INVESTIGATING THE INTEGRATION OF THE SIMS 3 IN AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION CONTEXT: A CASE STUDY AT A VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

BURKAY KURU

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

SEPTEMBER 2023

Approval of the thesis:

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ABSTRACT

INVESTIGATING THE INTEGRATION OF THE SIMS 3 IN AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION CONTEXT: A CASE STUDY AT A VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

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September 2023, 248 pages

Digital games are known to be integrated into language learning settings as they can innovate the learning process with their distinctive advantages which fulfill contemporary needs of students born into the 21st century. This qualitative study was conducted to analyze perceptions of high school students towards the utilization of a life simulation game called *The Sims 3* as an innovative tool in their regular English clasess. The present study also aimed at exploring the perceieved changes in motivation and language attitude of the participants. This case study was conducted in a vocational and technical high school in Turkey. Semi-structured interviews, stimulated recall interview and researcher's fields notes were utilized to gather data. It was revealed that the participants had positive perceptions regarding the integration of *The Sims 3* into their regular English lessons. Their perceptions are categorized under two themes. The first theme is associated with the high level of fun the participants had while completing the activities based on *The Sims 3* due to the embedded features of the game such as exploration, creativity and freedom. The second theme is about the the game's positive impact on their various language skills

from speaking to grammar due to the language-based nature of the game. The results also revealed that the participants had improvement in their perceived motivation levels and their attitude towards English lessons while engaging with the game and its activities thanks to the game's positive aspects which encourage cooperation, competition and eagerness in participation.

Keywords: *The Sims 3*, Digital Game-based Learning, Simulation Games in English Language Learning, Innovation in English Language Learning

ÖZ

THE SİMS 3'E İNGİLİZCE EĞİTİM SÜREÇLERİNDE YER VERİLMESİNİN ARAŞTIRILMASI: BİR MESLEKİ VE TEKNİK LİSEDE ÖRNEK OLAY ARAŞTIRMASI

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Eylül 2023, 248 sayfa

Dijital oyunların, 21. yüzyılda doğan öğrencilerin çağdaş ihtiyaçlarını ve ilgi alanlarını karşılayan dikkat çekici avantajlarıyla öğrenme sürecini modernleştirebildiği için dil öğrenme ortamlarına entegre edildiği bilinmektedir. Bu nitel çalışma, lise öğrencilerinin *The Sims 3*'ün müfredat kazanımlarını kapsayacak şekilde normal İngilizce derslerinde yenilikçi bir araç olarak kullanılmasına yönelik algılarını analiz etmek amacıyla uygunlanmıştır. Bu çalışma aynı zamanda *The Sims 3*'e dayalı etkinliklerin entegrasyonu ile katılımcıların algılanan motivasyon ve dil tutum düzeylerini keşfetmeyi amaçlamıştır. Bu örnek olay Ankara'da bir mesleki ve teknik lisede 14 yaşında 22 katılımcı ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Veri toplamak için yarı yapılandırılmış odak grup görüşmeleri, uyarılmış hatırlama görüşmesi ve araştırmacının alan notlarından yararlanılmıştır. Katılımcıların *The Sims 3*'ün normal İngilizce derslerine entegre edilmesine ilişkin olumlu algılara sahip oldukları ortaya çıkmıştır. Algıları iki ana tema altında kategorize edilebilmektedir. İlk tema, oyunun keşfetme, yaratıcılık, özgürlük gibi özelliklerinin bir sonucu olarak katılımcıların *The Sims 3*'e dayalı etkinlikleri tamamlarken yüksek derecede eğlenmesi ile

ilişkilendirilirken, ikinci tema, oyunun dil temelli doğasının bir sonucu olarak oyunun konuşmadan dilbilgisine kadar çeşitli dil becerilerine olumlu etkisi ile ilgilidir. Sonuçlar ayrıca, oyunun işbirliğini, rekabeti ve katılım isteğini teşvik eden olumlu yönleri sayesinde, katılımcıların oyunla ve ilgili etkinliklerle meşgul olurken algılanan motivasyon düzeylerinde ve İngilizce derslerine karşı tutumlarında iyileşme olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Katılımcılar ayrıca gelecekte *The Sims 3*'ün İngilizce derslerine entegre edilmesini destekleyeceklerini de belirtmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *The Sims 3*, Dijital Oyun Tabanlı Öğrenme, İngiliz Dili Öğreniminde Simülasyon Oyunları, İngiliz Dili Öğreniminde Modernleşme

To Bella Goth

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to my advisor, Prof. Dr. A. Cendel Karaman for his invaluable insights that helped me develop and bring this study to completion. I am thankful for his guidance, patience and constructive feedback in every stage of this thesis study. It was an honor to work with him.

I also wish to extend my gratitude and appreciation to Prof. Dr. Perihan Savaş and Assist. Prof. Dr. Pınar Yeni Palabıyık for being on my committee and sharing their valuable comments and insights that helped me analyze my thesis from different perspectives.

I would like to thanks to my participants, the brilliant minds, who spared their valuable time to participate in the study and shared their sincere experiences as well as comments. I am very lucky that they were willing to take part in the study and made it possible for me to write this research study.

The last but not the least, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my family, friends and girlfriend who endured me in this difficult yet exciting journey. I poured my mind and heart out to them. It was a privilege for me to turn the game I love the most into a teaching tool that I could utilize professionally. I cannot express how much fun I had, introducing the game that shaped my childhood to newer generations.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CALL	Computer-assisted Language Learning
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESA	Entertainment Software Association
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
TS	*The Sims*

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0. Presentation

This chapter includes five sections. The first section offers background information as to the present study by focusing on digital games, their role in the society as well as educational settings. In the second section, the statement of problem regarding the current language education tendencies in Turkey is given in relation to traditional and innovative teaching methods. Then, significance of the present study is explained in terms of its focus and position in larger literature as well as Turkish context. Next, research questions to be investigated are provided. Finally, crucial terms as well as definitions are described to conceptualize the important aspects of the present study.

1.1. Background to the Study

Digital games have become an indispensable part of many people for their popularity has consistently increased over the years thanks to their fun and engaging nature of gameplay (Prato et al., 2014; Granic et al., 2014; Wolf, 2021). It is reported that more than 226 million people from the USA play digital games, and 80% of the children living in the USA actively take part in digital games (Entertainment Software Association [ESA], 2021). A similar trend can be seen in Turkey where more and more institutions acknowledge the growing popularity of digital games and make investments accordingly (Ayar, 2018; Üçüncüoğlu & Çakır, 2017). Sezgin (2018) argues that approximately 30 million people in Turkey play digital games and that gaming industry in Turkey is expected to expand more in the near future. Therefore, it can be suggested that "today, the young who follow technological developments closely, devote more time to digital games and digital games become prominent among popular culture images of the young." (Namlı & Demir, 2020, p. 40).

As a result of the apparent popularity of digital games across the world, digital games have started to affect various aspects of everyday life. For instance, it is possible to see the integration of digital games into the professions like medicine and history (McCoy et al., 2016; Spring, 2015). Acknowledgement and utilization of digital games in different professions as well as areas of expertise demonstrate the successful and pervasive nature of digital games. The presence of digital games in educational settings is not an exception either. It is reported that integration of digital games into various educational subjects can boost student performance, motivation and attitude while also ensuring fun on the part of students as digital games act as innovative tools as opposed to traditional tools (Beavis et al., 2015; Gee & Price, 2021; Lay & Osman, 2018). This is not unexpected since games and gamified environments have always been in a crucial position in education along with technological advancements in the field, which makes the integration of digital games more agreeable and meaningful in actual teaching environments. To give several examples where digital games make a difference in education, it is reported that digital games are known to increase motivation among students in mathematics classes (Panoutsopoulos & Sampson, 2012), foster historical knowledge in history classes (Holdenried & Trépanier, 2013) or demonstrate misconceptions regarding evolution in chemistry classes by innovating the classroom practices (Cardoso et al., 2018).

Digital games have become such a crucial aspect of education that there are now digital games that are specifically designed and released for educational purposes. The main purpose behind such games is to meet certain educational objectives and foster learning among students in a non-traditional atmosphere (All et al., 2016; Girard et al., 2013). Surely, digital games created for entertainment purposes are also known to be integrated into classroom practices through careful adaptation and pedagogical selection (Ekaputra et al., 2013; Squire, 2008). Digital-game based learning is a specific research area in education that investigates how digital games, regardless of their educational or non-educational nature, can be utilized in various educational context to enhance students' knowledge in different subjects through innovative, fun and meaningful practices.

Since most digital games rely on language input and output, they are also used to enhance language learning and teaching practices both inside and outside the classroom contexts, and the role of digital games in EFL setting is a popular area of research in Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) (Campos, et al., 2013; Li, 2022; Rudis & Poštić, 2017). Within the domain of EFL, along with English language achievement related to classroom practices like vocabulary and grammar, digital games are seen as efficient tools to help students increase their language learning motivation and develop more positive attitudes towards English courses through fun factors their gameplays provide (Castillo-Cuesta, 2020; Ebrahimzadeh & Sepideh, 2017; Öden et al., 2021). Especially, simulation-based digital games like *The Sims (TS)* series are regarded as effective in enhancing students' English language abilities as they offer rich language input in a textual form and an innovative manner; moreover, players cannot proceed within such games if they do not understand the language input, which means that digital games naturally offer a meaningful language context for students to practice language while playing the games within or outside the classroom environment (Lorenset & Tumolo, 2019; Ranalli, 2008; Wang, 2019).

In conclusion, it is safe to acknowledge digital games have become a substantial part of hundreds of millions of people all around the world, and their popularity is expected to increase even more in the future. Due to their increasing popularity, digital games are integrated into various professions and fields to foster and boost skills as well as positive behaviors. Similarly, they are widely utilized in educational contexts to help students become more knowledgeable in various school subjects. Expectedly, digital games are implemented in EFL setting too since such games can boost learning process immensely thanks to their embedded features that promote language exposure. Since simulation games, such as *TS* series, are more associated with meaningful and authentic-like language elements, they are regarded as impactful in enhancing students' language skills and language-related motivation levels as well as attitudes.

1.2. Statement of The Problem

There has been a shift from traditional teaching to innovative teaching in EFL setting with the rise of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) over the past decades.

Furthermore, more innovative strategies and techniques have been adopted in line with the curricula changes and technological advancements in information and communications technology (ICT) in general and CALL specifically (Kessler, 2018; Timuçin 2006). Such innovative advancements have naturally increased the use of Web 2.0 tools like *YouTube*, *Kahoot* and *Quizlet* as well as digital games like *TS* in EFL setting (Kayar, 2019; Lorenset & Tumolo, 2019). This increase in the use of technological tools and adoption of more innovative teaching practices in language courses can accordingly lead to enhancement in language abilities, interpersonal skills and instructional exercises among students as well as teachers.

In order to embrace the innovative setting and practices associated with contemporary education, teachers are often encouraged to embrace state-of-the-art technologies in their classroom environments such as VR technology, weblogs, digital games to foster various language teaching areas from providing feedback to meaningful communication to student reflection to student motivation. (Karaman & Serpil, 2005; Peterson, 2016; Van Ginkel et al., 2020). In line with this notion, teacher training, language curricula and related materials evolve to be more technology-based and open to versatility across the world. Surely, Turkey is not an exception to the changes occurring in EFL setting as various changes are attempted to be made by both teacher training programs at universities as well as Ministry of National Education (MoNE) to keep up with the technological and contemporary needs. For instance, MoNE has recently updated their English curricula across all grades by putting a great emphasis on the integration of technology into EFL setting and association of technology with more versatile and inclusive classroom practices like authenticity, collaboration and critical thinking (Ministry of National Education [MoNE], 2018).

As for university-related innovation attempts, more contemporary examination suggestions regarding initial language teacher selection process for universities in Turkey are made to modernize teacher training programs (Erdoğan & Savaş, 2022). Moreover, prospective teachers in Turkey are encouraged to take advantages of technological devices like Tablet PCs in their teaching training process so that they can feel comfortable using such devices in their regular teachings once they start working (Savaş, 2014). Similarly, acknowledgement of the effectiveness of digital

games and appropriate utilization of them by language teachers in Turkey is suggested (Altınbaş & Savaş, 2020).

As a result, it can be argued that both MoNE and universities in Turkey have taken active steps to innovate EFL setting in Turkey to keep up with the technological needs of the contemporary world in theory. However, realizing these steps in actual EFL lessons in Turkey is a completely different story. It is often experienced that traditional teaching is still persistent in EFL lessons in Turkey through the use of mechanical activities like drilling, memorization as well as fill-in-the-blank activities and through the overdependence on textbooks that are artificial in nature even though many studies conducted in Turkish context regarding both prospective teachers and in-service teachers suggest that this should be changed. It is reported, for example, that MoNE does not provide appropriate technological tools as well as materials, despite the efforts, that can meet the contemporary language needs and that it is impossible to reach the intended innovative language objectives with the available class hours as well as traditional language applications (Karademir & Gorgoz, 2019).

Likewise, it is argued that several aspects of the current teacher training process as well as general language methodologies do not sufficiently encourage teachers to adopt innovative and technological tools and teaching techniques in EFL setting (İnci & Yıldız, 2019). This implies that there is a serious mismatch between the theoretical developments suggested by MoNE and their actual implementation in language classrooms, and that there is not enough attention to teachers' versatility and exploration especially in terms of active integration of technology and other innovative methods. This process also undermines the professional as well as personal development of novice teachers as they are offered a highly traditional language environment despite the fact that their university education encourages them to adopt innovative techniques. It is argued that "teachers who seek ways of enriching their instruction continue to explore emerging approaches after their entry into the profession" (Karaman et al., 2012, p. 80); however, when teachers are not given a chance to enrich their instructions, both teachers and students consequently suffer from traditional learning and teaching processes.

In conclusion, it is clear that there is a persistent problem of traditional teaching methods in EFL setting in Turkey. This problem leads to detrimental consequences in terms of both teacher and student satisfaction as well as achievement as the current techniques adopted in language classes are far from meeting contemporary needs of language learners. It is evident that MoNE has taken several steps to encourage teachers to use innovative and technological language practices in line with the studies conducted in Turkish context; however, these steps do not seem to be realized as intended. Therefore, there is a need to realize the contemporary approaches suggested in the language curricula proposed by MoNE despite all the contradictory realities and challenges present in the field by integrating innovative and technological tools like digital games into EFL setting and keep up with the current global shift from traditional teaching to innovative teaching in EFL setting.

1.3. The Significance of the Study

It is crucial to investigate ever-changing needs of the students born into the 21st century and implement more innovative educational approaches (Sawyer, 2019). These changing needs tend to alter and evolve over time; accordingly, more contemporary instructional tools in EFL setting are called for. It is seen that more technology-based and inclusive approaches are researched under the scope of ICT in general and CALL specifically in order to keep up with the evolving needs of the new generations of language learners (Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012; Woo, 2014; Yeşiltaş & Cevher, 2022).

Various studies encourage teachers to use technological tools that can innovate the traditional language learning environment for a number of reasons from authenticity (Rama et al., 2012) to enjoyment (Cornillie et al., 2012). Even though previous studies are valuable in offering crucial pieces of information and concepts regarding the nature of innovative as well as technology-based tools and their actual implementation in EFL setting (Cornillie et al., 2012; Rama et al., 2012), it is substantial to conduct even more contemporary studies and describe up-to-date language learning environments since education as well as innovative educational tools such as technological devices and techniques constantly evolve in line with the changing needs and interests of new generations of students. Thus, the present study is distinctive and essential for it aims

at investigating new generations of students and their interaction with contemporary technological tools, offering implications regarding their motivations and language-related attitudes in a distinctive setting.

When the previous literature about innovative language tools is investigated, it is argued that most studies focus on language achievement through numerical data, ignoring the actual process in which participants are exposed to the innovative tools by giving the greatest attention to the end results (Jensen, 2017; Ranalli, 2008; Sundqvist, 2019). Thus, there is a need for more studies analyzing the actual implementation process of innovative tools to give an insight regarding experiences rather than statistical data. The present study is crucial in this sense as it aims at investigating an innovative attempt in which the participants are exposed to an innovative and technological language learning tool, *TS 3,* over the course of multiple months by focusing on the participants' motivational factors and perceptions as they experience and engage with *TS 3* in a qualitative approach. Thus, progress and unique experiences are more important in the present study rather than the end results and language-related achievements, making the present study more process-based compared to most relevant studies. Therefore, it can be argued that the present study draws attention to an important gap in the related literature.

Another reason as to why the present study is substantial in the relevant literature is that it focuses on commercial off-the-shelf digital games and simulation genre by investigating the motivational and attitude-related effects of *TS 3* in EFL setting. Most studies investigating innovative tools in EFL setting analyze digital games that are specifically created for educational purposes. On the other hand, the studies that in fact analyze commercial off-the-shelf digital games and their implications in EFL setting are not associated with simulation games in many cases even though it is argued that simulation games have distinctive advantages compared to other genres of digital games for various reasons like offering meaningful (DeKeyser, 2010) and authentic (Reinhardt & Thorne, 2016) classroom practices. Thus, the present study takes a distinctive approach and directly focuses on simulation games and their implementation in EFL setting in contrast to many previous studies in the relevant literature.

Similarly, when previous studies are analyzed, it is seen that *TS* series can be a valuable tool in EFL setting; however, there is only a limited number of studies that investigate the utilization of *TS* series in language classes, and only a few of them are qualitative in nature (Miller & Hegelheimer, 2006; Monjelat et al., 2013; Purushotma, 2005; Ranalli, 2008). Thus, the present study explores the utilization *TS* series in an EFL setting with a process-based study design. Moreover, the present study also acknowledges the presence of the teacher in the process, and it gives importance to perceptions of the teacher in terms of activity design, activity administration and activity participation.

Finally, the present study is associated with Turkish context as it is conducted in a vocational and technical high school in Ankara, Turkey. When the previous studies focusing on the innovative and traditional nature of EFL setting in Turkey are analyzed, it is seen that most language-related practices are traditional in nature even though more innovative approaches are encouraged by MoNE and various studies (Altınbaş & Savaş, 2020; İnci & Yıldız, 2019; Karademir & Gorgoz, 2019; Koral & Mirci, 2021; MoNE, 2018; Zorba & Çakır, 2019). As a result, the present study is crucial in the related literature as it aims at innovating the language learning process as suggested by MoNE by integrating *TS 3* into the language classes and reach classroom implications regarding the nature of technology-based tools and their usability in Turkish context and whether previously experienced traditional environment in EFL setting in Turkey can be innovated as a result of the integration of *TS 3*. Furthermore, there are no previous studies that adopt *TS 3* as an innovative tool in EFL setting in Turkey, making the present study distinctive in its own context both in terms of gaming choice and as an innovative attempt.

1.4. Research Objective and Research Questions

The preset study is associated with the integration of *TS 3* into EFL curriculum at a technical and vocational high school in Turkey and how its in-class integration can innovate and change the teacher-centered teaching atmosphere. The study aims at investigating how *TS 3* gameplays and in-class activities that are related to gameplay experiences can influence on the perceived learning motivation as well as attitude

towards English language learning among a group of 9th graders. This study looks for answers to the following questions:

1. What are the perceptions of the teacher and learners regarding the integration of *TS 3* into EFL in a 9th grade classroom context?
2. How does the integration of *TS 3* into EFL curriculum influence the perceived motivation of the learners in a 9th grade classroom context?
3. How does the integration of *TS 3* into EFL curriculum influence the perceived language attitude of the learners towards EFL in a 9th grade classroom context?

1.5. Definitions of the Key Terms

Traditional Teaching: It refers to more teacher-based ways of teaching and learning processes in which more conventional activities are designed and conducted like drills and fill-in-the-blank activities in mechanical manners (Liu & Long, 2014; Raka & Najmonnisa, 2014; Tularam & Machisella, 2018).

Innovative Teaching: It is an educational approach that is associated with more contemporary tools as well as methods that draw attention to student-centered instances in which versatile abilities such as creativity and exploration are given the upmost importance (Jaskyte et al., 2009; Kalyani & Rajasekaran, 2018). Additionally, integration of technology in innovative teaching is widely seen and encouraged to modernize the teaching and learning process (Groff, 2013).

Motivation: It refers to holding a drive to conduct an action or refraining from it. Inclusion of elements such as awards, punishments, self-efficacy as well as satisfaction increases the chances of having a drive to complete an activity (Higgins, 2012; Locke, 1991).

Language Attitude: It gives insight as to the enjoyment as well as eagerness of individuals being exposed to the target language, making an active effort towards learning as well as using it (Dewaele, 2020; Pakdaman, 2022)

Digital game-based learning: It is a research area that investigates how digital games can be integrated into classroom practices and what kind of advantages and disadvantages they offer. Moreover, it gives crucial information about which types of digital games can hold pedagogical values or not (Gee, 2007).

Simulation Games: They are digital games that aim at mimicking one or more aspects of real life through implementation of real-like gameplay elements offering certain pedagogical merits that are often not present in other genres of digital games such as authenticity and open-endedness (Heintz & Law, 2015; Narayanasamy et al., 2005).

The Sims 3: It is the third establishment of the best-selling life simulation series *TS* (Behrmann, 2011). It is a commercial off-the-shelf digital game that revolves around controlling in-game characters and making decisions as to their lives from family relations to career advancements to hobbies (Rak, 2015). It offers limitless possibilities to players in terms of character creation, house building and in-game activities as well as events (Voronaya, 2022).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Presentation

This chapter consists of four sections that give detailed information regarding the background of the present study. The first section examines the contemporary education and its relationship with traditional as well as innovative teaching. The second section defines motivation and analyzes different motivation types as well as related theories while also investigating the interaction between teaching types and student motivation. The third section focuses on language attitude and its implications regarding teaching types in EFL setting. The last section gives general information about the role of gamification and digital games in education. Furthermore, this section analyzes entertainment games, simulation games and finally *The Sims* series respectively by making connections between the analyzed concepts and teaching types.

2.1. Education in the 21st Century

Human competence consists of three distinctive domains: interpersonal, intrapersonal and cognitive (National Research Council, 2012). This distinction can be likened to Bloom's taxonomy which also includes three domains defined as cognitive, affective and psychomotor (Sosniak, 1994). Cognitive domain refers to thinking and reasoning abilities whereas intrapersonal domain, or affective domain according to Bloom, is associated with emotions and feelings, and the last domain is interpersonal, or psychomotor, giving the emphasis on human movements as well as meaningful interactions between humans, and these domains are regarded as the basis of the education in the 21st century (National Research Council, 2012; Sosniak 1994).

Donovan et al. (2014) argue that there is not a specific definition of the education in the 21st century for there are different approaches and descriptions regarding the skills, interactions and tools needed in the contemporary education, yet they still acknowledge that any attempts to define the educational environment in the 21st century would certainly include the essential role of cognitive, interpersonal as well as intrapersonal domains to be able to conceptualize a successful learner in the 21st century. For instance, they suggest that collaboration and communication among students are necessary as such interpersonal skills help students be ready in future work environment; similarly, they mention creativity, which is about intrapersonal skills, and cognitive skills such as problem solving as well as critical thinking while defining a successful learner.

There are also certain skills that are associated with the contemporary education in line with the given domains. Irving (2006), for example, focuses on the important role of state-of-the-art technology and technological devices in the education in the 21st century, suggesting that technology can enhance students' skills immensely. Laar et al. (2017) explain that the contemporary education calls for technical, personal as well as contextual skills such as information management, creativity, situational awareness and self-direction. They suggest that these skills are essential to educate the next generations who are to be main protagonists in the 21st century's workplace. Moreover, several educational concepts like inclusivity and gamification are also to be integrated into the contemporary education as a result of the innovative nature of the education in the 21st century (Alejandro & David, 2018). Therefore, it can be said that there is a tendency towards the implementation of more modern as well as inclusive applications and concepts into the contemporary education as a result of the changing needs of the students born into the 21st century (Sawyer, 2019).

It is clear based on the mentioned arguments as well as concepts that education in the 21st century is mostly associated with modern teaching implications that give an essential role to more critical skills like problem-solving, creativity, technological knowledge as well as information management in line with the domains investigating human competence and contemporary needs of workplaces and society at large. However, this does not necessarily mean that traditional teaching is completely

abandoned or demeaned due to the rise of innovative teaching; in fact, both traditional teaching and innovative teaching methods are still widely utilized in the contemporary education; for instance, Kereluik et al. (2013) claim that 21st century skills require not only innovative teaching but also several aspects of traditional teaching. As a result, it is of importance to mention not only innovative teaching but also traditional teaching while explaining the educational context in the 21st century and focus on their educational implications in general education as well as EFL setting.

2.1.1. Traditional Teaching

Traditional teaching is one of the most popular teaching approaches that has been utilized widely all around the world for many decades. Although its popularity is acknowledged (Kereluik et al., 2013), it is vital to understand what traditional teaching really is and what sorts of teaching and learning implications it holds.

Traditional teaching refers to teaching approaches and modes that are strictly controlled and regulated by the teacher (Tularam & Machisella, 2018; Liu & Long, 2014). In addition to the authoritative figure of teacher in this type of teaching, learning and teaching techniques revolve around lectures which are highly instructive and theoretical in nature (Raka & Najmonnisa, 2014). Moreover, internalizing pieces of information for external elements like prizes or praises without incorporating their real-life applications as well as implications is common in traditional teaching and its related techniques and activities; thus, it is suggested that the main focus in traditional teaching is often not on real-life abilities and skills but rather on theoretical results (Begüm, 2018).

2.1.2. Advantages of Traditional Teaching

Traditional teaching has certain advantages over innovative teaching. First of all, Begüm (2018) argues that exchange of information as well as knowledge is mostly guided and even structured by teachers in this type of teaching; accordingly, the structured nature of teaching may have the implication of lower work-load on the part of students. Students can also acquire basic knowledge regarding different subject

areas or fields of expertise in a relatively short span of time through the implementation of traditional teaching (Sobirova & Karimova, 2021). Finally, teachers can take advantage of clearly formed teaching and learning patterns of traditional teaching effortlessly, and this may help them promote a new topic, revise previously learnt points and test them accordingly (Norova & Akbarov, 2020).

2.1.3. Disadvantages of Traditional Teaching

Despite the observable advantages of traditional teaching in some aspects of teaching and learning processes, there are several disadvantages of traditional teaching too. It is suggested by Liu and Long (2014) that traditional teaching ignores the potential within students, meaning that students cannot bring creativity, personality and initiative to the subjects they are taught or the activities they are asked to complete; moreover, students are not given a chance to think about the pieces of information they are introduced and analyze them in-depth due to the teacher-centered approach of traditional teaching. Similarly, Sabirova and Karinova (2021) argue that traditional teaching gives emphasis on memorization of the given subjects and concepts rather than active thinking processes, harming the process of teaching and learning greatly. Likewise, traditional teaching regards students as passive receivers of knowledge, which means that they do not make an active effort to discover pieces of information or deconstruct the given concepts to make out what they really mean (Boumova, 2008). Besides, Castronova (2002) argues that the nature of traditional teaching approaches and modes inevitably results in straightforward techniques like drill practices.

2.1.4. Innovative Teaching

Innovative teaching, also known as modern teaching, has become a prominent teaching approach in order for educational institutions to keep up with the changing needs, interests and accords of the new generation of students (Simplicio, 2000; Zhu et al., 2013). Since this type of teaching gives attention to students, engagement of students in the subjects they are offered and the activities they are given is one of the key concepts in innovative teaching (Kalyani & Rajasekaran, 2018). Thus, the teaching

techniques are often designed to be student-centered in innovative teaching, leading to more open-ended tasks, student discussions and exploration (Jaskyte et al., 2009).

Innovative teaching is often linked with popular modern educational and cognitive frameworks as well as theories. For instance, constructivism, as suggested by Piaget, offers an educational perspective that is also highlighted in innovative teaching; that is, knowledge should be explored and constructed by learners themselves without the confrontation of teachers (Boudourides, 2003). Similarly, innovative teaching is closely associated with Bruner's theory of discovery learning which argues that students are to make an active effort to realize, understand and internalize the subjects and problems they encounter, which is another highlighted factor in innovative teaching (Jian & Jing-xiang, 2010).

2.1.5. Examples of Innovative Teaching Methods

There are several tools that focus on the use of different instructional techniques, activities and materials to promote innovate learning atmosphere in which students can discover and construct knowledge. Below are some examples of innovative tools:

- *Audio and Video Tools:* Taking advantage of graphs, bars, photos, short videos and videos to help students visualize information and turn it into knowledge more easily and smoothly (Kalyani & Rajasekaran, 2018).

- *Computer-based Tools:* Utilizing first-order innovations like web apps, blogs and wikis as well as second-order innovations like augmented reality and digital games to promote meaningful learning among students since learning takes place best in educational environments supported by technology (Groff, 2013).

- *Gamified Tools:* Integrating games into the classroom setting to let students revise and practice what they have learnt; for instance, using scrambled word

activities and puzzle games as well as quizzes can be beneficial for students to reactivate their knowledge (Tretinjak et al., 2014).

- *Dramatization Tools:* Using imagination and creativity in drama activities where students can explore problems and offer solutions to the given challenges while also fostering their own creative skills and active engagement in the learning environment (Zilola & Makhsuda, 2020).

2.1.6. Advantages of Innovative Teaching

There are numerous advantages of applying innovative teaching in a teaching and learning environment. Firstly, innovative teaching techniques embrace the use of technological devices that promote active learning by encouraging students to communicate with each other during the completion of activities and tasks (Dimitrios et al., 2013). Moreover, innovative teaching gives attention to visual aids, like colorful objects and flashcards, that may enhance students' overall progression in the subject they are to learn, which, accordingly, makes the retention of knowledge easier and smoother (Akbarov, 2014).

Kalyani and Rajasekaran (2018) argue that innovative teaching methods can help students develop their creativity as well as critical thinking abilities through materials and techniques that can feed their "intellectual stimulation" (p. 23). Innovative teaching methods also lead to a better sense of efficacy among students since such methods give the upmost attention to the needs of students and their preferences in the educational environment; besides, innovative teaching methods aim at creating novel situations in which students can explore and think freely (Jaskyte et al., 2009).

2.1.7. Disadvantages of Innovative Teaching

Even though advantages of innovative teaching are abundant both in terms of quality and quantity, there are several disadvantages to it as well. For instance, maintaining innovative teaching activities as well as materials can be a challenge since their costs can be a concern in certain situations; besides, integration of innovative activities

without proper training on the part of teachers may hinder the interaction between teachers and students (Akbarov, 2014). Another possible disadvantage of innovative teaching is that students may not acquire the intended information and focus on relatively irrelevant points in the given activities or materials; moreover, use of innovative teaching may cause students to become completely discouraged to work with traditional methods of learning (Padmanabhan, 2020).

2.1.8. Implications of Traditional Teaching and Innovative Teaching in EFL Setting

The presence of traditional teaching and innovative teaching approaches, methods and techniques has been realized in the field of foreign language education as a part of both language-specific practices and general educational tools. Even though contemporary approaches in language teaching often put the emphasis on innovative teaching methods, it is possible to see the effects of traditional teaching methods as well as techniques in foreign language classrooms as well (Doggett, 1986; Richards & Rogers, 2014).

Grammar-Translation Method in which the structural and separate presentation of the language elements is highlighted to enhance reading and writing abilities, for instance, is regarded as one of the traditional teaching methods utilized in foreign language education as it is highly teacher-centered with a specific focus on forms through deductive and memory-based activities and materials (Zhou & Niu, 2015). Similarly, Audio-Lingual Method which is based on habit-formation suggestion of behaviorism is highly associated with traditional teaching since the productive aspects of language are taught through drills and memorization without focusing on creative and personalized language activities (Richards & Rogers, 2014). Surely, it is possible to see several popular foreign language and techniques that take advantage of activities based on traditional teaching like lecturing, memorization, repetition (Renau, 2016).

There are also several foreign language methods that focus on innovative teaching and its implications in forming activities, materials, class design and interaction patterns within and outside the classroom environment. Perhaps, the most prominent method

mentioned with innovative teaching is CLT which promotes discovery and creative learning through interactive techniques and materials like dramatization, information-gap and group-work activities (Richards & Rogers, 2014; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999). Apart from the suggestions and arguments present in certain foreign language methods, most contemporary activities in language classes are designed in line with the principles of innovative teaching approaches; for instance, brainstorming activities, mind-mapping techniques, integration of computers into teaching environment as well as debates can be regarded as several of the popular techniques used in foreign language classes to enrich students' language knowledge through attractive and meaningful ways (Zilola & Makhsuda, 2020).

As a result, the presence of both traditional and innovative approaches is widely seen in EFL setting, and there are various studies investigating the effectiveness of these approaches from different points of views. A study by Shaaban (2006) focused on the comparison between traditional and innovative language practices in EFL setting, and the results revealed that innovative practices led to better results in terms of language acquisition. He studied the effectiveness of Jigsaw II, which is cooperative, creative and meaningful language practice in nature, activity in contrast to teacher-led class discussion, which is a popular technique adopted in traditional classrooms. The results demonstrated that students developed a better understanding of certain reading skills and felt a clear increase in their self-perceived motivation levels towards English language when they practiced the languages elements as a part of Jigsaw II activity compared to whole class discussion activities even though both activity types were similar to each other in terms of vocabulary input and output. Similarly, Berzener and Deneme (2021) supported the results of this study in their own research by arguing that cooperative learning and its innovative implications resulted in better reading comprehension among high school students compared to direct and non-collaborative teaching of traditional approaches.

A systematic review by Dehghanzadeh et al. (2021) on gamification and game-related elements in EFL setting as a result of the shift from traditional teaching to innovative teaching revealed that innovative nature of gamified activities and tools led to several beneficial results among students from being enjoyable to being interactive to being

attractive. They also suggested that most students reported improvement in their language engagement and language abilities such as vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation as a result of the innovative activities they were introduced. A study by Gözcü and Çağanağa (2016) also revealed that games integrated into EFL setting through innovative techniques could increase the satisfaction and enjoyment levels of students and decrease their anxiety levels while dealing with the language elements, supporting the results suggested by Dehghanzadeh et al. (2021).

Giorgdze and Dgebuadze (2017) argued in their article that innovative teaching modes could bring about interactive and active situations where students could complete activities related to creativity, problem solving and social projects to activate and even enhance their analytical abilities as well as speaking skills. Moreover, students were able to think and act creatively during the activities, which was another beneficial result of the given innovative teaching modes. As a result, they suggested that students should not be defined as "passive recipient of knowledge" (p. 41), and they should be given more opportunities to act analytically and creatively.

Nawaila et al. (2020) argued in their study that innovative teaching techniques such as integration of technology into the EFL setting were proved to be efficient as they could feed the effectiveness of teaching and learning atmosphere. Moreover, they suggested that traditional teaching techniques were non-gripping, monotone and teacher-led, which, accordingly, showed the importance of integration of innovative teaching techniques focusing on students rather than traditional activities giving more importance to teachers. Similarly, Dewi (2017) supported the integration of student-centered techniques over teacher-led techniques through innovative methods such as student collaboration in his study.

Overall, the previous studies on the interaction between traditional teaching and innovative teaching report that innovative teaching methods are found to be more effective in EFL setting compared to traditional teaching methods for various reasons from being student-centered to being motivating and to being attractive thanks to the integration of techniques like games, collaborative activities and technological devices. Even though several merits of traditional teaching are reported, innovative

teaching is often indicated as the more modern and better option in EFL setting, which is the main reason why I attempted at innovating the EFL setting through a student-centered and exciting technique, mainly through the integration of *TS 3* as an educational tool, in my own case.

2.1.9. Effects of Traditional and Innovative Teaching EFL Setting in Turkey

Since the present study is associated with Turkish context, it is of importance to investigate EFL setting in Turkey specifically in addition to the global approaches, advancements and inclinations in EFL. Before analyzing certain studies on effectiveness of EFL setting in Turkey and its implications in terms of traditional teaching as well as innovative teaching, it is essential to give general information as to the current position of EFL in Turkish education system.

English language lessons at Turkish state schools start at Grade 2 and continue until the end of high school education at Grade 12. Even though the number of hours appointed designated for English lessons varies among different school types in Turkey, the general tendency shows that 2 hours of compulsory English language course is offered each week between Grades 2 and 4, and 4-5 hours for the higher grades. The main focus in these courses is mostly on oral skills in primary education, and the focus gradually broadens with the introduction of reading and writing skills along with cultural and critical thinking skills. The basic principles as well as suggestions of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) are taken into consideration during the preparation of English language curricula for each grade (MoNE, 2018). Backbone of the current English language curricula is based on an eclectic approach in terms of method, strategy and activity choice, yet the most emphasis is given to CLT and the 21st century skills like critical thinking, creativity and cultural awareness (MoNE, 2018).

Altan (2017) argues that the latest updates in the English language curricula in Turkey have a potential to restore the previously grammar-based curricula that lacked communicative skills as also revealed by the results of Turkish students who participated in respected international language exams. Likewise, MoNE acknowledges that there was a need for curricular change and suggests that “a periodic revision of the courses is essential to maintain an up-to-date and effective curriculum”

(MoNE, 2018, p.3). It is stated in the current English language curricula that English language is considered as a lingua franca and an international language; therefore, all aspects of communicative competence, four language skills are introduced with a specific focus on student collaboration, autonomy, self-esteem as well as content authenticity especially in high school level English language courses (MoNE, 2018).

As a result, it can be suggested that the current English language curricula prepared by MoNE (2018) are based on innovative teaching which gives importance to real communication among students by encouraging learner autonomy (Jaskyte et al., 2009), collaboration among students (Dimitrios et al., 2013) and authenticity (Serafin, 2016) in language learning process, Hence, English language education in Turkey is more associated with innovative teaching rather than traditional teaching in theory; however, it is essential to analyze whether this association is realized in actual language courses or not. Below are several studies on the English language lessons in Turkey and their implications.

A study conducted by Karademir and Gorgoz (2019) in line with the current language curricula implemented in Turkish schools analyzed eight English teachers offering compulsory English courses at state schools. They conducted interviews with the teachers and asked them questions regarding the language curricula introduced by MoNE and their actual applications as well as implications in classroom environments. The participants revealed certain problems with the current position of English language education in Turkey. For instance, they suggested that it was near impossible to reach the intended outcomes present in the curricula due to the lack of class hours. That is, it was too challenging to focus on all four skills within the same lessons. Moreover, the participants revealed that the supplementary books given by MoNE were not adequate to provide models for four skills and to create opportunities for communicative instances even though these points were given importance in the new curricula in theory. Finally, they argued that there were not enough technological tools and materials to actualize what was suggested in the curricula in terms of innovative teaching. The results reached in this study were also supported by İnci and Yıldız (2019) who focused on the issues of the English language curricula at hand and their actual implementation in English language courses in Turkey by suggesting that “for

a successful foreign language teaching program, adequate teacher training and suitable teaching methodology are necessary to get the expected results" (p. 444).

Another study by Zorba and Çakır (2019) investigating the intercultural awareness of 32 students qualitatively in English language courses in Turkish context revealed that there were several problems with the coursebooks provided by MoNE to actualize the curricular changes made in theory. For instance, the coursebooks included some pieces of information that were not true about foreign cultures; moreover, cultural elements were given in fragments, making it difficult to contextualize them. Another problem mentioned in the study was related to grammar teaching methods. That is, traditional methods were given the upmost priority as opposed to innovative methods in language classes in Turkey, especially during grammar teaching. They argued that this tendency was against the progressive ideals present in the current curricula by stating that "…despite curricular changes which prioritized communicative aspects in language learning, classroom activities in Turkey are still mainly mechanical" (Zorba & Çakır, 2019, p. 75). Similar results were reached by Koral and Mirci (2021) in their study which investigated certain coursebook activities. They suggested that metacognitive, critical and creative abilities of students were not given importance in the coursebook activities on speaking skills; accordingly, they argued that higher order thinking categories should be given more importance in future curricula.

Aldım and Arıbaş (2021) compared the nature of English language education in Turkey to Polish and Fin contexts in their study. The results showed that there were several challenges and problems in English language education in Turkey compared to the given countries. They argued that the Grammar-Translation Method was to be widely used in English language classes in Turkey. Due to this traditional nature of language courses in Turkey, they advised that more innovative approaches like content-based language teaching should be adopted to revise and innovate the language classes to make them more communicative and effective. They also mentioned the mismatch between the so-called innovative and effective frameworks as well as curricular changes in English language education in Turkey and their actual implementation in real classroom environments by suggesting "...in theory, adopting

and using an education program may not be as easy as in practice and may not give the desired results." (Aldım & Arıbaş, 2021, p. 458).

In conclusion, it is clear that English language education in Turkish context has certain problems especially in terms of traditional teaching. Even though the current English curricula offered by MoNE are innovative in theory, the reality is vastly different as traditional teaching methods like grammar-translation are still persistent due to the unrealistic ideals present in the related curricula and unpractical coursebooks as well as other supplementary materials that are unable to promote innovative teaching elements like autonomy, collaboration, authenticity and more. Therefore, there is a call for more innovative attempts in English language courses in Turkey.

2.2. Motivation

Motivation is regarded as one of the most vital psychological aspects of human life as it can have an enormous effect on how humans take certain directions in their attitudes, behaviors and actions (Hollyforde & Whiddett, 2002; Thierry & Koopman-Iwema, 1984). Thus, even though there are a number of different theories and frameworks defining motivation and its causes as well as results, motivation is often defined as the force that takes a substantial role in goal-directed movements of humans, and the direction as well as the source behind the direction can have a significant effect on the end result of the goal-directed movements as also explained in the book which aims at explaining how motivation really works by Higgins (2012). Locke (1991), similarly, suggests that motivational acts have direct associations with humans and their actions in terms of level of satisfaction, self-efficacy, rewards, requirements, purposes and so on, showing that there are several key concepts that can influence or can be influenced by motivation.

Bandura (1996), Seifert (2004) and Dweck (2010) argue that motivational concepts can be categorized under four main mutually related dimensions of motivation, namely competence, autonomy, interest and relevance, all of which also show resemblance with autonomous and controlled aspects of self-determination theory by Deci and Ryan (2012). They suggest that competence stands for being able to have the potential

skills and abilities that can help individuals complete the task at hand whereas autonomy refers to having some sort of choice while completing the tasks; moreover, interest is associated with being into the elements that are focused on the given task, and relevance is mainly about whether or not completing the given task leads to positive outcome such as social praise or tangible rewards. Below is a visualized and simplified version of these concepts and their relationship with motivation:

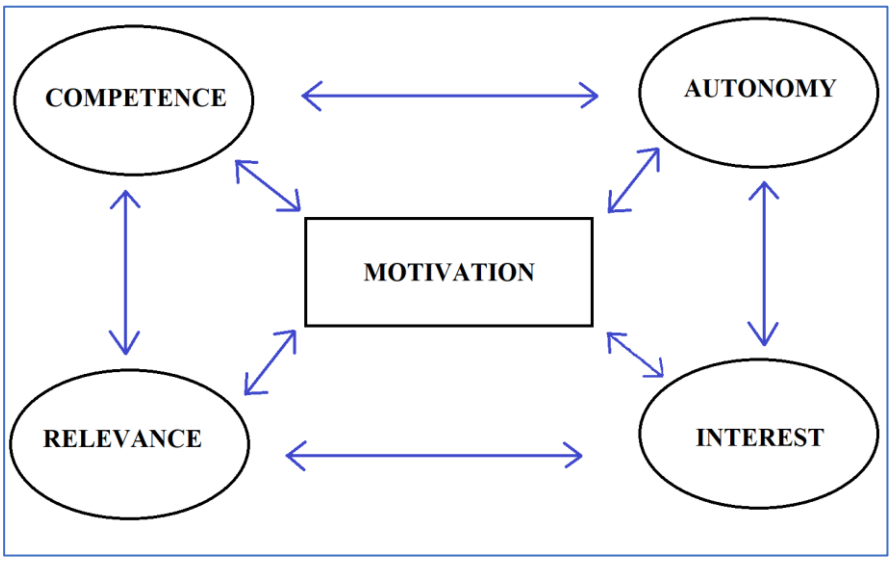

Figure 1.
The mutual interaction between 4 components of motivation

It is also possible to analyze motivation based on the source of motivational factor. Typically, motivation is divided into two main categories, namely extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation based on the factors that affect the direction of motivation (Çınar et al., 2011; Reiss, 2012; Vallerand & Ratelle, 2002).

Vallerand (2002) argues that intrinsic motivation stems from the individual factors such as being interested in the given task, enjoying the process or finding satisfaction while or after completing the task at hand. He also suggests that exploring new things, understanding new concepts, pushing oneself to accomplish an achievement out of pure pleasure or self-interest without the disruption or integration of outside factors are some of the characteristics of intrinsic motivation. Fishbach and Woolley (2022) suggest from a social psychology perspective that intrinsic motivation can enhance

individuals' creativity and engagement in the tasks they carry out, which accordingly leads to better performance and overall consistency. Moreover, it is argued that intrinsic motivation can result in determination and perceived enhancement in the overall competence of individuals (Hennessey, 2015). To give an example to contextualize the theoretical information, the motivation behind a kid who plays basketball to have fun and get better at the game can be regarded as intrinsic in nature since the kid wants to play basketball as a result of internal factors like satisfaction, enjoyment and personal interest.

Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is associated with outside or instrumental factors that cause individuals to become motivated to carry out an action or complete a task; thus, this type of motivation is related to external factors rather than internal or individual factors (Legault, 2020; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, money, fame and promotion opportunities can be shown as examples of motives behind extrinsic motivation (Clanton Harpine, 2015). Accordingly, a kid who plays basketball in order to win a competition and obtain the prize money has motivational acts that are extrinsic in nature.

