

**THE INTEGRATION OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN FIFTH GRADE
EFL CLASSROOMS**

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**THE INTEGRATION OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN FIFTH GRADE
EFL CLASSROOMS**

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Ailar SHAHAMAT

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Approval of the Graduate School of Educational Science

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ABSTRACT

THE INTEGRATION OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN FIFTH GRADE EFL CLASSROOMS

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of integrating cooperative learning in fifth grade Turkish EFL classrooms. It attempts to explore how the participating students and teachers perceive such language classes, investigates the effectiveness of integrating this particular method in the classroom, and examines the influence of working collaboratively on students' language proficiency. A sample of twenty-three fifth grade students and two teachers participated in the study. Data were collected through a triangulated approach, in which pre- and post- tests, diaries and observations were used. The findings of the study revealed that cooperative learning has positive influence on teaching and learning in fifth grade EFL classrooms.

Keywords: Cooperative Learning, Fifth Grade EFL Classroom, Students' and Teachers' Perceptions, Language Proficiency.

ÖZ

5. SINIF İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRENİMİNDE İŞBİRLİKÇİ ÖĞRENİMİN BÜTÜNLEŞMESİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı işbirlikçi öğrenmenin İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen beşinci sınıflar üzerindeki etkilerini araştırmaktır. Çalışma katılımcı öğretmen ve öğrencilerin söz konusu dil sınıflarını nasıl algıladıklarını ortaya çıkarmaya çalışmakta, söz konusu metodun sınıfta bütünleştirilmesinin etkilerini incelemekte ve işbirlikçi çalışmanın öğrencilerin dil yeterlilikleri üzerindeki etkilerini gözden geçirmektedir. Çalışmaya 23 beşinci sınıf öğrencisi ve 2 öğretmen katılmıştır. Veriler, çeşitleme yaklaşımını kullanılarak ön-test ve son-test sonuçlarından, günlüklerden ve gözlemlerden toplanmıştır. Çalışmanın bulguları işbirlikçi öğrenmenin İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğretildiği beşinci sınıflardaki öğretim ve öğrenim üzerinde olumlu etkileri olduğunu ortaya çıkarmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İşbirlikçi Öğrenim, İngilizceyi Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğrenen Beşinci Sınıf, Öğrencilerin ve Öğretmenlerin Algıları, Dil Yeterliliği.

To My Parents and the Best Brother

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Overview

Most students who gained the experience of working in a team in a laboratory- or project-based course generally have found memories of the experience. Some recall one or two students doing most of the work while others just get the grade. Others remember the different parts assigned to each group member who ends up into knowing little or nothing about what any others did. All these experiences made most of the students avoid teamwork whenever possible.

Cooperative Learning (CL) can be characterized as social process, which minimizes those unpleasant experiences and maximizes learning through the successful interaction between the group members. It is an instructional method where students in small groups can work together to maximize on another's learning and to achieve their mutual goals (Johnson, Johnson & Smith, 1998, Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

There are several reasons why cooperative learning works as well as it does. When engaged in cooperative activities, individuals seek outcomes that are beneficial to themselves and to all other members. Specifically, cooperative results in participants' striving for mutual benefits so that all members of the group benefit from each other's efforts ("Your success benefits me and my success benefits you"), their recognizing that all group members share a common fate ("We sink or swim together here") and that one's performance depends mutually on oneself and one's colleagues ("We can't do it without you"), and their feelings proudly and jointly celebrating where a group member is recognized for achievement ("You got an A! That's terrific") (Johnson, Johnson & Smith, 1991, p.3).

Furthermore, this particular method supports social-affective learning as well (Slavin, 1995). Students can learn to support each other, to deal with heterogeneity in a group, to work in a team and to deal with the perspective of others. In other words, students are able to learn to listen to each other and to solve problems together. This can lead to less fear and stress in a class and can increase the motivation in classroom environment.

Cooperative learning also encourages mutual respect and learning among students with varying talents and abilities, languages, racial, and ethnic backgrounds

(Marr, 1997). It is effective in reducing prejudice among students and in meeting the academic and social needs of students at risk for educational failure (Sudzina, 1993). Finally, according to Oxford (1997) :

Cooperative learning is more effective in promoting intrinsic motivation and task achievement, generating higher order thinking skills, improving attitudes toward the subject, developing academic peer norms, heightening self-esteem, increasing time on task, creating caring and altruistic relationships, and lowering anxiety and prejudice (p.445).

