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CONFLICT MANAGEMENT  
AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION:  
TYPES OF CONFLICT CONFRONTED  
AND THE SKILLS, NEEDS,  
AND ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS IN HANDLING CONFLICTS

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AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION:  
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## **ABSTRACT**

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT  
AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION:  
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AND ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS IN HANDLING CONFLICTS

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This study examines and analyzes conflict management and effective communication from several complementary perspectives. The purpose of the study is to identify common types of conflicts that learners confront in the process of EFL learning; to examine and analyze EFL learners' own strategies to deal with conflicts based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning; to find out their needs in terms of effective communication skills necessary to manage conflicts; and to analyze their attitudes toward conflict management learning and their needs for conflict management strategies. In order to achieve this aim, a survey research is preferred and the quantitative data gathered through the questionnaires were supported with the qualitative data obtained from the interviews with participant EFL learners.

In the questionnaire, there were two parts. The first one was a demographic inventory designed to gather the demographic characteristics of the participants. In

the second part, four sub-sections were designed: (1) a rank-answer questionnaire to identify common types of conflicts that learners confront in the process of EFL learning; (2) a slightly adapted, Likert-scale questionnaire which was translated to Turkish by Gümüşeli (1994) from The Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II (ROCI II) to identify EFL learners' conflict management strategies; (3) another Likert-scale questionnaire to find out their needs in terms of effective communication skills necessary to manage conflicts; and (4) an alternative-answer questionnaire to analyze learners' attitudes toward conflict management learning and their needs for conflict management strategies. The results of these questionnaires were analyzed by SPSS 15.0. This data gathering instrument was implemented on 339 students at the Preparatory School of TOBB University of Economics and Technology. Data gathered from 171 students from the same school were used for the piloting of the study. The data gathered from 339 students at ETU Preparatory School represented the results of the main study. In analyzing the data, descriptive statistics as frequency, percent, average, and standard deviation, and inferential statistics as ANOVA was used. As the second scale of the current study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 students studying at the same university. The results of the interviews were analyzed through content analysis.

The results of the study revealed that there is a relationship between EFL learners' conflict management strategies, need for effective communication skills and their gender, scholarship status, last school graduated, and duration of study at a particular university. Additionally, the study displayed that students confront various types of conflict and they need to learn conflict management skills and effective communication skills to deal with conflicts successfully.

Keywords: conflict, conflict management, conflict management styles and strategies, effective communications skills

## ÖZ

ÇATIŞMA YÖNETİMİ  
VE ETKİLİ İLETİŞİM:  
KARŞILAŞILAN ÇATIŞMA BİÇİMLERİ;  
GEREKSİNİMLER, BECERİLER,  
VE ÖĞRENCİLERİN ÇATIŞMA YÖNETİMİNE OLAN TUTUMU

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Bu çalışma, çatışma yönetimi ve etkili iletişim konularını çeşitli açılardan ele alıp incelemektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, öğrencilerin yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenmeleri sürecinde karşılaştıkları çatışma türlerini belirlemek; İngilizce öğrenme sürecinde öğrencilerin karşılaşmış oldukları çatışmalarda kullandıkları başa çıkma yollarını çözümlenmek; çatışmalarla başa çıkmada gerekli olan etkili iletişim becerileri açısından gereksinimlerini belirlemek; ve hem çatışma yönetimi eğitime karşı olan tutumlarını hem de etkili iletişim becerilerine olan gereksinimlerini değerlendirmektir. Bu amaçları yerine getirmek için, bir anket oluşturulmuş ve bu yolla elde edilen nicel bilgiler, öğrencilerle yapılan görüşmelerle elde edilen nitel bilgilerce desteklenmiştir.

Araştırmada kullanılan anket iki bölümden oluşmaktadır. İlk bölümü katılımcıların kişisel özellikleri hakkında bilgi toplamak amacıyla oluşturulmuştur. İkinci bölüm dört alt bölümden oluşmaktadır: (1) öğrencilerin İngilizce öğrenimi sürecinde sık karşılaştıkları çatışmaları belirlemek amacıyla cevapları sıralama şeklinde hazırlanmış soru formu; (2) öğrencilerin çatışma yönetimi stratejilerini

belirlemek amacıyla, Türkçe'ye Gümüşeli tarafından çevrilmiş Rahim Örgütsel Çatışma Envanterinin Likert ölçekli uyarlanmış soru formu; (3) çatışmalarla başa çıkmada gerekli olan etkili iletişim becerileri açısından öğrencilerin gereksinimlerini ortaya çıkarmak amacıyla hazırlanan bir diğer Likert ölçekli soru formu; (4) ve öğrencilerin hem çatışma yönetimi eğitimine karşı olan tutumlarını hem de etkili iletişim becerilerine olan gereksinimlerini incelemek amacıyla hazırlanan seçmeli yanıtli soru formu. Bu anketlerin sonuçları SPSS 15.0 programı ile analiz edilmiştir. Bu ölçek, TOBB Ekonomi ve Teknoloji Üniversitesi Hazırlık Okulu'nda okuyan 339 öğrenci üzerinde uygulanmıştır. İlk aşamada bu üniversitede okuyan 171 öğrenciden toplanan veriler pilot çalışma için kullanılmıştır. Daha sonra 339 öğrenciden toplanan veriler çalışmanın asıl sonuçlarını yansıtmak amacıyla kullanılmıştır. Veri analizi için betimsel istatistik olarak sıklık, yüzde, ortalama ve standart sapma, çıkarımsal istatistik olarak ANOVA testi kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın ikinci ölçeği olan yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme sorularının yer aldığı görüşmeler aynı üniversitede okuyan 12 öğrenciye uygulanmıştır. Görüşme sonuçları içerik analizi yöntemi ile analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmanın sonuçları, öğrencilerin cinsiyet, burs durumu, en son mezun oldukları okul ve şu anki okullarındaki öğrencilik süresi ile çatışma yönetimi stratejileri ve etkili iletişim becerilerine olan gereksinimleri arasında bir ilişki olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, çalışma öğrencilerin çeşitli türde çatışmalarla karşılaştıklarını ve bu çatışmalarla başarılı bir biçimde başa çıkmak için çatışma yönetimi stratejileri ile etkili iletişim becerilerinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyduklarını göstermiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: çatışma, çatışma yönetimi, çatışma yönetimi biçimleri ve stratejileri, etkili iletişim becerileri



To my beloved wife, Özge Seçkin Polat, and my whole family  
for their perpetual belief in me...

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Presentation**

This chapter covers nine subsequent sections. The first one provides background information for the study. This section chiefly elaborates on the strategies, skills employed by learners to deal with conflicts and also the needs of both learners in respect to conflict management and studying conflicts. Following this section, the setting for the study beside the purpose and the scope are also provided. In the next section, the research questions and hypotheses are imparted. Following this, significance of the study is explained. Afterward, overview of methodology and overview of diagnostic procedures are presented. Then, limitations of the study are explained. Finally, basic terms utilized in the study are elucidated.

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Today, we inhabit a world where, if asked to continue to live or not, people would not, as long as the conditions are still the same. This statement and the reality it implies are both valid for Turkey or any other country around the world. Harris and Morrison (2003) observe that most recently, fear of war has grown because nuclear weapons threaten the very existence of human civilization and they also claim, “no longer seen as purely conflicts between autonomous nation-states, much of modern warfare exists within countries and regions and guerilla warfare and terrorist attacks portend more of the same for the immediate and long-term future” (Harris & Morrison, 2003, p. 4). Therefore, in such a world where also teaching and learning activities are carried out, it is impossible to ignore the fact that both the learners and teachers are affected by all these kinds of threat and danger.

In addition to numerous global problems occurring around the world, it is indispensable to note that individuals have problems with the ones they are in close contact with and with the environment, as well. The disagreements between and among these individuals are, as Borisoff and Victor (1989) state, broadly defined as conflicts. Furthermore, it is acknowledged by Corvette that “conflicts exist wherever and whenever there is an incompatibility of cognitions or emotions within or between individuals” (Corvette, 2006, p. 34). Corvette also adds that “it [conflict] arises in personal relationships, in business, and professional relationships, in organizations, between groups and organizations, and between nations” (Corvette, 2006, p. 34). Since the building blocks of all classrooms and all teaching and learning institutions are learners and, therefore, human-beings, it is highly assumable that such kinds of conflicts can also be observed between or among learners in all classroom settings. Therefore, inferring that conflicts are impossible to avoid both in daily and educational life of learners, they need to be equipped with certain strategies, skills to cope with conflicts and carry out conflict management successfully and confidently. Otherwise, as Corvette mentions, “conflict unconflicted may lead to partial or complete disintegration or undesirable change through subversive acts or open demonstration of hostilities” (Corvette, 2006, p. 39). Hence it can be notable that conflict itself is unavoidable: however, there are ways to avoid the potential negative consequences of conflicts, or more positively there are also ways to transform it into opportunities for all parties.

In the abstract of their research, Çetin and Hacifazlıoğlu claim that “throughout the centuries, ‘conflict’ has been observed as a major problem in educational organisations. With the coming of the 21st century ‘conflict’ became one of the most important tools in the development of organisations when it is carefully managed” (Çetin & Hacifazlıoğlu, 2004, p. 1). In fact, most of the theorists, researchers and authors agree on the point that conflict has fairly benign and positive aspects when confronted competently, even though the classical viewpoint is “conflict is a battle to win or an encounter to avoid” (Borisoff & Victor, 1989, p. xiii)

or, as stated by Çetin and Hacifazlıođlu in their research, “conflict produced inefficiency and was therefore undesirable, even detrimental to the organization and should be eliminated or at least minimised to the extent possible” (Çetin & Hacifazlıođlu, 2004, p. 2).

Recognizing the fact that conflicts are an inseparable part of human life and considering the tendency that conflicts can be utilized for a positive and constructive end, the task seems to be on all educators’ and teachers’ shoulder since all learners who have a potential to have conflicts between or among each other are not readily equipped with suggested skills and strategies to manage a conflict. At this point, the idea that should be kept in mind is "students do not come to school with all the social skills they need to collaborate effectively with others. Therefore, teachers need to teach the appropriate communication, leadership, trust, decision making, and conflict management skills to students and provide the motivation to use these skills in order for groups to function effectively" (Johnson & Holubec, 1986). Furthermore, Harris and Morrison state, “teachers at all levels can contribute both by helping their students understand and deal creatively with the consequences of violent human behavior and by teaching them how to be peacemakers” (Harris & Morrison, 2003, p. 5).

As it is mentioned above, the responsibility in a classroom setting to provide learners with basic skills, strategies and also to alter the learners’ attitudes toward conflicts is on teachers’ shoulder, and this can be carried out either by the self-struggles of a teacher or by clearly defining the content in an overall curriculum. In order for this task to be achieved and feasible, teachers should be equipped with all those skills and strategies to deal with conflicts and they should have a certain way of attitude toward conflict management since “securing peace will require knowledge, changing attitudes, new ways of behaving, skills for managing conflict, and political change” (Harris & Morrison, 2003, p. 5). During this process, teachers should be supported by related parties as well due to the fact that, as also mentioned above, how conflicts are confronted is very vital to have benign results. Çetin and Hacifazlıođlu

state, “whether or not conflict benefits academics and colleges depends on two factors: first one is the intensity of the conflict and the other is the way conflict is managed” (Çetin and Hacızanlıoğlu, 2004, p. 2). On this topic, Froyd states, “faculty members should help students develop their conflict management skills. Most people do not resolve conflicts because they either have a faulty skill set and/or because they do not know the organization’s policy on conflict management” (Froyd, 2002). Therefore, to transform conflicts into something enriching and positive, teachers should be well-equipped, and both their institutions and also teachers themselves should have a certain viewpoint and attitude during this process.

As it is also mentioned above, what to teach specifically and how to equip learners with certain skills and strategies are some significant issues to be considered. Harris and Morrison suggest, “conflict-resolution educators teach children basic skills such as anger management, impulse control, emotional awareness, empathy development, assertiveness, and problem solving skills” (Harris & Morrison, 2003, p. 72). Harris and Morrison (2003) also state that teaching students to be peacemakers involves creating a cooperative climate that encourages disputants to reach mutually acceptable compromises and do not dominate each other.

In addition to what have been mentioned so far, the affective domain, attitudes, and also the needs of the learners are some other important components of conflict management and how to transform a conflict into cooperation and therefore, productivity. Ernest Hilgard, well-known for his study of human learning and cognition, once noted that “purely cognitive theories of learning will be rejected unless a role is assigned to affectivity (cited in Brown, 2000, p. 142). Therefore, it is highly vital to be aware of the viewpoints and attitudes of learners so that their specific needs and skills can be identified. Above, we have mentioned that students bring different ideas, goals, values, beliefs and needs to their teams. At this point Froyd states “these same differences inevitably lead to conflict [which] is inevitable” and adds that one of the ways in which faculty members can help students improve their abilities to function on multidisciplinary teams is to work with them to develop



their understanding of conflict and their capabilities to manage and resolve conflict (Froyd, 2002). Attitude and how an individual perceives a situation or another individual seem to be at the very base of conflict management because “as individuals, we develop perceptions about ourselves and form opinions about others (Borisoff & Victor, 1989, p. 11). Therefore, teachers or faculty members should be aware of the fact that “to deal effectively and productively with others, it is essential to suspend stereotyped assumptions and to enter into an encounter with an attitude of open-mindedness and willingness to evaluate the communicative behavior of the other party when it occurs” (Borisoff & Victor, 1989, p. 11). In addition to what is formerly mentioned about skills, strategies and ways of conflict management, teachers should also feel responsible for analyzing the viewpoints and attributions of learners and the former should try to enable the latter gain a positive and productive attitude toward how to deal with conflicts regardless of other biases or stereotypes. As a result, learners’ needs for necessary skills and strategies can be recognized and realized.

## **1.2 Setting for the Study**

The preparatory school of TOBB University of Economics and Technology (ETU) is a division of the Department of Foreign Languages and Foreign Language Education that gives general, academic and TOEFL based instruction for a year. Students upon taking Student Selection Examination (Öğrenci Seçme Sınavı: ÖSS) prepared and carried out by the Student Selection and Placement Centre (Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleştirme Merkezi: ÖSYM) can have the right to enroll in an undergraduate program based on their grade for the exam. After enrollment, every student takes a preliminary exam, ETU Proficiency Test and then the TOEFL ITP which is both an achievement and placement test and it measures the participants’ general English language proficiency. The students who are not eligible to get a certain score in the exam are placed into the preparatory school according to the score they get in the exam. Students are placed into three levels as A, B, and C according to

their language proficiency. C, showing the highest level of proficiency can be parallel to intermediate level of language proficiency, while B level is parallel to pre-intermediate and A to beginner level of language proficiency. Therefore, the classes are highly homogenous and both workload and pacing are balanced. There is no other general proficiency test for A and B levels, and they continue to study preparatory class for the whole academic year composed of three semesters, while C level students have the opportunity to take another proficiency test upon completing the first semester, and so they may register for the courses in their own departments for the following term, but as an irregular student. If they fail to pass the exam, they continue to study at preparatory school as B level students. Unless the students, upon completing the whole academic year of study at preparatory school are eligible to get a certain grade in TOEFL ITP, they must continue to study the same course books and curriculum for another year as C level students. Moreover, if they fail again to pass the TOEFL ITP at the end of the first term in their second year, they need to continue to study at preparatory school as B level students studying the same course books and following the same curriculum. At the end of the second year, even if they still fail to get the minimum grade, students can register for their departmental courses on the condition that they will take the TOEFL ITP again to get the minimum grade.

As a result of the highly intensive foreign language teaching curriculum and the long procedure to pass the preparatory class, they may have lots of problems and conflicts since they need to study the same course books and topics over and over again, and also they need to follow a strict program to be eligible to pass the TOEFL ITP and so the preparatory class.

### **1.3 Purpose and the Scope of the Study**

Considering the setting for the study elaborated in the previous section, as a microcosm of a society or the world, classroom settings can be regarded as environments that are highly sensitive to conflicts; therefore, learners should be

provided with skills and strategies necessary to handle such problems in order that it may not harm the friendly atmosphere, communicative environment, and the interpersonal communication process in EFL classrooms. When successfully managed, conflicts can enhance learning, while unsettled or unsuccessfully managed conflicts can harm all positive aspects or situations that can be created in an effective EFL classroom where cooperation, non-violent self expression, tolerance, cross-cultural understanding, and interpersonal communication skills can be encouraged.

The purpose of this study is to identify common types of conflicts that learners confront in the process of EFL learning; to examine and analyze EFL learners' own strategies to deal with conflicts based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning; to find out their needs in terms of effective communication skills necessary to manage conflicts; and to analyze their attitudes toward conflict management learning and their needs for conflict management strategies.

First of all, the study aims to find out what kind of strategies EFL learners normally use in order to cope with kinds of conflict they face, especially in terms of different skills of conflict management. This will provide information about learners and their strategies to deal with conflict which can enhance or inhibit their success in learning English language and their attitudes toward learning English. Besides, the study also examines what kind of needs learners have in order to manage conflicts. This will give information about the points and skills learners lack in general in respect to conflict management. Then, the study analyzes the common types of conflicts and problems that learners are faced with and that are meant to be overcome in the process of EFL learning. Additionally, the study examines and identifies the attitudes and opinions of the learners toward teaching and learning of conflict management strategies and effective communication skills. This will provide information about how learners view and what they think about conflict management and effective communication skills in classrooms. Finally, when conflicts are provided within the methodological framework designed by the teacher in the form of

tasks and activities in a classroom setting and when learners struggle to solve these conflicts, it is highly possible that they need to use some language skills to manage these conflicts. Therefore, based on the findings in this study, it is possible to conclude whether conflict and conflict management can be integrated into EFL curriculum as a subject since the study aims to provide us with learners' needs for conflict management skills and strategies.

Therefore, it is possible to state that this study can serve two separate but related ends. Its findings can be used not only to understand learners' strategies, needs for conflict management in addition to types of conflict they commonly confront with, but also to provide content for EFL classes in the form of dilemmas in order to develop their cognitive levels and language skills. In practical sense, learners can both learn some certain skills and strategies to cope with potential conflicts in either their personal or academic life, and they can also apply these strategies and skills into some conflicts and dilemmas provided by the teacher so that they develop both their language skills and cognitive skills.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

Based on all research and studies done on conflict management; skills and strategies of how to deal with conflicts; the needs of individuals in respect to conflicts and conflict management; and common types of conflict confronted in or outside the classroom, especially during the process of learning English, this study aims to answer the following research questions. The first set of questions is about EFL learners' own strategies in dealing with conflicts, while the second set is on learners' needs to deal with conflicts and the final set is on common types of conflicts confronted by learners.

1. What are the most common types of conflict that students confront in the process of EFL learning?
2. What are EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts and the frequency of each particular need?

3. What are the most common strategies used by EFL learners in dealing with conflicts among peers based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning and communication in real life?
4. Do conflict management strategies of learners differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners based on how it is perceived?
  - a. Is there any significant difference between male and female learners in terms of conflict management strategies?
  - b. Is there any significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of conflict management strategies?
  - c. Does the high school attended affect the kinds of strategies that students benefit to manage conflicts?
  - d. Does duration of study at a particular university affect the kinds of strategies used to manage conflicts?
5. Do EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners?
  - a. Is there any significant difference between male and female learners in terms of the needs for effective communication skills?
  - b. Is there any significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills?
  - c. Does the high school attended affect the learners' needs for effective communication skills?
  - d. Does duration of study at a particular university affect the learners' needs for effective communication skills?
6. What are EFL learners' attitudes toward teaching and learning conflict management strategies and toward effective communication skills?

## 1.5 Hypotheses

The hypotheses for the research questions are:

1. Conflict management strategies of learners usually differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learner.
  - a. There is a significant difference between male and female learners in terms of conflict management strategies.  
Ho. There is no significant difference between male and female learners in terms of conflict management strategies.
  - b. There is a significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of conflict management strategies.  
Ho. There is no significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of conflict management strategies.
  - c. The high school attended mostly affects the kinds of strategies that student benefit from to manage conflicts.  
Ho. The high school attended does not affect the kinds of strategies that student benefit from to manage conflicts.
  - d. The duration of study at a particular university mostly affects the kinds of strategies used to manage conflicts?  
Ho. The duration of study at a particular university does not affect the kinds of strategies used to manage conflicts?
  
2. The EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners.
  - a. There is a significant difference between male and female learners in terms of the needs for effective communication skills.  
Ho. There is no significant difference between male and female learners in terms of the needs for effective communication skills.
  - b. There is a significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills.

- H<sub>0</sub>. There is no significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills.
- c. The high school attended affects the EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills.
- H<sub>0</sub>. The high school attended does not affect the EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills.
- d. The duration of study at a particular university affects the needs for effective communication skills.
- H<sub>0</sub>. The duration of study at a particular university does not affect the needs for effective communication skills.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study aims to identify the most common conflict management strategies used by the EFL students both in and outside the classrooms. This is the first study being done in order to analyze EFL learners' strategies, skills and needs about conflict management. Numerous studies have investigated conflicts and conflict management in organizations. However, a very limited number have been devoted to educational organizations. Since there have been no studies in Turkey, that investigate the conflict management strategies of EFL learners, this study has been designed to describe the conflict management strategies of EFL learners at a higher education institution, and the study presents a socio-psychological and behavioral perspective which would enhance the scope of the studies conducted to understand the nature of conflicts in EFL classrooms and learners' own strategies, needs and common types of conflict confronted by the learners.

Initially, examining the strategies utilized by EFL learners to deal with conflicts both in and outside the classroom, the study supplies a genuine perspective for EFL researchers and English teachers. Knowing what kind of strategies EFL learners benefit from while dealing with conflicts helps researchers to conduct further research on learners' behavioral patterns and how they are assumed to behave in

certain situations. It further helps teachers to understand and interpret learners' behavior in or outside the classroom. By means of this information, it is also possible to avoid potential misunderstandings between students and teachers. This research is the first study that focuses on conflict management and related skills and strategies utilized by EFL learners in and outside EFL classrooms. Since the research aims to reveal EFL learners' strategies, needs and attitudes in terms of conflicts and certain skills of conflict management, it would offer broader understanding of the behaviors, behavioral patterns and other factors that have an important effect on the success and performance of EFL learners.

Another significance of the study is that it may guide the English language teachers and curriculum developers to review and revise what to include in their curriculum and syllabus. Besides, it can provide teachers with the idea of what learners need and to what degree they meet learners' expectation in terms of issues which are not directly related to learning or teaching English.

The other significance is that conflicts and conflict management will be taken more seriously, especially by EFL teachers and program developers, since it is strongly argued to be an inevitable part of learners' and all human-beings' lives. Although conflict management is seriously taken into consideration and a wide variety of studies are conducted in various fields such as business administration and organizational behavior, it is not taken into consideration in the EFL setting. Then, by means of this study, its vitality will be recognized in the EFL settings and this study will give way to further studies.

Additionally, as mentioned in previous sections, in an age when conflicts arise among people more than ever and when conflict management is viewed from a different and positive perspective in contrast to the classical view that conflict is always harmful for organizations, this study and its findings aim to provide content for EFL curriculum. Findings of this study can bear valuable results pertaining to what extent learners need to learn about conflict management. These findings and recent developments in the literature related to conflict management both in EFL and



related fields can provide us with the idea of how and to what extent curriculum developers can integrate these topics into language teaching curricula. Therefore, it is obvious that there is a need in the EFL setting to integrate the data related to conflict and conflict management so that learners can develop both their language and personal skills. This will also create an opportunity for us to integrate real life situations into our curriculum.

Finally, the outcomes of the study can be implemented in the EFL situation and also in various language learning settings such as colleges, universities, high schools where the human factor plays an important role and where social interaction takes place.

## **1.7 Overview of Methodology**

### **1.7.1 Procedures**

As a common research method, survey technique is used in this study. According to McKay (2005) survey is the most controlled and structured method which is sandwiched between statistical experimental research and qualitative research because survey research can use both statistical and qualitative analysis. As a form of survey research, close-ended questions in the formats of (1) alternative answer in which students have to select from one of the several options such as yes or no, (2) Likert scale in which participants are asked to select one of several categories by checking their response, and (3) rank answers in which participants are asked to rank among some choices (McKay, 2005). Besides, an interview following the questionnaire for a sample group of participants is preferred in order to, as McKay (2005) suggests, find out more about the participants' reported behavior or their responses.

The purpose of this study is to identify common types of conflicts that learners confront in the process of EFL learning; to examine and analyze EFL learners' own strategies to deal with conflicts based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning; to find out their needs in terms of effective

communication skills necessary to manage conflicts; and to analyze their attitudes toward conflict management learning and their needs for conflict management strategies. In order to achieve this aim, a survey research is preferred and the quantitative data gathered through the questionnaires were supported with the qualitative data obtained from the interviews with EFL learners.

In the questionnaire, there were two parts the first of which was a demographic inventory designed to gather the demographic characteristics of the participants. In the second part, four sub-sections were designed: (1) a rank-answer questionnaire to identify common types of conflicts that learners confront in the process of EFL learning; (2) a slightly adapted, Likert-scale questionnaire which was translated to Turkish by Gümüşeli (1994) from The Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II (ROCI II) to identify EFL learners' conflict management strategies; (3) another Likert-scale questionnaire to find out learners' needs in terms of effective communications skills necessary to manage conflicts; and (4) an alternative-answer questionnaire to analyze learners' attitudes toward conflict management learning and their needs for conflict management strategies.

The questionnaire results were supported with an interview consisting of a number of questions. The interview was developed to support the findings from questionnaires more and unearth the points that might not have been touched upon in the latter. The interviewees were chosen according to quota sampling in which the researcher decides on a quota for each category samples. In the current study, it was determined to have 6 male (3 from A level and 3 from B level program) and 6 female subjects (3 from A level and 3 from B level program). The subjects (n=12) were distributed equally considering A and B levels; males and females; and subjects' level of achievement. Each subject represents a male or female, A level or B level, and a high, average, or low level of achievement. The interviews were conducted in Turkish, the native tongue of the participants, in order to help them express themselves better.

### **1.7.2 Participants**

The students participating in this present study (N=327) were all students at TOBB University of Economics and Technology at the department of Foreign Languages Education during their first or second year upon their enrollment in the university just after the university entrance examination (OSS).

For this study, TOBB University of Economics and Technology, the Department of Foreign Language was selected since the curriculum is very intensive covering a very long process of forty weeks and the students do not seem content with this intensity. The survey was conducted during the last term when breakdowns, physical or emotional, begin to appear among students and when conflicts arise more than the two previous terms.

All the students participating in the study and studying at the preparatory program were from Turkey and Turkish is their mother tongue. Therefore, the language used both in the questionnaire and in the interview was Turkish. The proportion of female participants is smaller than the male samples and that reflects the general distribution in the department.

### **1.7.3 Analytical Procedures**

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed through statistical software packages (mainly SPSS) and the results of the interview were analyzed through content analysis.

## **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

The study was carried out in the third semester of 2008-2009 academic year and only B and A level of students participated in the study at TOBB ETU Department of Foreign Languages. However, the results of the study would be more effective if it had been conducted for C level classes that tend to have much more conflicts than A or B level classes since C level classes have to continue to study the same course books and curriculum for another year unless they, upon completing the

whole academic year of study at preparatory school, are eligible to get a certain grade in TOEFL ITP. However, some of the C level classes need to continue to study at preparatory school as B level students if they fail again to pass the TOEFL ITP at the end of the first term in their second year. Therefore, the study could not be carried out with some of these C level classes.

Additionally, the study was conducted for over a few hundred students at TOBB ETU. It would have presented much more comprehensive and general results had it been carried out in the preparatory classes of other local universities.

## **1.9 Definition of Terms**

### **1.9.1 Conflict**

Conflict is a serious disagreement and argument about something; a state of mind in which you find it impossible to make a decision; a serious difference between two or more beliefs, ideas, or interests (Collins Cobuild Essential English Dictionary, 1990). Although there exist numerous definitions for conflict (which is understandable, since disputes exist on a continuum ranging from interpersonal situations to international crises), many of the components of the definition remain constant (Domenici & Littlejohn, 2001). Joyce Hocker and William Wilmot (2001) see conflict as: “an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals” (cited in Domenici & Littlejohn, 2001, p.9).

### **1.9.2 Conflict Management**

Conflict Management is the ability to manage conflict effectively; conflict management refers to the modes used by either or both parties to cope with a conflict (Gordon, 2003).

### **1.9.3 Conflict Management Strategy**

Conflict management strategy refers to the behaviour participants display when in conflict (Balay, 2006).

### **1.9.4 Competition**

Competition covers such approaches to conflict which often involve highly assertive or aggressive individuals who see conflict as a win/lose situation (Domenici & Littlejohn, 2001). Competing behavior reflects the extreme example of concern for one's needs at the expense of the other party and it is identified with win-lose behavior (Borisoff & Victor, 1989).

### **1.9.5 Collaboration**

Collaboration is a strategy of conflict management that aims to produce a win/win situation and it requires a commitment from each side-a desire to work together and to produce a solution that is mutually acceptable (Domenici & Littlejohn, 2001). Collaboration is the conflict-handling behavior that requires a high level of both assertiveness and cooperation and it is also recognized as a win-win behavior (Borisoff & Victor, 1989).

### **1.9.6 Avoidance**

Avoidance is the strategy of being unwilling or unable to face the situation, so the individuals "vacate" physically, verbally, or nonverbally (Domenici & Littlejohn, 2001). Avoidance is identified with withdrawal from or denial of a problem or conflict (Borisoff & Victor, 1989).

### **1.9.7 Accommodation**

Accommodation is the strategy by which individuals put another person's needs or desires ahead of their own and fail to assert themselves by always giving in (Domenici & Littlejohn, 2001). Accommodation reflects the highest degree of

cooperation on the part of one of the parties but lowest amount of assertiveness (Borisoff & Victor, 1989).

### **1.9.8 Compromise**

Compromise means that, when two parties meet halfway in negotiation, both give up something they want or need and meet somewhere in the middle (Domenici & Littlejohn, 2001). Compromise is considered the middle-ground position on the conflict grid, and certainly it is one of the easier tactics to employ (Borisoff & Victor, 1989).

### **1.9.9 Assertiveness**

Counseling Center at University of Illinois (2007) define assertiveness as the ability to express oneself openly and honestly while also reflecting a genuine concern for others. It is about having the confidence to be oneself, to be true to one's values and beliefs, and to be courageous enough to speak up when needed. Assertiveness is a pertinent verbal skill necessary for good communication and conflict management, but it relies on others having active listening skills (Longaretti & English, 2008).

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **2.0. Presentation**

In this chapter, a review of literature is presented. A survey of more recent literature and studies of conflicts, educational conflicts, conflict styles and strategies, conflict management and conflicts in EFL classrooms will be reviewed and a general overview of learners' styles and strategies of conflict management will be provided.

In the first part of the literature review, current studies on communication and effective communication skills will be focused on and the results of such parallel studies will be put forward.

In the second part, the focus is on conflict and definitions, nature, types, sources and stages of conflicts in general.

In the last part, conflict management behaviors, styles and strategies will be identified and the ones used for this study will be defined.

#### **2.1. Communication**

The ability to communicate is the primary factor that distinguishes human beings from animals. And it is the ability to communicate well that distinguishes one individual from another. Communication is an area often taken for granted. We, as Longaretti and English (2008) claim, tend to assume that being able to speak automatically implies communication, but this is not always the case. Communication is essential for negotiation success. What you say must be understood as you intend it to be effective, as Corvette (2007) puts forward. Accordingly, saying the right things in the right ways is necessary for the message to be understood and hearing the other parties is necessary for saying the right thing at the right time.

### **2.1.1. Definitions for Communication and Communication Process**

Communication is a two-way process (Longaretti & English, 2008) and it is defined as the effective transfer of intended meaning (Corvette, 2007). Corvette adds that if the transfer falls short of that, it is just noise.

Communication is a complex process involving two or more people with their respective perspectives, representing their values, beliefs, assumptions, needs and various levels (cultural, spiritual and family), backgrounds, expectations, interpretations, experiences, and both past and present thoughts, feelings and behaviors (Long, 1996)

A way in which communication researchers have traditionally viewed communication is to define it as a process of sending and receiving messages (Cahn & Abigail, 2007). The process of communication may be analyzed in steps (see Figure 2.1.). A message flows through the following steps of sub-processes: the source, encoding, the channel, decoding, and the receiver (Berlo, 1960). Corvette (2007) explains that the source is the person who originates the message; encoding is structuring the message according to an understanding; the channel is the medium through which the message is sent; decoding is the receiver's interpretation and understanding of the message. Additionally, much purported communications stop here, and in order to ensure that communication has, in fact, occurred, one more step is needed: feedback (Corvette, 2007).



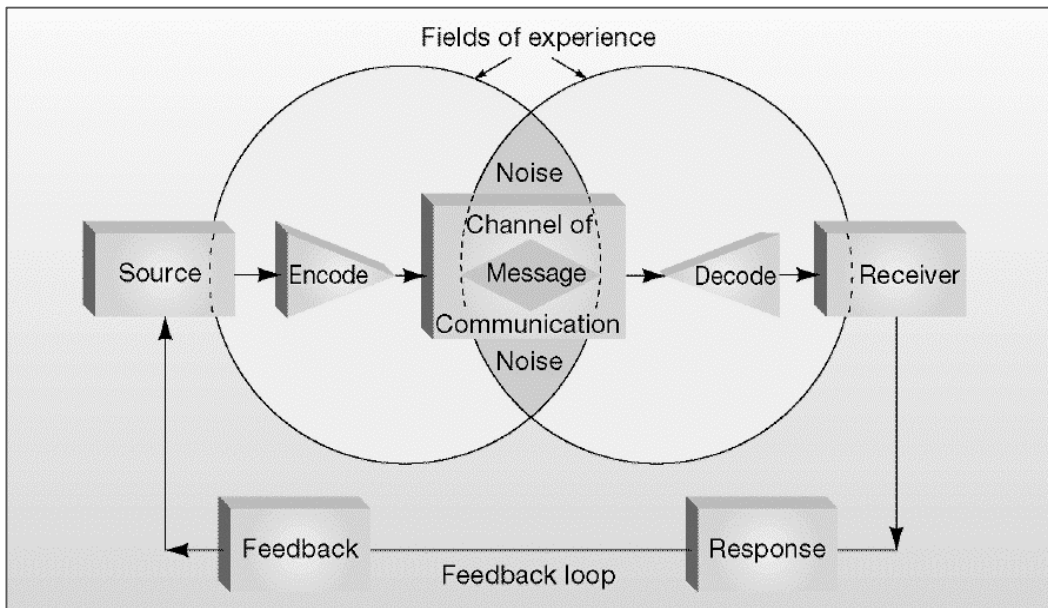


Figure 2.1 The communication process

### 2.1.2. Communication Models

Focusing on message senders or message receivers is a way of studying communication. This orientation to communication has been called the linear model of communication, because it focuses on the sequential production of messages with either the senders as the starting point or the receivers as the end point (Cahn & Abigail, 2007). On the other hand, it is also more common today to talk about communication as a process by which people make or create meaning together, which is commonly called the transactional model of communication.

### 2.1.3. Forms of Communication

Messages can be sent in a number of forms. They can also be received and understood in different ways. The two main forms of messages, as explained by Longaretti and English (2008), are verbal and non-verbal communication. Verbal communication is one way for people to communicate face-to-face and some of the key components of verbal communication are sound, words, speaking, and language,

while non-verbal communication is any form of communication that involves the display of expressions and behaviors or cues. As also explained by Long (1996), verbal communication is based on words and common mechanisms of verbal communication are statements and questions. As listed by Longaretti and English (2008), non-verbal communication is important and some cues may include physical movements such as gestures and distance, physical characteristics such as blushing, facial expressions such as smiles and frowns, and voice-related behavior such as tone, pitch and pauses.

#### **2.1.4. Effective Communication and Communications Skills**

Effective conversation (communication) is a conversation in which no one gets confused by the other person's meaning. When people (both the speaker or the listener) don't use proper communication skills, the other person can be unsure of the speaker's meaning. There can be many reasons for not understanding their meaning. As categorized by Corvette (2007), principles of effective communication are divided into four general categories: (1) listening, (2) speaking, (3) filtering, and (4) watching. Corvette explains that the first two are important regardless of who is on the other side of the communication process, while the latter two are particularly important when the one with whom we are communicating is the least like us.

According to Long (1996), communication effectiveness is determined relative to communication goals. There are three basic types of communication goals, which are: (1) to express, (2) to understand, and (3) to facilitate understanding.

Kohlrieser (2007) puts forward that the more effectively we communicate our differences and our areas of agreement, the better we will understand each other's concerns and improve our chances of reaching a mutually acceptable agreement. Considering this close relationship between conflict management and effective communication, some effective communication skills are listed below.

#### **2.1.4.1. Active Listening**

Active listening is an attempt to truly understand the content and emotion of what the other person is saying by paying attention to verbal and non-verbal messages. The task is to focus, hear, respect and communicate your desire to understand. This is not the time to be planning a response or conveying how you feel. Active listening involves a number of components, and these components can be divided into three broad categories (Longaretti & English, 2008). These are attending skills, following skills and reflecting skills. Attending skills can be defined as appropriate non-verbal skills such as facial expressions and tone; appropriate environment, physical and psychological orientations to others such as eye contact, body orientation and appropriate distance; and finally minimizing distractions. Secondly, following skills can be defined as non-advice giving, minimal encouragement and minimal speaking or questioning. Reflecting skills can be defined as clarifying, reflective responses, paraphrasing, and summarizing (Longaretti & English, 2008).

#### **2.1.4.2. Empathy**

According to Berger (1987), empathy is the capacity to know emotionally what another is experiencing from within the frame of reference of that other person, the capacity to sample the feelings of another or to put oneself in another's shoes. Empathy, according to Long, is other-understanding, which implies that we can be effective only when we are able to comprehend and respect the other's context and point of view in all manifestations rather than insisting on our own. Rosenberg (2003) expresses that when having been listened to and when having been heard, it is possible to perceive the world in a new way and to go on. Additionally it is astonishing that, via empathy, how elements that seem insoluble become soluble when one listens, how confusions that seem irremediable turn into relatively clear flowing streams when one is heard.

#### **2.1.4.3. Non-violent self expression**

Nonviolent communication (NVC) is a process developed by Marshall Rosenberg (2003) and others. People use NVC to communicate with greater compassion and clarity. It focuses on two things: honest self-expression — exposing what matters to oneself in a way that's likely to inspire compassion in others, and empathy — listening with deep compassion. Formal NVC self-expression includes four elements: observations (distinguished from interpretations/evaluations), feelings (emotions separate from thoughts), needs (deep motives) and requests (clear, present, doable, and without demand) (Rosenberg, 2003). It is also added that a key principle of NVC that supports this is the capacity to express oneself without use of good/bad, right/wrong judgment, hence the emphasis on expressing feelings and needs, instead of criticisms or judgments.

#### **2.1.4.4. Cooperation/Cooperative Negotiation**

Cooperation is the process of working or acting together, which can be accomplished by both intentional and non-intentional agents. Cooperative negotiation is an integrative form that combines formal bargaining techniques with many skills taught in basic interpersonal communication courses such as effective listening, assertiveness, supportive communication, and collaboration (Cahn & Abigail, 2007). Cooperative negotiation, as Abigail and Cahn add, works best when parties trust each other and the situations is one where mutually satisfactory outcomes are possible.

#### **2.1.4.5. Decision-making and Creativity**

Conventional approaches to decision making focus on generating and evaluating alternatives. According to Keeney (1994), however, alternatives are relevant only as means to achieve values and values, not alternatives, should be the primary focus of decision making. Value-focused thinking involves clearly defining and structuring your fundamental values in terms of objectives and using these objectives to guide and integrate decision making. Keeney (1994) explains that values

are principles for evaluating the desirability of any possible alternatives or consequences and these define all that you care about in a specific decision situation (See Figure 2.2.).

While giving a decision or proposing an idea, participants may take different values by considering the situation and the environment they are in. According to Keeney (1992), as illustrated in Figure 2.2., the general principle of thinking about values is to discover the reasoning for each objective and how it relates to other objectives. Values are identified by the responses to a large number of questions about the meaning of and reasoning for objectives and each response can be considered to be a ‘value bit’ of information useful in guiding value-focused thinking.

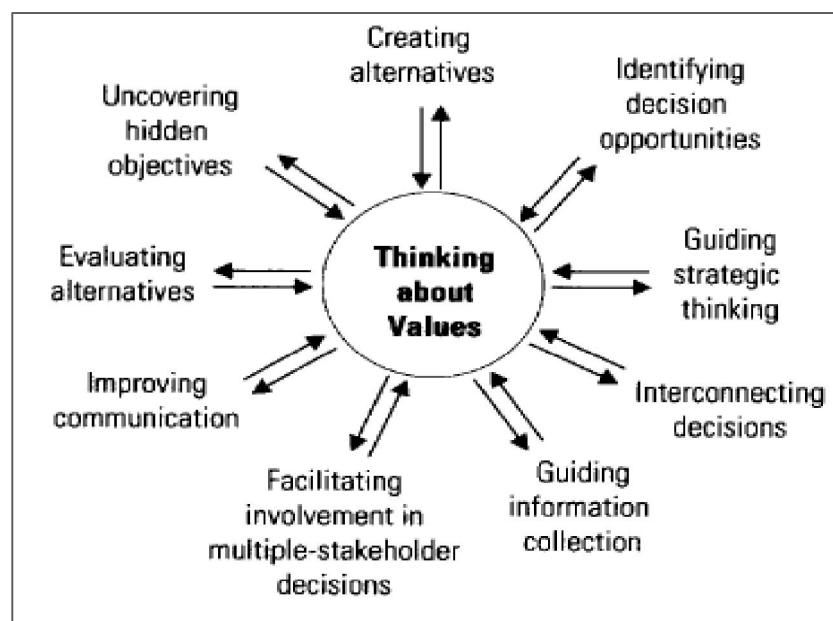


Figure 2.2 Thinking about values: The basis for the quality decision Making Source: Keeney, 1994

#### 2.1.4.6. Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a process that requires one to list all possible solutions, irrespective of their initial feasibility. Not all the options are workable, but when one

has examined all the possible solutions that could be thought of or considered, it is easier to focus on one (Abigail & Cahn, 2007).

#### **2.1.4.7. Problem-solving**

Problem solving is a fun and effective way to explore strategies for resolving conflict (Longaretti & English, 2008). The name "problem-solving" is assigned to learning approaches based upon the scientific method of inquiry. These approaches are built upon John Dewey's five steps of general problem-solving: (1) defining the problem, (2) formulating tentative hypotheses, (3) collecting, evaluating, organizing, and interpreting data, (4) reaching conclusions, and (5) testing those conclusions (Jones, 1994). Another five-step problem solving strategy, outlined by Longaretti and English (2008), suggests five sequential steps: (1) define the problem, (2) respect and understand other's perspectives, (3) assert views and feelings, (4) brainstorm solutions, and (5) select a solution and take action. Jones (1994) claims that problem-solving moves the mind to some of its highest cognitive functions: analyzing, generalizing, and synthesizing. Longaretti and English (2008) add that for effective problem solving, it is important that individuals should understand the procedure, and are skilled in active listening, clarifying the issue and brainstorming.

When students are specifically taught strategies and skills for developing effective communication and conflict management, they are better prepared to deal with real-life problems (Longaretti & English, 2008).

## **2.2. Conflict**

In comparison to other scholarly research, conflict research is still relatively young. The serious study of conflict can be traced back to the 1950s (Coser, 1956). Although it grew exponentially in the 1970s, there have still only been small amounts of systematic research conducted in this area and few of the conflict theories that have been proposed have actually been tested (Borisoff & Victor, 1998). Additionally, examinations of conflict within the context of communication have

been sparse. Nonetheless, conflict is pervasive and inevitable (Putnam & Poole, 1987; Roloff, 1987; Witteman, 1992), although the volume of research conducted does not represent the rate at which conflict penetrates people's lives. At times, conflict may be more frequent than peace and tranquility in relationships (Sprey, 1969).

According to Hocker (1986) conflict is especially pervasive in the classroom setting. A student and teacher may enter into conflict over many classroom issues such as how a paper has been graded, whether an attendance policy is fair, or whether a teacher is presenting course material in an adequate manner (Bowman, 2007). Bowman (2007) also explains that examining the process a student goes through to obtain that education is worth studying especially when some of the process includes conflict with teachers since there has been such importance placed on the value of education. Branson (1972) claims that when asked to describe the most negative experiences in their lives, one-third of people mentioned negative interpersonal relations or conflicts with teachers (cited in Bowman, 2007). This demonstrates that classroom conflicts have a lasting impact on students.

Moreover, Jamieson and Thomas (1974) inform that students report having more personal involvement in their conflicts with teachers than teachers do. To illustrate, Bowman (2003) explains this information with a sample case:

Imagine that a student approaches a teacher about a grade on a paper or test. The teacher calmly explains how the paper was graded and why the grade was reported as it was. At the end of the encounter, the teacher may leave feeling the issue was resolved calmly and reasonably. The student, however, could walk away fuming and feeling that the teacher is unreasonable and unfair. (p. 3)

Therefore, as Bowman (2003) further explains, knowing and understanding what conflicts are experienced by students is a first step in determining how to best manage or avoid negative conflict situations and this knowledge can aid instructors in planning course policies and preparing for interactions with students.