2.2.1. Motivation in Education and its Association with Self-Determination Theory

Motivation has been a key concept in education to understand and analyze the causes as well as the results that lead to student engagement, satisfaction and, surely, success (Ray, 1992; Stirling, 2014; Wigfield et al., 2019). Performance, engagement and autonomy among students are thought to be linked with motivation; besides, beliefs and individual identities of students are associated with motivation as well (Meece & Agger, 2018). As a result, there are several implications of motivation in education. For instance, it is known that high level of motivation among students increases their achievement as well as their own perceived efficacy levels (Tokan & Imakulata, 2019). Similarly, high level of motivation directly and favorably affects students' overall emotional circumstances and their enjoyment in learning process (Frenzel et al., 2019).

One of the most prominent theories that connects motivation with education is self-determination theory which is coined by Ryan and Deci (2000) as an attempt to conceptualize human development in regards to motivational acts with strong implications on education. What self-determination theory suggests in its simplest form is that individuals are intrinsically curious creatures who are eager to learn new pieces of information and become more knowledgeable entities; that is, people are motivated to learn and try out new things, showing the clear link between education and motivation (Stirling, 2014).

Self-determination theory values intrinsic motivation more than extrinsic motivation as the former version of motivation is based on "interest, excitement, and confidence, which in turn is manifest both as enhanced performance, persistence, and creativity" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 69). Moreover, Ryan and Deci (2000) suggest that intrinsic motivation is self-directed or self-determined, which means that individuals are autonomously motivated to carry out certain actions because of personal reasons like interest and enjoyment as opposed to external factors like rewards and praises; moreover, the motives behind intrinsic motivation leads to more satisfaction on the part of individuals compared to the motives behind extrinsic motivation.

Ryan and Deci (2000) analyze motivation and motivational acts even more in-depth and demonstrate their arguments through main categories of amotivation, extrinsic motivation as well as intrinsic motivation and sub-categories of motivational acts that fall under these main categories.
According to this framework, amotivation simply refers to lack of motivation to complete a task or finish an activity due to various reasons from being incompetent to putting no value on the tasks and activities at hand whereas extrinsic motivation is more complex in design as there are a number of different variables affecting the motives behind extrinsic motivation.

Externally regulated actions are regarded as the least autonomous version of extrinsic motivation where certain actions are completed for external factors such as rewards or punishments. Similarly, introjected regulation refers to the actions that are carried out for external factors but also oneself, making the motivational process slightly

autonomous. On the other hand, identified regulation is mainly about completing certain tasks or activities for external factors that are valued or found important by individuals; thus, this type of extrinsic motivation revolves around how certain externally regulated actions are partially internalized by individuals, making the motivation process more self-directed in nature. Finally, integrated regulation is associated with how externally regulated or shaped actions are fully internalized by the individuals who carry out them. Since there is internalization of external motivational acts, this type of extrinsic motivation is the most autonomous one in principle.

Intrinsic motivation as opposed to all sub-categories of extrinsic motivation is more self-directed and autonomous as there are no external factors or acts that motivate individuals to carry out actions; that is, individuals complete tasks or finish activities fully for themselves without the integration of prizes, regulations or other forms of extrinsic encouragements or discouragements.

Self-determination theory has strong ties with education as suggested earlier. For instance, Tsai et al. (2009) suggested that their students attending secondary level education in Germany had enhancement in their interest towards certain school subjects when they were given high level of autonomy in their lessons, which subsequently fostered their intrinsic motivation. Similarly, Niemiec et al. (2009) argued that implementation of implications of intrinsic motivation as well as its associations related to being autonomous and self-determined resulted in better academic performance among students through instructions focusing on students' emotions as well as meaningful activities with appropriate motivational aspects and autonomous nature.

Vansteenkiste et al. (2018), similarly, suggested in their study that learner-centered and meaningful teaching methods as well as techniques resulted in internalization of the knowledge, which accordingly led to more and better engagement in students, and students also put more value to the activities they were given when the activities fostered their autonomy. Besides, it was revealed that implementation of autonomy and self-directedness in physical education activities led to supportive, affective and

satisfactory situations in which students were intrinsically motivated to complete the given tasks and interact with their peers while doing so (White et al., 2021).

As a result, it can be argued that students become more successful and engaged in school subjects when they have high level of motivation. Methods, activities and materials that support students' autonomy, self-directedness and meaningful as well as natural participation help students become more intrinsically motivated in learning process, which, in return, enhances their overall achievement and interest during school activities, which shows that there is a positive relationship with student motivation and self-determination theory.

2.2.2. Motivation Types and Their Relationships with Innovative and Traditional Teaching

Since traditional teaching and innovative teaching methods, techniques as well as materials have drastically different approaches to teaching and learning environment occurring in classrooms as also explained and exemplified earlier, it is quite natural for them to have different implications in terms of motivation as well. Below are several studies focusing on the importance of motivation in EFL setting as well as the interaction between motivation and traditional and innovative teaching.

Lemos and Veríssimo (2013) revealed in their study that extrinsic motivation could be a result of non-autonomous and dependent learning environments in which students, for example, did their homework just to please their teachers or just to complete the homework for the sake of completing it, which indicates a clear connection between extrinsic motivation and traditional teaching methods and techniques as they are highly teacher-centered and non-autonomous in nature (Liu & Long, 2014). Similarly, Usmanovna and Oybekovna (2018) suggested in their article that extrinsic motivation often resulted in over-dependence as well as addictiveness in learning environment, which coincides with what traditional teaching typically offers while teaching subjects.

Xue et al. (2020) revealed that extrinsic motivation could have a negative interaction with creativity, which is a characteristic not given enough attention in traditional

teaching, by suggesting that "strong extrinsic motivation may turn people's attention to external targets rather than focusing on the task itself, which impairs intrinsic motivation and inhibits creative performance" (p. 38); moreover, they also suggested that materialistic prizes, which are also commonly used in traditional teaching environments, could diminish creativity among students. In addition to creativity, Kanonire et al. (2020) argued in their study that factors related to extrinsic motivation like rewards or being forced to complete task had negative impact on students' reading comprehension skills. As a result, it could be argued that extrinsic motivation is linked with the main characteristics of traditional teaching as traditional teaching gives the upmost importance to external factors such as teachers, prizes, punishments which are the key factors in extrinsic motivation.

On the other hand, according to Gottfried's study (1990), intrinsic motivation among students was regarded to be connected with enjoyment while dealing with activities or tasks which were challenging, interesting and novel at the same time, which clearly shows a direct correlation between intrinsic motivation and certain elements of innovative teaching like novelty, curiosity and personal pleasure as also suggested by Kalyani and Rajasen (2018). Similarly, Anghel (2017) focused on assessment techniques in innovative teaching methods and argued that students had higher level of intrinsic motivation when they were assessed through modern teaching techniques like formative tests that were consistent and modern in nature. Furthermore, Vansteenkiste (2018) suggested that students acted intrinsically motivated when they were offered innovative teaching techniques and materials focusing on internalization of knowledge meaningfully through students-centered methods.

Zaccone and Pedrini (2019) revealed in their study that students with high levels of intrinsic motivation achieved better in school as they found the given activities and tasks exciting, enjoyable and useful, all of which are general characteristics of a typical innovative teaching environment. Hence, based on the previous studies, it could be claimed that intrinsic motivation often occurs in innovative teaching methods and that intrinsic motivation has direct impact on students' attitude towards school subjects both in terms of achievement and overall interest.

In conclusion, extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation are said to have distinct implications in education, and it is rather straightforward to analyze them separately (Ryan & Deci, 2000). However, it is also substantial to examine them comparing and contrasting them to one another in order to find out the relationship (or lack of it) with each other. One of the most notable relationships between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation is that the former undermines the role of the latter (Cerasoli et al., 2014; Reiss, 2021). That is, the presence of the assets of extrinsic motivation alters the focus of individuals who are normally intrinsically motivated to complete a task or finish an activity from intrinsic characteristics to extrinsic characteristics, which may decrease the task performance in educational settings (Cameron & Pierce, 2002). That is, reactive nature of extrinsic motivation may have a detrimental impact on proactive nature of intrinsic motivation during choice making process. (Morris et al. 2022).

As a result, when analyzed from a teaching perspective and extrinsic motivation's direct relation with traditional teaching, the presence of traditional teaching elements that foster extrinsic motivation in school settings can hinder the overall effectiveness of innovative teaching and its implications regarding intrinsic motivation. Therefore, it should be noted that intrinsic motivation, and accordingly innovative teaching, should be given more importance over extrinsic motivation and its association with traditional teaching at schools, which supports the implications of the self-determination theory by Ryan and Deci (2000).

2.2.3. Studies on Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation in EFL Setting

Apart from the distinction between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation as well as their interaction with learning strategies, there are also studies conducted to find out whether high level of motivation – especially intrinsic motivation – could have positive effect on English language process. Several studies have reported the impact of motivation on English language learning (Carreira, 2011; Kulmetov, 2016; Ulfa & Bania, 2019; Wallace & Leong, 2020).

A study conducted with Indonesian EFL students in a high school setting by Ulfa and Bania (2019) revealed that motivation was an essential factor in English language

learning and that students could reach high level motivation if they were only offered appropriate teacher behaviors, activities and materials that could lead to comfortable learning atmosphere and feed their personal interests, which implies that innovative techniques could play a bigger role in increasing students' motivation levels for innovative techniques tend to give more importance to comfortable learning environments and personal interests as opposed to traditional techniques. Ekiz and Kulmetov (2016) supported this implication by suggesting that students could get more motivated if versatile and interesting techniques were adopted instead of memorization or old-school direct instruction.

Wallace and Leong (2020) argued in their study taken place in Japanese EFL context with younger students that motivation was a key concept in acquiring the target language since motivation contributed to their willingness to deal with English language; moreover, the study revealed that the role of learning environment was highly important for fostering motivation among students. For instance, it was reported that teacher's interest in the activities and materials was a positive factor for students along with interactive and innovative nature of activities such as digital games or songs (Wallace & Leong, 2020). The results reached in this study supported results of another study conducted in Japanese context among EFL learners, which argued that enjoyability of activities as well as materials was linked with the high levels of inner motivation among language students (Carreira, 2011).

Apart from the implications of the given studies from different educational contexts all around the world, a similar tendency was seen in Turkish educational settings too. For instance, Şener and Erol (2017) pointed out that motivation in EFL learners in Turkish context could be an important indicator of success in the target language for high level of motivation naturally could increase students' beliefs regarding self-efficacy as well as their confidence levels while practicing the language for both external and internal goals; moreover, the study revealed that teachers should provide students with more productive and encouraging tasks that could potentially make them more confident in using the language. Likewise, Kara et. al (2017) revealed in their study taking place in Turkish context among EFL learners that more interesting and enjoyable activities as well as materials should be adopted in EFL classrooms across

Turkey so that students could increase their motivation levels and have a chance to practice the language meaningfully rather than just focusing on structure and grammar rules.

Özer and Yetkin (2022) studied with high school students in Turkey to examine the factors that affected their motivation levels, and the results showed that students showed anxiety in EFL classes and felt uncomfortable with low levels of motivation unless teachers came up with positive, meaningful, appropriate and motivational activities that could encourage students to practice the language confidently.

In conclusion, based on the given studies examined in this section, it is clear that high levels of motivation among learners are essential in language learning environments since motivation yields direct implications as to the achievement as well as enjoyment levels of learners. Moreover, motivation is affected by several factors including students' internal interests, willingness, personal enjoyment along with external factors like teachers' attitude, activity types and overall classroom atmosphere. It is also argued that innovative teaching techniques like integration of digital games, meaningful materials, positive teacher attitudes can enhance students' motivation levels as opposed to traditional teaching techniques like memorization or structural presentation of language.

2.3. Attitude

Attitude is regarded as one of the most prominent variables in social sciences though its definition is not rather straightforward regarding what it actually entails since the concept itself leads to confusion due to its ambiguous and imperspicuous nature (Cooper & Fishman, 1974; Gawronski, 2007). There are several different approaches as to what attitude may refer to and what implications it may have; for instance, Eagly and Chaiken (1993) describe attitude as "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor (p.1). Similarly, Schwarz (2007) mentions that attitude is about the consistency of certain acts or thoughts under similar circumstances. Some researchers, in their attempts to

contextualize what attitude is, divide attitude into two distinct categories: implicit attitude and explicit attitude (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Rydell & McConnell, 2006).

While implicit attitude is associated with unconscious acts or beliefs of individuals under circumstances that encourage or force them to act upon something whereas explicit attitude refers to intentional movements or thoughts of individuals while conducting certain actions (Banaji, 2001). When different approaches to attitude are combined and simplified for a better understanding of the concept, it can be said that attitude refers to the individual and subjective assessment of individuals, entities, concepts and problems (Petty & Briñol, 2010). Since attitude often focuses on individuals and how they behave, it is not surprising why it is a key concept in social sciences, especially considering how attitude transpires substantial information about individuals both explicitly and implicitly. Therefore, Allport (1935) argues that "the concept of attitude is probably the most distinctive and indispensable concept" (p. 798) to demonstrate how essential attitude is in social sciences and related fields.

2.3.1. Language Attitude and Educational Implications

Sociolinguistics constitutes a major aspect of social sciences -especially social psychology- since sociolinguistics makes it possible to detect individuals' attitudes by examining language-related cues (Agheyisi & Fishman, 1970; Garret, 2006). As a result, it is considered that language can be a medium in understanding the attitude of individuals towards different subjects. Furthermore, apart from language's being an overall element in general attitude research, there are studies that analyze language, in addition to behavioral acts, in relation with the attitude of individuals towards language itself, and they are called language attitude studies (Amin, 2020; Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009).

Language attitude studies are widely taken advantage of in foreign language studies since language attitude brings about valuable pieces of information regarding how learners feel and think while learning or using a foreign language communicatively in different situations (Demirel & Duman, 2015; Garret, 2010; Getie, 2020). For instance, language attitude is said to give insight about the enjoyment and anxiety levels of

language learners as suggested by Mossevelde (2022). Additionally, language attitude of learners towards the target language can give clues regarding their motivation levels in learning or using the target language (Dewaele, 2020; Pakdaman, 2022). Aside from the distinctive and specific implications that language attitude can lead to, Garret (2010) argues that language attitude can be divided into three main components which give valuable insights as to what an individual thinks or feels towards a language: cognition, affect and behavior. Cognition basically refers to what a learner makes sense of the language (Garret, 2010). For example, if a learner believes that learning the target language results in better understanding of the culture of the target language, the learner is more likely to have positive attitude towards the target language. Affect, on the other hand, is all about feelings and emotions that the learner holds while dealing with the target language (Garret, 2010). If a learner loves song lyrics in the target language, it is more likely for the learner to enjoy the learning process when exposed to the target language due to personal enjoyment; thus, have a more positive attitude towards the target language. The third component, behavioral, refers to the measurable acts of the learner regarding the target language (Garret, 2010). For example, if a learner wants to get better in the target language, they may buy more language books that will actually help the learner become more knowledgeable in the target language.

2.3.2. Studies on Language Attitude in EFL Setting

Karahan (2007) suggests that "the positive language attitudes let learner have positive orientation towards learning English" (p. 84), which demonstrates the vital position of language attitude in English language learning. Additionally, it is suggested that achievement in language learning is directly linked with positive attitude of learners towards the language itself (Pan et al., 2010). Similarly, Ahmed (2015) argues that learners' attitudes towards English may have a distinctive impact on their success in the target language by focusing on the link between the levels of motivation and attitude. Therefore, language attitude is seen as one of the key factors in achieving success in the process of English language learning (Getie, 2020). Thus, it is of importance that language attitude is taken into consideration in English language teaching environments. In this section, previous studies on language attitude in English

language teaching and its relation with traditional as well as innovative teaching are investigated to take notice of the role of language attitude.

Merisuo-Storm (2007) found out that students could get better at English language and become more motivated to learn as well as use it communicatively when they had positive attitude towards language learning in a study where traditional language teaching environment of Finnish schools was modernized with CLIL and its innovative implications; moreover, the study suggested that students' overall attitude towards learning English was higher in this new innovative teaching environment. Similarly, Youssef (2012) revealed that more motivative and contemporary methods of teaching English should be adopted in educational institutions to help students develop more positive attitudes towards English language learning for students looked for more appropriate techniques that might potentially motivate them in line with the technological advances they came across in their everyday life.

Aydoğdu (2014) revealed in their study that students could get easily demotivated and develop low level of attitude towards learning English, and this process might lead to lower achievement scores among students; therefore, teachers should implement more innovative techniques in their teaching processes like games and more enjoyable activities as opposed to traditional activities, which suggests that innovative teaching techniques could help students have more positive attitude towards learning English language. Likewise, a study by Kara (2009) reached a similar conclusion suggesting that language learning was highly affected by the attitudes of learners since positive attitude among students led to better realization of their own learning process in addition being more versatile learners, having less anxiety levels in their learning and being more successful in their lessons; moreover, he pointed out that positive attitude might help learners increase their overall learning quality along with their language abilities.

Getie (2020) focused on how traditional learning environment could hinder the attitude of learners and how innovative learning environment could help learners have more positive attitude towards English language learning in their study where participants overtly suggested that their motivation and attitude were directly influenced by the

classroom design, learning opportunities, teaching methodologies, English models, teachers' encouragement levels and such. For instance, they had positive attitude towards English language in general since they were aware of the importance of the language in international arena, yet they had negative attitude towards the traditional ways they were offered while learning the language, showing how language attitude could directly be linked with innovative language teaching and traditional language teaching.

Shirvan et al. (2021) argued that learners' attitude towards English language could influence their learning rate for positive attitude could be more associated with enjoyment and related feelings which might contribute to overall success of students in English language learning environments, and they also suggested that supportive presence of teacher could help students develop a more positive attitude towards language learning. The results revealed by Dewaele et al. (2019) also supported the results of this argument suggesting that supportive atmosphere and emotional endorsement could be vital in EFL classes. Similarly, Lubis (2015) argued that supportive as well as motivative role of teacher along with innovative teaching techniques and materials like games, movies or real-life activities could have a positive impact on students' attitude towards EFL, which, again, shows the importance of innovative teaching in attitude-fostering environments.

In conclusion, based on the previous studies conducted on this specific subject, it could be argued that language attitude is one of the key factors in English language learning, and positive language attitude could have a direct impact on students' overall enjoyment as well as achievement in the process of English language learning; furthermore, language attitude has close association with motivation since both concepts seem to affect language learning progress and each other immensely.

It is also clear that positive language attitude is linked more with innovative teaching as opposed to traditional teaching for the former offers more versatile, enjoyable and stress-free environment in which students may develop more positive language attitude towards the target language while also strengthening their motivation levels.

2.4. The Role of Digital Games in the 21st Century

Children born in the 21st century are naturally exposed to advanced technology including TVs, high-tech computers and smartphones; therefore, this generation is regarded as digital natives of the Net Generation as a result of their constant interaction with modern technology (Acquah & Katz, 2020). The industry of digital games is regarded as the main attraction of the Net Generation due to their engaging as well as fun nature (Liu et al., 2013; Manesis, 2020).

Nowadays, digital games, which are also called as video games or computer games, are so popular that majority of American population and billions of people worldwide are exposed to digital games in their everyday life, and the popularity of the industry is still expected to rise in the near future (ESA, 2021; Liue et al., 2013; McGonigal, 2011; Wolf 2021). The industry of digital games is argued to be bigger than music and movie industry, which shows the rapidly expanding nature of digital games all around the world (Kim & Kang, 2021). Annetta (2009) describes the overall impact of digital games on the contemporary world by suggesting that "games are not just played; they are talked about, read about, fantasized about, cheated at, altered, and become models for everyday life" (p. 230).

The essential position of digital games in the 21st century cannot be denied for they are an indispensable part of the lives of billions of people all around the world thanks to the engaging and fun gameplay, narratives and characters they offer. New generations are born into a world shaped by digital games and their implications in their everyday life, which is in line with the notion of living within gameful societies suggested by Walz and Deterding (2015).

Even though people from all ages tend to play digital games, casually or competitively, the main groups that are involved with the digital games are younger children and teenagers who are also students in secondary schools or highs schools (Lérida-Ayala, 2023). This trend may indicate that students choose digital games over traditional games that are played in real life, which may lead to distinctive developmental as well

as social implications in the Net generation compared to older generations, both positively and negatively.

For instance, children and adolescents who play digital games can enhance their social skills or improve their mental skills in line with the digital games they are exposed to; similarly, they might show negative behavior like aggression and stress if they play violent digital games (Kirsh, 2003; Quwaider & Duwairi, 2019). Therefore, positive or negative impacts of digital games on children and teenagers may be in direct relation with the types as well as the contents of the digital games they are exposed to just like the games they play in real life.

In conclusion, digital games are in everyday use for billions of people and especially for children and teenagers who are born into the 21st century in which they involve in digital games virtually all the time to get socialized, have fun and become engaged with the rapidly evolving technology around them, and this trend is likely to gradually increase in the near future for the industry of digital games expands and diversifies each coming year.

2.4.1. Gamification and Digital Games in Education

Gamification is a concept that is implemented in various fields from science to business to education, and it is often utilized to make serious atmosphere more fun, collaborative and rewarding through game elements like badges, group scores or awards (Caponetto et al., 2014). By definition, gamification refers to turning serious information or situations into game-like environments where the topic is presented in a way that creativity, motivation and overall enjoyment are given the upmost priority as a result of the gamification process (Basten, 2017; Hamari, 2007; Sanchez et al., 2020).

Gamification is a hot topic and used in many services as a result of its evident advantages in terms of interactivity, intrinsic motivation and positive experiences (Hamari et al., 2014; Patricio et al., 2022). Expectedly, gamification is integrated into educational arena as an attempt to make classroom atmosphere more game-like and

engaging for various reasons (Luo, 2022; Rodrigues et al., 2022). Firstly, gamification is said to promote learning as well as motivation by making an association between problem solving and gamified activities and materials (Miller, 2013). Secondly, gamification can lead to better student performance, production and overall attitudes towards different school subjects (Ofosu-Ampon, 2020). As for specifically EFL contexts, gamification is argued to offer students interactive environments where they get a chance to practice the language meaningfully and responsively while also feeling excited and motivated to complete the activities (Yanes & Bououd, 2019). Moreover, gamification may help EFL teachers alter the possible negative mood, create engaging activities, attract students' attention and support active participation in EFL classes (Kıyançiçek & Uzun, 2022). Similarly, Cruaud (2018) suggest that "gamified activities are perceived as more motivating and interesting than their non-gamified counterparts" (p. 12) as a result of the game-like elements like badges and quests, which shows the positive relation with motivation and gamification applied in EFL classes.

The concept of digital games, on the other hand, is different from gamification even though the former is heavily affected by the latter. Gamification, as also suggested before, is utilized to turn "non-gaming educational contexts" (p. 791) into instances where game elements are adopted in activities or materials whereas the concept of digital games refers to the active implementation of a video game in educational setting to reach certain learning criteria (Sanchez, 2017). That is, the latter is about the direct use of a digital game whereas the former is about making a non-gaming situation more game-like. For instance, Al-Azawi et al. (2016) argue that adding badges, scores and rewards to an ordinary classroom activity is an example gamification whereas the use of *SimCity*, a city-builder simulation game, into class as a standalone activity is an example of the use of a digital game or digital game-based learning. It is of importance to acknowledge the distinction between the given concepts as they essentially refer to different educational contexts even though both are utilized to increase student motivation and engagement in their core essence (Figueroa-Flores, 2016; Lamrani & Abdelwahed, 2020).

As a result of the popularity of gamification in educational setting and rapid advances in ICT, digital game-based learning is regarded as a well-known concept in education

and extensively researched in EFL setting under the scope of CALL (Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012; Woo, 2014; Yeşiltaş & Cevher, 2022). Gee (2007) explains that digital games can have a favorable effect on education as they let learners play with instances with opportunities, risks and repetitive actions in which they can assume different identities and roles while interacting with the virtual world set up around them. Before examining what digital-game based learning offers in general education and in EFL setting specifically, defining different types of digital games is essential.

Serious game is the first type of game that falls under digital game-based learning, and it refers to the digital games that are created especially for educational contexts to teach, advertise or inform regarding a field ranging from business to medicine to education (Dörner, et al., 2016). Even though serious games are not designed for entertainment purposes, it should be noted that such games should still offer some kind of fun and challenge for users to play the games for a long time; otherwise, they may not be desirable for users to complete the games (Silva, 2019). The use of serious games in different educational areas is proven to be effective since serious games help reach learning outcomes more easily, gain cognitive skills, offer versatile learning environments and enhance motivation levels (Garneli et al., 2017). Similarly, Manesis (2020) argues that implementation of digital games for pedagogical purposes within the classroom environment may lead to enhancement among students' enjoyment of lessons and overall motivation, which "could effectively contribute to the reformation of educational system." (p. 90).

Serious games are used in EFL context as well. It is argued that serious games offer occasions on which students are encouraged to communicate using the target language; moreover, such games can lead to high level of excitement and motivation among language learners who may use this opportunity to increase their achievement or improve their four skills (Yanes & Bououd, 2019). Cruz and Guayara (2021) point out that serious games help students realize that language learning can take place outside the traditional activities or materials, which accordingly boosts their participation and overall achievement in the language. Kara (2022) also suggests that serious games that are utilized in EFL classrooms can be used to enhance specific skills like vocabulary acquisition in addition to general opportunities and strengths serious games offer.

The second type of game explained in digital game-based learning is defined as entertainment games or sometimes commercial-off-the-shelf games. Entertainment games are different from serious games for entertainment games are designed commercially for non-educational contexts and for pure enjoyment of players; that is, such games do not consider pedagogical values or learning outcomes. Entertainment games are more popular, especially among young people, compared to serious games since entertainment games are mainstreamed and advertised accordingly (Martinez et al., 2022). As a result of their popularity, entertainment games have been adopted in many fields for years, and it is argued that entertainment games can enhance cognitive functions, foster attention span, accelerate decision-making and improve visuospatial functions even though entertainment games do not have direct consideration of such cognitive or bodily functions of their own (Bediou et al., 2018; Buelow et al., 2015; McCord et al., 2020; Oei & Patterson, 2013).

Entertainment games are adopted and adapted in various ways in educational settings too. It is argued that entertainment games may be incorporated into lessons pedagogically to help students cooperate more with one another, solve the given problems together and memorize certain sequences, events or points (Gros, 2007). Entertainment games may also increase students' motivation towards learning process when entertainment games are adopted in the learning process in school setting for such games offer hands-on experiences as well as interesting gameplay focusing on interactivity as well as advanced computer technology (Hong et al., 2009).

Tokarieva et al. (2019) share that entertainment games give learners a chance to experiment with the gameplay and make occasional mistakes without any harmful consequences in the process of achieving the greatest result, which leads to self-realization among learners while also making the learning process more effective. Similarly, Reyes-de-Cózar (2022) claims that entertainment games with their immersive gameplay and context may lead to promotion of critical thinking among students towards certain challenges and ideas present from history to gender roles to everyday life.

Apart from general advantages and pedagogical values of entertainment games in educational setting, there are several studies focusing on individual entertainment games and their specific impact on overall educational setting. For instance, implementation of *Minecraft*, an online survival open world game, within an educational setting where students worked together to create their own homes, farm materials and fight shared enemies revealed that *Minecraft* was able to increase cooperation and motivation among students both within the game and outside the game, and the gameplay itself helped students learn about economy, construction and how communities worked in real life (Faas & Lin, 2017).

A more recent study suggested that the use of *Minecraft* within classroom environment to reach certain learning outcomes could increase creativity, problem solving, multitasking and research abilities among students as students needed to create innovative techniques and stories together to overcome problems (Hewett at al., 2020).

Age of Empires, a strategy game focusing on different historical battles, and *Total War*, a historically story-driven strategy series that take place in different ages and countries, were found to be effective among students in educational setting since both games let learners play engaging historical events and make connections between the real events that took place in the past and realize their implications (Holdenried & Trépanier, 2013).

Likewise, Maguth et al. (2016) argued that *Age of Empires* could be matched with learning outcomes in history classes since the game encouraged students to think about diplomacy, trade, policy making and actual wars while also giving them a physical space to relive historical events and experience every aspect of wars at once.

In conclusion, it can be suggested based on the studies and arguments present in this section that entertainment games which are released for non-educational settings - mainly mainstream media- can be adopted in different school subjects to promote certain skills among students and reach various language outcomes even though such games are not originally intended to cover educational topics on their own.

2.4.2. Entertainment Games and Their Implications Regarding Motivation, Attitude and Skills in EFL Setting

Gee (2008) explains that successful games always have motivational factors, like competition, cooperation or leveling up, embedded in them, and such factors usually lead players to having high level of motivation, enjoyment and engagement while playing games. Surely, motivational factors mentioned above can be sustained in EFL setting if entertainment games are carefully integrated into classroom practices. For instance, Cornillie et al. (2012) suggest that entertainment games adopted in language classes can enhance students' motivation levels for such games offer fun elements and objectives that should be reached by students. In the same vein, Peterson (2016) argues that entertainment games could enhance not only students' overall motivation towards the language learning process but also their self-confidence while being exposed to the language and using it.

Reinders and Wattana (2011) as well as Lee and Hsieh (2019) report that adaption of entertainment games in EFL classes can have a positive impact on students' willingness to communicate using the target language as a result of their improvement in their language motivation; for example, shy students who are normally unwilling to use the target language while communicating with others can be eager to interact in the target language when an entertainment game is utilized to practice language elements as a result of the motivational nature of the given entertainment game. This notion is also supported by the argument that reports entertainment games can "provide players a chance and the motivation required to fully embrace and practice the language." (Rudis & Poštić, 2017, p. 120), showing the substantial connection between the high level of motivation and the atmosphere entertainment games offers in language learning environment.

Additionally, Peterson (2012) claims that entertainment games can have a learner-centered approach in design, which naturally positively affects the language attitude and overall motivation of students playing the game. As a result of this learner-centered approach, Soyoof and McLay (2019) point out that entertainment games can lead to enhancement in social atmosphere of language classrooms by suggesting that

adoption of entertainment games "may be an effective strategy for improving rapport between students and teachers" (p. 54), which accordingly increases motivation levels of students practicing the target language. Apart from the arguments and suggestions made from different parts of the world, Özgür and Caner (2022) who specifically analyze Turkish context and anxiety levels of students argue that language learners' involvement with entertainment games can positively affect their motivation towards learning and using the target language communicatively as such games may help reduce their overall language anxiety.

There are several studies focusing on specific entertainment games and their contribution to students' motivation and language attitude apart from the studies that analyze entertainment games broadly. For instance, in a study conducted by Shahriarpour and Kafi (2014), students reported having high level of motivation and positively-altered attitudes towards language learning while and after playing *L.A. Noire*, a story-driven detective game, in EFL setting as the game offered them a fun and meaningful context where they could practice language elements. Similarly, Rama et al. (2012) argued in their study that language learners who played *World of Warcraft*, an online fantasy game, had high level of motivation towards language learning as the game allowed them to focus on real communication in authentic situations present within in the interactive world of the game where language anxiety was also lowered thanks to the gameplay offered in the game. Along the same line, it was reported that intensive implementation of *Ragnarok Online*, a multiplayer mythology game, in EFL setting had positive impact on students' willingness to communicate within the target language as they were offered real communicative situations where they could practice the language freely without the mechanical barriers in traditional tasks and assessment types; moreover, students reported positive alteration in their attitude towards learning the target language in addition to using it (Renders & Wattana, 2015).

It is clear based on the previous studies given above that implementation of entertainment games that are originally developed for pure enjoyment without pedagogical concerns in EFL setting may have positive impacts on students as such games offer authentic , (Rama et al., 2012), stress-free (Özgür & Caner, 2022),

meaningful (Shahriarpour & Kafi, 2014) and fun environments (Cornillie et al., 2012) where students have a chance to practice the language elements in versatile manners, which, in return, increases their motivation levels in using the language effectively and help them develop more favorable attitude towards language learning. It can also be said that what makes entertainment games are so motivative for language learners is in line with the implications of innovative teaching as opposed to traditional teaching, showing a clear connection between innovative teaching and entertainment games in terms of motivational and attitude-related aspects (Groff, 2013). However, it would be unfair to limit the positive effects of entertainment games on language learning only to certain aspects regarding language attitude and motivation for entertainment games are known to increase students' language skills in various ways.

It is reported that letting students play entertainment games as a part of language learning process in EFL setting may have a positive impact on students' vocabulary acquisition (Jensen, 2017; Ranalli, 2008; Sundqvist, 2019). Sundqvist (2019) argues that gamers tend to produce more versatile vocabulary items while using the target language compared to non-gamers for entertainment games offer various vocabulary items which are automatically embedded in the minds of the gamers. Similarly, Reinhardt and Thorne (2016) suggest that entertainment games provide language learners with authentic and interactive environment in which they practice the target language and mold it accordingly. This trend may be associated with incidental learning as language learners tend to pick up vocabulary items without really focusing on the vocabulary items themselves but the gameplay and other game-related elements offered in the entertainment games they play (Cheung & Harrison, 1992). Moreover, Gee (2007) argues that entertainment games also equip students with contemporary communication abilities, implying that entertainment games can offer essential vocabulary items for today's world for students to internalize.

A study conducted by Chen and Yang (2013) revealed that *BONE,* a story-driven adventure game, helped language learners increase their vocabulary knowledge according to the results obtained in pre-tests and post-tests as the game gave language learners a chance to hear native speakers and read related subtitles while completing challenging tasks and puzzles that required students to internalize the dialogues,

sentences and phrases they hear. Likewise, the narrative story and repetitive nature of the dialogues given in *Final Fantasy X,* a roleplaying adventure game, led to improvement in vocabulary acquisition in the target language (Piirainen-Marsh & Tainio, 2009). Calvo-Ferrer and Belda-Medina (2021) found out in their study that *Among Us,* a multiplayer guessing game, increased language learners' vocabulary knowledge as the game was able to offer rich and situational vocabulary items and phrases for learners to receive and productively use in various cases.

The use of entertainment games in EFL setting is also known to enhance language learners' various language and personal skills from reading to writing to critical thinking in addition to vocabulary acquisition (Chen & Yang, 2013; Turgut & İrgin, 2009; Yu et al., 2021). For instance, Turgut and İrgin (2009) suggest that entertainment games played by young learners could have a positive impact of students' overall grammar as entertainment games expose students to the same structures and language elements all the time, which helps them revise the grammar topics in natural contexts as opposed to traditional activities offering grammar points in mechanical repetition as seen in traditional teaching.

Chen and Yang (2013) argue that entertainment games may improve language learners' listening as well as reading skills for entertainment games tend to have audio-visual cues that can make language learners exposed to the target language both in written and audio form. Additionally, Shirazi et. al (2016) claim that entertainment games can also help students develop more functional skills like effectively apologizing or requesting different things in the target language thanks to the real and communicative use of the target language in the entertainment games.

Cruz (2007) revealed in his study that entertainment games such as *Final Fantasy* and *Atelier Iris,* a story-driven roleplaying series, and follow-up in-class activities based on these games could have beneficial impact on teenage students in EFL setting as such games could increase students' reading as well as pronunciation skills immensely thanks to their story-driven nature in which students were required to interact with the games either orally or in written form to be able to continue the story.

A study by Serafin (2016) suggested that "playing computer games is an advantage for students' second language acquisition." (p.85) for entertainment games had a positive effect on students' reading, grammar and listening abilities thanks to the authentic English input given within the dialogues, interface and other story elements present in the games such as *Grand Theft Auto,* open world action series; moreover, she argued that students were able to deal with language elements within the game more easily and comfortably than traditional classroom environment, showing the fact that entertainment games can act as innovative teaching methods in EFL setting.

Likewise, a study conducted by Soyoof and McLay (2019) argued that adoption of *Grand Theft Auto: Chinatown Wars* within EFL classes allowed students to improve students' overall language proficiency from grammar to communicative skills thanks to the game's stress-free, tensionless nature as well as rich English language elements embedded within the design and story of the game contextually and naturally.

In conclusion, the previous studies analyzing the effectiveness of entertainment games in EFL setting are in line with Gee's (2007) principles suggesting successful digital games can be effective learning tools as they encourage and expose critical as well as active learning through challenging yet doable, engaging and fun ways. Moreover, the previous studies imply a connection between innovative teaching and overall effectiveness of entertainment games in EFL setting. That is, integration of entertainment games into EFL setting brings about authentic, interactive, cooperative, personalized, learner-centered, stress-free, motivational and versatile materials, activities and instances which are highly valued in innovative teaching as opposed to traditional teaching focusing on mechanical, artificial and teacher-centered methods (Cruz, 2007; Gee, 2007; Turgut & İrgin, 2009).

As for specific impacts of entertainment games in EFL setting, several studies suggest that entertainment games can have a positive impact on students' language motivation (Özgür & Caner, 2022; Reinders & Wattana, 2011) language attitude (Groff, 2013; Peterson, 2012), critical thinking abilities (Kalyani & Rajasekaran, 2018), vocabulary acquisition (Chen & Yang, 2013; Sundqvist, 2019), grammar (Soyoof & McLay, 2019; Turgut & İrgin, 2009) and four skills (Serafin, 2016; Yu et al., 2021).

2.4.3. Simulation Games and Their Effectiveness in Education and EFL Setting

Simulation games are regarded as a genre of digital games, and the main educational principle in simulation games is "putting students into situations in which they must articulate positions, ideas, arguments, or facts they have previously learned; or training students' skills they will later need" (Greenblat, 1973, p. 62). This makes simulation games a different experience compared to other digital game genres as simulation games usually offer more authentic processes where one or more aspects of real life are experienced in a realistic environment unlike other game genres such as action and adventure (Heintz & Law, 2015). Also, simulation games are usually not pre-determined both in gameplay and story, meaning that simulation games are usually more open-ended and open to exploration compared to other genres of digital games (Narayanasamy et al., 2005).

Simulation games have been used in education for several decades, and its implementation in education is still persistent to this day both as serious and entertainment game modes (Boocock & Schild, 1968; Goi, 2019). There are several reasons as to why simulation games are extensively utilized in educational settings. Cadotte (2016) argues that "simulations are often seen as transformational experiences" (p. 120) by focusing the effectiveness of simulation games on helping students internalize the given concepts, thoughts and tools. Likewise, de Jong et al., (2018) claim that simulation games can help individuals acquire new abilities through scaffolds and other environmental or conceptual clues while also maintaining motivational aspects and active experiences present in regular digital games, which is an idea in line with constructivism (Boudourides, 2003).

Redpath et al. (2018) suggest that simulation games can offer situations in which students are expected to come up with novel solutions to problems they are given, making the experiences more realistic. Additionally, simulation games are regarded as modern and valuable teaching methods where interaction, cooperation and active learning are given the upmost importance, which demonstrates that simulation games are associated with innovative teaching as opposed to traditional teaching (Samuel & Rahman, 2018). Vogel et al. (2006) support this argument by suggesting that

simulation games "report higher cognitive gains and better attitudes toward learning compared to those using traditional teaching methods" (p. 237).

There are several studies focusing on certain simulation games and their effect in educational settings. For instance, a study conducted Schrader et al. (2016) revealed that utilization of *Spore*, an entertainment and simulation game on evolution, in science class in the 8th grade had a positive impact on students' scientific knowledge regarding evolution and its implications when the conceptions as well as misconceptions offered in the gameplay were matched with related supplemental activities to reach the intended objectives.

Spore's implications in science classes encouraged Cardoso et al. (2018) to develop a serious game called *Sim-Evolution* focusing on scientific facts and evolution theories, and the implementation of the game in high school setting was found to be interesting and successful by students. Moreover, it was revealed that the use of *SimCity*, a city-building simulation game, increased high school students' intrinsic motivation, overall engagement with the activities, enjoyment of the lessons and knowledge regarding infrastructure management, which demonstrates the success of simulation games both didactically and innovatively (Arnold et al., 2019).

Since simulation games are proven to be effective in educational arena thanks to their constructive, motivational and innovative elements, they are adopted and utilized in various ways in EFL setting too. It is suggested that simulation games can create visually interesting task-based activities in which language learners are to involve in the challenging activities to practice language elements (Reinhardt and Thorne, 2016). That is, language learners can use the target language in real-like environments thanks to the interactive and authentic-like contexts present in simulation games unlike other game genres where reality is often interrupted or ignored for gameplay elements. Likewise, DeKeyser (2010) argues that simulation games can be used to offer meaningful activities where language learners have a purpose to engage with the opportunities they are given, which may create more real-like and effective learning process. Simulation games are also effective in creating playful and enjoyable instances for language learners to experience which also offers a sense of agency and

autonomy as simulation games usually do not have strict limitations and rules (Anderson et al., 2008; Franciosi, 2017; Ibrahim 2018).

In conclusion, it is noted by various scholars that simulation games have certain advantageous elements that are present less in other digital game genres; for instance, simulation games often create realistic environments with rich gameplay, which, accordingly, leads to more authentic language input and output on the parts of language learners. Moreover, simulation games usually do not have pre-determined endings, giving more autonomy and sense of belonging to language learners, and this affects their enjoyment and engagement positively when completing language-related activities and materials through innovative nature of the simulation games as opposed to traditional activities. Moreover, simulation games are usually task-based, and this gives language learners a reason to use the language as a medium of interaction while completing the given tasks.

Apart from general advantages of simulation games over other digital game genres in EFL setting from interactivity to authenticity, simulation games are also argued to be effective in vocabulary acquisition for simulation games offer vocabulary items often used in everyday life thanks to their gameplay imitating real life (Peterson, 2021). This imitation of real life naturally helps language learners transfer the vocabulary items they learn during gameplay into real situations more easily (deHaan, 2005a). Similarly, Yang et al. (2022) support this notion by arguing that simulation games can create immersive situations where a connection among language learners and real life can be established by the nature of simulation games, and this can lead to appropriate opportunities to acquire and revise vocabulary items more authentically in an enjoyable atmosphere.

Even though most research focusing the use of simulation games in EFL setting are about vocabulary acquisition or affective factors, there are several studies analyzing the connection between language skills and implementation of simulation games in language learning process. For instance, it is reported that simulation games can help language learners improve their grammar skills for most simulation games are text-based, and this gives language learners an opportunity to be exposed to the target

language immensely, giving them chances to analyze grammar structures and spelling (Blasing, 2010). Likewise, Angelini and García-Carbonell (2019) suggest that high level of exposure to the target language in serious simulations can increase students' writing abilities along with grammar.

DeHaan (2005b) argues that playing simulation games can enhance listening skills of language learners in the target language for simulation games can offer both aural and written language for language learners to experience and acquire the language elements while engaging with the gameplay. Javid (2013) claims that simulations along with role playing games are effective in enhancing language learners' speaking abilities as simulation games tend to mimic real-life situations where oral communication is essential. It is also important to analyze individual and specific studies as well as their implications on the subject in addition to general claims and suggestions made by scholars.

A study by Coleman (2002) revealed that SimCity and its subgame SimCopter, a simulation game about helicopter piloting in the world of SimCity, was effective in enhancing students' not only reading but also writing skills in EFL setting as the missions offered in the simulations required students to read and internalize the given textual tasks and then write directions as a pilot for others to learn about certain locations within the world of *SimCity*; moreover, the study suggested that simulations were able to create authentic-like situations that would almost be impossible for most learners to experience in real life.

A study analyzing the use of *Second Life*, a multiplayer life simulation, revealed that students who took part in the game together to travel to various locations, investigate different worlds and do various tasks were able to enhance their communication skills, vocabulary knowledge and overall motivation towards language learning as the game offered them fun, interactive and pleasant gameplay experience where the language was utilized in a meaningful way as opposed to traditional grammar-based lessons typically seen in various language courses (Chen, 2016). Moreover, Ibrahim (2019) argued in his study focusing on *Baalty*, a shop management simulation, and its implementation in EFL setting one hour every week that the gameplay and

supplementary activities within or about the game allowed students to obtain linguistic knowledge as well as language autonomy as they were required to understand and use the language elements in order to thrive in the game; hence, the challenges in the game acted as scaffolds for students to experience and learn more about language structures and how to use them effectively.

In conclusion, simulation games have distinct differences compared to other digital game genres as simulation games often offer open-ended and interactive gameplay (Narayanasamy et al., 2005). These differences make simulation games effective in education thanks to their authentic atmosphere and realistic gameplay (Heintz & Law, 2015). Due to the given elements, simulation games are regarded as innovative teaching methods, and their utilization in various subjects can lead to improvement in students' knowledge and overall engagement with the course elements as in the case of *Spore* and *SimCity* (Arnold et al., 2019; Samuel and Rahman, 2018; Schrader et al., 2016; Vogel et al., 2006). Moreover, simulation games are also widely used in EFL courses since such games can increase student autonomy in language use, motivation towards language learning and meaningful use of language elements in authentic environments where interactivity is given the upmost importance as in the case of *SimCopter*, *Baalty* and *Second Life* (Chen, 2016; Coleman, 2002; DeKeyser, 2010; Ibrahim, 2019; Reinhardt and Thorne, 2016). Moreover, simulation games are known to enhance students' vocabulary acquisition (Peterson, 2021), grammar knowledge (Blasing, 2010) and language skills from speaking to writing (Angelini & García-Carbonell, 2019; Javid, 2013). As a result of these advantages of simulation games in EFL setting, they are found to be effective and innovative language learning tools (Vogel et al., 2006).

2.4.4. *The Sims* Series and Foreign Language Education

The Sims (TS) is one of the most successful life simulation series developed and published as a mainstream game for entertainment purposes by *Maxis and Electronic Arts*. As *TS* is a series developed under the label of a simulation game, the series mimics real-life elements and creates a virtual version of the world we experience in everyday life by focusing on individual personalities, family interactions and

neighborhood actions (Hsiao, 2009). Players are to design their own character, a Sim as the game names, and live their lives by making decisions in an active world to satisfy their goals (Mendez et al., 2014). Therefore, Berger (2002) likens the position of players in *TS* series to a creator making decisions for other people.

