaps not fully evident at an early age, there will be some manifestation of giftedness when the individual is a young child (as cited in Reyes, 2004). The initial United Stated Department of Education definition of giftedness included six different areas: (a) general intellectual ability, (b) specific academic aptitude, (c) creative or productive thinking, (d) leadership ability, (e) visual and performing arts, and (f) psychomotor ability (Easterly, 2001).

In light of these general definitions of giftedness, it is possible to state that gifted foreign language learners may demonstrate a range of individual differences in behavior and learning. Faulkner (2003) says that gifted students of foreign languages must have a certain level of competence, linguistically and communicatively, to interact with native speakers. They must be sensitive and rather intuitive to notice small differences. She goes on to say that these gifted foreign language learners may have a number of skills and abilities, like the ability to understand new things, and language talent. This helps them to make it easier to mentally process, understand and produce the new language. According to Little (1990), the gifted foreign language learner seems to know this: The most efficient learners will be those who can use the things they already know in order to learn new things. In other words, they have developed some autonomy. They must be autonomous to the point where they have enough independence, belief in their ability, and self-confidence to be able to function in all the different social, and psychological situations that they will find themselves in (as cited in Faulkner, 2003).

Gifted students learn a foreign language according to their cognitive and social skills (Horvathoca & Reid, 2016). They have their own reasons for learning foreign languages, which is connected with their motivation and their confidence gives the best results for learning a foreign language. This talent is used by gifted learners in a way that they create situations or opportunities to speak, plan, monitor, and learn or to evaluate a foreign language (Faulkner, 2003).

The Methods and Roles of Assessment

To assess student learning, Brown and Hudson (1998) divide types of language assessments into three major groups such as selected-response assessments, constructed-response assessments, and personal-response assessments. The first two categories are associated with the traditional assessment, and the third category relates to alternative assessment. In other words, among these methods of assessments, selected-response assessments such as tests consisting of true/false, matching, and multiple-choice test questions and constructed-response assessments such as tests including fill-in the blanks, short-answer, and essays are traditional methods of assessment. These kinds of language assessments are generally used to determine pupilsø level of proficiency in English and also used as a pupil placement tool.

In personal-response assessments, on the other hand, pupils create language, and therefore, these assessments measure pupilsø productive language skills such as speaking and writing. In other words, they are generally used to determine to what extent pupils use the language that they have learnt and produce a message through speech or written text, or by doing something else that they want others to understand (Brown & Hudson, 1998). For this purpose, such types of alternative assessment are used in todayøs language classrooms: self-assessment (student progress cards, rating scales, checklists and questionnaires, learner diaries and dialogue journals, and videotapes), peer assessment, portfolio assessment, student-teacher conferences, student-designed tests, learner-centered assessment, projects, and presentations (Coombe et al., 2007). Since communication is a process and also plays a crucial role in this assessment type, the alternative assessment focuses on the process of communication that occurs in real life situations and real communicative events created in the classroom.

An assessment has many effects on teaching as well as student learning. Assessment and student learning are interconnected. A central aspect of the teaching and learning process is assessment. õMere teaching, without assessment of what the learners have made of what you have offered them, is not complete teachingö (Örsdemir, 2010, p. 5). Assessment guides the learning and teaching of classroom courses (Ayas, 2014). She also adds that especially alternative assessment practices contribute remarkably to education. Göçtü (2013) identifies the functions of assessment of studentsøknowledge and skills as: Assessment influences the fields of motivation, learning and correction, upbringing, optimization, informing education policymakers and parents, and research. According to McMillan (2000), assessment has a big impact on student achievement, motivation and learning. The assessment of whether the classroom courses have been learned becomes more effective with motivation (Luyegu, 2009). In other words, it is clear that motivation and achievement are closely connected to each other.

According to Coombe et al. (2007), good assessment mirrors good teaching ó they go hand in hand. Because there are such a great variety of English teaching settings, there are also a great variety of assessment techniques. Regardless of the setting in which teachers teach, assessment should be a part of instruction from the very beginning of class planning. At this point, they point out that assessment improves teaching, not alone, but with analysis. Furthermore, McMillan (2000) states that good assessment improves teaching and also influences the teaching

atmosphere of classroom courses as well as enhancing the motivation of students to learn lessons and effective learning in these lessons.

Wiliam (2006) states that the impact that assessment has on promoting studentøs learning is more crucial than its validity or reliability. He also suggests that teachers need formal assessment tasks that support reliable conclusions about the extent of the studentøs learning. Moreover, he adds that assessment should serve as a bridge which encourages collaboration between the students and their learning.

Assessment Conceptions of Students

Assessment is a necessary part of the classroom environment, and studentsø assessment conceptions and perspectives contribute to this environment (Bazemore, 2012). According to Zaimo lu (2013), there is a relationship between studentsø conception of assessment and participation in the classroom courses. If students do not feel secure about assessment, they will have difficulty in learning. According to Bazemore (2012), the literature suggests that studentsø perceptions of assessment and their perceptions of their relationships with their teachers are directly related to each other.

According to Brown and Hirschfeld (2008), students conceive of assessment õin at least four major ways (i.e., assessment makes students accountable; assessment is irrelevant because it is bad or unfair; assessment improves the quality of learning; and assessment is enjoyable)ö (p. 3). In other words, they point out that students are reported as conceiving of assessment as õ(a) improving achievement, (b) a means for making them accountable, (c) being irrelevant, and (d) being enjoyableö (p. 4). OøFarrell (2009) states that teaching, learning, outcomes of assessment, and improvement may be defined as õelements of a feedback loop in which teaching influences learning, and the assessment of learning outcomes is used to improve teaching and learningö (p. 42). Assessment has an important part in learning a topic. It not only shows teachers whether students learn a topic enough or not but also shows students their mistakes; so they try not to make them again. Also, things that students learn from assessments last long in their memory and help them to use knowledge in different ways. Moreover, assessment provides students to consolidate their knowledge, and this is a better way to be able to learn a topic (Nasri, et al. 2010).

In Improvement Conception, according to Zaimo lu (2013), students gain an opportunity to improve their learning, and teachers try to change or improve their teaching methods through

assessments. According to Brown et al. (2009), students have no control over their school, intelligence, and the future. Regarding External Attribution Conception, it will be better if teachers make students like the idea of exam instead of teaching them how to deal with it. If teachers understand how difficult it is to be assessed and also they understand that assessment determines studentsø future, they will not only be facilitators for the students but also this situation will take the anxiety of students away (Brown et al., 2009). Brown and Harris (2012) state that assessment is nice and fun and also helps students support each other, and this is related to Affective Benefit Conception. In Brown et al.øs (2009) research, according to students, assessment is liked and fun, it is a benefit to the classroom environment and improves the social climate of class. In the last conception, Irrelevance, according to Brown and Harris (2012), assessment is irrelevant because it is unfair to students and therefore unimportant. Brown and Hirschfeld (2008) state that assessment can be considered to be irrelevant to students if considered bad or unfair. In their study, Brown and Hirschfeld (2007) found that the conceptions that õassessment makes students accountable and was beneficial for students loaded positively on achievement, while the conceptions that assessment is fun and assessment is ignored had negative loadings on achievementö (p. 63).