Another aspect of studying conflict and why conflict has a vital place in the EFL setting is that it is closely related with language and communication as discussed

in the previous section of the current chapter. Flannagan (2003) explains that it is difficult to separate language from larger categories like politics, ethnicity, and religion, which are more readily attributed root causes of conflict. Looking from a broad perspective such as this, one might wonder how the small act of language teaching, and of English teaching in particular, could have any role in spreading peace. Reagan (2002) clarifies this controversy by explaining that language teaching is a political act, and language pedagogically provides the self definitions upon which people act, negotiate various subject positions, and undertake a process of naming and renaming the relations between themselves, others, and the world. In this light, Flannagan (2003) states that English can be used as a common language through which we can understand the world critically and participate in its construction and as the current global lingua franca, English is a potential bridge between people from every culture, religion, and nation. Therefore, conflict and conflict management can be both a cause and an effective tool in the EFL setting. Due to this close relation between them, conflict is elaborated in detail in the following sections of the current chapter.

### **2.2.1. Definitions for Conflict**

Although many scholars have attempted to define conflict, Weiss and Dehle (1994) indicated that “a precise, all-purpose definition of conflict is still lacking” (p.95). There are several definitions for the term conflict (Borisoff & Victor, 1989). Coser defines conflict as “a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power, and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals” (Coser, 1956, p.8).

Conflict, which is a natural result of human communication, is generally defined also as an internal misunderstanding that occurs due to the differences in thoughts, values and feelings between two organizations or people (Marquis & Huston, 2000; Rahim et al., 2000). Cross, Names, and Beck (as cited in Borisoff & Victor, 1989, p. 1) define conflict as “differences between and among individuals.” It



is natural and unavoidable that conflict will occur in schools like it does in other work environments (Miklas & Kleiner, 2003; Çetin & Hacifazlıoğlu, 2004). As stated by many authors, conflict is part of human existence. Where individuals or groups with incompatible goals, values and perceptions are simultaneously competing for scarce resources and/or opportunities in order to achieve their goals, conflict is likely to emerge (Bondesio, 1992). Just as conflict can occur in schools between students and faculty management, between students and managers, and between faculty management and instructors, it can also occur between students and instructors as well (Miklas & Kleiner, 2003). Conflicts between faculty management and students have a different significance because of the basic relationship that is formed in the teaching center of student–faculty relationships and because the results of these relationships have a direct effect on student outcomes (Gillespie, 2004; Ang, 2005; Frymier & Houser, 2000).

As stated earlier in this chapter, “a precise, all-purpose definition of conflict is still lacking” (Weiss & Dehle, 1994 p. 95), but “the common elements to these definitions include the following terms: *differences, expressed struggle, incompatible, frustration, interference, perception, and interdependence*” (Borisoff & Victor, 1989, p. 2).

### **2.2.2. Conflict vs. Problem and Competition**

O’Connell (1971) states that definitions of conflict have been either ignored or stated in exceedingly vague terms. Such vagueness makes comparison of different research difficult. Efforts to develop a comprehensive typology of lateral conflict, while necessary, cannot be substituted for strivings to develop rigorous conceptual and operational definitions of conflict and its associated key variables. Pondy (1967) suggests this:

The term "conflict" has been used at one time or another in the literature to describe: (1) antecedent conditions (for example, scarcity of resources, policy differences) of conflictful behavior, (2) affective states (e.g., stress, tension, hostility, anxiety, etc.) of the individual involved, (3) cognitive states of

individuals, (i.e., their perception or awareness of conflictful situations, and (4) conflictful behavior, ranging from passive resistance to overt aggression (p. 298).

Since it is actually difficult to come up with a clear definition and a criterion for conflict, it has been confused with concepts such as competition and problem. Regarding the confusion between conflict and competition, competition in its broadest sense exists when any potential positions of two behavior units are mutually incompatible. This is a broader concept than conflict. Boulding (1962) explains that whereas all cases of conflict involve competition in the above sense not all cases of competition involve conflict.

Another concept which is frequently confused with conflict is problem. Therefore, understanding the difference between a problem and a conflict might help clarify conflict as a concept. Labres (2007) explains that problems can be solved on the spot and disappear, whereas conflicts are having deeper roots and only parts come to the surface. Labres (2007) clarifies the confusion via a story:

Husband comes home late and spills milk on the table... Wife gets angry and causes real trouble. Pretty soon it gets clear that the spilled milk is not the real reason for the conflict. There are some hidden factors, which did not show up at first sight. Compare the situation with an iceberg. Only a small part is on the surface and the major part is hidden below. If you try to solve a conflict on the visible – obvious – part you quite easy fail (p. 8)

Moreover, McNamara (2008) explains that conflict is often needed. Conflicts help to raise and address problems and energize work to be on the most appropriate issues. Additionally, conflict helps people "be real", for example, it motivates them to participate and it also helps people learn how to recognize and benefit from their differences. McNamara (2008) adds that conflict is not the same as discomfort. The conflict isn't the problem. Indeed, it is when conflict is poorly managed that is the problem. Conflict is a problem when it hampers productivity and lowers morale. It is also a problem when it leads to more and continued conflicts and when it causes inappropriate behaviors. As a result, conflicts can bear both positive and negative results, and they are an inevitable part of individuals' lives,

whereas a problem is a result of unsuccessful or ineffective settlement of a conflict and it usually has negative consequences.

### **2.2.3. Approaches to Conflict**

It is possible to talk about various types of distinctions and categorization pertaining to approaches to studying conflicts. However, according to what Lewicki and Weiss (1992) stated, within the eclectic history of conflict research one can find at least six major approaches, each subsuming a number of theories and models. These approaches may be classified under certain categories based on various criteria.

#### **2.2.3.1. Extent of Conflict and Number of Stakeholders**

**Micro-level Approach.** Nye (1973) pointed out that micro-level (psychological) approach has concentrated on conflict within and among human beings as individuals, specifically on interpersonal, intrapersonal and small group behavior variables that affect conflict causes, dynamics and outcomes. According to Abbey (2008), in micro-conflict theories, the relationship is between the individual and a collective group/identity. Moreover, the Micro-Conflict Theory approach includes subtopics such as: Behaviorism, Social Learning Theory, and Social Identity Theory, which will be elaborated in the following sections.

**Macro-level Approach.** The macro-level (sociological) approach has focused on groups, departments, divisions and even entire organizations as units of analysis for understanding conflict dynamics. Additionally, Coser (1956) states that researchers have discussed the functions and dysfunctions of social conflict as well as the analysis of conflict at the societal level. Abbey (2008) stated that, at the macro-level, the relationship is group-to-group, and theories focus on the notion of power and access to resources. In addition, Marxism and Socialism both deal with conflict in terms of imbalance of power and restricted access to resources (class hierarchies) (Abbey, 2008).

### **2.2.3.2. Dynamics and Functions or Dysfunctions of Conflict**

**General Theory.** According to general theory and this approach, it is assumed that no existing social science discipline, by itself, contains sufficient intellectual resources to achieve an adequate theory of international conflict (nor, by implication, of any other kind of conflict) (Fink,1968). Moreover, according to generalist approach, it is also argued that direct study of a given kind of conflict cannot, by itself, provide sufficient information on which to build an adequate theory covering that class of phenomena. Fink (1968) adds that this argument says, in fact, that specialized concentration on a given type of conflict will lead to the neglect of certain facts or principles which are essential to an adequate understanding of that kind of conflict. As a result, this implies that a special theory (for example, a theory of interpersonal, marital, intra-organizational, community, interethnic, class, or international conflict) will be inadequate to the extent that it is not informed by comparison with the other types or not imbedded in a more general theory of conflict.

**Traditional Theory.** Traditional view of conflict is the belief that all conflict must be avoided that it indicates a malfunctioning within the group (Robbins, 1991). The traditional view is that conflict is bad and should be avoided. This general approach to conflict fosters both avoidance and competitive behavior in interaction (Corvette, 2007). According to Corvette (2007), this is the view that many people learn unconsciously, and it is a view that causes anxiety about negotiation and fosters avoidant negotiating styles. Represented by Taylor (1913), Fayol (1949) and Weber (1947), this approach supports the idea that conflict, being harmful to the nature of the organization, should either be minimized or managed immediately and fully. The traditional view argues that conflict must be avoided because it indicates problems (Zheng, 2005).

**Neoclassicism or Behaviorism.** According to this view, as Ipek (2000) points out, conflict is a natural outcome of sophisticated structures and organizations, and it should be viewed naturally as normal. Moreover, conflict is inevitable for all individuals and organizations. Those subscribing to the behaviorist theory see conflict

as an intrinsic part of human nature and behavior, because, as William G. Cunningham notes in his chapter, *Theoretical Framework for Conflict Resolution*, this notion lies at the heart of the nature vs. nurture argument (Abbey, 2008). Is there a tendency for violent conflict in humans, and if so, does it have biological origins or can its roots be traced to socialization (Cunningham, 1998)? Zheng (2005) states that the behavioral view sees conflict as a natural and inevitable outcome when people work together in groups and teams and need not be negative. Rather it has the potential to be a positive force in contributing to the performance of the individuals (Zheng, 2005).

**Interactionist Theory.** The interactionist view proposes not only that conflict is a positive force but also that some conflict is necessary for an individual to perform effectively (Zheng, 2005). Resolving conflicts means challenging normal processes and procedures in an effort to improve individual productivity or introduce innovative systems (Robbins et al., 2003). However, the interactionist view is not suggesting that all interpersonal conflicts are good. In terms of the intensity of the conflict, it distinguishes between functional and dysfunctional conflicts (Wood et al., 2003). According to Zheng (2005) *functional conflicts* are of a constructive nature. They, for instance, support the goals of a work group and thus improve the performance of its individuals while *dysfunctional conflicts* are destructive and can decrease work productivity and job satisfaction and contribute to absenteeism and job turnover.

#### 2.2.4. Nature of Conflict

So far, various scholars have defined conflict in various ways depending on the approach and theory they are for. Therefore, it might not surprise you to hear that even theoreticians differ in how they view conflict (Bartos & Wehr, 2001). However, in general sense all scholars seem to agree on the point that whether we change our attitudes about it or not, conflict is a fact of life and it is inevitable (Cahn & Lulofs, 2000). Defining conflict, as Cahn and Lulofs (2000) point out, has been a popular activity among researchers in and outside of the discipline of communication. One

reason definitions are important is that the way something is defined will determine the judgments made about it (Cahn & Lulofs, 2000). Moreover, the definitions that scholars come up with may give an idea about the nature of conflict, too. The essential nature of conflict situation is easily understood in terms of the difficulties involved in meeting everyone's aspirations simultaneously (cited in Jeong, 2008). Different belief or value systems are likely to produce a conflict when individuals harboring these fundamental differences vie for goals in such a way that they perceive that one goal only can emerge (Borisoff & Victor, 1989).

According to Rahim (2002), conflict may occur due to a variety of reasons. It may occur (1) when a party is required to engage in an activity that is incongruent with his or her needs or interests; (2) when a party holds behavioral preferences, the satisfaction of which is incompatible with another person's implementation of his or her preferences; (3) when a party wants some mutually desirable resource that is in short supply, such that the wants of everyone may not be satisfied fully; (4) when a party possesses attitudes, values, skills, and goals that are salient in directing his or her behavior but are perceived to be exclusive of the attitudes, values, skills, and goals held by the other(s); (5) when two parties have partially exclusive behavioral preferences regarding their joint actions; and (6) when two parties are interdependent in the performance of functions; or activities.

Since conflict is entailed in diverse types of social interactions, its concepts have been applied to a variety of situations. The potential for conflict, as Jeong states, exists where opposing interests, values, or needs tinge our relationships with others. Borisoff and Victor (1989) claim that the more we feel that personal identity and basic values are compromised, the more likely a conflict will ensue and the more difficult it becomes to resolve such conflicts. Moreover, Borisoff and Victor add that, in contrast, when individuals hold certain goals in common but differ in how to achieve these goals, managing differences is far more likely.

Although the views of scholars differ in terms of defining conflict, it is considerable that most scholars agree on the nature of conflict and how conflict

arises. All interpersonal conflicts, whether they occur between family members, students and teachers, employees and supervisors, or groups, have certain elements in common (Wilmot and Hocker, 2001).

### **2.2.5. Sources and Causes of Conflict**

As defined in dictionary, source means the beginning and it is the place where something begins, and where it springs into being. Source also means any thing or place from which something comes, arises, or is obtained. On the other hand, cause is defined as events that provide the generative force. A cause is the reason or motive for some human action and it is a person or thing that acts, happens, or exists in such a way that some specific thing happens as a result. Considering the difference between these concepts and their relationship with conflict, there are different views. The views are presented in this section.

Managing and preventing conflict begins with understanding the sources of social struggles. We can explain the basis of conflict and related behavior in terms of human motivation, patterns of social interaction, and institutions (Jeong, 2008). Early reviews in the field of conflict resolution identified a large number of schemes for describing sources or types of conflict (Fink, 1968; Mack & Snyder, 1958). One of the early theorists on conflict, Daniel Katz (1965) created a typology that distinguishes three main sources of conflict: economic, value, and power. As Fisher (2000) writes, *Economic conflict* involves competing motives to attain scarce resources. *Value conflict* involves incompatibility in ways of life, ideologies – the preferences, principles and practices that people believe in. *Power conflict* occurs when each party wishes to maintain or maximize the amount of influence that it exerts in the relationship and the social setting.

Duncan (2005) explains that social scientists make a distinction between objective and subjective conflict (see Figure 2.3.). The source of subjective conflict stems from poor relationships, personality clashes, and differences in values. This

type of conflict is difficult to handle because values and preferences cannot be negotiated. On the other hand, the source of objective conflict lies in the allocation of resources, salaries, vacation time, office space, supplies, and respect. Objective conflicts can be negotiated.

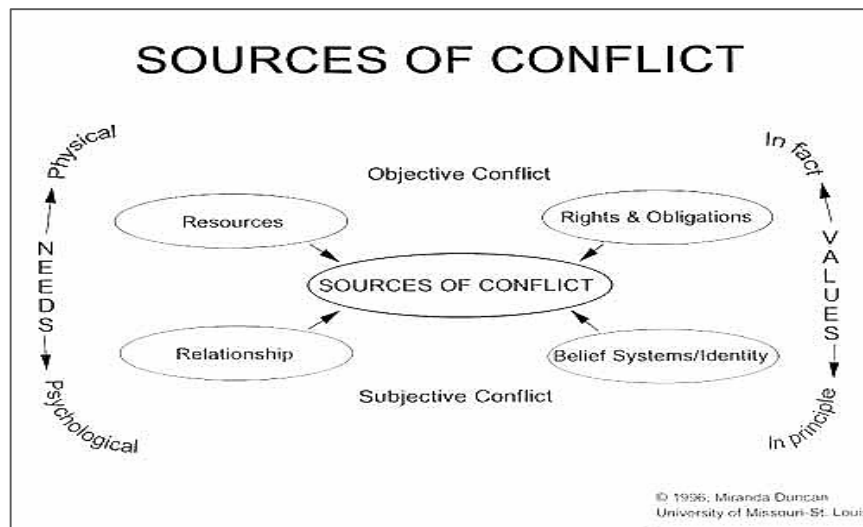


Figure 2.3 Sources of conflict

Source: Duncan, 1996

In addition, Jeong (2008) states that the social, psychological, and biological conditions of human behavior should be focused on as the sources of conflict, and the sources of conflict have been relegated to either larger social structures or an internal psychological environment. At this point, if we consider the fact that in psychiatric traditions, internal unconscious states shape assumptions about the motivations and judgments of human behavior, conflicts out of human behaviors can be explained by the theory that extreme forms of human aggression is explained by the Freudian doctrines of a struggle between the subconscious pleasure seeking ‘id’ and the conscience-based ‘superego’, with the intermediary role of rational principles of ‘ego’ (Jeong, 2008). This can explain the sources of some interpersonal and especially intrapersonal conflicts.



Moreover, as Pondy (1967) suggests, a search of literature has produced a long list of underlying sources of organizational conflict. These are condensed into three basic types of latent conflict: (1) competition for scarce resources (2) drives for autonomy, and (3) divergence of subunit goals.

Most conflicts involve value differences and power disparities, whereas misperception and miscommunication play an important role in the evolution of adversarial relationships (Jeong, 2008). Jeong also adds that a conflict can be quickly expanded to identity differences with escalation even though it may originate from economic and other material sources. According to Longaretti and English (2008), the different personalities, group dynamics and roles that exist within a school give rise to varying types of relationships and interactions. These communications and relationships are not always constructive or satisfying. In schools, there will always be differences, interpersonal conflicts and disagreements. Understanding the causes of a conflict can help us explain why a particular conflict exists (Bartos & Wehr, 2001). To illustrate, as Bartos and Wehr (2001) argues, conflict behavior can occur for six main reasons: the parties may have incompatible goals, they each may have achieved high solidarity, they may have organized for conflict, they can mobilize their conflict resources, they may be hostile toward their opponents, and they may have insufficient material resources (See Figure 2.4.).

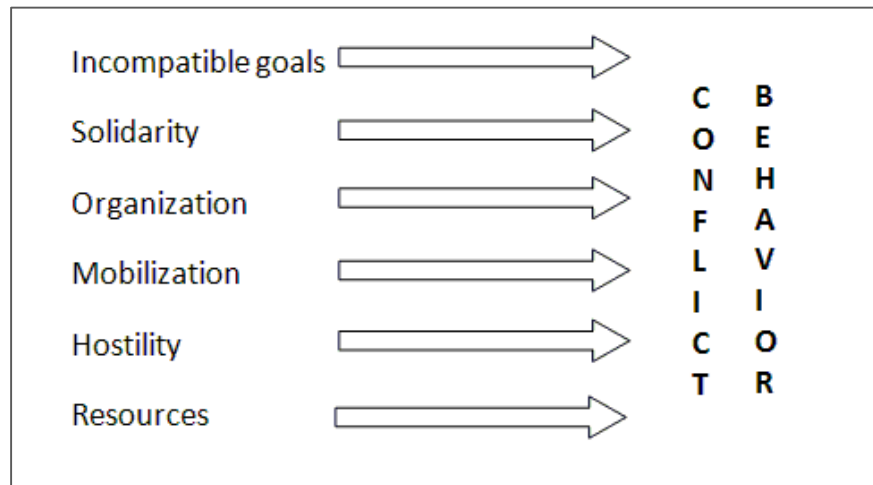


Figure 2.4. A theory of conflict behavior

Source: Bartos & Wehr, 2001

How Coser (1967) defined conflict may also give us an idea about the causes of conflict. Coser asserts that conflict is a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power, and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate the rivals. Although the definition above implies the belief system of traditional approaches to conflict, it explains what causes conflict. Clearly, as Jeong (2001) suggests, there are a number of specific reasons why two conflict actors can have incompatible goals. But, it is possible to subsume them under three main headings: contested resources, incompatible roles, and incompatible values (See Figure 2.5.).

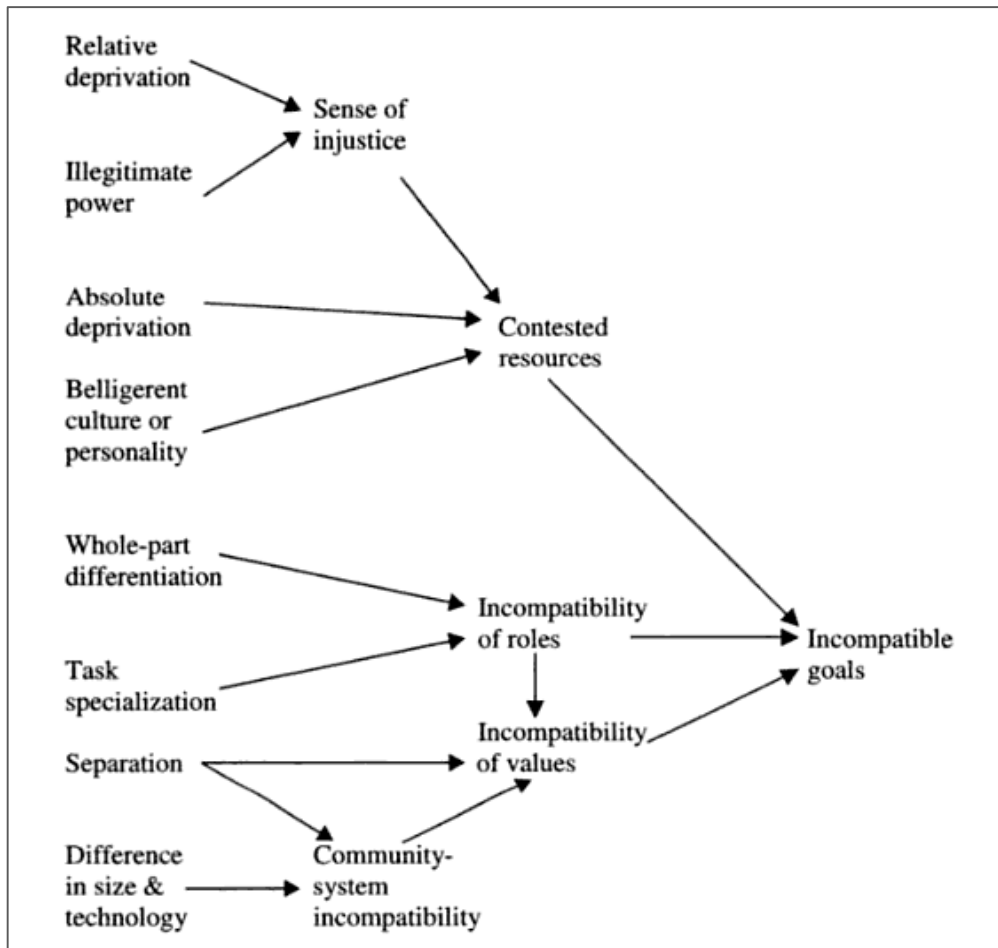


Figure 2.5 Causes of incompatible goals

Source: Bartos & Wehr, 2001

Firstly, resources are contested when a party wants some of the resources the other party has or when both adversaries want the same unallocated resource, which results in incompatibility of goals and this causes conflict. Then, two parties can have incompatible goals because they play different roles in an institution or an organization. Lastly, incompatibility of values resulting in incompatible goals can occur when two parties value different objectives and alternatives (Wehr & Bartos, 2002).

### 2.2.6. Stages of Conflict

In spite of their variations, conflict stages have, for analytical purposes, been portrayed in terms of an orderly evolution from initiation of struggles (conflict emergence), escalation, entrapment (stalemate), de-escalation, and termination (settlement) (Jeong, 2008) (See Figure 2.6.).

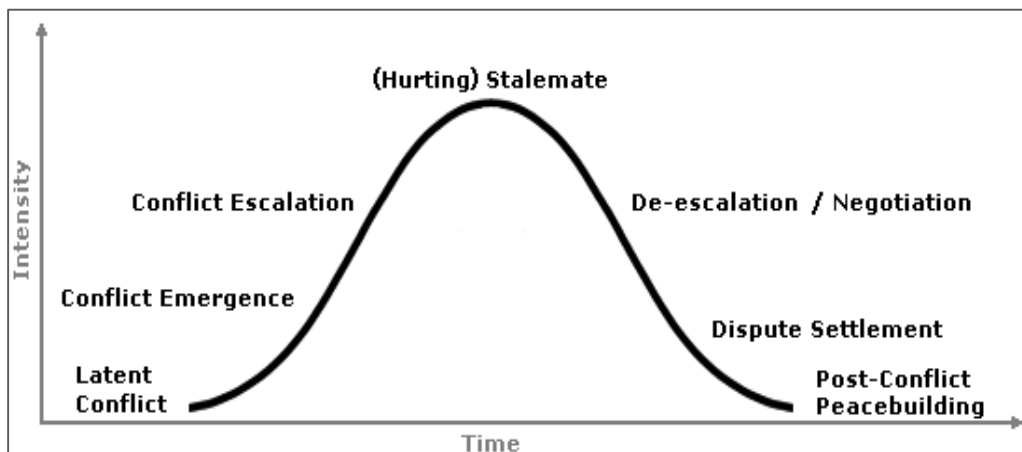


Figure 2.6 A conflict progression model

Source: Jeong, 2008

The early stage of a conflict process includes precipitating events, public awareness, and consciousness of incompatible goals. Escalation, Jeong (2008) continues, is often drawn out by the eruption of new conflict spirals in which opposing sides search for every possible advantage in their battles and really support for their cause. Escalation refers to an increase in the intensity of a conflict and in the severity of tactics used in pursuing it. It is driven by changes within each of the parties, new patterns of interaction between them, and the involvement of new parties in the struggle (Maiese, 2003). A hurting stalemate, Jeong (2008) states, associated with the prolonged, high intensity of struggles, eventually results in pessimistic prospects for the outcome with dwindling will and capacity. De-escalation may not come immediately after a decision on the cessation of escalation. A genuine transition from a stalemate to de-escalation is more likely when the stalemate situation is

mutually felt to be disadvantageous. Conflict resolution, Jeong (2008) states, is reflexive process of overcoming negative, mutual emotions and psychology. If no agreement is reached, the conflict may escalate again into a test of strength and resolve, or it may remain frozen at the status quo. However, if most or all of the underlying causes of the conflict are finally remedied, the conflict may be resolved permanently or at least for a long time (Kriesberg, 2003).

Donohue (1992) claims that a conflict's constructive and destructive quality depends on time. At this point, it might be useful to outline how conflicts escalate to understand how they can be turned into more productive interactions. According to Donohue's model of conflict stages, the first level of conflict is no conflict. At this stage, individuals face no key differences in goals. As the second stage, latent conflict is when one person senses a problem and believes goal differences exist. Pondy (1967) explains that latent conflict conditions may be present in a relationship without any of the participants perceiving the conflict. Donohue (1992) further adds that when people finally express concerns that focus on interests, they reach level three conflicts. This stage of conflict is problems to solve and at this level, participants' goals do not include personal attacks or saving face; instead, they remain focused on the problem and improve their chances of making conflict; yielding constructive outcomes. Then another level of conflict, dispute, arrives. When conflict reaches this level, the needs-centered dimension of the conflict takes precedence over the problem because people's first priority is self-protection, not the original substantive problem as in the previous stage. According to Donohue's model (1992), when people can no longer manage their dispute because they have gotten out of control (probably with personal, needs-centered issues), they often seek help, which brings us to the fifth stage. When help fails or when parties become so angry that they don't think of asking for help, we can talk about the "fight/flight" level of conflict, which implies a key conflict decision point for the parties. Donohue claims that in the fight/flight mode, people seek all the protection they can find. Finally, when people remain at the fight/flight level for a long time, sustaining the conflict becomes more

important than resolving it and conflict gains a life of its own, which takes us to the intractable stage.

Although all models of conflict stages have a lot in common, as a final model, Pondy (1967) identifies five stages of conflict: (1) latent conflict (conditions), (2) perceived conflict (cognition), (3) felt conflict (affect), (4) manifest conflict (behavior), and (5) conflict aftermath (conditions). At this point, Jeong (2008) argues that even if every conflict has its own dynamics, there is a common, though not always predictable, process, following precipitating events that signal the surfacing of a conflict. Analysis of a conflict process can explain the development of relationships at different phases following changes in each party's perceptions of the other's intention or goals.

### **2.2.7. Types of Conflicts**

Whether productive or destructive, conflicts come in many different shapes and sizes. It is important for us to understand the kind of conflict in which we are engaged because different types of conflicts call for different methods of management and resolution (Lulofs & Cahn, 2000). Considering the EFL setting, this difference may call for different classroom activities and different topics to teach the skills and strategies necessary to deal with various conflict types. To illustrate, Longaretti and English (2008) explain that games, role-play, simulations and discussions are all the kinds of activities through which concepts and skills of communication and conflict management can be taught and awareness can be raised.

As researchers have explored the concept of conflict, they have identified different types of conflict situations that require different ways of dealing with them (Cahn & Abigail, 2007). Studies indicated difficulties in making a clear-cut classification as conflict types tend to be intertwined and are usually in a process of development. It may start as one type and end up as something different (Bondesio, 1992). Lulofs and Cahn (2000) clarify that English language is filled with terms for different types of conflict: confrontation, verbal argument, disagreement, differences

of opinion, avoidance of confrontation, avoiding others, changing the topic, problem-solving discussion, interpersonal violence, physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, silent treatment, stonewalling, glaring at one another, making obscene gestures, expressions of anger, hostile reactions, ignoring the other, unhappy relationships, simply giving in, competition, bargaining, disputing, quarreling, threatening, and insulting. Various scholars have come up with various models or maps of styles of conflict. As a sample model, Bondesio (1992) distinguished the following types of conflict: Intrapersonal conflict, Interpersonal conflict, Individual vs. group conflict, Individual vs. organization conflict, Group vs. group conflict (intergroup), Organization vs. organization conflict, Strategic conflict and Structural conflict. The specific names for some conflicts and following styles of conflict mentioned above make a very long list, though incomplete. However, conflicts in general can be classified in respect to some certain criteria.

#### **2.2.7.1. Functional versus Dysfunctional Conflict**

Functional conflict is the conflict that supports the goals of the group and improves its performance; it is a constructive form of conflict. On the other hand, dysfunctional conflict is the conflict that hinders group performance; it is a destructive form of conflict (Robbins, 1991). According to Zheng (2005) *functional conflicts* are of a constructive nature and they support the goals of a work group and thus improve the performance of its individuals while *dysfunctional conflicts* are destructive and can decrease work productivity and job satisfaction and contribute to absenteeism and job turnover.

#### **2.2.7.2. Real versus Unreal Conflicts**

Conflicts can arise from real incompatibilities or from incompatibilities that are largely imagined (cited in Cupach & Canary, 2000). A real or actual conflict exists in fact and is perceived accurately; unreal conflicts either don't exist in reality but are thought to exist in someone's mind, or do exist in reality but are misperceived

(Lulofs & Cahn, 2000). Both in Cahn and Abigail's (2007) and Cahn and Lulofs' (2000), it is further explained that unreal conflicts consist of three types: (1) false conflicts in which at least one person in an interdependent relationship thinks that there is a conflict but, after talking to the other(s) involved, finds there is no conflict; (2) displaced conflict which occurs when people direct a conflict toward the wrong person, generally using a relatively unimportant issue as a focal point; (3) misplaced conflict that occurs when people argue about issues other than the ones at the heart of the conflict.

#### **2.2.7.3. Substantive versus Non-substantive Conflict**

In interpersonal conflicts, substantive conflicts focus on issues or problems that potentially could harm the relationship and possible solutions. The non-substantive conflicts, in which no real issue is involved, include bickering, verbal aggression, non-verbal (physical) aggression and competition (Lulofs & Cahn, 2000).

#### **2.2.7.4. Tangible versus Intangible Issue Conflicts**

There are two broad classes of conflict issues: those that concern tangible issues, and those that concern intangible issues (Cahn & Abigail, 2007). Tangible issue conflicts involve one's personal property, money, land, grades, promotions, water/food/air supply, natural resources, awards/rewards, jobs, and so on. Intangible issue conflicts are not over hard, physical, or observable assets; instead, they involve love attention, cooperative and beneficial behaviors, respect, power, self-esteem, and caring (Cahn & Abigail, 2007; Cahn & Lulofs, 2000). According to the types of conflicts explained in Cahn and Abigail's (2007) intangible conflicts involve three sub-group conflicts: (1) personality issue conflict which focuses on a whole constellation of behaviors such as being dominating, introverted, selfish or achievement oriented; (2) relationship/normative issue conflict that involve rules, norms, and boundaries that partners have tacitly or overtly agreed on; (3) behavioral



issue conflicts which concern specific and individual behaviors we can observe such as the way we handle money, time, space and so on.

#### **2.2.7.5. Intrapersonal versus Interpersonal Conflicts**

Interpersonal conflict is conflict that occurs between two or more individuals that work together in groups or teams (Wood et al., 2003). Here a link can be made to the organizational behavior theme 'groups and teams'. As a group performs its assigned tasks, conflicts inevitably arise (Robbins et al., 2003). Interpersonal conflicts are natural and can actually spur creativity and performance of the participating individuals. On the other hand, intrapersonal conflict is conflict that occurs within the individual as a result of actual or perceived pressures from incompatible goals or expectations (Zheng, 2005). As Cüceloğlu discusses, intrapersonal conflict arises when a dilemma or ambiguity is experienced during acting or decision-making and a considerable part of intrapersonal conflict is experienced within cognitive dilemmas or controversies (Ozgan, 2006). Additionally, Haig (2006) illustrates that religious, literary and psychoanalytic texts abound with similar discussions of conflicts between our higher and lower natures, between passion and reason, between selfishness and concern for others, between immediate gratification and pursuit of long-term goals, all of which can lead to intrapersonal conflict (cited in Jones & Fabian, 2006). Haig further explains that the idea that we can be at war with ourselves appears paradoxical at first sight; however, conflicts can exist among ideas, among genes, and between genes and ideas.

#### **2.2.7.6. Intragroup versus Intergroup Conflicts**

Intragroup conflict is also known as intradepartmental conflict and it refers to conflict among members of a group or between two or more subgroups within a group in connection with its goals, tasks, procedures, and so on (Rahim, 2001). Rahim also adds that such a conflict may also occur as a result of incompatibilities or disagreements between some or all the members of a group and its leaders. Intergroup

conflict, on the other hand, is also known as interdepartmental conflict and it refers to conflict between two or more units or groups within an organization (Rahim, 2001).

### **2.3. Conflict Management**

Conflict within organizations has become a major point of interest for researchers (Balay, 2006). Conflicts, emanating from interactions of interdependent people who perceive incompatible goals and interference from each other in achieving those goals, are inevitable in restructured schools where varied interests in education converge (Henkin et al., 1999). The literature on conflict management is extremely broad. Indeed, almost all social disciplines such as sociology, psychology, management and business have discussed this issue (Balay, 2006). Even though conflict is often said to be functional for organizations, most recommendations relating to organizational conflict still fall within the spectrum of conflict reduction, resolution, or minimization (Rahim, 2002). Conflict might escalate and lead to nonproductive results, or conflict can be beneficially resolved and lead to quality final products. Therefore, learning to manage conflict is integral to a high-performance team (Froyd, 2002). Appropriately managed conflict may serve as an important organizational utility when it is constructively regulated (Coser, 1956). The process of managing conflict to achieve constructive results is both complex and essential to organizational success in open systems of reformed school environments distinguished by local autonomy (Balay, 2006).

#### **2.3.1. Definitions for Conflict Management**

In a business dictionary, conflict management is defined as the identification and control of conflict within an organization. Furthermore, Cahn and Abigail (2007) define conflict management as the behavior a person employs based on his or her analysis of a conflict situation. Hamad (2005) claims that there has been an increasing inaccuracy in defining the concept of “conflict management.” The term has been given a far narrower meaning than it deserves. Historically, it has been understood to

mean the containment or suspension of a conflict. The linguistic and conceptual meanings of “management” in disciplines such as “business management” are much wider than the conventional meaning of the term in conflict studies. Froyd (2002) explains that conflict management is the principle that all conflicts cannot necessarily be resolved, but learning how to manage conflicts can decrease the odds of nonproductive escalation. Conflict management involves acquiring skills related to conflict resolution, self-awareness about conflict modes, conflict communication skills, and establishing a structure for management of conflict in your environment. According to Hamad’s definition (2005), conflict management covers every action taken by the parties to the conflict to handle the situation. Therefore, the definition of the term should be extended to cover a whole discipline, which includes the initiation of a conflict, its escalation, the ensuing complications, containment, resolution and transformation as sub-topics. Moreover, Reimann suggests that the term conflict management is itself rather unfortunate, as it may well include approaches such as conflict transformation that go far beyond the logic of management. However, in the lack of a better alternative, conflict management can be used as an umbrella term, while cautioning against its definitional and conceptual pitfalls. Considering the research and arguments on the concept of conflict management, the definition by Holmes (2009) can help us understand what this concept exactly is. Holmes defines conflict management as a systematic process geared toward finding mutually satisfying outcomes for two or more conflicted parties. Outcomes that help a team, group, organization or community function more effectively and achieve stated goals. The ultimate purpose of conflict management is to reduce the incidence of dysfunctional conflict (conflict that hinders group performance), and to increase the likelihood that any conflicts that take place will be resolved efficiently and effectively.

### **2.3.2. Conflict Resolution, Conflict Settlement and Conflict Transformation**

Robins (1978) explains that the difference between resolution and management of conflict is more than semantic. Conflict resolution implies reduction, elimination, or termination of conflict. A large number of studies on negotiation, bargaining, mediation, and arbitration fall into the conflict resolution category. Therefore, Rahim (2002) puts forward that what we need for contemporary organizations is conflict management and not conflict resolution. Conflict management does not necessarily imply avoidance, reduction, or termination of conflict. It involves designing effective macro-level strategies to minimize the dysfunctions of conflict and enhancing the constructive functions of conflict in order to enhance learning and effectiveness in an organization. According to Burton (1996), resolution often means, not resolving a problem, but peacekeeping or police action: getting to the sources and resolving a conflict is not a part of accepted thinking. Burton further clarifies that, indeed, even some scholars working in this area use these terms interchangeably. Instead of 'dispute settlement' and 'conflict resolution,' 'conflict settlement' and 'dispute resolution' are widely employed to describe processes. Conflict resolution refers to only one alternative in which parties solve a problem or issue, while conflict management refers to alternative ways of dealing with conflict, including resolution or avoiding it altogether (Cahn & Abigail, 2007). Reimann explains that conflict resolution attempts to use game theory in order to overcome the self-defeating dynamics of the zero-sum conflict management approaches and, thus, to reframe the conflict as a shared problem with mutually acceptable solutions. On the other hand, conflict settlement shall refer to all outcome oriented strategies for achieving sustainable win-win solutions and/or putting an end to direct violence, without necessarily addressing the underlying conflict causes (Reimann). Finally, as Reimann adds, conflict transformation refers to outcome, process and structure oriented long-term peace-building efforts, which aim to truly overcome revealed forms of direct, cultural and structural violence.

### **2.3.3. Stages of Conflict Management**

Regardless of the variations in how theorists define conflict, one attribute of conflict management remains consistent, that is, that conflict handling behavior is not a static procedure; rather it is a process that requires flexibility and constant evaluation to be truly productive and effective (Borisoff & Victor, 1989). According to Abigail and Cahn (2007), the fact is that we just do not handle our conflicts as they arise. Because of this, there are times when we have to make a special effort to confront others, creating a unique situation that requires careful handling.

The model of Borisoff and Victor (1989) for conflict management consists of five steps: assessment, acknowledgement, attitude, action, and analysis. Assessment is an initial stage that provides each party with an initial understanding about the nature of the relationship, the course of the conflict, and the appropriate communication strategies used in addressing differences. During the assessment phase, as Knofla (1999) explains, you gather as much information as you can about the parties involved in the situation. Although all the steps designated in the assessment phase are important, these are essentially ineffective unless we acknowledge the other party involved, which brings us the next stage (Borisoff & Victor, 1989). Acknowledgment encourages you to try to understand the other party's point of view, and to see the problem from their perspective (Knofla, 1999). Simply acknowledging another person's beliefs, goals, and values does not necessarily imply that our attitude toward the other party will be conducive to dealing with the problem. Therefore, Borisoff and Victor (1989) suggest that the attitude stage is important and our attitude toward that individual needs to be a willingness to engage in a productive communication exchange. As the fourth phase of conflict management, which is the action stage, both verbal and non-verbal actions matter a great deal, as do those of the other party and body language should reflect the open attitude to be achieved (Knofla, 1999). The action stage, as Borisoff and Victor (1989) claim, is a crucial stage of the conflict management process as one integrates the assessment, acknowledgement, and attitude dimensions into the most appropriate action for the particular situation. The

final step in Borisoff and Victor's conflict management model is analysis at which it is important to analyze the resolution to make sure that it is equitable to all parties concerned, has been created using specific, measurable elements, that the relationship with the other party remains at a desirable level, and that it is truly possible to make the changes needed to satisfy the terms of the agreement (Knofla, 1999).

According to Donohue's model (1992) of conflict, it is possible to talk about four main phases. The initial phase is setting the stage which starts at the point at which people feel ready to sit down and discuss their problems. After establishing motivations and rules, the next step, defining the issues, involves pulling out key issues in dispute. This task, as Donohue (1992) claims, is extremely difficult because it involves a great deal of listening. Then, the third phase is processing the issues at which one should have a list of all the issues that separate the parties. Finally, according to Donohue's model, the last phase arrives which is the stage of resolving the issues. Once parties identify important issues and discuss them carefully, they begin creating options to solve the problem, which is the last phase of a conflict.

One more model of Abigail and Cahn (2007) consists of a series of steps with a beginning to an end: (1) preparation, (2) tell the person 'we need to talk', (3) interpersonal confrontation, (4) consider your partner's point of view, (5) resolve the problem, (6) follow up on the solution or evaluation.

Considering all of the models mentioned so far, what Abigail and Cahn imply or put forward can give an idea of how familiarity with conflict management stages or cycle can help. Although it should be avoided to give the impression that all conflicts, large or small, are resolved by following a few easy steps, they help to know what to do and what not to do when confronting someone with whom you disagree.

#### **2.3.4. Conflict Management Styles and Strategies**

Conflict management strategy refers to the behavior participants display during conflict. People react to and cope with conflict in a variety of ways (Balay,

2006). Conflict [management] style, accordingly, refers to specific behavioral patterns that one prefers to employ when addressing conflict situations (Moberg, 2001). Morrison (1998), for instance, suggested that people will react to potential conflict in one of four main ways: fight, flight, freeze and assertiveness. Physiologically we respond to conflict in one of two ways—we want to “get away from the conflict” or we are ready to “take on anyone who comes our way” (Froyd, 2002). Convergent models of conflict style have proposed that an individual’s response to conflict is determined by one’s standing on two underlying dimensions and these dual dimensions have been analogously interpreted as concerns for production and disputants (Blake & Mounton, 1964), work relationship and personal goals (Hall, 1969), other’s and own outcomes (Pruitt, 1983; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986), others and self (Rahim, 1983; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979), and cooperativeness and assertiveness (Thomas, 1988) (cited in Moberg, 2001). Froyd (2002), at this point, puts forward that whether we feel like we want to fight or flee when a conflict arises, we can deliberately choose a conflict mode and by consciously choosing a conflict mode instead of to conflict, we are more likely to productively contribute to solving the problem at hand.

In addition to dual models listed above by Moberg (2001), he further explains that despite their interpretational distinctions, each model of conflict management contends that joint (low or high) standing on these dual dimensions suggests four conceptually parallel modes for approaching conflict: facing the conflict directly (problem solving, collaborating, integrating); minimizing differences (accommodating, obliging, smoothing, yielding); trying to maximize one’s outcomes at the expense of one’s opponent (competing, contending, dominating, forcing); and eluding conflict altogether (avoiding, not acting, withdrawing).

Rahim (2002) argues that existing literature on conflict management is deficient on strategies needed to manage conflict at the macro-level. Moreover, he puts forward that an effective conflict management strategy should: (1) minimize

affective conflicts at various levels, (2) attain and maintain a moderate amount of substantive conflict, (3) select and use appropriate conflict management strategies.

So far, various modes or strategies of conflict management have been proposed; however, as Brewer, Michel and Weber (2002) explain and Rahim (2002) writes that Rahim and Bonoma's (1979) conceptualization has been the most popular. They differentiated the styles of resolving interpersonal conflict on two basic dimensions: concern for self and concern for others. The first dimension explains the degree (high or low) to which a person attempts to satisfy their own concerns, while the second dimension explains the degree to which an individual tries to satisfy the needs or concerns for others. Combining the two dimensions results in five specific styles of conflict management known as integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising (Rahim, 2002), as shown in Figure 2.7. and 2.8. (Rahim, 2002; Çetin & Hacifazlıoğlu, 2004).



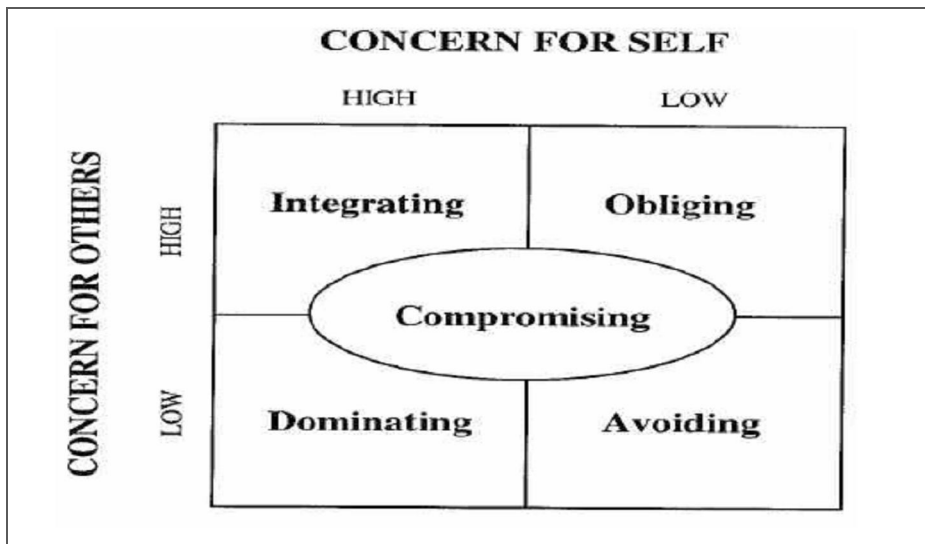


Figure 2.7 The dual concern model of the styles of handling interpersonal conflict  
 Source: Rahim, 2002

Figure 2.7 illustrates what shapes the strategy used by the parties in a conflict. The strategy changes depending on whether the parties have high or low concern for others and for themselves. For instance, when one of the parties is concerned with self at a very high level, but concerned with others at a very low level, the controlling mode or strategy would be dominating. These strategies will be explained in detail in the following section of the current chapter.

