



## EVALUATING ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSE IN A TURKISH UNIVERSITY: THE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES

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### Abstract

English language education has been an essential constituent of Turkish educational system since the worldwide popularization of English as a foreign language particularly after the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century. After the seventy-year period witnessing constant changes in course hours, materials and methods, etc., studies indicate that problems related to language education in Turkey still remain unresolved.

In this study, it is aimed to investigate higher education-level English language course in a provincial state university from the students' perspective. The study intends to simultaneously find out the students' opinions about English language and learning it, their evaluations of the course in question, and finally the problems leading to unsuccessful language learning experiences.

The study was conducted in a quantitative cross-sectional survey design, where a Likert-type questionnaire was administered at three faculties and two vocational schools of Iğdır University in 2010-2011. The data were analyzed via SPSS 17.0 and percentages, mean and standard deviation values were determined through descriptive statistics while Chi-square and G statistics were used as inferential statistics to test the association between participant responses and independent variables of age, gender and school type.

The results have shown that the students find English course of medium difficulty and they are motivated to learn English and they find the language necessary for both professional and social motives. The students demand more communicative activities promoting practical language use during the classes and more objective tests (true – false, matching or completing) in the assessment and evaluation processes. The majority of participating students believe that finishing high school with insufficient language education is the main reason for failure or inefficient learning in the course. The results have also indicated that students' age and gender do not significantly affect their viewpoints while their being whether a faculty or a vocational school student has a significant association with their responses to many items.

The study indicates that university students believe that all parties have responsibilities that should be actualized for better and more effective language education at universities in Turkey: the instructors should experiment with more contemporary methods and techniques while teaching, the students should have more a sophisticated approach towards language learning than only focusing on passing, and the system should accomplish a continuity in language education between primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

**Keywords:** English language course, student viewpoints, English language education in Turkey.