Methodology

This section will give information on the pilot study, participants, data collection process, data collection tools and data analysis.

Pilot Study

For piloting the instrument of data collection for this study, the questionnaires (SCoA) were distributed to the 40 students at a state school in Burdur. According to the results of the reliability analyses, the Cronbachøs Alpha for the ÷statements sectionø indicating studentsø perceptions of assessment in SCoA was obtained as .81, and the Cronbachøs Alpha for the ÷types of assessment activities sectionøin SCoA was obtained as .98, which indicates a high reliability.

Participants

In the main research, the convenience sampling method was utilized for the study because these centers are different from the state schools in that there is only one center in each city in Turkey. So, the students of the two centers in two cities (Burdur and Isparta) were selected as the

participants. The data were obtained from 75 English language learners (37 girls and 38 boys) at BILSEM in Burdur and Isparta. The students attending Burdur and Isparta BILSEM receive two hours of English lessons per week. All of the students, whose ages ranged from 11 to 14, were enrolled in state schools.

Data Collection Tools and Analysis

Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary and Robbins (1999) suggested using more than one way to collect data and collecting information on an ongoing basis. Therefore, in this study, mixed method approach was preferred to collect data. The researchers adopted both quantitative and qualitative research methods to conduct this study. The data collected from the questionnaires were subjected to SPSS version 21. In order to get results for the independent variables, Frequency analyses were done. To find out the results in order to answer the research questions, frequency analysis was conducted to show studentsø assessment perceptions, and Pearson Correlation analysis was used to present the relationship among the four components of SCoA-VI called as Improvement, External, Affect, and Irrelevance.

Studentsøconceptions of assessment scale (SCoA-VI)

In this study, to identify English language learnersø perceptions and opinions concerning assessment processes in EFL classrooms at BILSEM, a SCoA-VI developed by Brown (2008) was used. According to Brown and Harris (2012), the SCoA-VI elicits attitudes towards four beliefs (assessment: improves teaching and learning, measures external factors, has affective impact/benefit, is irrelevant).

Brown (2011) states that õthe SCoA focuses on studentsø conceptions of how assessment functions and what it is rather than on studentsø understandings of intellectual ability, which did not play a statistically significant role in discriminating between high and low motivation studentsö (p. 744). According to the study of Brown (2011), the improvement conception had two contributing factors (i.e., assessment improves the teacherø teaching, and assessment improves the studentøs learning). External attribution conception had two contributing factors (i.e., assessment serves external purposes such as judging a schooløs quality or predicting studentsø future educational and employment success). Affect conception had two contributing factors (i.e.,

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assessment is enjoyable and helps classmates be more supportive of each other), and irrelevance conception had two contributing factors, too (i.e., assessment is unfair, and assessment is ignored).

The SCoA-VI included three parts: In the first part, there were questions to get the demographic information of the participants. In the second part, there were 33 statements to indicate studentsø perceptions of assessment using a six-point Likert-type rating scale, which were Strongly Disagree (1), Mostly Disagree (2), Slightly Agree (3), Moderately Agree (4), Mostly Agree (5), and Strongly Agree (6). In the third part of it, there was a list of 12 types of assessment activities, and the students were asked to indicate the kinds or types of assessment activities that came to their mind when they thought of the word ÷assessmentø In order to be understood by all students taking this survey, the questionnaire was adapted and translated into Turkish by the researcher, and the translated questionnaire was also checked by several language experts. After conducting the survey on 75 participants the reliability analyses were administered again. The results showed that both parts of the questionnaire had a high level of reliability with Cronbachøs Alpha of .77 for the ÷statements partø indicating studentsø perceptions of assessment and Cronbachøs Alpha of .82 for the ÷types of assessment activities partø The data collected from the questionnaires was analyzed via SPSS 21.

Interview

The interview is deemed as an efficient means to have deeper insights into someoneøs experiences, and opinions (Lambert, 2012). For this purpose, studentsø views about assessment in EFL classrooms were also gathered through a semi-structured interview. These interviews including 11 questions were held with 27 volunteer students studying at Burdur and Isparta BILSEM. The participants were provided with the interview questions just before the interviews. With the intention that participants can comfortably express their ideas, the language of the interviews was either English or Turkish depending on the participantsø preference.

Results

This section presents the BILSEM English language learners' perceptions of assessment in terms of: Improvement (Student Improvement, Teacher Improves Learning), External Attribution/Accountability (School Accountability, Student Accountability), Affect/Benefit (Class Environment, Personal Enjoyment), and Irrelevance (Bad, Ignore). The subgroups by Brown (2007, 2009, and 2012) were also used to investigate the conceptions of BILSEM English language learners regarding assessment in EFL classrooms at BILSEM in this study.

Results of the Quantitative Data

Students' perceptions of assessment

The first concept that SCoA focuses on is the improvement conception of the students. According to the study of Brown (2012), the improvement conception had two contributing factors (i.e., assessment improves the teacher's teaching, and assessment improves the student's learning). In the table below, the students' perceptions related to improvement is given.

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Table 1.

Items Related to Improvement

Items	Frequencies						Percentages (%)					
	SD	MD	SA	MA	MA	SA	SD	MD	SA	MA	MA	SA
1.I pay attention to my assessment results in order to focus on what I could do better next time	3	1	5	9	22	35	4.0	1.3	6.7	12.0	29.3	46.7
5.Assessment helps teachers track my progress	0	1	4	9	20	41	0	1.3	5.3	12.0	26.7	54.7
8.Assessment is a way to determine how much I have learned from teaching	4	3	9	9	21	29	5.3	4.0	12.0	12.0	28.0	38.7

Item	SD	MD	SA	MA	MA	SA		SD	MD	SA	MA	MA	SA
9.Assessment is checking off my progress against achievement objectives or standards	2	5	4	18	23	23		2.7	6.7	5.3	24.0	30.7	30.7
10.I make use of the feedback I get to improve my learning	4	2	10	14	23	22		5.3	2.7	13.3	18.7	30.7	29.3
14.I look at what I got wrong or did poorly on to guide what I should learn next	3	2	4	8	25	33		4.0	2.7	5.3	10.7	33.3	44.0
15.I use assessments to take responsibility for my next learning steps	6	3	7	20	23	16		8.0	4.0	9.3	26.7	30.7	21.3
19.I use assessments to identify what I need to study next	4	5	8	16	23	19		5.3	6.7	10.7	21.3	30.7	25.3
23.My teachers use assessment to help me improve	4	6	7	14	20	24		5.3	8.0	9.3	18.7	26.7	32.0
27.Teachers use my assessment results to see what they need to teach me next	8	9	7	9	20	22		10.7	12.0	9.3	12.0	26.7	29.3
30.Assessment shows whether I can analyze and think critically about a topic	6	7	12	19	16	15		8.0	9.3	16.0	25.3	21.3	20.0