As shown in Figure 2.8., there are some behavioral patterns depending on the mode or conflict management strategy used by the parties in a conflict.

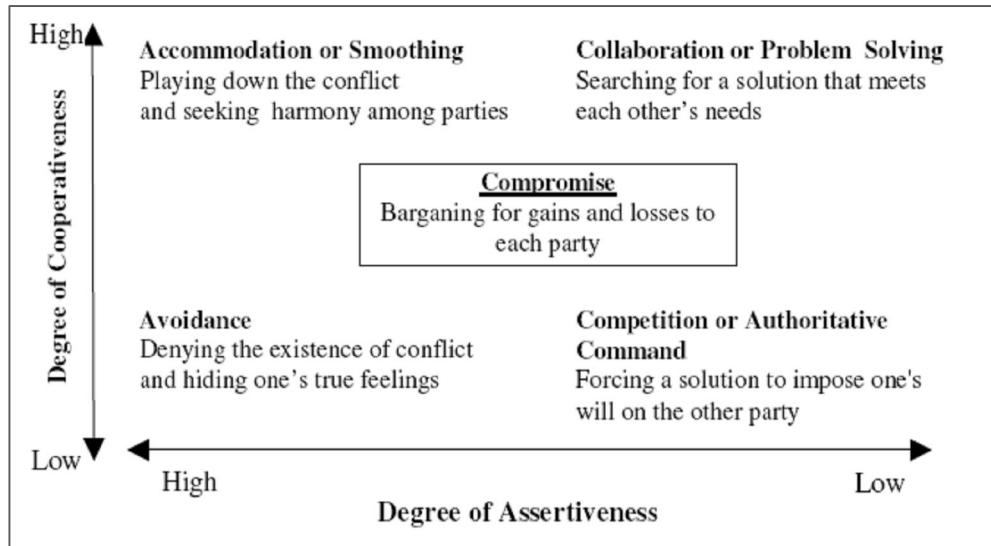


Figure 2.8 Interpersonal styles of conflict management

Source: Schermerhorn, 2000: 218

After explaining what types of conflict management strategies are favored and their common behavioral patterns shortly, these strategies can be further elaborated taking current literature into account.

1. Integrating (high concern for self and others) style is associated with problem solving, i.e., the diagnosis of and intervention in the right problems. The use of this style involves openness, exchanging information, looking for alternatives, and examination of differences to reach an effective solution acceptable to both parties (Rahim, 2002).

2. Obliging (low concern for self and high concern for others) style is associated with attempting to play down the differences and emphasizing commonalities to satisfy the concern of the other party. An obliging person neglects his or her own concern to satisfy the concern of the other party (Rahim, 2002).

3. Dominating (high concern for self and low concern for others) style has been identified with win-lose orientation or with forcing behavior to win one's position. A

dominating or competing person goes all out to win his or her objective and, as a result, often ignores the needs and expectations of the other party (Rahim, 2002).

4. Avoiding (low concern for self and others) style has been associated with withdrawal, buck-passing, or sidestepping situations. An avoiding person fails to satisfy his or her own concern as well as the concern of the other party (Rahim, 2002).

5. Compromising (intermediate in concern for self and others) style involves give-and-take whereby both parties give up something to make a mutually acceptable decision (Rahim, 2002).

Although some behavioral scientists suggest that integrating or problem-solving style is most appropriate for managing conflict (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Likert & Likert, 1976), it has been indicated by others that, for conflicts to be managed functionally, one style may be more appropriate than another depending upon the situation (Rahim, 2001; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979; Thomas, 1977). In general, integrating and to some extent compromising styles are appropriate for dealing with the strategic issues. The remaining styles can be used to deal with tactical or day-to-day problems. A summary of the styles of handling interpersonal conflict and the situations in which these are appropriate have been presented in Table 1 (Rahim, 2002) and Table 2.1 (Çetin and Hacifazlıoğlu, 2004). In addition to situations where these strategies appropriate or inappropriate, Table 2.2 also illustrates what can be gained or lost as a result of using these strategies of conflict management.

Table 2.1 Styles of handling interpersonal conflict and the situations where they are appropriate or inappropriate

Conflict style	Situations where appropriate	Situations where inappropriate
<b>Integrating</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Issues are complex.</li> <li>2. Synthesis of ideas is needed to come up with better solutions.</li> <li>3. Commitment is needed from other Parties for successful implementation.</li> <li>4. Time is available for problem solving.</li> <li>5. One party alone cannot solve the problem.</li> <li>6. Resources possessed by different parties are needed to solve their common problems.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Task or problem is simple.</li> <li>2. Immediate decision is required.</li> <li>3. Other parties are unconcerned about outcome.</li> <li>4. Other parties do not have problem-solving skills.</li> </ol>
<b>Obliging</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. You believe that you may be wrong.</li> <li>2. Issue is more important to the other party.</li> <li>3. You are willing to give up something in exchange for something from the other party in the future.</li> <li>4. You are dealing from a position of weakness.</li> <li>5. Preserving relationship is important.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Issue is important to you.</li> <li>2. You believe that you are right.</li> <li>3. The other party is wrong or unethical.</li> </ol>
<b>Dominating</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Issue is trivial.</li> <li>2. Speedy decision is needed.</li> <li>3. Unpopular course of action is implemented.</li> <li>4. Necessary to overcome assertive subordinates.</li> <li>5. Unfavorable decision by the other party may be costly to you.</li> <li>6. Subordinates lack expertise to make technical decisions.</li> <li>7. Issue is important to you.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Issue is complex.</li> <li>2. Issue is not important to you.</li> <li>3. Both parties are equally powerful.</li> <li>4. Decision does not have to be made quickly.</li> <li>5. Subordinates possess high degree of competence.</li> </ol>
<b>Avoiding</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Issue is trivial.</li> <li>2. Potential dysfunctional effect of confronting the other party outweighs benefits of resolution.</li> <li>3. Cooling off period is needed.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Issue is important to you.</li> <li>2. It is your responsibility to make decision.</li> <li>3. Parties are unwilling to defer, issue must be resolved.</li> <li>4. Prompt attention is needed.</li> </ol>
<b>Compromising</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Goals of parties are mutually exclusive.</li> <li>2. Parties are equally powerful.</li> <li>3. Consensus cannot be reached.</li> <li>4. Integrating or dominating style is not successful.</li> <li>5. Temporary solution to a complex problem is needed.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One party is more powerful.</li> <li>2. Problem is complex enough needing problem-solving approach.</li> </ol>

Source: Rahim, 2002

Table 2.2 Conflict management styles

Conflict Management Styles			
	GAINS	LOSSES	APPROPRIATE SITUATION
COMPETITION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chance to win everything</li> <li>• Exciting</li> <li>• Exercise own sense of power</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chance to lose everything</li> <li>• Alienates others</li> <li>• Discourages others working with an academic</li> <li>• Potentially larger scale conflicts in the future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When quick, decisive action is vital</li> <li>• On important issues where unpopular actions need implementing</li> <li>• On issues vital to organisation's welfare when an academic knows he / she is right</li> <li>• Against people who take advantage of non-competitive behaviour</li> </ul>
COMPROMISE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No one returns home empty handed</li> <li>• May or may not encourage creativity</li> <li>• "Keeps the peace"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since neither side is totally satisfied, conflicts are likely to recur later</li> <li>• Neither size realizes self-determination fully</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When goals are important, but not worth the effort or potential disruption of more assertive modes</li> <li>• To achieve temporary settlements to complex issues</li> <li>• As a backup when collaboration or competition is unsuccessful</li> </ul>
COLLABORATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both sides win</li> <li>• Creativity in problem solving</li> <li>• Improves quality of solution and commitment</li> <li>• Maintains relationship</li> <li>• New level of understanding of situation</li> <li>• Better chance for long-term solutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time , in the short run</li> <li>• Loss of sense of autonomy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To find an integrative solution when both sets of concerns are too important to be compromised</li> <li>• When academic's objective is to learn (professional development)</li> <li>• To merge insights from academics with different perspectives</li> </ul>
AVOIDANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No energy or time expenditure</li> <li>• Conserve for fights "that are more important"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less stimulation</li> <li>• Less creative problem solving</li> <li>• Little understanding of the needs of others</li> <li>• Incomplete comprehension of work environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When an issue is trivial, or more important issues are pressing</li> <li>• When an academic perceives no chance of satisfying his/ her concerns</li> </ul>
ACCOMMODATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Others may view the academic as supportive</li> <li>• Energy free for other pursuits</li> <li>• Little muss or fuss no feathers ruffled</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowered self-assertion and possibly self esteem</li> <li>• Loss of power</li> <li>• Absence of your unique contribution to the situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When an academics realises that he/ she is wrong</li> <li>• When issues are more important for others to build social credits for later issues</li> </ul>

Adapted from the works of (Ronald Fry, Jared Florian and Jacquie McLemore), (Kolb, Osland, Rubin, 1995 : 286) ; ( Robbins 1986 : 306)

Source: Çetin and Hacırızlıoğlu, 2004

### **2.3.5. Cross-cultural Awareness in Conflict Management**

When people engage in conflict, they bring to the encounter their personalities, gender, and cultural identity. Along with attitudes, beliefs, and goals, values play an important role in cognition (Lulofs & Cahn, 2000). According to Borisoff and Victor (1989), conflicts can be rooted in cultural differences in the way people communicate. Furthermore, Borisoff and Victor (1989) claim that a great proportion of what passes for actual conflict in cross-cultural situations is tied to the pseudo-conflict of some misunderstandings. At this point it would be prudent to define what is meant by culture. Ting-Toomey (1988) defines culture as a group-level construct that embodies a distinctive system of traditions, beliefs, values, norms, rituals, symbols, and meanings that is shared by a majority of interacting individuals in a community (Lulofs & Cahn, 2000). Worchel (2005) explains that culture plays two related but distinct roles in the conflict. On the one hand, culture and ethnicity serve as the vehicle for identifying and distinguishing the groups that are likely to be parties in a conflict. On the other hand, the second role for culture occurs at the intragroup level. In this case, culture shapes the way individuals perceive a conflict and respond to it. Worchel (2005) also states that these two roles often overlap, and together they make a clear case for the urgent need to consider culture when examining conflict.

Some theorists put this topic on a dual base: collectivism and individualism. Collectivism, as Triandis (2000) puts forward, is one of the most universal cultural characteristics, because more than 70 per cent of the world's population belongs to collectivist cultures. Collectivism is the degree to which a culture focuses on the welfare of groups or society, rather than on the welfare of the individual (Posthuma et al., 2006). Therefore, as suggested further, individuals in more collectivistic cultures will tend to use integrative or other-oriented conflict resolution strategies, in contrast to an individualistic conflict resolution strategy that exploits someone else.

A study of cultural differences between Canadian and Turkish students conducted by Ulu and Lalonde (2006) revealed that cultural differences emerged in the types of conflict management strategies chosen: Turks reported refraining from

conflict, postponing conflict, and employing persuasion to a greater extent than did Canadians, whereas Canadians were more likely to compromise, appeal to third-party assistance, and give priority to the other party in the conflict.

Finally, although cultural differences appear to represent significant barriers to communication, they may be overcome. According to Cushman and Cahn (1985), we can bring to consciousness our own cultural tendencies and those of others, define the conventions that link what is perceived with what is communicated, and then exert some control over the process of cross cultural communication. The general concepts (regarding intercultural conflict differences) should serve as a working basis in managing any kind of group-based difference in conflict. Additionally, both general and specific knowledge of other cultures and ethnic groups can increase our motivation and skill in dealing with people who are culturally and ethnically different (Lulofs & Cahn, 2000).

#### **2.3.6. Gender Differences in Conflict Management**

People use gender to explain a great deal of behavior. In addition, research has investigated the relationship between gender (a person's psychological orientation toward femininity, masculinity, or androgyny) and conflict (Lulofs & Cahn, 2000). Although the associated literature is now sizeable, it is characterized by inconsistent results. Some studies suggest that women have a more cooperative orientation to conflict management than men (Rahim, 1983) while, as claimed by Rubin and Brown (1975) others suggest that women are more competitive (cited in Brewer et al., 2002). Additionally, according to the gender role perspective, differences in conflict management behavior of men and women may be linked to, but not determined by, biological sex. Cook (1985) suggests that gender roles, which are considered to represent learned patterns of masculine and feminine characteristics, may determine how individuals behave in certain circumstances (cited in Brewer et al., 2002). Given this brief introduction to the politics of gender and sex differences and similarities in communication and conflict research, a few of the findings can be listed.

According to some studies, linking biological sex to conflict behavior, women tend to be more accommodating and compromising than men (Lulofs and Cahn, 2000). Women also, states Lulofs and Cahn (2002), learn how to avoid conflict situations; when in conflict, women express more support and exhibit more facilitative behavior than men, while men tend to be more dominant in conversation and more verbally aggressive than women.

Competitive or dominant behavior (high concern for self) appears to be consistent with a masculine gender role, while obliging and avoiding (low concern for the self) behaviors appear consistent with a feminine gender role (Brewer et al., 2002). On the other hand, the integrating and compromising conflict management styles, in which individuals have high concern for both self and others, suggest behavior that is both stereotypically masculine and feminine and thus these conflict styles appear compatible with androgynous gender role (Brewer et al., 2002).

Some studies, as Lulofs and Cahn (2000) put forward, indicate that women are more likely than men to employ strategies that focus on reasoning or understanding and are more likely to internalize the conflict. Women are also more likely than men to use personal criticism and anger strategies, whereas males are more likely to use denial tactics.

According to Froyd (2002), some of us were socialized to use particular conflict modes because of our gender. For example, some males, because they are male, were taught “always stand up to someone, and, if you have to fight, then fight.” If one was socialized this way he will be more likely to use assertive conflict modes versus using cooperative modes.

Finally, some studies have found no difference in what men and women do to deal with conflict. One such study, based on observations of interaction between dyads, concluded that the power and the sex of the ‘opponent’ was a better predictor of strategy use than biological sex or psychological gender of the actor (Lulofs & Cahn, 2000).



Conrad (1985), based on all these research studies and findings, concluded that the results of research examining the effect of gender on the selection of conflict strategies can be grouped into three categories of approximately equal size: (1) those which found no significant sex effect on parties' cooperativeness and competitiveness, (2) those which found that males are more cooperative than females, and (3) those which found that females are more cooperative than males.

#### **2.4. Communication, Conflict, Conflict Management and Language Teaching**

In the current chapter, several aspects have been explained based on three pillars of this study according to the literature. These pillars are communication, conflict, and conflict management. In the section related to communication, the significance of communication in human life, various forms and models of communication in addition to seven effective communication skills have been explained. Then, in the next section related to conflict, the definitions, approaches, nature, causes, sources and different types of conflict have been explained. Afterwards, the next section has dwelled on conflict management through several aspects such as definitions, stages, most common styles and strategies, cultural awareness, and gender differences. Moreover, in this section, how conflict management differs from conflict settlement and conflict resolution is explained. In order to express the scope and the significance of the study completely, in the present section, all these aspects will be discussed in relation to language teaching in the framework of several areas such as ELT, EFL and ESL.

To begin with, it is worth noting that the unavailability of conflicts is an inevitable part of life. Wenden (2001) explains that conflicts reflect the complex and sometimes inconsistent wants, values and expectations of individuals and groups. Conflicts can occur on different levels. Interpersonal conflicts occur between strangers, acquaintances, friends, parents and children. As for intergroup and international conflicts, the media report these on a daily basis. There are conflicts between groups within countries and conflicts between countries and regions. These

conflicts may be ethnic, racial, political, economic, ideological or religious in nature. In fact, Wenden (2001) claims that it is a rare day for most of us when we do not experience some conflict, even if it is only a trivial one. Accordingly, McCarthy (1992) complains that all the people are mostly peace illiterates, all helpless to deal with conflicts. He adds that it is unimaginable for people to graduate students from high school or college without ever teaching them math or English and say good luck. At this point, McCarthy (1992) explains that this is how people do it regarding conflicts: colleges graduate students not equipped with social and real life issues and then ask in false amazement why the country or the world is so violent. Wenden (2001) agrees with the statement above by claiming that few people today would disagree with him. More and more, government and community leaders, diplomats and teachers consider conflict resolution education essential for addressing conflict in their spheres of influence. Underlying this belief in the importance of conflict resolution is a commitment to nonviolence, a value that rejects the use of physical and psychological force and aggression as tools to achieve one's goals or as a means of resolving differences. Additionally, according to Wenden (2001) ESL or EFL teachers may find conflict resolution particularly important and challenging because their classes are usually comprised of students from different cultures. Cultural differences can lead to conflict in the classroom. Wenden also adds that a teacher may experience conflict with students who, from their perspective, are helping each other as classmates should but who, from the teachers' perspective, are cheating. These types of cultural differences make conflict resolution education especially important in the ESL and EFL classrooms. According to Schmidt (cited in Duers, 2000), when students are taught to care about each other—and are motivated by challenging work—they're more apt to care about learning. They work harder, achieve more, and give more importance to schoolwork in classes in which they feel liked, accepted, and respected by the teacher and other students.

Considering the EFL classrooms in general, it is possible to state that several institutions may integrate innovative ideas and techniques into present methods and

approaches. On the other hand, there are numerous institutions that focus on only teaching grammar or language rather than integrating innovations in areas such as intercultural understanding, intercultural communication, conflict resolution, and teaching effectiveness. According to Wenden (2001), for ESL/EFL teachers, conflict resolution education provides a wonderful opportunity for authentic communication among students. Students can talk about what they have observed and experienced and can share their opinions about conflict resolution. Moreover, if learning is to take place in the classroom, then conflicts must be resolved successfully. Tension and strife only inhibit learning. Finally, if students are to succeed in life outside the classroom and in the future, they must learn to resolve conflicts. Sardent (1998) states that lessons involving this kind of material often present learners with a three-fold challenge. First of all they have to think about what they will say, their opinions and ideas, secondly, they have to think about how to say those things in their foreign language, English, and thirdly, they have to practice a meta-cognitive exercise of observing how they actually interact and communicate with the others in the group or class. On the other hand, Wenden (2001) explains that ESL teachers and other school personnel cannot ignore the need for conflict resolution education. If educators limit their efforts to teaching language and academic subjects, they may be depriving students of life skills they need in order to use their new language and knowledge successfully in life.

Regarding the link between language teaching and communication, conflict, and conflict management, Schmidt (cited in Duers, 2000), states that there are many positive aspects and results of teaching peace and conflict resolution. Peace education empowers people with the skills: communication, listening, problem solving, responsible decision making, understanding different perspectives, cooperation, nonviolent conflict resolution, mediation, and social responsibility in order to develop, maintain, and restore harmonious relationships at all levels of human interaction. This is why it is important for all students to learn peacemaking skills.

Considering the link between language teaching and effective communication skills, it is a widely known principle that the purpose of language teaching is to permit people to communicate with each other. Moreover, the goal of language teaching is to develop what Hymes (1972) referred to as “communicative competence”, which involves being able to use the language appropriately to a given social context. Communicative language teaching assumes that language teaching will reflect the particular needs of the target language learners. These needs may be in the domains of reading, listening, writing, or speaking. And each of the former skills can be approached from a communicative perspective (Gewehr, 1998). Therefore, EFL classrooms hold an extremely high potential in terms of both helping students acquire a language and at the same time teaching effective communication skills and conflict management strategies by which learners might go beyond language and be trained to be confident, empowered and autonomous individuals. In order to achieve this aim, to combine all of these components into EFL classrooms, DiPietro (1987) suggests effective communication activities named ‘strategic interaction (SI).’ Strategic interaction (DiPietro, 1987) is an expanded version of role-plays involving cooperative learning techniques and conflict-based scenarios so as to generate more language from participants. Alatis (1993) explains his assumptions on DiPietro’s strategic interaction. First assumption is that one of the best goals that ESL/EFL teachers can have is to lower students’ affective filters to maximize the opportunities for language acquisition to occur. Another assumption is that one of the ways to lower students’ affective filter is to provide an atmosphere in which they can relax. As the third assumption, one of the ways to provide such a relaxed atmosphere is to create activities in which language learners can work with peers in problem-solving tasks. Then, the use of DiPietro’s Strategic Interaction and the scenario-the element that ‘lies at the heart of SI approach- offers students such opportunities listed above and, additionally, the use of the scenario can provide opportunities to enhance the development of language skills and especially speaking skills.

There is obviously a strong link between DiPietro's Strategic Interaction and conflict management. Firstly, Strategic Interaction activities enable students to be cast in various contexts in which they are reacting to questions, comments, observations, opinions, invitations, problems, and conflicts. Strategic interactions are more than a glorified role play insofar that they are open-ended allowing teachers to explore differences in language and outcomes; furthermore, they can be episodic, covering two or more events. Second, not only is there a shared context, but the participants have their own agendas and identities that are linked to the real world. There are also different types of scenarios such group, multiple-roles, databased, and open-ended ones (Long, 2000). In parallel to Strategic Interaction activities, conflict management is related to the ways or strategies one can normally handle conflicts. As a result, conflict management can provide content for Strategic Interaction activities, and by studying conflicts and conflict resolution techniques via Strategic Interaction, an individual can be made aware of sources and causes of conflicts, several conflict-handling modes, conflict situations in real life, and effective communication skills to deal with them. During this process, students who study conflict management via Strategic Interaction in the target language can enhance academic, personal, and language skills.

Additionally, Smith (2006) states that, in addition to current or relatively older methods in ELT (Grammar Translation Method, Audiolingual Method, Direct Method, Total Physical Response, Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia, Communicative Language Teaching), it is important to know newer practices which specifically address the psychological, sociological and acculturation needs of learners as well as the needs of teachers to address diverse classrooms and accountability expectations for accreditation. To this end, Smith (2006) proposes three innovative methods which are the principles of participatory language teaching, sheltered language instruction, and authentic language assessment. Briefly, participatory language teaching, like CLT, sees language learning as a social and cultural process (not something that happens to individuals in isolation). In its most

basic form, it involves offering students choices in their learning that are meaningful to them, thus giving them a chance to experience democracy and develop an understanding of their social roles and significance. Secondly, sheltered instruction draws on a wide range of pedagogical research and proposes a unified approach for effective teaching in highly diverse classrooms (i.e., settings in which students have a wide range of language abilities, learning strategies, emotional states, etc.). It also offers a simple, concrete pathway for fulfilling education of standards to institutions whose educators range from little to extensive experience. Finally, Smith (2006) explains that authentic assessment uses activities which are consistent with classroom and real-life tasks to detect growth in students and inform pedagogical choices. It departs from a transmission model of instruction (in which students memorize a set of discrete points) and instead adopts a constructivist model of learning (in which students construct meaning from multiple, scaffolded interactions). It requires students to apply knowledge and procedures to solve problems and demonstrate complex thinking and language skills. Since authentic assessment is intrinsically linked to classroom and real-life tasks, it has high reliability and content validity. These innovations in TESL methods explained by Smith (2006) focus on the link between language, learners, and society. Smith (2006) further explains that implementing the suggested innovations benefits students by providing language instruction specifically designed to stimulate their interests, models positive relationships with self and others, establishes personal autonomy, and supports social participation and positive identity development. Furthermore, the suggested techniques in authentic assessment allow a more sensitive identification of growth and development in language ability, content knowledge, and interpersonal or social skills.

The three innovative methods, which are the principles of participatory language teaching, sheltered language instruction, and authentic language assessment, are related to conflict management; and the latter can contribute to the content and design of these methods. Firstly, conflict management as a model covering social and

personal skills, real-life situations, authentic cases, and several negotiation strategies can provide content for these three innovative methods. Moreover, conflict management strategies and effective communication skills can help design activities and materials. To exemplify, regarding the strategy or the skill studied, a teacher can take into consideration the roles, parties, context, language abilities required or focused, and assessment techniques, etc. while designing a course in the light of these innovative methods and conflict management.

Regarding the literature review presented in this chapter related to conflict and conflict management, and their link with language teaching, it is possible to state that teachers who plan to help their students become conflict literate. They need to become aware of their own views about conflict so that learners can be equipped with necessary information related to these topics (Wenden, 2001). There are several key ideas in conflict literacy that teachers should understand and should help their students understand. Students should be made aware of the unavoidability of conflict and types of conflict that can arise at various levels such as interpersonal, social, national, or international levels. According to a task suggested by Wenden (2001) and a lesson plan presented in this study (Appendix C), the nature of conflict should be clarified and this might be integrated into the curriculum at the very beginning of a course or program. Secondly, conflicts have a bunch of sources and can occur because of several reasons. To exemplify, a conflict can occur when two or more people or groups who interact perceive threats to their resources, needs, or values (Kreidler 1984). Therefore, when students are made aware of several sources and causes of conflict, they can both become aware of possible reasons for conflicts and develop the language related to them. Thirdly, as explained in the current chapter by Rahim (2002), one's attitude and responses toward a conflict are of great importance. At this point of conflict management education, the distinction between conflict and problem might be important for students because Duers (2000) explains that all the people, as a society, stereotypically consider conflict to be a negative term. However, Duers (2000) states that how it is viewed and reacted to, negatively or positively,

depends upon the individual, and conflict resolution strives to eradicate the negative bias surrounding conflict and how it is handled. Therefore, clarifying the nature of conflict and helping students become aware of their own and others' conflict management strategies and attitudes are an important component of its integration into the EFL curriculum.

The teaching of several effective communication skills in addition to teaching conflict management strategies help students at interpersonal and social levels. Moreover, considering the students who have been enrolled in departments related to national or international affairs, teaching these skills and strategies in an integrated way in EFL classrooms enable them both to practice language and to be equipped with effective techniques and knowledge that will be needed in their professions. This can intrinsically motivate students, as verified by several motivation theories developed so far in the literature (Maslow, 1943; Herzberg, 1968).

Considering the approach and the assumptions discussed above, it is an EFL teacher's responsibility to put all these components together and develop learners in terms of language skills. Moreover, it might develop both conflict management strategies and effective communication skills, which are beyond language since they can help students improve communication skills at interpersonal level. As it has been mentioned above, Wenden (2001) suggests that for ESL/EFL teachers, conflict resolution education provides a wonderful opportunity for authentic communication among students. Students can talk about what they have observed and experienced and can share their opinions about conflict resolution. Furthermore, Duers (2000) expresses that the children of today are the leaders and decision-makers of tomorrow. They are the hope for change in the world. It is especially teacher's duty as citizens and members of a global community to provide these children with the widest range of opportunities and broadest forms of education possible so they are amply prepared for the long journey ahead of them.



**CHAPTER III**

**METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION, AND  
ANALYSIS**

**3.0. Presentation**

This chapter provides information on the methodology of the research. First, an overall explanation of the design of the study is presented. Then, information about the participants is provided and the characteristics of the setting are explained briefly. Finally, information about the instruments used in the study, data collection and analysis procedures are presented.

**3.1. Design of the Study**

One of the major distinctions made in discussing primary research is the difference between quantitative and qualitative research (McKay, 2005). McKay explains that in quantitative research, a researcher typically begins with a research question or hypothesis that is quite specific, while qualitative research typically starts with the assumptions that classroom learning must be studied holistically, taking into account a variety of factors in a specific classroom. As Neill (2007) also explains, quantitative research involves analysis of numerical data, while qualitative research involves analysis of data such as words (e.g., from interviews), pictures (e.g., video), or objects (e.g., an artifact). Considering these two types of research models, this study is mostly based on quantitative research; however, some qualitative research techniques are also used as a mixed type of research, which is both popular recently and makes up for some missing points that may not be clarified or explained by quantitative research techniques.

As a common research method, survey technique is used in this study. According to McKay (2005), survey is the most controlled and structured method, which is sandwiched between statistical experimental research and qualitative research because survey research can use both statistical and qualitative analysis. As a form of survey research, close-ended questions in the form of (1) alternative answer in which students have to select from one of the several options such as yes or no, (2) Likert-scale in which participants are asked to select one of several categories by checking their response, and (3) ranked answers in which participants are asked to rank their choices (McKay, 2005). Besides, an interview following the questionnaire for a sample group of participants is preferred in order to find out more about the participants' reported behavior or their responses (McKay, 2005).

The purpose of this study is to identify common types of conflicts that learners confront in the process of EFL learning; to examine and analyze EFL learners' own strategies to deal with conflicts based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning; to find out their needs in terms of effective communication skills necessary to manage conflicts; and to analyze their attitudes toward conflict management learning and their needs for conflict management strategies. In order to achieve this aim, survey research is preferred and the quantitative data gathered through the questionnaires were supported with the qualitative data obtained from the interviews with a group of representative EFL learners.

In the questionnaire, there were two parts. The first part was a demographic inventory designed to gather the demographic characteristics of the participants. In the second part, four sub-sections were designed: (1) a rank-answer questionnaire to identify common types of conflicts that learners confront in the process of EFL learning; (2) a slightly adapted, Likert-scale questionnaire which was translated to Turkish by Gümüşeli (1994) from The Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II (ROCI II) to identify EFL learners' conflict management strategies; (3) another Likert-scale questionnaire to find out their needs in terms of effective communication

skills necessary to manage conflicts; and (4) an alternative-answer questionnaire to analyze learners' attitudes toward conflict management learning and their needs for conflict management strategies.

The questionnaire results were supported with an interview consisting of a number of questions. The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed through statistical software packages (mainly SPSS) and the results of the interview were analyzed through content analysis.

### **3.2. Research Questions**

This study aims to answer the following research questions.

1. What are the most common types of conflict that students confront in the process of EFL learning?
2. What are EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts and the frequency of each particular need?
3. What are the most common strategies used by EFL learners in dealing with conflicts among peers based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning and communication in real life?
4. Do conflict management strategies of learners differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners based on how it is perceived?
  - a. Is there any significant difference between male and female learners in terms of conflict management strategies?
  - b. Is there any significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of conflict management strategies?
  - c. Does the high school attended affect the kinds of strategies that students benefit to manage conflicts?
  - d. Does duration of study at a particular university affect the kinds of strategies used to manage conflicts?

5. Do EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners?
  - a. Is there any significant difference between male and female learners in terms of the needs for effective communication skills?
  - b. Is there any significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills?
  - c. Does the high school attended affect the learners' needs for effective communication skills?
  - d. Does duration of study at a particular university affect the learners' needs for effective communication skills?
6. What are EFL learners' attitudes toward teaching and learning conflict management strategies and toward effective communication skills?

### **3.3. Hypotheses**

The hypotheses for the research questions are:

1. Conflict management strategies of learners usually differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learner.
  - a. There is a significant difference between male and female learners in terms of conflict management strategies.  
 H<sub>0</sub>. There is no significant difference between male and female learners in terms of conflict management strategies.
  - b. There is a significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of conflict management strategies.  
 H<sub>0</sub>. There is no significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of conflict management strategies.
  - c. The high school attended mostly affects the kinds of strategies that student benefit from to manage conflicts.

- H<sub>0</sub>. The high school attended does not affect the kinds of strategies that student benefit from to manage conflicts.
      - d. The duration of study at a particular university mostly affects the kinds of strategies used to manage conflicts?
      - H<sub>0</sub>. The duration of study at a particular university does not affect the kinds of strategies used to manage conflicts?
- 2. The EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners.
  - a. There is a significant difference between male and female learners in terms of the needs for effective communication skills.
    - H<sub>0</sub>. There is no significant difference between male and female learners in terms of the needs for effective communication skills.
  - b. There is a significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills.
    - H<sub>0</sub>. There is no significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills.
  - c. The high school attended affects the EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills.
    - H<sub>0</sub>. The high school attended does not affect the EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills.
  - d. The duration of study at a particular university affects the needs for effective communication skills.
    - H<sub>0</sub>. The duration of study at a particular university does not affect the needs for effective communication skills.

### **3.4. Participants**

The participants of the present study (N=339) were all students at TOBB University of Economics and Technology at the department of Foreign Languages

Education during their first or second year upon their enrollment in the university just after the university entrance examination (ÖSS).

For this study, TOBB University of Economics and Technology, the Department of Foreign Language was selected since the curriculum is very intensive covering a very long process of forty weeks and the students do not seem contented with this intensity. The survey was conducted during the last term when breakdowns, physical or emotional, begin to appear among students and when conflicts arise more than the two previous terms.

A pilot study was carried out in which a certain number of students (N total=171) were asked to participate in the study (see Table 3.1). The students were chosen from A and B levels at TOBB Economics and Technology University. The data gathered from these students (78=F, 93=M) were used to verify the validity and the reliability of the questionnaire. These statistical results of the questionnaire for the pilot study related to its reliability and validity were provided in the current chapter. Prior to this pilot study, the questionnaire was given to a few students and an expert, and these subjects were also interviewed to evaluate any mechanical, structural, or semantic problems to reinforce the face and content validity of the questionnaire.

Table 3.1 Distribution of the participant based on gender (pilot study)

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	Male	93	54,4	54,4	54,4
	Female	78	45,6	45,6	100,0
	Total	171	100,0	100,0	

All the students participating in the study and studying at the preparatory program were from Turkey and Turkish is their mother tongue. Therefore, the language used both in the questionnaire and in the interview was Turkish. The proportion of female participants is smaller than the male samples and that reflects the general distribution in the department.

### **3.5. Setting**

The preparatory school of TOBB University of Economics and Technology (ETU) is a division of the Department of Foreign Languages and Foreign Language Education that gives general, academic and TOEFL based instruction for a year. Students upon taking Student Selection Examination (Öğrenci Seçme Sınavı: ÖSS) prepared and carried out by the Student Selection and Placement Centre (Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleştirme Merkezi: ÖSYM) can have the right to enroll in an undergraduate program based on their grade for the exam. After enrollment, every student takes a preliminary exam, ETU Proficiency Test and then the TOEFL ITP which is both an achievement and placement test and it measures the participants' general English language proficiency. The students who are not eligible to get a certain score in the exam are placed into the preparatory school according to the score they get in the exam. Students are placed into three levels as A, B, and C according to their language proficiency. C, showing the highest level of proficiency can be parallel to intermediate level of language proficiency, while B level is parallel to pre-intermediate and A to beginner level of language proficiency. Therefore, the classes are highly homogenous and both workload and pacing are balanced. There is no other general proficiency test for A and B levels, and they continue to study preparatory class for the whole academic year composed of three semesters, while C level students have the opportunity to take another proficiency test upon completing the first semester, and so they may register for the courses in their own departments for the following term, but as an irregular student. If they fail to pass the exam, they continue to study at preparatory school as B level students. Unless the students, upon completing the whole academic year of study at preparatory school are eligible to get a certain grade in TOEFL ITP, they must continue to study the same course books and curriculum for another year as C level students. Moreover, if they fail again to pass the TOEFL ITP at the end of the first term in their second year, they need to continue to study at preparatory school as B level students studying the same course

books and following the same curriculum. At the end of the second year, even if they still fail to get the minimum grade, students can register for their departmental courses on the condition that they will take the TOEFL ITP again to get the minimum grade.

As a result of the highly intensive foreign language teaching curriculum and the long procedure to pass the preparatory class, they may have lots of problems and conflicts since they need to study the same course books and topics over and over again, and also they need to follow a strict program to be eligible to pass the TOEFL ITP and so the preparatory class.

### **3.6. Data Collection Instruments**

Initially, the previous and current research in the literature on conflict, conflict management and effective communication skills were considered. Afterwards, a preliminary research was conducted in order to build up an outline and a framework for both the questionnaire and the interviews. At this stage, several theses conducted at graduate level were considered and instruments used in these studies were analyzed in addition to information gathered from published sources written by authors who study these related topics in depth.

The data was collected through both qualitative and quantitative data gathering instruments. Questionnaire was used to collect this data. Based on the data gathered from the preliminary data and the results of the literature research in the related field; first, a two-part instrument was developed. It was composed of the demographic inventory in the first part and had four sub-sections in the second part, which were further elaborated in the following section. Then, interview questions were devised for an in-depth understanding of findings of the questionnaire and unearth the points that might not have been touched upon in the latter.



### **3.6.1. Questionnaire**

The survey designed to gather quantitative data was composed of two parts. In the demographic inventory, questions on gender, schools graduated, scholarships received, and years of study at the current institution were asked. In the second section, there were four interrelated sub-parts in which four separate inventories were used to analyze participants' responses related to types of conflicts, strategies used to handle conflicts, communication skills needed to deal with conflicts and opinions on teaching conflict management.

The first inventory was based on ranked answer and designed to gather information related to the type of conflicts that students encounter. In this part, some options were given in a list of 17 phrases, each referring to an instance of conflict, and these options were prepared considering four separate categories. The categories are based on conflicts related to courses, students, teachers, administration and institution, respectively. The students are supposed to choose four most common conflicts encountered without knowing under which category these conflicts are listed. Additionally, an option which lets students write any other type of conflict that might not have been listed is provided in the inventory.

The second inventory was based on The Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II (ROCI II) which was originally designed to identify conflict management strategies in organizations. This inventory was translated into Turkish by Gümüşeli (1994) to identify the conflict management strategies of administrators. In this study, after necessary permissions were taken to use the questionnaire, it was adapted to identify the conflict management strategies or behaviors of the participants, which are measured with a five-point Likert scale from 1 to 5. The ROCI-II, which was used in this study, is designed to measure five independent strategies of handling conflict. The inventory was based on the model developed by Rahim (2002) and Bonoma (1979) and this model has been the most popular one as they differentiated the styles of resolving interpersonal conflict on two basic dimensions: concern for self and concern for others. As Rahim (2002) explains,

combining the two dimensions results in five specific styles of conflict management. These five styles are Integrating (IN), Obliging (OB), Dominating (DO), Avoiding (AV), and Compromising (CO). A higher score represents the person's propensity to use a particular style, or styles, of handling interpersonal conflict. The inventory consists of 28 questions which are classified according to five types of conflict handling modes; integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising. In the inventory, the following items, 1, 5, 12, 22, 23, 28 represented the integrating style; items 2, 11, 13, 19, 24 the obliging style; items 8, 9, 18, 21, 25 the dominating style; items 3, 6, 16, 17, 26, 27 the avoiding style; items 4, 7, 10, 14, 15, 20 the compromising style. ROCI-II has been used for defining conflict management strategies of administrators in educational fields in Turkey (Abacıoğlu, 2005; Gümüşeli, 1994; Kaya, 1998; Özmen, 1997; Sözen, 2002; Uğurlu, 2001; Yıldırım, 2003). ROCI-II is an extensively used and reliable instrument for assessing conflict management strategies of administrators (Sulbiye, 2006). Reliability statistics for the Turkish version of the ROCI-II was based on the results of 40 administrators and 50 teachers who were working in high schools through a test and retest method. The reliability of the inventory was .81 for administrators and .88 for teachers at Gümüşeli's study in 1994.

Since the inventory was adapted to suit the characteristics of the students at TOBB ETU, the reliability of the inventory was tested again for the present study. According to the statistical results provided after the pilot study, the reliability of the inventory was .71 for the current study (see Table 3.2.).

Table 3.2 Reliability analysis of ROCI-II adapted for the current study

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,717	28

Compared with the reliability statistics for the Turkish version of the ROCI-II used in the previous studies, the reliability of the current study seemed lower. However, when item 22 was deleted, the reliability score changed to .81.

The third inventory in the survey was developed by the researcher based on seven types of effective communication skills and to identify students' needs for these skills. The skills were listed based on the literature research and findings. The inventory consists of a set of questions (N=14). In total seven types of communication skills were tested. These skills are problem-solving, decision making/creativity, cooperation, active listening, empathy, brainstorming, and non-violent self-expression. The responses of the subjects in this inventory are based on a five-point Likert scale from 1 to 5. Following this inventory, another 5-question inventory was developed in order to analyze students' responses further and understand the reasons behind their answers in the previous part of the same section. Considering the statistical results of the pilot study, the reliability of the interview was .93, which a fairly high value of reliability (see Table 3.3.).

Table 3.3 Reliability analysis of needs for communication skills inventory

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,936	14

The last inventory consists of a set of questions (N=14) which was developed to understand the participants' attitude toward conflict management teaching/learning and needs. Responses were based on both an alternative-answer method in which students had to select from one of the several options such as yes or no and rank-answer method in which participants were asked to rank among some choices.

### 3.6.2. Interviews

Gass and Mackey (2005) state that researchers, by using interviews, can investigate phenomena which cannot be directly observed. Interviews are particularly

useful for getting the story behind a participant’s experiences. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic. Interviews may be useful as follow-up to certain respondents to questionnaires, e.g., to further investigate their responses. (McNamara, 1999)

Therefore, an interview was designed and a set of questions were developed. The interview questions used in this study were unstructured and semi-structured. As an initial step of developing interviews, an unstructured interview was conducted with a number of students in order to build a framework about conflict, conflict types, conflict management strategies and effective communication skills. Following the information gathered from the preliminary study, a semi-structured interview with a set of main questions was designed to support and improve the interpretations of the quantitative results.

The interviews were conducted in Turkish, to help the participants express themselves better. The interviewees were chosen according to quota sampling in which the researcher decides on a quota for each category samples. In the current study, it was determined to have 6 male (3 from A level and 3 from B level program) and 6 female subjects (3 from A level and 3 from B level program). The subjects (n=12) were distributed equally considering A and B levels; males and females; and subjects’ level of achievement. Each subject represents a male or female, A level or B level, and a high, average, or low level of achievement. The details related to the representative sample for the interview are displayed in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Representative sample for the interview

	A LEVEL			B LEVEL		
	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
<b>FEMALE</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>MALE</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1

The interviews were recorded through digital sound recorders and conducted in classrooms. In order to decrease the anxiety of the interviewees and get more accurate answers, no other person was allowed to be in the room during the interviews. The interviewer asked the questions one by one and followed with new questions according to the answers of the interviewees. The aim was to make the participants think more on the topic and gather more information about the issue. The recordings were listened once and the important points were transcribed after the second listening. The results were categorized and evaluated by using content analysis.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

#### 4.0. Presentation

This chapter presents analysis of the questionnaires, the interviews and discussion of the results.

The purpose of the current study is to identify common types of conflicts that learners confront in the process of EFL learning; to examine and analyze EFL learners' own strategies to deal with conflicts based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning; to find out their needs in terms of effective communication skills necessary to manage conflicts; and to analyze their attitudes toward conflict management learning and their needs for conflict management strategies. For this purpose, descriptive statistics was used to explore the common types of conflict and EFL learners' own strategies to deal with conflicts. Inferential statistics as ANOVA was used to examine the relationship between EFL learners' conflict management strategies in the EFL classroom, their needs for conflict management, their attitudes toward conflict management learning and their gender, educational background, scholarship status, and years of study at their current school. The quantitative instrument prepared for the implementation of the research was administered to 339 EFL learners studying at the Preparatory School of TOBB University of Economics and Technology. For the qualitative part of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 representative EFL learners; each representing classes with high and low grades.

The quantitative instrument of this study consists of two parts. The first part was a demographic inventory designed to gather the demographic characteristics of the participants. In the second part, four sub-sections were designed: (1) a rank-

answer questionnaire to identify common types of conflicts that learners confront in the process of EFL learning; (2) a slightly adapted, Likert-scale questionnaire which was translated to Turkish by Gümüşeli (1994) from The Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II (ROCI II) to identify EFL learners' conflict management strategies; (3) another Likert-scale questionnaire to find out their needs in terms of effective communication skills necessary to manage conflicts; and (4) an alternative-answer questionnaire to analyze learners' attitudes toward conflict management learning and their needs for conflict management strategies.

Universe of the study comprises all the EFL learners studying English at the English preparatory schools of universities in Turkey. However, sampling of the main study covers a university in Ankara, considering the time limitations and the difficulty to reach all the universities in Turkey in a limited time span. The sample university at which the current study was carried out is TOBB University of Economics and Technology.

The quantitative data were analyzed through Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS for Windows15.0). The qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis.

Quantitative methods were employed to analyze the data by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 15.0 version. An independent sample t-test was used to understand the difference between learners' gender, scholarship status and years of study according to their conflict management strategies and needs for conflict management skills. Moreover, ANOVA test was used to see the difference between learners' educational background and their conflict management strategies and needs for conflict management skills. The factor analysis and reliability analysis of the tool were studied on the data gathered during the piloting. Since there were no problems regarding the factor analysis and the reliability analysis, the same tool was used in the main study without any adaptations. The data gathered from the Likert scale items were analyzed through descriptive statistics results of which were

illustrated by figures and frequency distribution tables. The statistical significance level was used as  $\alpha < .05$  for all the independent sample findings.

#### **4.1. Research Questions**

This study aims to answer the following research questions.

1. What are the most common types of conflict that students confront in the process of EFL learning?
2. What are EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts and the frequency of each particular need?
3. What are the most common strategies used by EFL learners in dealing with conflicts among peers based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning and communication in real life?
4. Do conflict management strategies of learners differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners based on how it is perceived?
  - a. Is there any significant difference between male and female learners in terms of conflict management strategies?
  - b. Is there any significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of conflict management strategies?
  - c. Does the high school attended affect the kinds of strategies that students benefit to manage conflicts?
  - d. Does duration of study at a particular university affect the kinds of strategies used to manage conflicts?
5. Do EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners?
  - a. Is there any significant difference between male and female learners in terms of the needs for effective communication skills?
  - b. Is there any significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills?