1.2 Theoretical Framework

Cooperative learning is one of the most important teaching and leaning strategies that can be used to create an appropriate learning environment for ESL students, which helps them to promote positive social interactions and English learning. Students placed in a cooperative group, feel a sense of belonging. They learn to ask for and receive help. As others ask for their input, they learn that their suggestions are valued. They learn that their success is linked to the success of others. Group participation is learned along with other social skills necessary for working together (Madrid, 1993).

Cooperative learning creates a student centered classroom environments, which allows students to be more active than the teachers, but the instructions are presented by the teachers. In traditional methods of teaching most of the classrooms were teacher centered and student were passive during the lessons. All of the assignments were done individually and there wasn't any cooperation among the students.

In order to have students more involved in the classroom cooperative leaning methods are suggested. For achieving the objectives of cooperative language learning and provide maximum benefit, teachers have to create well-structured tasks, set the goals of activities clearly, organize groups and assign students to different roles, and select suitable materials to be taught (Johnson & Johnson, 1994).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

English is the common language, which gives opportunities to people from any country and any language to interact with each other all over the world. In most of the countries English Language Learning has a special place in education. There are so many institutes and language schools, which provide English courses for language learners. In recent years, English has become one of the most important school subjects in Turkey as well. Because of this, the Ministry of National Education has developed a new curriculum for English language classes based on the Common European Framework. While designing the new curriculum, student centred approaches were taken into consideration and the new curriculum aimed to raise Turkey's language teaching system to the European standard.

The new English language curriculum has been used since 2006, and with the introduction of the new curriculum, English language teachers have gone through an in-service training in order to be made aware of the changes in the new curriculum. Cooperative learning was introduced as one of the most crucial elements to be emphasized in the English teaching and learning programs. Language learners should be given plenty of opportunities to play in teams and to 'help each other' in order to increase the social skills required for cooperative work.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned benefits; this study aims to investigate the effects of integrating cooperative learning in fifth grade EFL classrooms.

1.4 Purpose

The purpose of this study to investigate the effects of cooperative learning on teaching English to fifth grade Turkish EFL learners by exploring how the participating students and teachers perceive such language classes, investigating the effectiveness of integrating this method in the classroom and examining to what extent cooperative learning has influence on the learners' language proficiency.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the perceptions of students and teachers towards integrating cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms?
2. To what extent is integrating cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms effective in relation to the following five criteria:
 - 2a. students' stay on task
 - 2b. listening to group's ideas
 - 2c. participating in group discussion
 - 2d. encouraging group members
 - 2e. exhibiting positive attitudes
3. To what extent does cooperative learning influence the fifth grade Turkish EFL students' language proficiency?

1.6 Significance of the Study

According to the global perspectives and core competences necessary for modern life and the important role of English, the Ministry of Turkish Education reformed the curriculum for English language classes in 2006. This new curriculum was based on the Common European Framework, and mostly student-centred approaches were taken into consideration. According to the aims of this new curriculum, cooperative learning, which has got positive effects in learning, has been highly recommended to teachers to be used in EFL classrooms. The present study aims to investigate the effectiveness of integrating cooperative learning in fifth grade EFL classrooms.

1.7 Overview of Methodology

1.7.1 Research design. For the purposes of this study, a mixed-method research design which is a methodology for conducting research that involves collecting, analysing, and integrating (or mixing) quantitative and qualitative research (and data) in a single study or a longitudinal program of inquiry was adopted. The purpose of this form of research is that both qualitative and quantitative

research, in combination, to provide a better understanding of a research problem or issue than either research approach alone.

1.7.2 Participants. Twenty-three Turkish EFL students and two English teachers engaged in the fifth grade curriculum participated in this study.

1.7.3 Setting. The study was conducted at one of the private schools in Istanbul during the first and second semesters of the 2013-2014 educational years.

1.7.4 Data collection instruments. In this study, data were collected from three different instruments namely, pre- and post- tests, diaries and observations. First, the students were given a pre- test before the implementation of cooperative learning method to find out their current proficiency level. After the intensive implementation of ten different lesson plans based on cooperative learning, which lasted for five weeks, the same groups of students were given a post- test to see whether this particular method has increased their language proficiency. Additionally, after the implementation of this method, both the students and teachers kept diaries about their perceptions towards learning cooperatively. Finally, the researcher together with an external observer made observations during the implementation of this method based on a checklist to find out the effectiveness of using cooperative learning in 5th grade EFL classrooms.