SD= Strongly Disagree   MD= Mostly Disagree   SA= Slightly Agree

MA= Moderately Agree   MA= Mostly Agree   SA= Strongly Agree

As Table 1 presents, items 1, 5, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 19, 23, 27, and 30 are related to Improvement Conception. As it is seen, 29.3% of the students mostly agreed, and 46.7% of the students strongly agreed with Item 1. Likewise, 33.3% of the students mostly agreed, and 44.0% of the students strongly agreed with Item 14, and 30.7% of the students mostly agreed, and 25.3% of the students strongly agreed with Item 19. These two items are also related to the significance of assessment results for studentsø next studies like Item 1. In addition to this, the items that were mostly and strongly agreed by the participants were Item 5, 8, 9, 10, 15, 23, 27. Among these items, item 5, 8, and 9 are related to task of assessment for tracking studentsø progress, and 26.7% of the students mostly agreed, and 54.7% of the students strongly agreed with Item 5, 28.0% of the students mostly agreed, and 38.7% of the students strongly agreed with Item 8, and 30.7% of the students mostly agreed, and 30.7% of the students strongly agreed with Item 9.

Table 2.

Items Related to External

Items	Frequencies						Percentages (%)					
	SD	MD	SA	MA	MA	SA	SD	MD	SA	MA	MA	SA
4.Assessment results show how intelligent I am	30	13	4	10	14	4	40.0	17.3	5.3	13.3	18.7	5.3
11.Assessment provides information on how well schools are doing	9	7	7	19	19	14	12.0	9.3	9.3	25.3	25.3	18.7
16.Assessment results predict my future performance	9	7	10	21	18	10	12.0	9.3	13.3	28.0	24.0	13.3
20.Assessment is important for my future career or job	7	9	16	6	15	22	9.3	12.0	21.3	8.0	20.0	29.3
24.Assessment measures the worth or quality of schools	11	7	10	18	15	14	14.7	9.3	13.3	24.0	20.0	18.7
33.Assessment tells my parents how much I've learnt	10	6	6	11	16	26	13.3	8.0	8.0	14.7	21.3	34.7

As Table 2 presents, items 4, 11, 16, 20, 24, and 33 are related to External Conception. It is seen that 20.0% of the students mostly agreed, and 29.3% of the students strongly agreed with Item 20. Likewise, 21.3% of the students mostly agreed, and 34.7% of the students strongly agreed with Item 33.

Item 11 was moderately agreed by 25.3% of the students and mostly agreed by 25.3% of the students. Similarly, 28.0% of the students moderately agreed, and 24.0% of the students mostly agreed with Item 16, and 24.0% of the students moderately agreed, and 20.0% of the students mostly agreed with Item 24. These items indicated that the assessment provides information on how well schools are doing, assessment results predict the studentsø future performance, and assessment measures the worth or quality of schools. The item that was strongly disagreed (40.0%) by the participants was Item 4.

Table 3.

Items Related to Affect

Items	Frequencies						Percentages (%)					
	SD	MD	SA	MA	MA	SA	SD	MD	SA	MA	MA	SA
2.Assessment encourages my class to work together and help each other	11	8	10	20	16	10	14.7	10.7	13.3	26.7	21.3	13.3
6.Assessment is an engaging and enjoyable experience for me	10	10	17	15	11	12	13.3	13.3	22.7	20.0	14.7	16.0
12.Assessment motivates me and my classmates to help each other	13	9	20	14	10	9	17.3	12.0	26.7	18.7	13.3	12.0
17.Our class becomes more supportive when we are assessed	11	14	13	10	17	10	14.7	18.7	17.3	13.3	22.7	13.3
21.When we do assessments, there is a good atmosphere in our class	16	18	17	11	7	6	21.3	24.0	22.7	14.7	9.3	8.0
25.Assessment makes our class cooperate more with each other	13	16	15	13	12	6	17.3	21.3	20.0	17.3	16.0	8.0
28.When we are assessed, our class becomes more motivated to learn	15	11	11	15	13	10	20.0	14.7	14.7	20.0	17.3	13.3
31.I find myself really enjoying learning when I am assessed	10	7	11	13	20	14	13.3	9.3	14.7	17.3	26.7	18.7

As Table 3 presents, items 2, 6, 12, 17, 21, 25, 28, and 31 are related to Affect Conception. As it is seen, 26.7% of the students moderately agreed, and 21.3% of the students mostly agreed with Item 2. Likewise, 22.7% of the students mostly agreed with Item 17, and 26.7% of the students mostly agreed with Item 31.

Item 6 was slightly agreed by 22.7% of the students and moderately agreed by 20.0% of the students. Similarly, 26.7% of the students slightly agreed, and 18.7% of the students moderately agreed with Item 12. These items indicated that assessment is an engaging and enjoyable experience for the students, and assessment motivates the students and their classmates to help each other.

The items that were mostly disagreed (24.0% and 21.3% respectively) by the participants were Item 21 and Item 25 although these items were slightly agreed (22.7% and 20.0% respectively) by the participants, too. According to the participants, there is not a good atmosphere in their class when they are assessed, and assessment does not make their class cooperate more with each other. The item that was strongly disagreed (20.0%) by the participants was Item 28 although this item was moderately agreed (20.0%) by the participants, too.

Table 4.

Items Related to Irrelevance

Items	Frequencies						Percentages (%)					
	SD	MD	SA	MA	MA	SA	SD	MD	SA	MA	MA	SA
3.Assessment is unfair to students	43	12	8	5	4	3	57.3	16.0	10.7	6.7	5.3	4.0
7.I ignore assessment information	39	21	4	7	2	2	52.0	28.0	5.3	9.3	2.7	2.7
13.Assessment interferes with my learning	29	13	15	8	4	6	38.7	17.3	20.0	10.7	5.3	8.0
18.Teachers are over-assessing	16	14	15	11	10	9	21.3	18.7	20.0	14.7	13.3	12.0
22.Assessment results are not very accurate	21	21	14	8	5	6	28.0	28.0	18.7	10.7	6.7	8.0
26.Assessment is value-less	29	17	8	12	6	3	38.7	22.7	10.7	16.0	8.0	4.0
29.I ignore or throw away my assessment results	45	10	10	2	3	5	60.0	13.3	13.3	2.7	4.0	6.7
32.Assessment has little impact on my learning	24	21	14	8	6	2	32.0	28.0	18.7	10.7	8.0	2.7

As Table 4 presents, items 3, 7, 13, 18, 22, 26, 29, and 32 are related to Irrelevance Conception. As clearly seen, all of the items (Item 3, 7, 13, 18, 22, 26, 29, and 32) were strongly disagreed by the participants. Among these items, item 7, 22, and 29 are related to assessment results, and 52.0% of the students strongly disagreed with Item 7, 28.0% of the students strongly disagreed with Item 22, and 60.0% of the students strongly disagreed with Item 29. The other items that were strongly disagreed (57.3%, 38.7%, 21.3%, 38.7% and 32.0% respectively) by the participants were Items 3, 13, 18, 26 and 32.