- c. Does the high school attended affect the learners' needs for effective communication skills?
  - d. Does duration of study at a particular university affect the learners' needs for effective communication skills?
6. What are EFL learners' attitudes toward teaching and learning conflict management strategies and toward effective communication skills?

#### **4.2. Hypotheses**

The hypotheses for the research questions are:

1. Conflict management strategies of learners usually differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learner.
  - a. There is a significant difference between male and female learners in terms of conflict management strategies.  
 H<sub>0</sub>. There is no significant difference between male and female learners in terms of conflict management strategies.
  - b. There is a significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of conflict management strategies.  
 H<sub>0</sub>. There is no significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of conflict management strategies.
  - c. The high school attended mostly affects the kinds of strategies that student benefit from to manage conflicts.  
 H<sub>0</sub>. The high school attended does not affect the kinds of strategies that student benefit from to manage conflicts.
  - d. The duration of study at a particular university mostly affects the kinds of strategies used to manage conflicts?  
 H<sub>0</sub>. The duration of study at a particular university does not affect the kinds of strategies used to manage conflicts?

2. The EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners.
  - a. There is a significant difference between male and female learners in terms of the needs for effective communication skills.

Ho. There is no significant difference between male and female learners in terms of the needs for effective communication skills.
  - b. There is a significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills.

Ho. There is no significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills.
  - c. The high school attended affects the EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills.

Ho. The high school attended does not affect the EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills.
  - d. The duration of study at a particular university affects the needs for effective communication skills.

Ho. The duration of study at a particular university does not affect the needs for effective communication skills.

#### **4.3. Descriptive Analysis Regarding the Characteristics of the Participants**

The instrument used to gather data related to the research questions in the current study were composed of two main parts. The first part was a demographic inventory designed to gather the demographic characteristics of the participants. The questions asked in this section provided data about participants' gender, educational background, scholarship status and years of study at their school. Descriptive statistics regarding the demographic features of participants is revealed in tables and graphics as figures.

Among the 339 subjects involved in the study, 59 % (n=199) were males, whereas 41 % (n=140) were females. Figure 4.1 shows the distribution of EFL learners who participated in the current study according to their gender.

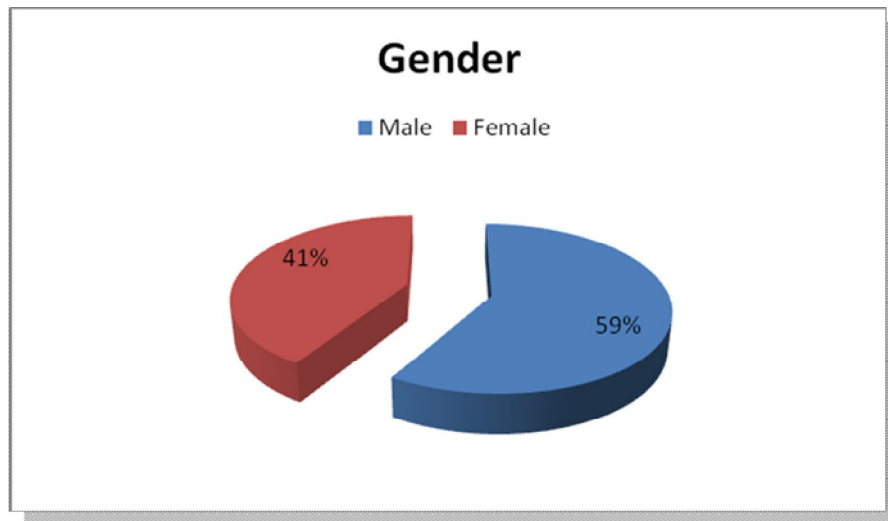


Figure 4.1 Gender distribution of the participants

In relation to the learners' educational background or last graduated school, among the 339 respondents, 40 % (n=135) were graduates from Anatolian High Schools, 16 % (n=53) were from Super High Schools, 15 % (n=51) graduated from Private Schools or Colleges, 14 % (n=46) came from State Schools, 7 % (n=25) were from Science High Schools, 5 % (n=17) from Anatolian Teacher Training High Schools, 1 % (n=3) from Vocational High Schools and 3 % (n=9) came from other schools such as a university or other vocational higher education institutions. Figure 4.2 represents the distribution of educational background of the learners.

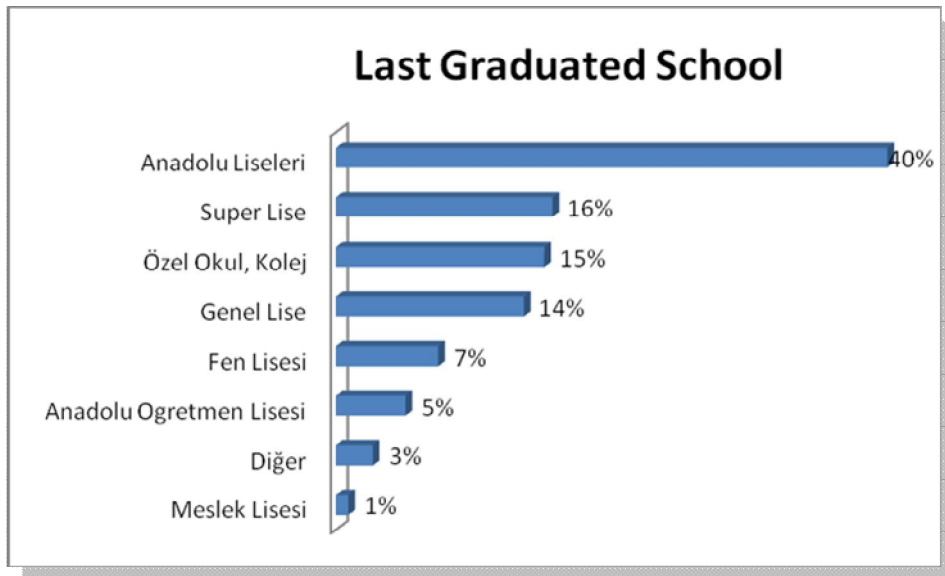


Figure 4.2 Distribution of educational background of the learners

Regarding whether the participants have scholarship or not, among 339 learners, 66 % (n=225) of the learners didn't hold a scholarship, while 34 % (n=114) had a scholarship. Figure 4.3 represents the distribution of the learners' scholarship status.

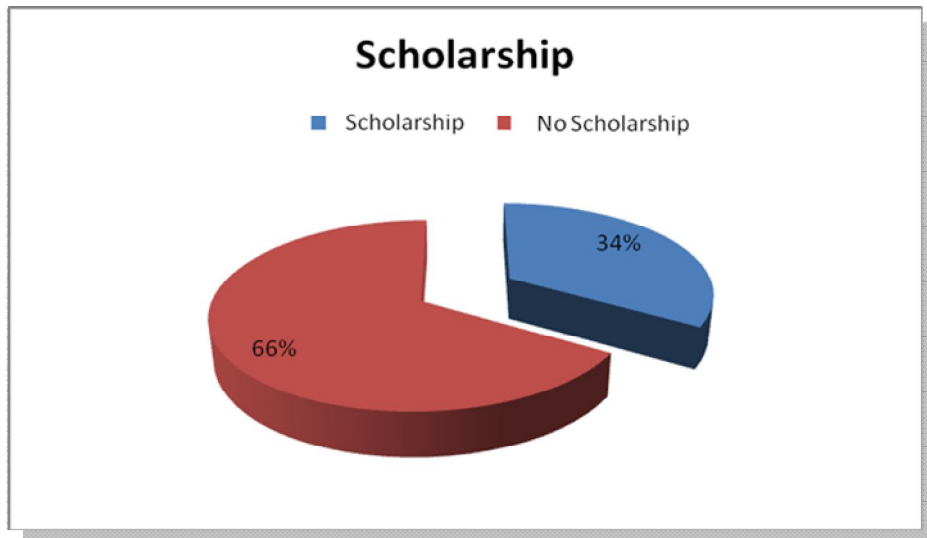


Figure 4.3 The distribution of the learners' scholarship status.

Regarding the years of study learners spent at the current institution, among 339 participants, 90 % (n=306) were in their first year at the preparatory school and university, 10 % (n=32) were in their second year, and less than 1 % (n=1) of the learners was in their third year of study. Figure 4.4 represents the distribution of the learners' year of study at preparatory school.

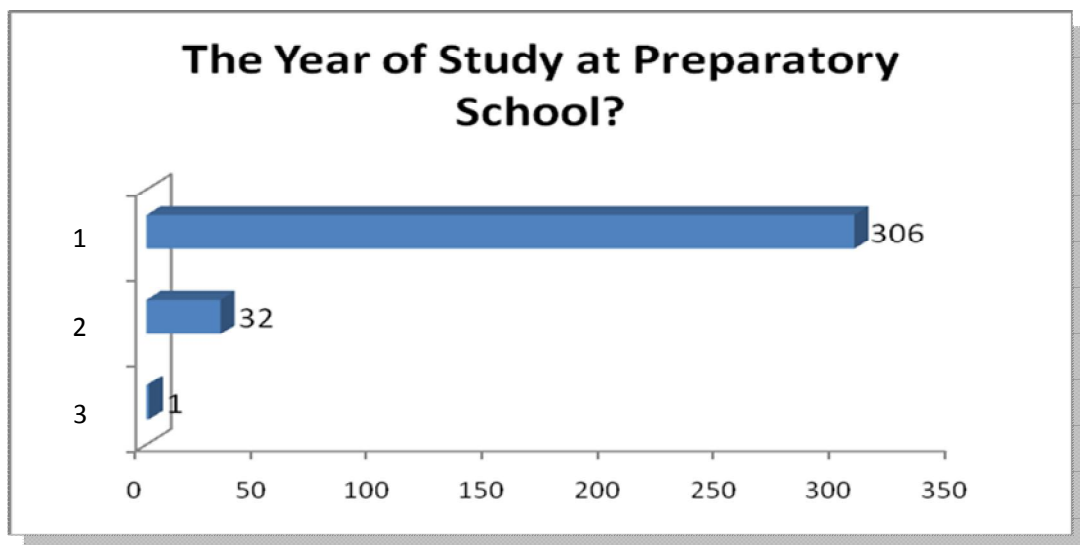


Figure 4.4 The participants' year of study at preparatory school

#### 4.4. Reliability Statistics of Questionnaire Items

Before analyzing the questionnaire, SPSS reliability analysis was conducted in order to check the reliability of the items in the questionnaires. This analysis was conducted on the second part of the instrument - Q1 and Q2 - which includes likert-type items.

Regarding the first questionnaire, The Reliability Statistics Table indicates that Cronbach's alpha for the 27-item scale is .827. Cronbach alpha is a coefficient that can be used to determine reliability of a scale. If the value of Cronbach's alpha is above 0.60, the scale is highly reliable. Therefore, the instrument used in this study could be considered to have good reliability. The result of the reliability statistics of the first questionnaire is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Reliability analysis of Q<sub>1</sub>

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,827	27

Regarding Q<sub>2</sub>, the Cronbach's alpha is 0,926. The result indicates that the instrument is highly reliable. Table 4.2 shows the reliability statistics of Q<sub>2</sub>.

Table 4.2 Reliability analysis of Q<sub>2</sub>

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,926	14

When a particular item is removed from consideration, the computation of Cronbach's alpha is a useful measure of that item's contribution to the entire test's assessment performance. In the column of "Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted", contribution of the item to the entire test is seen. For example, when a question is deleted from the scale and the Alpha statistics climbs to 0.95, that question should be examined and perhaps rewritten. However, the reliability statistics of Q<sub>1</sub> in the current study reveals that there is no such item. When the items are observed, it is concluded that more or less all items are close to each other to be part of the scale. It is seen that the extraction of any items to increase the reliability of the scale is not necessary due to the fact that the reliability of the instrument will not increase in that case. For this reason, there is no need to delete any items. Table 4.3 displays the item analysis for Q<sub>1</sub> (See Appendix A for the Turkish version of conflict management strategies inventory of the questionnaire).

Table 4.3 The item-total statistics of Q<sub>1</sub>

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. I try to investigate an issue with my friends to find a solution acceptable to us.	86,215	110,235	0,347	0,822
2. I generally try to satisfy the needs of my friends.	86,310	107,910	0,475	0,817
3. I attempt to avoid being “put on the spot” and try to keep my conflict with my friends to myself.	87,297	108,110	0,325	0,823
4. I try to integrate my ideas with those of my friends to come up with a decision jointly.	86,545	106,964	0,466	0,817
5. I try to work with my friends to find solutions to a problem which satisfy our expectations.	86,290	108,624	0,407	0,819
6. I usually avoid open discussions of my differences with my friends.	87,815	111,250	0,182	0,829
7. I try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.	86,304	110,047	0,347	0,822
8. I use my influence to get my ideas accepted.	87,624	115,196	0,016	0,835
9. I use my authority to make a decision in my favor.	87,086	110,999	0,195	0,828
10. I usually accomodate the wishes of my friends.	86,215	106,321	0,561	0,814
11. I give in to the wishes of my friends.	88,046	109,435	0,290	0,824
12. I exchange accurate information with my friends to solve a problem together.	86,380	107,620	0,453	0,818
13. I usually allow concessions to my friends.	87,241	108,640	0,350	0,821
14. I usually propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks.	86,363	109,391	0,475	0,818
15. I negotiate with my friends so that a compromise can be reached.	86,251	108,434	0,478	0,818
16. I try to stay away from disagreements with my friends.	86,812	105,537	0,467	0,816
17. I avoid an encounter with my friends.	87,403	106,308	0,377	0,820
18. I use my expertise to make a decision in my favor.	86,614	111,589	0,175	0,829

**Table continued**

<b>19.</b> I often go along with the suggestions of my friends.	86,766	108,663	0,489	0,818
<b>20.</b> I use “give and take” so that a compromise can be made.	86,974	111,231	0,207	0,827
<b>21.</b> I am generally firm in pursuing my side of the issue.	85,977	113,043	0,194	0,826
<b>22.</b> I collaborate with my friends to come up with decisions acceptable to us.	86,350	108,169	0,483	0,817
<b>23.</b> I try to satisfy the expectations of my friends.	86,561	106,452	0,526	0,815
<b>24.</b> I sometimes use my power to win a competitive situation.	86,422	109,218	0,290	0,824
<b>25.</b> I try to keep my disagreement with my friends to myself in order to avoid hard feelings.	87,452	107,162	0,367	0,821
<b>26.</b> I try to avoid unpleasant exchanges with my friends.	86,244	107,033	0,377	0,820
<b>27.</b> I try to work with my friends for a proper understanding of a problem.	86,333	105,951	0,578	0,814

Regarding the item analysis of Q<sub>2</sub>, since none of the items increases the reliability, there is no need to remove them. Table 4.4 shows the item analysis of Q<sub>2</sub> (See Appendix A for the Turkish version of EFL learners’ needs for effective communication skills inventory of the questionnaire).



Table 4.4 The item-total statistics of Q<sub>2</sub>

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. I need to be taught the skill to listen to my friends actively.	35,380	122,556	0,567	0,924
2. I need to be taught the skill to understand what my friends think or how they feel.	35,322	120,650	0,678	0,921
3. I need to be taught the skill to create ideas together with my friends.	35,307	118,644	0,741	0,918
4. I need to be taught the skill to know how to recognize and encounter a problem.	35,298	119,785	0,702	0,920
5. I need to be taught the skill to know how to evaluate and solve a problem.	35,273	120,076	0,700	0,920
6. I need to be taught the skill to know how to work on something with my friends.	35,423	119,476	0,714	0,919
7. I need to be taught the skill to cooperate effectively.	35,304	120,292	0,694	0,920
8. I need to be taught the skill to share and create ideas.	35,411	117,954	0,765	0,918
9. I need to be taught the skill to express myself without any negative feelings (revenge, hatred, and aggressiveness etc.	35,212	121,183	0,564	0,925
10. I need to be taught the skill to know how to act in the decision-making process.	35,199	120,923	0,634	0,922
11. I need to be taught the skill to listen to the other person actively without distraction	35,264	121,998	0,598	0,923
12. I need to be taught the skill to put myself into my friends' shoes and understand them.	35,656	120,805	0,700	0,920
13. I need to be taught the skill to express myself without any violence and force.	35,798	120,956	0,586	0,924
14. I need to be taught the skill to make a decision in a creative and an innovative way.	35,350	119,914	0,634	0,922

## **4.5. Results of the Questionnaire**

In the current study, five main research questions were asked to identify the relationship between learners' demographic traits and (1) common conflicts confronted by learners in EFL classrooms, (2) conflict management strategies, and (3) their needs for effective communication and conflict management skills. Moreover, learners' attitudes toward conflict management learning were analyzed through descriptive statistics. The data was gathered from the students studying at the Preparatory School of TOBB University of Economics and Technology. The results are presented in the same order with the research questions posed for the study.

### **4.5.1. Research Question 1**

In the first research question, the aim was to identify the most common types of conflict that students confront in the process of EFL learning. In order to find out the answer to this question, the data were gathered through an instrument covering a list of common conflict types and the data were subjected to descriptive analysis. Descriptive statistics was used to portray means and especially to identify the first four types of conflicts confronted by learners in EFL classrooms.

For this research question, subjects were asked to choose four most common types of conflict confronted and order them from 1 to 4. The results were analyzed in two different ways and illustrated in Table 4.5 and Table 4.6, respectively. The first analysis was conducted according to the mean scores of each type of conflict. For this analysis, different values were assigned based on in what order subjects chose four most common types of conflict. Since the order of the conflicts implies the significance attributed by the subjects, 4 points were assigned for the highest rank implying the highest frequency; 3 for the second frequent type of conflict, 2 for the third frequent type of conflict, and 1 for the least frequent type of conflict. Then, the mean scores of each type of conflict based on this formula were shown in Table 4.5, and the most frequent four types of conflict were explained. The results of the

instrument shows that the most frequent four types of conflicts confronted in EFL classrooms are respectively (1) attendance with highest mean score of 3,09, (2) assignments (m=2,53), (3) self-expression (m=2,53), and (4) course content (m=2,52). Table 4.5 lists all of the conflict types confronted in EFL classrooms.

Table 4.5 The common types of conflicts confronted by EFL learners

Descriptive Statistics		
	Mean	Order
Rules about attendance	3,09	1
Assignments	2,53	2
Self-expression	2,53	3
Course content	2,52	4
Lack of interest	2,48	5
Teachers' subject knowledge	2,45	6
Teachers' personal traits	2,45	7
Exams	2,45	8
Course program	2,38	9
Teaching strategies	2,37	10
Course material	2,33	11
Students	2,32	12
Participation	2,27	13
Ways of communication	2,26	14
Administration	2,25	15
Teachers' approach	2,22	16
Classroom and the building	1,68	17

Table 4.5 listed all the conflict types confronted in EFL classrooms based on one type of analysis. The second analysis was conducted based on the total number of the subjects who considered any of these conflicts as a type of conflict confronted. For this analysis, all four choices of the subjects were assigned with the same value regardless of the order assigned by the subjects. Then, the results were shown in Table 4.6 and compared with the results based on mean scores. As shown in Table 4.6, 224 of the subjects regarded attendance as the most common type of conflict and this is in parallel with the results based on mean scores. The responses of 165 subjects

implied that teachers' subject knowledge is the second most common type of conflict, while assignments are the third and course program is the fourth common type of conflict. Regarding the listing based on the first analysis, teachers' subject knowledge was in the sixth place; however regarding the listing based on the second analysis, almost 50 % percent of the participants identified teachers' subject knowledge as a common conflict in EFL classrooms.

Table 4.6 The common types of conflicts confronted by EFL learners

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Rules about Attendance	224	3.09	1.07
Teachers' subject knowledge	165	2.45	1.12
Assignments	142	2.53	0.99
Course program	101	2.38	1.09
Course content	92	2.52	1.15
Administration	81	2.25	1.16
Teaching strategies	79	2.37	1.01
Teachers' approach	67	2.22	1.01
Lack of interest	61	2.48	1.12
Exams	53	2.45	1.05
Course material	51	2.33	1.11
Teachers' personal traits	44	2.45	1.21
Students	44	2.32	1.05
Classroom and the building	40	1.68	0.94
Participation	37	2.27	1.07
Self-expression	36	2.53	1.06
Ways of communication	31	2.26	1.06

Both Table 4.5 and Table 4.6 list the most common types of conflict in two different ways. Regarding the the first research question, both ways of analysis bear some variations in respect to listing the most common types of conflict. However, it is obvious that rules about attendance and assignments are among the most common four types of problems leading to some conflict in EFL classrooms. The reasons behind these findings will be further analyzed with the interviews and the results will be shown in this chapter.

#### **4.5.2. Research Question 2**

In the second research question, the aim was to identify both the EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts and the frequency of each particular need. In order to find out the answer to this question, the data was gathered through a Likert scale instrument in which participants were asked to identify how frequently they need each particular skill to be taught. Regarding this instrument, the sentences are based on seven skills in total. In addition, following this instrument, another five-question tool was used and participants were also asked to identify the reasons why they think that they need or don't need each particular skill to be taught. Descriptive statistics was used to portray means and especially to identify the placement of seven types of skills needed by learners in EFL classrooms.

According to the results, the mean scores of each skill are not distinctively different and scores are very close to each other. Regarding the skills needed by the learners, problem-solving has the highest mean score with 2.82. Then, decision-making comes with 2.81. Moreover, the other skills tested are also close in terms of their mean scores (active listening 2.77; brainstorming 2.75; cooperation 2.73; empathy 2.61; self-expression 2.59). Table 4.7 shows the means and standard deviations of the items and variables.

Table 4.7 Descriptive statistics of EFL learners' need for effective communication skills

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Problem-solving	339	2,8201	1,04347
Decision-making	339	2,8127	1,03683
Active listening	339	2,7788	,95986
Brainstorming	339	2,7552	1,04085
Cooperation	339	2,7360	1,04856
Empathy	339	2,6121	,97033
Self-expression	339	2,5900	1,09869
Valid N (listwise)	339		

Regarding the Q<sub>2</sub>, only descriptive statistics was conducted to compare the mean values of each component. A factor analysis could not be carried out regarding the instrument. The purpose of the factor analysis is to look for the possible multi-dimensionality of each component with related items and even though it bears a good analysis regarding the tool, it was not possible to carry out factor analysis for this instrument since each component consists of only two items. Therefore, only descriptive statistics was used to analyze the results and factor analysis was not done in accordance with the guidance of a statistician.

In order to further analyze the mean scores of the skills in Q<sub>2</sub> and the reasons why students think that they need or don't need some specific skills to be taught, five more consecutive questions were asked. Each of these five questions was asked to refer to each answer given by the subjects in Q<sub>2</sub>. In total, six reasons were given and participants were asked to choose one reason for each answer they gave in Q<sub>2</sub> based on a Likert scale. Two of these reasons are positive that shows a tendency to learn effective communication skills. Two of them are negative showing a tendency not to learn these effective communication skills and last two indicate that the participants learnt these skills beforehand.

Table 4.8 portrays the reasons that participants stated to explain why they 'always' need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught. Regarding the results, a total of 72 % indicated that they need these skills to be

taught, while 20% indicated that they already know them. Moreover, 8 % of the participants stated that they somewhat don't need these skills to be taught.

Table 4.8 Causal analysis of learners' responses to needs for effective communication and conflict management skills

I "always" need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught because;

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	I don't care	9	2,75	3,46
	I don't want to learn	12	3,67	4,62
	I learnt it in courses	5	1,53	1,92
	I already learnt it	46	14,07	17,69
	It attracts my attention	61	18,65	23,46
	I want to learn	127	38,84	48,85
	Total	260	79,51	100
Missing	-1	67	20,49	
Total		327	100	

Table 4.9 portrays the reasons that participants gave to explain why they 'usually' need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught. Regarding the results a total of 69 % indicated that they need these skills to be taught, while 24% indicated that they already learnt them. Moreover, 7 % of the participants stated that they somewhat don't need these skills to be taught even though they mentioned that they 'always' need them to be taught.

Table 4.9 Causal analysis of learners' responses to needs for effective communication and conflict management skills

I "usually" need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught because;				
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	I don't care	8	2,45	2,76
	I don't want to learn	13	3,98	4,48
	I learnt it in courses	15	4,59	5,17
	I already learnt it	56	17,13	19,31
	It attracts my attention	138	42,20	47,59
	I want to learn	60	18,35	20,69
	Total	290	88,69	100
Missing	-1	37	11,31	
Total		327	100	

Table 4.10 portrays the reasons that participants gave to explain why they 'sometimes' need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught. Regarding the results a total of 44 % indicated that they need these skills to be taught, while 46 % indicated that they already learnt them. Moreover, 10 % of the participants stated that they somewhat don't need these skills to be taught even though they mentioned that they 'always' need them to be taught.



Table 4.10 Causal analysis of learners' responses to needs for effective communication and conflict management skills

I "sometimes" need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught because;

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	I don't care	10	3,06	3,22
	I don't want to learn	21	6,42	6,75
	I learnt it in courses	28	8,56	9,00
	I already learnt it	116	35,47	37,30
	It attracts my attention	98	29,97	31,51
	I want to learn	38	11,62	12,22
	Total	311	95,11	100
Missing	-1	16	4,89	
Total		327	100	

Table 4.11 portrays the reasons that participants gave to explain why they 'rarely' need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught. Regarding the results a total of 23 % indicated that they need these skills to be taught, while 60 % indicated that they already learnt them. Moreover, 17 % of the participants stated that they somewhat don't need these skills to be taught even though they mentioned that they 'always' need them to be taught.

Table 4.11 Causal analysis of learners' responses to needs for effective communication and conflict management skills

I "rarely" need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught because;

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	I don't care	20	6,12	6,31
	I don't want to learn	34	10,40	10,73
	I learnt it in courses	41	12,54	12,93
	I already learnt it	148	45,26	46,69
	It attracts my attention	54	16,51	17,03
	I want to learn	20	6,12	6,31
	Total	317	96,94	100
Missing	-1	10	3,06	
Total		327	100	

Table 4.12 portrays the reasons that participants gave to explain why they 'never' need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught. Regarding the results a total of 8 % indicated that they need these skills to be taught, while 56 % indicated that they already learnt them. Moreover, 36 % of the participants stated that they somewhat don't need these skills to be taught even though they mentioned that they 'always' need them to be taught.

Table 4.12 Causal analysis of learners' responses to needs for effective communication and conflict management skills

I "never" need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught because;				
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	I don't care	60	18,35	20,13
	I don't want to learn	47	14,37	15,77
	I learnt it in courses	13	3,98	4,36
	I already learnt it	154	47,09	51,68
	It attracts my attention	16	4,89	5,37
	I want to learn	8	2,45	2,68
	Total	298	91,13	100
Missing	-1	29	8,87	
Total		327	100	

Considering the results of all these five charts it is possible to conclude that the number of the students who need effective communications skills to be taught is higher than the number of students who don't need these skills to be taught in order to deal with conflicts. Table 4.13 summarizes the results and compares the percentage of both groups. Furthermore, regarding the results in this table, the percentage of students who think that they learnt these skills in courses is relatively low (1.92%~4.36) when compared with students who think that they already learnt these skills in various ways (17.69~51.68). Therefore, it can be said that students are aware of the fact that they learnt these skills in some ways, but the source is not the school or courses they have taken.

Table 4.13 Comparable analysis of learners' responses to needs for effective communication and conflict management skills

		I "always" need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught because;		I "usually" need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught because;		I "sometimes" need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught because;		I "rarely" need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught because;		I "never" need conflict management and effective communication skills to be taught because;	
		Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	(I don't care)	2,75	<b>3,46</b>	2,45	<b>2,76</b>	3,06	<b>3,22</b>	6,12	<b>6,31</b>	18,35	<b>20,13</b>
	(I don't want to learn)	3,67	<b>4,62</b>	3,98	<b>4,48</b>	6,42	<b>6,75</b>	10,40	<b>10,73</b>	14,37	<b>15,77</b>
	(I learnt it in courses)	1,53	<b>1,92</b>	4,59	<b>5,17</b>	8,56	<b>9,00</b>	12,54	<b>12,93</b>	3,98	<b>4,36</b>
	(I already learnt it)	14,07	<b>17,69</b>	17,13	<b>19,31</b>	35,47	<b>37,30</b>	45,26	<b>46,69</b>	47,09	<b>51,68</b>
	(It attracts my attention)	18,65	<b>23,46</b>	42,20	<b>47,59</b>	29,97	<b>31,51</b>	16,51	<b>17,03</b>	4,89	<b>5,37</b>
	(I want to learn)	38,84	<b>48,85</b>	18,35	<b>20,69</b>	11,62	<b>12,22</b>	6,12	<b>6,31</b>	2,45	<b>2,68</b>
	Total	79,51	<b>100</b>	88,69	<b>100</b>	95,11	<b>100</b>	96,94	<b>100</b>	91,13	<b>100</b>
Missing	-1	20,49		11,31		4,89		3,06		8,87	
Total		100		100		100		100		100	

### 4.5.3. Research Question 3

In the third research question, the aim was to explore the common conflict management strategies and styles used by EFL learners in dealing with conflicts among peers based on conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning and communication in real life. In order to find out the answer to this question, the data gathered via "The Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory (ROCI-II)" was subjected to descriptive and factor analyses. Descriptive statistics was used to portray means and standard deviations of the items and variables.

According to the results, integrating has the highest mean score with 3.74. Then, compromising comes with 3.61. Moreover, the mean scores of dominating and

obliging are respectively 3.32 and 3.08, while the mean score of avoiding is below 3 and it is the lowest score with 2.91. Table 4.14 shows the means and standard deviations of the items and variables.

Table 4.14 Descriptive statistics of conflict-handling modes

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Integrating	339	3,74	0,62
Obliging	339	3,08	0,59
Dominating	339	3,32	0,67
Avoiding	339	2,91	0,71
Compromising	339	3,61	0,52

In addition to Table 4.14 given above, Figure 4.5 illustrates the mean scores of each conflict-handling mode in a rank order.



Figure 4.5 Descriptive statistics of conflict-handling modes in rank order

Following the descriptive statistics, factor analysis was conducted. The purpose of the factor analysis was to look for the possible multi-dimensionality of the

negotiation strategies. Before the analysis, questionnaire items were grouped with the help of factor analysis. As a result of factor analysis, constructs were formed. The rotated solution yielded 5 interpretable factors, the eigenvalues of which are given in tables.

For this purpose, the factor analysis of Q<sub>1</sub> representing the first part of the scale was made. As shown in Table 4.15, the 27 questions in Q<sub>1</sub> accounted for 53, 32 % of the total variance for 5 factor conflict-handling modes. Table 4.15 illustrates the results of total variance. According to the results, Factor 1 was identified as ‘integrating’ and it has 5 items. Integrating as a factor explains 23.51 % of the total variance. Factor 2 was identified as ‘avoiding’ and included 6 items explaining 11.19 % of the total variance. Factor 3 “dominating” comprised 5 items explaining 9.49 % of the total variance. Factor 4 was identified as ‘obliging’ and included 5 items explaining 4.89% of the variance. Lastly, factor 5 was identified as “compromising” and it had 6 items explaining 4.23% of the total variance. It is clear that the first few factors explain relatively large amounts of variance whereas subsequent factors cover only small amounts of variance. For this reason we take a criterion of 50 % of variances.

Table 4.15 Total variance explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6,35	23,51	23,51	6,35	23,51	23,51	5,29	19,60	19,60
2	3,02	11,19	34,71	3,02	11,19	34,71	3,15	11,66	31,27
3	2,56	9,49	44,19	2,56	9,49	44,19	2,60	9,63	40,90
4	1,32	4,89	49,09	1,32	4,89	49,09	1,83	6,78	47,68
5	1,14	4,23	53,32	1,14	4,23	53,32	1,52	5,64	53,32
6	1,11	4,11	57,42						
7	1,04	3,85	61,27						
8	0,87	3,24	64,51						
9	0,85	3,14	67,65						
10	0,81	3,01	70,65						
11	0,71	2,64	73,30						
12	0,67	2,50	75,79						
13	0,62	2,28	78,07						
14	0,59	2,17	80,24						
15	0,56	2,09	82,34						
16	0,55	2,03	84,36						
17	0,53	1,97	86,33						
18	0,48	1,79	88,12						
19	0,47	1,73	89,85						
20	0,44	1,64	91,49						
21	0,41	1,53	93,02						
22	0,37	1,36	94,38						
23	0,34	1,26	95,64						
24	0,32	1,19	96,83						
25	0,31	1,15	97,98						
26	0,30	1,10	99,08						
27	0,25	0,92	100						

Analysis results of factor groups in Q1 and their correlation coefficients are presented in Tables 4.16. Factor loadings are the partial correlation between the item and the rotated factor. A minimum factor loading of .30 is a criterion for considering an item to be a part of a factor. As it is seen in Table 4.16, all the items have factor loadings greater than 0.30. This means that all items have significant loadings. The items cluster into 5 groups, integrating, avoiding, dominating, obliging, compromising defined by high loadings. The names of the factors are presented in the right column of the tables. The five-factor solution for 27 items accounted for 53.32 % of the total variance. Moreover, according to the degree of loading, they are grouped successfully.



Table 4.16 Factor loading for Q<sub>1</sub>

I try to investigate an issue with my friends to find a solution acceptable to us.	0,52		<b>Integrating</b>
I try to work with my friends to find solutions to a problem which satisfy our expectations.	0,65		
I exchange accurate information with my friends to solve a problem together.	0,67		
I collaborate with my friends to come up with decisions acceptable to us.	0,68		
I try to work with my friends for a proper understanding of a problem.	0,78		
I try to integrate my ideas with those of my friends to come up with a decision jointly.	0,62		<b>Avoiding</b>
I usually avoid open discussions of my differences with my friends.	0,60		
I try to stay away from disagreements with my friends.	0,40		
I avoid an encounter with my friends.	0,60		
I try to keep my disagreement with my friends to myself in order to avoid hard feelings.	0,68		
I try to avoid unpleasant exchanges with my friends.	0,50		
I use my influence to get my ideas accepted.	0,48		<b>Dominating</b>
I use my authority to make a decision in my favor.	0,73		
I use my expertise to make a decision in my favor.	0,74		
I am generally firm in pursuing my side of the issue.	0,44		
I sometimes use my power to win a competitive situation.	0,70		
I generally try to satisfy the needs of my friends.	0,34		<b>Obliging</b>
I give in to the wishes of my friends.	0,43		
I usually allow concessions to my friends.	0,39		
I often go along with the suggestions of my friends.	0,60		
I try to satisfy the expectations of my friends.	0,63		
I attempt to avoid being “put on the spot” and try to keep my conflict with my friends to myself.	0,62		<b>Compromising</b>
I try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.	-0,58		
I usually accomodate the wishes of my friends.	0,71		
I usually propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks.	0,66		
I negotiate with my friends so that a compromise can be reached.	0,68		
I use “give and take” so that a compromise can be made.	0,48		

#### 4.5.4. Research Question 4

The fourth research question of the current study was “Do conflict management strategies of learners differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners?” This research question was divided into four sub-questions to test the relationship between the conflict management strategies of EFL learners and each of four variables (gender, last graduated school, scholarship status and years of study at their current school).

The first variable of research question 4 aimed to explore whether there is a significant difference between male and female learners’ conflict management strategies. In Table 4.17, the mean scores of sub-groups of conflict-handling modes are displayed according to gender. It has been observed that the means of males and females are slightly different from each other. In order to understand whether this mean difference is statistically significant or not, independent t-test was used.

Table 4.17 Descriptive statistics of conflict-handling modes based on gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Integrating	Male	199	3,6884	,60621	,04297
	Female	140	3,8019	,64307	,05435
Obliging	Male	199	3,1111	,53483	,03791
	Female	140	3,0318	,64911	,05486
Dominating	Male	199	3,4088	,64256	,04555
	Female	140	3,1896	,69356	,05862
Avoiding	Male	199	2,9698	,68585	,04862
	Female	140	2,8321	,73244	,06190
Compromising	Male	199	3,6085	,51101	,03622
	Female	140	3,6086	,52294	,04420

Independent samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the mean differences in the two groups (Table 4.18). This analysis has been done to find out if there are any significant differences between the two groups. Under the assumption of two unrelated groups, independent-samples t-test is used. Findings showed that there is a

significant mean difference in conflict management strategies between males and females in terms of dominating.

Interpretation of the independent t-test table has two stages. The homogeneity of the variance between the two groups is examined using Levene's Test for Equality of Variances. If the 'Sig.' (p-value) is greater than 0.05, it can be assumed that the equality of variance assumption is not violated. It is possible to test the hypothesis using the t-test row of results labeled Equal variances assumed. Since the value of sig (2-tailed) of dominating is smaller than 0.05, it can be concluded that regarding dominating, there is a significant mean difference between males and females. Therefore, we fail to reject the hypothesis that there is a significant difference between male and female learners in terms of conflict management strategies. As a result, it can be concluded that the frequency of dominating conflict management strategy of EFL learners differ according to their gender while there is no significant difference in terms of other conflict management strategies.

Table 4.18 Independent t-test for conflict-handling modes and gender

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Integrating	Equal variances assumed	0,412	0,522	-	337	0,099	-0,113
	Equal variances not assumed			1,638	288,082	0,103	-0,113
Obliging	Equal variances assumed	3,254	0,072	1,229	337	0,220	0,079
	Equal variances not assumed			1,189	261,591	0,236	0,079
Dominating	Equal variances assumed	0,512	0,475	2,992	337	<b>0,003</b>	0,219
	Equal variances not assumed			2,952	284,684	0,003	0,219
Avoiding	Equal variances assumed	0,153	0,696	1,770	337	0,078	0,138
	Equal variances not assumed			1,749	286,772	0,081	0,138
Compromising	Equal variances assumed	0,069	0,793	-	337	1,000	0,000
	Equal variances not assumed			0,001	295,019	1,000	0,000

The second variable in the research question 4 was the last school attended or graduated. A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to evaluate the relationship between EFL learners' conflict management strategies and the school they graduated from before studying at their current school. The independent variable the last graduated school included six types: Anatolian High Schools, Anatolian Teacher Training High Schools, Science Schools, General High Schools, Private High Schools and Super High Schools.

Table 4.19 shows the analysis of variance for testing the hypothesis that there is a significant difference in the EFL learners' conflict-handling modes according to six types of last graduated schools. By analyzing this table, it is possible to tell whether we have enough evidence to reject this hypothesis. By looking at the observed significance level, which is labeled Sig, whether the hypothesis is rejected or not is seen. Since  $0.044 < 0.05$  for compromising we fail to reject the hypothesis that the high school attended or last graduated school affects the kinds of strategies that the learners benefit from to manage conflicts. In conclusion, there are significant differences between group categories in just compromising.

Table 4.19 One-way ANOVA test for last graduated schools and conflict-handling modes

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Integrating	Between Groups	3,613	5	,723	1,843	,104
	Within Groups	125,862	321	,392		
	Total	129,474	326			
Obliging	Between Groups	3,189	5	,638	1,940	,087
	Within Groups	105,513	321	,329		
	Total	108,702	326			
Dominating	Between Groups	1,195	5	,239	,523	,759
	Within Groups	146,595	321	,457		
	Total	147,790	326			
Avoiding	Between Groups	3,755	5	,751	1,534	,179
	Within Groups	157,144	321	,490		
	Total	160,899	326			
Compromising	Between Groups	3,028	5	,606	2,311	<b>,044</b>
	Within Groups	84,135	321	,262		
	Total	87,163	326			

In order to further analyze the results for compromising, Table 4.20 displays the difference of mean scores of learners from six types of last graduated schools, and students from super high schools and Anatolian high schools employ compromising strategies more and they try to come up with a win-win situation in their conflicts. Moreover, Table 4.20 implies that students from all these high schools employ compromising strategies commonly since all mean scores are above 2,50.

Table 4.20 Descriptive statistics of last graduated school and compromising strategies

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Compromising	Anatolian High Schools	135	3,67	0,51
	Anatolian Teacher Training High School	17	3,43	0,41
	Science High School	25	3,60	0,50
	General High School	46	3,58	0,59
	Private High School, College	51	3,45	0,52
	Super High School	53	3,71	0,48
	Total	327	3,61	0,52

As for the third variable in the research question 4, the relationship between scholarship status and conflict management strategies is examined. For this purpose, descriptive statistics was conducted. As Table 4.21 shows, except for dominating strategies, the mean values of the learners who hold a scholarship are slightly higher than those who hold no scholarship in integrating, obliging, avoiding and compromising strategies.

Table 4.21 Descriptive statistics of conflict-handling modes and scholarship status

	Scholarship Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Integrating	Scholarship	114	3,7567	,64221	,06015
	Non-scholarship	225	3,7244	,61463	,04098
Obliging	Scholarship	114	3,1114	,55507	,05199
	Non-scholarship	225	3,0616	,60028	,04002
Dominating	Scholarship	114	3,2816	,66230	,06203
	Non-scholarship	225	3,3369	,67732	,04515
Avoiding	Scholarship	114	3,1091	,66048	,06186
	Non-scholarship	225	2,8136	,71141	,04743
Compromising	Scholarship	114	3,6471	,52094	,04879
	Non-scholarship	225	3,5890	,51233	,03416

Furthermore, when the Sig (2-tailed) values are considered, avoiding is the single group that has a significant difference between scholarship since the Sig 2 value is lower than 0,05. In fact, Table 4.22 shows the analysis of variance for testing the hypothesis that there is a significant difference between scholarship status and conflict management strategies of EFL learners. As a result, we fail to reject the hypothesis that there is a significant difference between students with or without scholarship and conflict-handling modes of EFL learners. The findings imply that students with a scholarship tend to employ avoiding strategies more than students without a scholarship.

Table 4.22 Independent t-test for conflict-handling modes and scholarship status

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference
Integrating	Equal variances assumed	0,593	0,442	0,450	337	0,653	0,032
	Equal variances not assumed			0,444	218,484	0,658	0,032
Obliging	Equal variances assumed	0,462	0,497	0,741	337	0,459	0,050
	Equal variances not assumed			0,760	243,471	0,448	0,050
Dominating	Equal variances assumed	0,056	0,813	-0,716	337	0,475	-0,055
	Equal variances not assumed			-0,721	231,674	0,472	-0,055
Avoiding	Equal variances assumed	0,388	0,534	3,699	337	<b>0,000</b>	0,295
	Equal variances not assumed			3,790	242,605	0,000	0,295
Compromising	Equal variances assumed	0,378	0,539	0,980	337	0,328	0,058
	Equal variances not assumed			0,974	223,777	0,331	0,058

As for the fourth variable in the research question 4, the relationship between how long learners have been a student at that particular university and conflict management strategies is examined. For this purpose, descriptive statistics was conducted. As Table 4.23 shows, the mean values of the learners who are in their first year in their current institution are slightly lower than those who are in their second year of study in terms of integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising strategies.

Table 4.23 Descriptive statistics of conflict-handling modes and the year of study

	The year of study at the current university?		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
	1	2				
Integrating	1		306	3,7270	,62655	,03582
	2		32	3,7875	,58792	,10393
Obliging	1		306	3,0714	,59149	,03381
	2		32	3,1281	,52807	,09335
Dominating	1		306	3,3111	,67896	,03881
	2		32	3,3781	,61565	,10883
Avoiding	1		306	2,9000	,71110	,04065
	2		32	3,0083	,66833	,11815
Compromising	1		306	3,6015	,51527	,02946
	2		32	3,6531	,51228	,09056

On the other hand, when the Sig (2-tailed) values are considered, there is no significant difference between learners who are in their first or second year in terms of the conflict management strategies they employ in their EFL classes because none of the Sig. (2-tailed) values is lower than 0.05. In fact, Table 4.24 shows the analysis of variance for testing the hypothesis that the duration of study at a particular university affects the kinds of strategies used to manage conflicts. As a result, we fail to reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the year of study and conflict-handling strategies of EFL learners. Therefore, the findings imply that duration of study at a particular university has no significant effect on conflict management strategies employed by EFL learners.



Table 4.24 Independent t-test for conflict-handling modes and the year of study

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference
Integrating	Equal variances assumed	1,044	0,308	-0,522	336	0,602	-0,060
	Equal variances not assumed			-0,550	38,746	0,585	-0,060
Obliging	Equal variances assumed	0,435	0,510	-0,521	336	0,603	-0,057
	Equal variances not assumed			-0,571	39,599	0,571	-0,057
Dominating	Equal variances assumed	0,169	0,681	-0,536	336	0,593	-0,067
	Equal variances not assumed			-0,580	39,323	0,565	-0,067
Avoiding	Equal variances assumed	0,202	0,653	-0,824	336	0,410	-0,108
	Equal variances not assumed			-0,867	38,719	0,391	-0,108
Compromising	Equal variances assumed	0,004	0,949	-0,539	336	0,590	-0,052
	Equal variances not assumed			-0,542	37,863	0,591	-0,052

#### 4.5.5. Research Question 5

The fifth research question of the current study was “Do EFL learners’ needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners?” This research question was divided into four sub-questions to test the relationship between the conflict management strategies of EFL learners and each of four variables (gender, last graduated school, scholarship status and years of study at their current school).