Sylvén and Sundqvist (2012) suggest that *TS* series "provides opportunities to simulate virtual worlds, including creating environment, such as building cities and houses, as well as taking care of the inhabitants" (p. 304). Moreover, it is reported that the series does not force a certain type of gameplay (Rak, 2015). That is, the series never undermines freedom of the players; for instance, players are free to create a happy family having a wonderful life or a broken family with dysfunctional relationships. In short, it is noted that *TS* series offers a virtual world in which players control their Sim or Sims to make free and real-life decisions like getting married, going out, staying inside, having new friends, furnishing interiors, making babies, gaining money (or Simoleons as named in the game) and most importantly feeding their most fundamental needs like bladder and hunger (Nutt & Railton, 2003).
The fact that *TS* series does not have specific beginning or ending to the game as there are no pre-determined missions or aspirations to reach makes the game an ultimate sandbox experience in which players are free to pave their own paths and live without the restrictions of the game design or certain narratives (Berhmann, 2011). As a result of these game mechanics, *TS* series is regarded as one of the most realistic and immersive life simulation games created for the mainstream game industry.

TS 3, which is the third establishment of the series, dominated the game industry when it was released in 2009 with its open-world and fully customizable mechanics, and the game is still regarded as the most accomplished establishment of the series as *TS 3* was sold roughly 1.5 million times in its first week after release and it quickly became the best-selling game on PC in 2009 (Behrmann, 2011; Rak, 2015). *TS 3*'s success was ground-breaking in its neighborhood design as the players were finally able to walk around the neighborhood they lived in freely and visit neighbors, go to beaches, read books at libraries and much more in a totally open-world without the constraint of loading screens or invisible walls that were present in the previous games of the series (Rak, 2015). Moreover, Voronaya (2022) suggested that *TS 3* offered limitless

possibilities where one could have plenty of opportunities for creative ideas, which was another factor in the game's success as *TS 3* was more customizable compared to other establishments of the series. Similarly, *TS 3* expanded with several expansion packs and patches focusing on different game mechanics and themes from adopting pets to living in the future.

TS series, and *TS 3* specifically, is also known to be a valuable innovative tool in educational setting for various reasons. Hsiao (2009) argues that contemporary education shifts towards reflective as well as meaningful learning, and *TS* series can achieve both of these properties of contemporary education thanks to its narrative, experimental and reflective gameplay elements and their effortless and appropriate integration with innovative classroom activities such as "role-playing practice, narrative playing, group discussion, reflective dialogue, and so on" (p. 143).

It is suggested that *TS* series can act as an innovative teaching tool as the series encourages students with its versatile gameplay to solve problems actively, enhance their 21st century skills like collective participation as well as strategy development and help teachers create learning situations in which "a social network related to a commercial video game turns the school into a place where new processes of literacy become essential" (Mendez et al., 2014, p. 9).

Peterson (2021) claims that several digital games, including *TS* series, can innovate the teaching environment as such games have embedded features that can lead to engaging, real-like, interesting and enjoyable learning situations on the part of students, and these features, accordingly, help students develop autonomy, agency and positive feedback towards and within the given activities as well as subjects, which is not present in traditional teaching methods.

Similarly, Monjelat et al. (2013) suggest that *TS* series can be effectively utilized in schools to complete curricular objectives, improve various skills and innovate in-class interactions by focusing on the freedom offered in the series as players (students in this case) can create their own stories freely by choosing different paths, which, in return, affects their classroom activities creatively.

It is suggested in the previous sections (see sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.3) that digital games can be valuable tools in EFL setting since they can innovate the language learning process and allow students to internalize language elements creatively, incidentally and actively with high levels of motivation (Hong et al., 2009; Reinhardt & Thorne, 2016; Shahriarpour & Kafi, 2014). Moreover, integration of simulation games into EFL setting promotes language learning even more for simulations hold their distinctive advantages like open-endedness, autonomy and authenticity (; Chen, 2016; Coleman, 2002; DeKeyser, 2010; Ibrahim, 2019; Redpath et al. 2018; Reinhardt & Thorne, 2016). It is also possible to see its utilization in specific EFL settings to promote different language skills and tendencies among students even though the number of studies focusing on the benefits of *TS* series in EFL context is not abundant.

Tan et al. (2022) claim that utilization of *TS* series in EFL setting can promote language skills substantially for *TS* series makes language-related objectives more relatable for students in terms of authenticity. Furthermore, one of the major reasons behind the integration of *TS* series into EFL setting is to foster vocabulary acquisition as the series allows students to come across plenty of vocabulary items that can be used in everyday life and acquire them while playing the series (Reinhardt & Thorne, 2016). Likewise, Wang (2019) suggests additional proof that *TS* series and related activities can be used to increase students' vocabulary knowledge as a result of the textual nature of the gameplay and narratives offered in the series. Along the same line, it is suggested that the series offers language input through rich gameplay from job routines to neighborhood activities; from shopping to character development, giving language learners a chance to enhance their language skills in distinct situations (Miller & Hegelheimer, 2006). In short, DeKeyser (2010) claims that this contextualized and meaningful gameplay present in *TS* series is the key reason why students improve their vocabulary knowledge while engaging with the series.

Even though most studies highlight the usefulness of *TS* series in vocabulary acquisition, it would be unfair to limit the advantages of the implementation of the series in EFL setting in terms of language skills to only vocabulary acquisition. For instance, Wang (2019) claims that utilization of *TS* series as a supplementary material in language classes creates a natural context for students to interact with both their

teacher and one another in English, giving them a chance to practice oral skills. Similarly, Sandford et al. (2006) argue that students can improve their speaking skills thanks to the carefully designed activities prompting *TS* series as a discussion starter. It is also reported that successful integration of TS series into EFL setting along with supplementary materials about the gameplay can help students enhance their writing skills (Monjelat et al., 2013). To show the language learning merit of *TS* series, Purushotma (2005) focuses on the series' potential ability to help students enhance their essential language skills, and he compares the language elements present in *TS* series with traditional language learning books by suggesting "if we look at the number one selling game, *The Sims*, we see a lot of the same content one might find in an introductory language textbook" (p. 81).

TS series is known to enhance other aspects of learning process such as affective factors as well as meta-cognitive abilities in EFL setting too. For instance, Mendez et al. (2014) argue that *TS* series can help students not only improve their language skills but also help them express themselves more comfortably and meaningfully in EFL-related contexts. Furthermore, Ranalli (2008) mentions that TS series is highly popular among EFL learners; thus, integration of the series into EFL classes increases students' overall enjoyment in the learning process.

It is also known that *TS* series can increase EFL students' motivation and fulfillment levels as students use the language as a medium in order to thrive in the game and complete related language activities (Wang, 2019). Likewise, Noroozloo et al. (2015) imply that integration of *TS* series into EFL classes can create excitement among students and boost their motivation towards language learning, which, in return, may play a role in acquiring new language elements. The arguments made by Sandford et al. (2006) also support the notion of *TS* series' being a motivational factor on the part of students while engaging with the in-game elements, and they also add that letting students play *TS* also gives them a chance to do self-assessment explicitly for gaming elements and implicitly for language use.

Even though *TS* series is proven to be effective in EFL setting in terms of both linguistic and affective factors as suggested above, it is of importance to analyze

several studies focusing on the interaction between *TS* series and EFL lessons in-depth to be able to really grasp the impact of the series in EFL setting. Sandford et al. (2006) revealed in their study which was conducted in multiple schools where teenage EFL students were analyzed in terms of their participation in various language classes with the active integration of *TS* series that the series could be effectively matched with curricular objectives and could be utilized to improve various language skills. For instance, students were able to practice writing a story in L2 by using the objects, places and events shown in-game; similarly, students could play the series and then compare as well as contrast the lives of their in-game characters with their own lives in L2, enhancing their speaking abilities. Moreover, it was suggested that realistic position of *TS* series could help teachers initiate various activities like class discussions.

A more recent study regarding the implementation of *TS* series in EFL setting by Wang (2019) argued that in-class activities and active intervention of teachers based on the gameplay offered in *TS* series could help students enhance their language skills. This way, students could acquire new vocabulary items as they played the game, and they could practice these newly acquired vocabulary items even more thanks to the follow-up tasks and whole class activities. As a follow-up task, for example, teacher could screen-share the gameplay to each student, and students would all analyze the same objects, places or events while completing the given task about story depiction, making the process more collaborative on the part of students. Similar results were reached before by Miller and Hegelheimer (2006) and Ranalli (2008).

In these almost identical studies, EFL students were encouraged to play *TS* series and then complete several follow-up activities regarding the vocabulary items they examined in-game. For instance, students were exposed to words like *elegant*, *classic*, *incredible* in the series as they played the game with careful planning and guidance; then, they were to engage with non-game activities regarding these words. The results showed students were able to complete non-game activities smoothly as they already acquired the required vocabulary items while playing the game. Hence, the studies suggested that *TS* series could be a valuable tool in EFL setting especially in vocabulary acquisition due to the rich linguistic input present in the series.

To sum up, it is noted that *TS* series has certain merits that can create innovation in EFL setting as opposed to traditional teaching. Since *TS* series is a mimicry of real-life situations, it is possible to experience authentic-like instances and come across vocabulary items or linguistic elements that are widely used in everyday life (Reinhardt & Thorne, 2016; Tan et al., 2022). This, accordingly, makes the series a good fit in teaching everyday language (Sandford et al., 2006; Wang, 2019). Moreover, *TS* series can be used to teach language skills like writing and speaking as the rich gameplay offered in the series can help teachers initiate various activities where students can make a connection between language skills and in-game activities (Monjelat et al., 2013; Purushotma, 2005). Furthermore, *TS* series is known to increase motivation as well as interest among students in EFL classes thanks to its engaging and versatile gameplay elements, which is another factor why *TS* series is seen as a valuable tool in language classes (Noroozloo et al., 2015; Wang, 2019). Apart from these specific advantages, *TS* series also holds the general advantages of simulation games and digital games; thus, its successful integration can make EFL activities as well as tasks more creative, engaging, interactive and meaningful and, of course, innovative on the parts of students (DeKeyser, 2010; Hong et al., 2009; Ibrahim, 2019; Redpath et al. 2018; Shahriarpour & Kafi, 2014).

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

3.0. Presentation

This chapter gives detailed information about the present study. The first two sections analyze the rationale behind the adoption of qualitative inquiry, case study as well as teacher research as a framework in the study. The next section is about my own position and experiences regarding the present EFL atmosphere in Turkey and the utilization of *TS 3* in language learning process. Then, information as to the research setting, sampling and participants is given in the sections four, five and six. The next section focuses on data collection tools by analyzing the use of participant observation, field notes, stimulated recall as well as semi-structured interviews. The eighth section justifies why *TS 3* and its related activities as well as materials are chosen as an innovative tool and how they are to be implemented in actual classroom environment in line with the curriculum at hand. Then, information regarding data analysis process is given in detail to conceptualize how the raw data is to be managed. Finally, trustworthiness of the study is discussed by mentioning the steps to be taken to increase validity as well as reliability, and ethical concerns are described.

3.1. Qualitative Inquiry

It is essential to conceptualize a study philosophically and methodologically in terms of research focus, participants, data collection tools as well as analysis process so that appropriate and feasible approaches can be embraced and utilized accordingly (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, understanding what methodological approaches offer and their implications in a study is important. Quantitative methodological approach

is associated with experiments, focusing on objective measurements as well as numerical data (Mayoux, 2006). Hence, Goertzen (2017) suggests that "one of the central goals is to build accurate and reliable measurements that allow for statistical analysis" (p. 12) to make a clear connection between quantitative methodological approach and statistical results.

Qualitative methodological approach, on the other hand, is more about experiences and interpretations in various contexts (Hignett & McDermott, 2015). Therefore, "qualitative work is expressed in natural language" (Gerring, 2017, p. 18) rather than numerical data or statistics in general. As a result, it is reported that these two main methodological approaches are in the opposite sides of the spectrum, and researchers are usually to take a position between these two opposites in line with the nature of their studies, or they may adopt a mixture of both approaches if applicable (Brannen, 2017). Since the present study was about the natural integration of *TS3* into English language classes and expressions of participants regarding their motivational and attitude-related experiences and perceptions, a qualitative methodological approach was adopted in the study.

Even though general characteristics of qualitative methodological approach, as seen above, are a good fit for the natural and personal aspects of the present study, it is substantial to give more detailed rationale behind this intentional choice. Firstly, it is noted that qualitative works often focus on particular individuals and their dispositions in a relatively long periods of time rather than quick and direct generalizations, which is a phenomenon that was seen in the present study as the present study was associated with high school students and their individual experiences in a continuing process (Gerring, 2017). Also, qualitative methodological approach acknowledges the existence as well as participation of the researcher, which matches with the nature of the present study in which the researcher actively took part in the study while integrating *TS3* into the classroom environment (Hignett & McDermott, 2015). Finally, investigating natural context is important in qualitative methodological approach, and the participants were analyzed within their own natural context, mainly classroom, while completing given tasks and activities related to their language

curricula throughout the present study (Hignett & McDermott, 2015). As a result of these reasons, a qualitative methodological approach was adopted in this study.

For the present study is conducted in line with the characteristics of qualitative methodological approach, it is important to summarize these characteristics reported by Chesebro and Borisoff (2007):

- **Pragmaticism:** Investigating a social problem, trying to understand the nature of the problem and finding possible solutions to the problem.
- **Contextuality:** Respecting natural flow and analyzing a problem by also considering the relevant context in which the events take place or individuals reside.
- **Researcher-Participant Relationship:** Understanding that there may be interaction between researchers and participants, and this interaction may have an impact on the outcome of the research.
- **Scale:** Focusing on a small scale and giving implications only regarding that specific group of participants rather than trying to generalize outcomes of the study.

3.1.1. Teacher Research and Classroom Study

Teacher research framework refers to "systematic and intentional inquiry about teaching, learning and schooling carried out by teachers in their own school and classroom settings." (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 27). This framework was intentionally adopted in the presents study for I, the researcher, was also an English language teacher working at a state high school in Ankara, Turkey (more information regarding setting is given in section 3.4.) and this study especially focused on the teaching as well as learning environment taking place within English lessons taught by me; therefore, teacher research constituted a major part of this study. Another reason why this framework was adopted in this study was that teacher research framework could help teachers reflect on their own practices and explore their professional knowledge while also analyzing the learning process from the

perspectives of students in terms of interpersonal features and classroom effectiveness (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999), which was an argument that matched with the general purpose of the present study.

Since the present study took on teacher research framework, classroom environment and all the occurrences as well as interactions happening in this environment were given the upmost importance. Therefore, this study could also be regarded as a classroom study according to the teacher research framework (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993). Classroom study is often compared to more quantitative methodological approaches such as laboratory-based studies as also seen below:

> *Classrooms, on the other hand, are less controlled environments that contain students with a broad range of background knowledge, interests, and motivation. Compared to a laboratory study, failing to retrieve curriculum-based information in a classroom study could more likely reflect lapses in prior knowledge, interest, or motivation that could perpetuate suboptimal learning. (Carpenter et al., 2015, p. 266).*

Carpenter et al. (2015) suggest in their above argument that classroom studies can be more effective in investigating as well as improving different classroom aspects such as students' motivation as well as interest as classroom environments are not strictly restricted especially if feedback is present in the learning environment.

According to Hopkins (2014), classroom studies -or classroom research as called by several scholars- can improve researchers' own teaching process since such studies help researchers realize their own classroom dynamics. Moreover, he argues that active observation by researcher, asking questions and receiving questions from students are possible in this kind of study, which may help participants become more knowledgeable in various subjects and help researcher gather data for their project.

Chaudron (2001) focuses on the merits of classroom studies in EFL classes by suggesting that "the findings of classroom research are a vital base for professional practice, if for no other reason than that through classroom investigation we can verify or disconfirm the effectiveness of specific or general approaches to instruction and curricular content" (p. 58).

As a result, it is safe to note teacher research framework and its suggestions about classroom studies arguing that teachers can act as researchers in their own classrooms and that their research can help them analyze as well as reflect on their own teaching process is quite substantial; furthermore, it is reported that classroom studies can improve students' knowledge along with their motivation as well as attitude which were two concepts that were highly essential in the present study. Hence, it was clear that the nature of the study as well as the intended research area made teacher research and classroom study a perfect fit for the present study.

3.2. Case Study

In the present study, a qualitative case study design was adopted. A case study refers to the in-depth and detailed investigation of a contextually predetermined unit in terms of participants, time, place and/or other situational factors (Flyvbjerg, 2011). Feagin et al. (2016) argue that "case studies enable the investigator to ground the observations with which she or he works" (p. 7). In other words, it can be suggested that case studies focus on specific individuals and their actions in specific contexts. Therefore, researchers who take on the case study design in their studies do not separate their participants from their natural contexts, and assess the reached results in line with the contextual cues. Likewise, Yin (2018) points out the importance of contextuality in case studies by claiming that researchers should not manipulate or ignore the contextual setting in which participants are observed. In addition to contextuality of a case study design, real-life situations, problems or solutions are often at the center of focus in case studies rather than theoretical or abstract notions, making the study process more practice-based (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Before analyzing the categories as well as implications of case studies in the present study, it is essential to explain why a case study design was intentionally adopted. First of all, the participants were to be observed within their own natural classroom environment without the exclusion of contextual factors, and their interaction with innovative classroom activities and materials were analyzed without breaking the natural flow of the lessons. Therefore, a case study design was appropriate in terms of the highly contextual nature of the present study for case studies aim at capturing

"people as they experience their natural, everyday circumstances" (Feagin et al., 2016, p. 8). Secondly, case studies allow in-depth explorations regarding the topics to be investigated (Crowe et al., 2011), and the present study aimed at investigating how an innovative tool, mainly integration of *TS 3*, could influence students' motivation levels as well as language attitudes through the implementation of various activities and materials which were planned and conducted carefully over the course of multiple months, which made a case study design feasible as a result of the detailed, specific and long-termed nature of this study. Furthermore, social interactions and results of such interactions are often studied in case studies (Feagin et al., 2016). The present study concentrated on social dynamic among students when they were to engage with the given classroom activities as well as materials, making a case study design appropriate. Finally, a problem, traditional nature of language classes in a Turkish high school, and possible solutions, *TS 3*'s integration, to this problem was investigated in the present study, and this aspect of the study matched with the problem analysis of a case study design (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In the present study, the classroom was taken as a case to be investigated with all its components including students, teacher, activities and materials.

Yin (2009) explains that there are three distinctive types of a case study: descriptive, exploratory and explanatory. Descriptive case study design was adopted in this study since I aimed at describing the classroom interactions, dynamics and students' perceptions regarding the innovative tool they were offered in their classroom environment.

In addition to the categories of a case study design, there is even more classification regarding the starting point of a case study. State (1995) argues that researchers can conduct a case study intrinsically, instrumentally or collectively. Intrinsic case study refers to a researcher's personal interest as well as enjoyment regarding the topic they aim at investigating. In such studies, researcher's position and role is highlighted. Instrumental case study, on the other hand, occurs when a researcher aims at becoming more knowledgeable in an area in order to grasp and conceptualize certain issues as well as concerns in a distinctive context. Finally, collective case study, as one can guess from the antecedent, is associated with investigating several cases and finding

commonality as well as dissimilarity among them so as to understand certain aspects of the intended research area. When all these three starting points were analyzed, it was seen that the present study was instrumental in nature for my main aim was at analyzing whether innovative tools in EFL setting could change students' behaviors as well as thoughts positively in terms of their motivation and language attitude in order to become more professional and versatile in my teaching career.

However, it should not be ignored that there was some intrinsic nature of the study as well. This was because I personally loved digital games, especially *TS 3*, and I strongly believed that such digital games could be beneficial in EFL setting; therefore, I intentionally implemented digital-game based teaching as well as *TS 3*, which made this study also intrinsic in nature.

Along with all the features, advantages as well as implications suggested above, it should be noted that there are several limitations to a case study design as well. Cope (2015) defines a case study design as rather challenging for this design is not given enough attention in social science research. Moreover, Krusenvik (2016) argues that a case study design is often not applicable to generalize the results and arguments; similarly, this design is not appropriate to find causality among certain behaviors, actions or events.

However, limitations are always there for each methodological approach as well as specific designs in social science research. Krusenvik (2016) mentions a similar argument by suggesting that "case study research, like all other research, complements the strengths and limitations of other types of research" (p. 2). That is, limitations of a case study design do not eliminate its merits or usability. In fact, these limitations can also lead to distinctive positive features. For instance, the fact that case studies do not focus on generalizations makes it possible for an intensive study where a specific context and unit is investigated in-depth without the concern of reaching universal results (Jacobsen, 2002). Similarly, it is reported that case studies can be utilized to investigate real-life situations and contemporary human interactions without ignoring the context surrounding them unlike several other methodological approaches and designs.

3.3. The Role and Position of the Researcher

Understanding and acknowledging the role of researcher especially in case studies is highly important as researcher is an indispensable part of case studies as they analyze participants as well as events within their actual context naturally, which casts an essential role to researcher and their actions within this natural context (Feagin et al., 2016). Moreover, in addition to being a data collector, analyzer and an investigator, researcher is a natural of a part of the group that is to be investigated in classroom studies since researcher acts as an actual teacher giving instruction to students and interacting with them one by one while conducting various activities with different materials, which emphasizes the active role of researcher in this type of qualitative studies (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993).

Being a case as well as classroom study under the qualitative methodological approach, the present study called for the researcher's active participation as the researcher aimed at innovating the learning process by implementing distinctive activities based on the gameplay offered in *TS 3* while also taking part in these given activities by interacting with students or playing the game with them. However, solely acknowledging the participation of the researcher in the present study was not enough for there are different approaches a researcher can follow in their study.

The first approach is being an insider. This particular approach refers to researcher's close relationship with the case they aim at working on; that is, they are a native of the context they investigate (Breen, 2007). The second approach is being an outsider which suggests that researcher does not have prior intimacy with the case they analyze; instead, they choose a context of which they are not a part previously, they investigate it, and then they leave the context to never experience it again (Breen, 2007). Gerrard (1995) likens the position of researchers pursuing this approach to "parachuters" as they parachute into an unknown area and, then, abandon it completely.

As it has been suggested several times throughout the sections, I, as the researcher, was the natural part of the group I aimed at investigating as the participants were my students and I was their English language teacher; thus, I could be regarded as a native

rather than a person parachuting into their classroom environment without prior interaction or relationship with them; thus, I took up an insider role in this study. It is suggested that there are several advantages of being an insider in a qualitative study. For instance, Dwyer and Buckle (2009) argue that "This insider role status frequently allows researchers more rapid and more complete acceptance by their participants. Therefore, participants are typically more open with researchers so that there may be a greater depth to the data gathered" (p. 58). Similarly, it is implied that participants tend to share their honest thoughts as well as feelings with a researcher who is insider since they already have a previous relationship with the researcher (Giwa, 2015). Furthermore, Ergun and Erdemir (2010) argue that participants do not tend to feel distant to the researcher analyzing them and collecting necessary data, which is another favorable factor of being an insider.

Surely, there are several disadvantages of taking up an insider role in a study as well. Firstly, it is suggested that researchers may have existential issues while collecting data from the participants they are already acquainted with; for instance, taking up the roles of both a teacher and a researcher at the same time may lead to confusion during analysis part (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Also, it is argued that being an insider to a research context may cause subjectivity and bias on the part of researcher as both participants and researcher already share some similar characteristics, which may harm the data analysis process (Greene, 2014). However, this does not mean that potential disadvantages of being an insider in a study cannot be minimized or overcome. Greene (2014) claims that debriefing, continuous observation, utilizing adequate materials and self-reflexivity can help suppress the concerns regarding being an insider.

Now, it is an appropriate time to mention the position of the researcher in this study. Since I was 13, I had always wanted to be an English teacher, and following this dream, I graduated from the EFL department of Middle East Technical University (METU) in 2020. Soon after I have started pursuing MA in ELT in the same university. During my undergraduate as well as graduate years, I took several elective courses focusing on the integration of Web 2.0 tools, computer applications, digital games as well as technology in general into language teaching process. These courses always encouraged us to use innovative tools to replace the traditional teaching environment

present in language classes in Turkey. I was also able to reflect on my own language learning process during my time in these courses as I learnt lots of vocabulary items as well as grammatical structures by engaging with digital games outside classroom environment when I was little; moreover, such games let me practice four skills by making me exposed to the target language both in written form and orally. For instance, I vividly remembered playing *TS 1* and *TS 3* almost every day when they were first released, and these digital games let me learn lots of language elements incidentally and extramurally, making me one of the most successful students in my English classes. Therefore, both my personal experiences and the implications suggested in the courses I took intrigued me to include digital games along with other Web 2.0 tools into my teaching to change the traditional techniques, activities as well as materials implicitly imposed in language classes in Turkey.

I was appointed by MoNE to a vocational and technical high school in Ankara as an English teacher in September, 2021, which means that I was still a novice teacher at the time of the study. I realized during my first months in teaching that students were not given a chance to practice English through innovative tools like Web 2.0 tools or digital games even though their classrooms had technological infrastructure. My students reported that they rarely used technology in previous years too. Therefore, I started integrating innovative tools into my teaching and quickly realized that students started to show favorable behaviors towards English classes, which made me even more interested in innovative teaching in general and digital-game based teaching specifically as research areas. In conclusion, my current position based on my university education, personal experiences and my teaching practice was in favor of integration of innovative tools like digital games, especially *TS* series. Thus, my own positive thoughts and feelings about the current situation in English classes in Turkey as well as my interest in digital-game based learning constituted a prominent reason as to why I chose this path in the thesis and how I my positioned myself as a researcher.

3.4. Research Setting

The present study took place in a vocational and technical high school in a district of Ankara. The high school was governed by MoNE; consequently, all teachers as well

as other staff were appointed by MoNE. MoNE gives each school a ranking based on their location, security and school-related opportunities, 1/1 being the best and 3/6 being the worst. The school investigated in this study was given the rank 1/2, meaning that the school offered favorable and respected conditions and opportunities even if it was not in the top-notch league. Even though the specifics as to why this ranking was given to this high school were not shared, the fact that it was located in the capital of Turkey and that the school had a long history, as it was founded in 1969, was probably the main reason behind this ranking. Thus, it could be argued that the high school analyzed in the present study was among the better schools in Turkey in terms of school opportunities.

Since the school was vocational and technical, the greatest focus was on profession-related courses both in terms of time and effort. For instance, students were to attend school 40-45 hours each week, and at least 10-15 hours of the total school time were directly related to their profession-related courses during Grades 9-11. Moreover, they did internship at least three days each week or during summer holidays by working in workshops about their vocations in Grade 12. The school investigated in this study offered different vocational and technical branches such as information technologies, electric-electronic technologies, machine technology, metal technology, furniture and interior design as well as motor vehicles technology as also shown in. Students chose their desired branches in Grade 9 and took related courses throughout their high school years. If more students chose a certain branch than the given capacity, students were ordered in line with their school successes in previous years, mainly based on their diploma grade. Also, students who wished to choose the technical machine technology branch needed to take high-school entrance exam, unlike other branches, and registered with their scores. Therefore, the most respected branch in this high school was technical machine technology as students had to be relatively successful in a centered exam.

Even though the greatest focus was on vocational and technical courses, there were also general courses each student had to take from Mathematics to English to Turkish Literature classes. These courses were generally called as *culture courses* since such courses aimed at enhancing students' overall knowledge regarding the world around

them as opposed to vocational and technical courses that gave them profession-specific knowledge that they would need when they started working or attended university. English classes were compulsory throughout all grades, and students were free to attend even more English classes through elective courses. In Grade 9, students were to take five hours of compulsory English class each week whereas they only took two hours of compulsory English classes in Grades 10-12, as also shown in. The coursebooks as well as other supplementary materials for English classes were given free of charge by MoNE, and even more free materials were offered online both by MoNE and other publishers that supported MoNE. Since *culture courses*, including English, did not improve students' profession-related skills, they were mostly not given enough importance, and, sometimes, they were completely ignored by some students. Since English was offered five hours each week in Grade 9, students took this course more seriously due to their high exposure to the language elements; however, they often started to ignore English courses in the upcoming grades due to low exposure.

Being an English teacher in this high school for almost two years, I also wanted mention the workplace organization, culture and overall atmosphere present in the school both in terms of teachers and students since understanding the cultural implications in vocational and technical high schools was vital to have a good grasp of the operational factors in such schools (Sönmez, 2006). In my own experiences, I could say that students at the school to be investigated were not academically successful as their priority was not attending university; thus, they mostly did not give extra effort to understand the concepts discussed in *culture courses*. Moreover, they did not come to school prepared. That is, they did not do their homework or brought related materials as they did not give enough importance to such courses. However, this did not necessarily mean that they did not have the capacity to internalize the concepts in given *culture courses*. In fact, they were eager to engage with activities as well as materials if the subjects were offered in interactive and fun ways. Therefore, I tried to innovate the language classes as much as possible with the integration of technology, and this way, many students tried to use English language effectively in class. Hence, it could be said that students, despite their low academic background, could get better at English language as well as other culture subjects if teachers could

manage to attract their attention and make them realize that such courses were as important as their profession-related courses.

Apart from students' perspectives, it was vital to understand how teachers as well as administrators thought and felt. According to my own experiences, many teachers and administrators acknowledged the fact that students were academically lacking; hence, they watered down the subjects they aimed at teaching especially for the students attending the vocational branches since the students attending the technical branch were able to learn complex educational concepts more easily. Therefore, most exams were easy, and more direct ways of teaching were employed by teachers, meaning that traditional activities were widely seen and encouraged in classes. As a result, it could be said that workplace culture of the high school I worked both as a teacher and a researcher was associated with watering down subjects and making students' life easier. However, it was clear that students did not like direct ways of teaching even if teachers chose these ways in order to help students learn more basic information without making too much of an effort. Thus, the atmosphere and culture of the school at the time of the study had some implications about self-fulfilling prophecy. That is, teachers believed that students were academically lacking; thus, they taught only the most basic points with traditional activities; however, students did not like traditional activities and did not engage with the educational points given by their teachers, leading to even poorer academic performance among students.

3.5. Sampling

Convenience sampling is utilized in the present study. This type of sampling refers to non-random choice of participants who meet certain criteria (Etikan et al., 2015). Convenience sampling was intentionally adopted due to the nature of the study. That is, this was a case study focusing on a particular class and all the students that attended this class; therefore, each member of the class was a potential participant in the study. In other words, I was their teacher, and they were my students; thus, my innovative attempt had a particular effect on each student, making all of them candidates in my study. As a result, convenience sampling was the best sampling method that describes the nature of this case study.

There are certain advantages of adopting convenience sampling in a research study. Firstly, implementation of this type of sampling when it comes to researching one's own students is highly effective and meaningful (Dörnyei, 2007). Secondly, convenience sampling is affordable since it does not take considerable amount of time and effort to find participants (Etikan et al., 2015). Moreover, this sampling method is applicable for qualitative studies that aim at understanding certain issues or concerns, which was in line with the nature of the present study (Stratton, 2021). Surely, there are certain limitations of convenience sampling too. For example, one cannot generalize the results reached in this way, or there could be apparent bias on the part of researcher while choosing participants for their studies due to non-random recruiting process (Etikan, 2015). However, these limitations do not make convenience sampling impracticable for there are certain criteria, which were also taken into consideration in the present study, to overcome such limitations as suggested by Stratton (2021):

- Form unambiguous objectives and focus solely on the variables regarding these objectives.
- Determine the nature of the case and the role of participants
- Explain the background information of participants
- Collect data through different methods and tools
- Utilize descriptive analysis instead of statistical analysis
- Identify possible restrictions and concerns

3.6. Participants

All participants were high school students from Grade 9, and they all attended the same classes in the same classroom, which means that they were classmates. Their ages ranged between 14 and 15 at the time of the study which took place in the spring semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. The participants were all male, and they were from the branch of technical machine technology, getting education on computer numerical control in their profession-related classes. As they were from the technical branch of the high school, they all took the high-school entrance exam to be enrolled

in the branch. The participant with the lowest score to enroll in this branch got 302/500 from the exam, and several participants got as high as 360/500, meaning that the participants were relatively successful and homogenous in terms of exam scores in the high-school entrance exam that assessed their scientific, mathematical, historical, religious, Turkish as well as English knowledge. Since the participants attended the technical branch, they were separated from other students attending vocational branches in a different school building even though they shared the same 9th Grade curricula proposed by MoNE and adapted by school teachers. The participants were more successful compared to other students attending different branches; thus, most teachers prepared more complex materials, activities as well as assessment tools for the participants.

In addition to similarities regarding their ages, branches, similar exam scores and overall achievement compared to other branches, the participants held several other similarities too. For instance, all of them attended state schools in their primary and secondary education years, and they all lived in nearby vicinities, which means that they had approximately the same opportunities in terms of social and educational life. Moreover, they shared similar ambitions as most participants suggested that they wanted to get a university education on computer numerical control and other related departments when they graduated from high school. Finally, most participants openly argued that they chose this high school as well as the branch on purpose, which means that they all wanted to be in this particular position and studied in line with this ambition. As a result, it could be suggested that the participants in the present study formed a homogenous group. Forming a homogenous group in a qualitative study, like the present study, was especially vital since homogeneity among participants made the research process easier and more valid (Freitas et al., 1998). Moreover, it was suggested that "the more homogeneous the groups in terms of background and perspectives, the smaller the number of groups needed" (Freitas et al., 1998, p. 11).

The number of participants in the present study was 22. The class originally consisted of 30 students; however, one student dropped out of school, and seven students openly expressed that they did not wish to participate in the study; thus, seven students were removed from the study. Before asking student to participate in the study, necessary

formal permissions were received from the university Ethics Committee as well as MoNE. Then, students were given consent forms that gave necessary information about the nature of the study. Students were given some time to read all the information, and then they were given a chance to accept or refuse to take part in the study. Those who wanted to be a participant in the study filled out their names and signed the forms. Since students were minors, getting their consent was not enough on its own. Therefore, consent forms were also distributed to their parents, and their parents also gave their permission by signing the forms.

This way, consents of university, ministry, parents and students were all obtained to continue the study. The participants were also informed that they could leave the study whenever they wanted if they somehow felt uncomfortable during the implementation of *TS 3* activities or related data collections tools and that their school achievements would not be affected by their participation in the study. Furthermore, it was reported that pseudonyms would be assigned to each participant. Those who did not wish to participate in the study also played *TS 3* and completed activities based on the gameplay offered in *TS 3* since the game was utilized as a whole classroom activity to reach certain objectives, yet I did not include their reactions or perceptions during participant observation, and they were not asked to be interviewed; they just completed *TS 3* activities just like ordinary classroom activities.

Maximum variability refers to the in-depth analysis of certain individuals and their detailed opinions that represent the overall perceptions of the group they are a part of. (Malterud et al., 2015). Therefore, working with 22 participants during actual implementation of *TS 3* activities in classroom environment was possible thanks to the participant observation as well as field notes taken by the researcher. Therefore, 8 out of 22 participants were chosen and asked to take part in interviews in line with the maximum variability principles. Below are the four categories of participant choice and related information:

High Achievement: Murat and Mert were two of the most successful students in their class in terms of English exam scores, quiz results and activity completion. For instance, their overall semester score in English language lesson was over 90.

Moreover, their self-perceived English proficiency was high as they openly expressed that their English knowledge was *great*. Therefore, these two students were intentionally picked for the interview parts to represent the high-achievers among the participants.

Low Achievement: Orhan and Oğuz were among the participants who had relatively worse English exam scores than the other participants. They also had poorer performance during activities and quizzes.

For instance, their latest exam scores at the time of the study were lower than 65, and they rarely showed excellence in their homework. As a result, they were purposefully chosen as the participants representing the low-achievers in the classroom.

High Interest: Caner and Erkan were two of the most attentive participants in the classroom regardless of their proficiency in English as well as their exam scores. They always seemed to listen to their teacher, take notes, do homework on time and make an active effort to participate in the activities even if they made frequent mistakes.

For instance, they were among the participants who asked teacher questions regarding the points they did not understand and tried to finish the given tasks without getting distracted easily. Thus, they were selected to represent the participants showing high interest in English lessons.

Low Interest: Aydın and Burak were among the most reckless participants in the class regardless of their achievement in assessment tools. They frequently forgot to bring their books and notebooks, and they had a tendency not to complete given tasks due to being reckless or paying attention to various non-educational instances.

For instance, they were sometimes spotted sleeping during class hours, and they would only get up when warned by the teacher. As a result, they were intentionally chosen as the participants presenting the participants showing low levels of interest in English lessons.

3.7. Data Collection Tools

It is encouraged to benefit from multiple data collection tools in case studies for adopting different data collection tools allows research to investigate the topic under study from different perspectives in a detailed manner (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Furthermore, utilizing multiple data collection tools can make the study more systematic (Altheide & Johnson, 1994). Additionally, taking advantage of various data collection tools at the same time compare and contrast the obtained data can be a way of triangularization method that can act as validation of data (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Therefore, three different yet related data collection tools were utilized in the present study.

3.7.1. Participant Observation

Participant observation refers to the investigation of a certain group and their practices, behavioral attitudes as well as conversations by also considering researcher as a natural part of the observed group; that is researcher takes part in the investigated group and join their practices while examining the participants without disturbing the natural flow of the actions (Spradley, 2016). This observation technique was adopted in this study to take relevant field notes as to the participants who played or watched *TS 3* and their practices as well as their interactions with one another and the researcher who also took an active role in managing the game and its related activities. The reason why this technique was utilized in this study is that participants observation offered the advantage of on-the-spot observation in a natural environment by also enhancing the quality of sets of data as well as interpretation (Musante, 2015). Moreover, participation observation was a natural requirement for the present study as the teacher had to be a part of the classroom activities while giving instructions, helping students play the game and administrating the game-related activities.

Adopting participant observation in the study made taking field notes more natural. It is known that every action, reaction, hesitation, expression as well as a simple word can lead to a substantial set of data in qualitative studies; hence, taking field notes whenever necessary is encouraged to obtain data (Dörnyei, 2007). Similarly, Creswell (2013) reports that taking advantage of field notes may enrich and diversify the data

sets for researcher, which makes field notes a precious data collection tool. Moreover, "field notes are often used in conjunction with theoretical memos and researcher journals to record the researcher's conceptual reasoning and methodological decisions" (Maharaj, 2016, p. 114). As a result of the evident advantages of taking field notes in a qualitative study and the interactive nature of adopting participant observation method, I took advantage of field notes in various ways in the present study.

I always brought a notebook whenever I implemented an activity based on *TS 3* gameplay. As I did not have a chance to videotape students and their interactivity with the gameplay, it was necessary to take notes during such activities. I firstly focused on their initial reactions when *TS 3* activities were explained and instructions were given as their initial perceptions towards the gameplay could be an important indicator of their mood about the integration of *TS 3* activities into their regular classroom setting. Moreover, I took relevant field notes during the actual implementation of the activities by analyzing their movements, mimics, willingness to take part in the activities and their interactions with one another. I also noted down how many participants engaged with the gameplay and how many participants actively completed the tasks. In certain cases, the participants were asked whether they liked the given *TS 3* gameplay and follow-up activities for that week, and their answers to the question were taken as field notes for direct answers from the participants could constitute valuable data for the analysis part.

Taking field notes was not limited to in-class integration of *TS 3* gameplay as certain participants were asked to take part in interviews in different times of the study. I brought a notebook to the interview sessions as the participants' non-verbal reactions to the questions could lead to substantial data especially in terms of language motivation and attitude. Thus, during the interview, I frequently moved around and investigated the participants' pauses, hesitations, excitement, concerns as well as general physical movements to get a better understanding of their answers to the given questions. Moreover, the participants were asked to watch a recording of their previous *TS 3* gameplay in one of the interview sessions. For they were silent and engaged with the video, it was vital to take field notes regarding their behavioral changes and

reactions. Otherwise, making them watch their own gameplay video would not give enough information about their in-depth perceptions.

Even though taking field notes is about the participants most of the time, it should not be forgotten that field notes may contribute to the researcher's position and overall knowledge regarding the topic to be investigated (Borg, 2001). For instance, in this particular study, analyzing the participants' verbal and non-verbal reactions to the *TS 3* gameplay activities helped me realize that the participants were more into certain types of gameplays like building houses and creating sims freely rather than following linear gameplays imposed by instructions. Thus, taking field notes regarding this specific point accordingly encouraged me to come up with more versatile gameplay activities that gave freedom to the participants in the upcoming weeks, which strengthened the study and contributed to me as both a researcher and a teacher.

3.7.2. Stimulated Recall Interview

Dempsey (2010) explains stimulated recall interviewing technique as "interviewing individuals by playing them audio or audiovisual recordings of their own behavior in social situations and discussing different aspects of those recorded interactions" (p. 249). According to Creswell (2013), taking advantage of such technological attempts is understandable in the contemporary world. Stimulated recall interviews are often utilized to allow participants to recall what they have done, thoughts as well as felt through recordings showing them their previous behaviors in the study process (Nguyen et al., 2013). There are certain advantages of this type of interview. For example, it gives participants a chance to observe themselves and analyze the situations from an outsider perspective; moreover, it helps participants talk about events that happened in the past (Rowe, 2009). Also, stimulated recall interviews are reported to enhance the interactivity of the interview processes thanks to the extra attention it brings to the environment (Dempsey, 2010). As a result of these advantages, stimulated recall interviews were utilized in the present study.

All *TS 3* gameplay sessions were recorded by a screen capturing application installed to the computer. This application recorded not only the visual outputs but also the

audio present in the game. Since students could develop stress and hesitation due to the presence of a camera, their in-class behaviors were not recorded; only the screen was recorded to be used in the stimulated recall interview session. Students were aware of the fact that their gameplay was being recorded while playing the game, and their game choices did not seem to be affected by this fact.

Since the eventual length of the screen capturing videos was approximately 500 minutes at the time of the stimulated recall interview session, it was necessary to pick up only certain parts of the videos and shorten them so that students would not get bored while watching the videos in the actual interview environment. For this reason, four different gameplay sessions from different weeks focusing on different language objectives were chosen, and two minutes of gameplay from each video was shown to the participants. All the four videos represented different types of gameplays. For instance, the first video was about Create-A-Sim feature of the game, where students could create their own characters by adjusting physical as well as personal appropriates to practice vocabulary items related to physical features. The second video, on the other hand, focused on build mode in which students used the house decoration feature of the game to compare certain rooms with each other and then create their own rooms based on the comparison, which helped them revise comparative and superlative grammar points. The third video was about the direct gameplay of *TS 3*. That is, students did not create a character or design a room; they walked around with their characters, met new people, went to different places, conducted various activities from swimming to telling funny stories in order to practice speaking skills with a special focus on giving advice. Finally, the fourth video was about a gameplay controlled by the teacher and depicted by the participants. These four videos were chosen to represent different language elements as well as gameplay techniques offered in *TS 3*. (For more information regarding the nature of the activities, see section 3.9. where all gameplay sessions are described in detail.)

Students were asked to watch certain parts of the aforementioned gameplay sessions at the beginning of the stimulated recall interview, and then they were asked questions about these videos. For instance, they were asked questions about what they did or what language elements they practiced in the particular gameplay sessions or how they

felt during the process. After students answered these direct questions about the given videos, they were asked several questions regarding their motivation levels and attitudes towards English language learning in line with the integration of *TS 3* into their regular classes. Students were told to think about the gameplay videos they had just watched while answering these questions. The interview session was audio-recorded from the very beginning to the ending, and the participants' oral consents were obtained before audio-recording. Since MoNE regulations made it clear that each interview session should be under one lesson hour (40 minutes), I arranged the questions in a way that all 8 participants could answer the given questions within the permitted time period as also seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1.
Details of the stimulated recall interview session (SRI)

Date	Length	Field Notes
10/05/2023	31 minutes (active discussion) 8 minutes (gameplay watching session)	The participants remembered the previous sessions. The participants based their opinions on gameplay sessions by giving examples.

3.7.3. Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are reported to be the most popular interview type in qualitative studies (Brinkmann, 2014). Semi-structured interviews make it possible for researcher to ask follow up questions in line with the responses of participants to the pre-determined structured questions (Adams, 2015).

Barriball and While (1994) argues that there are various advantages of utilizing semi-structured interviews in qualitative studies as "they are well suited for the exploration of the perceptions and opinions of respondents regarding complex and sometimes sensitive issues and enable probing for more information and clarification of answers" (p. 330). Moreover, they may unearth valuable information regarding the individual and independent thoughts and feelings of participants about certain topics (Adams,

2015). As a result of their popularity as well as advantages in obtaining data, semi-structured interview sessions were conducted in the present study.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted in groups. All of the eight participants who were selected in terms of maximum variability were encouraged to discuss the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English classes in terms of possible enhancement in their motivation and language attitude through a set of pre-determined semi-structured questions.

The participants were not interviewed individually as group interviews could allow participants to feel comfortable in sharing their perceptions while also observing and interacting with other participants, making the interview process interactive in nature (Hennink, 2013). Moreover, group discussions are known to help researchers as well as their participants to explore and explain certain topics through a diversified context that is formed a result of the interactive processes present in group discussions. (Hennink, 2013). Therefore, conducting group interviews was found to be a better fit for the present study and adopted accordingly.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted twice in the research process. In the first interview session, the participants were asked general questions regarding the integration of computer-based activities into their English classes. Then, they were asked specific questions about *TS 3*. For instance, they were encouraged to talk about positive as well as negative sides of *TS 3* as a game; then, they were asked questions regarding the implementation of *TS 3* gameplay in their English activities in comparison with traditional activities (See Appendix D for interview questions).