Correlations among the four components of SCoA-VI

As it is seen in Table 5, this section presents the relationship among the four components of SCoA-VI called as Improvement, External, Affect, and Irrelevance. Pearson Correlation analysis was implemented to reveal the relationship between these four components.

Table 5.

Correlation Results for Studentsø Perceptions of Assessment

		IMP	EXT	AFF	IRR
IMP	Pearson Correlation	1	.69**	.62**	-.59**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.00	.00	.00
	N	75	75	75	75
EXT	Pearson Correlation	.69**	1	.46**	-.48**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00		.00	.00
	N	75	75	75	75
AFF	Pearson Correlation	.62**	.46**	1	-.53**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00	.00		.00
	N	75	75	75	75
IRR	Pearson Correlation	-.59**	-.48**	-.53**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00	.00	.00	
	N	75	75	75	75

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

IMP= IMPROVEMENT   EXT= EXTERNAL
AFF= AFFECT   IRR= IRRELEVANCE

Table 5 presents correlations among four components of the BILSEM English language learnersø perceptions of assessment. In Table 5, it is observed that all correlations among components except Irrelevance are in a positive direction. The correlation between Irrelevance and Improvement, External, and Affect is in a negative direction. The table demonstrates that there is a strong, positive and significant correlation between Improvement and External in perceptions of assessment, r= 0.69, p<0.01. The correlation between Improvement and Affect is strong, positive and significant, r= 0.62, p<0.01. The correlation between Improvement and Irrelevance is moderate, negative and significant, r= -.59, p<0.01.

There is a moderate, positive and significant correlation between External and Affect, r= 0.46, p<0.01. The correlation between External and Irrelevance is moderate, negative and significant, r= -.48, p<0.01. Lastly, the correlation between Affect and Irrelevance is moderate, negative and significant, too, r= -.53, p<0.01.

Results of the students' perceptions of assessment practices

As it is seen in Table 6, this section presents the Burdur and Isparta BILSEM English language learnersø perceptions of assessment practices. The students were asked to answer the following question: When you think of the word assessment, which kinds or types of assessment activities come to your mind?

Table 6.

Students' Perceptions of Assessment Practices

Assessment Practices	Frequency	Percentage (%)
An examination that takes one to three hours	33	44
I score or evaluate my own performance	60	80
My class mates score or evaluate my performance	26	35
The teacher asks me questions out loud in class	13	17
The teacher grades or marks or scores the written work I hand in	51	68
The teacher grades me on a written test that he or she made up	58	77
The teacher grades me on a written test that was written by someone other than the teacher	15	20
The teacher observes me in class and judges my learning	42	56
The teacher scores a portfolio of work I have done over the course of a term or school year	33	44
The teacher scores me on an in-class written essay	54	72
The teacher scores my performance after meeting or conferencing with me about my work	25	33
The teacher uses a checklist to judge my in-class performance	28	36
Something else	17	23

Table 6 demonstrates that õI score or evaluate my own performance (80%), The teacher grades me on a written test that he or she made up (77%), The teacher scores me on an in-class written essay (72%), The teacher grades or marks or scores the written work I hand in (68%), and The teacher observes me in class and judges my learning (56%)ö are the types of assessment practices that come to the studentsømind when they think of the word assessment. However, õthe teacher asks me questions out loud in classö (17%) is the assessment practice that comes to the studentsømind least when they think of the word õassessmentö.

Results of the Qualitative Data

Interview results of studentsøopinions about assessment

The qualitative data collected from the interviews and open-ended questions were subjected to a peer review. That is, the data from interviews were not only analyzed by the researchers, but also with their peers at school. In peer review, the open review technique, which includes discussions and brain storming about the qualitative data among the peers, was used to examine the qualitative data. The interviews were conducted with 27 students. The first question in the interview is õWhat is the first thing that comes into your mind when you hear the word Assessment?ö The results of the review show that according to most of the participants (S2, S4, S7, S9, S13, S16, S21, S23, S24, S25, S26, and S27), the first thing that comes into their mind when they hear the word assessment is an *exam*. In addition, the other words that come into their mind are *scores, marks, grade, school, success, repetition of topics they have learned, the method used to measure how much they understand what is taught in the lesson, a tool that makes it possible to learn about a community, behavioral evaluations, questionnaire aimed to measure the achievement and intelligence of the learner, to measure someoneøs knowledge, exam topics, an evaluation made at the end of the topics they have learned, taking notes, evaluating themselves, lessons and books because of the fact that their exams are formed by lessons and books, questions, abcd options, teachers, quiz, test, and projects*. Besides, some of the participants (S14, S16, S17, S20, S22) think that assessment is punishment. They say that they have a lot of trouble during this punishment. After punishment has ended, they get rid of their troubles. Also, to them, assessment is stress, fear, teachers who walk around the desks, feeling of inadequacy, anxiety, disappointment, difficult questions, difficulty level, and an unnecessary thing.

The second question in the interview is: "Is assessment important and necessary while learning a topic at school?" The review of the answers given to this question shows that according to most of the participants (S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S13, S15, S17, S18, S19, S20, S23, S24, S25, S26, S27), assessment is important and necessary because it shows whether the subject is understood or not and how much and how well they understand and learn a topic, it measures their level and whether they have enough information about the subject or not, they see their mistakes, and it provides students to learn a topic easily. Furthermore, it is important and necessary to test how much students understand a topic, to consolidate their knowledge, and to see their deficiencies and studying by being aware of them. On the other hand, some of the participants (S1, S11, S12, S14, S16, S21, and S22) think that assessment may be important and necessary but there should not be so much assessment anyway. They believe that assessing very often is nonsense because it is more stress for them. They also think that the lesson's being interesting and enjoyable during teaching is more important than assessment.

The third question in the interview is: "Does being assessed in English provide you with any advantages or disadvantages?" The review of the answers given to this question shows that considerable number of the participants (S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S15, S17, S18, S19, S20, S21, S23, S24, S25, S27) think that being assessed in English provides them advantages. It is useful and provides them with advantages because they know what they learnt and to what extent they understood and learnt a topic with assessment, they see their mistakes and study them, and according to the mistakes they make, they correct their deficiencies. In addition, the assessment provides them to consolidate their knowledge, shows how powerful their vocabulary is and how well they keep word meanings in their memory, provides them to answer the question of What should I practice?, and also students repeat the topics while they are studying for the exams. On the other hand, some of the participants (S16, S22, and S26) think that it has both advantages and disadvantages because they have an idea about their learning with assessment, but if they have low grades, they feel bad and stressful, and it is clear that stress is a really bad thing for their success and motivation.