1.7.5 Data analysis. In attempt to answer the first research question, the data obtained through diaries were analysed qualitatively to investigate the perceptions of students and teachers towards learning cooperatively in fifth grade EFL classrooms. As for the second research question, quantitative analysis was carried out to come up with the observation results in order to find out the effectiveness of using this method with fifth graders. As for the third research question, the results of pre- and post-tests were analyzed quantitatively to examine if cooperative learning has influence on students' language proficiency.

1.8 Operational Definitions of Terms

Cooperative Learning: is a set of teaching strategies used to promote face-to face interaction among students and help them reach specific learning and interpersonal goals in structured groups (Johnson & Johnson, 1994).

English as a Foreign Language EFL: English as a Foreign Language: is defined as the learning of a language, mostly in a classroom setting, in a context where the target language is not generally used in the community (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Defining Young Learners and Young Language Learners

One of the most common definitions of young learners has been proposed by Philips (2001) as “children from the year of formal schooling (five or six years old) to eleven or twelve years old”(p.3). Young learners have their own special characteristics that differentiate them from adult learners. Their needs, attitudes and interests should be taken into consideration. Unlike older learners, young learners are generally very active and unabashed. Young learners respond well to praising and yearn for approval from their teachers. Their language abilities vary from student to student. Moreover, they find pleasure in learning through playing and imitating and are mostly very imaginative.

Young learners are exposed to different languages right after birth. According to McKay (2006) young language learners are “those who are learning a foreign or second language and who are doing so during the first six or seven years of formal schooling” (p.1). They are children between seven and twelve years old who have different learning styles which should be known and understood by the teacher to give contribution to improve their quality of teaching and learning process.

Furthermore, individual differences and different learning styles of learners should be taken into account in during the teaching and learning process. According to Halliwell (1992) young learners do not come to the language classroom empty-handed. They bring with them already well established set of instincts, skills and characteristics which will help them to learn another language (p.3). We as teachers need to identify those and make the most of them. Specifically, young learners possess the following major characteristics:

- They already very good at interpreting meaning without necessarily understanding the individual words;
- They have great skill in using limited language creatively;
- They generally learn indirectly rather than directly;
- They take great pleasure in finding and creating fun in what they do;
- They have a ready imagination and take great delight in talking.

Age is another critical factor among these individual differences. Young learners have different characteristics from adults, which affects their language learning. Cameron (2001) mentioned that children learn a second or foreign language better than adults, and this is often used to support the early introduction of foreign language teaching. The Critical Period Hypothesis is the name given to the idea that children can learn a second language particularly effectively before puberty because their brains are still able to use the mechanisms that assisted first language acquisition. The Critical Period Hypothesis holds that older learners will learn language differently after this stage and, particularly for accent, can never achieve the same level of proficiency (p.13).

2.2 Young Learners and Age Classification

Young learners have been classified into different groups by various researchers. Two of the most commonly used classifications in literature were done by Scott and Ytreberg (1991) and Kedde (1997).

To begin, Scott and Ytreberg (1991) divided children into main groups, five to seven year-old and eight to ten year-olds. The following part will briefly mention about the major characteristics of this particular age groups.

2.2.1 Five to seven year-olds. As for the first group, the two researchers argued that children can talk about what they are doing or what they have done. They can understand direct human interaction. Even though they do not understand the rules, they know that the world is governed by rules and that they should obey them. These rules give them a sense of security (Scott & Ytreberg, 1991, p.220). Children are self-centred until the age of six or seven and can't understand other people's point of view.

Furthermore, five to seven years old children can understand situation more quickly than they understand the language used. The use of language skills comes before they are aware of them. At this age, they are able to use logical reasoning and according to them what you say first comes first. They might also have problems in determining what fact is and what is fiction; the line between these two is not clear for them. When a teacher ends a story told in a foreign language classroom by taking

out toy mouse out of her pocket, children have no problem believing that it is the mouse in the story. Apart from this, they have short attention and concentration.

On the other hand, it is not easy for this particular age group to talk about the language, in other words their meta-language is not as advanced as adult learners. Besides, they may not understand the point of working together and what is wanted from them. However, instead of asking for more information they will do what they think you want them to do.

2.2.2 Eight to ten year-olds. According to the second age classification identified by Scott and Ytreberg (1991), children have formed their basic concepts and decided on their views of the world between eight to ten years of age. Unlike five to seven year-olds, though limited, they can make decisions about their own learning. They have definite views on what they like and don't like doing. They have formed a sense of fairness and sometimes question teacher's decision. Contrary to young children, they can work with others and learn from them.