During the interview process, the participants were asked several follow-up questions, and they commented on each other's sentences several times to clarify their points. The interview took place in the library of the school campus, and there were no other people in the room at the time of the interview. The participants' responses to the questions and comments were audio-recorded after they had given oral consent to the recording process, and the interview took around 30 minutes, as also shown in Table 2. The participants were exposed to approximately 250 minutes of *TS 3* gameplay and

various follow-up in-class activities regarding the gameplay at the time of the first group interview. All interview sessions were conducted in Turkish.

Table 2.
Details of the first semi-structured interview session

Date	Length	Field Notes
22/03/2023	30 minutes	The participants were eager to talk. Their comments were sometimes repetitive. They were comfortable.

The second group interview session was conducted at the end of the whole process, which means that the participants had already conducted all 13 activities based on *TS 3* gameplay at the time of the interview. Therefore, the participants were exposed to more than 550 minutes of *TS 3* gameplay when they were asked to share their responses to the questions asked during this interview session.

Since this was the last interview session focusing on the whole process from beginning to the very ending, several questions from the previous interview sessions were also repeated to find out whether the participants' perceptions and behaviors would along the process in different interview sessions.

Several novel questions were directed to the participants as well. For instance, they were asked to think about all gameplay sessions they took part in and share their thoughts regarding the success of the sessions by focusing on their own motivation levels and attitudes towards English language.

Moreover, they were asked whether they would like to see the integration of *TS 3* and other digital games in English lessons in the upcoming years. This interview session took 37 minutes, and the participants seemed to be eager to answer the directed questions as well as follow-up points, and they contributed to each other's comments by making additional notes frequently.

Table 3.
Specifics of the second semi-structured interview session

Date	Length	Field Notes
26/05/2023	37 minutes	They commented on each other's opinions. They were enthusiastic about digital games.

3.8. *The Sims 3* as a Gaming Choice

It is of importance to explain why *TS 3* was used in the present study, and how it was specifically utilized during the data collection process. Before that, understanding the nature of the gameplay offered in *TS 3* is a good way to contextualize the process. *TS 3* is a life-simulation game in which there are no pre-determined sets of missions or paths to pursue in order to thrive in the game. That is, players are free to make their own choices and continue playing the game according to their own game style preferences and agendas, which makes the gameplay highly open-ended and open to creativity. *TS 3* consists of three main gameplay modes: buy mode, create-a-sim mode, gameplay mode. The first mode is specifically designed to build a house from scratch by designing the layout and to furnish the built houses by buying different household items from chairs to fridges to TVs (see Figure 2). In this mode, it is substantial to keep track of Simoleons (in-game currency) your Sims (in-game characters) have so that you can purchase better household items in accordance with your preferences and art style. The second mode is all about creating a Sim by designing their physical features as well as their personality. For instance, choosing different hairstyles, changing hair color, altering skin tone, choosing nose shape, finding appropriate outfits for different occasions, deciding on the favorite color and personal traits can be regarded as a few of the options offered in this mode (see Figure2).

The last mode is all about controlling your Sim that you have created in the house you have built and the neighborhood surrounding your house (see Figure 2). It is possible to take on different hobbies from fishing to martial arts to astronomy and pursue different professions from law enforcement to criminal career in the live mode. Moreover, Sims can communicate with other Sims present in their neighborhood,

affect them and get affected by them in line with the certain interactions your Sims choose to make. For instance, Sims can be in love with other Sims or be an eternal enemy to them. Additionally, Sims can do various activities and visit different places in the neighborhood. To give several examples, they can swim in the ocean, they can read books in the library, they can go to city hall, they can get a flu shot in hospital or they can attend festivals to enjoy seasonal activities. These are only a few examples regarding everyday activities; however, Sims can also conduct more eccentric activities like going into the future, fighting mummies in Egypt, attending rebel groups in university campus, swimming with mermaids or living their lives as fairies or vampires, which means that possibilities are almost limitless in the live mode in *TS 3*.

Finally, it should be noted that, in all modes, the gameplay essentially mimics the real life in an autonomous manner. This means the game has a dynamic nature, offering lots of different stories and gameplay advancements as the in-game time passes. For instance, baby Sims grow up in time, or older Sims die; married couples can get a divorce, or Sims who are in love can get married and make babies. Similarly, Sims who initially hate dogs can adopt several dogs as the time passes and much more. Therefore, it can be argued that the game never repeats itself and never blocks the creativity as the gameplay itself evolves all the time.

There were various reasons as to why *TS 3* was intentionally chosen in the present study. First of all, *TS 3* was a non-violent game that was released as a 13+ game worldwide. The most violent occasions in the game were rare fighting among two nemesis Sims. Even then, the fighting would be censored behind a caricaturized dust cloud. Thus, *TS 3* was appropriate for both the participants and school setting. Secondly, the researcher was familiar with the gameplay offered in *TS 3*; therefore, he would be able to explain the game in-depth and help students whenever they felt lost during gameplay, which made *TS 3* a feasible game choice. Moreover, *TS 3* had an immense potential for creativity as well as non-determined opportunities (Voronaya, 2022), and this creativity embedded in the gameplay made activity creation and language-related objective integration into the gameplay elements easier on the part of the researcher. *TS* series was also a popular game among teenagers as well as EFL students (Ranalli, 2008), which was a perfect fit for the intended audience in the study.

In addition to all these reasons, another reason why *TS 3* was adopted in the present study was that there were no loading screens or invisible walls in the gameplay unlike the other *TS* establishments (Rak, 2015), and this was an important factor to save time during classroom integration in the present study.

Figure 2.
Screenshots exemplifying the gameplay modes in The Sims 3

Even though the aforementioned reasons were highly important in gaming choice, educational, innovational and motivational reasons were the main considerations while deciding on the most appropriate digital game to be adopted. In terms of educational reasons, *TS 3* was reported to be effective in helping students improve their language-related skills and enhancing their attitudes towards language learning in previous studies. For instance, *TS 3* was able to help students improve writing abilities (Monjelat et al., 2013), enhance speaking skills as well as attitudes towards language learning (Tafazoli, 2012), foster communicative competence (Lee, 2012), improve vocabulary acquisition (Kohler, 2014) raise cultural awareness regarding the target language (Baierschmidt, 2013) and much more.

Another reason why *TS 3* was purposefully chosen in the present study was that it was able to cover all four main components of motivation as suggested by Bandura (1996) and mentioned in Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2012). As for competence, *TS 3* offered in-game situations as well as related follow-up activities in which the participants could use English as a medium of instruction to complete given

tasks and challenges, which, in return, helped them practice various language elements from speaking skills to grammar to vocabulary. As for interest, the integration of *TS 3* helped create joyful and attractive atmosphere in which the participants could show higher level of interest towards the activities and given tasks as digital games were proven to be very popular among teenagers.

TS 3 also offered high level of autonomy during many in-game activities as the participants were given a chance to freely design their houses, create their characters and conduct a number of different in-game actions. Finally, as for relevance, *TS 3* was able to help me cover certain language objectives that were present in the curricula effortlessly thanks to the versatile gameplay offered in the game, making the gameplay elements relevant to EFL setting. As a result of the presence of all these components within the game, *TS 3* was a good fit to increase the participants' motivation levels especially intrinsically.

Apart from educational and motivational merits of *TS 3* regarding language acquisition, another reason why *TS 3* was chosen in the present study was that *TS 3* was an innovative and technological tool that could feed the classroom environment full of participants born into technology.

Several scholars all around the world argued that integration of *TS 3* into classes could innovate the classroom environment as a result of its technological, active as well as student-based basis and gameplay that could feed higher order thinking skills, metacognitive abilities. (Monjelat et al., 2013; Voronaya, 2022). *TS 3* also could offer the general advantages of simulation games such as autonomy, authenticity, enjoyability and playfulness (Anderson et al., 2008; DeKeyser, 2010; Franciosi, 2017; Ibrahim 2018), which was another factor in gaming choice.

Since the present study also explored students' motivation levels towards language learning, the digital game to be adopted in the study had to be motivational in nature too, and *TS 3* was again a good fit since the game was reported to not only motivate students in distinctive classroom environments but also lower anxiety levels, increase

enthusiasm and have a positive impact on students' overall language attitudes (Bakar & Nosratirad, 2013; Establés-Heras, 2013; Tafazoli, 2012).

As a result of all the given reasons, *TS 3* was proposed as the gaming choice in the present study to innovate traditional classroom environment through technological as well as motivational implications *TS 3* holds. Moreover, Gee's (2005) design principles regarding successful learning in digital games were matched with *TS 3* and its related in-class activities in order to further justify the gaming choice in the present study.

These principles mainly suggest that successful digital games include certain features that enable players to learn concepts within the gameplays they offer and that these features can also be integrated into classroom environments to help teachers teach certain subjects.

These principles include *co-design, customize, identity, manipulation and distributed knowledge, well-ordered problems, pleasantly frustrating, cycles of expertise, information "on demand" and "just in time", fish tanks, sandboxes, skills as strategies, system thinking* and finally *meaning as an action image*. These principles were defined and matched with *TS 3 in* Table 4.

Table 4.
Design principles suggested by Gee (2005) and their role in TS 3

Gee's Principles	Their Presence in *TS 3*
Co-design: "What the player does matters and each player, based on his or her own decisions and actions, takes a different trajectory through the game world" (p. 7)	The game does not have pre-determined gameplay; thus, players are to make their own decisions and experience the consequences of their decisions.
Customize: "Players are able to customize the game play to fit their learning and playing styles" (p. 7)	The game allows players to customize their characters' physical features, personalities, their objects as well as their houses.

Table 4 (continued)

Identity: "Good games offer players identities that trigger a deep investment on the part of the player" (p. 7)	The game makes it possible to create characters as well as houses in accordance with the fantasies and preferences of players.
Manipulation and Distributed Knowledge: "The more and better a player can manipulate a character, the more the player invests in the game world" (p. 8)	Player is responsible for every action of their characters; thus, they are able to manipulate every aspect of their life.
Well-ordered Problems: "Earlier parts of a good game are always looking forward to later parts" (p. 9)	The game becomes progressively more complex as the player levels up in their professions, skills and family relationships.
*Pleasantly Frustrating: "*Good games adjust challenges and give feedback in such a way that different players feel the game is challenging but doable" (p. 10)	The challenges or events occurring in the game are always moderate in difficulty, and player is rarely punished if they are unable to complete the given challenges and events.
*Cycles of Expertise: "*Expertise is formed in any area by repeated cycles of learners practicing skills until they are nearly automatic" (p. 10)	The easy-to-use interface present in the game makes Sim controlling rather smooth and easy.
Information 'On Demand' and 'Just in Time': "Players don't need to read a manual to start, but can use the manual as a reference" (p. 11)	Players do not need to do tutorial in order to start the game as the core mechanics are very straightforward. However, occasional pop-ups and embedded guides help players for detailed actions when such actions occur

Table 4 (continued)

*Fish Tanks: "*In the real world, a fish tank can be a little simplified ecosystem that clearly displays some critical variables and their interactions" (p. 12)	The game does not let you start with all the possible achievements and challenges the game has to offer; you start with simplified version of the game, and the game gradually becomes more complex.
Sandboxes: "…if learners are put into a situation that feels like the real thing, but with risks and dangers greatly mitigated, they can learn well and still feel a sense of authenticity and accomplishment" (p. 12)	Since the game is life-simulation, it offers authentic-like situations where players are able to mimic real life without actual consequences.
Skills as Strategies: "In good games, players learn and practice skill packages as part and parcel of accomplishing things they need and want to accomplish" (p. 13)	Players need to get better at the game elements in order to obtain Simoleons, gain skills and purchase better household items.
*System Thinking: "*People learn skills, strategies, and ideas best when they see how they fit into an overall larger system to which they give meaning" (p. 14)	The main principle behind the game is surviving. All the skills and other in-game elements are a way to achieve this.
*Meaning as Action Image: "*Humans do not usually think through general definitions and logical principles. Rather, they think through experiences they have had and imaginative reconstructions of experience" (p. 14)	The game is based on audiovisual input rather than written input; thus, players do not have to read concepts or in-game definitions all the time.

As a result, it could be suggested that *TS 3* was a good fit according to the principles suggested by Gee (2005). The substantiality of these principles was that they aimed at

explaining both successful games in terms of gameplay and their feasibility in educational settings at the same time, mixing education with general digital game experiences. Since *TS 3* was able to cover all the principles, it was also a feasible game to integrate into EFL setting and accordingly adopted in the present study.

3.9. Timeline of the Study and Descriptions of In-Class Activities

The study took place in a time period of approximately four months in the spring semester of 2022-2023 academic year, and different *TS 3* gameplays and follow-up activities were conducted each week in accordance with the curricula objectives proposed by MoNE. Accordingly, each week was associated with different objectives and functions, calling for different treatment. In order to grasp the nature of the activities and time periods, timeline of the study and descriptions about the *TS 3* gameplays and activities conducted each week were given in this section (see Appendix I for the table depicting each week's activity).

Orientation Period: Before the beginning of the actual study, the participants were exposed to *TS 3* for approximately 200 minutes (five sessions) over the course of five weeks. In these sessions, I gave the participants information regarding the nature of *TS 3* and showed them the basics of the game. The participants learnt about controls, interface, buy mode, create-a-sim mode and live mode by both watching me and playing the game on their own. Even though this period aimed at familiarizing the participants with the game, I still integrated English language elements into their gameplay. For instance, they built themselves houses and described their houses by using "there is/are", some participants imagined a room and explained their room by using household objects and prepositions of place; then, other participants listened to them and designed a room in accordance with the instructions given by their friends.

Since this period was conducted before the actual study, the main aim was to make them get used to the game as much as possible so that they would not have any problems while playing the game later on; thus, I did not take any field notes or did not conduct in-class activities that could really challenge them. I found this period to

be very effective and useful since the participants were able to learn how to play the game thanks to the orientation process.

The First Session: The participants were told that they would create their own Sims collectively by taking turns. Each participant would firstly write down a sentence describing a physical feature on the board (*e.g. She has got blue skirts; she is brunette*). Then, they would control the game and create the Sim in accordance with the sentence they had just written. All students participated in this activity at least once, and they seemed to have fun with plenty of laughs while completing the activity as they were free to create funny-looking and unrealistic Sims like a pink-haired old punk lady. The preparation phase of this activity was quite straightforward as the game itself had all the necessary components embedded in its Create-A-Sim mode. The activity lasted 40 minutes (a session) and the curricular objective to be covered was *asking about and describing people's appearances and characters.*

The Second Session: The participants were told to compare and contrast two vastly different rooms shown in *TS 3* by focusing on the appearances of interiors and art design of the rooms. After approximately seven participants made comparison between the rooms, the participants were told to design their own room by taking turns and compare it with the previous rooms. After 10 participants controlled the game and purchased various household items of their choice, the participants started to focus on the differences as well as similarities between their own room and the previous rooms that were already built in a whole class discussion. The activity lasted 40 minutes and the participants were eager to take part in the activity. Sometimes, the participants became quite noisy while talking to each other, but their private speeches were still about the activity, and they were having fun; thus, I did not intervene most of the time. One challenge behind this activity was, as suggested, related to time and classroom management. The participants sometimes took too much time to make a move. The curricular objective to be covered was *comparing characteristics and appearances.*

The Third Session: This week's activity was mainly on speaking and present continuous tense. The participants were put in groups of four. Two of the participants would face the screen whereas the remaining two participants faced their friends. The

ones who could see the screen were told to watch me doing various eccentric and unusual activities in *TS 3* such as fighting sharks and catching a thief. Then, they would describe the scenes by using present continuous tense to their friends who could not watch the scenes. Finally, the group members who heard the scenes through their friends would draw the scenes in a piece of paper. At the end of the activity, I collected all their papers and analyzed their drawings. Most students were able to draw the scenes successfully, and their friends mostly described the scenes in English even though they sometimes switched to Turkish when they had major problems in expressing themselves. The preparation of this activity took considerable amount of time, which might be a challenge for teachers who do not have extra time to come up with such activities. The activity lasted 40 minutes and the objective behind the activity was *talking about current activities.*

The Fourth Session: The participants were shown three different buildings with different purposes in *TS 3*. They were asked to describe the buildings by focusing on different aspects of them *(i.e. purpose, size, color, location).* Approximately 10 students participated in this part of the activity, and I asked them several follow-up questions *(e.g. which one is your favorite? which one is the ugliest?)* to get even more detailed answers. Then, the participants were asked whether location was a huge factor in the differences among buildings. After a quick whole class discussion, I asked them to choose a specific location in the *TS 3*'s open world, and students chose a relatively cheaper part of the town. Then, I asked them to create a house that would reflect the cheapness of the surrounding locations, and 13 students designed a house by purchasing cheaper and old-fashioned objects in turns. Students mostly liked the activity and the overall participation was high. The preparation phase of the activity took significant amount of time, which could be, again, a challenge for teachers who cannot spare time for this type of activities. The activity lasted 60 minutes and the objective that was covered in the activity was *asking about and describing cities.*

The Fifth Session: The participants were asked to whether or not they had gotten on a plane before. After a quick discussion, I told them that we would visit an airport in *TS 3* (see Figure 3). In the first part of the activity, I walked around the airport by controlling my Sim and described important places as well as activities associated with

airports *(i.e. check-in-desk, passport control, security check, baggage)*. After the introduction of new vocabulary items as well as activities, I selected seven-eight students randomly one by one and asked them questions about the airport *(e.g. where is the luggage area? what happens during security check?).* Then, the participants would answer the questions by controlling the Sim. For instance, if they were asked about security check, they would go to the security area in the game and show us the steps and describe the process accordingly.

Even though not many students could participate in the activity due to time limitations, the activity was a success as the main aim was to talk about transportation and introduce airport-related vocabulary items. In the upcoming sessions, the participants were asked about the vocabulary items they had learnt in this session, and they were able to remember all of them successfully. The challenge behind this activity was creating the airport itself before the actual classroom implementation. Finding necessary items and spending time on them to create a possible airport was tiresome. The activity lasted 40 minutes and the covered objective was *talking about travel and tourism.*

Figure 3.
The airport venue utilized in the activity

The Sixth Session: In this week's sessions, I showed them a Sim's childhood and current condition and wanted them to describe the Sim's current condition by using

sentences with “am/is/are”. After a couple of participants shared their answers, I asked them to focus on the childhood version of the same Sim by forming sentences with “was/were”. After approximately 10 students shared their answers, I divided the white board into two and with the titles “then” and “now”. I invited the participants to come and write down some random sentences with “was/were” and “am/is/are”.

Finally, I wanted them to create a Sim (both past and present versions) in line with the sentences they had just written on the board, and approximately 15 students took turns to create the Sim. Most participants were willing to participate in the activity even though a few participants who were not eager to join the activity made noise by talking about irrelevant things. I had to warn them a few times throughout the activity. There were not any major challenges behind the preparation of this activity on the part of the teacher as it was a self-made activity. The activity lasted 60 minutes and the main objective to be covered in the activity was *talking about past events*.

The Seventh Session: The participants were told that they would visit Egypt in *TS 3* and that they would go to different ancient structures in which they would look for treasure. Then, I controlled the Sim and went to different tombs and historical structures to conduct various activities like solving puzzles, jumping through traps, finding gold. After each historical activity, I asked students to write down what had just happened by using past simple tense. Then, I would choose random participants to share their answers with the whole class; then, other participants would share the details their friends forgot to mention to fully depict the scene. This way, 7-8 participants were chosen to share their answers explicitly, and all participants were given a chance to analyze the historical activities and use past simple tense. Then, I would collect all the papers and announce the paper with the most descriptive and correct paragraph to be winner of the activity. The participants were mostly successful in using past simple tense, and they seemed to have enjoyed the activity as there were humorous animations throughout the activity. Moreover, the competitive nature of the activity motivated them to utilize the language productively and win the activity. *(e.g. The Sim’s hip would catch on fire due to fire traps and run around ridiculously to put out the fire).* The challenge behind this activity was regarding the fine details of the game. That is, the teacher had to know not only basics of the game but also its complex

systems and gameplay elements, which might be difficult for some teachers. The activity lasted 40 minutes and the objective behind the activity was *talking about past events*.

The Eighth Session: The participants were told that they would go around the town, visit different places and conduct various activities in *TS 3.* I told them that 2 participants would stand up at a time. One of them would give advice to the other participant regarding the activity to be conducted in *TS 3* by using *"*should / had better / ought to", and the other participant would control the Sim and do the action in line with the given advice.

7 pairs participated in the activity, and they conducted many different in-game actions like swimming in the ocean, buying a new car, eating at a restaurant, skating, meeting another Sim and such. The participants seemed to enjoy the activity very much as the pairs were completely free to do whatever they wanted without the intervention of me and further instructions. However, since the activity was not structured in nature, some participants had hard time controlling their Sim in different places. The challenge behind this activity, for the teacher, was regarding the activity's free nature as the teacher had no idea regarding what the pairs would do in the activity. Moreover, the grammar point itself was really hard to incorporate into the game elements. The activity lasted 40 minutes and the objective to be covered was *asking for and giving advice.*

The Ninth Session: Since the unit was about emergencies, the participants were told to create their own emergency shelters by selecting only five items that were essential to them; moreover, the participants were asked to write down a rule for their shelter by using "must / have to".

Approximately 15 participants took part in this activity and furnished their emergency shelters according to their preferences and shared their rule with the other participants. The participants seemed to enjoy the activity as they were free to choose any items they wanted. There was no challenge behind this activity as the activity itself was

simple. The activity lasted 40 minutes and the objective that was covered in the activity was *expressing obligations and prohibitions*.

The Tenth Session: The participants were reminded of the emergency shelters they created in the last session. This time, they were asked to use the emergency shelters one by one. That is, I chose a random participant each turn and asked them to explain what could be done in that specific emergency shelter in case of an emergency and what kind of instructions could be relevant. Then, each participant controlled a Sim and conducted various activities in the emergency shelters to prove their points. The participants were much willing to participate in this activity mostly because they were surprised to see their latest creations in actual use. Approximately 15 participants took part in the activity; however, my expectation was that more participants would join if we had more time for the activity. As stated, the challenge regarding this activity was in terms of time management. The activity took 40 minutes and the covered objective was *giving and understanding simple instructions in case of emergency.*

The Eleventh Session: Since the new unit was about parties and celebrations, I wrote down several party types on the board and told participants that I would show them various party activities in *TS 3*. Participants would watch me conducting those in-game activities like doing karaoke, playing pool, walking on fire and tell me to which party types they would belong in a whole class discussion. The participants would also be asked to mention their own thoughts and feelings about the given party activities and types. Since participants did not actively play the game in this activity, they were more silent than the usual; however, they were still eager for the matching activity. It was overall a successful activity especially for vocabulary acquisition since the activity included unusual party activities unlike the book activities. Even though the implementation of the activity in classroom environment was effortless, the preparation phase required significant amount of time. The activity lasted 40 minutes and the objective behind the activity was *asking for and giving opinion (agreement, disagreement, etc…)*.

The Twelfth Session: The participants were told that their Sim was at a party venue with lots of different activity types. I selected random participants one by one and gave

them some time to analyze the party activities such as dancing floor (see Figure 4), bowling area, DJ booth by controlling their Sim. Then, I wanted them to express which activity they wanted to conduct by forming sentences with future tense *(e.g. I am going to jump on the trampoline.)*. After forming the sentences, they would do the said activity in-game by giving orders to their Sim.

The participants seemed to have liked the activity; however, they were slower than usual as there were lots of different party activities to choose from. Only challenge in this activity was regarding time management issues as some participants had hard time controlling their character, which hindered the flow of the activity. Thus, approximately 10 participants could participate the activity, and the activity lasted 40 minutes as usual. The objective to be covered in the activity was *talking about future plans*.

Figure 4.
The dancing floor in the party venue

The Thirteenth Session: The participants were told that they would create two characters for certain movie genres by taking turns one by one. Firstly, they were asked to create a Sim that would star in a western movie. The participants came on the board and adjusted the Sim's personality as well as physical features in accordance with the

movie genre. Then, the participants shared their predictions whether the Sim they had just created would be a successful actor or not in the movie by taking advantage of future tense.

Then, they were asked to create another Sim that would star in a war movie. The participants, again, came on the board and created their Sim accordingly before predicting their Sim's role as well as success rate in the movie. Approximately 15 participants participated in the activity and the activity lasted 40 minutes as planned.

No challenges were spotted in this activity on the part of the teacher and the participants. The objective that was fulfilled in the activity was *making predictions about the future*. At the end of the activity, the participants were told that this was their last activity based on *TS 3* and the participants were given a chance to share their overall experiences and thoughts in the process.

3.10. Data Analysis

It is of importance to adopt a feasible and meaningful data analysis procedure to present the collected data in a qualitative study. In the present study, Creswell and Poth's (2016) data analysis spiral was adopted in order to analyze the data descriptively in a non-linear way.

It is reported that this guideline helps researchers offer credible results through systematic and spiral approach to data analysis (Kodish & Gittelsohn, 2011). Below are the steps to a successful data analysis as suggested by Creswell and Poth (2016).

Step 1: Manage the Data

The first step in data analysis is to store the obtained data in a secure and confidential place. Giving related names to the data, ordering them properly, transcribing them, turning them into files are the substantial considerations in this step (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Moreover, researcher should make a decision whether third party applications

will be used or not during data management phase. This way, data can be stored in a way to ease the data analysis in the upcoming steps.

Step 2: Internalize the Data

After organizing the data, researcher should start reading the obtained data several times by focusing on the general ideas and categories present in the data. This is the first step to explore the data at hand. During the readings, researcher can also note down "short phrases, ideas, or key concepts that occur to the reader." (Creswell & Poth, 2016, p. 183).

This process is called memoing, which is highly important in qualitative studies. Birks et al. (2008) suggest that memoing leads to productivity on the part of the researcher while also bringing about the skeleton of the final product, making the upcoming steps easier to grasp for the researcher. Moreover, in this step, the researcher is encouraged to make a connection between interview data and field notes to realize whether there are similar categories or not (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Step 3: Interpret the Data

After the initial memoing and note taking in the second step, it is now the time to go one step further and explain, categorize as well as interpret the data at hand. According to Creswell and Poth (2016), this step is "the heart of qualitative data analysis" (p. 184) as researcher is to code the available data in a detailed manner.

Coding refers to looking for evidence for an idea by analyzing different participants as well as different database (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Elliott (2018) argues that the coding process is "essentially indexing or mapping data, to provide an overview of disparate data that allows the researcher to make sense of them in relation to their research questions" (p. 2851). As a result, since this step is analyzing the data in-depth based on the research questions, researcher should form this step as thoroughly as possible.

Step 4: Assess the Interpretations

In this step, researcher aims at assessing the interpretations reached in the study. That is, researcher compares and contrasts the findings of their own study with the previous literature by investigating frameworks, themes, repeated notions and thoughts (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Therefore, it is necessary to take a step away from the current study in this step and investigate the findings of the study in line with the larger research literature.

Step 5: Represent the Data

This step is all about offering the reached findings and implications to the reader in different ways. Researcher may find sharing the findings in textual, visual or figure forms in line with their own inclinations as well as the nature of their study. Sharing quotes of the participants in written form, forming tables to compare and contrast certain notions, creating figures to describe a concept or drawing tree diagrams to demonstrate hierarchy can be examples of representing the data in different ways (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Since Data Analysis Spiral calls for non-linear analysis, all the given steps were revisited, reanalyzed, if necessary and inductive reasoning was adopted in the present study to reach general categories and themes from individual thoughts and ideas. MAXQDA was utilized throughout all the steps of data analysis in the study. This application was intentionally chosen as it is considered to be a functional tool in qualitative data analysis (Gizzi & Rädiker, 2021). Moreover, the application not only allows research to store data but also write down memos and notes related to the stored data easily and visually; additionally, it has advanced coding and categorizing system that investigates the available data in terms of relevance and complexity (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

In the present study, during the first step, audio-recordings were transcribed and stored within the application along with field notes taken by the researched. Then, the transcriptions for each interview session as well as field notes were analyzed multiple

times by the researcher and some memos as well as notes were generated for further interpretation. Then, initial coding process started in the third step based on the research questions, and main themes started to emerge in line with perceptions of the participants. Second coding process was more in-depth in nature as codes were defined and fractionated into meaningful units in line with the main themes that emerged as a result of the participants' arguments. Codes and units were finally sorted under certain categories and interpreted accordingly. In the last step, the findings reached in the present study were shared textually and visually under the emergent themes as well as categories. Certain excerpts were taken from participants' own arguments to justify interpretation process. Since the participants spoke in Turkish during the interview sessions, any excerpts to be given in the study were firstly translated into English and reviewed by another researcher. Differences as well as similarities between each participant were also made in this step to give more in-depth analysis of the process.

3.11. Trustworthiness of the Present Study

Demonstrating validity as well as credibility in qualitative studies is not straightforward as there are multiple challenges that require careful planning (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Thus, it is substantial to look for alternatives that can prove the credibility of qualitative studies. In the present study, alternative concepts of achieving trustworthiness and credibility as also described by Creswell and Poth (2016) based on the ideas of Lincoln and Guba (1985) as well as Sim and Sharp (1998) were utilized. These concepts included *triangulation*, *member checking*, *prolonged engagement in the field*, *researcher reflexivity*, *thick, rich description* as well as *peer debriefing*.

Triangulation: It refers to taking advantage of multiple data collection tools in order to obtain more detailed and versatile data that can be utilized to cross-check the reached categories and themes; accordingly; this cross-checking process leads to more valid results (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In the present study, in order to achieve triangulation and secure validity, three different data collection tools (field notes, semi-structured interviews, stimulated recall interviews) were used throughout the study. The data obtained in all the data collection tools were compared and contrasted with

one another to find out whether similar categories and themes were present. This way, the data analysis part and the end results could be more credible.

Member checking: "It consists of taking data and interpretations back to the participants in the study so that they can confirm the credibility of the information and narrative account" (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 127). That is, participants themselves analyze the categories and themes that are created based on the raw transcriptions, and they share their thoughts as well as feelings regarding the emergent categories and themes, revealing whether they agree with them or not. As a result, it gives crucial information about the accuracy and credibility of the researcher's data analysis process; thus, it is regarded as "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility." (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 314). In the present study, this approach was adopted, and the participants were allowed to investigate the general themes emerged as a result of their interviews and share their honest opinions about the accuracy of the themes. This way, participants were given a chance to correct any possible mistakes or misunderstandings, making the data analysis process more credible.

Prolonged engagement in the field: It refers to the researcher's close association with participants in a natural and trustworthy environment. That is, "during repeated observation, the researchers build trust with participants, find gatekeepers to allow access to people and sites, establish rapport so that participants are comfortable disclosing information, and reciprocate by giving back to people being studied." (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 128). This alternative way of achieving validity was intentionally utilized in the present study to make participants' answers more credible and honest. To achieve this, there was an orientation period that lasted months in which the participants were able to get to know *TS 3* and feel comfortable enough to disclose what they really thought and felt. Moreover, since I was their English teacher even before the orientation process of the study, I knew them very well and had close association with them both personally and professionally.

Researcher reflexivity: It is directly associated with researcher's past experiences, orientations and inclinations towards to the investigated topic in the study (Creswell & Poth, 2016). If researcher expresses their own biases and arguments regarding the

topic, reader can understand the position of researcher and investigate the study in line with that piece of information, which naturally increases the credibility of the study. In the present study, I talked about my own honest experiences regarding the use of *TS* series in EFL setting and how *TS* series could have a positive impact on students' motivation levels as well as their attitudes towards language learning before the actual data collection and analysis part in order to reach researcher reflexivity and inform readers about my disposition.

Thick description: It refers to explaining and describing every aspect of a study in detail by giving detailed information regarding participants, setting, data collection tools, data analysis part and so on in order to help reader internalize the study completely without missing any important points that could in fact be crucial in the study design (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Denzin (1989) reports that rich descriptions can lead to more dense and deep accounts of data at hand in contrast to just sharing facts shallowly, which increases the validity of study. In order to secure validity in the present study, very detailed explanations and descriptions regarding the methodology of the study were given, and they were often accompanied by tables as well as figures to equip readers with enough information regarding the study.

Peer Debriefing: This is an external way of increasing validity in which another scholar shares their honest opinions with researcher by pointing out possible mistakes, misinterpretations and methodological challenges, which helps researcher push themselves to make their study more credible and valid by adjusting their study in line with the peer feedback (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This approach to ensuring validity is often likened to playing "devil's advocate" (Creswell & Poth, 2016, p. 251) since it is all about asking bitter questions. In the present study, throughout the whole process from literature review to methodological design to presenting results, I asked written as well as oral feedback from another researcher, who was also writing their own thesis at the time, to find out whether there was any more potential to make study more in-depth and reader-friendly.

Securing validity in qualitative studies is vital, yet it does not hold much value its own without the presence of reliability. Therefore, adopting methods to have reliable data

analysis process is highly important too, which is also highlighted by (Creswell & Poth, 2016). To ensure reliability in the present study, in-depth field notes were taken throughout the data collection process both in regular classroom and interview sessions. Moreover, the recorded interview sessions were fully transcribed, and non-verbal reactions like pauses or hesitations were also included in the transcriptions to be able to analyze the raw data more reliably as also suggested by Silverman (2005). Cresswell and Poth (2016) argue that intercoder agreement, in which multiple researchers analyze the same data to find out whether they come up with similar themes and categories, is highly substantial in qualitative studies to ensure reliability. Therefore, another researcher also coded certain parts of the raw data apart from me, and, then, we compared our coding process to see if there were major differences or not.

3.12. Ethical Considerations

Ethics constitutes the most substantial part of any research study which is conducted with human subjects. Any problematic instances that could occur because of unethical approaches can harm both researchers and participants. Therefore, acknowledging ethical considerations before the actual implementation of a study is highly important. In the present study, a request application was filled out and sent to Human Subjects Ethics Committee of Middle East Technical University for approval. After the approval was granted from the university, I proceeded to the next step and sent another application to Research and Application Center of Ministry of National Education for approval since the present study was to be conducted in state schools with high school students who were minor. After the approval was received from Ministry of National Education, the study process officially started, and the administration of the institution was accordingly informed of the study.

The participants were given consent forms that offered detailed information regarding the nature and aim of the study along with the data collection tools and steps to be taken. Moreover, the parents of the participants were also given consent forms so that they could also be informed about the study and give their open permission. All participants as well as their parents were given information about the potential

benefits, risks, challenges and ethical concerns of the study. It was announced that any data collected from the participants would be used for only academic purposes and kept private as well as confidential without personal information of the participants as well as institution. The participants were told that they could leave the study at any point for any reason and that their participation (or lack of participation) would not have any effect on their school-related achievements. The participants were also told that pseudonymous would be assigned to each of them to provide full confidentiality. Finally, institution administration was openly invited to inspect the study process anytime they found it necessary.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.0. Presentation

Findings are revealed based on the research questions in this chapter. General perceptions of the participants towards the integration of *TS 3* in their classroom context are given in line with the emergent themes in the first part.

Their perceived motivational changes during the integration of *TS 3* are revealed and conceptualized in the second part whereas their perceived attitude changes towards EFL are investigated in the third part in line with their responses in interview sessions and field notes taken during the actual implementation of gameplay sessions based on *TS 3* and during the follow-up activities.

4.1. What are the perceptions of the teacher and learners regarding the integration of *TS 3* into EFL in a 9th grade classroom context?

When perceptions of the participants were investigated towards the utilization of *TS 3* as a medium to reach specific curricular objectives in English lessons on the basis of their active participation in the gameplay sessions that were controlled and analyzed by the teacher and their direct as well as indirect answers in the conducted interview sessions, two major themes occurred and several categories and codes emerged.

These themes were related to the perceptions of the participants towards the integration of the activities based on *TS 3* into their regular classroom sessions in terms of having fun in *TS 3* activities and facilitation of language learning. The emergent themes, categories and codes in line with the first research question can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5.
The table summarizing the emergent themes and categories for the first research question

Perceptions of the Participants as to the Integration of *TS 3*	
Themes	**Categories and Codes**

Having Fun in *TS 3* Activities	• Everyday Habits and Interests Present in *TS 3*
	  o Familiarity with Real Life
	  o Personal Dispositions
	  o Previous Experiences
	• Freedom and Real-life Elements in *TS 3*
	  o Imitation of Real World
	  o Exploration
	  o Experimentation
	• Active Agency with *TS 3*
	  o Autonomy
	  o Creativity
	  o Versatility

Facilitation of Language Learning with *TS 3*	• Facilitation of Vocabulary Learning in *TS 3*
	  o Introduction to New Words
	  o Revision of Words
	  o Retention of Words
	• Facilitation of Oral Skills in *TS 3*
	  o Speaking Skills
	  o Pronunciation
	• Facilitation of Grammar in *TS 3*
	  o Sentence Formation
	  o Structural Knowledge

4.1.1. Having Fun with *TS 3*

Fun constitutes one of the most essential aspects of the language learning process as fun elements found in language-related approaches, methods, strategies, activities as well as materials can encourage students to be more invested in language learning and overcome possible obstacles in the process more smoothly. Digital games integrated into EFL setting tend to provide language learners with enough fun to keep them attentive and excited about the language learning process. It was found that all participants who took part in the interviews regarded the integration of *TS 3* into their English lessons as fun. This theme was further divided into three categories for in-depth analysis of the effect of fun present in *TS 3* activities on participants'

perceptions. These categories were, respectively, everyday habits and interests, freedom and real-life elements and active agency.

4.1.1.1. Everyday Habits and Interests Present in *TS 3*

Everyday dispositions and attachments of students are crucial in lessons since students tend to give more attention to the language points that are presented in ways that can attract their attention and interests. Therefore, integrating students' everyday habits and interests into activities as well as materials to be conducted in a classroom environment is an essential factor to foster a successful and fun learning process.

It was found that *TS 3* posed as an innovative tool that was able to feed the participants' everyday habits and interests. Aydın, for example, reported multiple times below that *TS 3* offered them fun learning opportunities because he and his friends were familiar with using computers and playing digital games in their spare time. That is, they were able to experience what they had previously done outside the school in order to have fun be integrated into actual learning environment, holding all the fun elements they were used to experiencing only in their spare time. This, in return, attracted their attention and encouraged them to become more active students. "…since we conduct the activities on computers, we are already inclined. *TS 3* is more fun and easier." (Aydın – Interview 1), "…we all have mobile phones at home or in our pockets. Since we are familiar with technology, *(TS 3)* helps me learn better." (Aydın – Interview 2) and "I liked the activities based on *TS 3*. *TS 3* is more fun compared to paper-based activities because we like dealing with technological devices. This is something positive for me." (Aydın – Interview 3) are some examples stated by the participants.

Similar to Aydın's views, Mert, Oğuz and Serhat revealed that their personal interests in technological devices as well as digital games encouraged them to take part in activities based on *TS 3* gameplays, and this increased their perceived fun in English lessons accordingly. Moreover, lessons seemed to go more smoothly thanks to the integration of *TS 3* into their lessons. For instance, Mert and Oğuz respectively shared "*TS 3*'s one of the positive sides is that it makes lessons flow more rapidly, and, since it is technology-based, it attracts our attention." (Mert – Interview 3) and "I liked the

activities based on *TS 3*. Since the activities are technological, they attract the classroom's attention more (compared to paper-based activities.)" (Oğuz – Interview 3). Serhat also shared a similar statement too by suggesting "I think computer-based activities are pretty nice. They are good for both having fun and learning English." (Serhat – Interview 1).

Moreover, Murat pointed out that their previous habits with technology helped them conduct the activities on *TS 3* effortlessly. He suggested that the similarity between the activities on *TS 3* and their spare-time experiences increased their fun in the lessons; thus, he liked the integration of *TS 3* into their lessons more compared to paper-based activities present in their coursebooks as also seen in his statement "…everybody is accustomed to using keyboards and mouses, so *TS 3* is better." (Murat – Interview 1).

As a result, it could be said that the participants' everyday interest in technological devices helped them have more fun in the activities based on *TS 3* since such activities were able to feed their familiarities and create a bridge between school life and personal life.

My own observations supported the notions shared by the participants as well. I often experienced that the participants rarely had any significant problems completing the activities based on *TS 3* as they already knew how to use computers before. Moreover, I taught them the fundamentals of the game beforehand, and this certainly had a positive impact on their ease in playing the game.

I could clearly sense the fun they had while actively using the computer to play *TS 3*. For instance, in the first session, the participants were eager to participate in the activity in which they were supposed to create their own characters in the game because they were already familiar with character creation in other games that they played in their spare time; moreover, the participants were aware of the fact that characters would constitute the core point of any game from their previous experiences outside the school, and having a chance to create a character in a class activity increased their fun and encouraged them to take part in the activity accordingly.

Moreover, the detailed character creation menu (Create-a-Sim) in *TS 3* attracted their attention even more because they probably had never seen such complexity in characters they had created in other games. The participants seemed genuinely excited about this feature so it was not unexpected for me when the participants pointed out character creation menu in interviews. For example, Ümit mentioned that the complexity that they could add to their characters was intriguing by suggesting "*TS 3* attracts my attention because it is a nice game. The most interesting thing is adjusting the personality of the character… choosing their favorite meals… deciding on their age…" (Ümit – Interview 1). Additionally, Caner focused on the character creation menu in *TS 3* and mentioned how character creation could increase their fun levels as also seen in his statement "I love *TS 3* because it is a unique game, and the game is fun because I get to participate and create characters with my friends in the game. That's why I love this game." (Caner – Interview 3).

Similarly, in the fourth session, their fun level drastically increased when the participants were given a chance to create their own houses based on certain instructions. They liked the activity because they were accustomed to creating houses, bases and buildings in other digital games that they played on their mobile phones or computers. Thus, a high level of familiarity between their spare time activities and in-class activity increased their fun and their participation rate. Moreover, the fact that there were a number of different objects to choose from enhanced their fun levels because the participants could find objects that could reflect their personalities. Additionally, the participants seemed to enjoy adding absurdity to their houses by adding silly colors and patterns to their objects. In fact, such instances resulted in laughter among the participants as well as me due to the absurdity, which had a positive impact on enjoyment levels in activities.

Overall, it was reported by the participants that they had fun while completing the activities based on *TS 3* because they were already familiar with using computers, mobile phones and other digital devices in their spare time. Moreover, they would play digital games outside the school environment; therefore, the integration of *TS 3* into their regular classroom sessions naturally attracted their attention, which increased their perceived fun in playing the game and doing the relevant activities. In addition

to the statements of the participants, my observations came to similar conclusions. That is, the participants had more fun while controlling the game and completing the activities based on the gameplay compared to paper-based activities that would be traditional and mechanical in nature.

4.1.1.2. Freedom and Real-Life Elements in *TS 3*

Being a simulation game, *TS 3* is known to mimic real life as much as possible. Even though there are various humorous and comical elements within the game, every option and every action is grounded in reality. There are almost endless possibilities when it comes to customization and making choices. The participants were aware of the imitation of reality presented in the game, and they enjoyed its advantages, which had a positive impact on the fun the activities were to offer.

Erkan, for instance, suggested that real-life activities that could be done in *TS 3* offered fun moments and eliminated boredom among his friends by stating "*TS 3* is a good game in my opinion. It is fun and we do not get bored… it feels like we are in real life. Buying house, eating food, swimming and such activities." (Erkan - Interview 1). Aydın and Mert on the other hand, mentioned the authenticity of the game by focusing on the open-endedness of the game and how freedom enhanced their fun while playing the game in the classroom environment. They suggested "The game is fun. It does not set limits to what we can do. We are free… there are various things to do. It is a nice game." (Aydın - Interview 1) and "I believe doing some real-life activities is good and fun. *TS 3*'s likeness to real life and conducting such real-life activities gets my attention" (Mert - Interview 1). Similar to Aydın's view, Murat enjoyed the fact that our imagination could feed our game choices as there were no boundaries enforced by the game itself by suggesting "After our own heart, based on our own imagination, we could come up with characters and play accordingly." (Murat - 184 - Interview 1).

Since there were no limitations to what the participants could do in terms of gameplay elements, exploration and experimenting were popular among the participants. For instance, they could try a number of different clothes before deciding on the best one, or they could try different cars and experiment with their speed limits before buying

the most appropriate one for them. Similarly, they could meet with other Sims and try to learn about their lives before befriending them. As a result, the participants had a high level of fun exploring and experimenting with different choices and gameplay styles.

Surely, the participants had limitations as a result of the activity boundaries and instructions. Still, the participants acknowledged that such restrictions were necessary in a language classroom, and they were not directly associated with the game itself. Thus, they still regarded *TS 3* as an experimental game and had plenty of fun accordingly. Below are Aydın's and Caner's views regarding the high level of exploration present in the game in comparison to coursebook activities that were mainly paper-based.

> *The fundamental difference between paper-based activities and TS 3 is that the former starts to become boring… we only fill in the blanks all the time. Since we can do a different thing every day in TS 3, expectations increase. We can conduct vastly different activities. Then, we can explore new stuff. (Aydın - Interview 3)*

> *The difference to me is that there are limited pages and activities in coursebooks. So, they end at one point and halt the lesson. However, since TS 3 is a unique and open-world game we can continuously do different things and repeat them. (Caner - Interview 3)*

My observations also showed me that the participants had fun while experimenting with the endless possibilities present in the game through the imitation of real life. For instance, in the session 8, they were given a chance to conduct any activity they wanted with their pairs, and the participants were excited as they were given full freedom in their choices.

They enjoyed the activity very much and did various activities from swimming to meeting new people to buying cars in line with their own personal choices while practicing the grammar point should / shouldn't. The fun they had was evident to me as they were free to experiment with any aspect of the game; moreover, their friends who did not control the game gave them their own suggestions, leading to funny conversations and discussions among the participants.