The fourth question in the interview is: "Which is better: traditional assessment or an alternative assessment? Which one do you like and prefer? Why?" 20 participants stated that alternative assessment is better. They also stated that they like and prefer alternative assessment because they feel more relaxed and free in alternative assessment while they have got stress in

vain in traditional assessment so they can make mistakes because of the stress, it is easier to learn something with different activities in alternative assessment for them, learning by doing is more useful, and it is more instructive. It is clear that stress does not emerge in the alternative as traditional exams do, and alternative assessment makes the learner more active because it allows students to use their skills and learnings together. In other words, in traditional assessment, the student is not active because it only measures what he/she has learned, but in alternative assessment, the student applies and practices what he/she has learned so in this method the student is active. The participants also stated that they prefer alternative assessment because it is more formative and beneficial, more consistent, motivating, has more advantages, lessons will be more understandable with alternative, and they have a second chance to achieve something in the alternative. On the other hand, some of the participants (S10, S15, S21, S22, S24) stated that they prefer traditional assessment because they always take traditional exams at school, parents are doing the alternative exams rather than students according to them, and if they work regularly, they can get high marks in traditional assessments. Besides, some of the participants (S16, S17) prefer both of them but in different lessons, because while alternative assessment is more effective in artistic lessons, traditional one is more effective in science lessons.

The fifth question in the interview is: "What are your concerns about traditional and alternative assessment?" The review of the answers given to this question shows that concern of most of the participants (S3, S4, S6, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S19, S20, S23, S24, S26, S27) is to get low marks in traditional assessment because according to them, marks are very important. Also, their other concerns in traditional assessment are: they have a fear that they cannot do traditional exams, the copy problem is too much because they think that students cheating in the exams can get their efforts very quickly, they are worried about the difficulty level and timing of traditional assessment, they are afraid of not being able to pass the exams, and they are nervous about giving wrong answers to questions in traditional exams. In addition, they think traditional assessment does not evaluate their learning level, but it only evaluates their memorizing ability so using traditional assessment is worrying. Furthermore, some of the students (S1, S7, S21, S22, S25) have concerns both in the traditional and alternative assessment such as the difficulty of exams, and failure. On the other hand, several participants (S2, S5, S17, S18) have not got any concerns about traditional and alternative assessment. According to them, in alternative assessment, lessons are more productive and creative because there is no concern

about grades, and also they state that they prepare their projects very well, and thus they have not got any problems in the alternative assessments.

The sixth question in the interview is õIn which assessment type do you have difficulties?ö Almost all the participants (S2, S3, S6, S7, S8, S11, S12, S13, S14, S16, S18, S19, S20, S23, S24, S25, S26, S27) stated that they have difficulties in traditional assessment type because according to them, they can make mistakes as a result of the anxiety the questions give them especially in traditional, their teachers ask details and do not sometimes give them the grades they deserve in traditional exams. On the other hand, some of the participants (S4, S9, S10, S21, and S22) stated that they have difficulties in alternative assessment type because they sometimes have difficulty in providing the materials in the alternative assessment.

The seventh question in the interview is: õWhat kind of challenges have you experienced in both traditional and alternative assessment methods so far?ö Regarding traditional assessment methods, the participants (S1, S2, S3, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S15, S16, S19, S20, S21, S22, S23, S24, S25, S26, S27) stated that they may not sometimes remember the topic or how to solve the problem in traditional exams, the exams were boring and intensive, they felt themselves under pressure, the stress they experienced caused them to misrepresent their knowledge, and the chance of cheating in traditional exams is very high. They also stated that they have difficulty in questions in traditional assessment, making a choice between two options in traditional exams, and out of topic questions, they have experienced challenges in memorizing the topics, they could not use the time properly, they have more than one exam in one day, and they have difficulties in focusing and attention in traditional assessment methods. On the other hand, regarding alternative assessment methods, some of the participants (S1, S4, S10, S21, S22) stated that they have challenges in not doing well in things such as size, shape, smoothness, etc. in the alternative assessment. Besides, several participants (S5, S14, S17, S18) stated that they have not experienced any challenges in both assessment methods so far.

The eighth question in the interview is õWhat do you do to cope with the challenges you have while you are being assessed at both your regular school and BILSEM?ö Most of the participants (S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S16, S17, S18, S20, S21, S22, S23, S24, S25, S26, S27) stated that in their regular school, they study harder because there is traditional assessment, but at BILSEM, they ask help from their teachers and consult them. In addition, they stated that if they do not know the topic or have not enough knowledge about it,

they make some preliminaries, they repeat the topics and solve tests at their regular schools, they study regularly but if not enough, they get help from their families, they think calmly, consider the problem again and try to focus on by relaxing, they try not to be stressful, and they listen to lessons more carefully, and they do more homework. S19 stated that: I have been properly assessed at BILSEM, and I have not encountered any difficulties, but in my regular school, I do what I need to get a high grade, even if it is wrong. (I memorize, etc.) Few students (S14, S15) said that they do nothing because there are not any difficulties for them.

The ninth question in the interview is: õHow effective are traditional and alternative assessment methods if you give percentage out of a hundred for gaining four language skills in English?ö As it is seen in Tables 8 and 9, the responses of the participants are categorized under the effectiveness levels of traditional and alternative assessment methods for gaining four language skills.

Table 8.

The percentages of effectiveness levels of traditional assessment methods for gaining four language skills (speaking, writing, listening and reading) in English

Effectiveness percentages	Number of Participants (27)	Percentages of the participants out of 100%
100% - 91%	0	0
90% - 81%	4	14.8
80% - 71%	2	7.4
70% - 61%	2	7.4
60% - 51%	2	7.4
50% - 41%	3	11.1
40% - 31%	2	7.4
30% - 21%	7	25.9
20% - 11%	2	7.4
10% - 0%	3	11.1

As it is seen in Table 9, 44.4% of the participants (S1, S4, S5, S6, S8, S11, S12, S14, S16, S18, S19, S21) think that traditional assessment methods have a very small effect on gaining four language skills (speaking, writing, listening and reading) in English.

Table 9.

The percentages of effectiveness levels of alternative assessment methods for gaining four language skills (speaking, writing, listening and reading) in English

Effectiveness percentages	Number of Participants (27)	Percentages of the participants out of 100%
100% - 91%	11	40.7
90% - 81%	6	22.2
80% - 71%	2	7.4
70% - 61%	3	11.1
60% - 51%	0	0
50% - 41%	5	18.5
40% - 31%	0	0
30% - 21%	0	0
20% - 11%	0	0
10% - 0%	0	0

The tenth question in the interview is: õHow effective are traditional and alternative assessment methods if you give percentage out of a hundred for fostering your critical thinking skills and creativity?ö As it is seen in Tables 10 and 11, the responses of the participants are categorized under the effectiveness levels of traditional and alternative assessment methods for fostering critical thinking skills and creativity.

Table 10.

Effectiveness levels of traditional assessment methods for fostering critical thinking skills and creativity

Effectiveness percentages	Number of Participants (27)	Percentages of the participants out of 100%
100% - 91%	0	0
90% - 81%	0	0
80% - 71%	3	11.1
70% - 61%	2	7.4
60% - 51%	0	0
50% - 41%	4	14.8
40% - 31%	5	18.5
30% - 21%	3	11.1
20% - 11%	2	7.4
10% - 0%	8	29.6

According to Table 11, 48.1% of the participants (S6, S7, S8, S11, S13, S14, S16, S17, S18, S19, S21, S23, S25) think that traditional assessment methods have a very small effect on fostering their critical thinking skills and creativity. In other words, according to them, traditional assessment methods do not provide students with capability in critical and creative thinking

because it is so difficult to be able to learn to generate and evaluate knowledge, consider alternatives and solve problems in this type of assessment.