Moreover, at this particular age group children depend on the spoken word as well as the physical world to convey and understand meaning. They start making sense of the adult worlds as we see it. By the age of ten, they are able to understand abstract symbols. They can also tell the differences between fact and fiction. Aside these, they have a language awareness and readiness. Unlike five to seven year-olds, they ask questions all the time and if they do not understand something they try to find out by asking. Looking at all these differences, we see that we have to take the stage that the student is in into consideration when we are teaching.

While Scott and Ytreberg (1991) have grouped children by age, Kettle (1997) has categorized them according to their growth under three headings; child, preteen and young teenagers. All of them have different characteristics and learning styles, which will be described in the following paragraph.

Where children learn by doing, playing games, socializing, and TPR this sometimes causes problems with pre-teens and teenagers due to embarrassment, their maturing to adolescence and self-consciousness. When you look at the development from child to teenager the attention span increases as they get older, whereas enthusiasm tends to decrease, for example if the teenager isn't satisfied with the

teacher or the lesson. This may occur due to a more developed knowledge of the world and having stronger personal opinions and ideas. The motor skills of children develop and when they are teenagers their motor skills are almost at the level of adults. According to Keddl (1997) children need a more holistic approach than teenagers, are predominantly oral-based learners and need constant reinforcement while when they get older they become aware of learning and studying as separate skills, there is a bigger focus on reading and writing and their memory levels get higher.

For the purposes of this study, the target group of participants was ten to twelve years old fifth graders studying at a private school in Istanbul. The reason behind choosing this particular age group was due to the introduction of the new education system called “4+4+4” by the Ministry of Education in 2012. Because of this new system, fifth graders have particularly gained importance due to the fact that the fifth grade is the transactional grade between elementary and secondary school. Moreover, the students have to be dealt with as preparatory group for facing the upper and more difficult curriculum.

2.2 Young Learners and Language Learning Theories

Several studies emphasize on the way young learners think and learn. Vygotsky (1962), Piaget (1971), and Bruner (1983) have been among the most influential ones in educational theory.

Vygotsky (1962) was an advocate of cognitive learning and social-interaction theory. He mentioned that development and learning in young learners take place in a social context and adults have an important role in this process. Children can learn much more things with the help of the adults than they can on their own. Vygotsky’s “Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)” refers to the tasks a child is unable to complete alone, but is able to complete with the assistance of an adult. He used the idea of ZPD to give a new meaning to ‘intelligence’. Rather than measuring intelligence by what a child can do alone, Vygotsky (1962) suggested that intelligence was better measured by what a child can do with skilled help.

Vygotsky (1962) distinguished the outward talk and what is happening in the child’s mind as well. The infant begins with using single words, but these words

convey whole message. As the child's language develops, the whole undivided thought message can be broken down into similar units and expressed by putting together words that are now units of talk. For him meaning has got an important role in learning language.

In relation to second and foreign language education, Vygotsky (1978) claimed that the child learns a foreign language in school differently than he learns his native language. He does not begin learning his native language with the study of the alphabet, with reading and writing, with the conscious and intentional construction of phrases, with the definition of words, or with the study of grammar. Generally, however, this is all characteristic of the child's first steps in learning a foreign language. The child learns his native language without conscious awareness or intention; he learns a foreign language with conscious awareness and intention.

Another pioneer educational theorist is Piaget (1971) who gave a much less important role to language in cognitive development than did Vygotsky (1978). It is action, rather than the development of the first language, which, for Piaget, is fundamental to cognitive development.

Furthermore, Piaget's (1971) concern was how children functioned in the world around them, and how the world influences their mental development. The child is seen as continually interacting with the world around her/him, solving problems that are presented by environment. It is through taking actions to solve problems that learning occurs. The knowledge that results from such actions is not imitated or in-born, but is actively constructed by the child. About concrete objects thought is seen as deriving from action; action is internalized, or carried out mentally in the imagination, and in this way thinking develops.

From a Piagetian viewpoint, a child's thinking develops as gradual growth of knowledge and intellectual skills towards a final stage of formal, logical thinking. However, gradual growth is punctuated with certain fundamental changes, which cause the child to pass through a series of stages. At each stage, the child is capable of some types of thinking but still incapable of others (Cameron, 2001, p.3).