Moreover, as for real-life elements, I realized that the participants enjoyed the realism embedded within the game. That is, in *TS 3*, they could reach real-life achievements that they would not be able to reach in their own life. For instance, they could buy a fast car, dive in the ocean or change their physical properties however they wished. They had fun in this process because the game allowed them to experience the things that seemed impossible in their own lives by introducing them to real-like virtual experiences. In line with my classroom observations, Aydın suggested that *TS 3* offered them a real-life life in which they could come across significant events that they would not be able to experience in their own lives as also seen in his statement "…*TS 3* is a real-life game as I said before. We can't go to England as a part of our lessons in real life, but we can go there in *TS 3*." (Aydın - Interview 3).

This suggestion by Aydın was also similar to what we did in session seven. We went to Egypt, and I controlled our Sim to show the students some historical places and objects by visiting landmarks in Egypt. This way, we learnt about Egypt's culture and practiced past simple tense. The participants had fun in this activity a lot even though they were not given a chance to control the game, and Aydın's suggestion made it clear as to why they had fun in this activity.

As a result, the participants stated that they loved the limitless possibilities present in *TS 3* and the freedom the game provided to them. Moreover, they compared paper-based activities with the activities based on *TS 3* and suggested that the former was more restrictive and linear without giving offering versatility in activity completion; however, the latter provided them with lots of experimentation and freedom, which, in return, increased their perceived fun while playing the game and completing the related activities.

4.1.1.3. Active Agency with *TS 3*

It is of importance to provide autonomy and agency to language learners so that they can actively create opportunities in which they can practice various language elements. This category focuses on how the participants were offered a high level of autonomy and active agency in the activities based on *TS 3* and how this offer enhanced their

enjoyment as well as fun during the activities. Even though this category is similar to the above one at first glance, it is different as this category is more associated with language learners and their behaviors within the classroom environment whereas the above one is more about what the *TS 3* gameplays offered.

As *TS 3* was game-based in nature, the participants had various chances to engage with the activities by actively using certain language elements to reach curricular objectives. Since the participants were used to completing coursebook activities that were highly mechanical in nature in their previous education, conducting activities with a game-based approach was something fresh to them, and this freshness provided them with opportunities to become more autonomous and active in the language learning process, which, in return, increased the fun levels of the activities. Serhat and Oğuz compared their typical coursebook activities with the activities based on *TS 3*. They shared that the latter was better and more fun for they were given a chance to actually do something rather than just sitting and listening. To prove his point, Oğuz stated "Doing something on the board rather than filling out photocopied activities enjoys me more. We only write in the paper-based activities, but we speak in the other activities (based on *TS 3*)" (Oğuz - Interview 1).

> *In my opinion, TS 3 activities were better than the paper-based ones in terms of fun and learning. We were doing the activities silently through writing in the paper-based activities, but now we can go on the board if we wish. (Serhat - Interview 1)*

Similar to what was suggested, Caner pointed out multiple times that doing similar activities in coursebooks repeatedly could lead to discomfort and inefficacy, yet *TS 3* could give them something tangible to work on collectively and create something by prioritizing enjoyment and fun. For instance, he stated "…I enjoyed *TS 3* because we played a game unlike paper-based activities. Our arms no longer hurt. We now participate in the activities altogether." (Caner - Interview 3).

> *…There is not much versatility in paper-based activities and the activities are limited in number. The same question types are often used. But, in TS 3, we can both create things ourselves and see and complete various activity types. TS 3's prioritization is better. (Caner - Interview 1)*

Ümit, on the other hand, focused more on the creative side of *TS 3* activities as such activities could give them enough autonomy and agency to go beyond the boundaries of typical mechanical activities that were less fun compared to *TS 3*. He stated that "I believe *TS 3* is better because we can learn better and instantly. The fundamental differences are that we can be more creative with *TS 3*. We cannot be that creative in paper-based activities." (Ümit - Interview 1).

In addition to the overt responses by the participants regarding the prioritization of active agency in the activities based on *TS 3*, my own classroom observations came to similar results too. The coursebooks and other supplementary materials provided by MoNE were mostly teacher-based without allowing language learners to make choices in terms of both content and organization; therefore, the participants were primarily silent and bored during such activities. However, when I implemented the activities based on *TS 3*, their behaviors changed immensely as they were given a chance to be autonomous and active learners. It seemed to me that they started to have more fun this way for they were no longer glued to their chairs. For instance, the participants that were silent in coursebook activities began to become more active and come on the board to play the game and complete related activities.

The participants had lots of fun in session two due to the high level of active agency they had. All of the participants were willing to take part in the activity because they were only given very broad instructions to create a room of their own by using superlatives / comparatives. They were free to form their own sentences and choose the objects to decorate the room; thus, they were more autonomous, which increased their enjoyment clearly.

Similarly, in session 12, the participants had plenty of fun while choosing among various party activities and conducting them however they wished without any restrictions. However, when they were offered an activity about party activities in the coursebook, they were not eager to participate in the activity and seemed bored as they were not autonomous while completing the activity. This was probably due to the fact that the coursebook activity was linear and mechanical compared to the activity based on *TS 3* which allowed them to be active by coming on the board, controlling the game

and doing activities in the way they wanted. Murat's suggestion regarding the tedious nature of the coursebook activities and how coursebook activities made them sleepy due to their being passive supported my observation.

> *As for the basic differences (between TS 3 and coursebook activities), we can study up to a certain point with the coursebook. Then, it becomes boring, and only a few people participate in the activities based on the coursebook. This makes people bored and sleepy. I think, this is why TS 3 is better. (Murat - Interview 1)*

Overall, the participants reported that they had fun while playing *TS 3* and completing the relevant activities as they had a high level of autonomy and agency in the activities. They suggested that they felt free in the activities because they were no longer forced to complete activities in one way mechanically. Instead, they could approach to the same activity from different perspectives and complete it versatilely. They suggested that the coursebook activities were bland and lacked fun because they were passive in such activities; however, they could be more active when similar activities were conducted with the integration of *TS 3*. Also, my classroom observations came to similar results as I realized that the participants had more fun in *TS 3* activities as they were much freer both in terms of language production and activity completion.

4.1.2. Facilitation of English Language Learning with *TS 3*

The main objective of adopting strategies, conduct activities and prepare materials in an EFL setting is to help language learners become more knowledgeable in the target language. Adopting *TS 3* was not an exception either. All activities that were based on *TS 3* were carefully planned and designed to meet specific curricular objectives to enhance various language skills of the participants. It was found all participants agreed that integration of *TS 3* and its related activities improved their English proficiency in multiple ways, and their perceptions were mostly positive regarding the *TS 3*'s integration in terms of facilitation of their proficiency in English.

Aydın reported that *TS 3* was able to help them get better in the target language because the activities based on *TS 3* could represent the language points to be learnt clearly. He

also compared the paper-based activities with *TS 3* and suggested that *TS 3* was a better fit for learning English even though he admitted that class size could be an issue in implementing *TS 3* into the classroom environment. Similarly, Serhat suggested that they would feel encouraged to listen to the lessons more carefully and conduct the activities accordingly when *TS 3* was integrated into their lessons as opposed to paper-based activities, which had a positive impact on their overall proficiency in English and their eagerness to participate as also analyzed in section 4.3.1. in-depth.

> *TS 3's contribution to lessons and our proficiency in English is nice. Because, normally it is very traditional to do activities with papers and coursebooks. We can get bored. This way, we can try out different activities and have a more enjoyable and positive day. As for the positive sides of TS 3, we can directly see what we have in our minds in the game. When it comes to the negative sides, we can't participate all the time because of the size of the class. Still, TS 3 is a very good game. (Aydın - Interview 1)*

> *If we only did paper-based activities, most people would write but not listen. However, when people go on the board (with the activities based on TS 3) everybody wants to listen and participate, and this process makes us learn (Serhat - Interview 3)*

Broadening the scope, Erkan took a more general approach and shared computer-based activities overall were more beneficial to his English proficiency by suggesting that "To me, computer-based activities are better. In terms of understanding the given points and improving my English, I think they are more useful." (Erkan - Interview 1)

Ümit and Erkan also shared that *TS 3* helped him improve their English language skills even though they admitted that some of his friends tended to make noise when they were completing activities based on *TS 3*. These suggestions were supported by my own classroom observations too. Some students would get too excited and drift away from the actual topic, or they would start speaking too loudly even though they were talking about the activity to be conducted. Still, these instances did not have a major impact on the lessons as the students were able to internalize the intended objectives more easily compared to paper-based activities as also mentioned by Erkan and Ümit. Erkan suggested that "I liked *TS 3* because we can learn the objectives better. Negatively, people tend to make noise more." (Erkan - Interview 3). Similarly, Ümit

shared “I loved *TS 3*’s integration because you learn better, but there may be noise in the classroom. (Ümit - Interview 3).

Overall improvement as to the proficiency in English among the participants was evident in my class observations. I introduced various language elements from unknown vocabulary items to grammar points, and the participants were able to learn the intended points more quickly when they were to engage with *TS 3* rather than completing coursebook activities. For instance, in session nine, the participants were introduced to “must / have to” inductively within the game by watching me play the game. They quickly understood what those grammar points meant and how they were used without detailed instruction only by analyzing the in-game movements. Then, they used the given grammar points productively by taking turns playing the game and coming up with certain rules for the emergency rooms they created from scratch. Moreover, retention was remarkable too. Even though the participants learnt these points by playing the game, they were able to transfer what they had learnt to coursebook activities in the upcoming days.

Caner’s view about retention of the language elements learnt while playing *TS 3* and completing the relevant activities based on *TS 3* supported my observations. He suggested that *TS 3* appealed to their visual memory, which, in return, allowed them to improve their proficiency in English better. Caner shared that “What we see is stored in our mind. Since the good day that we spend (playing *TS 3*) is stuck in the mind, we remember the English-related elements that we saw in the game too” (Caner - Interview 1).

In addition to introducing new language elements through *TS 3*, I sometimes designed certain activities to revise what the participants had already learnt. For instance, they would be introduced to past simple tense in a typical lesson; then, they would be given a chance to practice past simple tense by creating past versions of several Sims in session six. This type of activity design was especially beneficial since the participants were able to productively use the grammar points they had just learnt in a meaningful and fun environment. I realized that they rarely made mistakes while practicing the intended objective, and they were able to remember the phrases as well as sentences

they formed even after the lesson was over, which proved would facilitate their overall proficiency in English.

All eight participants who took part in interview sessions shared that *TS 3* was beneficial in their overall proficiency in English. seven out of eight participants openly stated that *TS 3* and other computer-based activities were better than the paper-based activities in terms of facilitation of overall English, and my observations suggested that the other participants who did not participate in the interview sessions but joined the classroom sessions had similar perceptions regarding the positive role of *TS 3* compared to paper-based activities in English proficiency. However, one participant, Mert, suggested that he would still prefer paper-based activities even though he acknowledged that *TS 3* helped him improve various language skills by saying "Paper-based activities are more informative to me. It makes me participate in the activities more and helps me understand. Still, *TS 3* is fun." (Mert - Interview 2) and "After one point, the game starts to bore me, but it is beneficial in terms of English. It improves my English. It is an English-based game ultimately." (Mert - Interview 1).

This could be due to the fact that he was used to learning English openly and in structure forms; moreover, he was a high achiever in the classroom, meaning that the language elements practiced in *TS 3* might seem trivial to him. Still, he accepted that *TS 3* was beneficial in enhancing proficiency in English. Below can be seen some excerpts showing his views.

In conclusion, it could be said that all participants found the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons to be beneficial in terms of their general proficiency in English. They suggested that presentation of the language elements in *TS 3* was more precise, more versatile and enjoyable. They stated that there could be a few drawbacks of *TS 3*'s integration like unnecessary noise due to the size of the class; however, these drawbacks would not prevent *TS 3* from being a beneficial language learning tool.
Finally, they actively compared paper-based activities with the activities based on *TS 3*, and seven out of eight participants said that *TS 3* was more superior compared to paper-based activities in terms of helping them understand the intended language elements and use them productively. one participant who preferred paper-based

activities also suggested that *TS 3* was fruitful and enjoyable in terms of facilitation of their proficiency in English. My observations were also in line with the statements made by the participants. That is, the participants were mostly in favor of using *TS 3* to improve their English-related skills, and they would enjoy the learning process more compared to paper-based activities.

This theme was further divided into three distinctive sub-themes and codes for in-depth analysis of the effect of facilitation of language learning offered in *TS 3* on the participants' perceptions in terms of different language points. These categories were respectively facilitation of vocabulary learning, facilitation of oral skills and facilitation of grammar.

4.1.2.1. Facilitation of Vocabulary Learning with *TS 3*

It was shared that all participants found the integration of *TS 3*'s into their regular English classes to be beneficial in terms of their general proficiency in English, and they had positive perceptions overall. This theme is associated with *TS 3*'s positive impact on vocabulary acquisition among the participants.

Since lower proficiency language learners often focus on unknown vocabulary items and commonly used phrases to get a better understanding of the target language, it was not unexpected for me to hear frequent statements by the participants regarding the merits of *TS 3* in terms of vocabulary acquisition as well as revision during the interview sessions. Oğuz, for instance, made a connection between visual basis of *TS 3* and how it helped them internalize more vocabulary items. For this, Oğuz shared "We can learn more words in English lessons now. And since we see the words visually, we do not forget them. This way, we can improve our English." (Oğuz - Interview 2).

Similar to what Oğuz suggested, Aydın shared that paper-based activities were not enough to provide them with necessary vocabulary items. He believed paper-based activities would present vocabulary items linearly, yet *TS 3* could offer versatile

opportunities to experience vocabulary items from different aspects. This way, *TS 3* would also feed their visual memory, making the retention easier.

> *This process made me improve my visual memory. As I said earlier, black and white activities in the coursebook are sometimes clear, sometimes not clear. And we only and solely remember the words as they are presented. The correct approach, however, should be to experience the meanings of the words in different ways. TS 3 is more successful in making me understand words and commit them to memory. (Aydın - Interview 3)*

Caner also suggested that *TS 3* helped him internalize vocabulary items thanks to the fun atmosphere and visually-appealing basis of *TS 3* activities.

> *TS 3 enhanced my vocabulary in English. It enhanced my visual memory. Because we play the game, the fun things that we do visually are stored in our minds. This way, the words are stored in our minds as well. (Caner - Interview 3)*

This was a repeated pattern throughout the three interviews; moreover, the participants explicitly stated multiple times that learning vocabulary items with *TS 3* was much easier compared to the coursebook. My in-class observations also came to similar conclusions. I realized that they would pick up many vocabulary items incidentally while controlling their Sims and conducting various activities; moreover, they would see the actions associated with those vocabulary items, helping them understand the meaning of the words more easily.

I also experienced that the participants would remember the vocabulary items that they had picked up while playing the game after multiple weeks. They would also occasionally refer to those words while completing coursebook activities or conduct productive activities requiring speaking or writing. This, accordingly, means that chances of retention were high. This could be due to the game's visual nature, as also suggested by the participants, or the fact that the participants were given meaningful situations to learn and use various vocabulary items unlike the coursebook activities that were highly mechanical and linear in nature. As a result, I designed more *TS 3* activities to introduce or revise vocabulary items to the participants so that their

chances of remembering them and using them actively would be more than simple and traditional vocabulary activities offered in coursebooks.

For instance, even though the coursebook had vocabulary section about airports and transportation, I changed into an activity based on *TS 3* and created an in-game airport in the session 5. Then, I moved around the airport with my Sim and introduced the participants with airport-related words and phrases. Then, I let the participants control the Sim and do various activities about the words they had just learnt. The participants easily picked up the words, and they would productively utilize them in the upcoming weeks. To check their retention, I wanted them to do the activity about airport words in the coursebook weeks later, and they successfully and effortlessly completed the activity, showing how *TS 3* was able to help them pick up words effectively.

Similar to my observations, Aydın focused on session five while talking about how *TS 3* improved their vocabulary and stated that doing activities on *TS 3* to learn new words benefitted him in terms of retention. He also gave another example about the session 12 which was again a vocabulary-based lesson about party types and party activities that were introduced and revised on *TS 3*.

> *…before TS 3, it could be said that I did not like English at all. We would write words on the board all the time... We would go home and write words… repeat them. When it comes to TS 3, we remember the words because we do activities on TS 3. In the last session, we did an activity on the airport, then we did another activity about parties, and I remember them well. TS 3 is better for me in terms of retention. TS 3 changed my attitude. (Aydın - Interview 3)*

Another essential thing embedded in his speech was that he compared traditional vocabulary activities with the activities based on *TS 3* and said that his previous experiences with traditional vocabulary items made him dislike English; however, when he was offered a more innovative method, he started to like English and his vocabulary was improved.

This was something I observed in-class activities as well. Most participants stated many times that they did not like learning new words in English in the previous years because it meant writing all the time and memorizing them one by one; however, they

stated in multiple sessions that they loved learning new words with *TS 3* because it meant actually understanding the words, seeing them visually and remembering them more easily in relevant contexts. Just like Aydın, Caner also pointed out this fact multiple times and told how the memorization technique made them take a dislike to English and how *TS 3* enhanced their retention by suggesting "We would memorize all the time. This caused us to dislike English. Since there were not plenty of activities in the coursebook, we would memorize the words and such, and we did not enjoy that." (Caner - Interview 3).

> *My view of English was different in the past. We kept memorizing words from the coursebook and notebook all the time. As for TS 3, it has become easier to remember words as we visually played the game. So, it is beneficial for me. (Caner - Interview 2)*

Moreover, during the stimulated recall interview, the participants were shown multiple videos from their previous gameplay sessions and asked whether they remembered what they did in those sessions in terms of activity type and English content. When the participants were shown a video from session one in which they learnt some vocabulary items physical features while creating their own Sims, they mentioned several words they remembered from the session.

Similarly, after watching a video the sessions which was about airport vocabulary and phrases, they explicitly told that they learnt new words about airports while playing *TS 3* in that session. This showed that the participants' retention level was high in the sessions focusing on vocabulary acquisition, and they could easily remember which words they practiced in what kind of gameplay design.

In addition to these merits of *TS 3* in vocabulary acquisition, Ümit loved the fact that there were a number of different vocabulary items that were used frequently in everyday life in *TS 3*. He believed that the integration of everyday words into *TS 3* activities was beneficial. The coursebook activities also mostly included everyday words; however, seeing them in an artificial manner might have decreased their effectiveness; thus, seeing everyday words in an actually living world in which such words actually meant something may have caused Ümit and other participants to

realize that they were actually learning useful words that could help them survive in the real world as also seen below.

> *Integration of TS 3 into our lessons is very nice. I enjoyed the game. We learn English words from real life. I liked this aspect. We don't just learn words about workplaces. We experience words that are about the real world. However, some people don't understand this. It is not that they are not listening to the lessons, but they seem to learn better the other way around. (Ümit - 234 - Interview 1)*

In this excerpt, Ümit also seemed to criticize some of his friends who would still prefer coursebook activities even though learning everyday words with *TS 3* was more meaningful to them. Most probably, he referred to Mert in this excerpt as Mert was the only one who stated that learning with paper-based activities was more preferable. He might also have referred to his friends who did not take part in the interviews but attended the gameplay sessions; however, my observations as well as in-class discussions suggested that the number of participants who would prefer paper-based activities to learn vocabulary would be low.

Overall, it was seen that all participants in the interview sessions stated that they were able to improve their vocabulary thanks to the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons. They talked about how *TS 3* was visually appealing and meaningful in vocabulary activities; moreover, they mentioned that retention levels were higher with *TS 3* activities compared to paper-based activities.

My classroom observations also showed that the participants were to engage more with the vocabulary activities offered in *TS 3*, and they would pick up the intended word more easily and transfer them to the relevant situations effortlessly. Finally, Ümit pointed out that everyday words could be learnt more easily and meaningfully with the integration of *TS 3*.

4.1.2.2. Facilitation of Oral Skills with *TS 3*

The participants mentioned enhancement in their English skills generally and vocabulary specifically in the previous parts. Another category that emerged as a result

of the interviews and classroom observations was the specific enhancement of oral skills. I designed several *TS 3* activities that encouraged the participants to use the target language productively. Thus, frequent statements regarding how *TS 3* increased their oral skills were not unexpected.

The participants stated that *TS 3* gave them a chance to produce English output that would not be possible with paper-based activities since such activities did not allow them to use the target language in productive situations.

For instance, Aydın mentioned that traditional teaching methods would focus on memorization; thus, they would not encourage the participants to actually speak the language. Rather, they would only talk about the language. However, with the integration of *TS 3*, they started speaking English and it benefitted not only their general speaking skills but also pronunciation in the target language.

> *TS 3 enhances my motivation. It helps me build self-confidence too. Because when we memorize what is written on the board in order to study the language, we may have problems speaking the language. Since we study by speaking (with TS 3), we get to learn the pronunciation of words too. (Aydın - Interview 2)*

He also mentioned how being able to actually speak the language fostered his motivation as well as self-confidence thanks to the integration of *TS 3*. This point was discussed in-depth in section 4.2.

Caner stated that they used to speak Turkish in English lessons before in a traditional manner; thus, they would keep prioritizing Turkish instead of English, and this would negatively affect their English learning process. On the other hand, with the integration of *TS 3*, they found a chance to prioritize English and use it productively, which, accordingly, improve their speaking and pronunciation.

> *As we spoke Turkish all the time, we would form English sentences from a Turkish language perspective too. We fixed this and our pronunciation thanks to you. We started to form better sentences. Since we spoke to you in English (in TS 3 activities), we could practice. (TS 3) enhanced our speaking. (Caner - Interview 3)*

Caner also pointed out that speaking in the activities based on *TS 3* was done as a whole class rather than an individual effort, and this could lead to effective feedback in terms of speaking abilities. He said "…when we speak in the activities (based on *TS 3*), we speak as a whole class. When we can't manage something or mispronounce a word, the class can help us. This, as a result, supports us." (Caner - Interview 2).

Oğuz believed that they were automatically encouraged to switch to English because *TS 3* itself was an English-based game. This was something I observed in-class activities based on *TS 3* too. The participants would normally speak Turkish in paper-based activities; however, when I told them that we would play *TS 3*, and they made more effort to form sentences in English. This could be due to the fact that *TS 3* posed as a meaningful language exposure point to them. For this point, he shared "Since the game is in English, we speak in English too, so it helps us." (Oğuz - Interview 2).

My classroom observations led to similar results as well. As I mentioned earlier, I wanted the participants to interact with me and one another in English; thus, I designed the activities based on *TS 3* accordingly. In the session 3, for instance, the participants worked in groups and talked to each other in English in order to describe the humorous events happening in *TS 3*.

Even though the participants were hesitant to speak at first, their hesitations quickly went away, and they communicated in English most of the time even though they sometimes switched to Turkish when their English proficiency was not developed enough to convey certain ideas. To avoid Turkish, I helped them whenever necessary so that their interactions could keep going in English. The participants stated that they loved this speaking activity at the end of the session despite their initial hesitations.

Likewise, in session eight, the participants controlled the game as pairs. One of them would give the other pair some suggestions by forming sentences with should / shouldn't. Then, the other one would do certain in-game actions in accordance with the given suggestions. In this activity, the participants were encouraged to talk to each other in English, and they rarely switched to Turkish. Therefore, it could be said that

their overt statements regarding improvement in speaking abilities were also observed by me in the activities based on *TS 3*.

Overall, they suggested that *TS 3* could foster their speaking skills and enhance their pronunciation, and their perceptions were generally in favor of utilizing *TS 3* for the facilitation of English language learning. They argued that they were not used to utilizing English in speaking before the integration of *TS 3*. They implied that traditional teaching methods that they previously experienced did not give made room for productive skills; thus, speaking was never a priority for them. Instead, they would learn about the language and memorize every given bit. The statements given by the participants and my in-class observations showed that this traditional atmosphere changed thanks to the integration of *TS 3*, and the participants found a chance to speak English. This, naturally, led them to have positive perceptions.

4.1.2.3. Facilitation of Grammar with *TS 3*

Structure constitutes a major part of any language; thus, integration of structural elements and overall grammar points into EFL setting is highly important. I designed several of the activities based on *TS 3* to cover curricular objectives regarding structural elements inductively, and the participants stated multiple times that they thought their perceived grammar knowledge improved thanks to *TS 3*.

The participants stated in interviews that the activities based on *TS 3* helped them learn about the sentence structure of English better. This could be considered an important step for Turkish language learners of English with lower proficiency levels because Turkish and English have different sentence structures. Aydın, for instance, thought that computer-based activities let him create better-formed sentences in English. He said “In my opinion, computer-based activities are more interesting. They help us form clearer sentences in English” (Aydın - Interview 1).

Mert, likewise, thought that *TS 3*’s integration fostered his eagerness to participate in the lessons, and the activities based on *TS 3* helped him not only learn new vocabulary items but also form better sentences in English. Moreover, he made a comparison

between paper-based activities and *TS 3* activities and shared that *TS 3* was a better fit for him by saying "*TS 3* fostered my participation in English lessons more than paper-based activities. It allowed me to learn more words and form sentences" (Mert - Interview 3). Oğuz also shared the same perceptions as Mert and stated that *TS 3* helped him form sentences in English. He shared "*TS 3* improved my vocabulary to some extent. Likewise, it fostered me in forming sentences too. (Oğuz - Interview 3).

Oğuz and Mert could be referring to multiple sessions in the above excerpts. In session 2, for example, they were to form English sentences with comparative or superlative forms by analyzing the household objects in *TS 3*. Similarly, in session six, they were able to create a past version of a Sim by coming up with sentences of their own without any restrictions, or in session 10, the participants used English productively and described what kind of activities could be conducted in each emergency room that they had shown in *TS 3*.

My classroom observations also showed that the participants had positive perceptions regarding the use of *TS 3* to improve their grammar knowledge of English. For instance, in session seven in which they were supposed to depict the given scenes by using past simple tense, the participants had a chance to form sentences in a meaningful and fun way, and it allowed them to revise past simple tense. At the end of the activities, the participants stated that they liked the activity because they actually used English during the activity. Moreover, the sentences that they formed, despite being simple, were mostly correct, showing the positive effect of the activities based on *TS 3* on grammar.

Additionally, when I compared *TS 3* activities with paper-based activities available in their coursebook, I realized that the coursebook activities were very strict. In other words, the activities did not allow the participants to produce sentences of their own; instead, they were given some missing parts in texts, and they only had to fill in the blanks. Even the activities that seemed productive were controlled by the frames to be used by the participants; thus, it could be said that the activities were mechanical and traditional, not giving enough room for active participation on the part of students in terms of sentence creation. As for the activities based on *TS 3*, they gave the

participants to work with each other, form sentences of their own and mold the frames however they wished. This is because they were not given exhausting instructions and the activities that they were to engage with were interesting as well as meaningful, creating relevant opportunities for them to speak English naturally.

As a result of the given characteristics of the paper-based activities as well as the activities based on *TS 3*, the participants seemed to improve their grammar better with *TS 3*, and their perceptions were more positive when they were offered *TS 3* activities to learn or revise grammar points as also stated by the participants in interviews.

Overall, the participants stated that they thought *TS 3* helped them improve their grammar especially in terms of sentence forming. Their positive perceptions could be due to the fact that paper-based activities were more restrictive and traditional in nature; therefore, when they were introduced to *TS 3*, their perceived grammar knowledge improved since the activities based on *TS 3* allowed them to form sentences of their own freely in a meaningful atmosphere.

In addition to the statements of the participants in the interviews, I observed that the participants' utilization of English grammar was more versatile as well as correct in *TS 3* activities compared to their utilization of English grammar in paper-based activities, which supported their overt statements.

In conclusion, in this section, the participants' as well as the teacher's perceptions regarding the integration of *TS 3* into the 9th grade English classroom environment were shared under the first research question. One of the most frequently stated thoughts among the participants was that the activities based on *TS 3* offered plenty of fun in the learning process. Moreover, the observations by the researcher led to similar results, suggesting that the participants had enhancement in their perceived enjoyment levels while doing *TS 3* activities to cover certain curricular objectives. As a teacher, I also had more fun preparing as well as conducting the activities based on *TS 3* as they were more versatile, meaningful and productive compared to traditional paper-based activities. Thus, the fun factor provided by *TS 3* caused the participants as well as me to form positive perceptions towards the integration of *TS 3* in EFL setting.

The fun theme was further analyzed under three distinctive categories. The first one was related to everyday habits and interests. This category was associated with the participants' personal interest in technological devices mainly involving computers and mobile phones. The participants suggested that since they were used to utilizing such technological devices in their spare time, being able to experience them and use them in actual classroom environment to complete certain activities and learn various language points was exciting and fun. Similar findings were found in classroom observations as well. The participants seemed to be eager to control the computer and the activities based on *TS 3*, and they had little to no issues controlling the computer due to their tendencies in their free time. They had more fun conducting such activities involving technological devices as opposed to coursebook activities that were highly mechanical and linear in nature. Similar to the participants, I, as a teacher, found the involvement of *TS 3* more relatable to my own life as I was already used to playing *TS 3* and using computers and mobile phones, which increased the fun I had in classroom environment.

The second category was freedom and real-life elements. This category was based on the free choices and almost limitless possibilities offered in *TS 3*. That is, the participants were not forced to play the game from only one perspective or complete the given tasks by doing the same actions over and over again. The fact that the game allowed them to find their own voices and play as they really liked enhanced their perceived fun levels in EFL setting. The fun they had was also seen in classroom observations too. Since they were free in the game, they created their Sims however they wished, and their end creations usually led to humorous and funny situations, adding fun to the tasks they were to complete. Similar instances happened when they were to build themselves houses or rooms as well. I had fun watching them create unusual and funny Sims and houses too. It was a great experience as they were able to both complete the given tasks to reach certain curricular objectives and have fun at the same time.

The second part of this theme was regarding real-life elements found in the game. The participants stated that they liked the integration of *TS 3* into their regular classes because the game was just like the real-life; thus, they felt they were living in that

alternate world while conducting the activities, which had a positive effect on their perceived fun levels. In my classroom observations, I experienced that they liked dealing with real-life events like selecting among different cars, choosing hairstyles and doing everyday events like swimming as well as meeting new people, and they had plenty of fun in the process. As a teacher, it was a pleasant experience for me too since there being lots of activities depicting real life allowed me to design in-class activities easier and more efficiently.

The third category was related to the active agency of the participants. That is, they were not strictly controlled by the instructions and that the activities were not linear in nature. They were more autonomous and active in *TS 3* activities compared to paper-based activities offered in their coursebook. Even though this category was similar to the prior category, it was different in the sense that the former was about the game mechanics whereas the latter was about what the participants actually could do as learners. The participants suggested that they felt freer while conducting the activities based on *TS 3* as they were not forced to follow pre-determined paths and frames. Surely, they were given instructions in *TS 3* activities to successfully reach the intended curricular objectives; however, the instructions were much more flexible and personalized compared to traditional activities. It was seen during the observations that the participants were happy with the less restrictive instructions and having actual agency in the tasks that they were supposed to complete.

The second theme to be analyzed under the first research question was the facilitation of English language learning. The participants shared positive perceptions regarding how the integration of *TS 3* allowed them to have enhancement in their perceived English language skills. The participants stated that the activities based on *TS 3* enabled them to improve their general language-related skills. In-class observations came to similar conclusions as well. That is, the participants were able to reach the intended curricular objectives successfully and used English in the learning process effectively. The participants made a comparison between paper-based activities that they were used to completing traditionally and the integration of *TS 3* into their regular classroom environments and suggested multiple times that *TS 3* was a better fit to improve their language skills. As a teacher, I also agreed with the participants in the

sense that paper-based activities were not detailed and versatile enough to provide the participants with the necessary language knowledge to cover the curricular objectives. Thus, resorting to more innovative and modern activities as well as materials was a must.

The first category under the second theme was the facilitation of vocabulary learning. The participants stated that they had positive perceptions regarding *TS 3*'s ability to provide them with various vocabulary items in a meaningful way. They suggested that the activities based on *TS 3* helped them acquire vocabulary items more easily compared to the paper-based vocabulary activities that they were used to completing by writing and memorizing all the time. They also argued that their retention levels were higher when they were introduced to new vocabulary items with *TS 3*. My classroom observations also supported their statements as the participants were more engaged with vocabulary activities when they were introduced to them with the integration of *TS 3*; similarly, they could remember the words introduced in the activities based on *TS 3* long after the completion of the first session. The participants finally suggested that they could experience more vocabulary items that could in fact be used in real life in *TS 3* since the game had a more realistic approach in nature.

The second category was related to a perceived improvement in the participants' oral skills in English. The participants stated that *TS 3* gave them plenty of opportunities to speak the target language productively. They suggested that they were not able to speak in English as much as possible before the integration of *TS 3* as they were used to doing traditional activities that did not give the utmost priority to speaking abilities. The participants also argued that, in addition to speaking, they improved their pronunciation thanks to the activities based on *TS 3*. My in-class observations also suggested that the participants were more active in terms of productively using English while completing *TS 3* activities. This was most probably due to the fact that I specifically designed several *TS 3* activities that would encourage the participants to speak in English, which was something they rarely did with the paper-based activities.

The third category under the second theme was the facilitation of grammar. The participant stated that they had perceived improvement in their grammar knowledge

in English thanks to the activities based on *TS 3*. They argued that *TS 3* allowed them to form sentences of their own, which, in return, enhanced their structural knowledge of English. My in-class observations suggested that the participants were not given a chance to produce their own sentences both in oral and written forms in the coursebook activities as they were highly mechanical and linear in nature. They would always fill in the blanks or transform the given sentences in accordance with the pre-determined frames. However, *TS 3* allowed them to go beyond these strict boundaries and form their own sentences freely even if it meant their sentences were very simple grammatically. Thus, they developed favorable perceptions as to the ability of *TS 3* to foster their grammar abilities.

Overall, the participants had positive perceptions about *TS 3* and its integration within their regular classroom sessions to reach certain curricular objectives. They thought that *TS 3* could provide plenty of fun and foster their language-related skills more than the paper-based activities that they were used to completing traditionally before the integration of *TS 3*. In addition to the overt statements of the participants, their positive perceptions could also be seen in classroom observations in which they were to engage with various tasks based on *TS 3*. As a teacher, I also developed positive perceptions towards the utilization of *TS 3* in EFL setting as it could effectively innovate the previously seen traditional learning environment and provide the participants with distinctive opportunities to enhance their language skills while also ensuring some elements of fun.

4.2. How does the integration of *TS 3* into the EFL curriculum influence the perceived motivation of the learners in a 9th grade classroom context?

Another aim of the present study was to find out whether there were any changes in the perceived motivation levels of the participants with the integration of the activities based on *TS 3* into their regular English lessons in order to reach certain pre-determined curricular objectives. The participants were asked several questions regarding the connection between *TS 3* and their motivation levels in interviews, and the participants were given a chance to compare *TS 3*-based activities and paper-based activities while sharing their perceptions related to motivation. Moreover, the

participants' motivation levels were also analyzed by the researcher in classroom observations in which they were actively engaged in playing the game, watching the game or completing relevant activities based on the gameplay they were to experience. Then, their overt responses to the relevant interview questions and their in-class behaviors as well as reactions associated with the impact of *TS 3* on their motivation levels were analyzed to answer the second research question.

It was found that all participants who took part in the interviews had enhancement in their perceived motivation levels after the integration of *TS 3* activities into their classroom context. Moreover, in-class observations suggested that the participants were motivated to complete the given tasks based on *TS 3* compared to paper-based activities. It looked like the participants loved *TS 3* activities more than the traditional activities because of the more fun and informative nature of the former, which, in return, strengthened their motivation. Serhat and Erkan, for instance, stated that there was an apparent connection between their love towards *TS 3* and their motivation levels. They believed that their enjoyment of the activities based on *TS 3* allowed them to become more motivated to learn English. To prove his point Serhat shared "Since we love playing *TS 3* and learning with it, of course, *TS 3* improves our motivation" (Serhat - Interview 2). Similarly, Erkan stated that "*TS 3* enhanced my motivation. I also became more willing to participate in the lessons. It also helped me love lessons because our lessons are no longer boring." (Erkan - Interview 3).

The participants suggested that another reason why *TS 3* helped them improve their motivation levels was that *TS 3* was a visual-based activity type with endless possibilities and fun, and it accordingly had a positive effect on their learning process. This was also something I experienced in my in-class observations. That is, the participants were naturally motivated to complete the given tasks if they were associated with *TS 3* because they genuinely thought that completing such activities would help them improve their English skills; however, they would not be as motivated when they were offered the mechanical and traditional activities present in their coursebooks. They rarely thought that completing coursebook activities would lead to any beneficial outcomes in real life in terms of English use. For example, Erkan said "Yes, I think that *TS 3* enhances my motivation. Since the game is visual, retention is

much better. Thus, it also has a positive effect on language use." (Erkan - Interview 2).

> *TS 3 contributes to our knowledge in lessons, and it entertains us. In terms of motivation, one would like to do more and more as TS 3 is fun. Additionally, TS 3 is a continuous activity without a pre-determined ending, and we become more knowledgeable (in English) by learning and progressing within the game. (Mert - Interview 2)*

Moreover, Murat pointed out what I experienced in the classroom observations by saying "...since *TS 3* is a nicer and more fun game that can be played with friends, my motivation has improved more with *TS 3* compared to paper-based activities." (Murat - Interview 2). He argued that *TS 3* was more motivational compared to paper-based activities because it was a more social-based game with fun elements compared to paper-based activities that were not able to offer such elements. The social side of the game in relation to motivation would be discussed more throughout the next sections.

Similar to Murat, Ümit and Caner suggested that paper-based activities would eliminate the fun elements in English lessons, and this would hinder their motivation levels. In addition to being not fun and motivational, paper-based activities would mean memorization of certain language elements, which was a common concern stated many times as a response to different questions in interviews. Thus, Ümit and Caner stated in interviews that they would prefer the activities based on *TS 3* to paper-based activities due to the more motivational nature of the former. For instance, Ümit shared that "Paper-based activities decrease my motivation. I cannot have fun in English lessons this way." (Ümit - Interview 2). Similarly, Caner added that "My motivation would be poorer (without the integration of *TS 3*) because my view of English was different before. We would always memorize words." (Caner - Interview 2).

As for specific classroom sessions, in session six, the participants were asked to create a past version of a given Sim in *TS 3*. They were to use was / were and form sentences in the past tense to describe a Sim's look as well as personality. Then, they would go on the board and create the Sim in accordance with the sentences they had just formed. The participants seemed to be very motivated to complete the task and use the intended

grammar point. This was probably due to the fact that the task was visual, and the participants were creative in the process regarding the physical appearance and personality choices of the Sim they were to create. When the participants were asked whether they liked the activity or not, almost all students stated that they liked the activity as they could appeal to their imagination and play the game by taking turns.

Even though I realized that the participants had a seemingly high level of motivation in this activity, it would be important to see whether their motivation levels would be seemingly lower when they were offered a similar activity in a paper-based version. For this, I wanted participants in another classroom session to look at some famous people given in their coursebooks and make some assumptions regarding their past both in terms of personality and physical properties by writing several sentences with was / were.

The participants seemed to be bored in the process, and several students did not even complete the activity even though all of them knew the intended grammar point very well. This could show that they had a seemingly lower level of motivation in the paper-based version of the activity compared to the activity based on *TS 3*. This, a result, could demonstrate that *TS 3* posed as a more motivational tool in their classroom environment as opposed to paper-based activities.

Ümit shared a thought that supported my observations and suggested that they were used to completing lessons with paper-based activities in other subjects, and this repetitive process naturally could lead to boredom among them, which ultimately affected their motivation levels negatively. However, experiencing something fresh, *TS 3* in this case, could attract their attention more easily and improve their motivation levels while completing the fresh tasks and activities. Moreover, having a chance to go beyond the boring nature of paper-based activities could lead to a soothing experience.

> *Since we always study with paper-based activities in other subjects, (doing activities based on TS 3) is better for us, and, this way, we get to relax in English lessons. This affects my motivation too. As I mentioned, as we always do paper-based activities in other subjects, doing even more paper-based*

activities in English lessons would be boring. It would hinder my motivation. (Ümit - Interview 2)

As a result, the participants shared that the activities based on *TS 3* helped them improve their motivation levels in English lessons, and they did this by actively making a comparison between paper-based activities and *TS 3* activities. They suggested that the latter was more fun, informative as well as creative as opposed to the boring nature of the paper-based activities. My in-class observations also suggested that the participants showed a seemingly higher level of motivation while completing the relevant tasks based on *TS 3*; however, their motivation levels would drop when they were offered similar activities in traditional ways. This tendency among the participants led me to adopt and turn the paper-based activities that were already available in their coursebook into similar and refreshing *TS 3* activities to maintain a high level of motivation among them and reach the intended curricular objectives more successfully.

In conclusion, all participants suggested that they had improvement in their motivation levels with the integration of *TS 3* activities. In this section, the general perceptions of the participants were shared in terms of the motivational effect of *TS 3*. Additionally, two themes emerged in the analysis part, which called for separate presentations: cooperation and competition. In the upcoming sections, the motivational effects of *TS 3* in regards to cooperation and competition were shared and analyzed in-depth with the participants' overt arguments as well as the field notes taken during in-class observations.

4.2.1. Cooperation and its Effect on Motivation

Communication occurs with at least two people, and language constitutes the basis of any type of communication. That is, learning a new language requires individuals to interact with each other to be able to really internalize the language and utilize it communicatively. Hence, language teachers always try to integrate cooperative elements into their lessons so that students can use the target language in a meaningful and natural context while completing the given tasks. This way students get a chance

to produce outputs and receive inputs that can enhance their language skills immensely.

Knowing this fact, in my time designing and administrating the activities based on *TS 3* in the classroom environment, I always prioritized communication among the participants immensely. For instance, I designed several activities that required active cooperation of pairs, groups and even sometimes the whole class. Even, the activities that seemed to be done individually were in fact prepared to encourage active communication and cooperation among the participants. Some activities required cooperation between the teacher as well as the participants as well.

Therefore, I expected the participants to mention cooperation in interviews and in-class observations, and they did. The participants stated many times in response to various different interview questions that the cooperative nature of the activities based on *TS 3* increased their motivation. Caner, for instance, stated that completing the tasks with his friends was a factor that enhanced his motivation in the activities based on *TS 3*. Caner shared "As for motivation, *TS 3* has improved my motivation because we can do the activities together with my friends as we are close with each other. Also, we can support each other in the activities." (Caner - Interview 3).

Likewise, Murat suggested that *TS 3* was able to improve his motivation in English lessons as *TS 3* was a game that could be played together with his friends. He also made a comparison between the activities based on *TS 3* and traditional paper-based activities and implied that *TS 3* allowed them to interact with other students more, which also increased their perceived fun while completing the given tasks by suggesting "...since *TS 3* is a nicer and more fun game that can be played with friends, my motivation has improved more with *TS 3* compared to paper-based activities." (Murat - Interview 2).

Aydın argued that they could complete *TS 3* activities by exchanging opinions and sharing ideas with his friends; thus, he liked *TS 3* activities more compared to paper-based activities. Also, his perceived motivation level seemed to be higher due to this reason. Another important notion to be taken into consideration in his argument was

that he likened *TS 3* to a common world. I found this metaphor especially interesting as he coded the game as something to be conducted collectively rather than individually, implying how *TS 3* activities encouraged them to work together. Aydın said "I enjoy the activities that we do in our common world by sharing ideas with my friends. *TS 3* is a different experience compared to other subjects because we get to participate together with my friends." (Aydın - Interview 2).

Aydın also made a comparison between English subject and other subjects while describing the collective nature of the activities based on *TS 3*. His statement implied that they did not get many chances to work with his friends in other subjects, making *TS 3* activities more unique and effective in terms of pair and group work.

This argument was also pointed out several times in classroom sessions. When the participants were asked whether they liked working together with other students to overcome challenges and complete the given tasks, they stated that they loved working together because they would always study individually in other subjects; thus, their in-class interaction would be very limited. However, they would be able to create shared characters and spaces in the activities based on *TS 3*, increasing their motivation levels accordingly.

Ümit made a comparison among different subjects too. He stated that they were more active in English lessons which let them go beyond just listening to the lessons and become active participants in the given tasks. He said being able to work with his friends made them freer in the activities based on *TS 3*. He also said that *TS 3* activities allowed them to get to know each other in-depth because 9th grade was the first time they met each other. This way, the game posed as an icebreaker and let the participants become more acquainted with each other. He argued that this type of cooperation increased their motivation in English lessons.

> *In other subjects, teacher presents the lesson, we listen. In this subject, since we are freer, we can do the activities together with friends. This way, our circle of friends expands as well. This is the 9th grade, and we get to know each other for the first time. It has been good for us to be sincere with each other. We have*

> *become motivated for lessons too. Our lessons have become more fruitful and fun. (Ümit - Interview 3)*

In addition to general statements of the participants, Caner gave two specific examples in which cooperation among the participants made sense while completing an activity. He said that they had a chance to work together and create Sims that would reflect all of their ideas, likes as well as dislikes. He implied that collective work behind such activities made *TS 3* a unique experience for them. To prove his point, Caner shared "I love *TS 3* because it is a unique game, and the game is fun because I get to participate and create characters with my friends in the game. That's why I love this game" (Caner - Interview 3).

> *In the character creation activities that we did last week, more people participated in the activity because it was an activity that we completed as a whole class. As a result of this shared participation, the lesson was better. I could say it was more beneficial. (Caner - Interview 2)*

The example pointed out by Caner was something that attracted my attention in-class observations as well. In session one, for instance, the participants were to create Sims by altering their physical properties. Even though it seemed to be an individual activity at first glance as the participants would go on the board one by one to mold the physical features of the given Sims and then form English sentences regarding what they have done, the participants started to work collectively and gave each other suggestions regarding how the given Sims should look like and what kind of changes should be made. They also gave each other feedback when they made mistakes while forming sentences in English.