Table 11.

Effectiveness levels of alternative assessment methods for fostering critical thinking skills and creativity

Effectiveness percentages	Number of Participants (27)	Percentages of the participants out of 100%
100% - 91%	11	40.7
90% - 81%	8	29.6
80% - 71%	1	3.7
70% - 61%	2	7.4
60% - 51%	3	11.1
50% - 41%	2	7.4
40% - 31%	0	0
30% - 21%	0	0
20% - 11%	0	0
10% - 0%	0	0

As in Table 11, 74.0% of the participants (S1, S2, S3, S6, S7, S8, S10, S11, S14, S15, S17, S18, S19, S21, S22, S23, S24, S25, S26, S27) think that alternative assessment methods have a huge effect on fostering their critical thinking skills and creativity because this type of assessment creates opportunities for students to be able to use their imagination and innovation skills in all learning areas not only at their school but also in their lives beyond school. In other words, students can develop their critical and creative thinking through alternative assessment methods very well.

The final question in the interview is: õWhat are your opinions and suggestions for õAssessmentö in English classes at BILSEM?ö Almost all the participants (S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S19, S20, S22, S25, S26) stated that since assessment and evaluation type in BILSEM is an alternative assessment, it makes their learning easier and increases comprehension and the level of creativity more. Some of the participants (S1, S2, S12, S21, S27) suggest that after a topic is discussed, a small competition on this topic can be made, and teachers can give them feedback about portfolios every year. Since there are not any traditional exams at BILSEM, the participants like that, and they think being assessed not with the information they memorize and forget after a few weeks but with their creativity and abilities contributes to them and reminds them that everything is not a lesson. They also think that English lessons at BILSEM are based on speaking, and this is very effective in improving English.

Besides, the participants state that alternative assessment is better at BILSEM because it provides permanence, and students want to come here, but in traditional assessment, students only want to get high marks. They also state that traditional assessment should never be used at schools; alternative one should be used, but in alternative assessment, their desire to participate in the activities can be taken into consideration. On the other hand, several participants (S18, S23, S24) think that self- and peer-assessment is not good because students may hide their real thoughts and feelings.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this part, the results related to quantitative and qualitative components will be discussed relating the findings with the previous studies mentioned in the literature review. Each research question will be presented in sub-titles, and the answers will be given to the questions based on the findings of this study.

1-   What are the English language learners' perceptions of assessment in EFL classrooms at BILSEM in terms of; External/Accountability (School Accountability, Student Accountability), Affect/Benefit (Class Environment, Personal Enjoyment), Improvement (Student Improvement, Teacher Improves Learning), Irrelevance (Bad, Ignore)?

The percentages of the students' agreement about External/Accountability (School Accountability, Student Accountability) subgroup showed that most students support the idea that assessment is important for their future career or job. Likewise, according to most of the interviewed students, assessment is important and necessary for them, too. It means that most of the students see assessment as an important element for their future career or job. Also, most students also support the idea that assessment tells their parents how much they have learnt. It can be said that for the majority of the participants, assessment provides useful information about their level and quantity of learning to their parents. However, they think that assessment results do not show how intelligent they are. In other words, according to the students, assessment does not show their intelligence level. In their research, Brown et al. (2009) found that the students moderately agreed that assessment made schools and students accountable. According to Brown and Harris (2012), assessment measures external factors such as quality of school/teacher, students' future, luck, intelligence or the teacher likes me. When the results related to the

External/Accountability conception in this study were compared with Zaimo lu's study (2013), the situation was different in her study. According to the statistics in her study, the External/Accountability conception had the lowest mean scores among other variables. Regarding this result, she stated that the lowest mean score for this conception among other conceptions showed that students in her study did not believe that assessments measure their future, intelligence or the quality of schooling. At this point, Rotter (1982) emphasized that success attribution in external, uncontrollable factors is associated with reduced academic achievement; whereas, endorsement of internally-located, consistent, and controllable causes is associated with increased performance (as cited in Brown & Harris, 2012). Likewise, Zaimo lu (2013) also emphasized in her study that the students can be successful in their school life when the external factors are under their control because the External/Accountability conception has a very important place in students' academic achievements. In line with the opinions of Rotter (1982) and Zaimo lu (2013), the students taking part in this study dominate the external factors except for intelligence, and thus their academic performance is high. The students' views on this conception point to this conclusion.

The BILSEM English language learners' conception of assessment related to *Affect/Benefit* (Class Environment, Personal Enjoyment) subgroup indicated that the students think assessment encourages their classes to work together and help each other. It means that most of the students see assessment as an encouraging element to work together and help each other in classes. Likewise, most of the students think that their classes become more supportive, and they find themselves really enjoying learning when they are assessed. It can be said that for the majority of the participants, assessment is a useful and an enjoyable element to learn subjects in school. On the other hand, some of the students think that when they are assessed, their class does not become more motivating to learn. In Brown and Harris's study (2012), older students recorded lower agreement with the conception of *Affect/Benefit* than the younger students who endorsed strongly the positive affective element like personal enjoyment. According to Brown and Harris (2012), the reason for this situation may be that the older students such as high school students begin to look at assessment and evaluation processes from a more realistic point of view rather than emotionally because assessment and evaluation has begun to shape and direct their lives in a way. They also state that the negative perspectives of students against assessment may increase in their education lives over the years because students experience and become more aware of the

individual impacts and results of assessment over the years, and they experience the exams which, like national exams, have a profound impact on their future lives and constitute a risk for them. Considering Brown and Harris's views at this point, most of the students in this study are young, and perhaps because of this, the perceptions they have developed against this conception are mostly positive.

According to the analyses of conceptions of assessment related to *Improvement* (Student Improvement, Teacher Improves Learning) subgroup, assessment results are important for most of the students because they use their assessment results to determine what they can do better in their next studies. In other words, for the majority of the participants, assessment results are important as a means of guide for their next studies. Also, the students think that assessment is a significant tool of track for their progress. Besides, for the majority of the participants, assessment is important as a means of feedback, too. When these results related to the Improvement conception in this study were compared with Zaimo lu's study (2013), they were the same in her study, too. According to the statistics in her study, the Improvement conception had the highest mean scores among other variables. Regarding this result, she expressed that the highest mean score for this conception among other conceptions showed that according to the students taking part in her study, the assessment might have the positive effects on their learning. She also stated that from this point of view, the students in her study think that the purpose of assessment is to plan, improve and increase, and evaluate their learning in classes. Likewise, in the research of Brown et al. (2009), taking the correlations and the mean scores together, it would appear that high school students firstly focused on the conception of improvement of assessment, thought that assessment increased their learning, and affected it in a positive way. At this point, Brown and Harris (2012) stress that the more students support and defend the improvement conception, the more successful they will be in their academic life. They also added that it is a fact that the improvement conception of assessment is the most approved and popular among high school students. Therefore, teachers should actively use assessment in their lessons to facilitate and increase the learning of students as well as to make their teaching more effective; this is a situation that all students expect from assessment.