The first variable of research question 5 aimed to explore whether there is a significant difference between male and female learners’ needs for effective communication and conflict management skills. In Table 4.25, the mean scores of

sub-groups of learners' needs are displayed according to gender. It has been observed that the mean scores of males and females are slightly different from each other and values gathered from males are higher than the values gathered by females for all skills. In order to understand whether this mean difference is statistically significant or not, independent t-test was used.

Table 4.25 Descriptive statistics of EFL learners' needs in terms of gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Problem-solving	Male	199	2,8367	1,00238	,07106
	Female	140	2,7964	1,10248	,09318
Decision-making	Male	199	2,8291	1,01924	,07225
	Female	140	2,7893	1,06458	,08997
Cooperation	Male	199	2,8065	,99697	,07067
	Female	140	2,6357	1,11375	,09413
Active listening	Male	199	2,8794	,87935	,06234
	Female	140	2,6357	1,05060	,08879
Empathy	Male	199	2,6960	,89006	,06309
	Female	140	2,4929	1,06613	,09010
Brainstorming	Male	199	2,8216	,97031	,06878
	Female	140	2,6607	1,13046	,09554
Self-expression	Male	199	2,7362	1,03938	,07368
	Female	140	2,3821	1,14993	,09719

Independent samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the mean differences in the two groups (Table 4.26). This analysis has been done to find out if there are any significant differences between the two groups. Under the assumption of two unrelated groups, independent-samples t test is used. Findings showed that there is a significant mean difference in EFL learners' need for effective communication skills between males and females in terms of active listening and self-expression.

Interpretation of the independent t-test table has two stages. The homogeneity of the variance between the two groups is examined using Levene's Test for Equality of Variances. If the 'Sig.' (p-value) is greater than 0.05, it can be assumed that the equality of variance assumption is not violated. It is possible to test the hypothesis using the t-test row of results labeled Equal variances assumed. Since the value of Sig

(2-tailed) of active listening and self-expression is smaller than 0.05, it can be concluded that there is a significant mean difference between males and females in terms of active listening and self-expression. Therefore, we failed to reject the hypothesis that there is a significant difference between male and female learners in terms of EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills. As a result, it can be concluded that the frequency of the needs for active listening and self-expression of EFL learners differ according to their gender while there is no significant difference in terms of other skills.

Table 4.26: Independent t-test for EFL learners' needs and gender

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Problem-solving	Equal variances assumed	2,082	0,150	0,349	337	0,727	0,040
	Equal variances not assumed			0,344	280,974	0,731	0,040
Decision-making	Equal variances assumed	0,213	0,644	0,348	337	0,728	0,040
	Equal variances not assumed			0,345	291,094	0,730	0,040
Cooperation	Equal variances assumed	3,359	0,068	1,479	337	0,140	0,171
	Equal variances not assumed			1,451	277,891	0,148	0,171
Active-listening	Equal variances assumed	6,026	0,015	2,316	337	<b>0,021</b>	0,244
	Equal variances not assumed			2,246	264,651	0,026	0,244
Empathy	Equal variances assumed	6,222	0,013	1,905	337	0,058	0,203
	Equal variances not assumed			1,847	264,148	0,066	0,203
Brainstorming	Equal variances assumed	8,667	0,003	1,403	337	0,161	0,161
	Equal variances not assumed			1,367	269,588	0,173	0,161
Self-expression	Equal variances assumed	0,981	0,323	2,954	337	<b>0,003</b>	0,354
	Equal variances not assumed			2,903	279,808	0,004	0,354

The second variable in the research question 5 was the last school attended or graduated. A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to evaluate the relationship between EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills and the school they

graduated from before studying at their current school. The independent variable the last graduated school included six types: Anatolian High Schools, Anatolian Teacher Training High Schools, Science Schools, General High Schools, Private High Schools and Super High Schools.

Table 4.27 shows the analysis of variance for testing the hypothesis that there is a significant difference in the EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills according to six types of last graduated schools. By looking at the observed significance level, which is labeled Sig, whether the hypothesis is rejected or not is seen. Since  $0.015 < 0.05$  for decision-making we fail to reject the hypothesis that the high school attended or last graduated school affects the EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills. Hence, the findings imply students from different high schools have different needs in terms of decision-making.

Table 4.27 One-way ANOVA test for last graduated schools and EFL learners' needs

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Problem solving	Between Groups	4,501	5	,900	,831	,528
	Within Groups	347,683	321	1,083		
	Total	352,183	326			
Decision-making	Between Groups	14,742	5	2,948	2,855	<b>,015</b>
	Within Groups	331,503	321	1,033		
	Total	346,245	326			
Cooperation	Between Groups	7,983	5	1,597	1,492	,192
	Within Groups	343,417	321	1,070		
	Total	351,401	326			
Active listening	Between Groups	8,119	5	1,624	1,821	,108
	Within Groups	286,318	321	,892		
	Total	294,437	326			
Empathy	Between Groups	8,157	5	1,631	1,791	,114
	Within Groups	292,404	321	,911		
	Total	300,561	326			
Brainstorming	Between Groups	10,635	5	2,127	2,068	,069
	Within Groups	330,218	321	1,029		
	Total	340,853	326			
Self-expression	Between Groups	6,125	5	1,225	1,022	,405
	Within Groups	384,963	321	1,199		
	Total	391,089	326			

Table 4.28 displays the difference of mean scores of learners from six types of last graduated schools in terms of decision making skill.

Table 4.28 Descriptive statistics of last graduated school and need for decision-making

		N	Mean
Decision-making	Anatolian High Schools	135	2,8
	Anatolian Teacher Training HS	17	2,9
	Science High School	25	2,58
	General High School	46	2,4
	Private High School, College	51	3
	Super High School	53	3,1
	Total	327	2,8

As for the third variable in the research question 5, the relationship between scholarship status and EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills is examined. For this purpose, descriptive statistics was conducted. As Table 4.29 shows, except for the skills of problem solving and brainstorming, the mean values of the learners who hold a scholarship are slightly higher than those without scholarship in decision-making, cooperation, active listening, empathy, and self-expression.

Table 4.29 Descriptive statistics of EFL learners' needs and scholarship status

	Scholarship status?	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Problem-solving	Scholarship	114	2,7412	1,02886	,09636
	Non-scholarship	225	2,8600	1,05081	,07005
Decision-making	Scholarship	114	2,8158	1,03322	,09677
	Non-scholarship	225	2,8111	1,04095	,06940
Cooperation	Scholarship	114	2,7544	1,02889	,09636
	Non-scholarship	225	2,7267	1,06053	,07070
Active listening	Scholarship	114	2,8289	,95201	,08916
	Non-scholarship	225	2,7533	,96492	,06433
Empathy	Scholarship	114	2,7018	,95176	,08914
	Non-scholarship	225	2,5667	,97856	,06524
Brainstorming	Scholarship	114	2,7237	1,04985	,09833
	Non-scholarship	225	2,7711	1,03825	,06922
Self-expression	Scholarship	114	2,6974	1,09225	,10230
	Non-scholarship	225	2,5356	1,10036	,07336

Furthermore, the Sig (2-tailed) values were considered. Since all of the values in the column of Sig. are higher than 0.05, the hypothesis that scholarship status of EFL learners affects their needs for effective communication skills is rejected. Moreover, as shown on Table 4.30, since all Sig values are higher than 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills according to their scholarship status. As a result, it can be concluded that whether the learners hold a scholarship or not does not affect their needs for effective communication skills.

Table 4.30 Independent t-test for EFL learners' needs and scholarship status

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Problem-solving	Equal variances assumed	0,018	0,892	-0,990	337	0,323	-0,119
	Equal variances not assumed			-0,997	231,401	0,320	-0,119
Decision-making	Equal variances assumed	0,007	0,933	0,039	337	0,969	0,005
	Equal variances not assumed			0,039	228,612	0,969	0,005
Cooperation	Equal variances assumed	0,319	0,573	0,230	337	0,819	0,028
	Equal variances not assumed			0,232	233,300	0,817	0,028
Active listening	Equal variances assumed	0,101	0,751	0,685	337	0,494	0,076
	Equal variances not assumed			0,688	229,836	0,492	0,076
Empathy	Equal variances assumed	0,059	0,808	1,212	337	0,226	0,135
	Equal variances not assumed			1,223	232,778	0,223	0,135
Brainstorming	Equal variances assumed	0,010	0,921	-0,396	337	0,692	-0,047
	Equal variances not assumed			-0,394	224,881	0,694	-0,047
Self-expression	Equal variances assumed	0,009	0,923	1,282	337	0,201	0,162
	Equal variances not assumed			1,285	228,600	0,200	0,162

As for the last variable in the research question 5, the relationship between the duration of study of a student at a particular university and EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills is examined. For this purpose, descriptive statistics was conducted. As Table 4.31 shows, the mean values of the learners who are studying at their current institution for the first year are all lower than those who are in their second year of study in respect to all skills examined in the current study.

Table 4.31 Descriptive statistics of EFL learners' needs and the year of study

	The year of study at the current university?	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Problem-solving	1	306	2,8154	1,03594	,05922
	2	32	2,7969	1,07658	,19031
Decision-making	1	306	2,8382	1,03106	,05894
	2	32	2,5156	1,03553	,18306
Cooperation	1	306	2,7614	1,05517	,06032
	2	32	2,4375	,91361	,16150
Active listening	1	306	2,7827	,96716	,05529
	2	32	2,7031	,88772	,15693
Empathy	1	306	2,6340	,96667	,05526
	2	32	2,3750	,99190	,17535
Brainstorming	1	306	2,7663	1,04418	,05969
	2	32	2,5938	,97912	,17309
Self-expression	1	306	2,5980	1,07895	,06168
	2	32	2,4375	1,22310	,21622

On the other hand, when the Sig (2-tailed) values are considered, there is no significant difference between learners who are in their first or second year in terms of their needs for effective communication skills because none of the Sig. (2-tailed) values is lower than 0.05. In fact, Table 4.32 shows the analysis of variance for testing the hypothesis that the duration of study of a student at a particular university affects their need for effective communication skills. As a result, we fail to reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the year of study and EFL learners' need for effective communication skills. The findings show that duration of a study at a particular university has no effect on EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills.



Table 4.32 Independent t-test for EFL learners' needs and the year of study

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Problem-solving	Equal variances assumed	0,191	0,663	0,096	336	0,924	0,018
	Equal variances not assumed			0,093	37,259	0,927	0,018
Decision-making	Equal variances assumed	0,058	0,810	1,683	336	0,093	0,323
	Equal variances not assumed			1,678	37,720	0,102	0,323
Cooperation	Equal variances assumed	0,642	0,424	1,672	336	0,095	0,324
	Equal variances not assumed			1,879	40,172	0,068	0,324
Active listening	Equal variances assumed	0,337	0,562	0,446	336	0,656	0,080
	Equal variances not assumed			0,478	39,112	0,635	0,080
Empathy	Equal variances assumed	0,088	0,767	1,439	336	0,151	0,259
	Equal variances not assumed			1,409	37,426	0,167	0,259
Brainstorming	Equal variances assumed	0,100	0,753	0,895	336	0,372	0,173
	Equal variances not assumed			0,943	38,757	0,352	0,173
Self-expression	Equal variances assumed	0,162	0,688	0,791	336	0,430	0,161
	Equal variances not assumed			0,714	36,226	0,480	0,161

#### 4.5.6. Research question 6

The sixth research question investigates EFL learners' opinions about and attitudes toward teaching and learning conflict management strategies and toward effective communication skills. The instrument designed to gather data regarding the research question was based on an alternative-answer instrument in which the participants were expected to give responses as yes or no and skip some following items depending on their responses. In addition, there was one item in which the subjects were expected to rank their answer among some options.

As for the results of the analysis, descriptive statistics was used and results are presented in the form of charts. Regarding the first item in this questionnaire, Table 4.33 shows that 18 % of learners (n=61) stated that skills and strategies helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements are taught in courses, while 82 % (n=278) stated that they are not taught. As also illustrated in Figure 4.6, the learners giving the response ‘no’ for the current question is almost five times higher than those who said ‘yes’.

Table 4.33 Descriptive statistics for item no 1

Are skills and strategies helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements taught in courses?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	61	17,9941	17,9941	17,9941
	No	278	82,0059	82,0059	100
	Total	339	100	100	



Figure 4.6 Distribution of respondents for item no 1

Regarding the second item in this questionnaire, Table 4.34 shows that 81 % of subjects (n=277) did not state a specific response because they needed to skip the next 3 questions upon saying ‘no’ for the previous item. Considering this fact and also by excluding those subjects with N/A, Figure 4.7 shows valid percent values of only ‘yes’ and ‘no’ responses. According to Figure 4.7, 31 % (n=19) stated a ‘no’, while 69 % (n=43) stated that skills and strategies taught in courses to help deal with conflicts meet their needs.

Table 4.34 Descriptive statistics for item no 2

Do the skills and strategies that are taught in courses to manage conflicts and disagreements meet your needs?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	43	12,68437	69,4	69,4
	No	19	5,60472	31,6	100
	N/A	277	81,71091	-	
Total		339	100	100	

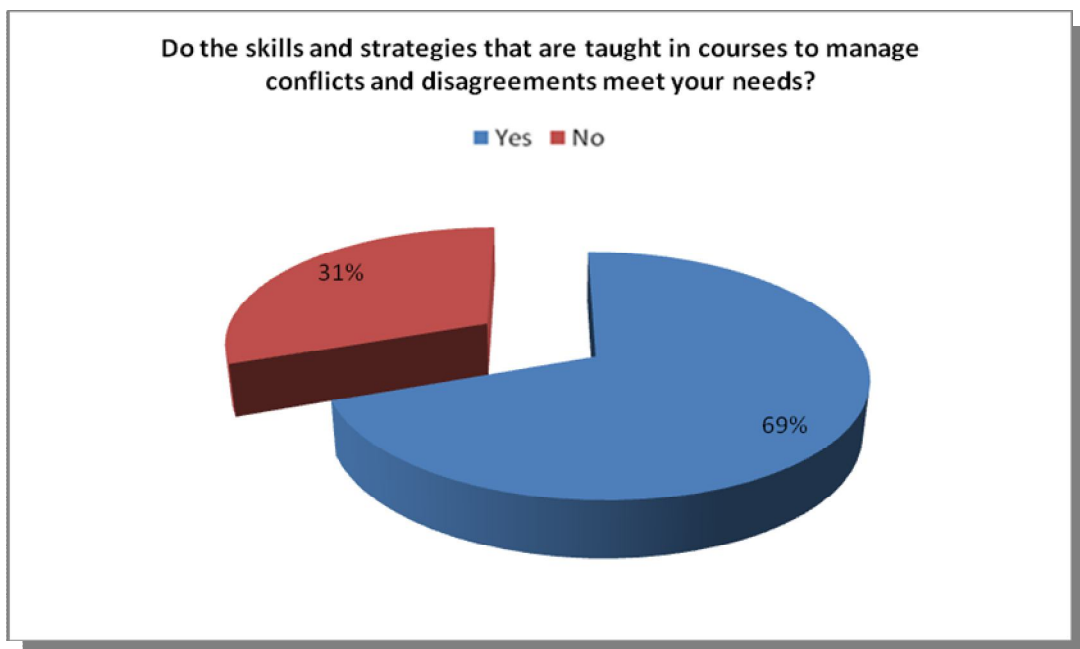


Figure 4.7 Distribution of respondents for item no 2

Regarding the results of the third item in this questionnaire, Table 4.35 shows that 81 % of subjects (n=267) did not state a specific response because they needed to skip the next 3 questions upon saying ‘no’ for the item 1 as it was also the case in the previous item. Considering this fact and also by excluding those subjects with N/A, Figure 4.8 shows 39 % (n=24) stated a ‘no’, while 61 % (n=38) stated that skills and strategies taught in courses to help deal with conflicts can be used by them in lessons.

Table 4.35 Descriptive statistics for item no 3

In the lessons, can you use the skills and strategies that are taught in courses to manage conflicts and disagreements?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	38	11,20944	61,3	61,3
	No	24	7,079646	38,7	100
	N/A	277	81,71091	-	
	Total	339	100	100	

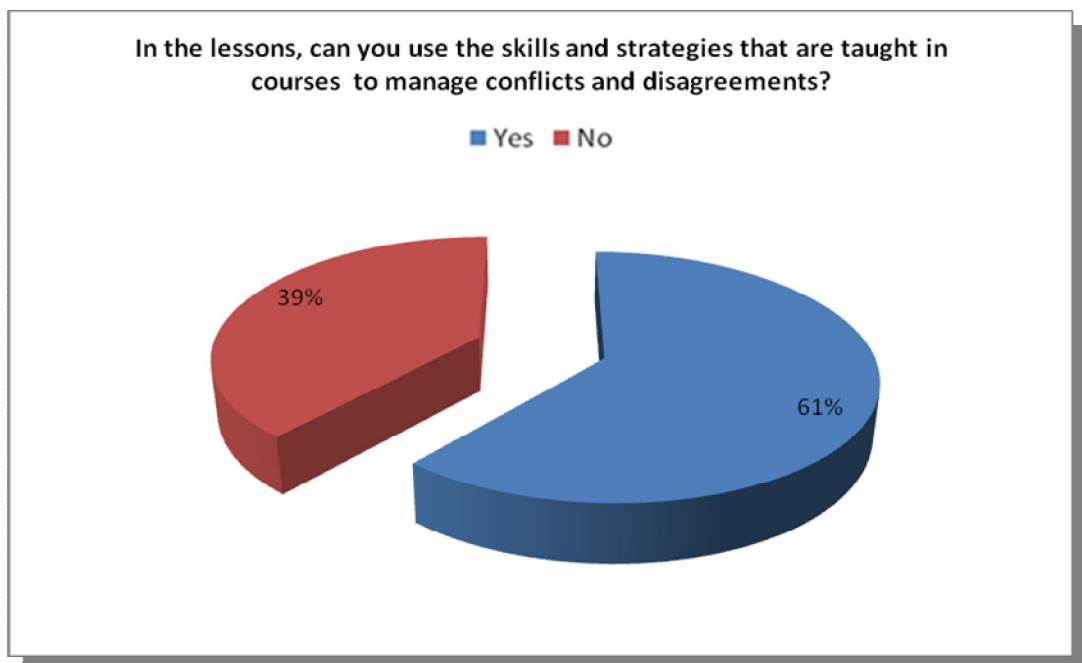


Figure 4.8 Distribution of respondents for item no 3

Regarding the results of the third item in this questionnaire, Table 4.36 shows that 81 % of subjects (n=267) did not state a specific response because they needed to skip the next 3 questions upon saying ‘no’ for the item 1 as it was also the case in the previous item. Considering this fact and also by excluding those subjects with N/A, Figure 4.9 shows 32 % (n=20) stated a ‘no’, while 68 % (n=42) stated that skills and strategies taught in courses to help deal with conflicts can be used by them in real life.

Table 4.36 Descriptive statistics for item no 4

In real life, can you use the skills and strategies that are taught in courses to manage conflicts and disagreements?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	42	12,38938	67,7	67,7
	No	20	5,899705	32,3	100
	N/A	277	81,71091	-	
	Total	339	100	100	



Figure 4.9 Distribution of respondents for item no 4

Regarding the item 5 in this questionnaire, Table 4.37 shows that 76 % of learners (n=250) stated that they want skills and strategies helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements to be taught in courses, while 24 % (n=79) stated that they do not. As also illustrated in Figure 4.10, the learners giving the response ‘yes’ for this item is almost three times higher than those who said ‘no’.

Table 4.37 Descriptive statistics for item no 5

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	250	73,74631	76,0	76,0
	No	79	23,30383	24,0	100
	Total	329	97,05015	100	
Missing	-1	10	2,949853		
Total		339	100		



Figure 4.10 Distribution of respondents for item no 5

Regarding the item 6 in this questionnaire, Table 4.38 shows that 78 % of learners (n=261) stated that they think it is necessary to use the skills and strategies helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements in courses, while 22 % (n=75) stated that they do not. As also illustrated in Figure 4.11, the learners giving the response ‘yes’ for this item is more than three times higher than those who said ‘no’.

Table 4.38 Descriptive statistics for item no 6

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	261	76,99115	77,7	77,7
	No	75	22,12389	22,3	100
	Total	336	99,11504	100	
Missing	-1	3	0,884956		
Total		339	100		

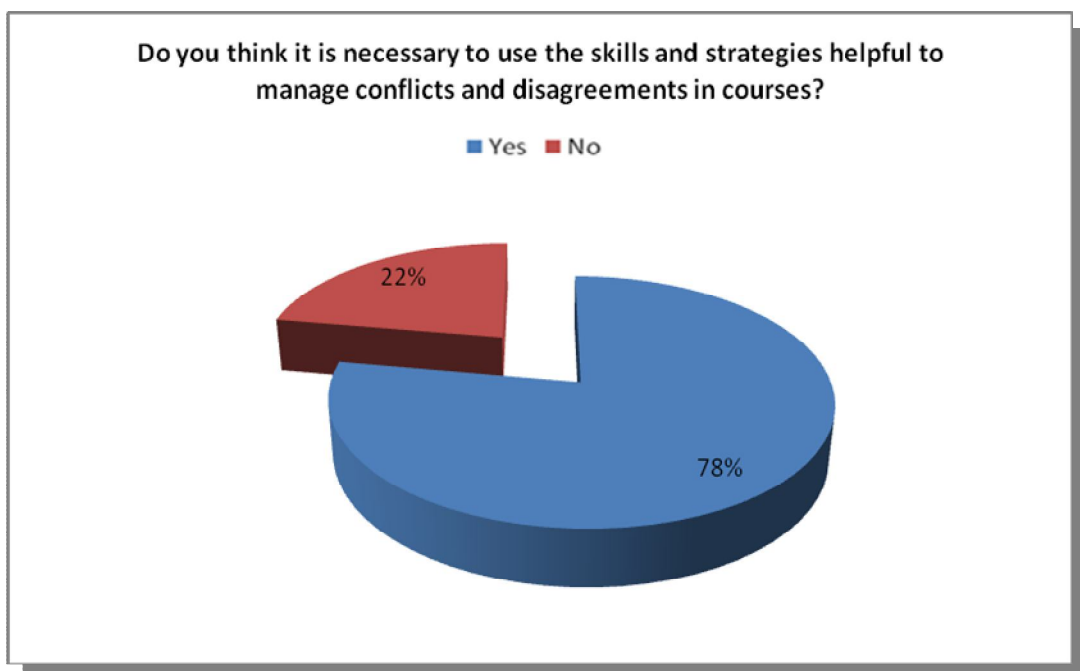


Figure 4.11 Distribution of respondents for item no 6

Regarding the item 7 in this questionnaire, Table 4.39 shows that 89 % of learners (n=297) stated that they think it is necessary to use the skills and strategies helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements in real life, while only 11 % (n=37) stated that they do not. As also illustrated in Figure 4.12, the learners giving the response ‘yes’ for this item is almost more than eight times higher than those who said ‘no’.

Table 4.39 Descriptive statistics for item no 7

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	297	87,61062	88,9	88,9
	No	37	10,91445	11,1	100
	Total	334	98,52507	100	
Missing	-1	5	1,474926		
Total		339	100		

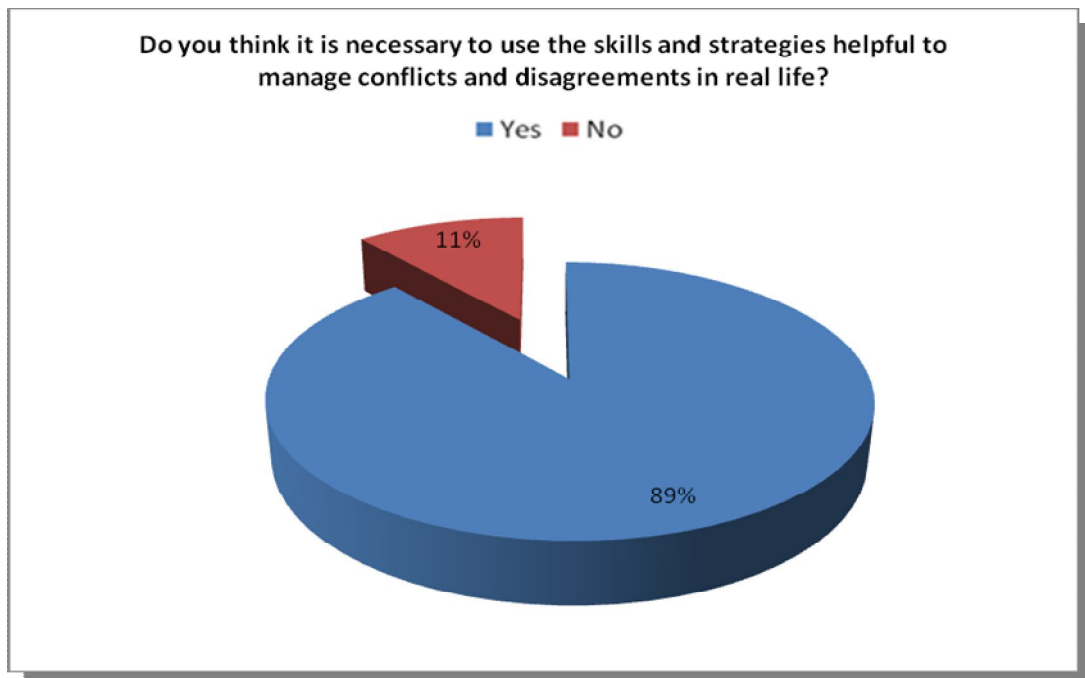


Figure 4.12 Distribution of respondents for item no 7



Following the first seven questions asking about learners' opinions about and attitudes toward the skills and strategies helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements, learners were asked to state their opinions about effective communication skills in the rest of this part of the questionnaire.

Regarding the item 8 in this questionnaire, Table 4.40 shows that 84 % of learners (n=284) stated that effective communication skills are not taught in courses, while only 16 % (n=54) said 'yes' for this question. As also illustrated in Figure 4.13, the learners giving the response 'no' for this item is almost more than five times higher than those who said 'yes'.

Table 4.40 Descriptive statistics for item no 8

Are effective communication skills taught in courses?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	54	15,9292	16,0	16,0
	No	284	83,77581	84,0	100
	N/A	1	0,294985	100	
	Total	339	100		

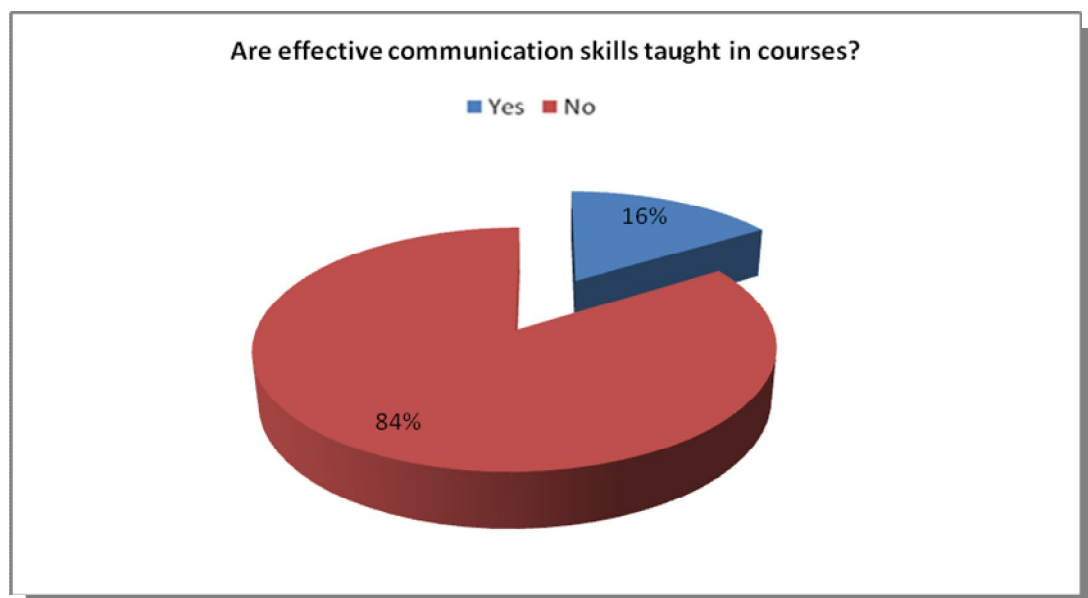


Figure 4.13 Distribution of respondents for item no 8

Regarding the item 9 in this questionnaire, Table 4.41 shows that 84 % of subjects (n=285) did not state a specific response because they needed to skip the next 3 questions upon saying ‘no’ for the previous item. Considering this fact and also by excluding both those subjects with N/A and missing values represented with ‘-1’, Figure 4.14 shows that 23 % (n=12) stated a ‘no’, while 77 % (n=41) stated that effective communications skills taught in courses meet their needs.

Table 4.41 Descriptive statistics for item no 9

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	41	12,0944	77,4	77,4
	No	12	3,539823	22,6	100
	N/A	285	84,0708	-	
	Total	338	99,70501	100	
Missing	-1	1	0,294985		
Total		339	100		

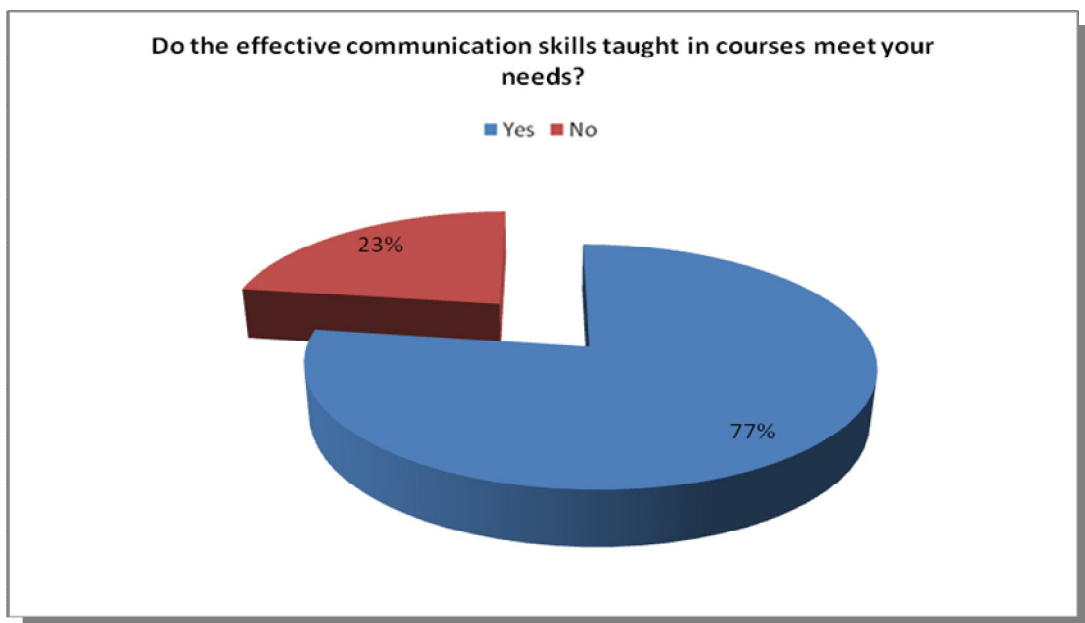


Figure 4.14 Distribution of respondents for item no 9

Regarding the results of the item 10 in this questionnaire, Table 4.42 shows that almost 84 % of subjects (n=284) did not state a specific response because they needed to skip the next 3 questions upon saying ‘no’ for the item 8 as it was also the case in the previous item. Considering this fact and also by excluding those subjects with N/A, Figure 4.15 shows 34 % (n=18) stated a ‘no’, while 66 % (n=35) stated that, in lessons, they can use the effective communication skills taught in courses.

Table 4.42 Descriptive statistics for item no 10

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
In lessons, can you use the effective communication skills taught in courses?					
Valid	Yes	35	10,32448	66,0	66,0
	No	18	5,309735	34,0	100
	N/A	284	83,77581	-	
	Total	337	99,41003	100	
Missing	-1	2	0,589971		
Total		339	100		

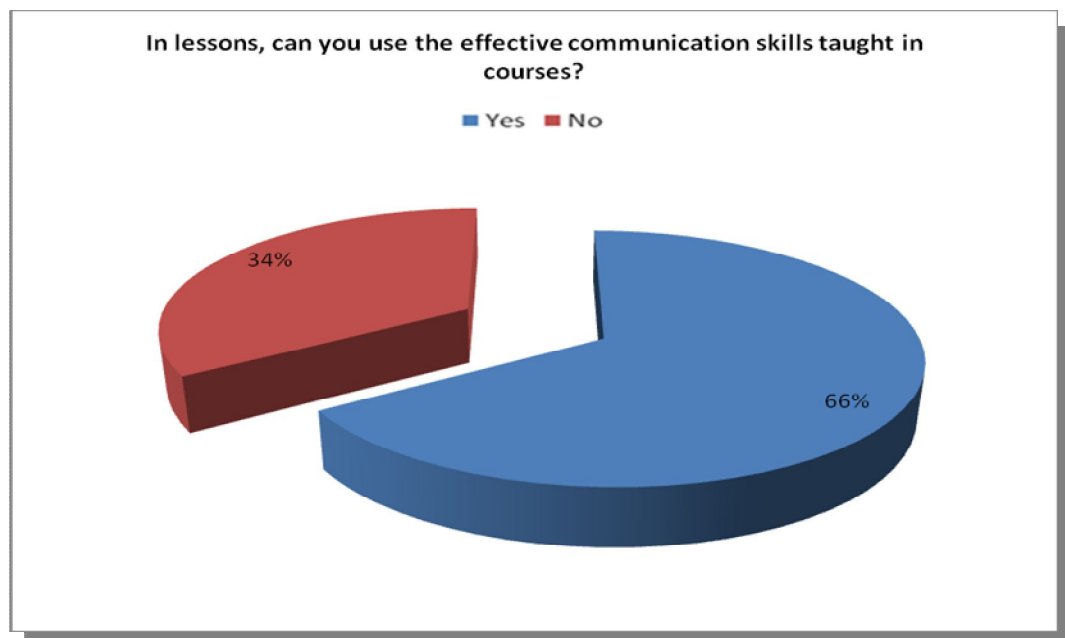


Figure 4.15 Distribution of respondents for item no 10

Regarding the results of the third item in this questionnaire, Table 4.43 shows that 82 % of subjects (n=278) did not state a specific response because they needed to skip the next 3 questions upon saying ‘no’ for the item 8 as it was also the case in the previous item. Considering this fact and also by excluding those subjects with N/A, Figure 4.16 shows that 27 % (n=16) stated a ‘no’, while 73 % (n=43) stated that, in real life, they can use the effective communication skills taught in courses.

Table 4.43 Descriptive statistics for item no 11

In real life, can you use the effective communication skills taught in courses?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	43	12,68437	72,9	72,9
	No	16	4,719764	27,1	100
	N/A	278	82,0059	-	
	Total	337	99,41003	100	
Missing	-1	2	0,589971		
Total		339	100		

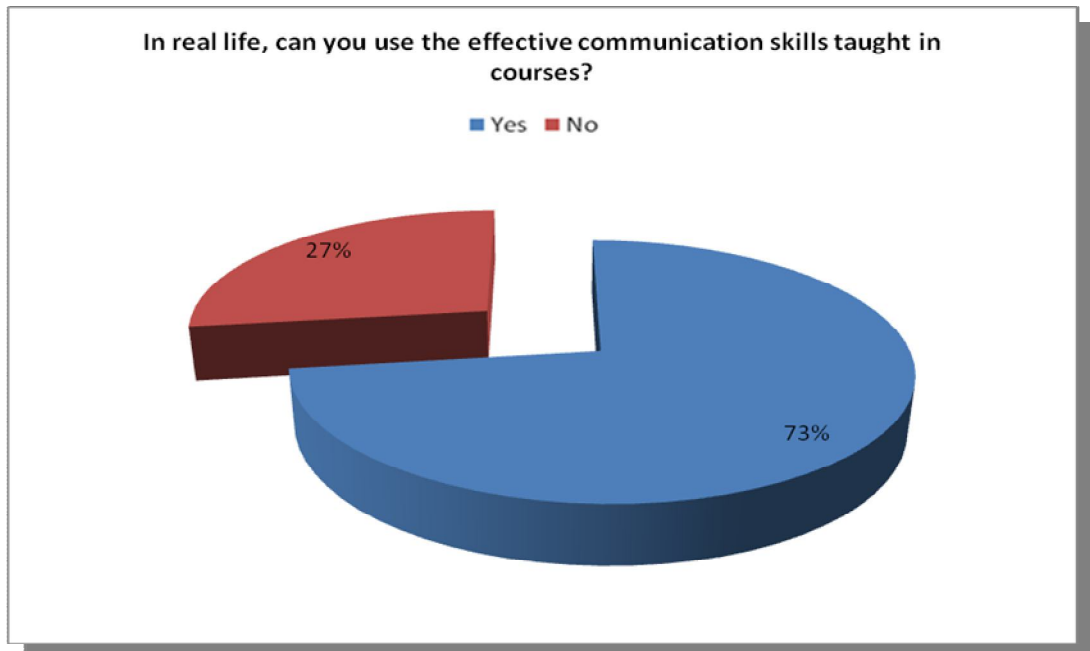


Figure 4.16 Distribution of respondents for item no 11

Regarding the item 12 in this questionnaire, Table 4.44 shows that 80 % of the learners (n=272) stated that they want effective communication skills to be taught in courses, while almost 19 % (n=64) stated that they do not. As also illustrated in Figure 4.17, the learners giving the response ‘yes’ for this item is more than four times as high as those who said ‘no’.

Table 4.44 Descriptive statistics for item no 12

Do you want the effective communication skills to be taught in courses?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	272	80,23599	81,0	81,0
	No	64	18,87906	19,0	100
	Total	336	99,11504	100	
Missing	-1	3	0,884956		
Total		339	100		

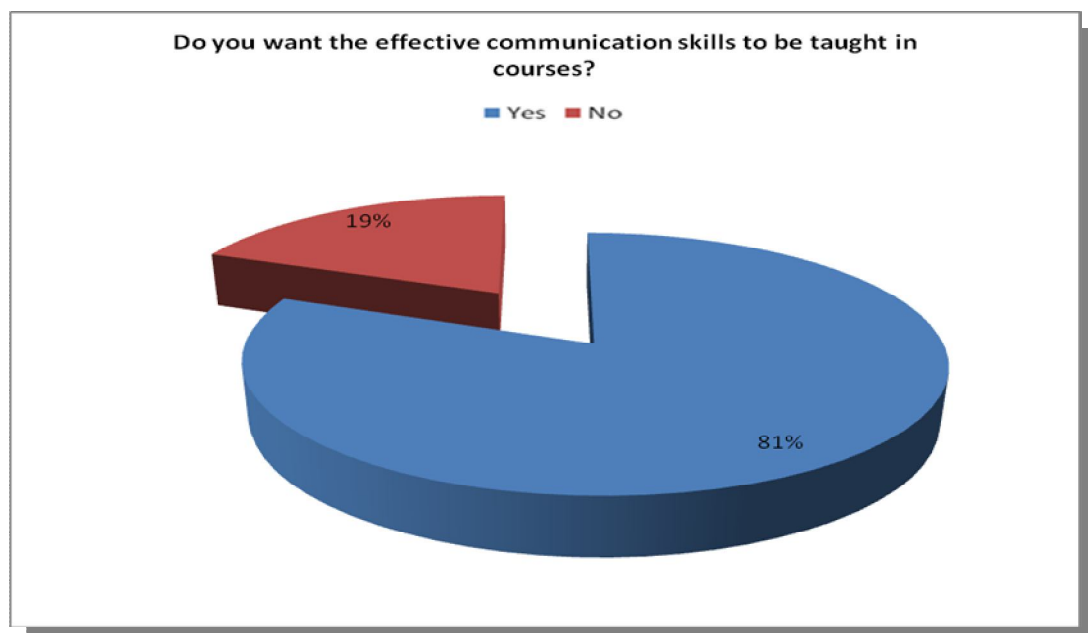


Figure 4.17 Distribution of respondents for item no 12

Regarding the item 13 in this questionnaire, Table 4.45 shows that 80 % of learners (n=273) stated that they think it is necessary to use the effective communication skills in courses, while 19 % (n=64) stated that it is not necessary. As

also illustrated in Figure 4.18, the learners giving the response ‘yes’ for this item is almost more than four times higher than those who said ‘no’.

Table 4.45 Descriptive statistics for item no 13

Do you think it is necessary to use the effective communication skills in lessons?		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	273	80,53097	81,0	81,0
	No	64	18,87906	19,0	100
	Total	337	99,41003	100	
Missing	-1	2	0,589971		
Total		339	100		

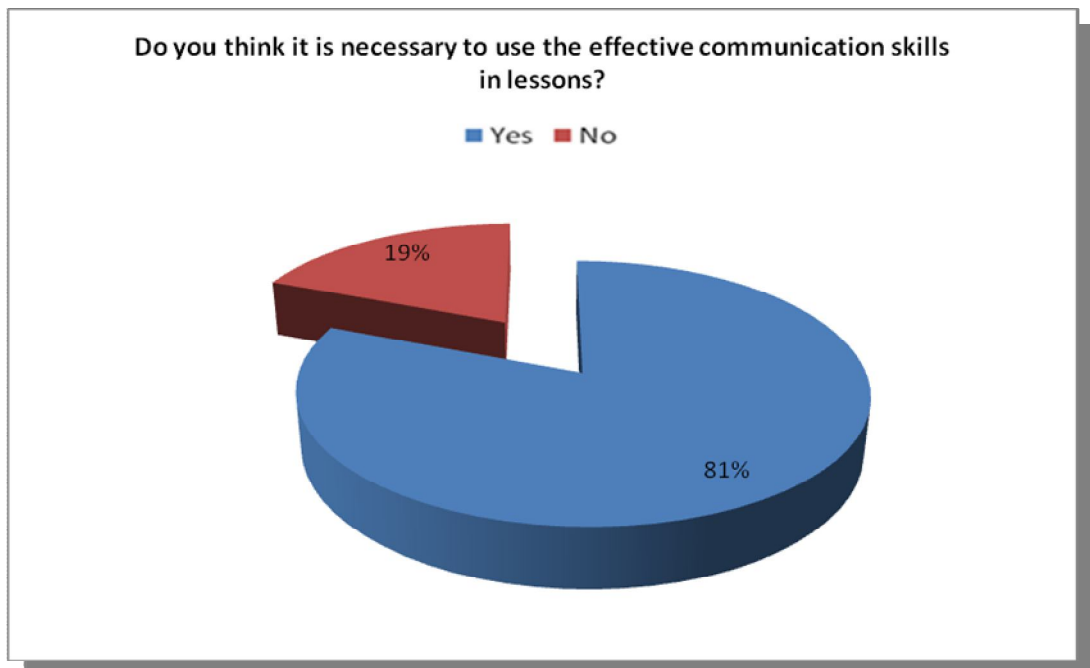


Figure 4.18 Distribution of respondents for item no 13

Regarding the item 14, the last item in this questionnaire, it asks subjects to rank 3 choices out of 6 in respect to the sources that learners benefit from in learning conflict management strategies and effective communication skills provided that they learn it from any other sources rather than courses. To analyze this item with mean values of each choice on the list, 1 was recoded as 3, 2 as 2 and 3 as 1 so that,

linearly, there would be a chance to see which category has a strong preference capacity. As shown in Table 4.46 and Figure 4.19, parents have the highest mean score and it is considered to be the first source of information after courses for EFL learners to learn conflict management strategies and effective communication skills. Experience comes as the second and based on its mean score, friends comes as the third on this list according to the opinions and attitudes of EFL learners.

Table 4.46 Descriptive statistics for item no 14

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Parents	2.31	0.82
Experience	2.02	0.86
Friends	1.95	0.71
Books	1.81	0.78
TV/Media	1.65	0.72
Internet	1.48	0.71



Figure 4.19 Ranked mean scores of sources of information for item no 14

#### 4.6. Summary of the Questionnaire Results

The quantitative data of this study was analyzed through SPSS 15. First, descriptive statistics of the participants were given so as to provide an overall view of the participants' demographic features. After that, SPSS reliability and factor analyses were conducted in order to check the reliability of the items in the questionnaires. Then the items were grouped with the help of factor analysis to strengthen the results of analysis. Later, descriptive statistics regarding the relationship between EFL learners' conflict management strategies and their need for effective communication skills and personality traits is presented. Following that, ANOVA test was used to see the difference between conflict management strategies, the need for effective communication skills and high school or the last school graduated. Finally, a summary of the applied tests for the analysis of the quantitative data in the light of research questions is shown in Table 4.47.