The feedback that was given was also in English most of the time even though there were occasional mistakes in sentence structures or vocabulary choice. This activity showed that *TS 3* had an embedded feature that allowed the participants to work collectively and overcome the challenges posed by the activities, which, in return, improved their motivation levels to complete the tasks. Moreover, this type of collective work gave the participants a chance to use the language productively and enhance their speaking, vocabulary and grammar as also stated in the previous chapters.

Another activity in which cooperation was encouraged by the nature of the activity was session two. It was a house decoration activity. The participants were to compare several rooms with each other by using comparative / superlative forms. Then, they would form similar sentences in comparative / superlative forms and create their own rooms in accordance with the sentences they had just formed. Just like session one, the participants gave each other advice regarding the interior choices that should be followed in English. Additionally, the participants corrected each other's mistakes and explained them why they made such mistakes even without the interference of the researcher. At the end of the activity, the end creation was a cooperative work of the participants, and they were proud of it. It seemed to me that the participants were highly motivated in the process both in terms of language use and activity completion for the whole class was active and their ideas actually made sense in their shared world.

As I mentioned earlier, there were also multiple activities that were especially designed to increase cooperation among the participants. For instance, in the session three, the participants were to work in groups of four orally describe certain scenes shown in *TS 3* and then draw the described scenes on a piece of paper. The participants stated that they loved this activity because they were dependent on each other. In other words, all participants had to contribute in one way or another to complete the activity mutually. This way, the participants were highly motivated to fulfill their own roles and help their other group members to be able to complete the given task successfully. The participants stated at the end of the session that they had never done group work in other subjects; thus, the whole process was motivating for them. To support this notion, Aydın argued that the possibility of doing different activities in English lessons would increase their expectations and motivation levels when attending English lessons.

In conclusion, it could be said, in line with the responses of the participants in interviews and in-class observations, that the motivation levels of the participants increased with the integration of *TS 3* into their regular sessions in terms of cooperation and collective work. It was found that the participants were willing to study and complete activities in cooperation with their friends. They argued that they enjoyed giving advice and getting advice from friends and creating mutual creations at the end of the tasks. Moreover, cooperation was something they did not experience in other

subjects as a result of the traditional teaching techniques; thus, being able to do something different from individual work was a motivating and enjoyable experience for them.

4.2.2. Perceptions of Competition and Motivation

Cooperation is a good way to make students productively use the target language while completing various tasks. However, not all activities are collective and cooperative in nature. There are many activities and task that require participants to compete against each other. Even though such instances do not actually aim at creating rivalry among students, competitive activities can lead to situations in which students can practice different language elements to complete given tasks the first or in the best possible way.

As a result, I designed several activities based on *TS 3* to create a competitive atmosphere so that the participants could feel motivated to complete activities and race with their friends. To my expectations, the participants pointed out the competitive nature of *TS 3* and how it motivated them in the classroom environment multiple times. Erkan, for instance, stated that the competitive nature of *TS 3* resulted in a more fun atmosphere, which, accordingly, increased their motivation to participate in the given tasks.

> *I believe TS 3 is OK. My friends are motivated to participate in the lessons more. Since there is competition, the activities are fun. Positively, it makes understanding the lesson easier, and since more people get to participate, the lessons are overall better. (Erkan - Interview 1)*

Similar to Erkan, Mert and Ümit believe that *TS 3* and computer-based activities in general made the classroom atmosphere more competitive, and this competitiveness embedded within the activities based on *TS 3* allowed them to improve their English language skills and perceived enjoyment levels as also stated in the earlier chapters**.** Mert said “As my friends mentioned, *TS 3* leads to competition. At the same time, we get to improve our English more.” (Mert - Interview 1), and Ümit added “To me,

computer-based activities are better, and such activities lead to even more fun as they lead to competition" (Ümit - Interview 1).

Murat also believed that computer-based activities overall were a better fit for him. He acknowledged that there was a connection between competition and an increase in their proficiency in English. This could be due to the fact that competition gave them a chance to actively utilize the target language in a meaningful environment. He shared

> *I think computer-based activities are better. This, accordingly, improves our English with TS 3. Additionally, it increases the competition among us as my friends said earlier. (Murat - Interview 1).*

My own classroom observations also came to a similar conclusion. That is, the participants found the integration of *TS 3* activities that were competitive in nature to be motivational in terms of participation and enjoyment. They wanted to be the best in the given task; thus, they were motivated to use the target language to complete the given task in the best possible way. They also often teased each other in such activities. When they were asked in classroom sessions whether they loved the activities involving competition, they argued that they loved competition because it gave them something to go for, and the fact that *TS 3* gave them even more enjoyable and meaningful experience increased their motivation even more in terms of competition.

As for specific examples, in session seven, the participants were to watch the researcher playing *TS 3* and visiting different places in Egypt. They would then describe the given scenes by using past simple tense. The participant with the most descriptive paragraph would be the winner of the activity. As a result of there being a winner in the activity, all participants did their best to depict the scenes as much as possible with the accurate use of the past simple tense. At the end of the activity, the participants would keep asking questions to learn the winner of the activity.

It looked like the main motivation behind their completion of the activity was to be the winner. As a result, this competitive nature gave them a meaningful atmosphere to practice the past simple tense, revise some vocabulary items regarding the ancient world and use the language productively. When the participants were asked whether

they liked the activity or not, almost all of them said that they enjoyed the activity a lot even though they never had a chance to control the game in this session.

Similarly, in session nine, the participants were to create their own emergency rooms and then come up with some rules for those who wanted to enter their rooms in case of an emergency by using must / have to. Even though no winner was to be announced at the end of the activity, the participants wanted to create the best room of their own and write down unusual rules. Therefore, they went into competition and tried to make their room as attractive and useful as possible while also teasing each other's choices in English.

According to my observations, the reason why they were so competitive in this activity was that they were told to work individually. Since each student could individually create their own rooms, they naturally started to compare their own rooms with the other rooms created by their friends. They were so motivated to come on the board that almost all hands were raised to take part in the study.

Moreover, the participants wanted to participate multiple times even though they had already created their own rooms. It looked like their initial creations were not the best; thus, they wanted to edit their rooms to make their friends jealous. When they were asked whether they liked the activity or not, the participants said they enjoyed the activity and claimed that their creations were much better than the others, showing how competitively motivated they got while completing the activity.

As a result of the participants' statements in the interviews and in-class observations, it could be argued that the competitive nature of certain activities that were based on *TS 3* influenced the participants' perceived motivation levels positively. They stated that competition embedded in such activities increased their enjoyment levels, gave them chances to utilize the target language communicatively, improve their language-related skills and motivate them to participate in the lessons. Likewise, I experienced during in-class observations that the participants were more willing to engage with the activities and more motivated to complete them if the activities were to offer them competitive elements.

Overall, the second research question was associated with the perceived motivation levels of the participants with the active integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons, and all participants who took part in the interviews openly stated that integration of *TS 3* enhanced their perceived motivation levels. The other participants who did not participate in the interviews but joined the gameplay sessions based on *TS 3* also suggested in classroom environment that their perceived motivation levels were higher with the *TS 3* activities.

My own classroom observations also came to similar conclusions, arguing that the participants were more motivated to take part in the activities and complete them accordingly compared to the paper-based activities that they were used to completing silently and passively. The participants also made an active comparison between paper-based activities and *TS 3* and stated that the latter was more motivating due to its fun, creative and informative nature as opposed to the boring and linear nature of paper-based activities. Thus, it could be said that the participants found the integration of *TS 3* more innovative compared to their previous experiences, which, in return, improved their motivation in English lessons.

There were two categories present under the second research question. The first one was about cooperation and its effect on the perceived motivation levels of the participants. The participants stated that *TS 3* activities gave them chances to work with each other and complete various activities collectively.

Since they were able to talk to each other, share their ideas and give feedback to one another, they found the activities based on *TS 3* fresh. This is because they were not used to working with their friends in other subjects; instead, they would just listen to their teachers and complete the lessons individually. However, when they were offered something fresh, something that they could complete by working with their friends, their perceived motivation levels increased accordingly.

The second category was about competition. As mentioned earlier, the participants would always work individually and passively on other subjects, and this traditional approach would bore them and have a negative impact on their perceived motivation

levels. However, when *TS 3* activities with competition were introduced, the participants' perceived motivation levels enhanced.

They suggested that they loved competition-embedded activities because such activities could lead to funny situations in which they could also practice language elements meaningfully. They also argued that they felt more motivated to participate in the activities when competition was present in the said activities. My classroom observations also showed that the participants were more motivated to take part in the activities which offered competition between individuals or between groups.

4.3. How does the integration of *TS 3* into the EFL curriculum influence the perceived language attitude of the learners towards EFL in a 9th grade classroom context?

The third research question to be answered in the present study was associated with the impact of the activities based on *TS 3* on the language attitude of the participants towards English language learning process. It is noteworthy to mention that language attitude, just like motivation, forms the basis of successful language learning. In other words, if a language learner has a positive attitude towards the target language that they aim at learning, their probability of learning that language is higher compared to a language learner who has a negative language attitude. Therefore, it is a crucial consideration for language teachers and other stakeholders to come up with methods, techniques and tools that can have a positive effect on language attitudes of learners.

In the present study, *TS 3* was adopted as an innovative tool as an attempt to change the previously seen traditional techniques in English subject in a Turkish technical and vocational high school among a group of 9th graders. When the participants were asked questions regarding their perceived language attitude towards English lessons with the integration of *TS 3* in stimulated recall interview after they had watched several gameplay clips to remind them of what they had experienced, they all stated that they had positive language attitudes. Seven participants suggested that they had relatively less positive, and sometimes even negative, language attitudes towards English lessons before *TS 3*. In other words, the activities based on *TS 3* were able to help them improve

their perceived language attitude towards English lessons, making their experiences more pleasant.

One participant, on the other hand, suggested that he already had positive language attitude towards English lessons even before the integration of *TS 3* into their regular lessons, and he argued that their language attitudes remained positive after *TS 3*'s integration. That is, he had already positive dispositions regarding English lessons; thus, the activities based on *TS 3* would not be able to make his experiences more positive; however, he also suggested that *TS 3* did not have a negative impact on their perceived language attitudes towards English lessons either, implying *TS 3* was still a positive experience for him as it still helped him remain positive language attitude towards English lessons specifically and English language as generally. Below can be seen a table that describes the participants' language attitude before and after the integration of *TS 3* along with their reasons and perceptions regarding this topic.

Table 6.
Perceived change in language attitude of the participants based on stimulated recall interview

Participants	**Attitude before *TS 3***	**Attitude after *TS 3***	**Reasons for Change**
Aydın	Less Positive	More Positive	More fun and preparation
Caner	Negative	Positive	More retention and visual
Mert	Positive	Positive	-
Ümit	Less Positive	More Positive	More fun and informative
Serhat	Less Positive	More Positive	More fun and less boring
Erkan	Less Positive	More Positive	More meaningful
Oğuz	Less Positive	More Positive	More beneficial
Murat	Negative	Positive	More fun and visual

The participants stated that English lessons before the integration of *TS 3* were mostly boring. They would always do similar paper-based activities that would be traditional in nature. Thus, doing such activities all the time would lead to boredom. Moreover, sometimes, this traditional nature of English lessons caused the participants to hate English lessons, which, accordingly, made them have a negative language attitude towards English lessons and English language learning as a whole. For instance, Murat pointed out that doing similar written-based activities for 40 straight minutes would make the lessons boring. However, with the integration of *TS 3* into their regular lessons, his perceived language attitude turned into a more positive stance as time, a result of the fun, visual and more informative nature of the activities based on *TS 3*. Overall, what he actually implied was that the innovative nature of the game-based learning was more beneficial than the traditional paper-based activities.

> *My language attitude would not be the same (without the integration of TS 3). Because doing paper-based activities for 40 minutes bore us. It almost makes us hate English lessons. With TS 3, we can learn English better as a result of its fun and visual nature. (Murat - Interview 2)*

Similar to what Murat suggested, Oğuz shared that paper-based activities would be boring in nature and less beneficial compared to the activities based on *TS 3*. He suggested that the shift from paper-based activities to *TS 3* activities changed his perceived language attitude from a negative stance to a positive one. He shared "Paper-based activities tend to bore me more. (*TS 3* activities) are more beneficial; thus, my language attitude is now positive." (Oğuz - Interview 2).

Caner suggested that his language attitude towards English lessons was negative before the integration of *TS 3* because memorization was a huge part of their regular lessons, and this caused them to dislike English language. However, after the introduction of *TS 3* activities, his language attitude turned into a more positive stance because they did not have to memorize words or do coursebook activities anymore. Instead, they would play *TS 3* visually, and it would help them remember the intended language points without memorization. Aydın also supported the suggestions made by Caner and said that their previous lessons were based on memorization and he would not like English lessons at all due to this reason.

> *My attitude changed positively. As other friends said, with paper-based activities, we would memorize all the time. This caused us to dislike English. Since there were not plenty of activities in the coursebook, we would memorize the words and such, and we did not enjoy that. However, as we played TS 3 on the board, we could remember TS 3 more easily, and since we got to use the words in the activities, they would be stored in our minds too, in our visual memory. (Caner - Interview 3)*

> *TS 3 changed my attitude towards English lessons. Before TS 3, it could be said that I did not like English at all. We would write words on the board all the time... We would go home and write words… repeat them. When it comes to TS 3, we remember the words because we do activities on TS 3. (Aydın - Interview 3)*

Serhat and Ümit took a broader perspective and focused on enjoyment that *TS 3* added to their lessons. Ümit mentioned his language attitude became more positive thanks to the fun elements present in the activities based on *TS 3*. He also added that *TS 3* was more informative compared to paper-based activities by suggesting "*TS 3* makes (lessons) more fun. Plus, it is more informative. My language attitude changed positively." (Ümit - Interview 2). Likewise, Serhat mentioned that *TS 3* activities were much more enjoyable and fun than paper-based activities; however, he added that sometimes paper-based activities could be more informative, which was contradictory to what Ümit and some of his friends suggested. This conflict could be due to their personal choices regarding learning preferences and dispositions. Still, Serhat said that *TS 3* was able to change his language attitude to a more positive stance, which was in line with Ümit's perception.

> *TS 3 causes lessons to be more fun, but I think we can learn better with paper-based activities. Retention might be better this way. However, as I said, the lessons are more fun (with TS 3), and my attitude is more positive with TS 3 because the lessons could be more boring (with paper-based activities) (Serhat - Interview 2)*

Erkan, on the other hand, believed that integration of *TS 3* activities into their regular lessons posed as a more meaningful addition. He believed that such activities could make the lessons more versatile as doing paper-based activities all the time would lead to a boring class atmosphere. Thus, he had a positive change in his perceived language attitude, and he, accordingly, wanted to participate in the lessons more.

> *I would like to participate more (thanks to the integration of TS 3). In the end, paper-based activities are often boring. TS 3 is more meaningful. It creates a difference. My attitude would not be the same without TS 3. (Erkan - Interview 2)*

Differently from all the other participants who suggested that the integration of *TS 3* into their regular lessons helped them develop a more positive language attitude towards English lessons and English language, Mert suggested that *TS 3* activities did not lead to any meaningful changes in his perceived language attitude. He stated that he always loved English lessons no matter what, and he would prefer paper-based activities more. Mert shared "*TS 3* did not change my attitude towards English much. I used to love English this much, and I still love it this much. As for teaching, paper-based activities appeal to me more". (Mert - Interview 2).

He also said, as also seen below, that he would not see the difference between paper-based activities and the activities based on *TS 3* as long as the given activities could feed their English knowledge. Moreover, according to his in-class scores and participation, I realized that his proficiency in English was higher compared to his friends, and he would always want to do something that could improve his English abilities. Therefore, he might have focused more on the objectives and language improvement rather than the activities themselves, which could explain why he always had a positive language attitude towards English lessons regardless of the activity types. For this point, he added "...there is not much difference between the two (the paper-based activities and the activities based on *TS 3*). Both aim at teaching us English and making us learn something". (Mert - Interview 1).

In conclusion, all participants had a positive language attitude towards EFL with the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons. 7 participants said that their language attitude was poorer before the introduction of the activities based on *TS 3*, yet their perceived language attitude improved with *TS 3* activities. The improvement was more evident among some participants as they had a completely negative attitude towards English lessons previously. For others, their previous language attitudes were still somewhat positive, but *TS 3* was able to enhance the positiveness even more. 1 participant, on the other hand, suggested that integration of *TS 3* did not make any changes in his perceived language attitude towards English lessons as his language

attitude would always be positive regardless of the methods, tools and techniques to be imposed in the classroom environment.

In addition to general suggestions and statements of the participants regarding the perceived change in their language attitudes with the activities based on *TS 3* that were presented in this chapter, two categories occurred under this research question, respectively eagerness in participation and presence of digital games.

4.3.1. Eagerness in Participation and its Relation to Language Attitude

Participation is essential in language classes. For a successful language learning process, language learners should go beyond passively sitting and learning about the language. Instead, they should actively use the language and internalize the intended curricular objectives by manipulating the given tasks or producing language outputs. When language learners are given chances to participate in the lessons by engaging with various activities or materials, they are expected to develop more positive language attitude and internalize the language points more effectively.

Keeping this valuable information in mind, I designed the activities based on *TS 3* to encourage the participants to participate in the lessons as much as possible. To help them become more willing to take part in the activities, I added humorous elements to *TS 3* activities. For instance, I let them create unrealistic Sims or house designs, or I permitted them to do fun party activities in the game. Similarly, I tried to incorporate some fantasy elements like fighting mummies or talking to the grim reaper. Moreover, I let the participants as free and creative as possible so that their participation rates would be higher compared to traditional paper-based activities in which they would not have chances to complete activities variously and differently, and I gave them meaningful chances to mold the language and use it in the way they wished.

Expectedly, the participants stated multiple times that their eagerness to participate in English lessons, compared to their previous experiences with traditional teaching methods, increased, and this increase caused them to develop a more positive language attitude towards English lessons and English language. Aydın stated that participation

in *TS 3* activities was better because the activities that they were offered were soothing and enjoyable at the same time. He mentioned that his language attitude could be poorer if he had not participated in the activities that much.

> *Doing activities and participating in the activities by playing TS 3 is more fun and more soothing because it is an open-world game. For us, participation becomes more enjoyable. My language attitude would change (without TS 3). It would change negatively. (Aydın - Interview 3)*

Aydın further mentioned that he would study at home beforehand so that he could take part in the activities based on *TS 3*. He also made a comparison between *TS 3* activities and paper-based activities suggesting that the former made him much more eager in lessons in terms of participation rate.

> *Compared to traditional paper-based activities, TS 3 activities are more fun. At home, I study a little bit and make some preparations in order to participate in the activities. I believe the integration of TS 3 is more fun than paper-based activities. I am more willing to participate compared to old times. The lessons are now nice and enjoyable. (Aydın - Interview 2)*

The above two excerpts by Aydın actually showed the clear connection between his eagerness to participate in the lessons and developing a positive language attitude towards English lessons. It looked like both fed each other. Additionally, Caner suggested that *TS 3* helped him become a more active student not only in English lessons but also in other lessons as well. As a result of his active participation in the lessons, he developed a more positive language attitude too. Erkan also made a very similar statement. He said that "In this process, my self-confidence improved as I constantly wanted to go on the board. I'm not talking about just this lesson; my willingness to go on the board in the other lessons increased too." (Erkan - Interview 3), which means that *TS 3* helped him build self-confidence thanks to his frequent participation in the activities based on *TS 3*. Similar to Caner, he said that his eagerness in participation increased in other subjects in addition to English lessons as well.

> *This process has been good to me because we continue to learn with TS 3. This process caused me to be more active… not just in English lessons but also in other lessons too. My motivation improved and my attitude towards lessons changed. So, the process was nice (Caner - Interview 3)*

> *Willingness to participate is more (with the activities based on TS 3). The class environment is usually silent with paper-based activities, and our friends do not want to participate in the lessons. With TS 3, the eagerness of participation is more intense. Only the same people take part in the paper-based activities. (Erkan - Interview 1)*

Erkan also compared in the above statement that paper-based activities with *TS 3* activities and made comments suggesting that paper-based activities would lead to a more passive and silent atmosphere where participant rates would accordingly drop. This statement was also supported by my in-class observations. That is, most participants would not take part in the lessons if they were offered traditional paper-based activities.

I would not be able to find volunteers for such activities. However, after the integration of *TS 3* activities, most participants would want to come on the board and do the activities voluntarily, which might imply that they developed a more positive language attitude thanks to the innovative and modern nature of *TS 3* activities, and this, in return, increased their participation rate.

Serhat argued that he and his friends developed a more positive language attitude thanks to the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons as a result of the fact that they all wanted to participate in the activities, which helped them learn the intended language points more easily and attentively. He also reported that they would not have the same feelings and thoughts if they had done paper-based activities instead of *TS 3* activities.

> *We take an interest in lessons thanks to TS 3. If we only did paper-based activities, most people would write but not listen. However, when people go on the board (with TS 3 activities) everybody wants to listen and participate, and this process makes us learn. (Serhat - Interview 3)*

In addition to Serhat's statement, Aydın mentioned in the below excerpt that he and his friends would participate in the activities more when *TS 3* was integrated into lessons compared to paper-based activities. He said "The game is fun. Since it is more fun than the activities that we do on other days, our willingness to participate in the lessons increases" (Aydın - Interview 1).

Oğuz also made a comment about their participation rate with and without *TS 3* activities and stated that they would not participate in the lessons as much if they were not offered the activities based on *TS 3*, and this would accordingly affect their language attitude negatively. He stated "If there weren't the integration of *TS 3*, my participation rate would be lower. Yes, that is what would happen. I would not participate as much. My attitude would change too." (Oğuz - Interview 3).

In addition to the statements uttered by the participants in interviews, I had my observations regarding this topic as well. For instance, before session 2, the participants were given a coursebook activity in which they were to compare and contrast different objects as well as people by analyzing the given pictures. However, since the activity was linear and it did not have room for creativity, the participants did not want to participate in the activity and share their answers with the whole class. Some of them even did not finish the activity even though they knew the correct grammar use. Then, when I told participants that they would analyze some rooms in *TS 3* and then create their own rooms by making an active comparison between their new rooms and the existing rooms, the participation rate suddenly increased meaningfully. They wanted to take part in the activity even though they knew they would make mistakes while forming sentences from scratch. This activity showed how much they wanted to participate in the activities when *TS 3* was integrated into their lessons as opposed to the traditional activities present in their coursebook. They also seemed to enjoy the activity, and most participants stated at the end of the activity that they loved the activity and had lots of fun. As a result, the participants seemed to show a more positive attitude towards English in the activity based on *TS 3*, and this positive shift seemed to be connected to their eagerness to participate.

Likewise, in session eight, the participants had an apparent increase in their eagerness to participate in the activity because they were to go around the town and do various activities in pairs and form sentences with should / shouldn't. Their participation rate was higher than the typical coursebook activities that aimed at revising and practicing the same grammar point because they were much freer and more creative in their gameplay choices; moreover, they would be able to form their own sentences instead of utilizing the frames or restrictive vocabulary choice present in the coursebook

activities. They seemed to enjoy the activity and the participants who already took part in the activity would want to come on the board again and again, which was something unusual. The participants seemed to develop a more positive attitude towards English in this specific activity as was evident in their willingness to participate in the activity multiple times and their enjoyment throughout the activity. The participants also said at the end of the activity that they loved the activity and they would like to do a similar activity in the upcoming weeks.

All in all, this chapter was about the development of a more positive language attitude towards English and its relationship with eagerness to participate in the activities based on *TS 3*. The participants suggested that *TS 3* activities made them more eager to take part in the relevant activities. They said they became more active learners, built self-confidence and even transferred their willingness to other lessons. They said that being able to participate in the *TS 3* activities had a positive effect on their language attitude and that their language attitude would be poorer with paper-based activities in which fewer people would be willing to participate because of their more boring and less joyful nature. My in-class observations supported the statements shared by the participants as well. For instance, the participants were often more willing to participate in the activities based on *TS 3* compared to the coursebook activities that would cover the same curricular objectives. The participants would state that they enjoyed *TS 3* activities more than paper-based activities, and they seemed to have a more positive language attitude while engaging with the former type of activities.

4.3.2. Support for Integration of *TS 3* and Other Digital Games

Gamification is an important part of language learning process as it influences the language attitude of learners along with their motivation, enjoyment and proficiency levels. Based on gamification, digital games are extensively used in language classes as well in order to provide language learners with innovative, fun and informative learning situations.

In the present study *TS 3* was introduced to the participants as a part of their regular classroom sessions, and they were to complete various activities either by controlling

the game or watching the game to fulfill certain curricular language objectives. As a result of this process, the participants had distinctive experiences that equipped them with thoughts and feelings regarding the integration of *TS 3* into their English sessions, and these experiences inevitably had an impact on their perceived language attitudes.

At the very end of the study, the participants were asked to carefully think about what they felt during the activities based on *TS 3*, and how this process shaped their language attitude. The participants mostly stated that they had positive perceptions regarding the integration of *TS 3* and its effect on their present as well as future language attitudes. For instance, Aydın believed that *TS 3* should be integrated in the upcoming semesters as well for it could lead to enjoyable experiences in which the participants could get away from the traditional atmosphere of the school; moreover, such an approach could enhance participation as well as self-confidence as also mentioned in the earlier chapters. Aydın stated that all these suggested positive experiences could ultimately change their attitudes into a more positive stance towards English lessons and English language.

> *I would like to see the integration of TS 3 (in the future). Because everyone studies in order to be knowledgeable in the future; everyone studies and attends school. Yet, it is good to have game breaks every now and then. They are fun. So, in my opinion integration of TS 3 (in the future) would be good. As for the positive sides of the game, it could encourage someone who would normally not like to participate in lessons to take part in lessons. It could improve self-confidence. It could help us have a more positive attitude towards lessons. (Aydın - Interview 3)*

Similarly, Caner supported the integration of the activities based on *TS 3* in the future as well. He stated that traditional activities would be boring and straightforward. However, with the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons, they could experience something fresh and study English accordingly as seen in the below excerpt.

> *If you ask me, I would love to see the addition of TS 3 (in the upcoming years) since writing stuff or doing activities in the coursebook constantly for 8 hours or 10 hours would be boring. At the very least, I would like TS 3 to be integrated for 1 or 2 hours. This way, we could relieve our tiredness and do some work.*

> *So, in my opinion, I would like the integration of TS 3 (in the upcoming years) (Caner - Interview 3)*

When Caner's view of the traditional teaching atmosphere present in English lessons was analyzed, it was seen that he considered traditional activities to be tiresome and boring and even repetitive, offering implications regarding his negative attitude towards English lessons with a traditional teaching approach. However, he believed that even one hour of integration of *TS 3* into their lessons could potentially change the negative atmosphere and allow them to do some work and study English without getting tired. Thus, it could be said that his language attitude toward English would be much more positive with *TS 3* activities as *TS 3* meant withdrawing from the traditional teaching techniques that they were used to experiencing in their English lessons.

Mert believed that the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English sessions was a successful attempt. When he compared his previous experiences in English lessons, he realized that they had never seen such an innovative attempt before. Thus, he said he suggested that the experiences they had and their overall language attitude towards English with *TS 3* were positive even though he had previously reported multiple times that he would learn better with paper-based activities. Mert did not share whether he would like to see a similar attempt in the future years of his school life or not; however, it would not be far-fetched to assume that he would not be unhappy to see similar activities based on *TS 3* as he found the whole process successful overall.

> *I find what you do successful. I have never heard of an instance where a game was to be integrated into lessons before. I haven't seen either. It increases participation. For some, playing a game and participating in the lessons like this is more fun. (Mert - Interview 3)*

Similar to Mert, Serhat also reported that he found the whole process as a successful innovative attempt by me. He said that his interest in English lessons enhanced thanks to the activities based on *TS 3*. Serhat further suggested in another statement that he would love to see similar *TS 3* activities in the future years. The fact that he was in favor of the utilization of *TS 3* in his future school years could be associated with his enhanced interest, or language attitude in other words, in English lessons due to *TS 3* activities. He shared "I find the whole process well-done. As for me, I show interest in

lessons because of *TS 3*. I believe what managed the process well." (Serhat - Interview 3) and "Of course, I would love to see the integration of *TS 3* (in the future years) for it could increase our motivation towards the lessons. It could allow us to learn stuff." (Serhat - Interview 3) to share his thoughts on this topic.

As for my own in-class observations, I experienced that most participants showed open support in terms of the integration of *TS 3* into their future English lessons. When I told them that the process came to an end after the last session, the participants asked whether they could play *TS 3* in 10th grade. I told them that it would depend on their feedback and whether their language attitude towards English changed positively or not. After this statement, most participants shared that they showed a more positive attitude towards English lessons because the activities that they were offered based on *TS 3* were more enjoyable, fun and informative compared to traditional activities that they would see in their coursebooks. They also added they would support the integration of *TS 3* activities in the upcoming years too.

As a result, it could be suggested that the participants were overall in favor of the utilization of *TS 3* in their English lessons, and they regarded the process as a successful attempt as they would evidently show more negative language attitude in English lessons if they were only given paper-based activities like the ones in their coursebooks because of the reasons they shared multiple times as responses to various questions not only in interview sessions but also in classroom sessions.

Accordingly, the participants wanted to experience similar activities based on *TS 3* in 10th grade to overcome the negative aspects of traditional English lessons and experience the refreshing, fun, motivating, active and informative classroom atmosphere provided by the activities based on *TS 3*.

In addition to their support in terms of the integration of *TS 3* into English lessons in their future school years, the participants suggested that they would love to see the integration of different digital games as well. Ümit, for instance, suggested that creative and open-world games could be integrated into their English lessons along with *TS 3*. He said that such games could enhance their motivation. Ümit, then,

specifically gave the example of Red Dead Redemption and GTA 5 by suggesting "I would love to see the integration of games. They motivate us. Maybe creative games. Open world games can be added too. They can feed our creativity. We can talk about GTA 5 and Red Dead Redemption." (Ümit - Interview 3).

Caner proposed that Minecraft could be a nice addition to their English lessons as the language-based nature of the game could foster their vocabulary learning. He also suggested that online games that could be controlled via their mobile phones could be fun and competitive in terms of alternative assessment techniques.

> *Since objects and other stuff are in English, our vocabulary can expand with Minecraft. In terms of integrating digital games into our lessons, we can also do this not only via the smart board but also our mobile phones online. This way, it could be even more fun especially in terms of competitive activities. (Caner - Interview 3)*

In conclusion, the participants' potential change in language attitude in line with the activities based on *TS 3* was examined under the third research question. All participants suggested that their language attitudes were positive during the integration of *TS 3*. seven participants stated that their language attitudes shifted from a less positive stance to a more positive stance thanks to the activities based on *TS 3*.

One participant suggested that his language attitude was in the most positive stance; thus, *TS 3*'s integration could not improve it anymore, yet they still acknowledged that the integration of *TS 3* did not have any negative impact on his language attitude in any way.

As for the reasons why the participants had a positive language attitude with *TS 3* activities, they stated that they were used to completing traditional activities that would be boring, less beneficial and limited both in terms of quality and quantity; thus, when they the activities based on *TS 3* introduced, they felt like they were to engage with more beneficial, fun, visual, informative and meaningful activities to fulfill the intended language areas and objectives. As a result, their language attitudes were positive throughout the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons.

Under the first category that emerged in this section, the relationship between the participants' eagerness to participate in the lessons and their positive language attitude towards English lessons and English language was analyzed. It was revealed that the participants wanted to take part in *TS 3* activities more compared to traditional paper-based activities as a result of freer and more enjoyable nature of the former. It was found that the participants' language attitude tended to become more positive when they were to participate in the activities based on *TS 3*. The second category, on the other hand, was associated with the participants' active support of the integration of *TS 3* as well as other digital games into their regular English lessons. As the participants thought that the innovative attempt that they were offered was successful in nature, their language attitude enhanced accordingly. Furthermore, the participants wanted to experience similar attempts in which *TS 3* or other digital games were integrated into their English lessons as they thought such attempts would be beneficial and fun, having a positive impact on their language attitude.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS and IMPLICATIONS

5.0. Presentation

This chapter consists of four sections. In the first section, the findings are discussed in line with the research questions, and the discussed points are presented with the relevant literature. In the second section, the conclusions reached in the present study are presented and explained. Teaching implications regarding the utilization of *TS 3* in EFL setting are given and suggestions for the integration of digital games are made in the third section. The last section presents the limitations of the present study and reveals suggestions for future researchers who are interested in the relevant area of research.

5.1. Discussion

The present study was conducted in order to seek answers to three research questions. The first research question was associated with the general perceptions of the participants as to the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons to cover curricular objectives. The emergent themes were investigated in line with their thoughts and perceived feelings regarding the activities based on *TS 3*. The second research question aimed at investigating whether the perceived motivation levels of the participants increased with *TS 3* activities in line with their narratives. The third question was about the perceived language attitudes of the participants and how the activities based on *TS 3* could affect their perceived language attitudes.

As for the first research question, two emergent themes and three categories under each theme occurred. The first theme was associated with the participants' perceived

fun levels while engaging with *TS 3* activities offered in the classroom environment. The participants suggested that they had positive perceptions regarding the integration of *TS 3* for the game was able to offer them situations that fostered their perceived fun levels.

The first category was related to everyday habits and interests present in *TS 3*. The participants revealed that their perceived fun levels improved with the activities based on *TS 3* because they would also play digital games and engage with technological devices such as computers and mobile phones in their spare time outside school. As they were personally interested in digital games and technological devices, *TS 3* was able to attract their attention as a result of its game-based technological nature, and the participants started to have fun as they experienced something that they were personally interested in their spare time to be integrated into their regular English lessons. The fact that the participants were into digital games and other contemporary high-tech devices and tools in their free time was in line with the suggestions made by Liu et al. (2013) and Manesis (2020), stating that the contemporary generation's main attraction in their spare time is engaging with digital games. Likewise, this finding supported the trend suggesting that playing digital games is an indispensable part of teenagers attending high school (Lérida-Ayala, 2023).

The participants stated that the activities based on *TS 3* fostered their perceived fun levels because they were accustomed to this type of attraction in their free time. For instance, Aydın shared that playing *TS 3* and completing activities based on *TS 3* was easier for him because he was already good at using computers. He also added that he was familiar with the technology present in *TS 3*, which accordingly helped him have more fun while engaging with such activities. Oğuz suggested that *TS 3* was a better fit for them rather than paper-based activities that would be traditional in nature because technology would attract their attention more, which, in return, would foster the fun they had while completing the activities based on *TS 3*. This finding was also pointed out by Groff (2013). He states that taking advantage of second-order innovations like digital games within lessons could benefit the learning environment. My experiences in classroom observations reached to similar findings, suggesting that the participants were interested in engaging with *TS 3* because they were also

accustomed to playing digital games in their own free time. To support this, Murat stated that they were already used to using keyboards and mouses in their free time; thus, being able to experience something they would always do outside the school could cause them to have more fun while doing *TS 3* activities. This finding can be associated with Walz and Deterding's (2015) suggestion claiming that new generations are born into a world where digital games are a part of their daily lives; thus, it is crucial to integrate digital games into educational settings in order to create a meaningful bridge between their spare time and school time activities and dispositions. This way, as also revealed in the present study, students may have more fun while fulfilling the intended curricular objectives as a result of the contemporary tools they are already familiar with in their own free time.

The second category was regarding the freedom and real-life elements offered in *TS 3*. Tan et al. (2022) argue that TS series offers authentic in-game environments, and this authenticity can accordingly make language-related objectives more relatable and reachable by students. Similarly, it is suggested that TS series includes immersive details in terms of the real world (Lin & Lin, 2017) and real-life problems (Mendez et al., 2014). Thus, it is often claimed that *TS 3* offers limitless possibilities in which different aspects of real life can be integrated and experienced authentically (Voronaya, 2022). As a result of the freedom and real-life elements embedded in *TS 3*, its integration into educational settings is regarded to be successful and effective (Wang, 2019). In line with the previous studies and suggestions made by scholars in the relevant literature, it was revealed in the present study that the participants found the integration of *TS 3* in terms of the embedded freedom and real-life elements in the gameplay mechanics successful, and they suggested that the said mechanics improved their perceived fun levels while completing the activities based on *TS 3*.

Erkan stated, for instance, that being able to conduct daily life activities like buying a new house, swimming in the sea or eating food increased the fun he had while playing the game and completing the relevant tasks because he felt like he actually lived a real life in the game. Similarly, Mert shared that doing various activities in the game that they can also do in their own lives attracted their attention and had a positive impact on their perceived fun levels while engaging with *TS 3*.

The participants also suggested that the game allowed them to explore and experiment with real life. For instance, they could experiment with different models of cars before buying the one that would be more appropriate to their style, or they could try out various outfits before finding the most befitting. The examples given by the participants are in line with the limitless and endless nature of *TS 3* as the game never undermines free player-based choices, as also suggested by Voronaya (2022). Therefore, this free nature of the game may explain why they had increase in their perceived fun levels while playing the game and doing the related activities based on *TS 3*. The suggestions made by the participants are also suggested by Gee's (2019) argument stating that TS series can help students equip with 21st-century skills including exploration.

The participants also made active comparison in terms of real-life elements and freedom between paper-based activities that were traditional in nature with the innovative activities based on *TS 3* while sharing their perceptions as to why they had more fun doing *TS 3* activities. Caner, for instance, stated that coursebook activities would be limited in terms of quantity; however, *TS 3* activities would go on forever thanks to its open-world game that would offer unique and authentic-like nature. Aydın added that paper-based activities would be boring because of the activities like fill-in-the-blank tasks, which is in line with the negative properties of traditional teaching methods; however, with *TS 3* they could make exploration and try different things as a result of the freedom they were offered in the game. The fact that traditional activities ignore the exploration and initiative of students as also pointed out by Liu and Long (2014) may explain why the participants found the coursebook activities boring.

In the same vein, it can explain how the embedded properties of *TS 3* match with the advantages of innovative teaching as opposed to traditional teaching. For instance, Jaskyte et al. (2009) argue that innovative activities provide students with opportunities to explore and contemplate freely while completing the given tasks. Similarly, it is argued that innovative teaching methods may foster exploration (Kalyani & Rajasekaran, 2018), and the present study revealed that *TS 3* was more creative, freer and more open to exploration compared to typical coursebook activities,

suggesting that *TS 3* can act as an innovative teaching tool. This also may explain why the participants had more fun while completing the activities based on *TS 3*.

The third category under the theme of having fun in *TS 3* activities was related to active agency offered in *TS 3*. This category is different from the earlier category in the sense that it is more associated with the participants and their autonomy in the activities based on *TS 3* whereas the second category is more about the properties of *TS 3* without outside factors. The participants revealed that they felt autonomous and active while completing the tasks based on *TS 3* and that this feeling increased the fun they had in the process. For instance, Serhat stated that they could go on the board and do activities actively while also having fun thanks to the integration of *TS 3*. He further suggested that they could not have such chances when they were to engage in paper-based activities. Additionally, Caner argued that they could complete the activities by taking various paths instead of following the instructions linearly. He said that the prioritization in *TS 3* activities was on creativity, which, accordingly, had a positive impact on their perceived fun levels in English lessons. The suggestions made by the participants in terms of their being creative, autonomous and active during the activities based on *TS 3* are in line with previous literature on the topic (Beavis & Charles, 2005; Monjelat et al, 2013; Wang, 2019). For instance, it is argued that *TS 3* has the potential to feed in-class activities with a high level of autonomy, interactivity and creativity as also pointed out by Monjelat et al. (2013) and Wang (2019). It is also suggested that different gameplay choices and priorities assumed by different students while completing activities can feed the fun atmosphere present in the classroom environment (Beavis & Charles, 2005), which is also supported by the findings in the present study. Moreover, the results revealed in the present study were also in line with Stocker's (2020) arguments suggesting that TS series can actively feed students' autonomy needs, and this process can lead to exploration among students.

Similar findings were reached in classroom observations as well. The high level of autonomy that the participants had in the activities based on *TS 3* had a positive effect on their perceived fun levels. Compared to their coursebook activities that were traditional in nature, the participants felt like they finally went beyond the restrictions of the paper-based activities and could make sense of the language productively, which

was mentioned by the participants multiple times as well. For instance, they suggested that they were mostly silent, and they would write all the time without having a chance to actually utilize the language in order to complete the given paper-based activities; however, they could mold the language however they wanted and become active users of the language while engaging with *TS 3* activities. Therefore, it can be said that the autonomous and active nature of the activities based on *TS 3* is in line with the advantages of innovative teaching methods, proving, once more, that *TS 3* can pose as an innovative tool in a classroom environment, as also previously argued by Hsiao (2009) and Peterson (2021).

Moreover, Panoutsopoulos and Sampson (2012) reveal that being able to actively solve real-life problems in various and engaging ways in TS series can increase the fun students have while completing the given activities through interesting gameplay. This result shared by them was, as a result, supported in the present study since the participants very similarly suggested that being active and autonomous in the activities based on *TS 3* improved their perceived fun levels in EFL setting.

The second theme under the first research question is on the facilitation of language learning with *TS 3*. It is associated with the participants' perceptions regarding the positive effects of *TS 3* on their language proficiency in various ways. All participants stated that *TS 3* was able to improve their general proficiency in English language. This result reached in the present study supports the relevant literature suggesting that TS series, and specifically *TS 3*, can enhance students' general language skills and fulfill language-related objectives as previously pointed out by Miller and Hegelheimer (2006), Sandford et al. (2006), Mendez et al. (2014) and Wang (2019).

The participants believed that they could reach the intended objectives better with the activities based on *TS 3*. They stated that their lessons would be more enjoyable and positive with the integration of *TS 3* activities into their regular English lessons, and since they had an enjoyable and positive time in the lessons, their probability of learning and remembering the important language points would be high. Aydın also shared that they could directly see the points that they should learn thanks to the visual aspect of *TS 3*, and this visuality would help them learn the intended language points.

This statement by Aydın is also in line with the argument suggesting that simulation games can create visual-based tasks and activities that can attract students' attention better, leading to efficient language learning instances (Reinhardt & Thorne, 2016). In-class observations revealed that the participants were able to internalize the language better with the activities based on *TS 3* as they could better engage with the tasks presented visually and meaningfully, supporting the statements shared by the participants.

Even though the participants believed that *TS 3* improved their overall proficiency in the English language, they shared some drawbacks of the activities based on *TS 3* too. They said that they would not be able to participate as much as possible due to the class size, and they also added that some of their friends could drift away from the activities and talk to each other irrelevantly, resulting in unnecessary noise. As the participants suggested, this drawback was mostly due to the fact that there were 30 students in the class, and they would get too excited when they were offered the activities based on *TS 3* according to my in-class observation. Regardless, the overall aim of the activities would not be affected by this drawback, and the participants would be able to complete the tasks without major problems and internalize the intended curricular objectives, as also suggested by the participants many times. It should also be noted that it is not unusual for students to be more dynamic and excited during student-based activities that are innovative in nature as opposed to teacher-based activities in which students are to sit silently and passively.

The participants again made a comparison between paper-based activities and the activities based on *TS 3* and sevenparticipants stated that the latter was more beneficial and effective due to the reasons given above. one participant, Mert, on the other hand, said that he would learn better with paper-based activities even though he admitted the activities based on *TS 3* were beneficial too. When his answers and behaviors throughout all the interviews and classroom observation sessions were analyzed, it was seen that his proficiency in English was higher than his friends; thus, the offered activities in *TS 3* might seem more simplistic to him. In other words, it is most likely that he looked for more direct, deductive and complex presentations as well as activities. As a result, the activities based on *TS 3* did not seem as effective. However,

as stated earlier, he still acknowledged that *TS 3* was able to improve his English in some ways.

The first category under the second theme was on the facilitation of vocabulary learning with *TS 3*. It is argued that TS series can create situations in which students can pick up various vocabulary items and internalize them meaningfully as also proved by Miller and Hegelheimer (2006) and Ranalli (2008) previously. Likewise, it is reported that TS series is a good fit for teaching vocabulary items from everyday life (Sandford et al., 2006; Wang, 2019). The findings in the present study supported relevant literature. The participants suggested they were able to improve their vocabulary thanks to the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons. Aydın, for instance, revealed that understanding the meanings of words and committing them to memory was plausible with the activities based on *TS 3*.

In the same vein, Caner admitted that engaging with new vocabulary items through *TS 3* would be more easily stored in their minds. They suggested that this was possible thanks to the visual introduction of the words they were to learn and being able to experience the same words in different contexts. This finding is in line with DeKeyser's (2010) argument which suggests that contextualized stance of TS series is one of the key reasons why students can improve their vocabulary knowledge while playing the game.

Additionally, the participants believed that the retention level of the acquired vocabulary items with *TS 3* was high. This high retention level may be due to the fact that *TS 3* offered them meaningful contexts to pick up the words and use them appropriately. As a result of this meaningful process, they might remember the words more easily whenever they need them in the future. To support this notion, they gave a specific example of the session where they went to the airport in *TS 3* to internalize various words and phrases regarding the airport theme. They stated that their retention of airport items was high because they were able to actually experience an airport context and see the words in their actual use. Therefore, it can be argued based on this statement that *TS 3*'s presentation of vocabulary items in an authentic-like manner

could increase their retention levels which is in line with the suggestions made regarding the high level of authenticity present in TS series by Tan et al. (2022).