Piaget (1971) claimed that all children go through a series of stages of intellectual development. Piaget alleged the four stages – 'sensorimotor' (birth to 18 months approximately), 'pre-operational' (2 to 7 years), 'concrete operational' (7

to 11 years approximately), and 'formal operational' period (11 years onwards). In his stage theory he also asserts that children can't do certain things if they have not yet reached that stage.

Based on these two viewpoints, Cameron (2001) came out with an argument that:

An important dimension of children's lives that Piaget neglects is the social; it is the child on his or her own in the world that concerns him, rather than the child in communication with adults and other children. As well we will see Vygotsky's ideas give a much greater priority to social interaction (p.4).

Apart from Vygotsky and Piaget, the other theorist who gave his ideas about young learners is Bruner. For Bruner (1983) language is the most important tool for cognitive growth, and he has investigated how adults use language to mediate the world for children and help them to solve problems. He also labelled helping children in doing their tasks or learning anything as "scaffolding".

The notions of formats and routines are other central aspects of Bruner's (1983) studies. These concepts are "events that allow scaffolding to take place, formats and routines combine the security of the familiar with the excitement of the new" (Cameron, 2001, p.9). Formats and routines such as reading books together provide children with repeated forms of language in familiar contexts can raise their expectation.

2.3 What is Cooperative Learning?

Cooperative learning is not new; it has been around since the early 1900's when it was used in one-room schoolhouses. During the 1950's, educators moved towards a model of individualization and competition accepting the individual differences, resolving conflicts and pooling their resources to solve problems. However, due to rapid changes in our contemporary society, there is a return to the concept of cooperation and teamwork to be competitive in today's global economy. Parallel to business and industry, cooperative learning has received increased attention in recent years due to the movement to provide better education. It has been considered as an intervention of use in promoting appropriate behaviour of students and in creating a positive behavioural climate in schools. Taking all this into

consideration, the importance of cooperative learning cannot be overemphasized.

Cooperative learning (CL) is an essential methodological paradigm in the constructivist classroom (Wolff, 1994). Knowledge is constructed, and transformed by students. The learning process is understood as something a learner does by activating already existing cognitive structures. Teaching becomes a transaction between all the stakeholders in the learning process. Students do not passively receive knowledge from the teacher but work together to solve problems and complete projects promoting both positive interdependence and individual. Using cooperative learning in the classrooms can reduce the teacher's talking time and increase the students' talking time. It can give more opportunities in learning for students. Student interaction and dialogues with their friends will improve.

Several definitions of cooperative learning have been formulated. The one most widely used is probably that of Johnson and Johnson (2000) who view cooperative learning as an instruction that involves students working in teams to achieve a common goal based on the conditions comprising the following elements:

1. Positive interdependence: Team members are obliged to rely on one another to achieve the goal. If any team members fail to do their part, everyone suffers consequences.
2. Individual accountability: All students in a group are held accountable for doing their share of the work and for mastery of all materials to be learned.
3. Face-to-face promotive interaction: Although some of the group work may be parcelled out and done individually, some must be done interactively, with group members providing one another with feedback, challenging reasoning and conclusions, and perhaps most importantly, teaching and encouraging one another.
4. Appropriate use of collaborative skills: Students are encouraged and helped to develop and practice trust building, leadership, decision-making, communication, and conflict management skills.
5. Group processing: Team members set group goals, periodically assess what they are doing well as a team, and identify changes they will make to function more effectively in the future.

Based on Johnson and Johnson's (2000) definition, many other scholars came up with similar definitions. Slavin (1995) for example, gives the following definitions on cooperative learning:

Cooperative learning refers to a variety of teaching methods in which students work in small groups to help one another learn academic content. In cooperative classrooms, students are expected to help each other; to discuss and argue with each other, to assess each other's current knowledge and fill in gaps in each other understands (p.2).

Another definition provided by Johnson and Johnson (1994) states that cooperative learning is a small heterogeneously mixed working groups of learners learning collaborative /social skills while working toward a common academic goal or task (p.1).

Finally, according Olsen and Kagan (1992), cooperative learning is "a group learning activity organized so that learning is dependents on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learners is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others" (Kessler, 1992, p.8).