Most of the students in this study also think that teachers see assessment as a useful tool for teaching them according to its results while the teachers think assessment is a force to make them

teach in a way that is against their beliefs, and assessment is little use because teachers make little use of assessment, although they conduct it. Additionally, as it is understood from the analyses, it is important to state here that while, according to the teachers, assessment does not measure studentsøhigher-order cognitive skills, such as analyzing and evaluating anyway, according to the students, assessment measures their higher order cognitive skills, such as analyzing and thinking critically. Likewise, according to the students interviewed, alternative assessment methods have a huge effect on fostering their critical thinking skills and creativity. They also think that they can develop their critical and creative thinking through alternative assessment methods very well. This might be a result of the fact that the students attach great importance to assessment and think that it plays an active role in preparing themselves for the future by assessing them in every aspect.

Lastly, according to the analyses of conceptions of assessment related to Irrelevance (Bad, Ignore) subgroup, the students do not ignore assessment information, assessment results are very accurate according to them while most teachers see assessment as an imprecise process, and the students do not ignore or throw away their assessment results, too. Moreover, according to the students, assessment is fair to them in parallel with the thought of the teachers about this situation, assessment does not interfere with their learning, teachers are not over-assessing, the assessment is important, and assessment has an important impact on their learning. Similar to the results in this study, Zaimo lu (2013) found that the students participating in her study did not also ignore information gained from assessment activities and did not think that assessment is without value or having little impact on their learning. Likewise, Brown and Hirschfeld (2008) also found that the students in their research tended to disagree with the conception of Irrelevance generally including the opinions such as assessment is bad and ignored. Moreover, they state that according to the results in their research, while students who consider assessment as a useful process that develops their individual responsibilities and helps them improve their learning got higher marks in courses, students who do not take assessment seriously or ignore it, and those who consistently link the responsibility of assessment results to teacher or schools got lower marks in courses. They also added that students who do not ignore assessment and its results and consider that assessment plays a constructive role, not destructive in their learning think very closely to the characteristics of formative self-assessment which is one of the alternative assessment techniques.

2- What is the relationship among the four components of SCoA-VI?

In Brown and Hirschfeldøs study (2008), the conception of affect is correlated very highly with the school accountability factor and moderately with the student accountability factor which are the factors of External/Accountability conception. According to them, the pattern of these correlations indicated that students who had good experience in assessment and who liked assessment thought that schools rather than themselves were responsible for the good results of assessment for schools. They also state that if students like assessment, and if their evaluations about it are positive, their views and opinions about school may be positive, too, and they will think that schools are doing good things for themselves. Similar to Brown and Hirschfeldø study, the correlation results of the current study demonstrated that there is a positive and significant correlation between Improvement and External/Accountability, between Improvement and Affect, and between External and Affect in perceptions of assessment. The correlation results also showed that there is a significant correlation between Irrelevance and Improvement, between Irrelevance and External, and between Irrelevance and Affect in perceptions of assessment although the correlation between these components is in negative direction. It can be said that the BILSEM English language learners see assessment as a way to determine how much they have learned from teaching and as a way to inform their parents about how much they have learnt. What is more, they see assessment as a good way of enjoying learning, assessment is important for them, and they attach great importance to assessment information and their assessment results, assessment results are very accurate, and assessment is fair to them.

3- What are the BILSEM English language learnersøchoices of assessment practices?

The results showed that the types of assessment practices that come to the BILSEM English language learnersø mind when they think of the word assessment are: õI score or evaluate my own performance, The teacher grades me on a written test that he or she made up, The teacher scores me on an in-class written essay, The teacher grades or marks or scores the written work I hand in, and The teacher observes me in class and judges my learningö. However, õThe teacher asks me questions out loud in classö is the assessment practice that comes to the studentsø mind least when they think of the word assessment although most of the teachers use Oral Question &

Answer assessment practice to assess their studentsø language performances in their classes. Brown (2011) states that how students understand the nature of assessment and its functions or purposes seems to affect and guide their perspectives and approaches to assessment practices. Additionally, Bazemore (2012) expresses that the studentsø perceptions of assessment practices are directly related to the feedback, comments and explanations given them by their teachers about their lessons and exam results.

It can be said that when the BILSEM English language learners think of the word assessment: õI score or evaluate my own performance assessment practiceö come to their mind mostly. This shows that the English language learnersø studying at BILSEM language performances is assessed mostly through Self-Assessment. Also, their language performances are assessed mostly through their own written works they hand in and Planned Observation such as running record, and checklist. This result clearly shows that the students participating in this study are mostly assessed by alternative assessment techniques such as student self-assessment, performance-based assessments, and observation techniques. Most of the students interviewed stated that alternative assessment practices are better. Moreover, they also stated that they like and prefer alternative assessment practices because they feel more relaxed and free in alternative assessment while they have got stress in vain in traditional assessment.

Limitations

This study is limited with 75 participants from two BILSEM centers. According to Mohammed (2012), õTo get more transferable, generalized and accurate picture nationally, a larger sample should be used to cover many other regionsö (p. 102). However, these centers are only one in most of the cities so this situation makes it difficult to reach many English language teachers and learners. Therefore, the study is not sufficiently representative of the entire population of English language teachers working at BILSEM in Turkey and students studying in these institutions.

Also, this study is only limited with the data obtained by SCoA and interview questions to identify the conceptions of English language learners regarding assessment processes in EFL classrooms at BILSEM.

Suggestions for Further Studies

In this study, English language learnersø perceptions concerning assessment and evaluation processes in EFL classrooms were emphasized. The effect of assessment on improving higher

order thinking skills should also be considered separately, and the effect of this differentiation on the critical and creative thinking skills of gifted students should be examined. While searching the effect of assessment on higher order thinking skills, it may be necessary to move the teaching environments out of the classroom in order to generalize the skills to be learned, and to enable the use of skills in natural environments. Therefore, time allocated to further studies should be increased. Besides, to be able to understand whether assessment measures students' higher order thinking skills, firstly the critical and creative thinking skills of teachers working at BILSEM should be assessed; experimental programs should be prepared to improve these skills, and the results should be tested.

In this study, the scale used for students' perceptions on assessment was applied to 75 English language learners who were identified as gifted only in two BILSEM, Burdur and Isparta, and 27 students in these two BILSEM were also interviewed about assessment. However, to better understand students' views, more studies should be conducted on larger samples of gifted students in other BILSEM in different cities in Turkey.