Table 4.47 Summary of the quantitative results of the study

Research Question	Analysis Conducted	Result		
1. What are the most common types of conflict that students confront in the process of EFL learning?	Descriptive Statistics	Rules about attendance	Mean	Order
		Assignments	3,09	1
		Self-expression	2,53	2
		Course content	2,53	3
		Lack of interest	2,52	4
		Teachers' subject knowledge	2,48	5
		Teachers' personal traits	2,45	6
		Exams	2,45	7
		Course program	2,45	8
		Teaching strategies	2,38	9
		Course material	2,37	10
		Students	2,33	11
		Participation	2,32	12
		Ways of communication	2,27	13
		Administration	2,26	14
		Teachers' approach	2,25	15
		Classroom and the building	2,22	16
		1,68	17	



**Table continued**

<p>2. What are EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts and the frequency of each particular need?</p>	<p>Descriptive Statistics</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>N</th> <th>Mean</th> <th>Std. Deviation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Problem-solving</td> <td>339</td> <td>2,8201</td> <td>1,04347</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Decision-making</td> <td>339</td> <td>2,8127</td> <td>1,03683</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Active listening</td> <td>339</td> <td>2,7788</td> <td>,95986</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brainstorming</td> <td>339</td> <td>2,7552</td> <td>1,04085</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cooperation</td> <td>339</td> <td>2,7360</td> <td>1,04856</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Empathy</td> <td>339</td> <td>2,6121</td> <td>,97033</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Self-expression</td> <td>339</td> <td>2,5900</td> <td>1,09869</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Valid N (listwise)</td> <td>339</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Problem-solving	339	2,8201	1,04347	Decision-making	339	2,8127	1,03683	Active listening	339	2,7788	,95986	Brainstorming	339	2,7552	1,04085	Cooperation	339	2,7360	1,04856	Empathy	339	2,6121	,97033	Self-expression	339	2,5900	1,09869	Valid N (listwise)	339		
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation																																			
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Self-expression	339	2,5900	1,09869																																			
Valid N (listwise)	339																																					
<p>3. What are the most common strategies used by EFL learners in dealing with conflicts among peers based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning and communication in real life?</p>	<p>Descriptive Statistics and Factor Analysis</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>N</th> <th>Mean</th> <th>Std. Deviation</th> <th>% of Variance</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Integrating</td> <td>339</td> <td>3,74</td> <td>0,62</td> <td>23,51</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Obliging</td> <td>339</td> <td>3,08</td> <td>0,59</td> <td>4,89</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dominating</td> <td>339</td> <td>3,32</td> <td>0,67</td> <td>9,49</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Avoiding</td> <td>339</td> <td>2,91</td> <td>0,71</td> <td>11,19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Compromising</td> <td>339</td> <td>3,61</td> <td>0,52</td> <td>4,23</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total %</b></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td><b>53,32</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	% of Variance	Integrating	339	3,74	0,62	23,51	Obliging	339	3,08	0,59	4,89	Dominating	339	3,32	0,67	9,49	Avoiding	339	2,91	0,71	11,19	Compromising	339	3,61	0,52	4,23	<b>Total %</b>				<b>53,32</b>	
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<b>Total %</b>				<b>53,32</b>																																		
<p>4. Do conflict management strategies of learners differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners based on how it is perceived?</p> <p>4.1. Is there any significant difference between male and female learners in terms of conflict management strategies?</p> <p>4.2. Is there any significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of conflict management strategies?</p> <p>4.3. Does the high school attended affect the kinds of strategies that students benefit to manage conflicts?</p> <p>4.4. Does duration of study at that particular university affect the kinds of strategies used to manage conflicts?</p>	<p>1. Descriptive Statistics, Independent t-test</p> <p>2. Descriptive Statistics, Independent t-test</p> <p>3. Descriptive Statistics, One-way ANOVA test</p> <p>4. Descriptive Statistics, Independent t-test</p>	<p>1. There is a significant mean difference in conflict management strategies between males and females in terms of dominating.</p> <p>2. There is a significant difference between EFL learners with or without scholarship in terms of conflict-handling modes (avoiding p value is <math>0.000 &lt; 0,05</math>)</p> <p>3. There are significant differences between group categories in terms of compromising.</p> <p>4. There is no significant difference between learners who are in their first or second year in terms of the conflict management strategies they employ in their EFL classes.</p>																																				

**Table continued**

<p>5. Do EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners?</p> <p>5.1. Is there any significant difference between male and female learners in terms of the needs for effective communication skills?</p> <p>5.2. Is there any significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills?</p> <p>5.3. Does the high school attended affect the learners' needs for effective communication skills?</p> <p>5.4. Does duration of study at that particular university affect the learners' needs for effective communication skills?</p>	<p>1. Descriptive Statistics, Independent t-test</p> <p>2. Descriptive Statistics, Independent t-test</p> <p>3. Descriptive Statistics, One-way ANOVA test</p> <p>4. Descriptive Statistics, Independent t-test</p>	<p>1. There is a significant mean difference in EFL learners' need for effective communication skills between males and females in terms of active listening and self-expression.</p> <p>2. There is no significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills.</p> <p>3. The high school attended or last graduated school affects the EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills. (decision making p value is <math>0.015 &lt; 0,05</math>)</p> <p>4. There is no significant relationship between the year of study and EFL learners' need for effective communication skills.</p>																																																																																																																																									
<p>6. What are EFL learners' attitudes toward teaching and learning conflict management strategies and toward effective communication skills?</p> <p>6.1. Are skills and strategies helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements taught in courses?</p> <p>6.2. Do the skills and strategies that are taught in courses to manage conflicts and disagreements meet your needs?</p> <p>6.3. In the lessons, can you use the skills and strategies that are taught in courses to manage conflicts and disagreements?</p> <p>6.4. In real life, can you use the skills and strategies that are taught in courses to manage conflicts and disagreements?</p> <p>6.5. Do you want the skills and strategies helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements to be taught in courses?</p> <p>6.6. Do you think it is necessary to use the skills and strategies helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements in courses?</p>	<p>1. Descriptive Statistics</p> <p>2. Descriptive Statistics</p> <p>3. Descriptive Statistics</p> <p>4. Descriptive Statistics</p> <p>5. Descriptive Statistics</p> <p>6. Descriptive Statistics</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th></th> <th>Frequency</th> <th>Percent</th> <th>Valid Percent</th> <th>Cumulative Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="3">1</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>61</td> <td>17,9941</td> <td>17,9</td> <td>17,9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>278</td> <td>82,0059</td> <td>82,1</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>339</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="4">2</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>43</td> <td>12,68437</td> <td>69,4</td> <td>69,4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>19</td> <td>5,60472</td> <td>31,6</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>N/A</td> <td>277</td> <td>81,71091</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>339</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="4">3</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>38</td> <td>11,20944</td> <td>61,3</td> <td>61,3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>24</td> <td>7,079646</td> <td>38,7</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>N/A</td> <td>277</td> <td>81,71091</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>339</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="4">4</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>42</td> <td>12,38938</td> <td>67,7</td> <td>67,7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>20</td> <td>5,899705</td> <td>32,3</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>N/A</td> <td>277</td> <td>81,71091</td> <td>-</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>339</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="5">5</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>250</td> <td>73,74631</td> <td>76,0</td> <td>76,0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>79</td> <td>23,30383</td> <td>24,0</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>329</td> <td>97,05015</td> <td>100</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>-1</td> <td>10</td> <td>2,949853</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>339</td> <td>100</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="5">6</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>261</td> <td>76,99115</td> <td>77,7</td> <td>77,7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>75</td> <td>22,12389</td> <td>22,3</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>336</td> <td>99,11504</td> <td>100</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>-1</td> <td>3</td> <td>0,884956</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>339</td> <td>100</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	1	Yes	61	17,9941	17,9	17,9	No	278	82,0059	82,1	100	Total	339	100	100		2	Yes	43	12,68437	69,4	69,4	No	19	5,60472	31,6	100	N/A	277	81,71091	-		Total	339	100	100		3	Yes	38	11,20944	61,3	61,3	No	24	7,079646	38,7	100	N/A	277	81,71091	-		Total	339	100	100		4	Yes	42	12,38938	67,7	67,7	No	20	5,899705	32,3	100	N/A	277	81,71091	-		Total	339	100	100		5	Yes	250	73,74631	76,0	76,0	No	79	23,30383	24,0	100	Total	329	97,05015	100		-1	10	2,949853			TOTAL	339	100			6	Yes	261	76,99115	77,7	77,7	No	75	22,12389	22,3	100	Total	336	99,11504	100		-1	3	0,884956			TOTAL	339	100		
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**Table continued**

6.7. Do you think it is necessary to use the skills and strategies helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements in real life?	7. Descriptive Statistics	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>297</td> <td>87,61062</td> <td>88,9</td> <td>88,9</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>No</td> <td>37</td> <td>10,91445</td> <td>11,1</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Total</td> <td>334</td> <td>98,52507</td> <td>100</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>-1</td> <td>5</td> <td>1,474926</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>339</td> <td>100</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	7	Yes	297	87,61062	88,9	88,9		No	37	10,91445	11,1	100		Total	334	98,52507	100			-1	5	1,474926				TOTAL	339	100								
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	Internet	1.48	0.71																																			

#### **4.7. Analysis of Interviews with EFL learners**

In the context of the current study, content analysis of the interviews was used as supplementary source of data to improve the quality of interpretation and inference of the results. Holsti (1969) emphasizes that a related application of content analysis, even when direct access to the subject poses no difficulty, is to develop an independent line of validation for data obtained through other methods. The investigator may check the results of the questionnaire or the interview data by comparing them with content analysis of the subjects' statements. He also reminds the investigator of the necessity to use his/her judgments in making decisions about the data even in the simplest and most mechanical forms of content analysis. Krippendorff (2004) emphasizes that analyzing texts in the contexts of their uses distinguishes content analysis from other methods of inquiry. In the light of this information, the data gathered from the interviews were analyzed through content analysis. The interviewees were chosen according to quota sampling in which the researcher decides on a quota for each category samples. In the current study, 6 male (3 from A level and 3 from B level program) and 6 female subjects (3 from A level and 3 from B level program) were selected as interviewees. The subjects (n=12) were distributed equally considering A and B levels; males and females; and subjects' level of achievement. Each subject represents a male or female, A level or B level, and a high, average, or low level of achievement. The analysis of the interviews is presented under research questions.

##### **4.7.1. Research Question 1**

The first research question of the study was to find out and list the most common types of conflict that students confront in the process of EFL learning. Hence, in the interview, the first few questions aimed to find out what kind of problems students experience both in and outside the classrooms. Initially, in the light of findings gathered in the interviews, most of the students regard conflict as something negative and they believe that conflicts are caused by disagreements

between the parties and also some differences or discrepancies in terms of ideas, needs, goals and interests. Most of the students think that conflicts are inevitable, while only few of them stated that they do not encounter conflicts as they generally tend to avoid conflicts or compromise.

In this question, students were expected to give specific types of conflict they encounter in or outside the classroom and each of them listed more than one type of conflict, and most common ones are listed in the findings of the study. When 12 students were asked what kind of conflicts they encounter in EFL classrooms at preparatory school, most of the students stated that attendance and related restrictions are the most common problems in EFL classrooms. They explained that the fact that they are not allowed into classrooms when they are late only for one minute, or too many rules about attendance affect their mood and performance in classrooms. Some of them stated that this situation caused them to sleep or not to participate in the lesson since they knew they had to attend the lessons due to restrictions about attendance. Some students explained that they expect teachers to be thoughtful and tolerant when they arrive late; however, they complained that teachers generally do not do so. At this point, students try to persuade the teacher by giving excuses, while other students mentioned that they knew they had to obey the teacher and do whatever is said. However, students who try to persuade the teacher might face various arguments and this could also result in conflicts between teachers and students. As a result, attendance is regarded as a problem that can lead to various conflicts, which might, as explained by the students, affect students negatively and result in various problems such as lack of motivation or interest in the lessons.

As the second most common conflict in EFL classrooms, almost half of the students stated that assignments given by the teachers are both too many and sometimes too simple. Therefore, students think that assignments are not effective and useful for them in learning English. Furthermore, they think that the fact that students do not want to do homework affects both their relation with the teacher and also the classroom atmosphere in a negative way. Regarding this problem, some

students explained that it might not lead to a conflict if the students do not need the score they got when doing homework. Likewise, interviewees explained that if the teacher ignores the problem, it might not lead to a conflict. However, if a teacher gives importance to assignments and if a student insists on not doing homework due to various reasons, it might lead to a conflict between a student and the teacher. According to interviewees, this usually happens when students think that assignments are not effective for them and also when the teacher does not explain the importance of doing that particular assignment.

More than one fourth of the interviewees consider that conflicts are also caused by the fact that students cannot express themselves clearly. This is sometimes a result of the fact that they need to communicate with the teacher in English especially during lessons.

As the fourth most common conflict in EFL classrooms, more than one fourth of the students stated that content of the courses could be regarded as unnecessary. They think that they sometimes have to learn things that are not useful for them considering what is expected from them. For example, students explained that they need to take the TOEFL ITP exam at the end of the term; however, they are forced to do some activities on the Internet and these activities are not useful for them. Students explained that when they reject doing these activities or exercises, they either get low grades or experience conflict with the teacher.

Finally, one fourth of the students explained that teachers' subject knowledge and English language can be the types of conflict confronted. Students mentioned that they sometimes cannot get satisfactory explanations and responses from teachers, while some students mentioned that English language itself is a problem since there are so many inexplicable topics when compared to Turkish language. Considering the first research question in this study, students listed several types of conflict and they explained why they consider them as conflict.

The opinions of the participants related to the definition of conflict and the first research question are provided in the excerpts below:

Personally, I have not experienced so much conflict, but maybe attendance can be a conflict. But, generally, people had such problems as being introvert and not being able to talk. For example, they couldn't express themselves in speaking lessons in front of the teacher. In fact, teachers tell everyone to participate but it doesn't affect a lot. Only when one realizes that he can speak can he participate in the lessons. When a person knows his responsibilities, attendance is not a serious conflict, but students sometimes may ask for more and in fact restrictions can cause conflict in terms of attendance. Everyone who wants to pass the exam knows that they should come and not be absent more than the attendance limit, but since there is a rule about it, students usually want to exceed the limit. Also, I don't like the situation when the teacher doesn't allow one to attend the lesson even if he is late for one minute, but this may be because of the fact that the teacher doesn't want to be disturbed and interfered during the lesson. In terms of assignments, I didn't do any homework in the 3<sup>rd</sup> term. I did not do homework when I thought that they were useless and I could do something better instead. (Interviewee 1; most common conflicts; self-expression, attendance, assignments)

When asked what conflict is, I think it is the situation when one has an opposing view with his friends and a kind of disagreement. English language is a very complicated language and there is no logic in it. For example, the reasoning in Turkish is not applicable in English; therefore, we have conflicts with teachers. When we do not understand the difference between these languages, we experience conflicts. I had to compromise at the end since I know I cannot change this language. Attendance rules are similar to those in high school. In university, people expect different things; they expect to come only whenever they want, not when they are supposed to come to the class. These rules cause conflicts. I experienced conflicts about these rules. For example, when I was late only for a few minutes, the teacher did not allow me into the classroom and this is not reasonable. I tried to persuade the teacher and explained why I was late; however, I was not allowed and I had to obey the teacher. (Interviewee 4: most common conflicts; English language, attendance)

The most common problem is between students and teachers. The conflict is the communication problem between them. Another conflict is the students' not being able to express themselves during the lesson and the students may also not like the teacher. In addition, there may be some problems among students but this may not affect the lesson a lot. Students at university are above eighteen and restrictions about attendance are not reasonable and they can cause a conflict since students are in the opinion that they can make their own decisions at that age. That's why the attendance problem is one of the most important problems. Students may sleep in the classroom as they come to class for the sake of rules and this might also lead to some other conflicts. (Interviewee 7: most common conflicts; self-expression, dislike for the teacher, attendance)

#### 4.7.2. Research Question 2

The second research question aimed to explore the learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts and the frequency of each particular need. Initially, the interviewees were asked to express their opinions about what effective communication is and what kind of skills they need and use related to effective communication. In the light of this preliminary question, most of the students stated that effective communication is listening to someone and telling what one wants clearly. Moreover, they mentioned that effective communication skills are making someone listen, persuasion, expressing oneself clearly, choosing the right words, and using body language such as smiling, eye-contact and gestures. Then, the interviewees were given a list of skills that could be needed to manage conflicts, and they were asked to mention all of the skills they needed and explain why they needed these skills.

Regarding the findings of the second research question in the study, questionnaire results showed that problem solving is the most needed effective communication skill by EFL learners. In the interviews, students explained that they need problem solving quite often because this is a scientific and systematic approach to deal with conflicts. They explained that this might help them to know what to do when confronted with a conflict. Moreover, the interviewees explained that they generally try to cope with conflicts in the way they are used to; however, some of them explained that there might be various ways to manage a conflict. Hence, when they know about these ways, they can choose among various options and cope with problems in a better way.

Responses gathered from the interviewees are as follows:

In order to manage conflicts, problem-solving, active listening are the skills I need. For example, first, I listen to the other party and then try to manage conflicts. During this process, if I know how I can deal with a conflict, I might feel confident and help my friends, as well. When we do not know the reason for a problem, it is difficult to solve it, therefore, I prefer to listen to my friends and then I express my opinions before we solve a problem. (Interviewee 3)



Then, from a scientific perspective, problem-solving can be taken into consideration as an effective communication skill to manage conflicts. I remember learning about solving problems at high school. When we deal with a problem by following some steps, we can successfully handle that problem. However, I do not remember what we learnt about solving problems now. If I know them and if my friends know them, too, it might be easier to solve our problems. (Interviewee 5)

I read books for self-improvement and I know problem-solving might be important in dealing with conflicts. However, people around me do not like reading a lot and I think they also should learn such kind of things. (Interviewee 7)

The results of the interviews showed that decision-making, brain-storming and cooperation is another group of effective communication skills needed by students. Almost one fourth of the interviewees consider these skills as very vital, and they mentioned that decision-making is needed to a great extent in order to finalize a conflict between parties. Moreover, brain-storming is another important effective communication skill since it helps people to think in an organized way and produce ideas. Interviewees explained that cooperation is also an important skill and they needed it in dealing with their conflict, because it is usually not effective when only one of the parties tries to solve the problem on his/her own.

Responses gathered from the interviewees are as follows:

Considering all these skills, I need them to a certain extent. I need cooperation, too. I am a member and one of the administrators of a student club and we usually come together to make some decisions. If I ignore the opinion of others, we cannot work together. Therefore, we share our ideas and we find a solution that is accepted by everyone. While working in this club and coping with several conflicts, I need these skills to some extent. (Interviewee 4)

In English lessons, I liked writing courses when we discussed the topics together and expressed our opinions. By doing so, we could produce opinions on the same topic. Now in departmental courses, we spend a lot of time on discussion and we can understand different perspectives and make decisions in a better way. We discuss problems in Turkey, and the instructor asks the opinion of everybody and he wants us to come up with a decision at the end. During this process, we need to cooperate and produce ideas together in order to deal with those problems. (Interviewee 12)

As another group of skills, of all the effective communication skills listed, interviewees mentioned that they need self-expression, empathy and active-listening skills to manage several types of conflict in a successful way. Interviewees explained that self-expression is one of the most needed effective communication skills since an individual might experience several problems due to lack of this skill. For example, interviewees mentioned that it might result in misunderstanding, which can also cause conflicts. On the contrary, when one expresses oneself clearly, the individual can easily communicate with people and persuade them in an expected way. According to the results of the interviews, more than half of the students expressed that they need empathy so that they can understand the feelings and opinions of the person they are talking to clearly and effectively. Moreover, the results showed that another half of the students need active listening skill to manage their conflicts. Interviewees expressed that they need to show that they really want to listen to the other party so that they can build an effective communication ground.

Regarding the second research questions, the opinions of the participants are provided in the excerpts below:

For example, empathy is an effective communication skill. Additionally, understanding the person whom I am talking to is a skill I need. Decision-making, empathy, and self-expression are three effective communication skills. I need them most because managing conflicts requires these skills. (Interviewee 2)

While talking with someone, I pay attention to how I talk. I try to communicate with the other party by paying utmost attention to talking more fluently, clearly, and effectively or using body language effectively such as using tone of voice, eye-contact, stress on words, gestures, etc. In order to manage conflicts, problem-solving, active listening are the skills I need. For example, first, I listen to the other party and then try to manage conflicts. Moreover, I need self-expression and cooperation, too. Considering all these skills, I need all of them at a certain level. (Interviewee 3)

Self-expression is how all types of arts were originated. Maybe, this is a very artistic perspective but I need this skill the most. Then, from a scientific perspective, problem-solving can be taken into consideration. (Interviewee 5)

We do not use effective communication skills frequently in our lives and maybe we generally do not have these skills. First of all, self-expression is very important. Choosing the right words; expressing self in the clearest way

possible, and using visuals and other means of communication when talking in front of others are some examples of effective communication skills. For example, if I try to persuade someone, I go into details. Moreover, I try to be as clear as possible in a way that the other person can understand me. I use bodily gestures. I refer to certain resources. My most frequently needed effective communication skills are active listening, empathy, and decision-making. First, if there is a conflict, we should understand this and in order to do this, both parties should listen to each other actively. Afterwards, they should make a decision and while doing this, they should put themselves into each others' shoes. (Interviewee 7)

Effective communication is making someone do whatever one wants. This does not mean that one can achieve this by force, but you should talk in such an effective way that the other person might feel like doing what you want. In fact, I am not good at communication, and I am not good at self-expression. Sometimes, I make incomplete sentences. I usually ignore being misunderstood and actually I like it most of the time. On the other hand, the least frequently needed skill is empathy. It is not very important for me to know what the other person feels or thinks. I generally ignore such things, and I regard them as unnecessary and unimportant. (Interviewee 11)

Regarding EFL learners' need for effective communication skills, there were also interesting findings which showed that students are not effective communicators and it seems that there is a general need to help them become aware of effective communication skills that are helpful to manage conflicts. To illustrate, one of the students explained that she doesn't need the cooperation skill since she prefers to make her decisions alone. On the other hand, another student expressed that he likes to be misunderstood sometimes and his least needed skill is empathy. These findings indicate that teaching these skills and focusing on them in EFL classrooms might help students gain a different perspective and communicate effectively.

The opinion of the interviewees regarding the second research question is provided in the excerpts below:

The skill I do not need is cooperation because I regard it as unnecessary since I prefer to make decisions alone. I generally listen to other people's opinions; however, when I try to come up with a shared decision, it seems as if I gave wrong or worse decisions. I believe, I can solve my problems in a very successful way on my own, so I prefer to make my decisions by myself. (Interviewee 2)

On the other hand, I need brain-storming the least frequently because it seems something very serious and organized and I am not that kind of person. In order to brain-storm, it looks as if we need a more serious ground and I do not like thinking in an organized and detailed way. In fact, some other people generally think about solutions instead of me and these people are usually my friends. (Interviewee 5)

#### **4.7.3. Research Question 3**

The third research question aimed to explore the most common strategies used by EFL learners in dealing with conflicts among peers based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning and communication in real life. In the interviews, the students were initially asked to describe their conflict management strategies based on five different modes of conflict management. Then, they were asked to give specific examples for conflicts confronted in their lives and their opinions about how they manage these conflicts. Afterwards, interviewees were asked to express whether the strategies that they employ in dealing with conflicts help them to cope with their conflicts or not. It is possible to analyze the results of this interview question in two ways. Firstly, all of the students came up with a common conflict style that they use in the process of EFL learning and communication in real life; however, most of the interviewees came up with other alternative conflict management strategies depending on the type of the conflict and the parties involved. Therefore, the first analysis was done by taking into account only students' first choice and another analysis was done by considering students' both the first and second choices.

Regarding participants' most common conflict management styles and their first preference, more than half of the students stated that they employ compromising strategies in handling their conflicts. They explained that they want each party involved in a conflict to be happy, but they are aware of the fact that they need to compromise with the other party and they should disclaim a part of their rights to achieve this. The results based on only students' first preference showed that less than one fourth of the participants stated that they use dominating strategies in handling conflicts. They explained that this strategy can change depending on the type of

conflict and the people involved; however, they stated that they employ this strategy because they tend to behave in this way, or this is generally the easiest way to deal with a conflict. Finally, a few of the participants stated that they generally avoid conflict in dealing with them and a number of students stated that they employ integrating strategies in dealing with conflicts. Students who employ integrating strategies explained that they do not want to disclaim their rights but they want to come up with a different and common solution so that both parties can win at the same time. On the other hand, students who employ avoiding strategies explained that it is usually the easiest way to deal with a conflict.

Regarding students' responses in terms of their most common strategies in dealing with conflicts, the interview results showed that the majority of the students stated that they employ compromising strategies in order that both parties can gain something out of the conflict. Secondly, more than one fourth of the participants stated that they use dominating strategies and this is generally used when compromising or students' initial strategies do not work for them in handling conflicts. Furthermore, more than one fourth of the participants stated that they employ avoiding strategies when they are unable to deal with their conflict in a constructive way. Also, some of the participants stated that they use obliging strategies because they do not want to experience conflicts in the long run and they choose the easiest way according to their opinion. Finally, one fourth of the participants employ integrating conflict management strategy in order that both parties can come up with a better solution together.

Regarding the third research question in this study; in the interviews, students were also asked to explain whether they think the strategies they employ are effective or not in handling conflicts they experience. According to the responses given by the students, the strategies they employ in handling conflicts are effective and they can solve their own conflicts by executing these strategies.

Regarding the most common conflict management strategies and students' ideas about these strategies and their effectiveness, the opinions of the participants are provided in the excerpts below:

My most common conflict management strategy can be compromising. When I am in a conflict and when I want something completely different from what the other party wants, I usually want to make the other party pleased to a certain extent and at the same time I want to make myself pleased by involving what I want in the solution process. In fact, I can disclaim some of my rights that have a little importance. Actually, this looks like a little obliging, but I believe all of these strategies complete each other and I use compromising most of the time. I do not experience conflict very often with the people around and the strategies I use when confronted with a conflict are generally effective. (Interviewee 1)

If the issue leading to a conflict is a topic I am sensitive with, I generally tend to use dominating strategy. If not and if it is open to discussion, I tend to use compromising strategy. However, people usually tell me that I use dominating strategy more. For example, if we discuss a political or religious topic, people say that I use dominating strategy more. I do not experience conflict very often. For example, the last conflict I experienced might be two years ago. At the beginning, I try to understand the other party and use compromising strategy, but when the debate gets hot, I turn out to be dominating. In this way, I try to show that I cannot change my opinion; however, sometimes, people whom I am arguing with try to change my opinion. Then, they understand that it is not possible to do so, and they do not continue to argue with me. I do not know whether their opinion changes, but, in this way we avoid a potential conflict. Therefore, my friends who already know me and my personality do not want to have such discussions with me, and I also do not like discussing this issues I am very sensitivitive about. I do not remember experiencing a very serious conflict due to this reason. (Interviewee 6)

Dominating and avoiding are two of the strategies I employ during a conflict. I do not prefer to use compromising or integrating a lot. I am not communicating a lot with people and, therefore, I do not experience lots of conflict. I use dominating strategy more than the others and this could be effective in handling conflicts with my family, but it is not effective in handling conflicts with my friends. (Interviewee 8)

I am good at compromising, and sometimes obliging. For instance, when I experience a conflict with my flat mate, I try to compromise with her and can disclaim some of my rights for the sake of handling conflicts and making both parties pleased at the same time. Actually, I do not experience conflict often and the strategies I employ are usually effective in handling conflicts. (Interviewee 9)

Compromising is effective in handling conflicts. Considering the lessons, when there is a disagreement between me and the teacher, I try to find a middle ground. Who is pleased and who is not is important in handling the conflicts. If the other party or I can persuade each other about what way is the right one, I can accept his way; however, when the other party does not understand and accept my way, I try to do my best and then I can avoid the conflict. (Interviewee 10)

#### **4.7.4. Research Question 4**

The fourth research question aimed to find the answer regarding the effect of demographic features on EFL learners' conflict management strategies. For this purpose certain sub-research questions were formed. In each sub-research question an aspect of four demographic features were examined. These features were gender, scholarship status, last school attended and finally duration of study at a particular university. Regarding the findings related to EFL learners' most common conflict management strategies based on quantitative data, significant differences were found in terms of gender, scholarship status, and last school attended while the results showed that there is no significant difference between students who study at a particular university for the first or second year in respect to their conflict management strategies. Therefore, in order to analyze these findings more, and dig out the reasons behind significant differences, a number of interview questions were designed for each sub-question of the fourth research question.

The first sub-question of the fourth research question was to highlight whether male and female EFL learners have different conflict management strategies. In the interviews, participants were asked to explain the reasons why males are different from female students in terms of conflict management strategies. All of the interviewees stated that there is a difference between the conflict management strategies of male and female students. There were differences in terms of how gender affects conflict management strategies and also some of the students mentioned that gender is not the only factor affecting conflict management strategies; however, the results of the study showed that all of the students thought that males might be different from females regarding conflict management strategies. According

to some of the participants, one of the reasons of the difference is social norms and how male and female children are raised in society. Some other students explained that the reason is not nurture but nature of females and males, and they stated that there is a difference between males and females by nature regardless of how they are brought up or educated. Regarding the findings of the study, students mentioned different reasons why and how males are different from females in terms of conflict management strategies; however, all the participants unanimously agreed that gender affects conflict management strategies employed by students. The findings of quantitative data showed that the difference between males and females is in terms of dominating conflict management strategy and males employ more dominating conflict management strategy than females do. Males are considered to employ dominating strategy more due to the fact that social norms and how males are brought up enable them to be more powerful and strong, whereas females are known to be good at employing strategies such as compromising, integrating, and sometimes even obliging.

Sample responses gathered from the interviews are as follows:

The conflict management strategies employed by male and female learners are different. The ideas of a male and the ideas of a female are never the same. Hence, they also experience differences in terms of conflict management strategies, as well. For example, the things that males and females like can be different, so they experience different conflicts because they have different thought systems. (Interviewee 4)

The conflict management strategies of males and females are absolutely different, especially in Turkey. Firstly, female learners give importance to physical appearance and in order to be considered sympathetic, nice, and good-hearted they behave in a compromising way. They do not act in an authentic manner. On the other hand, male students behave in a more natural way and they tend to behave aggressively without helping to find a solution. The reason behind this fact can be social norms and society. (Interviewee 8)

Female learners employ integrating and compromising, while males employ dominating strategies. It is the law of nature and we can even tell the same thing for animals. Males tend to show off and be dominant among other people. (Interviewee 11)



Most of the time, males and females are different in terms of conflict management strategies. Not only gender but also other personality traits have an effect on this difference. For example, males tend to use dominating strategy very often but this might not be valid for all of the males. In terms of their nature, males and females are totally different; therefore, their reactions might be so different. Even if they are raised under similar conditions, there might be differences in respect to both opinions and behaviors. Males are more dominating and they get angry easier, while females tend to think more logically. (Interviewee 7)

The second sub-question referring to the fourth research question of the study intended to detect whether the fact that students hold a scholarship has a significant role in the way they manage their conflicts. For this purpose, the students were asked whether they think the conflict management strategies of the students with a scholarship are different from those of the students without scholarship, and then they were asked to explain how they observed this difference and the reasons of it. The results of the interview questions showed that whether a student holds any scholarship might affect what kinds of conflict management strategies are employed. According to some of the participants, students with scholarship might be more dominating, while some of the participants think that students without scholarship might be good at compromising and integrating since they could express themselves clearly and effectively. Regarding the findings of the questionnaire, the difference between students with and without scholarship is in terms of avoiding strategy. Based on the quantitative findings, students with scholarship tend to employ avoiding strategy in dealing with their conflicts more than students without scholarship do. Regarding the responses given by the interviewees, students with scholarship tend to be the party who avoid conflicts rather than the students without scholarship because students who hold a scholarship might have fear of losing their scholarship, whereas students without scholarship tend to deal with conflicts as much as they can.

Sample responses gathered from the interviews are as follows:

Students with a scholarship do not show objection a lot. They are generally the party who avoid conflicts. They behave in this way since they have fear of losing their scholarship, or such negative consequences. On the other hand, when there is a conflict between a student with and without a scholarship,

students who do not hold scholarship are generally more dominating because of financial superiority and their egoistic nature. (Interviewee 1)

Mostly, there might not be a difference between students who hold a scholarship and those who do not. However, it depends on the situation. It is not possible to distinguish students on the basis of scholarship. (Interviewee 3)

We cannot state that there is a difference between students with and without a scholarship at a university. It is generally related to their personality traits. Making such a difference is not reasonable and it is unnecessary. (Interviewee 6)

We cannot generalize this, as well, but there is a difference between these groups in terms of conflict management strategies. It is also related to how the students improved themselves or how they are brought up by their parents. For example, we consider a student from economics department; students with a scholarship were very successful in OSS exam, while students without a scholarship got lower scores from the same exam. Therefore, students without a scholarship mostly think that they can do what they want thanks to their financial superiority and they have not developed themselves well because of this superiority. On the other hand, this difference can be lower when students from engineering faculty are considered. (Interviewee 7)

In our university, there might not be a difference, but considering other private universities, it is believed that students who do not hold a scholarship want to be more dominating, while students with a scholarship tend to be more obliging and avoiding. The reason is related to financial superiority of their families. (Interviewee 9)

The third sub-question referring to the fourth research question of the study intended to detect whether the schools or universities from which students last graduated has a significant role in the way they manage their conflicts or not. For this purpose, students were asked to express their opinions about whether last school attended by the students affects the type of conflict management strategy employed by the students. Moreover, students were asked to explain in what situations they observed this difference and possible reasons behind this difference. The results of this interview question showed that a majority of the students stated that the last school attended has a role in the way students manage their conflicts. They explained that the difference is a result of several things. Firstly, there are certain differences between how students are educated in private and public schools. Secondly, different types of public or private schools have different student profiles categorized

according to their socio-economic levels, achievement, intelligence, etc. Finally, what people think about different types of schools and how teachers behave toward the students might be different. As a result, when all of these three reasons are combined, the last attended school might have an effect on the way students manage their conflicts. Regarding the findings of the questionnaire, the difference among students from various high schools is in terms of compromising strategy. Based on the quantitative findings, students from super high schools or Anatolian high schools tend to employ compromising strategy more than students from general high schools or private high schools. According to the interviewees, students from private high schools might act in a spoiled way, they tend to ignore problems or employ dominating strategy more due to monetary superiority. Likewise, students from general state schools might be more aggressive and dominating. However, students from Anatolian high schools might be tolerant and constructive, which might help them use compromising and integrating more in dealing with their conflicts. Moreover, the interviewees expressed that students tend to regard their teachers as role models and act in a way their teachers do. Therefore, students are said to observe how their teachers manage conflicts and they might imitate their teachers' skills and strategies in handling conflicts.

Sample responses gathered from the interviews are as follows:

Teachers at science schools can be more tolerant than those at regular state schools. And teachers at state schools can be more strict and aggressive. Accordingly, students from science schools might be tolerant in the way they manage their conflicts, while students from regular state schools might be more aggressive and dominating in the way they manage their conflicts. Therefore teachers and the environment at high school have an effect on students' conflict management strategies. (Interviewee 2)

Students who graduated from private colleges might be spoiled, therefore, they tend to avoid conflicts and ignore problems. On the other hand, students from Anatolian high schools or science schools might focus on the conflict more and fight with the conflicts. They might be good at integrating and compromising. One of the reasons can be money and monetary superiority for the students from private colleges. Students from science schools have developed themselves more and are knowledgeable about various topics, while students from regular state high school might not be very well-developed and knowledgeable. Therefore,

students from science or Anatolian high schools are good at compromising and integrating in dealing with conflicts, while the students from regular high schools tend to avoid conflicts. Additionally, students from science schools might be dominating since they might think that they are more knowledgeable than the others. (Interviewee 4)

I come from a state school, and I can clearly understand the difference between a private and a public school. For example, a teacher never taught us each and every detail of a subject and then asked whether we understood or not. He usually lectured us. Therefore, a student from such a school and a private school are certainly different, of course. In my opinion, a student from a state school might be obliging and avoiding in handling conflicts, while a student from a private school might be dominating in handling conflicts. (Interviewee 12)

Finally, the fourth and the last sub-question referring to the fourth research question of the study intended to detect whether the duration of study at a particular university has a significant role in the way they manage their conflicts or not. For this purpose, students were asked to express their opinions about whether there is a difference between students who study for the first year at preparatory school at university and students who have to study for another year there in terms of the type of conflict management strategies employed by them. Moreover, students were asked to explain in what situations they observed this difference and possible reasons behind this difference. Regarding the findings of the quantitative data, there are some mean differences between first and second-year students in terms of some of the conflict management strategies; however, this is not a significant difference.

Some of the interviewees believe that the duration of study at preparatory school or at a particular university has a role in the way students manage their conflicts. According to most of the students, students who have to study for a second year at preparatory school tend to usually avoid conflicts since they do not want to experience conflicts with the teachers. Moreover, they feel worried and depressed as they have to study at the preparatory school for the second year, so they might not use integrating or compromising strategies more. Instead, they either avoid conflicts or use dominating strategy more than first year students.

Sample responses gathered from the interviews are as follows:

Students who study at a particular university for the second year are more experienced and confident; therefore, when confronted with a conflict they might be more relaxed and more reasonable. On the other hand, considering students in their first year, they might be more nervous, hasty, and impatient and they might make unreasonable decisions. For example, students in their first year might use avoiding often, while students in their second year might use compromising since they can give more reasonable decisions. (Interviewee 3)

Second-year students might use dominating more by claiming that they are more experienced and knowledgeable about school than the first-year students. (Interviewee 6)

First-year students tend to be either avoiding or compromising since they have just started school and they are inexperienced in most of the things about university. Moreover, they might be nervous and afraid of a new environment. However, second-year students might use dominating very often or they can just cause conflicts instead of dealing with them since they rebel against anything. (Interviewee 7)

Students in their second year at preparatory school generally feel worried and depressed. At the same time, they can feel superior since they behave as if they know everything about the school. Therefore, they tend to use dominating more. On the other hand, first-year students are certainly passive and they tend to use avoiding or compromising most of the time. (Interviewee 11)

#### **4.7.5. Research Question 5**

The fifth research question aimed to find the answer regarding the effect of demographic features on EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts. For this purpose certain sub-research questions were formed. In each sub-research question an aspect of four demographic features were examined. These features were gender, scholarship status, last school attended and finally duration of study at a particular university. Regarding the findings related to EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills based on quantitative data, significant differences were found in terms of gender, and last school attended while the results showed that there is no significant difference in terms of scholarship status and the duration of study at a particular university in respect to EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills. Therefore, in order to analyze these findings

more, and dig out the reasons behind significant differences, a number of interview questions were designed as sub-questions for the fifth research question.

The first sub-question of the interview was to highlight whether male and female EFL learners need different effective communication skills. In the interviews, participants were asked to explain the reasons why males are different from female students in terms of their needs for effective communication skills. Regarding the responses given by 12 participants, a great majority of the students stated that there is a difference between male and female students in respect to their needs for effective communication skills. In fact, all the participants stated that there were differences in terms of how gender affects the need for effective communication skills, and also some of the students mentioned that gender is not the only factor affecting the need for effective communication skills; however, the results of the study showed that almost all of the students thought that males might be different from females regarding their needs for effective communication skills. According to some of the participants, one of the reasons of the difference is social norms and how male and female children are raised in a society. Additionally, culture is another reason why females differ from males in terms of effective communication skills. Some other students explained that the reason is the nature of females and males, and they stated that there is an inborn difference between males and females regardless of how they are brought up or educated. Regarding the findings of the study, students mentioned different reasons why and how males are different from females in terms of their needs for effective communication skills; however, all the participants almost unanimously agreed that gender affects EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts. The findings of the quantitative data showed that the difference between males and females is in terms of self-expression and active listening skills. Actually, males need these two skills more than females do. Based on the responses given by the interviewees, females can use self-expression and active listening better since they can express themselves clearly and gently. Moreover, in terms of active-listening, females can carefully listen to the

other party and might give the impression that they care for what the other person says. On the other hand, males do not use these two skills as effectively as females do. Therefore, males need these two effective communication skills to be taught to manage their conflicts successfully. Moreover, some of the interviewees mentioned that female students use empathy and cooperation skills more than males. The reason why males and females are different in terms of their need for some of the effective communication skills is expectations of the society for their roles, environment, and teachers.