2.4 Cooperative Learning: Advantages and Disadvantages

The effectiveness of cooperative learning has been confirmed by a large and rapidly growing body of researches. According to Felder and Brent (2007):

Cooperatively taught students tend to exhibit higher academic achievement, greater persistence through graduation, better high-level reasoning and critical thinking skills, deeper understanding of learned material, greater time on task and less disruptive behaviour in class, lower levels of anxiety and stress, greater intrinsic motivation to learn and achieve, greater ability to view situations' from others' perspectives, more positive and supportive relationships with peers, more positive attitudes toward subject areas, and higher self-esteem. In cooperative learning, learners learn from one another. They learn trust building, communication and leadership skills from which they benefit for the rest of their lives in the work place, or in relationships. Also Valuable social skills such as resolving conflict,

problem solving, criticizing ideas and not people, paraphrasing, asking questions, giving direction to the group's work, and building on each other's information are learned by learners (p.34).

On the contrary, cooperative learning has got some limitations for both learners and teachers. Learning to facilitate cooperative learning expertly requires training, experience, and perseverance. It may take 2 to 3 years before a teacher can use these techniques routinely. Groups finish work at different times. Sometimes learners argue or refuse to do the work. Some learners don't know how to get along with others and settle their differences. Some learners want to work alone. Initially, the teaching of collaborative/social skills takes up a great deal of class time, affecting the amount of content covered. Some learners do not like to work in groups. If individual accountability is not in place, some learners do all of the work and the other group members let them. Cooperative learning does not work well in easy lessons. Processing skills take time to learn and to carry out in the classroom. Conflicts may arise for which the teachers may not be prepared. Working in cooperative groups creates a level of "noise" that may be uncomfortable for some teachers.

2.5 Cooperative Learning Structures

Cooperative learning can be used to stimulate students to acquire the knowledge as well as interpersonal and team skills. It helps to promote student-student interaction via working in small groups to maximize their learning and reach their shared goal (Brown, 1994, p.81). Following are some of the structures that can be implemented to promote collaborative learning in classrooms:

- Academic learning

Cohen (1994) states that cooperative learning can help students learn academically. On the one hand they acquire the content of the subject and on the other hand they develop meta-disciplinary competence, as for example “higher order thinking skills” (p.6). These include forming hypotheses, making decisions and finding categories. In addition, cooperative learning encourages students to find solutions for special problems. Therefore, they have to discuss, form ideas and opinions and have to give feedback, as Cohen (1994) mentioned:

Discussion within the group promotes more frequent oral summarizing, explaining, and elaborating what one knows; cooperative learning promotes greater ability to take the perspective of others; in the group setting, one's thinking is monitored by others and has the benefit of both the input of other people's thinking and their critical feedback (p.15).

- Social-affective learning

Another advantage of cooperative learning can be social-affective learning. Pupils can learn to support each other, to deal with heterogeneity in a group, to work in a team and to deal with the perspective of others. A further advantage is that students are able to learn to listen to each other and to solve problems together. This can lead to less fear and stress in a class and can increase the motivation (Slavin, 1995, p.70).

- Personality development

Cooperative learning can also be highly motivating for the students since it can strengthen the confidence in their own abilities. If learners realize that their contributions are accepted in a group and even necessary and useful for the aim of the group, their self-esteem might rise (Huber, 2004, p.4).

Giving the learners more authority to make their own decisions, the teacher also prepares the students for their role as citizens in the adult world, as Cohen (1994) points out: "They will have more of a sense of control of their own environment, and they will learn how to be active citizens" (p.19).

2.6 Types of Cooperative Learning Groups

One of the most widely accepted classification of cooperative learning groups has been emphasized by Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec's (1998) theory which identified three types of cooperative learning groups: formal, informal, and base groups.

To begin, formal cooperative learning groups range in length from one class period to several weeks. The teacher can structure any academic assignment or course requirement for formal cooperative learning. "Formal cooperative learning groups ensure that students are actively involved in the intellectual work of organizing material, explaining it, summarizing it, and integrating it into existing

conceptual structures. They are the heart of using cooperative learning” (Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 1998, pp. 1-8).

Furthermore, informal cooperative learning groups are ad-hoc groups that may last from a few minutes to a whole class period. The teacher uses them during direct teaching (lectures, demonstrations) to focus student attention on the material to be learned, set a mood conducive to learning, help set expectations about material, what the lesson will cover, ensure that students are cognitively processing the material being taught, and provide closure to an instructional session.

Finally, cooperative base groups are "long-term (lasting for at least a year), heterogeneous groups with stable membership whose primary purpose is for members to give each other the support, help, encouragement, and assistance each needs to progress academically. Base groups provide students with long-term, committed relationships” (Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 1998, pp. 1-8).