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Uzun Özet

Giri

Türkiye'de, farkl, e itim ve aktivitelere ihtiyaç duyan üstün yetenekli çocuklar,n ya ,tlar,na göre farkl, e itim görmesi konusu di er ülkelere k,yasla oldukça yeni bir konudur. Di er bir deyi le ülkemizde õÜstün yetenekli çocuklar,n e itimininö önemi yak,n zamanda anla ,lm, t,r. Günümüzde bu ö renciler, kendi normal okul saatlerinden sonra BILSEM'de e itim görmektedirler. Bu okullar kendi müfredat,na sahip olmalar,n,n yan,nda farkl, de erlendirme teknikleri kullanmaktad,r. Bu merkezlerin yabanc, dil (ngilizce) derslerinde a ,rl,kl, olarak alternatif de erlendirme teknikleri kullan,lmaktad,r. Bu de erlendirme süreci ve uygulamalar, ö rencileri birçok yönden etkilemektedir. Bu nedenle, BILSEM'de kullan,lan alternatif de erlendirmenin etkilili i ve önemi belirlenmelidir.

Bu özel çocuklar,n ngilizce dersinin de erlendirilmesiyle ve bu de erlendirmeyi nas,l alg,lad,klar,na dair sorular,n yan,tlanmas, önemlidir. Ancak alan yaz,nda BILSEMƒde ö rencilerin yabanc, dil derslerinin de erlendirilmesine yönelik çal, ma bulunmamaktad,r. Üstün yetenekli ö rencilerin de erlendirme anlay, lar,n, belirmeyi amaçlayan bu çal, ma bu alana , ,k tutacakt,r. Çal, man,n ara t,rma sorular, a a ,daki gibidir:

1- ngilizce ö renenlerin BILSEM'deki yabanc, dil s,n,flar,ndaki de erlendirme alg,lar, nelerdir?

2- SCoA-VI'n,n dört bile eni aras,ndaki ili ki nedir?

3- BILSEMƒde ngilizce ö renenlerin bu derste kullan,lan de erlendirme uygulamalar, ile ilgili tercihleri nelerdir?

Yöntem

Bu çal, mada karma desen yöntemi tercih edilmi tir. Ara t,rmac,lar, çal, mas,n, yürütmek için nicel ve nitel veriler toplam, t,r.

Kat,l,mc,lar

Ara t,rma verileri, Burdur ve Isparta'daki BILSEM'de okuyan 75 ö renciden (37 k,z ve 38 erkek) toplanm, t,r. Haftada iki saat ngilizce dersi alan bu ö rencilerin ya lar, 11 ile 14 aras,nda de i mektedir.

Veri toplama araçlar,

Ö rencilerin De erlendirme Görü Ölçe i (SCoA-VI)

Bu çal, mada Brown (2008) taraf,ndan geli tirilen bir SCoA-VI kullan,lm, t,r. SCoA-VI üç bölümden olu maktad,r: lk bölümde kat,l,mc,lar,n demografik bilgilerini almak için sorular vard,r. kinci bölümde, alt, puanl,k Likert tipi de erlendirme ölçe i kullan,larak ö rencilerin de erlendirme alg,lar,n, belirten 33 ifade bulunmaktad,r. Üçüncü bölümde ö rencilerden õde erlendirmeö kelimesini dü ündüklerinde ak,llar,na gelen de erlendirme faaliyetlerinin türlerini veya türlerini belirtmeleri istenmektedir. Ba ,ms,z de i kenler için sonuç almak amac,yla Frekans analizleri yap,lm, t,r. Ara t,rma sorular,n, cevaplamak için sonuçlar, bulmak amac,yla T-Testi ve Pearson Korelasyon Analizi kullan,lm, t,r.

Görü me

Ö rencilerin ngilizce dersinde uygulanan de erlendirme süreçleri hakk,ndaki görü leri yar, yap,land,r,lm, görü me yoluyla toplanm, t,r. Burdur ve Isparta B LSEM'de ö renim gören 27 ö renciyle yap,lan görü melerde kat,l,mc,lar,n fikirlerini rahatça ifade edebilmeleri amac,yla onlar,n tercihine ba l, olarak görü melerin dili ngilizce ya da Türkçe olarak belirlenmi tir. Görü melerden ve aç,k uçlu sorulardan toplanan nitel veriler, meslekta incelemesine tabi tutuldu. Bu nitel verilerin incelenmesinde aç,k inceleme tekni i kullan,lm, t,r.

Tart, ma ve Sonuç

Bu bölümde, nicel ve nitel bile enlerle ilgili sonuçlar tart, ,lacakt,r. Her ara t,rma sorusuna bu çal, man,n bulgular,na dayanarak cevaplar verilecektir.

1-   ngilizce ö renenlerin BILSEM'deki yabanc, dil s,n,flar,ndaki de erlendirme alg,lar, nelerdir?

Çoğu öğrenci, değerlendirmenin gelecekteki kariyerleri veya meslekleri için önemli olduğunu belirtmiştir. Aynı şekilde, görüşülen öğrencilerin çoğuna göre sınıfta yapılan değerlendirmelerin onlar için önemli ve gerekli sonucuna varılmıştır. Bu sonuç, öğrencilerin çoğunun değerlendirmeyi gelecekteki kariyerleri veya meslekleri için önemli bir unsur olarak gördüğü anlamına gelmektedir. Ancak, öğrencilere göre sınıfta yapılan değerlendirme sonuçları, onların ne kadar akıllı olduklarını göstermemektedir. Başka bir deyişle, öğrencilere göre değerlendirme zekâ seviyelerini göstermemektedir. Öğrencilerin çoğunluğu İngilizce dersinde değerlendirildiklerinde, derslerin daha destekleyici olduğunu ve kendilerini gerçekten öğrenmekten zevk aldıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Ayrıca, katılımcıların çoğunluğu için değerlendirmenin okuldaki konuları öğrenmek için yararlı ve eğlenceli bir unsur olduğu söylenebilir.

2- SCoA-VI'nın dört bileşeni arasındaki ilişki nedir?

Korelasyon sonuçlarına göre BILSEM'de İngilizce öğrenenlerin değerlendirmeyi, ne kadar öğrendiklerini belirlemenin bir yolu olarak gördükleri söylenebilir. Dahası, değerlendirmeyi öğrenmenin tadını çıkarmanın iyi bir yolu olarak gördükleri ortaya konmuştur. İngilizce dersinde yapılan değerlendirme bu öğrenciler için önemlidir ve yapılan değerlendirmelerin sonuçlarına büyük önem verdikleri bulunmuştur. Ayrıca değerlendirme sonuçları çok doğrudur ve öğretmenleri tarafından uygulanan değerlendirme yöntemleri kendileri için adildir.

3- BILSEM'de İngilizce öğrenenlerin bu derste kullanılan değerlendirme uygulamaları ile ilgili tercihleri nelerdir?

Bu çalışmaya katılan öğrencilerin verdikleri cevaplardan; çoğunlukla öğrenci öz değerlendirme, performansa dayalı değerlendirme ve gözlem teknikleri gibi alternatif değerlendirme teknikleri tercih ettikleri anlaşılmıştır. Ayrıca görüşme yapılan öğrencilerin çoğu alternatif değerlendirme uygulamalarının geleneksel yöntemlere kıyasla daha faydalı olduğunu belirtmiştir. Bunun sebebi olarak ise, geleneksel değerlendirmede gereksiz yere strese girdiklerini ve alternatif değerlendirmede daha rahat ve özgür hissettiklerini belirtmişlerdir.