Sample responses gathered from the interviews are as follows:

Generally, it is possible to say that males and females do not differ to a great extent, but since females are more sentimental and sensitive, they might need empathy more and use it more. For the females, they might use problem solving skills and need it more. However, in my belief, there are not big differences between males and females. (Interviewee 1)

Female students use and need empathy and cooperation more, while male students need these skills less. Considering the reasons behind this situation, expectations of the society for their roles, environment, and teachers can be explanatory causes for this difference. (Interviewee 2)

In my belief, there is a difference between male and female students in terms of effective communication skills because they have different ideas about several topics. For example, male students tend to act independently, while females tend to cooperate and solve problems together. Moreover, I do not think that male students will need cooperation and such skills as much as females do. (Interviewee 5)

In my belief, there are differences between males and females in terms of effective communication skills, for example, in terms of self-expression. What I mean is that female students can express themselves better by talking gently and politely. Also, they are good at active listening. On the other hand, it seems that male students may not need active listening or self expression as much as females do. In my belief, the reason can be nurture which is how they are brought up since their childhood. (Interviewee 8)

In my belief, males and females can differ from each other in terms of active listening skill at which females are better; and brain storming skill at which males are better. As a reason for this, it can be said that female students are more sentimental and sensitive than male students. (Interviewee 12)

The second sub-question referring to the fifth research question of the study intended to detect whether the students who hold a scholarship has a significant role in what kinds of effective communication skills they need to manage their conflicts. For this purpose, the students were asked whether they think the need for effective communication skills of the students with a scholarship are different from those of the students without a scholarship, and then they were asked to explain how they observed this difference and the reasons of it. Regarding the findings of the quantitative data, there are some mean differences between students with and without a scholarship in terms of their needs for effective communication skills; however, the results showed that there is no significant difference between students with and without a scholarship in respect to needs for effective communication skills. Regarding the qualitative data, the results of the interview question showed that more than half of the students stated that whether a student holds any scholarship might affect what kinds of effective communication skills they need in order to manage their conflicts. According to some of the participants, students with a scholarship might need and use active listening and empathy more, while some of the participants think that students without a scholarship might be good at using skills such as self-expression since they could express themselves clearly and effectively. On the other hand, almost half of the students stated that scholarship status of a student does not affect their need for effective communication skills. They stated that scholarship is not a very important factor affecting effective communication skills. Regarding the second sub-question of the fifth research question, sample responses gathered from the interviews are as follows:

Students with a scholarship use effective communication skills more, while students without a scholarship do not use them very often since students without a scholarship think that they can deal with everything by dominating and they do not need these skills. On the other hand, students who hold a scholarship have improved themselves to a great extent and they learn everything by thinking and doing. As a result, they use effective communication skills more often and effectively. (Interviewee 2)

In my opinion, students with a scholarship can use empathy better and they can effectively put themselves into someone's shoes to understand them. On the



other hand, students who do not hold a scholarship might express themselves better by telling whatever they want in a very open way. They do not hesitate to tell everything in mind thanks to their self-confidence. Considering the reasons behind this situation, students with a scholarship tend to think about their life and future more so that they can plan and organize everything, which helps them use some effective communication skills. On the other hand, students without a scholarship do not care for problems and they are generally relaxed in life, which makes them more confident. (Interviewee 4)

During a conflict, rather than one's socio-economic situation, the knowledge, awareness and the sensitivity of the individual are more important than that individual's scholarship status. Hence, I don't want to say that scholarship status affects students' needs for effective communication skills. However, we can only say that students without a scholarship might not have a tendency to use cooperation as much as those with a scholarship would. (Interviewee 6)

There is a difference between students with and without a scholarship in terms of effective communication skills. For example, when we consider students with scholarship at our school, they usually come out of the city and they know how to stand on their own foot. As a result, the effective communication skills used by them can be more. Moreover, they can use their logic more effectively. For example, the communication between two students with a scholarship can be very different from the communication between two students with and without a scholarship. Everything they talk about, and share might be completely different. As a result their ways of communication are different, too. (Interviewee 7)

The third sub-question referring to the fifth research question of the study intended to detect whether the schools or universities from which students last graduated has a significant role in terms of what kinds of effective communication skills they need to manage their conflicts. For this purpose, students were asked to express their opinions about whether last school attended by the students affects EFL learners' need for effective communication skills. Moreover, students were asked to explain in what situations they observed this difference and also possible reasons behind this difference. The results of this interview question showed that a majority of the students stated that the last school attended has a role in terms of what kinds of effective communication skills they need to manage their conflicts. They explained that the difference is a result of several things. Firstly, there are certain differences between how students are educated in private and public schools. Secondly, different

types of public or private schools have different student profiles categorized according to their socio-economic levels, achievement, intelligence, etc. Finally, what people think about different types of schools and how teachers behave toward the students might be different. As a result, when all of these three reasons are combined, the last attended school might have an effect on students' needs for effective communication skills. Regarding the findings of the questionnaire, the difference among students from various high schools is in terms of their need for decision-making skill. Based on the quantitative findings, students from super high schools or Anatolian high schools tend to have more need for decision-making skill to be taught more than students from general high schools or science high schools. Regarding the responses given by the interviewees, the high school attended has a very important role in learners' need for effective communication skills so that some of the students think that it might be difficult for them to communicate effectively with students from various high schools. Regarding the third sub-question of the fifth research question, sample responses gathered from the interviews are as follows:

There is a significant difference among students from various high schools in terms of their needs for effective communication skills. At high school level, the individual just starts to learn such things as effective communication skills for the first time. At university level, it could be really difficult to change this kind of things since they are considered to be learnt and internalized. However, at the age of fourteen or fifteen, these skills might be taught. As a result there is a difference among students from various high school backgrounds. (Interviewee 1)

Of course, there is a difference in terms of needs for communication skills among students from different high schools. For example, I do not think that I can communicate effectively with a student from a regular state high school. Both the topics of interest and ideas are different. The reason of this difference is how well the students developed themselves, environment and friends around. (Interviewee 7)

The intelligence level is different among students coming from different high schools and this may affect what kind of conflict management strategies they employ in handling conflicts. Moreover, students who graduated from high schools like science schools may boast about it and may have a higher confidence level, and this can affect communication negatively. When you feel superior to the other party involved, it leads to communication problems. (Interviewee 8)

Students from state science schools might use problem-solving and brainstorming more dominantly. However students from private high schools tend to use decision-making and self-expression better. The reasons can be students' socio-economic situation, their family and environment. (Interviewee 12)

Finally, the fourth and the last sub-question referring to the fifth research question of the study intended to detect whether the duration of study at a particular university has a significant role in what kinds of effective communication skills they need to manage their conflicts. For this purpose, students were asked to express their opinions about whether there is a difference between students who study for the first year at preparatory school at university and students who have to study for another year there in terms of their need for effective communication skills. Moreover, students were asked to explain in what situations they observed this difference and possible reasons behind this difference. Regarding the findings of the quantitative data, there are some mean differences between first and second-year students in terms of their needs for effective communication skills; however, the results are not significant. The results of this interview question showed that more than half of the students are in the opinion that the duration of study at preparatory school or at a particular university affects EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills. According to most of the students, students who have to study for a second year at preparatory school need and tend to use some of the effective communication skills such as decision-making, problem-solving and cooperation since they are more experienced and more knowledgeable about the procedures and rules. On the other hand, almost one third of the interviewees stated that duration of study at a particular university does not affect EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills since there are some other more important factors than duration of study that might have an effect on learners' need for effective communication skills. Regarding the final sub-question of the fifth research question, sample responses gathered from the interviews are as follows:

Duration of study affects learners' needs for effective communication skills. In my belief, in terms of decision-making and problem-solving, second-year

students can use these skills better. First-year students might also use and need these skills, but they do not use them as much as second-year students do. Experience is an important factor in explaining this difference. (Interviewee 3)

This is my second year at this school, and I have opinions about procedures and rules in the school. Hence, my thoughts have been shaped accordingly and my attitudes have been formed in parallel with this awareness. Moreover, I have started to use different effective communication skills and techniques. However, a first-year student who is not aware of these procedures and rules might have difficulty in problem-solving and dealing with conflicts. Therefore, experience is an important factor in explaining this difference. (Interviewee 4)

Maybe, in terms of decision-making second year students might use it more when compared to first-year students. However we cannot say this is a very important factor that affects learners' needs for effective communication skills. (Interviewee 6)

First-year students tend to withdraw themselves more; therefore, they may experience difficulty in communication. Accordingly, second-year students feel worried and depressed, and this might lead to withdrawal, too. Except for empathy, the other effective communication skills might be different. For example, first-year students might have difficulty in self-expression since they don't have any idea about teachers, environments, etc. However, second-year students can be better in terms of self-expression. Moreover, second-year students might be better in using cooperation. Finally, both first-year and second-year students might have difficulty in brain-storming, while they may use active listening effectively. (Interviewee 7)

#### **4.7.6. Research Question 6**

Finally, the sixth and the last research question aimed to explore EFL learners' opinions about teaching and learning conflict management strategies and also about effective communication skills. Considering the actions of people, opinions are important since they usually shape or direct what kind of behavior or attitude people will show as a consequence of their ideas. For this purpose, four different interview questions were asked to understand EFL learners' opinions about teaching and learning conflict management strategies and effective communication skills. Firstly, students were asked to express their opinions about whether they think effective communication skills can be taught and learnt subsequently after a certain period of time in life. Considering the responses given for this interview question, the results showed that a great majority of the students stated that conflict management

strategies can be learnt at high school or at university level. However, some of these participants explained that conflict management skills might be owned by birth and they might be taught and learnt in students' lives, as well. Moreover, they explained that natural aptitudes, tendency or general psychology of the person can affect what conflict management strategies this individual might prefer in addition to the fact that these strategies can be acquired by learning and teaching. On the other hand, less than one fourth of the students are in the opinion that these skills are inborn and one cannot learn or teach these skills after they are born. Secondly, the participants were asked whether they think that they learn and study conflict management strategies and effective communication skills as part of their English lessons. The results of this interview question showed that majority of the students are in the opinion that there are activities or materials related to the teaching and learning of these skills and strategies, while almost one third of the students stated that they do not think some activities and materials are related to the teaching and learning of these skills and strategies. The participants who think these skills and strategies are studied in English lessons explained that they sometimes read passages about up-to-date topics, discuss in groups, do group-work or they learn how to cooperate by negotiating during several important conflicts, whereas the rest of the participants do not think these skills and strategies are studied in English lessons. As the third interview question, participants were asked whether teaching conflict management strategies and effective communication skills help them acquire a different consciousness or perspective. The results showed that a great majority of the participants are in the opinion that teaching these strategies and skills in English lessons might help them think from a different perspective, build and use empathy in their relations, develop their ideas and common sense, and decrease the number of conflicts experienced in their lives. On the other hand, approximately one fourth of the students think that these skills and strategies are acquired by nature and an individual cannot change even if they are studied in EFL classrooms. Finally, the participants were asked whether they need these skills and strategies to be taught. The results showed that a

great majority of the participants need conflict management strategies and effective communication skills to be taught since they want to benefit from them in the way which was explained in the previous sub-question of the same research question. On the other hand, almost one fourth of the participants stated that they do not need these skills and strategies to be taught because they have already learnt them via different sources such as books and parents. Regarding the qualitative analysis of the sixth research question, in the following excerpts, the participants explain their opinions about whether communication skills and conflict management strategies could be taught:

They might not be learnt, however, I believe that they may be gained to some extent. It is something related to an individual's characteristics. It depends on the individual. You can teach them to some degree but personality and characteristics are important. (Interviewee 1)

If the case is preparatory school students, it is not possible to teach these skills since it is impossible to change one's character at that age. However, watching plays, reading novels and changing the environment can help someone to gain these skills and strategies. (Interviewee 2)

We cannot say that people maintain their characteristics, skills and habits all through their lives; it is possible to teach someone something in various ways. Therefore, I believe these skills and strategies can be taught, too. It might not be in a very short time, but an individual can change by experience, learning and demonstration. In English courses, for example, cooperation is taught not explicitly but by means of some activities such as group or pair work.

It depends on the person and age, and teaching these skills and strategies to someone who is an adult and mature enough might affect their lives in a positive way. It is not directly related to age, but it is related to how an individual is improved and developed. (Interviewee 3)

Of course, teaching these skills and strategies can help an individual reach a different level of consciousness. For example, teaching empathy can help a person know what the other people think and feel. (Interviewee 7)

I am not sure whether we can acquire these skills and strategies when we are taught or trained. In my opinion, this could be done at an early age. At our age, one's character is shaped almost completely; therefore, what we have been taught can be only theoretical knowledge. I wish we could learn and acquire various skills and strategies, but this is actually what I believe.

Regarding the qualitative analysis of the sixth research question, in the following excerpts, the participants explain their opinions about whether communication skills and conflict management strategies are taught and what can be the possible outcomes of this process:

In English courses, there is not direct teaching related to these skills and strategies; however, some of the units in the course book were about some recent topics. There were topics one can encounter in daily life. Most probably, these things have an effect on our learning, but in my belief, there were vocabulary exercises which taught us some expressions and vocabulary items that I could use when I face conflict in a foreign country where English is spoken. Teaching these skills and strategies may attract learners' attention. In fact it is like the leadership training. It might be useful especially for the people who hesitate to speak. Students participating in such training activities are the ones who want to develop their skills; therefore, this kind of people might want to learn them. It can help students to change and acquire some skills and strategies, although it might be a little bit difficult for people to change and trim their existing skills. (Interviewee 1)

Until now, I have not needed them to be taught, however, for instance, in terms of problem-solving, I might encounter a problem that I cannot deal with on my own. If there is a problem or conflict, I might need to learn how to solve it. My way of dealing with the problem might not be correct, and then a training session on these skills and strategies might help me realize my mistake and teach a different approach especially in terms of problem solving and self-expression. In my opinion, these skills and strategies should be taught to everyone, especially at university level, there must be a separate course on these. This course can also be prepared for not only university but also high school or elementary school students. This is about how much an individual wants to develop. For instance, active listening skills are needed very much. We also do not know how to brain storm. People have different characteristics by birth; however, they still might learn and gain a different personality trait. In English lessons, we have activities on effective communication. For example, we have projects, group work activities and interactive activities, but there is no direct teaching of these skills and strategies.

In English courses, most of the units in the book are based on such things. Moreover, considering teaching techniques of a teacher, there are things which are done in order to teach such skills. For example, you express your ideas, the others are actively listening to you, and we do brain-storming; as a result, we can say that these are covered in lessons. Teaching topics related to such kind of topics in English might not help students gain a different perspective or consciousness since students generally pay attention to practicing English, getting high scores and learning a language. They do not think about the content in lessons. In fact, a combination of learning a language, real-life components

and these skills and strategies can be very effective for students; however, this is not possible considering the current education system. The current system which is based on just testing and grades should be changed so that the students can pay attention to the content and these skills and strategies. If the aim is getting high scores, students may not care for what they learn but grammar, reading skills and vocabulary. (Interviewee 8)

#### **4.8. Discussion of the Results**

In this section, the results of the quantitative and the qualitative data are presented in the light of research questions. The reasons behind some findings and significant differences gathered from quantitative data are unearthed and analyzed in detail.

The first research question aimed to find out the most common types of conflict confronted in EFL classrooms. Regarding the related question in the questionnaire, students were asked to choose the four most common types of conflict among a total of seventeen conflicts, whereas students were asked to identify the most common types of conflict and explain what kind of problems might lead to conflicts. Regarding the results of the quantitative data, the most common conflicts confronted by EFL learners are rules and restrictions on attendance with highest mean score of 3,09. The other most common conflicts are assignments, self-expression, course content, lack of interest, and teachers' subject knowledge respectively. Regarding the results of qualitative data, most of the students stated that attendance and related restrictions are the most common problems in EFL classrooms because of the fact that they are not allowed into classrooms when they are late only for one minute, or too many rules about attendance affect their mood and performance in classrooms. As the second most common conflict in EFL classrooms, almost half of the students stated that assignments given by the teachers are both too many and sometimes too simple. More than one fourth of the students consider that conflicts are also caused by the fact that students cannot express themselves clearly. As the fourth most common conflict in EFL classrooms, more than one fourth of the students stated that content of the courses could be regarded as unnecessary by the students. Finally, one fourth of the students explained that teachers' subject knowledge and English



language can be the types of conflict confronted. Students mentioned that they sometimes cannot get satisfactory explanations and responses from teachers, while some students mentioned that English language itself is a problem since there are so many inexplicable topics when compared to Turkish language. When all of these conflicts are combined, students feel a lack of interest in English courses. Table 4.48 displays the results of both of the instruments regarding the first research question.

Table 4.48 Summary of the results of the first research question

<b>Research Question 1</b>		
What are the most common types of conflict that students confront in the process of EFL learning?		
Results of the Questionnaire		Results of the Interviews
	Mean	Order
Rules about attendance	3,09	1
Assignments	2,53	2
Self-expression	2,53	3
Course content	2,52	4
Lack of interest	2,48	5
Teachers' subject knowledge	2,45	6
Teachers' personal traits	2,45	7
Exams	2,45	8
Course program	2,38	9
Teaching strategies	2,37	10
Course material	2,33	11
Students	2,32	12
Participation	2,27	13
Ways of communication	2,26	14
Administration	2,25	15
Teachers' approach	2,22	16
Classroom and the building	1,68	17

The second research question aimed to identify learners' needs for effective communication skills. In the quantitative instrument, students were asked to express their needs in the form of Likert-scale based on fourteen items, whereas participants of the interview were asked to express their needs by taking seven effective communication skills given in a list. Regarding the mean scores gathered via

quantitative data, problem-solving, decision-making, and active listening are the most needed three effective communication skills, whereas self-expression, empathy, cooperation, and brain-storming are the least needed four skills. Regarding the qualitative data gathered through interviews, students explained that they need problem solving quite often because this is a scientific and systematic approach to deal with conflicts. They explained that this might help them to know what to do when confronted with a conflict. Moreover, the interviewees mentioned that decision-making is needed to a great extent in order to finalize a conflict between parties, and brain-storming is another important effective communication skill since it helps people to think in an organized way and produce ideas. Interviewees explained that cooperation is also an important skill and they needed it in dealing with their conflict, because it is usually not effective when only one of the parties tries to solve the problem on his/her own. Interviewees explained that self-expression is one of the most needed effective communication skills since an individual might experience several problems due to lack of this skill. Additionally, more than half of the students expressed that they need empathy so that they can understand the feelings and opinions of the person they are talking to clearly and effectively. Moreover, the results showed that another half of the students need active listening skills to manage their conflicts. Interviewees expressed that they need to show that they really want to listen to the other party so that they can build an effective communication ground. Table 4.49 illustrates the results of both of the instruments regarding the second research question.

Table 4.49 Summary of the results of the second research question

<b>Research Question 2</b>			
What are EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts and the frequency of each particular need?			
Results of the Questionnaire			Results of the Interviews
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Problem-solving	339	2,8201	1,04347
Decision-making	339	2,8127	1,03683
Active listening	339	2,7788	,95986
Brainstorming	339	2,7552	1,04085
Cooperation	339	2,7360	1,04856
Empathy	339	2,6121	,97033
Self-expression	339	2,5900	1,09869
Valid N (listwise)	339		
			<b>Problem-solving:</b> scientific, systematic, organized <b>Decision-making:</b> a must to finalize conflicts <b>Active-listening:</b> a must to build an effective communication ground <b>Brain-storming:</b> an organized way of producing ideas and increasing creativity <b>Cooperation:</b> not possible to solve conflict on one's own, it is necessary to solve conflicts together <b>Empathy:</b> a good way to understand others' feelings and ideas <b>Self-expression:</b> prevents misunderstandings

The third research question aimed to identify the common conflict management strategies employed by EFL learners. The quantitative data was gathered through an adapted version of ROCI-II inventory. On the other hand, for the qualitative data, interviewees were given five conflict handling modes and they were asked to express which one they commonly employ in handling conflicts. The results of the quantitative data showed that integrating has the highest mean score with 3.74. Then, compromising comes with 3.61. Moreover, the mean scores of dominating and obliging are respectively 3.32 and 3.08, while the mean score of avoiding is below 3 and it is the lowest score with 2.91. Regarding students' responses in terms of their most common strategies in dealing with conflicts, the interview results showed that the majority of the students stated that they employ compromising strategies in order that both parties can gain something out of the conflict. Secondly, more than one fourth of the participants stated that they use dominating strategies and this is generally used when compromising or students' initial strategies do not work for

them in handling conflicts. Furthermore, more than one fourth of the participants stated that they employ avoiding strategies when they are unable to deal with their conflict in a constructive way. Also, some of the participants stated that they use obliging strategies because they do not want to experience conflict in the long run and they choose the easiest way according to their opinion. Finally, one fourth of the participants employ integrating conflict management strategy in order that both parties can come up with a better solution together. Table 4.50 illustrates the results of both of the instruments regarding the third research question.

Table 4.50 Summary of the results of the third research question

<b>Research Question 3</b>				
What are the most common strategies used by EFL learners in dealing with conflicts among peers based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning and communication in real life?				
Results of the Questionnaire				Results of the Interviews
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	% of Variance
Integrating	339	3,74	0,62	23,51
Obliging	339	3,08	0,59	4,89
Dominating	339	3,32	0,67	9,49
Avoiding	339	2,91	0,71	11,19
Compromising	339	3,61	0,52	4,23
			<b>Total %</b>	<b>53,32</b>

**Integrating:** when students want to come up with a better solution together

**Obliging:** when students do not want to experience conflict in the long run

**Dominating:** especially when the initial strategy does not work in handling conflicts

**Avoiding:** when unable to deal with conflicts in a constructive way

**Compromising:** when both parties can gain some benefit out of conflict.

The fourth research question aimed to analyze the effect of demographic characteristics on conflict management strategies employed by EFL learners and the relationship between these factors. For this purpose, the data were examined under certain sub-categories: gender, scholarship status, high school attended, and duration of study at a particular university. Firstly, the findings of the quantitative data showed that the difference between males and females is in terms of dominating conflict

management strategy, and males employ more dominating conflict management strategies than females do. Based on the responses given by the interviewees, males are considered to employ dominating strategy more as social norms and how males are brought up enables them to be more powerful and strong, whereas females are known to be good at employing strategies such as compromising, integrating, and sometimes even obliging. Secondly, regarding the role of scholarship status in learners' conflict management strategies, based on the quantitative findings, students with scholarship tend to employ avoiding strategy in dealing with their conflicts more than students without a scholarship do. Based on the responses given by the interviewees, students with a scholarship tend to be the party who avoid conflicts rather than the students without a scholarship because students who hold a scholarship might have a fear of losing their scholarship, whereas students without a scholarship tend to deal with conflicts as much as they can do. As the third factor, regarding the high school attended, based on the quantitative findings, students from super high schools or Anatolian high schools tend to employ compromising strategy more than students from general high schools or private high schools. As the responses in the interviews show, students from private high schools might act in a spoiled way, they tend to ignore problems or employ dominating strategy more due to monetary superiority. Likewise, students from general state schools might be more aggressive and dominating due to their teachers' characteristics at high school. However, students from Anatolian high schools might have teachers who are tolerant and constructive, which might help them use compromising and integrating more in dealing with their conflicts. Finally, regarding the role of duration of study at a particular university in students' conflict management strategies, the findings of the quantitative data showed that there are some mean differences between first and second-year students in terms of some of the conflict management strategies; however, the statistical analysis showed that there is no significant difference between first and second-year students in terms of conflict management strategies. The results of the qualitative data showed that some of the interviewees think that the

duration of study at preparatory school or at a particular university has a role in the way students manage their conflicts. According to most of the students, students who have to study for a second year at preparatory school tend to usually avoid conflicts since they do not want to experience conflicts with the teachers. Moreover, they feel worried and depressed as they have to study at the preparatory school for the second year, so they might not use integrating or compromising strategies more. Instead, they either avoid conflicts or use dominating strategy more than students in their first year. The results regarding the fourth research question and both of the instruments are summarized in Table 4.51.

Table 4.51 Summary of the results of the fourth research question

<b>Research Question 4</b>	
<p>Do conflict management strategies of learners differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners based on how it is perceived?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there any significant difference between male and female learners in terms of conflict management strategies?</li> <li>2. Is there any significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of conflict management strategies?</li> <li>3. Does the high school attended affect the kinds of strategies that students benefit to manage conflicts?</li> <li>4. Does duration of study at that particular university affect the kinds of strategies used to manage conflicts?</li> </ol>	
Results of the Questionnaire	Results of the Interviews
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is a significant mean difference in conflict management strategies between males and females in terms of dominating.</li> <li>2. There is a significant difference between students with or without scholarship and conflict-handling modes of EFL learners (avoiding p value is <math>0.000 &lt; 0,05</math>)</li> <li>3. There are significant differences between group categories in terms of compromising.</li> <li>4. There is no significant difference between learners who are in their first or second year in terms of the conflict management strategies they employ in their EFL classes.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Gender:</b> nature, nurture, culture, social norms, personality, physical differences</p> <p><b>Scholarship status:</b> monetary superiority, different socio economic situation and family background, personal differences, fear of losing scholarship affect conflict-handling modes</p> <p><b>Last school attended:</b> monetary superiority, educational opportunities, teachers' characteristics, environment</p> <p><b>Duration of study:</b> no significant difference</p>

The fifth research question aimed to analyze the effect of demographic characteristics on effective communication skills needed by EFL learners and examined the relationship between these factors. For this purpose, the data were examined under certain sub-categories: gender, scholarship status, high school attended, and duration of study at a particular university. Firstly, the findings of the quantitative data showed that the difference between males and females is in terms of self-expression and active listening skills. Actually, males need these two skills more than females do. Based on the responses given by the interviewees, females can use self-expression and active listening better since they can express themselves clearly and gently. Moreover, in terms of active-listening, females can carefully listen to the other party and might give the impression that they care for what the other person says. On the other hand, males do not use these two skills as effectively as females do. Therefore, males need these two effective communication skills to be taught to manage their conflicts successfully. Moreover, some of the interviewees mentioned that female students use empathy and cooperation skills more than males. The reason why males and females are different in terms of their need for some of the effective communication skills is expectations of the society for their roles, environment, and teachers. Secondly, regarding the findings of the quantitative data, there are some mean differences between students with and without a scholarship in terms of their needs for effective communication skills; however, the results showed that there is no significant difference between students with and without a scholarship in respect to needs for effective communication skills. Regarding the qualitative data, the results of the interview question showed that almost half of the students stated that scholarship status of a student does not affect their need for effective communication skills. They stated that scholarship is not a very important factor affecting effective communication skills. Thirdly, based on the quantitative findings, students from super high schools or Anatolian high schools tend to have more need for decision-making skill to be taught more than students from general high schools or science high schools. Regarding the responses given by the interviewees, the high school

attended has such a very important role in learners' need for effective communication skills that some of the students think that it might be difficult for them to communicate effectively with students from various high schools. Finally, regarding the findings of the quantitative data, there are some mean differences between first and second-year students in terms of their needs for effective communication skills; however, the difference is not significant. Almost one third of the interviewees stated that duration of study at a particular university does not affect EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills since there are some other more important factors than duration of study that might have an effect on learners' need for effective communication skills. The results regarding the fifth research question and both of the instruments are summarized in Table 4.52.

Table 4.52 Summary of the results of the fifth research question

<b>Research Question 5</b>	
Do EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners?	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there any significant difference between male and female learners in terms of the needs for effective communication skills?</li> <li>2. Is there any significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills?</li> <li>3. Does the high school attended affect the learners' needs for effective communication skills?</li> <li>4. Does duration of study at that particular university affect the learners' needs for effective communication skills?</li> </ol>	
Results of the Questionnaire	Results of the Interviews
1. There is a significant mean difference in EFL learners' need for effective communication skills between males and females in terms of active listening and self-expression.	<b>Gender:</b> nature, nurture, culture, social norms, personality, expectation of the society, empathetic differences
2. There is no significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills	<b>Scholarship status:</b> no significant difference
3. The high school attended or last graduated school affects the EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills. (decision making p value is 0.015<0,05)	<b>Last school attended:</b> financial superiority, educational opportunities, teachers' characteristics, environment
4. There is no significant relationship between the year of study and EFL learners' need for effective communication skills.	<b>Duration of study:</b> no significant difference



Finally, the sixth and the last research question aimed to find out learners' opinions on teaching and learning conflict management strategies and effective communication skills. The findings of the questionnaire results are supported and explained by qualitative data gathered through the interviews. Regarding the current research question, the quantitative data displayed that students do not think that effective communication skills or conflict management strategies are not taught in courses, but most of the students want these skills and strategies to be taught in courses. Similarly, qualitative data revealed that a great majority of the students stated that conflict management strategies can be learnt at high school or university level. However, some of these participants explained that conflict management skills might be inborn and they might be taught and learnt in students' lives, as well. Moreover, the findings of the qualitative data showed that some activities and materials are related to the teaching and learning of these skills and strategies. According to the participants who think these skills and strategies are studied in English lessons, students sometimes read passages about up-to-date topics, discuss in groups, do group-work or they learn how to cooperate by negotiating during several important conflicts. Thirdly, the results showed that a great majority of the participants believe that teaching these strategies and skills in English lessons might help them think from a different perspective, build and use empathy in their relations, develop their ideas and common sense, and decrease the number of conflicts confronted in their lives. Finally, qualitative data displayed that EFL learners need these skills and strategies to be taught in general since they want to benefit from them in the way which was explained in the previous sub-question of the same research question. The results regarding the sixth research question and both of the instruments are summarized in Table 4.53.

Table 4.53 Summary of the results of the sixth research question

<b>Research Question 6</b>				
What are EFL learners' attitudes toward teaching and learning conflict management strategies and toward effective communication skills?				
Results of the Questionnaire				Results of the Interviews
	Y	%	N	%
Are skills and strategies helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements taught in courses?	61	18 %	278	82 %
Do you want the skills and strategies that are helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements to be taught in courses?	250	74 %	79	23 %
Are effective communication skills taught in courses?	54	16 %	284	84 %
Do you want the effective communication skills to be taught in courses?	272	80 %	64	19 %

Conflict management strategies and effective communication skills can be taught and learnt.

Some activities and materials are related to teaching and learning these skills and strategies. For example: reading passages about up-to-date topics, discussion in groups, doing group-work or learning how to cooperate by negotiating on several important conflicts.

Teaching conflict management strategies and effective communication skills helps acquire a different perspective, build and use empathy in their relations, develop ideas and common sense, and decrease the number of conflicts confronted in life.

EFL learners need these skills and strategies to be taught.

#### 4.9. Summary of the Overall Results

The current study examined and analyzed conflict management and effective communication from several complementary perspectives. The purpose of the study was to identify common types of conflicts that learners confront in the process of EFL learning; to examine and analyze EFL learners' own strategies to deal with conflicts based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning; to find out their needs in terms of effective communication skills necessary to manage conflicts; and to analyze their attitudes toward conflict management learning and their needs for conflict management strategies. In order to achieve this aim, a survey research is preferred and the quantitative data gathered through the questionnaires were supported with the qualitative data obtained from the interviews with participant EFL learners.

The results of the study revealed that there is a relationship between EFL learners' conflict management strategies, need for effective communication skills and their gender, scholarship status, last school graduated, duration of study at a particular university. Additionally, the study displayed that students confront various types of conflict and they need conflict management skills and effective communication skills to be taught to deal with conflicts successfully. Table 4.54 summarizes the findings of the quantitative and the qualitative data.

Table 4.54 Summary of the overall results

<b>Research Question 1</b>				
What are the most common types of conflict that students confront in the process of EFL learning?				
Results of the Questionnaire			Results of the Interviews	
	Mean	Order		
Rules about attendance	3,09	1	<p><b>Attendance:</b> too many rules, too strict regulation, intolerance, sleeping problems</p> <p><b>Assignments:</b> too many, unnecessary, not relevant, too simple, not useful</p> <p><b>Self-expression:</b> difficulty in expressing in English, personal characteristics, misunderstanding</p> <p><b>Course content:</b> unnecessarily loaded, exam-based, uninteresting internet activities,</p> <p><b>Lack of interest:</b> too many rules, too much conflict, teachers' ways of communication, boring subjects</p> <p><b>Teachers' subject knowledge:</b> not to be able to explain questions effectively, problems related to the difference between Turkish and English</p>	
Assignments	2,53	2		
Self-expression	2,53	3		
Course content	2,52	4		
Lack of interest	2,48	5		
Teachers' subject knowledge	2,45	6		
Teachers' personal traits	2,45	7		
Exams	2,45	8		
Course program	2,38	9		
Teaching strategies	2,37	10		
Course material	2,33	11		
Students	2,32	12		
Participation	2,27	13		
Ways of communication	2,26	14		
Administration	2,25	15		
Teachers' approach	2,22	16		
Classroom and the building	1,68	17		
<b>Research Question 2</b>				
What are EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts and the frequency of each particular need?				
Results of the Questionnaire			Results of the Interviews	
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	
Problem-solving	339	2,8201	1,04347	<p><b>Problem-solving:</b> scientific, systematic, organized</p> <p><b>Decision-making:</b> a must to finalize conflicts</p> <p><b>Active-listening:</b> a must to build an effective communication ground</p> <p><b>Brain-storming:</b> an organized way of producing ideas and increasing creativity</p> <p><b>Cooperation:</b> not possible to solve conflict on one's own, it is necessary to solve conflicts together</p> <p><b>Empathy:</b> a good way to understand others' feelings and ideas</p> <p><b>Self-expression:</b> prevents misunderstandings</p>
Decision-making	339	2,8127	1,03683	
Active listening	339	2,7788	,95986	
Brainstorming	339	2,7552	1,04085	
Cooperation	339	2,7360	1,04856	
Empathy	339	2,6121	,97033	
Self-expression	339	2,5900	1,09869	
Valid N (listwise)	339			

**Table continued**

**Research Question 3**

What are the most common strategies used by EFL learners in dealing with conflicts among peers based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning and communication in real life?

Results of the Questionnaire					Results of the Interviews
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	% of Variance	
Integrating	339	3,74	0,62	23,51	<b>Integrating:</b> when students want to come up with a better solution together
Obliging	339	3,08	0,59	4,89	<b>Obliging:</b> when students do not want to experience conflict in the long run
Dominating	339	3,32	0,67	9,49	<b>Dominating:</b> especially when the initial strategy does not work in handling conflicts
Avoiding	339	2,91	0,71	11,19	<b>Avoiding:</b> when unable to deal with conflicts in a constructive way
Compromising	339	3,61	0,52	4,23	<b>Compromising:</b> when both parties can gain some benefit out of conflict.
			<b>Total %</b>	<b>53,32</b>	

**Research Question 4**

Do conflict management strategies of learners differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners based on how it is perceived?

1. Is there any significant difference between male and female learners in terms of conflict management strategies?
2. Is there any significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of conflict management strategies?
3. Does the high school attended affect the kinds of strategies that students benefit to manage conflicts?
4. Does duration of study at that particular university affect the kinds of strategies used to manage conflicts?

Results of the Questionnaire	Results of the Interviews
1. There is a significant mean difference in conflict management strategies between males and females in terms of dominating.	<b>Gender:</b> nature, nurture, culture, social norms, personality, physical differences
2. There is a significant difference between students with or without scholarship and conflict-handling modes of EFL learners (avoiding p value is 0.000<0,05)	<b>Scholarship status:</b> monetary superiority, different socio economic situation and family background, personal differences, fear of losing scholarship affect conflict-handling modes
3. There are significant differences between group categories in terms of compromising.	<b>Last school attended:</b> monetary superiority, educational opportunities, teachers' characteristics, environment
4. There is no significant difference between learners who are in their first or second year in terms of the conflict management strategies they employ in their EFL classes.	<b>Duration of study:</b> no significant difference

**Table continued**

**Research Question 5**

<p>Do EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there any significant difference between male and female learners in terms of the needs for effective communication skills?</li> <li>2. Is there any significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills?</li> <li>3. Does the high school attended affect the learners' needs for effective communication skills?</li> <li>4. Does duration of study at that particular university affect the learners' needs for effective communication skills?</li> </ol>	
Results of the Questionnaire	Results of the Interviews
<p>1. There is a significant mean difference in EFL learners' need for effective communication skills between males and females in terms of active listening and self-expression.</p> <p>2. There is no significant difference between students with and without scholarship in terms of the needs for effective communication skills</p> <p>3. The high school attended or last graduated school affects the EFL learners' needs for effective communication skills. (decision making p value is 0.015&lt;0,05)</p> <p>4. There is no significant relationship between the year of study and EFL learners' need for effective communication skills.</p>	<p><b>Gender:</b> nature, nurture, culture, social norms, personality, expectation of the society, empathetic differences</p> <p><b>Scholarship status:</b> no significant difference</p> <p><b>Last school attended:</b> financial superiority, educational opportunities, teachers' characteristics, environment</p> <p><b>Duration of study:</b> no significant difference</p>

**Research Question 6**

<p>What are EFL learners' attitudes toward teaching and learning conflict management strategies and toward effective communication skills?</p>																										
Results of the Questionnaire	Results of the Interviews																									
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">Y</th> <th style="text-align: center;">%</th> <th style="text-align: center;">N</th> <th style="text-align: center;">%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Are skills and strategies helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements taught in courses?</td> <td style="text-align: center;">61</td> <td style="text-align: center;">18 %</td> <td style="text-align: center;">278</td> <td style="text-align: center;">82 %</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Do you want the skills and strategies that are helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements to be taught in courses?</td> <td style="text-align: center;">250</td> <td style="text-align: center;">74 %</td> <td style="text-align: center;">79</td> <td style="text-align: center;">23 %</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Are effective communication skills taught in courses?</td> <td style="text-align: center;">54</td> <td style="text-align: center;">16 %</td> <td style="text-align: center;">284</td> <td style="text-align: center;">84 %</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Do you want the effective communication skills to be taught in courses?</td> <td style="text-align: center;">272</td> <td style="text-align: center;">80 %</td> <td style="text-align: center;">64</td> <td style="text-align: center;">19 %</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Y	%	N	%	Are skills and strategies helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements taught in courses?	61	18 %	278	82 %	Do you want the skills and strategies that are helpful to manage conflicts and disagreements to be taught in courses?	250	74 %	79	23 %	Are effective communication skills taught in courses?	54	16 %	284	84 %	Do you want the effective communication skills to be taught in courses?	272	80 %	64	19 %	<p>Conflict management strategies and effective communication skills can be taught and learnt.</p> <p>Some activities and materials are related to teaching and learning these skills and strategies. For example: reading passages about up-to-date topics, discussion in groups, doing group-work or learning how to cooperate by negotiating on several important conflicts.</p> <p>Teaching conflict management strategies and effective communication skills helps acquire a different perspective, build and use empathy in their relations, develop ideas and common sense, and decrease the number of conflicts confronted in life.</p> <p>EFL learners need these skills and strategies to be taught.</p>
	Y	%	N	%																						
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Do you want the effective communication skills to be taught in courses?	272	80 %	64	19 %																						

In the next chapter, the findings and implications of the study are discussed in the light of literature and suggestions are offered.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **5.0 Presentation**

This chapter consists of the summary of the study, discussion of the findings, pedagogical implications and recommendation for further research.

#### **5.1 Summary of the Study**

This study aimed to identify common types of conflicts that learners confront in the process of EFL learning; to examine and analyze EFL learners' own strategies to deal with conflicts based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning; to find out their needs in terms of effective communication skills necessary to manage conflicts; and to analyze their attitudes toward conflict management learning and their needs for conflict management strategies. For this purpose, descriptive statistics was used to explore the common types of conflict and EFL learners' own strategies to deal with conflicts. Inferential statistics as ANOVA was used to examine the relationship between EFL learners' conflict management strategies in the EFL classroom, their needs for conflict management, their attitudes toward conflict management learning and their gender, educational background, scholarship status, and years of study at their current school. The quantitative instrument prepared for the implementation of the research was administered to 339 EFL learners studying at the Preparatory School of TOBB University of Economics and Technology. For the qualitative part of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 representative EFL learners; each representing classes with high and low grades.



The quantitative instrument of this study consists of two parts. The first part was a demographic inventory designed to gather the demographic characteristics of the participants. In the second part, four sub-sections were designed: (1) a rank-answer questionnaire to identify common types of conflicts that learners confront in the process of EFL learning; (2) a slightly adapted, Likert-scale questionnaire which was translated to Turkish by Gümüşeli (1994) from The Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II (ROCI II) to identify EFL learners' conflict management strategies; (3) another Likert-scale questionnaire to find out students' needs in terms of effective communication skills necessary to manage conflicts; and (4) an alternative-answer questionnaire to analyze learners' attitudes toward conflict management learning and their needs for conflict management strategies.

Universe of the study comprises all the EFL learners studying English at the English preparatory schools of universities in Turkey. However, sampling of the main study covers a university in Ankara, considering the time limitations and the difficulty to reach all the universities in Turkey in a limited time span. The sample university at which the current study was carried out is TOBB University of Economics and Technology.

The quantitative data were analyzed through Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS for Windows15.0). The qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis.

Quantitative methods were employed to analyze the data by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 15.0 version. An independent sample t-test was used to understand the difference between learners' gender, scholarship status and years of study according to their conflict management strategies and needs for conflict management skills. Moreover, ANOVA test was used to see the difference between learners' educational background and their conflict management strategies and needs for conflict management skills. The factor analysis and reliability analysis of the tool were studied on the data gathered during the piloting. Since there were no problems regarding the factor analysis and the reliability analysis, the same tool was

used in the main study without any adaptations. The data gathered from the Likert scale items were analyzed through descriptive statistics results of which were illustrated by figures and frequency distribution tables. The statistical significance level was used as  $\alpha < .05$  for all the independent sample findings.

## **5.2 Discussion**

The main purpose of the study was to study conflict management and effective communication skills by examining the types of conflict confronted by and the needs, skills and attitudes of students in handling conflicts. To answer this question, a set of research questions were designed. These questions aimed to identify the types of conflict encountered in EFL classes by students; the strategies employed by these students to deal with their conflicts; the needs and attitudes of learners in handling conflicts, and to examine the relationship between these findings listed and certain demographic features such as gender, high school graduated last, scholarship status and year of study at their current institution.

This section provides discussion based on the findings of the study. The discussion follows the order through which research questions were listed. It starts with comments on the findings regarding common types of conflict confronted, then EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills, and finally conflict management strategies employed by students. It continues with comments regarding different factors that have an effect on the common conflicts, needs, and strategies of EFL learners with different features such as gender, years of study, high school graduated and scholarship status. The section also evaluates the findings of the current study in the light of previous research. Finally, it ends with general explanations about the findings and comments regarding how to integrate conflict management and effective communication into the EFL curriculum so that students are empowered with necessary skills and techniques to overcome their conflicts and communicate effectively with one another in parallel with the curricular objectives, as well.

Considering common types of conflict confronted in EFL classrooms, attendance is the most common problem confronted by students. This shows that students experience some conflicts caused by rules related to attendance at the current institution. Some specific occasions such as being penalized for arriving late, leaving early, or missing class, not being allowed to make up work when absent, or limit of absenteeism to continue attending classes can be conflicts related to attendance. The current study shows that 224 out of 339 students considered attendance as the most common type of conflict and they need to encounter several arguments and disagreements related to this conflict. According to another study carried out by Bowman (2007), a total list of 18 conflicts was identified by subjects and attendance categorized as a conflict related to class/work-related conflicts was the 8<sup>th</sup> most common conflict. In the same study by Bowman (2007), having a teacher who is a non-native speaker of English was identified as the 1<sup>st</sup> most common conflict, and incompetent teaching skills of a teacher was listed as the 3<sup>rd</sup> most common conflict. Likewise, in the current study, teachers' subject knowledge that can include a teacher's not speaking well enough to understand, not being able to answer students' questions, giving incorrect explanations of course material, being unprepared for class, or being unorganized, and not being able to explain material was identified as the 2<sup>nd</sup> most common type of conflict confronted in EFL classes. In the current study, assignments and homework was identified as the 3<sup>rd</sup> most common conflict. This can be related to giving too many or few assignments, not accepting assignments submitted after deadline or submitted incomplete, etc. Regarding the five most common conflicts, problems related to course schedule was identified as the 4<sup>th</sup> and problems related to course content was identified as the 5<sup>th</sup> most common conflict confronted by EFL learners. Regarding the top five conflicts confronted by EFL learners and the rest seventeen conflicts, conflicts related to teacher behavior and course requirements were identified as more common conflicts while conflicts related to students' themselves and student behavior such as lack of interest, relations with other students, participation, self-expression, and ways of communication were

identified as less common conflicts. In addition to the quantitative results, data gathered via interviews were parallel to the findings from the questionnaire. During interviews, interviewees explained that attendance and related rules are the most common problem. Attendance is followed by assignments, self-expression, content of the courses and teachers' subject knowledge as the most common conflicts. The findings and a review of the literature indicate that students do not seem to be happy with rules and restrictions since they regard themselves as mature individuals who can make their own decisions and hold themselves responsible for their own actions. Another interesting finding at this point is that some of the learners might develop negative feelings toward education and learning due to such restrictions and rules. Assuming that the students were all objective, it can be inferred that procedures and objectives related to course and teaching need to be reconsidered. Moreover, since subjects identified conflicts related to students, student behavior and themselves as less important, it can also be inferred that students may not be aware of conflicts related to their own, or conflicts related to students may not be considered as important due to their indirect effect on their success or achievements.

Regarding EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts and the frequency of each particular need, the results of the quantitative data showed that students need all of the related effective communication skills. Moreover, although the difference among the mean values of each skill is not high, the most needed effective communication skill by EFL learners in the current study is problem-solving. Chamot (1992) explains that students learning English as a new language face many challenges and not only must they learn a new system of communication and become comfortable with a new culture, but they must also use the new language to learn the academic subjects of the curriculum. Therefore, the need for problem solving skill is justifiable in the current study. In the same article by Chamot (1992), it is explained that explicit instruction in a problem solving sequential procedure is helpful for ESL students. Slavin and Madden (1989) further explain that benefits of solving problems cooperatively

include sharing strategies, communicating mathematically, and developing skills needed for independent learning by helping students develop meta-cognitive awareness of their own systematic thinking. Additionally, such meta-cognitive knowledge and executive control over problem solving provides the student with flexible and autonomous control over the learning process. In addition to meta-cognitive control, an effective problem solver will brainstorm a variety of alternative plans or solution strategies, activate what has already been learned, try the plan out with the current problem, and evaluate its application to the solution. (Dirkes, 1985) Regarding students' needs for problem solving and other effective communication skills that were identified with the related research question in the current study and taking into consideration its potential outcomes on learners' language skills, the findings bear valuable input for EFL instructors and curriculum developers. Maxwell (1997) explains that the activities in which students use L2 as a means to solve a problem are not only meaningful to EFL learners but also increase their motivation, participation and use of the target language. The reason for this high interest and involvement lies in the fact that students have to use their cognitive skills and logic to arrive at solutions to problems relevant to their own lives. Students learn and acquire the target language by using it for critical thinking and problem solving.

One of the main purposes of the current study was to identify EFL learners' conflict-handling modes and to list the most common conflict management strategies with an understanding of the relationship between these strategies and certain demographic features. Regarding the conflict management strategies of EFL learners, the results of the quantitative data revealed that a majority of EFL learners use the conflict management strategy of integrating to deal with conflicts among peers based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning and communication in real life. According to Rahim (2002), integrating is a strategy by which the individual has high concern for self and others at the same time, and EFL learners with higher mean scores of this style employ problem solving which may lead to creative solutions. The learners using this style favor openness, exchanging information,

looking for alternatives, and examination of differences to reach an effective solution acceptable to both parties. Therefore, in an EFL classroom including learners who mostly employ integrating strategies in handling conflicts, the instructor can successfully facilitate activities in which group/pair work is expected, resources possessed by different parties are needed to solve their common problems and commitment is needed from other parties for successful implementation. However, when other parties are unconcerned about the outcome and do not have problem-solving skills, and when immediate decision is required, learners with higher mean scores of integrating strategies will not be challenged enough and will not actualize expected outcomes.

The results of the quantitative data also revealed that compromising is the second most frequent conflict management strategy used by EFL learners, whereas dominating and obliging are used less often than the others. Finally, the results indicate that avoiding is the least employed conflict management strategy by EFL learners. EFL learners with higher mean scores of compromising tend to have intermediate concern for self and others, and they are ready to give up some of their rights to make a mutually acceptable decision (Rahim et al., 2002). Therefore, they may experience clashes with other parties when one party is more powerful. Considering all five conflict-handling modes, EFL learners with higher mean scores of dominating tend to have more conflicts with their friends or teachers, while learners with higher scores of obliging fail to express themselves and their opinions firmly. Finally, learners with higher scores of avoiding tend to ignore problems. Considering what a higher score from each conflict-handling mode implies, it can be inferred that it will bear valuable input for teachers of English and curriculum planners while designing lessons in which language is taught via explicit teaching of effective communication skills such as problem solving, decision-making, etc.

Another purpose of the study was to analyze whether conflict management strategies of learners differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners such as gender, high school graduated, scholarship status, and year of study

at their current institution. The results regarding the role of gender in the way EFL learners deal with their conflicts showed that there is a significant mean difference in conflict management strategies between male and female learners in terms of dominating. Considering the order of conflict management strategies, there is no difference between male and female subjects; however, in terms of dominating conflict management strategy, male subjects are more dominant than female subjects. Studies done by Rubin and Brown (1975), Lulofs and Cahn (2002), Rahim (2002), Çetin and Hacifazlıoğlu (2004) support this finding. However, since this study is one of the first research studies on EFL learners' conflict management strategies, it is not possible to refer to studies done in the field of ELT and EFL context. However, a study on managers carried out by Sutschek (2002) revealed that gender has a role in conflict management strategies, and males and females differ from each other in terms of certain conflict management strategies. Sutschek (2002) found that females used the conflict strategies in this order: integrating, compromising, obliging, avoiding, and then dominating, while males used the conflict strategies in this order: integrating, compromising, obliging, dominating, and avoiding. Sutschek (2002) further explained that males prefer the dominating strategy before utilizing the avoiding strategy. Similarly, females prefer the avoiding strategy before utilizing the dominating strategy. Regarding the results of the interviews, all of the participants explained that gender has a strong relationship with the conflict management strategies employed by the students. Participants also explained that this result is not surprising when personality, social, cultural, and physical differences are taken into account regarding males and females. Males are thought to be more dominating than females, since social norms and culture direct them in this way.

In the current study, another factor that has an effect on the selection of conflict management strategies was detected by the last school attended or graduated. The results showed that there is a significant difference between conflict management strategies and high school attended or last school graduated in terms of compromising. This result showed that EFL learners tend to show different behaviors

in terms of compromising, and students from Super High Schools and Anatolian High Schools tend to employ compromising more than students from Anatolian Teachers Training High Schools and Private High Schools. This finding was supported with the findings gathered from the interviews. Interviewees stated that students from Anatolian high schools tend to be good at compromising and integrating in dealing with conflicts because they model their teachers' behavior and teachers' characteristics better than students from other high schools. Teachers at Anatolian high schools and science high school are generally tolerant, flexible and they generally try to employ innovative methods in teaching courses. In spite of this fact, interviewees explained, students from science high schools might be dominating since they might think that they are more knowledgeable than the others.