For the purposes of this study, formal cooperative group was chosen. Specifically, the students received intensive instruction on cooperative learning for five weeks. They were actively involved in ten lessons, which included at least one group-work activity.

2.7 Cooperative Learning Models

Johnson, Johnson and Stanne (2000) provided a brief summary of various cooperative learning models focusing on their history, developers and possible primary applications in the context of ESL/EFL instruction (See Table 1 below).

Table 1

Cooperative Learning Models

Researcher/ Developer	Date	Method	ESL/EFL Primary Applications
Johnson & Johnson	Mid 1970s	Learning Together	Reading, Writing, Speaking, Culture
DeVries & Edward	Early 1970s	Teams-Games- Tournaments (TGT)	Language Rules and Mechanics
Sharan & Sharan	Mid 1970s	Group Investigation (GI)	Writing, Culture
Johnson & Johnson	Late 1970s	Constructive Controversy (CC)	Culture
Aronson, Blaney,	Late 1970s	Jigsaw Procedure	Reading, Literature

Sikes, Stephan & Snapp, Slavin	Late 1970s	Student Teams - Achievement Divisions (STAD)	Language Rules and Mechanics
Cohen	Early 1980s	Complex Instruction (CI)	Social Skills, Culture, Reading, Writing, Language Rules and Mechanics
Slavin, Leavey, & Madden	Mid 1980s	Team Accelerated Instruction (TAI)	None
Kagan	Mid 1980s	Cooperative Learning Structures	Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing
Stevens, Madden, Slavinn, & Farnish	Mid 1980s	Curriculum Packages: Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC)	Reading, Writing, Spelling, Vocabulary, Literature

- Learning Together (LT)

In this model, instructions organize according to the principles of heterogeneous grouping, positive interdependence, individual accountability, social/collaborative skills, and group processing. In ESL/EFL classrooms this model can help learners to read and comprehend a certain text, write an essay, and/or prepare a group project or presentation about certain aspects of the target culture.

- Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT)

Instruction of TGT method is organized into the five major components of lesson planning—class presentation, team study, tournament, determining individual improvement points, and team recognition. TGT is the most appropriate method for teaching spelling, the language rules and mechanics of the target language.

- Group Investigation (GI)

This method divides work between group members. In the ESL/EFL classroom, GI is absolutely suitable for completing complex tasks such as writing a research paper, preparing a presentation about some relevant theme or issue, or

developing culture capsules, mini-dramas, and clusters to learn about certain aspects of the target culture.

- Constructive Controversy (CC)

In this method learners are divided into groups of four members and each of these groups is divided into two pairs. Each pair should advocate about the given issue. This model is suitable for researching and disputing about certain aspects of the native language culture and the target language culture. So it can be helpful in increasing ESL/EFL learners' knowledge of cross-cultural, norms and values of the target language and also it will help them to improve their general research and communication skills.

- Jigsaw Procedure (JP)

This method follows the procedure of lesson planning: reading the assigned material, expert group discussion, team reporting, and finally team recognition as in TGT. Jigsaw is most appropriate for teaching literature, biography, a chapter in a book, or any other similar narrative, expository, or descriptive textual material.

- Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD)

This method is very similar to the TGT method with the exception of the tournament part. Learners in STAD take individual quizzes and tests in order to determine their mastery of the material under study. Like TGT, STAD is most appropriate for teaching the language rules and mechanics of the target language.

- Complex Instruction (CI)

This model gives opportunities for learners to acquire group work norms and management skills. CI convinces learners that they each are smart and have important intellectual contributions to make to the multiple-ability task. In the ESL/EFL classrooms, by using CI, teachers can teach all the language skills.

- Team Accelerated Instruction (TAI)

This program is designed to teach mathematics so it is not relevant to ESL/EFL contexts.

Based on the cooperative learning models discussed above, two models entitled, Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD), Learning Together (LT),

Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT) and the Group Investigation (GI) models of cooperative learning were adopted to find out the effectiveness of integrating cooperative learning in fifth grade EFL classrooms.

2.8 Cooperative Learning Activities in EFL Classrooms

Cooperative learning serves as a basis for developing a variety of activities, which are used both in schools, and higher levels of education to develop students' language skills. Teachers can use different types of activities such as real life tasks, task-based interaction, real world material and intensive oral practice by creating an authentic and supportive environment for students. Isabell and Raines (2003) mention a variety of activities that support collaborative learning in EFL/ESL classrooms.