My classroom observations led to the same result as well. That is, the participants were able to pick up the words more easily as a result of the meaningful context and authentic-like atmosphere they were offered in the activities based on *TS 3*, and they could remember the given words in such contexts weeks after without any major problems. For instance, the participants could remember party types and party activities that were given in line with the curricular objective smoothly, and they stated that they could remember those words because they experienced them playing *TS 3*. Thus, it can be said that the integration of *TS 3* was able to help them have the perception of perceived improvement in their vocabulary knowledge in terms of vocabulary internalization and retention.

Moreover, Ümit stated that the words that they experienced in the activities based on *TS 3* were not solely random vocabulary items that they would not use in the future. Instead, they would come across everyday words that would actually help them in real life; therefore, he believed that this aspect of the game helped him improve his vocabulary. Ümit's suggestion is in line with Purushotma's (2005) saying "if we look at the number one selling game, *The Sims*, we see a lot of the same content one might find in an introductory language textbook" (p. 81). In other words, TS series can provide language learners with the necessary words that they need to learn and use in everyday life instead of focusing on various irrelevant and decontextualized vocabulary items. As the teacher, this aspect of *TS 3* made my activity design process especially easier as I could find relevant spaces and contexts for most of the words pointed out in the curriculum; thus, coming up with meaningful and appropriate activities to highlight various vocabulary items in everyday situations, and in-class observations, I realized that the participants were in favor of experiencing everyday words in meaningful contexts as also supported by Ümit's statement.

Finally, the participants made a comparison between paper-based activities and the activities based on *TS 3* and suggested the latter was more efficient in their perceived vocabulary knowledge. They stated that they would always memorize words or write

them down repetitively in a very traditional manner in their previous school years; however, with the integration of *TS 3*, they were not forced to learn vocabulary items through traditional methods. Instead, they would learn the intended vocabulary items by playing the game or completing relevant tasks innovatively. Caner, for instance, stated going beyond the traditional coursebook activities was an enjoyable and beneficial experience for them. Therefore, it can be said that *TS 3* could act as an innovative teaching tool in terms of vocabulary acquisition and allowed the participants to get away from the traditional practices and experience a more innovative learning process. The participants' statements regarding the innovative nature of *TS 3* are in line with the relevant literature suggesting that *TS 3* can act innovatively through its interesting, enjoyable and authentic-like nature (Lin & Lin, 2017; Mendez et al., 2014; Peterson, 2021).

The participants also stated that their perceived oral skills improved thanks to the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons. They believed that the activities based on *TS 3* gave them chances for them to use the target language communicatively and productively. Caner, for instance, suggested that *TS 3* allowed them to speak English as a whole class while completing the relevant tasks, which naturally encouraged them to utilize English interactively. They also believed that *TS 3* activities were meaningful in nature; thus, speaking the target language felt more natural and expressive for them. The findings reached in the present study were in line with previous studies on the relevant literature. Lee (2012), for example, suggests that *TS 3* fosters communicative competence among language learners as also pointed out by the participants in the present study. Similarly, Wang (2019) argues that the tasks based on *TS 3* can provide language learners with learning environments in which oral communication is key, which was also supported by the findings in the present study. Furthermore, the participants compared their previous experiences with traditional teaching methods and suggested that the innovative nature of *TS 3* was a better fit for them as they would always memorize and write in the past, which, accordingly, did not lead to any situations where oral communication was prioritized. The participants' previous experiences in which mechanical and teacher-based practices were highlighted are pointed out by Zorba and Çakır (2019) as well as Aldım and Arıbaş (2021), suggesting that most English lessons in Turkish schools are traditional and

paper-based in nature without giving enough importance to communicative aspects of language. As for the activities based on *TS 3*, the participants stated that *TS 3* gave them rich chances to actually speak the language and produce meaningful outputs in order to complete the given activities.

This way, they could enhance not only their overall communicative skills but also their pronunciation. Caner said that they would always try to form sentences in English by considering the rules of Turkish language, which would lead to mistakes; however, thanks to the *TS 3*, they started to form more effortless and natural sentences.

My in-class observations brought about similar findings as well. That is, the participants felt for the first time that speaking the language was the utmost priority; thus, they started to take advantage of it orally. Moreover, since several activities based on *TS 3* highlighted pair or group work, the participants felt that speaking English was more meaningful and significant in order to complete the given tasks. Oğuz, for instance, stated that they wanted to speak English because the game itself was in English, and this process, accordingly, improved their oral skills.

Therefore, this way, they felt like they enhanced their perceived oral skills. The meaningfulness of using the target language that was mentioned by the participants is also pointed out by Lorenset and Tumolo (2019) who suggest that digital games naturally provide students with meaningful contexts as they need to grasp the language input present in the digital games and then produce relevant language output to proceed within the game or relevant activities.

The final category under the first research question was related to the perceptions of the participants regarding perceived enhancement in their grammar knowledge in English. The participants believed that the activities based on *TS 3* helped them improve their perceived grammar in English for various reasons, and the findings reached in the present study were in line with Blasing's (2010) suggestion that simulation games can be integrated into English lessons to enhance students' grammar skills. He argues that the textual nature of the series may be the main reason why students' grammar skills enhance.

The participants shared that they were able to internalize the sentence structure of English better thanks to the activities based on *TS 3*. As the participants were rarely given a chance to form sentences in English from scratch previously as a result of the traditional coursebook activities that would only allow them to match certain phrases or fill in the blanks with pre-determined words, they felt an increase in their knowledge regarding the sentence structure of English when they were given appropriate chances to form sentences of their own both orally and in written form. Mert, for instance, overtly suggested that *TS 3* allowed him to use the language more productively; thus, improve his knowledge in forming English sentences. Similarly, Aydın suggested that computer-based activities would help them understand English sentence structures better than paper-based activities.

In classroom observations, the participants also seemed to have positive perceptions as to the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons because *TS 3* let them practice various grammar points from past simple tense to future tense to giving advice. They were provided with contexts in which they could practice and revise the grammar points freely by forming their own sentences while engaging with the tasks given in *TS 3* instead of completing the mechanical grammar activities present in their coursebook. For instance, the participants could create past versions of a given Sim freely and then form sentences in past tense to describe what changes and adjustments they made to the given Sim without any restrictions that would be present in paper-based activities.

The second research question to be answered in the present study was associated with the perceived motivation levels of the participants with the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons. The previous studies analyzing the impact of *TS 3* on students' motivation in EFL setting suggest that TS series has a beneficial effect on perceived motivation levels. Sandford et al. (2006), for instance, argue that engaging gameplay elements present in *TS 3* can be utilized as motivational factors on the part of students. Similarly, Noroozloo et al. (2015) argue that TS series can be integrated into EFL setting to increase motivation as a result of its exciting atmosphere, which is also supported by Wang (2019). In line with the suggestions in the relevant literature, it was found in the present study that all participants had enhancement in their

perceived motivation levels thanks to the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons for various reasons.

The participants suggested that they loved playing *TS 3* and completing the relevant activities based on *TS 3,* and this apparent love for the game strengthened the participants' perceived motivation levels to engage with *TS 3*. Erkan suggested he loved the game because it was not boring as opposed to paper-based activities, and since he loved the game, his motivation within English lessons increased accordingly. Similarly, Serhat believed that learning English with the activities based on *TS 3* was a favorable and loveable experience, which, ultimately, had a positive impact on his perceived motivation level in English lessons. Another factor that had an impact on the motivation levels of the participants was regarding the visual appeal, limitless possibilities and fun situations that were offered in *TS 3* gameplay. The participants believed that playing and watching visually controlled in-game characters with virtually endless options was a fun experience that they would not be able to experience in traditional activities offered in their coursebook. Thus, the participants felt an increase in their perceived motivation levels while playing the game and completing the relevant activities.

Mert, for instance, believed that non-determined gameplay elements within the game entertained him and increased his motivation to complete the given activities. Similarly, Erkan suggested that visual experiences he had with *TS 3* had a positive impact on his motivation as well as his overall language use. Therefore, it can be said that the enjoyable experiences present in *TS 3* and the fun the participants had while completing the relevant tasks based on *TS 3* increased their perceived motivation levels. When the participant' motivational drives are analyzed based on their above suggestions, it is seen that the participants talked about more personal and internal factors such as fun and enjoyment while describing the motivational nature of *TS 3,* and this can be linked to inner motivation as also explained in Self-Determination Theory by Ryan and Deci (2000). It is offered in Self-Determination Theory that inner motivation is the most effective type of motivation since it is more self-directed and autonomous in nature, increasing the overall effect of the motivational acts (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Moreover, it is highlighted that intrinsic motivation can increase student

engagement as well as the internalization of the intended curricular objectives (Vansteenkiste et al., 2018). In the present study, the participants reported multiple times that their engagement levels were high and the internalization process was successful with the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons, which is in line with the properties of intrinsic motivation of Self-Determination Theory. Thus, it can be assumed that the participants were intrinsically motivated to engage with *TS 3* and its relevant activities in the present study.

Similarly, it is suggested that relevance, autonomy, interest and competence are the main components of motivational situations (Bandura, 1996; Seifert, 2004). Since the participants had improvement in their perceived motivation levels, it could be suggested that *TS 3* was able to cover all these four components to become a successful motivational tool. In terms of autonomy, the participants suggested that they were free in their choices and the activities gave them active agency, which is in line with the autonomy aspect of motivation. Then, the participants revealed that they were personally interested in digital games and technological devices, which is also in line with the interest aspect of motivation. Moreover, the participants believed that the activities based on *TS 3* were relevant in terms of both context and language points, giving them chances to improve their competence in English language. This is in line with both relevance and competence aspects of motivation, which shows that *TS 3* covered four components of motivation. This could explain why the participants believed that they had enhancement in their motivation levels with the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons.

The participants also suggested several other reasons as to why *TS 3* increased their perceived motivation levels. Murat pointed out that *TS 3* was a social game, giving opportunities to communicate with his friends while completing the tasks, and this socialness embedded in *TS 3* had a favorable effect on his motivation level. Moreover, the participants said that the activities based on *TS 3* made them improve their English proficiency and enhance their overall knowledge regarding English, which, in return, enhanced their perceived motivation levels too. Additionally, the participants made a comparison between traditional paper-based activities and the activities based on *TS 3* while sharing their thoughts and feelings regarding their motivation levels.

They highlighted that paper-based activities were boring, mechanical, and unenjoyable memorization-based, and all these negative features would decrease their overall motivation in English lessons. My own classroom observations led to very similar findings as well. The participants would not be unwilling to complete the coursebook activities because the activities would be very linear, straightforward and non-enjoyable in nature. They often said they would not want to do coursebook activities; instead, they would want to do more activities based on *TS 3* regardless of the subject. The reason why they preferred *TS 3* activities compared to paper-based activities can be directly associated with their motivation levels. Anghel (2017) suggests that innovative teaching tools lead to increased inner motivation levels among students, and since *TS 3* acted as an innovative tool in the present study, the participants might have put more value on *TS 3* activities compared to paper-based activities as they wanted to enhance their inner motivation.

The participants shared that doing paper-based activities would hinder their motivation because they would do the same activities mechanically and passively again and again not only in English lessons but also in other lessons as well. Thus, when they were to be introduced to the activities based on *TS 3*, they would relax, have fun, progress within the game and actively complete the given tasks knowing that the tasks would help them offer limitless, fresh possibilities and improve their English skills, which, accordingly, would boost their perceived motivation levels too. This point was also supported by my in-class observations. That is, the participants were more willing to complete the tasks based on *TS 3* compared to the tasks present in their coursebooks; similarly, the participants openly stated during *TS 3* activities that *TS 3* was nicer and more effective than the coursebook activities because the former was open to more engagement, exploration as well as autonomy and their motivation levels would positively be affected by the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons to fulfill certain curricular objectives. The suggestions made by the participants regarding the less effective nature of the coursebook activities in terms of motivation can be due to the traditional and non-appropriate nature of the coursebook content which is also highlighted by Karademir and Gorgoz (2019). Thus, the claim stating the innovative nature of English curriculum by MoNE (2018) falls short as also seen in the statement of the participants in the present study.

Additionally, two categories emerged under the second research question. The first one is related to the cooperation present in *TS 3* activities and how this cooperative nature of *TS 3* affected the participants' perceived motivation levels in English lessons, which is in line with Gros's (2007) argument as to how entertainment games can increase student motivation with a sense of togetherness and interactivity. The participants stated that their perceived motivation levels increased thanks to the cooperative elements present in the activities based on *TS 3*. Caner, for instance, suggested that his motivation improved as a result of the possibility of working close with his friends and supporting each other while completing the tasks on *TS 3*. Furthermore, the participants suggested that their friendships grew stronger as they became familiar with each other while doing *TS 3* activities together, and this process had a beneficial effect on their perceived motivation levels in English lessons. Ümit suggested that he felt freer when he was allowed to work with his friends in *TS 3* activities, and this freedom to cooperate improved his perceived motivation level. Aydın, on the other hand, regarded *TS 3* activities as a different experience compared to other school subjects and he likened *TS 3* as their common world in which they could complete various tasks together with his friends. Aydın's statement may be in line with the relevant literature suggesting that students' motivation can be affected positively thanks to the novel and enjoyable elements found in the activities (Rajasen, 2018).

The participants also gave specific examples regarding how their perceived motivation levels were affected in terms of the cooperative chances they were offered in the activities based on *TS 3*. Caner, for instance, mentioned the Sim creation activity they completed in session one in which all participants worked together to create a mutual Sim. He said that the activity was more beneficial as a result of the cooperation it involved. His suggestion was in line with my in-class observations too. The participants were often more motivated to complete the activities based on *TS 3* when such activities gave them chances to work with their pairs or within groups. This motivation increase may be associated with a shift from passive learning to active learning. In other words, the participants were used to sitting silently and passively in other subjects; however, when they were allowed to work together actively to complete various tasks, they felt like they had an increase in their perceived motivation levels.

This is in line with the notion that simulation games often create a context in which communication, cooperation and active learning are prioritized (Samuel & Rahman, 2018). Similarly, TS series is also known to let language learners work cooperatively and create narratives together (Monjelat et al., 2013), which is a suggestion also supported by the participants in the present study.

The second category emerged under the second research question was on competition offered in *TS 3* activities and its impact on the perceived motivation levels of the participants. The participant stated that they had an increase in their perceived motivational levels as a result of the competitive elements present in the activities based on *TS 3*, which is in line with Gee's (2008) argument suggesting that digital games with competitive elements can lead to enhancement in motivation. The participants believed that competition was a crucial factor in several *TS 3* tasks, and this factor helped them become motivated to complete the tasks accordingly.

Mert shared that competition embedded in *TS 3* helped them improve their overall proficiency in English naturally. Similarly, Erkan revealed that competition enhanced their perceived motivation levels in English lessons; moreover, competition made the lessons more fun and easier to comprehend. This may be due to the fact that competition gave them meaningful and natural contexts in which they could use the target language communicatively to finish the tasks. Similarly, competing against each other individually or in groups might have excited and motivated them to complete the tasks and have fun in the process. Moreover, in line with Ryan and Deci's (2000) Self-Determination Theory, competitive elements embedded in several *TS 3* tasks may have triggered intrinsic motivation among the participants and encouraged them to fulfill their desire to be the best and the most striking among their friends, which also fits the general characteristics of older young learners.

In addition to the statements of the participants regarding enhancement in their perceived motivation levels due to the competitive elements, my classroom observations showed similar results. The participants seemed eager to complete *TS 3* activities more excitedly and quickly when they were to compete against each other. They occasionally teased each other and made comments about completing the tasks

in the best possible way, showing how motivated they were to complete the activities thanks to the competitive elements. It should also be noted that competition that was embedded in *TS 3* activities was not in a traditional sense according to the participants' statements and classroom observations. That is, the competition was not encouraged among the participants to get the highest score in exams or secure a prestigious position; instead, the competition was present in the relevant activities to make the lesson atmosphere more innovative and activity completion process more fun, versatile and remarkable among the participants, which is in line with the arguments by Rudolf and Lee (2023) suggesting that competition can have a positive impact on learning experiences of students if it is embedded with a clear planning.

The third research question that was answered in the present study is on the perceived language attitude of the participants and how their attitude was affected by the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons. All eight participants who took part in the interviews stated that their language attitude towards English was positive with the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons. Seven participants suggested that their perceived language attitude was negative or less positive before *TS 3*; however, their language attitude became more positive thanks to the activities based on *TS 3*. One participant, Mert, on the other hand, argued that his language attitude would always be positive regardless of teaching methods and activity types, yet he admitted that *TS 3* was favorable, and its integration did not have any negative impact on his attitude towards English lessons and English language. The findings reached in the present study are in line with the relevant suggestions made in the larger literature. The participants' statements, for instance, are supported by Vogel et al. (2006) who argue that simulation games can lead to better attitudes among students. Similarly, the present study supported that the integration of digital games can enhance the language attitudes of students, as also highlighted by Peterson (2012) and Groff (2013).

The participants in the present study suggested that English lessons before the integration of *TS 3* were mostly boring and traditional in nature due to the high number of paper-based activities, which would make their perceived language attitude less positive and even sometimes directly negative in English lessons. Murat, for instance,

believed that spending 40 minutes while completing paper-based activities would make them hate English lessons. However, after the integration of the tasks based on *TS 3*, the participants stated that their perceived language attitude changed from a negative stance to a positive one as a result of the beneficial, enjoyable, interesting and visual nature of the game. Caner shared that they would enjoy playing *TS 3* because they would go on the board and actively complete the given tasks, which would help them in terms of internalizing and remembering the important language points. Thus, they would think that studying with *TS 3* was overall easier compared to paper-based activities, and this would help them develop a more positive language attitude towards English lessons and English language. In other words, the participants believed that their perceived language attitude was enhanced because learning English with *TS 3* was a better and more comprehensible experience compared to traditional activities. Only Mert suggested that paper-based activities were more appealing to him than the activities based on *TS 3* though he stated that he was not against the integration of *TS 3* as *TS 3* also helped him learn language elements.

Therefore, it can be said that the participants in this study found *TS 3* to be an effective and innovative language learning tool that can result in better language attitude among students as also revealed in the present study, and the fact that the participants made an active comparison between traditional activities and the activities based on *TS 3* in association with their perceived language attitude may show that the participants aware and in favor of the methods and activities that can bring innovation to their classroom environment.

The first category under the third research question is related to the participants' eagerness to participate in the activities based on *TS 3*, and how this process had a positive impact on their perceived language attitude. The participants shared that their eagerness to participate in the given tasks and activities increased with the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons, and this increase in their participation helped them develop a more positive language attitude towards English lessons and English language. This finding is in line with the relevant literature suggesting that TS can enhance participation among students in the school environment (Hsiao, 2009). The participants shared that they wanted to participate in *TS 3* activities because such

activities were more fun, enjoyable and soothing, and since their participation rate was higher compared to paper-based activities, they naturally developed a better language attitude in English lessons. The participants' suggestion as to the enjoyable, fun and soothing elements found in *TS 3* activities is also supported by the relevant literature arguing that TS series can appeal to students' affective factors (Ranalli, 2008).

Aydın also shared that, in order to participate more in the activities based on *TS 3*, he would study the relevant language points at home beforehand, showing the increase in their perceived language attitude in English lessons. Caner also thought that his eagerness to participate in the activities based on *TS 3* also helped him become a more active student in other subjects as well. Aydın's and Caner's statements are in line with the general properties of innovative teaching that aim at improving students' participation rate by making them active in the learning process al also suggested by (Dimitrios et al., 2013). The participants also shared that they would not participate in the traditional activities because traditional activities were always based on writing and listening instead of going on the board and doing the activities actively, implying that their perceived language attitude was more negative before the integration of *TS 3*. Additionally, in-class observations also showed that the other participants, who did not take part in the interviews, also showed an increase in their participation rate in the activities based on *TS 3* as they were given active chances to act freely, form their own sentences and complete the tasks in various ways. As a result, the participants seemed to develop a more positive attitude towards English in such activities.

The second category under the third research question is regarding the future support of the integration of *TS 3* and other digital games. The participants suggested that they found the integration of the activities based on *TS 3* into their regular English lessons to be successful and effective; thus, their perceived language attitude shifted from a more negative stance to a more positive stance, which is in line with the relevant literature suggesting that TS series can be effectively and successfully integrated into various school subjects as also suggested by Monjelat et al. (2013) and Peterson (2021). Moreover, it is evident based on the participants' suggestions that the game elements found in *TS 3* can be successfully matched with Gee's (2005) design

principles that offer implications regarding the usability of digital games to promote successful learning among students.

The participants suggested they loved playing *TS 3* and completing relevant tasks as such tasks meant getting a break from the negative aspects of the school environment. Furthermore, they could have a chance to relieve the tiredness that occurred in other lessons where they were to engage in highly traditional activities. The participants' suggestions may also mean that the participants matched traditional activities with negative emotions and properties as also suggested by Özer and Yetkin (2022); thus, when they were given a chance to break free from traditional activities, they felt like they could relieve their negative emotions. This could explain why they frequently focused on their emotions while talking about why *TS 3* was a better fit for them in terms of their perceived language attitude. In the same vein, the participants suggested that they found the integration of *TS 3* successful because the game was able to help them gain self-confidence which is in line with the previous literature focusing on the impact of *TS 3* on students' emotions and self-expressions (Voronaya, 2022).

Another reason why the participants found the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons successful and effective is regarding its teaching merits. The participants suggested that *TS 3* helped them learn English better compared to paper-based activities, and they also believed that the activities based on *TS 3* made their lessons more interesting as well as motivational, making the whole learning process a positive experience. As a result, the participants believed that *TS 3* should be integrated into their lessons in the future of their educational life too as the game fed their perceived language attitude towards English positively. Similarly, the participants shared during classroom sessions that they would love to see similar activities based on *TS 3* in future semesters.

The participants also shared that they would support the utilization of other digital games such as that would be creative, open-ended and simulation-based in nature. When the participants' suggestions are analyzed, it is seen that the properties they shared are valid for *TS 3* as well. Therefore, it can be suggested that the participants find the given properties of *TS 3* successful and meaningful in their English lessons;

thus, they would not be opposed to other digital games as long as they shared similarities with *TS 3*. In line with the given properties, the participants pointed out that Minecraft could be integrated into English lessons to study vocabulary, which is in line with Faas and Lin's (2017) suggestion that *Minecraft* can be a useful tool in educational settings. Likewise, the participants suggested that *Grand Theft Auto 5* could be integrated into their English lesson as it had similarities with *TS 3* in the sense that both are open-world games. Like *Minecraft*, *Grand Theft Auto* is known to be successfully used in EFL setting to improve various language skills as suggested by Serafin (2016), showing that the participants' thoughts about the type of games that could be utilized in EFL setting are validated by the relevant literature. All in all, it is evident that the participants found the integration of *TS 3* and its related activities into their regular English classes successful, and they would like to see similar attempts in the future both with *TS 3* and other digital games that share similar properties with *TS 3*.

5.2. Conclusions

Education in the 21st century aims at providing new generations of students with practical skills as well as theoretical knowledge of the constantly thriving contemporary world. Expectedly, innovative ways of teaching are called for to achieve the intended outcomes through methods and strategies involving state-of-the-art technology, gamification, creativity, problem-solving, self-direction as well as student-based approaches that can encourage students to take the initiative and become autonomous learners (Alejandro & David, 2018; Irving, 2006; Laar et al., 2017; Sawyer, 2019). Even though this is supposed to be the norm worldwide, traditional ways of teaching are still persistent in many parts of the world including Turkey through teacher-based activities in which students are passive learners with mechanical activities (Castronova, 2002; Liu & Long, 2014; Zorba & Çakır, 2019). Thus, it is crucial to innovate the traditional ways of teaching in order to equip newer generations of students to necessary skills and knowledge to live in the contemporary world. It is known that simulation games can act as innovative teaching tools thanks to their authentic, transformational, effective, motivational, incidental, autonomous as

well as creative nature (Boudourides, 2003; Cadotte, 2016; Heintz & Law, 2015; Samuel & Rahman, 2018; Stocker, 2020; Voronaya, 2022).

Traditional ways of teaching seem to be persistent in EFL classrooms in Turkey even though several attempts are made. This qualitative case study aimed at innovating these seemingly persistent traditional ways of teaching present in a vocational and technical high school in Ankara, Turkey. For this, at least one activity that involved playing or watching *TS 3* was created by the researcher each week and implemented in classroom environment in line with the curricular objective that was supposed to be covered that week, and various language points were introduced or revised with the gameplay elements present in *TS 3*. 13 different activities were designed and implemented in the process with a total of approximately 550 minutes of gameplay. The participants consisted of 22 teenage students attending the 9th grade. Three different data collection tools were utilized in the study at hand: field notes, stimulated recall interview and semi-structured focus group interviews. All participants were taken into consideration in the field notes whereas eight participants took part in the interview sessions.

The first research question sought answers to the general perceptions of the teacher as well as the participants regarding the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons. The second research question aimed at analyzing the perceived motivation levels of the participants in line with the activities based on *TS 3*. The third research question aimed at exploring the participants' perceived language attitudes towards English after the integration of *TS 3* activities into their classroom environment.

It was concluded that the participants as well as the teacher had positive perceptions of the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons. The participants suggested that the activities based on *TS 3* were fun as they were personally interested in technology generally and digital games specifically. The participants also shared that they were in favor of the utilization of *TS 3* in their lessons because they were already used to playing digital games in their free time; thus, experiencing a digital game in their school setting was fun and exciting. The participants also made a comparison between their previous experiences in English lessons with traditional activities and

the innovative atmosphere that occurred as a result of the integration of *TS 3* and stated that they would prefer the latter as a result of its contemporary nature that gave prioritized creativity, exploration, autonomy, versatility as well as authenticity, and similar conclusions were reached in classroom observations. Additionally, the participants and the teacher had positive perceptions about the facilitation of language learning with the activities based on *TS 3*. The participants suggested that they were able to learn new vocabulary items and remember them more easily when they were offered them in *TS 3* as opposed to traditional activities. They also suggested that they could practice their oral skills as the activities based on *TS 3* allowed them to speak more freely and interactively compared to paper-based activities that were traditional in nature. Additionally, they believed that *TS 3* was beneficial in helping them learn the rules and regulations of English more effectively than traditional activities; thus, the participants had positive perceptions regarding the utilization of *TS 3* in their English lessons.

The participants shared statements about their perceived motivation levels as a result of the activities based on *TS 3* within the scope of the second research question. All participants stated that their perceived motivation levels improved when they were offered to play *TS 3* and complete relevant tasks. They suggested that they loved the gameplay present in *TS 3*, and they enjoyed learning English with those gameplay elements, which, accordingly, enhanced their perceived motivation levels. Furthermore, the participants believed endless possibilities and language-based situations offered in *TS 3* allowed them to be more motivated to finish the given tasks, progress within the game and engage with visually appealing in-game elements, which was also supported by in-class observations. Moreover, they argued that *TS 3* was more entertaining, informative and innovative than the paper-based activities that were boring and based on memorization, which had a positive effect on their perceived motivation levels. Also, the participants suggested that *TS 3* caused the classroom atmosphere to be more social than mechanical activities. That is, the participants were encouraged to work cooperatively or competitively to complete the tasks based on *TS 3*; thus, they had to communicate with each other in pairs or in groups to reach the intended outcomes, and this whole interactive process was another as to why their

perceived motivation levels were higher compared to previously seen traditional atmosphere.

As for the third research question to be analyzed in the present study, The participants shared that their perceived language attitude was more positive towards English lessons and English language with the integration of *TS 3* activities into their regular English lessons. Seven participants who took part in the interviews said that their perceived language attitude was less positive and sometimes even negative before the tasks on *TS 3*. They suggested that they were used to completing activities silently and passively as the activities were boring and traditional in nature. Several participants even suggested that they used to hate English lessons before the integration of *TS 3* into their lessons. According to interviews and in-class observations, the participants believed that *TS 3* activities were more beneficial, enjoyable and more positive overall compared to traditional activities that they were used to completing by memorizing language elements all the time; thus, their perceived language attitude was affected positively after the integration of *TS 3* into their regular English lessons. The participants also stated that *TS 3* made them more willing to participate in the activities in English lessons, showing a positive change in their perceived language attitude. Finally, they would support the integration of *TS 3* in future semesters thanks to its positive impact on their perceived language attitude. In addition to *TS 3*, the participants were also in favor of utilizing other digital games, such as *Minecraft*, that would share similarities with *TS 3* in terms of properties like open-endedness and creativity as they thought that such games could also foster their perceived language attitude towards English.

5.3. Implications for Practice

In line with the results reached in the present study and the related literature associated with the integration of TS series as well as similar digital games into English lessons, several practical implications are provided to help teachers as well as other stakeholders not only in Turkey but also all around the world to innovate the English language learning process and minimize the negative impacts of traditional learning through the utilization of *TS 3* and other digital games:

1. Digital games have the capacity to innovate the previously seen traditional atmosphere in EFL setting if they are carefully designed and implemented in line with the curricular objectives at hand. Moreover, digital games can be utilized to teach various language points from grammar to speaking to listening as long as they are implemented with the properties of innovative teaching such as exploration, freedom, cooperation and competition.

2. *TS 3*, and *TS* series in general, can be integrated into EFL setting successfully to promote English language learning and innovate the learning atmosphere, as also suggested by the present study and the relevant literature. As a result of the open-endedness and high customization options leading to creativity and limitless possibilities present in the game, *TS 3* can be utilized to form various activities in EFL setting from individual works to group works to introduce new language points or revise them effectively and innovatively.

3. *TS 3* can help language learners improve their motivation and language attitude in EFL setting as the game brings a high level of autonomy and active agency to language learners with the elements of meaningful communication through cooperation and competition. Thus, language learners get various chances to use the language productively and mold it in the ways they want in order to complete the given tasks based on *TS 3*. Moreover, language learners can get away from the linear instructions and restrictive frames thanks to the freedom offered in *TS 3* and its related activities.

4. Many language learners prefer learning with more innovative ways of teaching rather than traditional ways of teaching, as also suggested by the participants in the present study, as the latter undermines the creativity and autonomy of language learners, leading to boring and unenjoyable instances in which language learners need to silently sit and finish the given mechanical activities passively. Thus, more innovative ways of teaching should be embraced in EFL setting to minimize, and even eliminate, the negative effects of traditional teaching methods that are still persistent in many parts of the world, including Turkey.

5. It is crucial for English teachers and other stakeholders to take the initiative and innovate English language teaching process in line with the needs of the newer generations born in the 21st century. This can be realized with the integration of digital games such as *TS 3* or with other methods as well as activities that prioritize student-based teaching with creative as well as meaningful language elements that can create spaces and situations for language learners to internalize and produce the language naturally and authentically.

6. Before integrating *TS 3* or other digital games into actual classroom environment to reach certain curricular objectives, implementing an orientation process for students to learn the basics of the given digital game may be effective. This way, students can feel confident while playing the given game and focus more on the curricular objectives to be reached rather than trying to control the game. The participants in the present study felt comfortable controlling *TS 3* as an orientation process was implemented beforehand. Still, there were a few cases in which the participants struggled with the gameplay elements and controls, which highlights the importance of an orientation process.

7. Preparing activities based on *TS 3* or other digital games, as also suggested in the present study, can be demanding in terms of both time and resources. Thus, teachers may want to choose digital games that they are familiar with so that they can prepare activities to reach certain curricular objectives more easily and smoothly. Moreover, teachers may need to acknowledge that they should have enough time and resources to come up with innovative activities based on *TS 3* or other digital games as creating the perfect conditions for the desired activity can be challenging. It is of importance for teachers to stipulate that not all curricular objectives can be achieved with the activities based on *TS 3* or other digital games.

8. Implementing *TS 3* activities in actual classroom environment may call for different classroom management styles compared to traditional activities. For instance, the activities based on *TS 3* can take significant amount of time,

making it challenging for all students to participate especially in crowded classrooms as also stated by the participants in the present study. Thus, managing the activities based on *TS 3* as pair or group work activities could resolve the problem in such cases. Moreover, students may get excited and drift away from the actual purpose of the activities based on *TS 3,* as also experienced in the present study in a few cases; thus, teachers should give proper instructions and make the aim clear beforehand. Teachers can also control the game to guide students if necessary to highlight the gameplay and activity purpose.

5.4. Limitations and Recommendations

The present study revealed important elements related to the integration of *TS 3* into regular English lessons to innovate the traditional teaching environment through various activities and tasks based on *TS 3*. However, several limitations of the present study should be acknowledged so that they can be compensated in the future by researchers who have similar research interests. Firstly, the present study was conducted with only one class of students. Thus, it is of importance to conduct a similar study in different contexts with a multi-site approach to find out whether similar findings can be revealed in different cases. Secondly, as the participants themselves suggested several times, the number of participants present in the classroom environment was high for a qualitative study, which had a negative impact on the effectiveness of the activities based on *TS 3*. Therefore, a similar study with fewer participants could be conducted in order to minimize the effect on the larger audience. This way, the participants could have more chances to play the game and engage with the tasks based on it, and classroom management could be relatively smoother in the process.

Thirdly, semi-structured in focus groups as well as stimulated recall interviews along with classroom observations by the researcher were utilized to collect the necessary data in the present study. In future research, individual interviews could be conducted as well. This way, more in-depth answers from each participant could be collected to strengthen the data repository. Moreover, the participants could be given more chances

to share their thoughts as well as feelings with the integration of individual interviews. Since the present study was qualitative in nature, quantitative approaches could be integrated in order to reach more generalizable and experimental results as well. Another limitation of the present study was regarding its limited focus. That is, expanding the scope to all high school grades instead of only Grade 9 could give more comprehensive results regarding the effect of traditional as well as innovative teaching environments on the whole school setting.

Additionally, it should be noted that all participants were male in the present study. Thus, this was a limitation in terms of inclusion. In the future, both male and female participants could be analyzed to be more inclusive and to find out whether differences among different sexes could occur as a result of the integration of *TS 3* into regular English lessons.

The participants shared several times that they would support the integration of *TS 3* in their future school years. Thus, conducting a study that focuses on the integration of *TS 3* for multiple semesters can yield in-depth findings regarding the longitudinal effect of digital game-based learning in EFL setting. Furthermore, the participants believed that the integration of different games, in addition to *TS 3*, can have a beneficial effect on their overall English language learning experience and innovate the learning atmosphere. They gave the examples of *Minecraft*, *GTA 5* and *Red Dead Redemption*; thus, future studies on this topic can also investigate the impact of the given digital games on English language learning process and reach findings on whether they can be used as innovative tools in EFL setting.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL FROM METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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01 ARALIK 2022

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Prof. Dr. A. Cendel KARAMAN

Danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz Burkay Kuru'nun ***"The Sims 3'ün İngilizce Öğrenime Entegre Edilişinin Araştırılması: Bir Meslek Lisesinde Örnek Olay Araştırması"*** başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek **0556-ODTUİAEK-2022** protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Prof. Dr. Sibel KAZAK BERUMENT
Başkan

Doç. Dr. I.Semih AKÇOMAK
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Uyesi Müge GUNDUZ
Üve

Dr. Öğretim Uyesi Şerife SEVİNÇ
Üve

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Murat Perit ÇAKIR
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Süreyya ÖZCAN KABASAKAL
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi A. Emre TURGUT
Üye

B. APPROVAL FROM MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION

T.C.
ANKARA VALİLİĞİ
Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü

Sayı : E-14588481-605.99-68992925 23.01.2023
Konu : Araştırma İzni

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜNE

İlgi: a) 12.01.2023 tarihli ve 345 sayılı yazınız.
b) MEB Yenilik ve Eğitim Teknolojileri Genel Müdürlüğünün 2020/2 nolu Genelgesi.

Üniversiteniz Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi Burkay KURU'nun "**The Sims 3' ün İngilizce Öğrenime Entegre Edilişinin Araştırılması: Bir Meslek Lisesinde Örnek Olay Araştırması**" konulu tezi kapsamında [redacted] ilçesine bağlı okullarda uygulanacak olan veri toplama araçları ilgi (b) Genelge çerçevesinde incelenmiştir.

Yapılan inceleme sonucunda, söz konusu araştırmanın Müdürlüğümüzde muhafaza edilen ölçme araçlarının; Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasası, Millî Eğitim Temel Kanunu ile Türk Milli Eğitiminin genel amaçlarına uygun olarak, ilgili yasal düzenlemelerde belirtilen ilke, esas ve amaçlara aykırılık teşkil etmeyecek, eğitim-öğretim faaliyetlerini aksatmayacak şekilde okul ve kurum yöneticilerinin sorumluluğunda gönüllülük esasına göre uygulanması Müdürlüğümüzce uygun görülmüştür.

Bilgilerinizi ve gereğini rica ederim.

Harun FATSA
Vali a.
Milli Eğitim Müdürü

Ek:
Uygulama araçları (3 sayfa)
Dağıtım:
Gereği:
ODTÜ
Bilgi:
Polatlı İlçe MEM

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C. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

İlk Görüşme

1. **İngilizce derslerine bilgisayar tabanlı interaktif etkinliklerin entegre edilmesi hakkında ne düşünüyorsun?**
   1.2 Sence bilgisayar tabanlı interaktif etkinlikler mi daha ilgi çekici yoksa kağıt-kalem tabanlı etkinlikler mi? Neden?

2. **The Sims 3 oyunu hakkında ne düşünüyorsun?**
   2.1 Oyun ilgini çekiyor mu?
   2.2 Çekiyorsa oyunun hangi özellikleri ilgini çekiyor?
   2.3 İlgini çeken özelliklerden örnekler paylaşabilir misin?

3. **The Sims 3'ün derslerimize entegre edilmesi hakkında ne düşünüyorsun?**
   3.1 The Sims 3 üzerinden yaptığımız etkinlikleri genel olarak beğendin mi?
   3.2 Bu etkinliklerin artıları nelerdi?
   3.3 Bu etkinliklerin eksileri nelerdi?
   3.4 Kağıt-kalem tabanlı etkinlikler mi daha çok ilgini çekti yoksa The Sims 3 üzerinden hazırlanan etkinlikler mi? Neden?
   3.5. Kağıt-kalem tabanlı etkinlikler ile The Sims 3 üzerinden hazırlanan etkinlikler arasındaki temel farklar nelerdir?

İkinci Görüşme

1. **İngilizce derslerine The Sims 3 tabanlı interaktif etkinliklerin entegre edilmesi hakkında ne düşünüyorsun? Ekranda gözüken oynanış videolarını izledikten sonra cevap verebilirsin.**
   1.1 Sence The Sims 3 interaktif etkinlikler mi daha ilgi çekici yoksa kağıt-kalem tabanlı etkinlikler mi? Neden?

2. **The Sims 3'ün derslerimize entegre edilmesinin İngilizce derslerine olan tutumunu değiştirdiğini düşünüyor musun?**
    - **2.1 The Sims 3 üzerinden yaptığımız aktiviteler seni İngilizce dersine daha istekli hale getirdi mi? Neden?**
    - **2.2 The Sims 3 tabanlı etkinlikler yerine kalem-kağıt tabanlı etkinlikler yapsaydık İngilizce dersine bakış açın yine aynı olur muydu? Neden?**

3. **The Sims 3'ün derslerimize entegre edilmesinin İngilizce dilini öğrenmede/kullanmada motivasyonunu artırdığını düşünüyor musun?**
    - **3.1 The Sims 3 tabanlı etkinlikler motivasyonun üzerinde nasıl bir etkiye sahip? Örnek verebilir misin?**
    - **3.2. The Sims 3 üzerinden yaptığımız aktiviteler seni İngilizce dersini daha fazla sevmene sebep oldu mu? Neden?**
    - **3.3 The Sims 3 tabanlı etkinlikler yerine kalem-kağıt tabanlı etkinlikler yapsaydık İngilizce dersindeki motivasyon seviyen yine aynı olur muydu? Neden?**

Son Görüşme

1. **The Sims 3'ün derslerimize entegre edilmesi hakkında ne düşünüyorsun?**
    - **1.1 The Sims 3 üzerinden yaptığımız etkinlikleri genel olarak beğendin mi?**
    - **1.2 Bu etkinliklerin artıları nelerdi?**
    - **1.3 Bu etkinliklerin eksileri nelerdi?**
    - **1.4 Kağıt-kalem tabanlı etkinlikler mi daha çok ilgini çekti yoksa The Sims 3 üzerinden hazırlanan etkinlikler mi? Neden?**
    - **1.5. Kağıt-kalem tabanlı etkinlikler ile The Sims 3 üzerinden hazırlanan etkinlikler arasındaki temel farklar nelerdir? Örnek verebilir misin?**

2. **The Sims 3'ün derslerimize entegre edilmesinin İngilizce derslerine olan tutumunu değiştirdiğini düşünüyor musun?**
    - **2.1. The Sims 3 üzerinden yaptığımız aktiviteler seni İngilizce dersine daha istekli hale getirdi mi? Neden?**

2.2 The Sims 3 tabanlı etkinlikler yerine kalem-kağıt tabanlı etkinlikler yapsaydık İngilizce dersine bakış açın yine aynı olur muydu? Neden?

3 The Sims 3'ün derslerimize entegre edilmesinin İngilizce dilini öğrenmede/kullanmada motivasyonunu artırdığını düşünüyor musun?

3.1 The Sims 3 tabanlı etkinlikler motivasyonun üzerinde nasıl bir etkiye sahip? Örnek verebilir misin?

3.2. The Sims 3 üzerinden yaptığımız aktiviteler seni İngilizce dersini daha fazla sevmene sebep oldu mu? Neden?

3.3 The Sims 3 tabanlı etkinlikler yerine kalem-kağıt tabanlı etkinlikler yapsaydık İngilizce dersindeki motivasyon seviyen yine aynı olur muydu? Neden?

4. İlk haftadan son haftaya kadar tüm süreci göz önüne aldığında The Sims 3'ün derslerimize entegre edilişini başarılı buluyor musun? Neden?

4.1. Bu sürecin sana neler kattığını kısaca özetler misin?

4.2. Bu sürecin İngilizceye karşı olan bakış açını ne derece değiştirdiğini düşünüyorsun? Bu değişim ne yönde oldu? Neden?

5. Eğitiminin gelecek yıllarında İngilizce dersinde The Sims 3 ya da benzeri oyunların derslere entegre edilmesini ister misin? Neden?

D. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (IN ENGLISH)

First Interview

1. What do you think about integrating computer-based interactive activities into English lessons?

1.2 Do you think computer-based interactive activities or paper-pencil-based activities are more interesting? Why?

2. What do you think about The Sims 3 game?

2.1 Are you interested in the game?

2.2 If yes, what features of the game are you interested in?

2.3 Can you share examples of features that interest you?

3. What do you think about integrating The Sims 3 into our lessons?

3.1 Did you like the activities we did on The Sims 3 in general?

3.2 What were the pros of these activities?

3.3 What were the cons of these activities?

3.4 Did the paper-pencil-based activities or the activities prepared through The Sims 3 interest you more? Why?

3.5. What are the main differences between paper-based activities and activities based on The Sims 3?

Second Interview

1. What do you think about integrating The Sims 3 based interactive activities into English lessons? You can reply after watching the gameplay videos that appear on the screen.

1.1 Do you think interactive The Sims 3 activities or paper and pencil based activities are more interesting? Why?

2. Do you think the integration of The Sims 3 into our lessons has changed your attitude towards English lessons?

2.1 Did the activities we did on The Sims 3 make you more willing to learn English? Why?

2.2 If we did paper-based activities instead of The Sims 3-based activities, would your attitude towards English lessons still be the same? Why?

3. Do you think that integrating The Sims 3 into our lessons increases your motivation to learn/use the English language?

3.1 What effect do The Sims 3 based events have on your motivation? Can you give an example?

3.2. Did the activities we did on The Sims 3 make you like English lessons more? Why?

3.3 If we did pencil-paper-based activities instead of The Sims 3-based activities, would your motivation level in English class be the same? Why?

Last Interview

1. What do you think about integrating The Sims 3 into our lessons?

1.1 Did you generally like the activities we did on The Sims 3?

1.2 What were the pros of these activities?

1.3 What were the cons of these activities?

1.4 Did the paper-pencil-based activities or the activities prepared through The Sims 3 interest you more? Why?

1.5. What are the main differences between paper-based activities and activities based on The Sims 3? Can you give an example?

2. Do you think the integration of The Sims 3 into our lessons has changed your attitude towards English lessons?

2.1. Did the activities we do on The Sims 3 make you more willing to learn English? Why?

2.2 If we did pencil-paper-based activities instead of The Sims 3-based activities, would your attitude towards English lessons still be the same? Why?

3. Do you think that integrating The Sims 3 into our lessons increases your motivation to learn/use the English language?

3.1. What effect do The Sims 3 based events have on your motivation? Can you give an example?

3.2. Did the activities we did on The Sims 3 make you like English lessons more? Why?

3.3. If we did pencil-paper-based activities instead of The Sims 3-based activities, would your motivation level in English lessons be the same? Why?

4. When you consider the whole process from the first week to the last week, do you think the integration of The Sims 3 into our lessons is successful? Why?

4.1. Can you briefly summarize what this process has contributed to you?

4.2. To what extent do you think this process has changed your perspective towards English? How was the change? Why?

5. Would you like to integrate The Sims 3 or similar games into your English lessons in the next years of your education? Why?

E. INFORMED CONSENT FORM (FOR PARTICIPANTS)

Sayın Katılımcımız;
Katılacağınız bu çalışma, The Sims 3'ün İngilizce Öğrenime Entegre Edilişinin Araştırılması: Bir Meslek Lisesinde Örnek Olay Araştırması adıyla, Burkay KURU tarafından 15 Şubat 2023 – 15 Mayıs 2023 tarihleri arasında yapılacak bir araştırma uygulamasıdır.