Another variable that affects which conflict management strategy is employed by EFL learners is scholarship status of the learners. The result of the analysis showed that students who hold a scholarship tend to employ avoiding and fail to satisfy their own concern as well as the concern of the other party more than those who do not hold a scholarship.

Finally, the relationship between EFL learners' year of study at their current institution and conflict management strategies that they use was examined and the analysis indicated that there is no significant difference between these two. When the variable, the year of study is considered, its range covered only two years, and these years were spent at preparatory school. Therefore, it is not possible to observe important changes related to learners' personal and academic life, and this might be one of the reasons why the results showed no significant difference.

Finally, the sixth and the last research question aimed to find out learners' opinions on teaching and learning conflict management strategies and effective communication skills and the findings displayed that students do not think that effective communication skills or conflict management strategies are not taught in courses, but most of the students want these skills and strategies to be taught in courses. An interesting finding inferred via questionnaires is that interviewees believe



that content related to effective communication skills and conflict management strategies are covered in course books; however, students might not learn them because of the way teachers teach them these skills.

The present study described the EFL learners' use of conflict management strategies based on conflict-handling modes and their need for effective communication skills through both a questionnaire to gather quantitative data and also an interview to support the data gathered from the questionnaire so that we would have the opportunity to see which strategies are employed and which skills are needed frequently by learners and the reasons behind them.

### **5.3 Pedagogical Implications**

Branson (1972) claims that, when asked to describe the most negative experiences in their lives, one-third of the participants mentioned negative interpersonal relations or conflicts with teachers (cited in Bowman, 2007). This demonstrates that classroom conflicts have a lasting impact on students.

In an age when conflicts arise among people more than ever and when conflict management is viewed from a different and positive perspective in contrast to the classical view that conflict is always harmful for organizations, this study and its findings aim to provide content for EFL curriculum

As mentioned earlier in this study, as a microcosm of a society or the world, classroom settings can be regarded as environments that are highly sensitive to conflicts; therefore, learners should be provided with skills and strategies necessary to handle such problems in order that it may not harm the friendly atmosphere, communicative environment, and the interpersonal communication process in EFL classrooms. When successfully managed, conflicts can enhance learning; unsettled or unsuccessfully managed conflicts can harm all positive aspects or situations that can be created in an effective EFL classroom where cooperation, non-violent self expression, tolerance, cross-cultural understanding, and interpersonal communication skills are encouraged. Considering the fact that conflict and conflict management

have a vital role in EFL classes and as explained by Harris and Morrison (2003), taking into consideration the claim that people around the globe have started embracing conflict resolution as a key component of a quality education, the current study serves various educational purposes.

Mainly, the study has two related dimensions. The first dimension is that it provides data related to EFL learners' strategies, needs and attitudes for conflict management in addition to types of conflict they commonly face. Regarding this dimension, the findings and their implications will serve as a needs analysis and they will pose an important role especially for learners and teachers at the level of higher education. Firstly, it is vital for both the instructors or course developers and students themselves to be aware of common conflicts confronted. As Bowman (2007) explains, knowing and understanding what conflicts are experienced by students is a first step in determining how to best manage or avoid negative conflict situations and this knowledge can aid instructors in planning course policies and preparing for interactions with students. Additionally, knowing what conflicts they are in or what kind of problems they experience can give learners a chance to enhance their awareness both for themselves and others around. Secondly, it is crucial that EFL learners not only become knowledgeable about conflict management strategies but also receive adequate training and practice the strategies they learn. Learners can become aware of the most common strategies they employ while dealing with conflicts, and more importantly, they can become aware of the fact that other parties tend to behave differently during these conflicts. Another important implication of this finding is that learners can realize that these strategies are flexible so that learners can learn to employ various strategies based on other variables such as the other party, type of conflict, time, place etc. during each and every conflict. As the third implication of the first dimension, both learners and instructors or course planners can become aware of learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills. In chapter II, it is discussed that communication is essential for the success of negotiation. What you say must be understood as you intend it to be effective, as

Corvette (2007) puts forward. Moreover, teaching communication and helping learners enhance their communicative skills are core processes of language teaching. Therefore, this aspect of the study presents various implications that can be utilized during the language teaching process. Regarding the findings in this part of the study, it can be generalized that there is a common need among learners for effective communication skills to be taught. This finding can give instructors and course planners an idea of what to include in course syllabuses. Finally, attitudes of the learners toward conflict management and effective communication process are very crucial since they form most of the learners' affective background. Regarding this part of the study, more than 75 % of EFL learners in the current study have expressed that they need both conflict management strategies and effective communication skills to be taught in EFL classes since they believe these skills and strategies are not currently integrated and taught in classrooms. The rest of the subjects who think that they have been taught these skills and strategies before regard them as useful and applicable in both the classroom environment and real life situations. These findings imply that an integration of these skills and strategies into EFL courses is a need and learners are aware of the fact that learning these skills and strategies will be crucial for them both in their classrooms and in the real life situations.

Regarding the second dimension of the study, it presents crucial data about what to include in EFL courses. Taking learners' awareness, needs, skills and attitudes into account, it is also possible to decide on the content of lessons (Appendix C, D). In addition to equipping learners with necessary information, skills and strategies, it can also give a broad range of ideas about making use of various topics, activities, techniques and materials for the instructors. Therefore, considering both dimensions of the study and related implications, the study might present significant findings for four pillars of the field, which are (1) instructors, (2) EFL learners, (3) ELT, and (4) researchers. First of all, in terms of its significance for instructors, the following points can be taken into consideration in several different

but interrelated phases of language teaching such as needs analysis, lesson planning, material preparation, classroom management, program evaluation:

- awareness of conflicts, conflict management strategies and its use in the EFL context
- interpretation of learners' behavior and dealing with misbehaving students
- classroom management and rapport with students
- a different and a genuine perspective on EFL curriculum
- a review and revision of ELT programs and curricula to integrate conflict management and effective communication skills
- integration of different skills such as speaking, writing by dealing with conflicts
- strategic interaction regarding developing speaking and writing skills

Considering the list of significant points for instructors, it can be emphasized that the findings of the study will help instructors become aware of individual choices regarding different conflict management strategies and effective communication skills, which can make it easier for them to interpret learners' behavior in a more effective way. As a result, this may be helpful for instructors to deal with problems related to classroom management. To illustrate, if a teacher is aware of the reasons behind students' behaviors, the teacher can act in a proactive way and deal with classroom management issues. Another significant implication of the study is that it will give instructors a different and a genuine perspective in the language teaching process, especially when we consider the students who aim to take part in international relationships. One example for a genuine perspective could be the fact that conflicts are not negative all the time, and they are even necessary for a better communication ground. Additionally, the findings of the study can present useful information also for the content of lessons and instructors can integrate a variety of skills into their lessons. For instance, based on the strategic interaction approach, which was developed by DiPietro (1987), it is possible to design scenarios and

dilemmas by integrating various language skills such as speaking or writing with conflicts and conflict management strategies.

Secondly, the study is also significant for EFL learners in terms of developing the following skills and strategies in the process of language learning:

- awareness of conflicts, conflict management and its function in personal academic life
- self-confidence
- empathy
- communicative competence
- a different perspective on conflicts and relationships
- personal and academic skills such as coping with conflicts and language skills
- effective communication skills such as problem-solving, decision-making

It is firmly believed that the findings will help students become aware of individual differences and gain a different perspective in terms of conflicts and conflict management. As a result, learners are expected to be more conscious about individual choices regarding conflict management skills employed. Another significant implication for EFL learners is that they can build empathy for their peers or teachers, and they can understand what other parties think or feel since they will be trained in terms of conflicts and conflict management skills and strategies. As a result of this process, they can also develop their communicative competence and they will realize the benefits of this process both in their academic and personal lives.

Finally, the study will bear significant implications for the field of ELT as well as for researchers in terms of the following points which might have a direct or indirect effect on the effectiveness of language teaching and learning process:

- a different and a genuine perspective on the integration of conflict management and TEFL
- further research on conflicts, conflict management and effective communication skills regarding their use in EFL curricula

- recognition of conflict management as a new topic that is related to language teaching
- content, scenario, dilemmas and integration of real-life situations into TEFL
- needs analysis and an understanding of EFL learners' need for conflict management and effective communication skills

Regarding the points listed above and research in ELT, this study has significant findings since it will help gain a different and genuine perspective in ELT. A part of the findings in this study can be considered a needs analysis and it gives significant data related to EFL learners' needs and expectations in terms of conflict management strategies and effective communication skills. As a result, conflict management will be recognized in ELT. Upon integrating conflict management in ELT, the findings related to conflicts, conflict management strategies, and effective communication skills can present very valuable information with respect to the integration of real-life situations into EFL courses that will prepare students for real life challenges.

When all of these dimensions discussed above are taken into account, one can come up with various implications. As it was also found out in the interviews, one of the implications can be a good integration of all findings into EFL curricula based on the needs of the students. In order to achieve this, course planners need to select content by taking into account conflict management skills and strategies and design materials accordingly. This will lead to the integration of conflict management skills and strategies into EFL curriculum effectively. In addition, a new course can be organized in which important components of conflict management and effective communication skills can be covered (Appendix E). Conflict management and effective communication are two of the most emphasized concepts in colleges and other higher education institutions since it has been admitted that conflict is an inevitable part of everyday life and effective communication is the key to handle most of the conflicts. Since language teaching is strongly tied with conflict and

communication, creation and organization of a course can be very effective for learners both in their academic and personal life to be able to create an awareness of conflicts and the effective communication process. When this has been achieved, EFL learners can feel more confident and conscious about the self and others during the language learning process. Besides, they will develop positive self images, a sense of responsibility for self and others, a capacity to trust others, and a caring for the well-being of the natural world. Thus, firstly, the classroom as a microcosm of the world, and then the whole world can become a place of sharing, understanding and developing all the time.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Research**

Based on the findings of the current research, the following suggestions might be helpful for curriculum planners, researchers and English teachers.

The current study covers only one private university in Ankara; however, another study that covers several universities not only in Ankara but also in other cities of Turkey might bear a comparative study of a wide range of EFL classrooms in different universities. Besides, a comparative study of not only private but also state universities might present valuable data on the differences among EFL learners in these two types of universities.

One of implications of the current study is to organize a curriculum that covers important components of conflict management and effective communication skills and strategies with related activities and materials. Considering this implication, a comparative study with an experimental group in which learners participate in a well-organized 5-10 week syllabus with a control group in which learners are taught in parallel with normal syllabus could provide more experimental and realistic findings on teaching conflict management and effective communication skills. Besides, in addition to collecting data via several quantitative or qualitative instruments such as interviews, surveys or questionnaires, observing students'

behavior and providing some conflict situations in a real classroom environment through the use of video might present more realistic data and results.



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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A ÇATIŞMA YÖNETİMİ ANKETİ

Sevgili öğrenciler,

Bu araştırmanın amacı TOBB Ekonomi ve Teknoloji Üniversitesi, Yabancı Diller Bölümü, hazırlık sınıfı öğrencilerinin karşılaştıkları çatışmaları saptamak, bunlarla başa çıkma stratejilerini ve bu konuda gereksinim duydukları becerileri belirlemektir. Birinci bölüm, anketi yanıtladınlarla ilgili kişisel bilgilere ulaşmak için hazırlanmış anket sorularını içermektedir. İkinci bölüm ise, öğrencilerin karşılaştıkları çatışma biçimlerini, çatışma stratejilerini, gereksinimlerini ve düşüncelerini belirlemek amacıyla tasarlanmıştır. Anketle elde edilen bilgiler sadece bu araştırmada kullanılacaktır. Lütfen anketteki tüm soruları yanıtlayınız. Herhangi bir sorunuz olduğunda lütfen iletişim kurunuz. Gerekli özeni göstereceğinizi umar, çalışmaya katkılarınız için teşekkür ederim.

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#### I. BÖLÜM (KİŞİSEL BİLGİLER)

Bu bölümde, anketi yanıtladınlarla ilgili verilerin elde edilmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Durumuza uygun olan seçeneği (X) işareti koyarak işaretleyiniz.

##### 1. Cinsiyetiniz?

Erkek

Kadın

##### 2. En son mezun olduğunuz okul?

Anadolu Lisesi

Özel Okul, Kolej

Anadolu Öğretmen Lisesi

Meslek Lisesi

Fen Lisesi

Süper Lise

Genel Lise

Diğer .....

##### 3. Burs durumunuz?

Burslu

Burssuz

##### 4. Şu an öğrenci olarak bulunduğunuz okuldaki kaçınıcı yılınız?

1

3

2

4

#### II. BÖLÜM (ÇATIŞMA / DAVRANIŞ / GEREKSİNİM BİÇİMLERİ VE DÜŞÜNCELER)

##### A. ÇATIŞMA BİÇİMLERİ

Özellikle İngilizce öğrenme sürecini göz önünde bulundurarak, aşağıdaki çatışma biçimlerini veya anlaşmazlık türünü, en çok karşılaştığınız ilk **dört** tanesini 1'den başlayarak (1'en çok' ve 2, 3, 4 'daha az' olmak üzere) sıralayınız.

1. Ders içeriği .....
2. Ders materyali .....
3. Ders programı .....
4. Devamsızlık .....
5. İlgisizlik .....
6. İletişim yaklaşımları .....
7. Katılım .....
8. Kendini ifade .....
9. Okul idaresi .....

10. Ödevler .....
11. Öğrenciler .....
12. Öğretim teknikleri .....
13. Öğretmenin kişisel özellikleri .....
14. Öğretmenin yaklaşımı .....
15. Öğretmenin konu bilgisi .....
16. Sınavlar .....
17. Sınıf veya okul binası .....
18. Diğer .....

## B. DAVRANIŞ BİÇİMLERİ

Sevgili öğrenciler, anketin bu bölümünde davranış biçimleri başlığı altında 28 davranış verilmiştir. İngilizce öğrenimi süresince, sadece sınıf içi değil aynı zamanda sınıf dışı çalışmalarınızı da göz önünde bulundurarak arkadaşlarınızla olan bir anlaşmazlık veya çatışma durumunda hangi yöntemleri hangi sıklıkta kullandığınızı düşününüz. Davranış biçimlerini değerlendirirken yakın geçmişte karşılaşmış olduğunuz anlaşmazlık durumunu olabildiğince anımsamaya çalışınız.

Her davranışın karşısında yer alan seçeneklerden size uygun olan seçeneğe (X) koyunuz. Doğru ya da yanlış yanıt yoktur. Her ifadeye ilişkin beş seçenekten yalnızca birini işaretlemeniz ve yanıtı bırakmamanız gerekmektedir.

Anketi yanıtlamaya ilişkin bir örnek aşağıda verilmiştir:

### Örnek:

Herhangi bir konuda arkadaşlarınızla aranızda bir farklılık, uyuşmazlık, sorun veya başka bir ifadeyle anlaşmazlık çıkması durumunda;

DAVRANIŞ BİÇİMLERİ	Her zaman	Çoğunlukla	Ara sıra	Az	Hiçbir zaman
	5	4	3	2	1
1. Hepimizce kabul edilebilecek kararlara ulaşabilmek için onlarla işbirliği yaparım.		X			
2. Bir uzlaşma sağlamak için pazarlık yaparım.					X

Örnekteki sorulara yanıt veren öğrenci;

1. maddeye verdiği yanıtta göre; herhangi bir uyuşmazlık durumunda, “herkesçe kabul edilebilecek kararlara ulaşabilmek için **çoğunlukla** arkadaşlarıyla işbirliği yaptığını”,

2. maddeye verdiği yanıtta göre de; herhangi bir anlaşmazlık durumunda, “uzlaşma sağlamak için **hiçbir zaman** pazarlık yapmadığını” ifade etmektedir.

DAVRANIŞ BİÇİMLERİ	Her zaman	Çoğunlukla	Ara sıra	Az	Hiçbir zaman
	5	4	3	2	1
1. Herkesçe kabul edilebilir bir çözüm bulmak için sorunu onlarla birlikte incelemeye çalışırım.					
2. Arkadaşlarımın genel olarak gereksinimlerini karşılamaya çalışırım.					
3. Kötü duruma düşmekten kaçınmak için onlarla anlaşmazlıklarımı açığa vurmamaya çaba gösteririm.					
4. Ortak bir karara ulaşabilmek için fikirlerimi onlarınkiyle birleştirmeye çalışırım.					
5. Bir soruna hepimizin beklentilerini karşılayacak çözümler bulmak için onlarla birlikte çalışmaya çaba gösteririm.					
6. Arkadaşlarımla görüş ayrılıklarımı açıkça tartışmaktan kaçınırım.					
7. Bir çıkmazı çözmek için orta bir yol bulmaya çalışırım.					
8. Fikirlerimi kabul ettirmek için baskı yaparım.					
9. Sorunu kendi lehime sonuçlandırmak için üstün yönlerimi kullanırım.					
10. Arkadaşlarımın isteklerini dikkate alırım.					
11. Arkadaşlarımın isteklerini koşulsuz benimserim.					
12. Bir sorunu birlikte çözebilmek için onlarla tam bir bilgi alışverişi yaparım.					
13. Arkadaşlarıma ödün veririm.					
14. Anlaşmazlıklarda tıkanmayı gidermek için orta bir yol öneririm					
15. Uzlaşma sağlanabilmesi için onlarla görüşürüm.					
16. Arkadaşlarımla anlaşmazlıktan kaçınmaya çalışırım.					
17. Arkadaşlarımla karşı karşıya gelmekten kaçınırım.					

DAVRANIŞ BİÇİMLERİ (DEVAM...)	Her zaman	Çoğunlukla	Ara sıra	Az	Hiçbir zaman
	5	4	3	2	1
18. Sorunu kendi lehime sonuçlandırmak için bilgi ve becerilerimi kullanırım.					
19. Arkadaşlarımın önerilerine uyarım.					
20. Bir uzlaşma sağlamak için pazarlık yaparım.					
21. Sorunun beni ilgilendiren yönünü sıkı takip ederim.					
22. Hepimizce kabul edilebilecek kararlara ulaşabilmek için arkadaşlarımla işbirliği yaparım.					
23. Arkadaşlarımın beklentilerini karşılamaya çaba gösteririm.					
24. Rekabet gerektiren bir durumda üstün yönlerimi kullanırım.					
25. Kırgınlığı önlemek için onlarla görüş ayrılığımı açığa vurmam.					
26. Arkadaşlarıma hoş olmayan sözler söylemekten kaçınırım.					
27. Bir sorunun doğru anlaşılabilmesi için onlarla işbirliği yapmaya özen gösteririm.					

### C. GEREKSİNİMLER

Bu bölüm **iki** ayrı alt bölümden oluşmaktadır. İlk bölümde, genel olarak çatışma yönetimi ve etkili iletişim becerilerinin öğretilmesine duyulan gereksinim; ikinci bölümde de, bu becerilere duyduğunuz gereksinimlere ilişkin bilgi edinilmesi amaçlanmaktadır.

#### C1. GEREKSİNİM DUYULAN BECERİLER

Özellikle İngilizce derslerinde edindiğiniz becerilerden yola çıkarak arkadaşlarınızla birlikte ödev/proje/sunum hazırlarken ya da günlük hayatınızda bir çatışma durumunda, aşağıdaki listelenmiş olası çatışma yönetimi ve iletişim becerilerinden gereksinim duyduklarınızı ve bunlara ne derecede gereksinim duyduğunuzu belirtiniz.

Doğru ya da yanlış yanıt yoktur. İfadeler "Her zaman (5), Genellikle (4), Bazen (3), Nadiren (2), Hiçbir zaman (1)" seçeneklerine karşılık gelmektedir. Her ifadeye ilişkin uygun seçenekleri işaretlemeniz ve yanıtsız bırakmamanız gerekmektedir. Elde edilen bilgiler sadece bu araştırmada kullanılacaktır. Gerekli özeni göstereceğinizi umar, katkılarınız için teşekkür ederim.

Anketi yanıtlamaya ilişkin bir örnek aşağıda verilmiştir:

#### Örnek:

GEREKSİNİM DUYULAN BECERİLER	Her zaman	Genellikle	Bazen	Nadiren	Hiçbir zaman
	5	4	3	2	1
1. Kendimi herhangi bir şekilde şiddete veya kaba kuvvete başvurmadan ifade etme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.		X			
2. Yaratıcı ve yenilikçi karar verme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					X

Örnekteki sorulara yanıt veren öğrenci;

1. maddeye verdiği yanıtta göre, etkili iletişim kurup, uyuşmazlığı çözümlmek için "kendisini herhangi bir şekilde şiddete veya kaba kuvvete başvurmadan ifade etme becerisinin öğretilmesine" **genellikle** gereksinim duyduğunu,

2. maddeye verdiği yanıtta göre de; etkili iletişim kurup, uyuşmazlığı çözümlmek için "yaratıcı ve yenilikçi karar verme becerisinin öğretilmesine" **hiçbir zaman** gereksinim duymadığını ifade etmektedir.



GEREKSİNİM DUYULAN BECERİLER	Her zaman	Genellikle	Bazen	Nadiren	Hiçbir zaman
	5	4	3	2	1
1. Arkadaşlarımı dinleme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					
2. Arkadaşlarımın ne düşündüğünü veya ne hissettiğini anlama becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					
3. Arkadaşlarımla birlikte fikir üretme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					
4. Bir sorunu algılamak ve bu sorunu nasıl karşılamam gerektiğini bilme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					
5. Bir sorunu nasıl değerlendireceğimi ve çözüme ulaştıracağımı bilme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					
6. Diğer arkadaşlarımla bir işi nasıl birlikte yürütebileceğimi bilme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					
7. Etkili işbirliği yapabilme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					
8. Fikir paylaşımı ve fikir yürütme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					
9. Herhangi olumsuz bir duyguya (kin, nefret, aşırı kızgınlık vs.) kapılmadan kendimi ifade edebilme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					
10. Karar verme aşamasında nasıl bir davranış sergileyebileceğimi bilme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					
11. Karşımdaki kişiyi bir konu hakkında dikkatim dağılmadan dinleme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					
12. Kendimi arkadaşlarımla yerine koyup onları anlayabilme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					
13. Kendimi herhangi bir şekilde şiddete veya kaba kuvvete başvurmadan ifade etme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					
14. Yaratıcı ve yenilikçi karar verme becerisinin öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyorum.					

## C2. GEREKSİNİM DUYULAN BECERİLERE VERİLEN YANITLARIN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ

Bir önceki bölümde, çatışma yönetimi ve iletişim becerilerini ve bunlara ne derecede gereksinim duyduğunuzu göz önünde bulundurarak, yukarıdaki sorularda "Her zaman (5), Genellikle (4), Bazen (3), Nadiren (2), Hiçbir zaman (1)" şeklinde vermiş olduğunuz yanıtları göz önünde bulundurarak, aşağıdaki soruları size uygun gelen seçeneklere (X) işareti koyarak yanıtlayınız.

GEREKSİNİM DUYULAN BECERİLERE VERİLEN YANITLARIN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ	Öğrenmek istiyorum	İlgimi çekiyor	Zaten biliyorum	Derste öğrendim	Öğrenmek istemiyorum	Umursamıyorum
	1. Çatışma yönetimi ve iletişim becerilerinin öğretilmesine "her zaman (5)" gereksinim duyuyorum, çünkü;					
2. Çatışma yönetimi ve iletişim becerilerinin öğretilmesine "genellikle (4)" gereksinim duyuyorum, çünkü;						
3. Çatışma yönetimi ve iletişim becerilerinin öğretilmesine "bazen (3)" gereksinim duyuyorum, çünkü;						
4. Çatışma yönetimi ve iletişim becerilerinin öğretilmesine "nadiren (2)" gereksinim duyuyorum, çünkü;						
5. Çatışma yönetimi ve iletişim becerilerinin öğretilmesine "hiçbir zaman (1)" gereksinim duymuyorum, çünkü;						

#### D. BİREYSEL DÜŞÜNCELER

Bu bölümde, genel olarak çatışma yönetimi ve anlaşmazlıkların çözümüne ilişkin beceri ve stratejileri; ayrıca etkili iletişim becerilerini göz önünde bulundurarak, size uygun olan yanıtı işaretlemeniz gerekmektedir. Doğru veya yanlış yanıt yoktur.

ÇATIŞMA YÖNETİMİ VE ETKİLİ İLETİŞİM BECERİLERİ DÜŞÜNCE ANKETİ		
1. Derslerde çatışma ve anlaşmazlıkları çözmeye yönelik beceri ve stratejiler öğretiliyor mu?	Evet	Hayır [5.soruya geçiniz]
2. Derslerde öğretilen anlaşmazlıkları çözmeye yönelik beceri ve stratejiler gereksinimlerinizi karşılıyor mu?	Evet	Hayır
3. Derslerde öğretilen çatışma ve anlaşmazlıkların çözümüne ilişkin beceri ve stratejileri derste uygulayabiliyor musunuz?	Evet	Hayır
4. Derslerde öğretilen çatışma ve anlaşmazlıkların çözümüne ilişkin beceri ve stratejileri gerçek hayatta uygulayabiliyor musunuz?	Evet	Hayır
5. Derslerde çatışma ve anlaşmazlıkları çözmeye yönelik beceri ve stratejilerin öğretilmesini istiyor musunuz?	Evet	Hayır
6. Derslerde çatışma ve anlaşmazlıkları çözmeye yönelik beceri ve stratejileri uygulamanın gerekli olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz?	Evet	Hayır
7. Gerçek hayatta çatışma ve anlaşmazlıkları çözmeye yönelik beceri ve stratejileri uygulamanın gerekli olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz?	Evet	Hayır
8. Derslerde etkili iletişim becerileri öğretiliyor mu?	Evet	Hayır [12.soruya geçiniz]
9. Derslerde öğretilen etkili iletişim becerileri gereksinimlerinizi karşılıyor mu?	Evet	Hayır
10. Derslerde öğretilen etkili iletişim becerilerini derste uygulayabiliyor musunuz?	Evet	Hayır
11. Derslerde öğretilen etkili iletişim becerilerini gerçek hayatta uygulayabiliyor musunuz?	Evet	Hayır
12. Derslerde etkili iletişim becerilerinin öğretilmesini istiyor musunuz?	Evet	Hayır
13. Derslerde etkili iletişim becerilerini uygulamanın gerekli olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz?	Evet	Hayır
14. Çatışma ve anlaşmazlıkları çözmeye yönelik stratejileri ve etkili iletişim becerilerini ders dışında da öğrendiğinizi düşünüyorsanız, en çok aşağıdakilerden hangisinden yararlanıyorsunuz? (1 'en çok' ve 2, 3 'daha az' olmak üzere ilk üç tanesini sıralayınız.) a. Anne-baba ____ b. Arkadaşlarım ____ c. Kitaplar ____ d. TV/Medya ____ e. Deneyim ____ f. İnternet ____ g. Diğer .....		

#### ...ANKETE KATILIMINIZ İÇİN ÇOK TEŞEKKÜR EDERİM...

(Son olarak, aşağıdaki anket tamamlama kontrol formunu da doldurduğunuzdan emin olunuz)

ANKET TAMAMLAMA KONTROL FORMU (Tamamladığımız bölümler için, soru sayısının hemen yanındaki kutucuğu (✓) ile işaretleyiniz, tamamlanmamışsa lütfen ilgili bölüme tekrar dönünüz)	Soru Sayısı	Tamamlama Durumu
I. BÖLÜM (KİŞİSEL BİLGİLER)	4	
II. BÖLÜM (ÇATIŞMA / DAVRANIŞ / GEREKSİNİM BİÇİMLERİ VE DÜŞÜNCELER)		
A. ÇATIŞMA BİÇİMLERİ	1	
B. DAVRANIŞ BİÇİMLERİ	27	
C. GEREKSİNİMLER		
C.1. GEREKSİNİM DUYULAN BECERİLER	14	
C.2. GEREKSİNİM DUYULAN BECERİLERE VERİLEN YANITLARIN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ	5	
D. BİREYSEL DÜŞÜNCELER	14	
<b>TOPLAM</b>	<b>66</b>	

## APPENDIX B

Research Questions	Interview Questions
<p>1. What are the most common types of conflict that students confront in the process of EFL learning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Çatışma nedir? Örnek verebilir misiniz?</li> <li>• Derslerde, özellikle İngilizce derslerini düşünerek, sık karşılaştığımız çatışma biçimlerini belirtebilir misiniz?</li> <li>• (1) Devamsızlığa ilişkin kısıtlamalar veya kurallar, (2) Ödevler, (3) Kendini ifade etme, (4) Ders içeriği, (2) Öğretmenin konu bilgisi, (4) Dersin programı konularında ne tür problem veya çatışmalar yaşanabiliyor? Siz bunlarla nasıl başa çıkıyorsunuz? Neden bu konularda daha sık çatışma yaşıyor?</li> </ul>
<p>2. What are EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts and the frequency of each particular need?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Etkili iletişim becerileri deyince ne anlıyorsunuz? Kullanıyor musunuz? Nerede, Nasıl?</li> <li>• Sıklıkla kullandığımız etkili iletişim yolları nelerdir? En çok/En az hangisine veya hangilerine gereksinim duyuyorsunuz? Neden? Açıklayabilir misiniz? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Problem çözme (Problem-solving)</li> <li>b. Karar verme (Decision-making)</li> <li>c. Etkin dinleme (Active listening)</li> <li>d. Beyin fırtınası (Brain-storming)</li> <li>e. İşbirliği yapma (Cooperation)</li> <li>f. Empati (Empathy)</li> <li>g. Kendini ifade etme (Self-expression)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>3. What are the most common strategies used by EFL learners in dealing with conflicts among peers based on the conflict-handling modes in the process of EFL learning and communication in real life?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Çatışmalarla başa çıkmada kendinizi nasıl tanımlarsınız? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Baskı kuran, hükmeden (Dominating)</li> <li>b. Uzlaşmacı (Compromising)</li> <li>c. Kaçınan (Avoiding)</li> <li>d. Ödün veren (Obliging)</li> <li>e. İşbirlikçi, tümleştiren (Integrating)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ne kadar sıklıkta çevrenizle çatışma yaşıyorsunuz? Bunlar için kullandığımız çözüm yolları veya teknikler nedir? Sizce bu çözüm yollarının etkili olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz?</li> <li>• Genel olarak etkili iletişim becerileri ve çatışmalarla başa çıkma yollarını göz önünde bulundurduğunuz zaman, bunların öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyor musunuz? Neden? Ne kadar açıklayabilir misiniz?</li> </ul>

<p>4. Do conflict management strategies of learners differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners based on how it is perceived?</p> <p>a. Male &amp; Female (gender) b. With/out a Scholarship c. Last School Attended d. Duration of Study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sizce kız ve erkek öğrencilerin çatışma stratejileri farklı mıdır? Neden? Hangi durumlarda bu farkı gözlemlediniz?</li> <li>• Sizce burslu ve burssuz öğrencilerin çatışma stratejileri farklı mıdır? Neden? Bir örnekle açıklayabilir misiniz?</li> <li>• Sizce farklı lise veya okullardan gelmiş öğrencilerin çatışma stratejileri farklı mıdır? Neden? Açıklayabilir misiniz?</li> <li>• Sizce öğrenci olduğu okuldaki bulunma süresi farklı olan öğrencilerin çatışma stratejileri de farklı mıdır? Nasıl bir fark gözlemlediniz? Açıklayabilir misiniz?</li> </ul>
<p>5. Do EFL learners' needs in terms of effective communication skills that are necessary to manage conflicts differ in relation to certain demographic characteristics of the learners?</p> <p>a. Male &amp; Female (gender) b. With/out a Scholarship c. Last School Attended d. Duration of Study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sizce kız ve erkek öğrencilerin problemlerle başa çıkmak için kullandıkları etkili iletişim becerileri farklı mıdır? Bu farkın nedenleri ne olabilir? Açıklayabilir misiniz?</li> <li>• Sizce burslu ve burssuz öğrencilerin problemlerle başa çıkmak için kullandıkları etkili iletişim becerileri farklı mıdır? Neden? Bir örnekle açıklayabilir misiniz?</li> <li>• Sizce farklı lise veya okullardan gelmiş öğrencilerin problemlerle başa çıkmak için kullandıkları etkili iletişim becerileri farklı mıdır? Neden? Açıklayabilir misiniz?</li> <li>• Sizce öğrenci olduğu okuldaki bulunma süresi farklı olan öğrencilerin problemlerle başa çıkmak için kullandıkları etkili iletişim becerileri farklı mıdır? Nasıl bir fark gözlemlediniz? Açıklayabilir misiniz?</li> </ul>
<p>6. What are EFL learners' opinions about and attitudes toward teaching and learning conflict management strategies and toward effective communication skills?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sizce çatışmalarla başa çıkma yolları sonradan öğrenilebilir ve öğretilebilir bir bilgi midir?</li> <li>• Dersleri, özellikle İngilizce derslerini göz önünde bulundurduğumuz zaman derslerde çatışmalarla başa çıkma yollarına ilişkin çalışmalar yapılıyor mu? Evet ise örnek verebilir misiniz? Hayır ise ne tür çalışmaların yapılmasını isterdiniz?</li> <li>• Derslerde etkili iletişim becerilerinin ve çatışmalarla başa çıkma yollarının öğretilmesi size farklı bir bilinç kazandırabilir mi? Neden?</li> <li>• Etkili iletişim becerilerinin veya çatışma ile başa çıkma yollarının öğretilmesine gereksinim duyuyor musunuz? Bu konudaki düşünceleriniz nedir?</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX C

### LESSON PLAN-I

#### Exploring the Nature of Conflict

**Theme** : Nature of Conflict

**Grade Level(s)** : High Intermediate

**Skills** : Speaking

**Materials** : Handout: Survey About Conflict and Me

#### Objectives

- Students will construct definitions of conflict and violence
- Students will distinguish between conflict and violence.
- Students will identify what is positive about conflict
- Students will analyze a conflict they have experienced.

#### Procedures

1. Begin with an [opening activity](#).

#### Webbing Conflict

2. Ask students for their associations with the word "conflict."
3. Record their ideas on the board using a web format.
4. Write the word "conflict" in the center of the board or chart paper and circle it. The words students associate with conflict are written at the end of lines radiating from the circle. Related ideas can be grouped together.
5. Discuss the web by asking:
  - a. What do you notice about the web?
  - b. Are there any generalizations we might make about our associations with the word conflict?
  - c. Why are most of our associations with conflict negative?
  - d. What are some examples of conflicts?
6. Explain that many people equate conflict with violence. (You may want to write "Conflict = Violence" on the board to make this point.)
7. Ask students: What is the difference between conflict and violence? (When a distinction has been made, you can change the equation on the board to "Conflict does not equal Violence.")

8. Point out that violence and conflict are not the same thing because most conflicts do not lead to violence.
9. Erase the words from the board and ask students to brainstorm a list of things that are positive about conflict.
10. Some examples of positive aspects of conflict are:
  - a. It can be exciting.
  - b. It can shape our thinking so that we have new ideas.
  - c. Sometimes it can bring us closer to another person once we've worked it out.
11. Explain that conflict is a part of life and that we all experience conflicts at home, at work, in school, and on the street. In fact, conflict is often beneficial. Having conflicts with other people may be uncomfortable, but trying to solve them can shake up our thinking and often leads to new ways of looking at things.

#### **Pair-Share About a Conflict You've Experienced**

12. In pairs students will take turns talking and listening.
13. Give each person two or three minutes to respond to the following question:  
What was a recent conflict you experienced? Who was involved? What did he or she do? How did it turn out?
14. After each partner has had a chance to speak, ask: What was that like? Did your partner really listen? What made you think so? What kind of body language shows that someone is listening (eye contact, facing the speaker, leaning forward)? What were the outcomes of some of the conflicts?

#### **Checking Out What We've Learned**

15. Give each student a copy of the [Survey About Conflict and Me](#).
16. Have each student fill it out. Remind students to be as honest as possible.
17. Assure them that other students will not see their responses.
18. The survey provides you with a good database for creating role-plays and conflict scenarios to use in conjunction with other exercises.

Source:

Lieber, C. M., Lantieri, L., Roderick, T. (1998) *Conflict Resolution in the High School*. The USA: Educators for Social Responsibility. Retrieved from the following World Wide Web:  
<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/classroom-management/activity/2922.html>

## **Conflict Resolution Activities (Opening Activity)**

Grade Levels: **Intermediate/High Intermediate**

Here is a list of five to ten minute activities that are intended to promote positive community-building. In all activities, students should have the opportunity to pass if they so desire.

### **A. Anger Ball-Toss**

Find a soft ball. Have the class stand in a circle. Begin by completing the sentence, "I feel angry when ..." Ask for a volunteer who is willing to restate what you just said. Toss that student the ball. That student restates what you said, then completes the sentence for herself. She then tosses the ball to someone else, who repeats what she said, then completes the sentence for himself, and so on.

### **B. Feelings Check-In**

Pass out markers and 5x8 index cards. Ask each student to write on the card in large letters one word that describes how he or she is feeling right now. Then ask students to hold up their cards and look at the variety of responses. Point out how rare it is for different people to bring the same feelings to an experience or situation. Invite students to share why they wrote down the words that they did.

### **C. "I Got What I Wanted ..."**

Have students complete the following sentence: "A time I got something I wanted was when ..."

### **D. I Represent Conflict**

Place yourself in the middle of the room and say, "Imagine that I represent conflict. Think about how you usually react when you experience a conflict personally or witness a conflict happening nearby. Then place yourself, in relation to me, somewhere in the room in a way that indicates your first response to conflict or disagreement. Think about your body position, the direction that you're facing, and the distance from conflict."

Once students have found a position relative to you in the room, ask individuals to explain why they are standing where they are. You might also want to ask, "If this represents your first reaction, what might your second reaction be, after thinking about the conflict?"

**E. Putting Up a Fight**

Go around the group and have students answer: "What is something you have that you would put up a serious fight for--even risk your life for--if someone tried to take it away?" (This can be a material thing, like a gold chain, or something intangible, like a good reputation.) Then ask: "Why is this so important to you?"

**F. Standing Up**

Have students describe a time they felt they were being taken advantage of and they stood up for themselves.

**G. What Color is Conflict?**

Cut up a large quantity of 4x4 construction-paper squares in a wide variety of colors. Be sure to have plenty of red, black, brown, and gray. Ask each student to choose a color or group of colors that she thinks represents conflict. Either in the large group or in smaller groups of five or six, have participants share the colors they chose and why they chose them. (If you split up into smaller groups, come back together at the end and have volunteers share with the whole group which colors they chose and why.)

**H. "What Would You Do ...?"**

Go around the group asking each student to respond to this question: "If you saw a fight starting in the street between two people you didn't know at all, what would you do?"

**I. "When I'm in a Conflict..."**

Go around the group, asking each student to complete the sentence, "When I get into a conflict, I usually ..."

Source:

Lieber, C. M., Lantieri, L., Roderick, T. (1998) *Conflict Resolution in the High School*. The USA: Educators for Social Responsibility. Retrieved from the following World Wide Web: <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/classroom-management/activity/2922.html>



## Survey about Conflict and Me

This is a survey for students concerning their responses to conflict.

When filling this out be as honest as possible!

1. Most people fight or argue when they:
2. Most people fight or argue over:
3. One good thing people get from arguing or fighting is:
4. One bad thing about arguing and fighting is:
5. People generally respond to conflicts by (list two):
6. I fight or argue when:
7. I get upset or angry when other students:
8. I make others angry when I:
9. When I'm talking to someone else who is really angry or upset, the most important thing to do is:
10. When I'm really angry or upset with someone, the most important thing for me to do is:
11. When I'm upset at, mad at, or bothered by another student I can (list three):
12. When I have a disagreement or conflict with someone, we can agree to:

Source:

Lieber, C. M., Lantieri, L., Roderick, T. (1998) *Conflict Resolution in the High School*. The USA: Educators for Social Responsibility. Retrieved from the following World Wide Web: <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/classroom-management/lesson-plan/2921.html>

**APPENDIX D**  
**LESSON PLAN-II**

**Decision Making**

**Theme** : Decision-making

**Grade Level(s)** : Intermediate

**Skills** : Reading & Speaking

**Material** : Handout-1 (Stories), Handout-2 (Decision Mountain)

**Description** : Conflict resolution is a trend to which students need to become familiar. They should understand the possible impact that alternative dispute resolution may have in their lives.

**Goal** : This lesson encourages students to think of different ways in which they may solve their problems. The traditional "My father can beat up your father" or "I'll see you in court" are old-fashioned approaches to problem solving.

**Objectives** : Students will identify the problem, the choices and the consequences both positive and negative. The students will work together to make a group decision.

**Procedure:**

- A. Distribute copies of the worksheet, "[Decision Mountain](#)". Inform students that they are going to make a decision by climbing the "Decision Mountain." By climbing the mountain they will learn the steps involved in decision making, while examining in further detail the problem presented in their story. Have students break into groups of five or six.
- B. Ask students to read the story to their group and identify the problem. At the foot of the mountain, write the problem.
  1. Ask students to identify possible options for resolving the problem. List negative and positive options.
  2. Next, have the class identify the consequence (positive or negative) for the specific option. List the consequences with the corresponding option number.

3. Review and discuss information. Ask students to decide which options and corresponding consequences are best. Have students write their group decision at the top of the mountain.
- C. Ask students to share their story with the class. Discuss problems and decisions. Discuss how decisions were made and why it solves the problem.

## Stories

1. Catherine is not doing very well in her English class. Whether she passes or not depends on her final written project. Even though she has always tried hard, she hasn't been able to get very good grades. She finds the paper that her brother did on the topic three years ago and this paper received an "A."
2. You forgot your social studies assignment. Today is the day when everyone is supposed to bring some object to show to the class. The object should be something that has to do with American History. As you start out the door of the house, you remember your sister's arrowhead collection. Great idea-- you could take the collection to school for social studies class. Suddenly, you remember how your sister feels about the collection. She always says, "I'll never take this collection to school because I don't want to lose or damage it." Since she is already on her way to school, you can't ask permission to take the collection. But the collection is the perfect thing for the assignment.
3. The children in Mrs. Dunn's sixth grade class were having a special treat. A collector of Indian artifacts was visiting and he brought with him some Indian weapons, clothing and beads. He was going to teach the children some Indian words and songs. But before he could start his program, Mrs. Dunn had to take him down the meet the principal. The collector asked that no one touch his belongings, and he put a student, Jane in charge, saying that if anyone touched his things, he would call off his visit. Shortly after Mrs. Dunn and the collector left, a few children couldn't resist touching the clothing and trying on some of the beads. When the collector and Mrs. Dunn returned, Jane did not know what to do.
4. The Smith's new neighbors are coming unexpectedly to visit the Smith's in two hours. The Smith children, Bob and Sally, are at home watching their favorite television show with their best friends. Mr. Smith, wanting to make a good impression on the soon to arrive guests and feeling anxious about meeting new people, immediately turned off the television and told the children to clean the

house. When Bob began to question his father, Mr. Smith got even angrier, and Sally, embarrassed by her father's tone of voice, ran to her room crying.

5. Mike brought a walkman radio to school that he had just received as a birthday gift the night before. All of his friends wanted to have a turn playing the walkman. When it was James' turn, he accidentally broke off one of the knobs. Mike saw this happen and got really mad at James.

HANDOUT 2  
**DECISION MOUNTAIN**

**Decision**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

-----

**Consequences**

1. _____ _____ _____	2. _____ _____ _____
3. _____ _____ _____	4. _____ _____ _____

-----

**Options**

1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____

-----

**Define the Problem**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Source:

Kelley, L. A. (1994). Decision-making: An educator's reference desk lesson plan. Retrieved from the following World Wide Web:

[http://www.eduref.org/Virtual/Lessons/Social\\_Studies/Psychology/PSY0004.html](http://www.eduref.org/Virtual/Lessons/Social_Studies/Psychology/PSY0004.html)

## **APPENDIX E**

### **CONFLICT MANAGEMENT COURSE TOPICS**

#### **Unit One: Conflict and Communication**

1. Definition
2. Approaches
3. Models

#### **Unit Two: Traits and Types of Conflict**

1. Nature
2. Stages
3. Sources & Causes

#### **Unit Three: Personality Puzzle**

1. Individual differences
2. Personality Types
3. Uniqueness
4. Empathy

#### **Unit Four: Conflict Styles, Strategies, and Tactics**

1. Compromising
2. Integrating
3. Obliging
4. Dominating
5. Avoiding

#### **Unit Five: Introducing Nonviolent Communication**

1. Language
2. Communicative competence
3. Effective communication skills
  - a. Self-expression
  - b. Active Listening
  - c. Empathy
  - d. Cooperation
  - e. Brain-storming
  - f. Problem-solving
  - g. Decision-making

**Unit Six: Theories and Cycles of Conflict**

1. General
2. Traditional
3. Interactionist

**Unit Seven: Relationships**

1. Interpersonal
2. Intragroup
3. International

**Unit Eight: Gender and Culture in Conflict**

1. Cross-cultural awareness
2. Individual differences
3. Emotional awareness

**Unit Nine: Anger and Stress**

1. Sources & Causes
2. Anger management
3. Nature of stress

**Unit Ten: Negotiation, Mediation, and Termination of Conflicts**

1. Negotiation strategies
2. Peace-building techniques
3. Peace education