Araştırmanın Hedefi: The Sims 3 adlı şiddet içermeyen simülasyon oyunu, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından belirlenen İngilizce müfredatına uygun bağlamda interaktif ve yenilikçi bir şekilde derslere entegre edilecektir ve öğrencilerin bu yenilikçi süreç hakkında ne düşündükleri ve hissettikleri nitel bir şekilde alan notları ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler araştırılacaktır.
Araştırmanın Nedeni: Yüksek Lisans Tez Çalışması

Araştırma Uygulaması: Görüşme, Gözlem, The Sims 3'ün Oyun İçi Ekran Kaydı

Araştırma T.C. Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi'nin ve okul/kurum yönetiminin izni ile gerçekleşmektedir. Araştırma uygulamasına katılım tamamıyla gönüllülük esasına dayalı olmaktadır. Çalışmada sizden kimlik belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Araştırma süresince araştırmacı tarafından alan notları alınacaktır. Ayrıca The Sims 3 oyunun oyun içi görüntüleri bilgisayar tarafından kaydedilecektir ve şifreli bir bilgisayarda daha sonra kullanılmak üzere saklanacaktır. Katılımcılar farklı zamanlarda üç kez bir ders saatini geçmeyecek şekilde bireysel ya da gruplar halinde yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelere çağrılacaktır ve süreç hakkında sorular cevaplayacaklardır. Katılımcılar tarafından verilen cevaplar dijital ses kaydına alınacaktır ve araştırmacı tarafından daha sonra kullanılmak üzere şifreli bir bilgisayarda saklanacaktır. Cevaplar tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacı tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Veriler sadece araştırmada kullanılacak ve üçüncü kişilerle paylaşılmayacaktır.
Uygulamalar, kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular ve durumlar içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden rahatsız hissederseniz cevaplama işini yarıda bırakabilirsiniz.
Katılımı onaylamadan önce sormak istediğiniz herhangi bir konu varsa sormaktan çekinmeyiniz. Çalışma bittikten sonra bizlere telefon veya e-posta ile ulaşarak soru sorabilir, sonuçlar hakkında bilgi isteyebilirsiniz. Saygılarımızla,

Araştırmacı : Burkay Kuru

İletişim Bilgileri :

Yukarıda bilgileri bulunan araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

..../...../.....
Ad-Soyad / İmza

F. INFORMED CONSENT FORM (FOR PARENTS)

Sayın Veli;

Çocuğunuzun katılacağı bu çalışma, "*The Sims 3*'ün İngilizce Öğrenime Entegre Edilişinin Araştırılması: Bir Meslek Lisesinde Örnek Olay Araştırması" adıyla, 15 Şubat 2023 – 15 Mayıs 2023 tarihleri arasında yapılacak bir araştırma uygulamasıdır.

Araştırmanın Hedefi: The Sims 3 adlı şiddet içermeyen simülasyon oyunu, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından belirlenen İngilizce müfredatına uygun bağlamda interaktif ve yenilikçi bir şekilde derslere entegre edilecektir ve öğrencilerin bu yenilikçi süreç hakkında ne düşündükleri ve hissettikleri nitel bir şekilde alan notları ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler araştırılacaktır.

Araştırmanın Nedeni: Yüksek Lisans Tez Calısması

Araştırmanın Yapılacağı Yer:

Araştırma Uygulaması: Görüşme, Gözlem, The Sims 3'ün Oyun İçi Ekran Kaydı

Araştırma T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi'nin ve okul yönetiminin de izni ile gerçekleşmektedir. Araştırma uygulamasına katılım tamamıyla gönüllülük esasına dayalı olmaktadır. Çocuğunuz çalışmaya katılıp katılmamakta özgürdür. Araştırma çocuğunuz için herhangi bir istenmeyen etki ya da risk taşımamaktadır. Çocuğunuzun katılımı **tamamen sizin isteğinize bağlıdır**, reddedebilir ya da herhangi bir aşamasında ayrılabilirsiniz. Araştırmaya katılmamama veya araştırmadan ayrılma durumunda öğrencilerin akademik başarıları, okul ve öğretmenleriyle olan ilişkileri etkilemeyecektir.

Çalışmada öğrencilerden kimlik belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Araştırma süresince araştırmacı tarafından alan notları alınacaktır. Ayrıca The Sims 3 oyunun oyun içi görüntüleri bilgisayar tarafından kaydedilecektir ve daha sonra kullanılmak üzere şifreli bir bilgisayarda saklanacaktır. Katılımcılar farklı zamanlarda üç kez bir ders saatini geçmeyecek şekilde bireysel ya da gruplar halinde yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelere çağrılacaktır ve süreç hakkında sorular cevaplayacaklardır. Katılımcılar tarafından verilen cevaplar dijital ses kaydına alınacaktır ve araştırmacı tarafından daha sonra kullanılmak üzere şifreli bir bilgisayarda saklanacaktır. Cevaplar tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacı tarafından değerlendirilecektir.

Uygulamalar, genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular ve durumlar içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden çocuğunuz kendisini rahatsız hissederse cevaplama işini yarıda bırakıp çıkmakta özgürdür. Bu durumda rahatsızlığın giderilmesi için gereken yardım sağlanacaktır. Çocuğunuz çalışmaya katıldıktan sonra istediği an vazgeçebilir. Böyle bir durumda veri toplama aracını uygulayan kişiye, çalışmayı tamamlamayacağını söylemesi yeterli olacaktır. Çalışmaya katılmamak ya da katıldıktan sonra vazgeçmek çocuğunuza hiçbir sorumluluk getirmeyecektir.

Onay vermeden önce sormak istediğiniz herhangi bir konu varsa sormaktan çekinmeyiniz. Çalışma bittikten sonra bizlere telefon veya e-posta ile ulaşarak soru sorabilir, sonuçlar hakkında bilgi isteyebilirsiniz. Saygılarımızla,

Araştırmacı : Burkav KURU

İletişim bilgileri

Velisi bulunduğum 9-_____ sınıfı ..... numaralı öğrencisi .... 'in yukarıda açıklanan araştırmaya katılmasına izin veriyorum. (Lütfen formu imzaladıktan sonra çocuğunuzla okula geri gönderiniz).

..../...../ .....

Veli Adı-Soyadı : Ad-Soyad / İmza

Telefon Numarası :

G. DEBRIEFING FORM

Sayın katılımcımız;
Öncelikle araştırmaya katıldığınız için teşekkür ederiz.

Katıldığınız bu çalışma, The Sims 3'ün İngilizce Öğrenime Entegre Edilişinin Araştırılması: Bir Meslek Lisesinde Örnek Olay Araştırması adıyla, Burkay KURU tarafından 15 Şubat 2023 – 15 Mayıs 2023 tarihleri arasında yapılmış bir araştırma uygulamasıdır.

Araştırma T.C. Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi'nin ve okul/kurum yönetiminin izni ile gerçekleşmiştir ve The Sims 3 adlı şiddet içermeyen simülasyon oyununun Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından belirlenen İngilizce müfredatına uygun bağlamda interaktif ve yenilikçi bir şekilde derslere entegre edilmiş olup katılımcıların bu yenilikçi süreç hakkında ne düşündükleri ve hissettikleri nitel bir şekilde alan notları ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ile araştırılmıştır.

Araştırma sırasında araştırmacı tarafından çeşitli alan notları alınmış olup katılımcılarla farklı zamanlarda ikisi odak grup görüşmesi, biri de bireysel görüşme olmak üzere üç kez yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme yapılmıştır ve bu görüşmelerde The Sims 3'ün İngiliz dili eğitimine entegresi hakkında sorular sorulmuş olup soruların genel odağı katılımcıların İngilizce dersine olan motivasyonları ve tutumları hakkındadır. Ayrıca araştırma süresince oynanan The Sims 3'ün oyun içi görüntüleri bilgisayar tarafından kaydedilmiştir ve aynı şekilde görüşmeler sırasında katılımcıların cevapları dijital ses kaydına alınmıştır ve daha sonra incelenmek üzere araştırmacı tarafından kimseyle paylaşılmamak üzere şifreli bir bilgisayarda saklanmıştır. Elde edilen verilen yalnızca bu araştırma kapsamında kullanılmıştır. Araştırmamıza katıldığınız için yeniden teşekkür ederiz.

Eğer araştırmayla ilgili sorularınız varsa ya da ilerleyen zamanda araştırmanın sonuçları hakkında bilgi almak isterseniz aşağıda bulunan iletişim yöntemlerinden biriyle Burkay KURU'ya ulaşabilirsiniz.

Araştırmacı : Burkay Kuru
İletişim Bilgileri :

H. LIST OF INITIAL CODES

3D Nature of The Sims 3
Abundance in Activities
Acknowledgement of Necessity of English
Active Learning
Active Participation
Advantages of The Sims 3 Activities
Attraction of Attention
Being Not Tired in The Sims 3 Activities
Better Overall Retention
Better Participation with The Sims 3
Better Retention of Vocabulary Items
Boredom in Mechanical Writing Activities
Boredom in Paper-based Activities
Boredom in The Sims 3 Activities
Chance of Vocabulary Revision
Character Design in The Sims 3
Clear Presentation
Clearness in Presentation
Collective Work
Competitive Atmosphere
Competitiveness in Activities
Continuous Activities
Creativity Embedded in The Sims 3
Curiosity about Upcoming Activities
Decoration / Build Mode
Different Activity Styles in The Sims 3
Different Activity Types
Disadvantages of The Sims 3 Activities
Discontinuation in Paper-based Activities
Disinterest in The Sims 3
Divergence from School Stress
Ease in Playing the Game
Ease of Flow in The Sims 3 Activities
Ease of Use
Encouragement from Friends
Endless Possibilities in The Sims 3
Enhancement in Friendships
Enhancement in Motivation
Enhancement in Participation
Enjoyment in Activities
Everyday Use of Language
Exploration in The Sims 3
Extra Preparation at Home for The Sims 3 Activities
Facilitation of Cooperation

Facilitation of Ease in Sentence Formation
Facilitation of Language Learning
Facilitation of More Effective Learning
Facilitation of Pronunciation
Facilitation of Self-Confidence
Facilitation of Sentence Structure
Facilitation of Social Network
Facilitation of Speaking Abilities
Facilitation of Using Language Outside Classroom
Facilitation of Visual Memory
Facilitation of Vocabulary Learning
Facilitation of Vocabulary Learning
Forming New Friendships
Freedom in Activities
Freshness of The Sims 3
Fun Elements in The Sims 3
Fun Game Elements
Fun in The Sims 3 Tasks
Fun in Working Together
Future Support for Integration of The Sims 3
Future Support for Integration of The Sims 3
Game-based Instructions
Game-based Learning
Hating English lessons Due to Boredom
Imitation of Real Life
Increase in Love towards English language
Increase in Love Towards FLE
Individual Learning
Interaction between Love and Learning
Interest Based on Everyday Life
Interest in The Sims 3
Interest in The Sims 3
Interest in Using Technological Devices
Just a Game
Lack of Attention among Watchers
Lack of Desire for Participation
Lack of Enjoyment
Language-based Activities
Learning Experience as a Whole Class
Limited Number of Paper-based Activities
Low Motivation before The Sims 3 Activities
Low Motivation due to Book Activities
Low Motivation due to Boredom
Low Motivation due to Memorization
Low Motivation due to Not Fun Environment
Meaningful Activities in The Sims 3
Negative Effect of Crowded Classroom

Noise in The Sims 3 Activities
Not Requirement of Using Notebooks
Not So Fun
Not So Instructive
Not Writing-based Nature of the Activities
Obstruction of Paper-based Activities
Open World Experiences
Open World Nature of The Sims 3
Opportunity to Use English
Perceived Attitude Change with The Sims 3
Perceived Increase in Motivation with The Sims 3
Personality Choice in The Sims 3
Positive Atmosphere in The Sims 3
Positive Attitudes towards Lessons with The Sims 3
Preference for Paper-based Activities
Preference for Paper-based Writing
Productive Language Use in The Sims 3
Real Life Experiences
Relaxation in The Sims 3 Activities
Relevance to Topics
Repetition of Important Points
Revision of Important Language Elements
Simulation Experiences
Soothing Atmosphere in Activities
Speaking-based Lessons
Spending Good Time with Friends
Successful Integration of The Sims
Support of Integration of The Sims 3 Activities
Technology-based Lessons
Uniqueness of The Sims 3
Usefulness of The Sims 3 Activities
Utilization of Creative Games
Utilization of Open World Games
Utilization of Simulation Games
Variety in Feedback in The Sims 3 Activities
Versatility in Activities in The Sims 3
Versatility in Experiences
Visual Activities
Weird Nature of The Sims 3
Willingness to Participate
Working Together in The Sims 3 Activities

I. TABLE DEPICTING THE SCREENSHOTS FROM GAMEPLAY SESSIONS AND THEIR OBJECTIVES / UNITS

Table I1.

Screenshots from TS 3 activities and their objectives

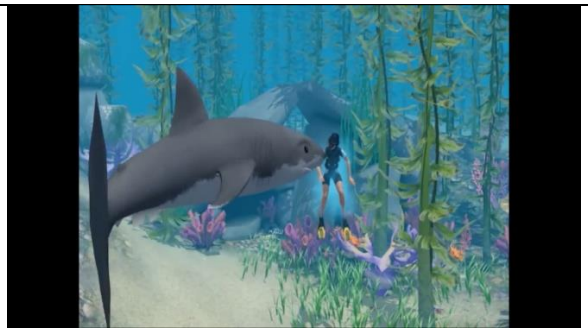
Activities	Screenshots	Objectives / Units
1.		**Objective:** asking about and describing people's appearances and characters. **Focus:** Vocabulary **Unit:** Theme 5
2.		**Objective:** comparing characteristics and appearances. **Focus:** Grammar **Unit:** Theme 5
3.		**Objective:** talking about current activities. **Focus:** Speaking, grammar **Unit:** Theme 5

Table I1 (continued)

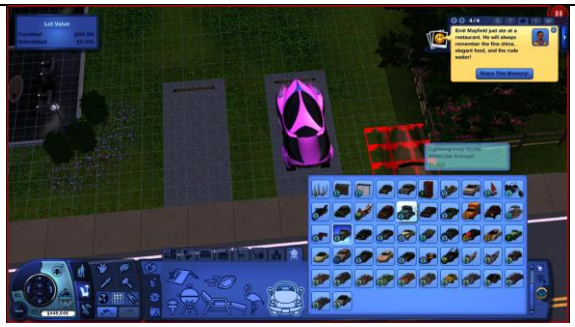
4.		**Objective:** Asking about and describing cities. **Focus:** Speaking **Unit:** Theme 6
5.		**Objective:** Talking about travel and tourism **Focus:** Vocabulary **Unit:** Theme 6
6.		**Objective:** Talking about past events **Focus:** Grammar **Unit:** Theme 7
7.		**Objective:** Talking about past events **Focus:** Writing, grammar **Unit:** Theme 7
8.		**Objective:** Asking for and giving advice **Focus:** Speaking **Unit:** Theme 8

Table I1 (continued)

9.		**Objective:** Expressing obligations and prohibitions **Focus:** Grammar **Unit:** Theme 8
10.		**Objective:** Giving and understanding simple instructions in case of emergency **Focus:** Speaking **Unit:** Theme 8
11.		**Objective:** Asking for and giving opinion (agreement, disagreement, etc…) **Focus:** **Vocabulary** **Unit:** Theme 9
12.		**Objective:** Talking about future plans **Focus:** Grammar **Unit:** Theme 9

Table I1 (continued)

13.		**Objective:** making predictions about the future **Focus:** Grammar **Unit:** Theme 10

J. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

THE SİMS 3'E İNGİLİZCE EĞİTİM SÜREÇLERİNDE YER VERİLMESİNİN ARAŞTIRILMASI: BİR MESLEKİ VE TEKNİK LİSEDE ÖRNEK OLAY ARAŞTIRMASI

GİRİŞ

Dijital oyunlar birçok insanın hayatında vazgeçilmez bir yer kazanmış ve dijital oyunların popülaritesi sundukları eğlenceli ve çekici oynanış sebebiyle son yıllarda artmış durumdadır (Granic et al., 2014; Feijoo-Gonzales & Simon, 2014; Wolf, 2021). ABD'de 226 milyondan daha fazla insanın dijital oyun oynadığı ve çocukların %80'inin oyunlarla haşır neşir olduğu raporlanmıştır (ESA, 2021). Dijital oyunlarının popülaritesinin düzenli olarak artmasının sonucuyla da dijital oyunlar tarih ve tıp gibi farklı alanlarda da başarıyı ve çekiciliği artırmak için kullanılmaya başlanmıştır (Spring, 2015; McCoy et al., 2016). Dijital oyunlar öğrenci performansını, motivasyonunu ve öğrencilerin çeşitli derslere karşı olan tutumlarını geliştirirken aynı zamanda öğrencilerin eğlenmesini sağladığı için dijital oyunlar eğitim alanında da sıklıkla kullanılmaktadır (Beavis et al., 2015; Lay & Osman, 2018; Gee & Price, 2021). Ayrıca, tamamen eğitim amacıyla yaratılmış birçok oyun da bulunmaktadır ve bu tarz oyunların amacı eğitim kazanımlarını sağlamak olduğu için bu türdeki oyunlara "ciddi oyunlar" denmektedir ve bu yaklaşım dijital oyun tabanlı öğrenme kavramını ortaya çıkarmıştır (Girard et al., 2013; All et al., 2016). Ciddi oyunlara ek olarak eğlence amacıyla yaratılmış olan dijital oyunlar da itinalı adaptasyon sürecinden ve pedagojik seçimden geçirilerek sınıf aktivitelerinde kullanılabilmektedir (Squire, 2008; Ekaputra et al., 2013). Amacından bağımsız olarak birçok oyun dil girdisine ve çıktısına bağlı olduğu için dijital oyunlar, İngiliz dili öğretimine ve sınıf aktivitelerine de entegre edilebilmektedir (Campos et al., 2013; Rudis & Poštić, 2017; Li, 2022).

İngiliz dili eğitimi alanında, dijital oyunların sınıf aktivitelerindeki başarıyı artırmanın yanı sıra sunmuş olduğu eğlence faktörleri sayesinde öğrencilerin motivasyonunu artırdığı ve öğrencilerin İngiliz derslerine karşı daha iyi bir tutum geliştirildiği de görülmektedir (Ebrahimzadeh & Sepideh, 2017; Castillo-Cuesta, 2020; Öden et al., 2021). Özellikle de *The Sims* gibi yazılı bir biçimde zengin dil içeriği sunan simülasyon tabanlı dijital oyunların öğrencilerin dil becerilerini artırmada başarılı olduğu belirtilmektedir ve öğrenciler bu tarz oyunlarda dil içeriğini anlayamadan oyunda ilerleyememekte ve dil çıktısını mantıklı bağlamlarda görmektedirler (Ranalli, 2008; Wang, 2019; Lorenset & Tumolo, 2019).

Son yıllarda iletişimsel dil öğretiminin (CLT) yaygınlaşmasıyla birlikte İngiliz dili eğitiminde geleneksel öğretimden modern öğretime geçiş başlamıştır (Alamri, 2018). Aynı zamanda spesifik olarak bilgisayar destekli dil eğitimi (CALL) alanındaki ve genel olarak bilişim ve iletişim teknolojileri alanındaki teknolojik gelişmeler ve dil alanındaki müfredat değişiklikleri sayesinde dil eğitimde daha yenilikçi stratejiler ve teknikler kullanılmaktadır (Timuçin 2006; Kessler, 2018). Bu tarz yenilikçi gelişmeler doğal olarak *YouTube, Kahoot* ve *Quizlet* gibi Web 2.0 uygulamalarının ve *The Sims* gibi dijital oyunların İngiliz dili eğitimi alanında kullanılmaya başlamasına sebep olmuştur (Kayar, 2019; Lorenset & Tumolo, 2019). Özcan & Kırkgöz (2021) İngilizce derslerindeki teknolojik, yani yenilikçi, araçların kullanılmasının öğrencilerin dil becerilerini ve hem kendi aralarındaki hem de öğretmenleriyle olan iletişimlerini artırdığını söylemiştir. Ne yazık ki bahsedilen bu değişim gerçek hayatta pek yer bulmamıştır çünkü geleneksel eğitim sistemi hala modern eğitim sistemine göre daha fazla kullanılmaktadır ve geleneksel eğitim sistemi öğrencilerin potansiyelini, yaratıcılığını, kişiliğini ve derse katılımını baltalamaktadır (Liu & Long 2014). Buna ek olarak geleneksel eğitim sistemi konseptlerin ve konuların ezberlenmesini odak noktası haline getirmekte ve aktif düşünme becerisini arka plana atarak eğitim ve öğretim sürecinin etkisini azaltmaktadır (Sabirova & Karinova, 2021). Ayrıca, Castronova (2002) geleneksel eğitim sisteminin mekanik tekrar ettirme etkinlikleri gibi öğretmen tabanlı stratejilere sebebiyet verdiğini belirtmektedir. Bu yüzden, geleneksel eğitim sisteminin getirmiş olduğu sınırları aşmak ve teoride belirtilmiş olan modern eğitim sistemine geçiş yapmak elzemdir çünkü modern eğitim sisteminde öğrencilerin derse ve aktivitelere katılımı en önem verilen unsurlardan biridir

(Simplicio, 2000; Zhu et al., 2013). Ayrıca modern eğitim sisteminde dijital oyunların ve diğer bilgisayar tabanlı uygulamaların derse entegre edilmesine önem verilmekle birlikte bu tarz oyunların ve uygulamaların öğrencilerin etkileşim yeteneklerini, dersteki başarılarını artıracağı belirtilmiştir. (Groff, 2013; Dimitrios et al., 2013; Kalyani & Rajasekaran, 2018). Aynı zamanda, şu anda görülmekte olan geleneksel eğitim sistemiyle karşılaştırıldığında, modern eğitim sisteminin İngilizce dil becerilerini, iletişim tekniklerini de artırdığı görülmüştür (Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Richards & Rogers, 2014; Zilola & Makhsuda, 2020). Lorenset & Tumolo (2019)'un da belirttiği gibi, The Sims'in modern eğitim sistemi kapsamında İngilizce derslerine entegre edilmesi de öğrencilerin dil becerilerini mantıklı ortamlarda artıracak ve geleneksel eğitim sisteminin yaratmış olduğu problemin ortadan kaldırılmasına yardımcı olacaktır.

Bu araştırma mesleğe yeni başlamış bir İngilizce öğretmeni tarafından Türkiye'deki bir mesleki ve teknik Anadolu lisesinde The Sims 3'ün İngilizce dersi müfredatına entegre edilerek modern eğitim sistemi kapsamında The Sims 3-tabanlı çeşitli yenilikçi ve öğrenci merkezli etkinlikler sayesinde İngiliz dili eğitiminde görülen geleneksel eğitim sisteminin etkinliğini azaltmak ve öğrencilerin The Sims 3 tabanlı aktivitelere katılımlarını inceleyerek öğrencilerin derse olan tutumlarını ve motivasyon sevilerini yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ve alan notları ile incelemektir. Bu araştırmada şu sorulara cevap aranmaktadır:

1. The Sims 3'ün 9. Sınıf İngilizce müfredatına entegre edilmesi öğretmen merkezli geleneksel eğitim sistemini, öğrenci merkezli modern eğitim sistemine dönüştürmede yardımcı olacak mıdır?
2. The Sims 3'ün 9. Sınıf İngilizce müfredatına entegre edilmesi öğrencilerin İngilizce dersine karşı sınıf içi motivasyonlarını artıracak mıdır?
3. The Sims 3'ün 9. Sınıf İngilizce müfredatına entegre edilmesi öğrencilerin İngilizce dersine karşı olan tutumlarını iyi yönde etkileyecek midir?

YÖNTEM

Bu araştırmada nitel araştırma yöntemi uygulanmaktadır. Araştırma süreç odaklı olduğu için ve öğrencilerin süreç içerisindeki motivasyon ve tutum değişikliklerine

odaklanılacağı için bu araştırma yöntemi tercih edilmiştir. Bilindiği üzere nitel araştırma yöntemleri kişilerin birinci elden duygularına, düşüncelerine ve davranış değişikliklerine önem vermektedir ve bu da bu araştırmanın amacıyla örtüşmektedir (Deatrick, 1991). Ayrıca bu araştırma bir sorunu (geleneksel eğitim sisteminin eksiklikleri) ortaya koymaktadır ve bu bir süreç içerisinde bu soruna çözüm (The Sims 3'ün derslere entegre edilmesiyle geleneksel eğitim sistemini modern eğitim sistemiyle değiştirme) aramaktadır ki bu da nitel araştırmaların sorun arama ve çözüm üretme özelliğini yansıtmaktadır (Maxwell et al., 2009).

Bu araştırmada örnek olay modeli uygulanmaktadır. Örnek olay modeli önceden belirlenmiş bir olayın belirli bir katılımcı sayısıyla ve belirli bir zaman diliminde önceden belirlenmiş kriterler ışığında tüm detaylarıyla farklı açılardan incelenmesidir (Flyvbjerg, 2011). Bu araştırmada da aynı olanakları, sınırları, dersleri ve materyalleri paylaşan bir grup öğrenci incelenmektedir ve bu öğrencilerin yaş bakımından birbirleriyle benzer olmakla birlikte aynı mekânda ve aynı zaman diliminde aynı etkinliklere ve tekniklere maruz kalmaktadırlar. Bu bakımdan bu araştırmada kullanılan örnek olay modeli bu öğrenci grubu ve bu araştırma bağlamında uygun olacaktır.

Örnek olay araştırma modeline ek olarak bu araştırmada sınıf araştırması yöntemi de uygulanmaktadır. Sınıf araştırması yöntemi öğretmen (araştırmacı) ve öğrencilerin (katılımcı) aynı bağlamda iş birliği içinde beraber çalıştığı ve sınıf içerisindeki etkinlikler, materyaller ve tekniklerle uygulanan bir araştırma yöntemidir (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993). Bu araştırmada da öğretmen araştırmacı, öğrencilerin de katılımcı rolünde olduğu göz önüne alındığında ve aynı zamanda The Sims 3'ün derslere entegresiyle yapılan interaktif derslerde hem öğretmenin hem de öğrencilerin aynı anda katılım göstermesi sebebiyle bu araştırma modelinin uygun olduğu görülmektedir.

Bu araştırmadaki katılımcıların tamamı Ankara'daki bir mesleki ve teknik Anadolu lisesindeki önceden belirlenmiş bir 9. Sınıf şubesi öğrencilerinden oluşmaktadır ve sınıfın mevcudu 30'dur. Bu sınıfın özellikle belirlenmesinin sebebi diğer 9. Sınıfların aksine araştırma için seçilen 9. Sınıfın öğrencilerinin LGS puanıyla liseye yerleşmesi ve bu yüzden de hem İngilizce hem de diğer derslerde daha başarılı olmasıdır. Böylece

araştırma boyunca öğrenciler oyundaki dil girdisini ve çıktısını daha rahat anlayabilecek ve teknolojik etkinlikleri daha rahat yapabilecektir. Sınıfın tüm mevcudu erkek öğrencilerden oluşmaktadır ve öğrencilerin yaşı ortalama 14'tür. Öğrencilerin birçoğu ilçe merkezinde oturmaktadır ve teknolojiyi kullanmakta yetenekli bireyler olmakla birlikte öğrencilerin sosyo-kültürel seviyesi de yüksektir. Aynı zamanda öğrencilerin tamamı ilkokul ve ortaokul yıllarını ilçedeki çeşitli devlet okullarında geçirmiştir. Bu bağlamda öğrencilerin hem eğitim geçmişi hem de kültürel geçmiş olarak birbirlerine benzer özellikler gösterdikleri söylenebilmektedir.

Katılımcı gözlemlenmesi, içinde araştırmacının da doğal olarak dahil olduğu önceden belirlenmiş bir grubun duygularının, fikirlerinin ve davranışsal durumlarının incelendiği ve grubun doğallığının bozulmaması açısından herhangi bir dış müdahalenin yapılmadığı bir gözlem yöntemidir (Spradley, 2016). Bu araştırma bağlamında da öğretmen hem araştırmacı hem de grubun doğal bir üyesi olarak diğer katılımcıların The Sims 3'ün entegresi sırasındaki duygu değişimlerini, tepkilerini, davranışlar değişikliklerini inceleyerek daha sonra kullanmak üzere bir not defterine not alacaktır.

Dempsey (2010) hatırlatma görüşme tekniği katılımcıların içinde bulunduğu bir ortamın kayıt altına alınması ve daha sonra bu kayıtların katılımcılarla paylaşılıp kayıtta bahsi geçen konular hakkında konuşmalarının istenmesiyle yapılmaktadır. Bu araştırma kapsamında da The Sims 3'ün kazanımlarla eşleştirilerek sınıf içine uygulandığı durumlarda akıllı tahtadaki uygulama sayesinde The Sims 3'ün oyun içi görüntüleri kayıt altına alınacak -öğrenciler ya da sınıf ortamı kaydedilmeyecek; yalnızca bilgisayar ekranı kaydedilecek- ve bu kayıtlar daha sonra öğrencilere çeşitli bireysel ya da grup görüşmelerinde gösterilecektir. Böylece katılımcıların The Sims 3 ile yapılmış olan aktiviteleri hatırlayıp daha net cevaplar vermesi beklenmektedir.

Öğrencilere dönem başında, ortasında ve sonuna doğru daha önceden belirlenmiş bir görüşme odasına gruplar halinde alınarak The Sims 3'ün İngilizce derslerine entegresi hakkında yarı yapılandırılmış açık uçlu sorular sorulacaktır. Bu sorular sayesinde öğrencilerin The Sims 3 içerikli interaktif etkinlikleri tamamlarken neler hissettikleri ve düşündükleri ortaya çıkarılması hedeflenmektir. Aynı zamanda bu sorulardan alınacak cevaplar sayesinde öğrencilerin İngilizce dersine ve genel olarak İngilizce

kullanımına karşı motivasyonlarının ve tutumlarının pozitif yönde değişip değişmediği incelenecektir.

Araştırma süresince The Sims 3 yıllık plandaki kazanımlara uygun bir şekilde derslere entegre edilip çeşitli interaktif ve öğrenci tabanlı etkinlikler ile dersin işlenişine kazandırılacaktır. The Sims 3'ün böyle bir araştırma için seçilmesinin birkaç ana sebebi vardır. Öncelikle oyun 13+ yaş ibaresiyle satışa çıkmıştır; bu da oyunun öğrencilerin yaşına uygun olduğunu göstermektedir. Buna ek olarak oyun şiddet içermemektedir ve oyun tamamen dil girdisi ve çıktısı üzerinden yönetilmektedir. Bu da katılımcıların bol bol İngilizce diline maruz kalmalarını ve oyunda ilerleyebilmek için İngilizce'yi aktif olarak kullanmalarına sebep olmaktadır. Ayrıca The Sims 3 bir yaşam simülasyonu oyunudur ve yıllık planda belirtilen kazanımlar sağlayacak kadar esnek ve kolay bir oynanışa sahiptir. Böylece hemen araştırmacı için hem de katılımcılar için The Sims 3 iyi bir seçenektir. Bunlara ek olarak The Sims 3 birçok genç tarafından bilinen bir oyundur ve bu da katılımcıların oyuna daha kolay adapte olmasını sağlayan bir başka etkendir.

Dönem boyunca öğretmen tarafından haftada en az bir kez The Sims 3 tabanlı bir interaktif etkinlik sınıf içinde yapılır ve bu sırada The Sims 3'ün oyun içi görüntüleri akıllı tahta tarafından kaydedilir. Katılımcılar etkinlikleri tamamlarken araştırmacı dönem boyunca katılımcıların istekliği, duyguları, düşünceleri, motivasyon seviyeleri ve tutumları hakkında alan notları alır.

Dönemin ilk haftalarında öğrenciler The Sims 3 etkinlikleriyle yeni tanışmışken araştırmacı katılımcıları idare tarafından daha önceden belirlenen bir görüşme odasına alır ve kısaca öğrencilere The Sims 3'ün derslere entegresi hakkında neler düşündükleri ve hissettikleri hakkında yarı yapılandırılmış sorular sorulur. Böylece öğrencilerin süreç başında bu modern yaklaşım hakkında neler hissettiklerinin ve düşündüklerinin ortaya çıkarılması hedeflenmektedir. Görüşme sorularının tamamı ekte verilmiştir.

Dönem ortasında araştırmacı katılımcıları idare tarafından belirlenen bir görüşme odasına alır ve daha önceden çekilen The Sims 3 oyun içi görüntüleri izletilir daha sonra öğrencilerin bu görüntüleri de göz önüne alarak görüşme sorularını

cevaplamaları istenir. Bu görüşmenin amacı hem öğrencilerin süreç içerisinde The Sims 3'ün derslere entegresi hakkında neler düşündüklerini ve hissettiklerini ortaya çıkarmak hem de kaydedilmiş olan ekran görüntüleri sayesinde öğrencilerin sürecin ilk haftalarını hatırlamalarını sağlamaktır. Görüşme sorularının tamamı ekte verilmiştir.

Dönemin sonuna doğru araştırmacı katılımcıları idare tarafından daha önceden belirlenen bir görüşme odasına alır ve katılımcılara The Sims 3'ün derse entegresi hakkında dönem boyunca neler hissettikleriyle ilgili yarı yapılandırılmış sorular sorulur ve katılımcıların The Sims 3 tabanlı etkinliklere karşı hissettikleri ve düşündükleri ortaya çıkarılmaya çalışılır ve böylece öğrencilerin motivasyon ve tutumları hakkında da bilgi sahibi olunur.

Her üç toplantı sırasında da katılımcıların vermiş olduğu cevaplar bir kayıt cihazı ile kaydedilecektir ve üçüncü kişilerle kesinlikle paylaşılmamak üzere araştırmacı tarafından güvenli bir yerde saklanacaktır.

Toplantılar sırasında elde edilen ses kayıtları veri toplama süreci tamamlandıktan sonra ses kayıtlarının transkripsiyonu sağlanmak üzere güvenli ve şifreli bir bilgisayara aktarılacaktır. Aynı şekilde araştırmacının süreç içerisinde almış olduğu alan notları da yine güvenli ve şifreli bir bilgisayara kaydedilecektir. Daha sonra kaydedilen ses kayıtlarının transkripsiyonları katılımcılara takma adlar verilerek dosyalanacaktır.

Elde edilen transkripsiyonlar içerik çözümlemesi yoluyla motivasyon, tutum, modern eğitim sistemi, geleneksel eğitim sistemi ve dijital oyunlar gibi kategorilere ayrılacak ve kategorilere ayrılan içerikler daha sonra derinlemesine incelenecek ve daha sonra incelenen cevaplardan kesitler alınarak cevapların ne anlama geldiği hakkında detaylı açıklamalar yapılacaktır.

İçerik çözümlemesi ile elde edilen sonuçlara ek olarak araştırmacı tarafından tutulan alan notları da incelenecek ve yine kategoriler hazırlanarak kategori içi incelemeler yapılacaktır. Son olarak alan notları ile transkripsiyondan elde edilen kategoriler birbirleriyle karşılaştırılacak ve benzerlikler ya da farklılıklar üzerinde yorumlama yapılacaktır.

BULGULAR, TARTIŞMA VE SONUÇ

21. yüzyılda eğitim, yeni nesil öğrencilere sürekli gelişen çağdaş dünya için teorik bilgilerin yanı sıra pratik beceriler kazandırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Beklendiği gibi, öğrencileri inisiyatif almaya ve özerk öğrenenler olmaya teşvik edebilecek öğrenci temelli yaklaşımların yanı sıra en son teknoloji, oyunlaştırma, yaratıcılık, problem çözme, öz-yönetim içeren yöntem ve stratejiler aracılığıyla amaçlanan sonuçlara ulaşmak için yenilikçi öğretim yöntemlerine ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır (Irving, 2006; Laar ve diğerleri, 2017; Alejandro ve David, 2018; Sawyer, 2019). Bunun dünya çapında bir norm olduğu varsayılsa da, öğrencilerin mekanik etkinliklerle pasif öğreniciler olduğu öğretmen temelli etkinlikler yoluyla geleneksel öğretim yöntemleri Türkiye de dahil olmak üzere dünyanın birçok yerinde hala varlığını sürdürmektedir (Castronova, 2002; Liu & Long, 2014; Zorba & Çakır, 2019). Bu nedenle, yeni nesil öğrencileri çağdaş dünyada yaşamaları için gerekli bilgi ve becerilerle donatmak için geleneksel öğretim yöntemlerini modernleştirmek çok önemlidir. Simülasyon oyunlarının özgün, dönüştürücü, etkili, motive edici, rastlantısal, otonom ve yaratıcı doğası sayesinde yenilikçi öğretim araçları olarak kullanılabildii bilinmektedir (Boudourides, 2003; Heintz & Law, 2015; Cadotte, 2016; Samuel & Rahman, 2018; Stocker, 2020; Voronaya, 2022).

Bu nitel vaka çalışması, The Sims 3'ü normal İngilizce derslerine entegre ederek *TS 3*'ü temel alan çeşitli etkinlik ve işlerle belirli müfredat kazanımlarını yerine getirmek için Türkiye'de Ankara'da bulunan bir mesleki ve teknik lisede mevcut olan geleneksel öğretim yöntemlerini modernleştirmeyi amaçlamıştır. Bunun için, araştırmacı tarafından her hafta The Sims 3'ü oynamayı veya izlemeyi içeren en az bir etkinlik oluşturulmuş ve o hafta ele alınması gereken müfredat kazanmı doğrultusunda sınıf ortamında uygulanmış ve çeşitli dil noktaları The Sims 3'te yer alan oyun öğeleri ile tanıtılmış veya revize edilmiştir ve toplam yaklaşık 550 dakikalık oynanış süresi ile bu süreçte etkinlikler tasarlanmış ve uygulanmıştır. Katılımcılar 9. sınıfa devam eden 23 genç öğrenciden oluşmaktadır. Eldeki çalışmada üç farklı veri toplama aracı kullanılmıştır: alan notları, uyarılmış hatırlama görüşmesi ve yarı yapılandırılmış odak grup görüşmeleri. Alan notlarında tüm katılımcılar dikkate alınırken, görüşme oturumlarında 8 katılımcı yer almıştır. Bu çalışmanın amaçları doğrultusunda üç farklı

araştırma sorusu ortaya çıkmıştır. İlk araştırma sorusu, The Sims 3'ün normal İngilizce derslerine entegre edilmesine ilişkin katılımcıların yanı sıra öğretmenin genel algılarına cevap aradı. İkinci araştırma sorusu, The Sims 3'e dayalı etkinlikler doğrultusunda katılımcıların algılanan motivasyon düzeylerini incelemeyi amaçlamıştır.

Üçüncü araştırma sorusu, The Sims 3 etkinliklerini sınıf ortamına entegre ettikten sonra katılımcıların İngilizce'ye yönelik algıladıkları dil tutumlarını keşfetmeyi amaçlamaktadır. The Sims 3'ün normal İngilizce derslerine entegre edilmesi konusunda hem katılımcıların hem de öğretmenin olumlu algılara sahip olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Katılımcılar kişisel olarak genel olarak teknoloji özelde ise dijital oyunlar ile ilgilendikleri için The Sims 3'e dayalı etkinliklerin eğlenceli olduğunu öne sürmüşlerdir. Katılımcılar ayrıca boş zamanlarında dijital oyunlar oynamaya zaten alışkın oldukları için The Sims 3'ün derslerinde kullanılmasından yana olduklarını ve bu nedenle okul ortamlarında bir dijital oyunu deneyimlemek eğlenceli ve heyecan verici olduğunu paylaşmışlardır.

Katılımcılar ayrıca geleneksel etkinliklerle İngilizce derslerinde önceki deneyimleri ile The Sims 3'ün entegrasyonu sonucu oluşan yenilikçi atmosfer arasında bir karşılaştırma yapmışlar ve yaratıcılığın, keşfetmenin, özerkliğin, çok yönlülüğün, özgünlüğün ön planda tutulduğu çağdaş doğası nedeniyle ikincisini tercih edeceklerini belirtmişlerdir ve sınıf gözlemlerinde benzer sonuçlara ulaşılmıştır. Ayrıca katılımcılar ve öğretmen, The Sims 3'e dayalı etkinliklerle dil öğrenmenin kolaylaşması konusunda olumlu algılara sahip olduğunu belirtmiştir. Katılımcılar, geleneksel etkinliklerin aksine The Sims 3'te yeni kelime ögelerini daha kolay öğrendiklerini ve hatırladıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Ayrıca, The Sims 3'e dayalı etkinlikler, doğası gereği geleneksel olan kağıt tabanlı etkinliklere kıyasla daha özgür ve etkileşimli sınıf içi konuşmalara izin verdiği için The Sims 3 sayesinde sözlü becerilerinin gelişebileceği belirtilmiştir. Ek olarak, katılımcılar, The Sims 3'ün İngilizce kural ve düzenlemelerini geleneksel etkinliklerden daha etkili bir şekilde öğrenmelerine yardımcı olduğu konusunda görüş belirttiler; dolayısıyla katılımcıların İngilizce derslerinde The Sims 3 kullanımına ilişkin olumlu algıları olduğu gözlemlemiştir.

Katılımcılar ikinci araştırma sorusu kapsamında The Sims 3'e dayalı etkinlikler sonucunda algıladıkları motivasyon düzeylerine ilişkin ifadeler paylaşmışlardır. Tüm katılımcılar, kendilerine The Sims 3 oynamaları ve ilgili görevleri tamamlamaları teklif edildiğinde algılanan motivasyon düzeylerinin arttığını belirtmişlerdir. The Sims 3'te bulunan oynanışı sevdiklerini ve bu oyun öğeleriyle İngilizce öğrenmekten keyif aldıklarını ve dolayısıyla algılanan motivasyon düzeylerini artırdıklarını öne sürmüşlerdir. Ayrıca katılımcılar, The Sims 3'te sunulan sonsuz olasılıkların ve dile dayalı durumların, verilen görevleri bitirmek, oyun içinde ilerlemek ve görsel olarak çekici oyun içi öğelerle meşgul olmak için daha fazla motive olmalarına izin verdiğine inanmışlardır ve bu durum sınıf içi gözlemlerle de desteklenmiştir.

Ek olarak The Sims 3'ün kağıt üzerinde yapılan sıkıcı ve ezbere dayalı etkinliklere göre daha eğlenceli, bilgilendirici ve yenilikçi olduğunu, bunun da algılanan motivasyon düzeyleri üzerinde olumlu etkisi olduğunu savunmuşlardır. Katılımcılar, The Sims 3'ün sınıf ortamını mekanik etkinliklere göre daha sosyal hale getirdiğini öne sürmüşlerdir. Yani katılımcılar, The Sims 3'e dayalı görevleri tamamlamak için işbirliği içinde veya rekabet halinde çalışmaya teşvik edilmiştir; bu nedenle, amaçlanan sonuçlara ulaşmak için birbirleriyle çiftler halinde veya gruplar halinde iletişim kurmak zorunda kalmışlar ve tüm bu etkileşimli süreç, daha önce görülen geleneksel atmosfere kıyasla algılanan motivasyon düzeylerinin neden daha yüksek olduğunu ortayan koyan bir başka nedendi.

Bu çalışmada incelenecek üçüncü araştırma sorusunda katılımcılar, The Sims 3 etkinliklerinin normal İngilizce derslerine entegre edilmesiyle, İngilizce derslerine ve İngilizce diline yönelik algılanan dil tutumlarının daha olumlu olduğunu paylaştılar. Görüşmelere katılan 7 katılımcı, The Sims 3'teki etkinliklerden önce algılanan dil tutumlarının daha az olumlu ve hatta bazen olumsuz olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Etkinliklerin sıkıcı ve geleneksel olması nedeniyle etkinlikleri sessiz ve pasif bir şekilde tamamlamaya alışkın olduklarını öne sürmüşlerdir. Hatta birkaç katılımcı, The Sims 3'ü derslerine entegre etmeden önce İngilizce derslerinden nefret ettiklerini bile öne sürmüşlerdir.

Görüşmelere ve sınıf içi gözlemlere göre, katılımcılar, The Sims 3 etkinliklerinin, her zaman dil unsurlarını ezberleyerek tamamlamaya alıştıkları geleneksel etkinliklere

kıyasla genel olarak daha faydalı, eğlenceli ve daha olumlu olduğuna inanmışlardır; böylece, The Sims 3'ün normal İngilizce derslerine entegre edilmesinden sonra algılanan dil tutumları olumlu yönde etkilenmiştir. Katılımcılar ayrıca The Sims 3'ün kendilerini İngilizce derslerindeki etkinliklere katılmaya daha istekli hale getirdiğini ve algılanan dil tutumlarındaki olumlu değişikliği gösterdiğini belirtmişlerdir. Son olarak, algılanan dil tutumları üzerindeki olumlu etkisi sayesinde The Sims 3'ün gelecek dönemlerdeki olası entegrasyonunu destekleyeceklerini belirtmişlerdir. Katılımcılar The Sims 3'e benzeyecek başka açık dünya ve yaratıcılık temelli oyunlarının da İngilizce derslerine entegre edilmesini isteyeceklerini öne sürmüş ve Minecraft, Red Dead Redemption ve GTA gibi oyun örnekleri vermişlerdir. Sonuç olarak katılımcılar The Sims 3'ün İngilizce derslerine entegre edilmesinden memnun olduklarını, bu sayede algılanan motivasyon sevilerinin ve dil tutumlarının iyi yönde etkilendiğini ve The Sims 3 üzerinden yapılan etkinliklerle ilgili olumlu görüşlere sahip olduklarını paylaşmışlardır.

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TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (**İngilizce** / English): INVESTIGATING THE INTEGRATION OF THE SIMS 3 IN AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION CONTEXT: A CASE STUDY AT A VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE**:** **Yüksek Lisans** / Master ☒ **Doktora** / PhD ☐

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