Drama, for example, is one of the activities, which can be used cooperatively. It emphasizes on meaningful communication, drama has become an important technique in language teaching. Drama provides many opportunities for classroom interaction that, as Vygotsky (1962) had stated, is necessary to internalize new knowledge. It provides a connection between language and movement (p.197).

Role-play is probably the most common cooperative, which is used in EFL classrooms. In role-play students act small scenes, either using their own ideas or by building on ideas from a role card.

Pantomime is another cooperative activity, which has been defined as the use of movement and gestures to express ideas or feelings. In pantomime communication is established through action instead of words. It is effective, safe and successful beginning drama experience, as it doesn't need language or dialogue (p.204). Pantomime makes it easier for students to perform in front of the peers. Each positive experience in drama builds confidence in children and hence they become more willing to take risks and try out new roles.

2.9 Research Support for Cooperative Learning

Many research studies in relation to cooperative learning have been conducted both in ESL and EFL contexts. One of the studies was done by Çokparlamış (2010) in an attempt to find out the effects of working collaboratively

in fifth grade EFL classrooms in Turkey. 50 students participated in the study. Data came from pre- and post- tests, and diaries from both experimental and control groups. The results revealed that cooperative learning provided more opportunities to the participants to get involved in the activities, and it created more student centred classroom environments. The data showed the development of the participants between the pre- and post- tests. The analysis of the results also contributed to the understanding of whether the students in any groups formed, that is, experimental and control groups, developed more than the other. Also the differences between pre and post- test results implied that the implementation of cooperative learning had a positive effective on learning English. On the other hand, apart from positive effects of working in such classes, some of the students complained about their group members stating that they were lazy. Finally, the participating students pointed that they didn't want to share the group with some of the members who were talking too much and didn't let them speak.

Besides of cooperative learning effects on students' academic success, some research studies emphasized that working in groups also helps students to promote their discourse and social interaction (Gillies, 2007; Melton & Derring, 1999). Although cooperative learning provides opportunities for students to think and reason together, research indicates that unless students are helped to dialogue together, they only infrequently give rich and detailed help to each other engage in cognitively sophisticated talk.

Furthermore, the results of another two studies, which were conducted by Yang (2009) and Ghorbani and Nezamoshari (2012), showed that beside of the effects of cooperative learning on developing the student's proficiency level, it also helps them to increase the number of their interactions, communication skills and motivation. To put it simply, in such classrooms, students are encouraged to participate in discussions in order to improve their English learning skills.

Finally one other result was the low amount of anxiety between students in these classrooms. Since students could ask their questions and express themselves to their classmates, rather than a teacher, they were less anxious than their counterparts in the traditional class.

Based on these overviews, it can be summarized that, cooperative learning

gives the opportunity to the students to freely express themselves, have a voice in the class, and improve their critical thinking which has positive influence on their language proficiency, communication skills and motivation.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Overview

This chapter describes the methodology of the study. The remaining part of the chapter will focus on the research questions, the research design, setting, and participants, data collection instruments and procedures, and data analysis.

Specifically, the following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the perceptions of students and teachers towards integrating cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms?
2. To what extent is integrating cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms effective in relation to the following five criteria:
 - 2a. students' stay on task
 - 2b. listening to group's ideas
 - 2c. participating in group discussion
 - 2d. encouraging group members
 - 2e. exhibiting positive attitudes
3. To what extent does cooperative learning influence the fifth grade Turkish EFL students' language proficiency?

3.2 Philosophical Paradigm

A paradigm can be defined as “the basic belief system or a world view that guides the investigation” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 105). Quantitative and qualitative research paradigms have been widely used in research. According to Cresswell (1994) qualitative study is an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting. Alternatively a quantitative study, consistent with the quantitative paradigm, is an inquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measure with numbers, and analyzed with statistical procedures, in order to determine whether the predictive generalizations of the theory hold true.

In this study, a mixed methods research design which is a procedure for collecting, analysing, and “mixing” both quantitative and qualitative research and methods in a single study to understand a research problem was adopted (Cresswell, 2012).

3.3 Research Design

Mixed methods research studies are the “third wave” or third research paradigm, suggesting that quantitative and qualitative designs can work together.

Burke Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) defined mixed methods research as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts, or language into a single study.

Creswell and Clark (2007) came up with the following definition of mixed methods research:

A research design with philosophical assumptions is as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone (p. 5).

The above definitions of mixed methods designs add greater clarity in relation to conducting research using this paradigm. However, questions of identifying possible mixed methods design strategies within one’s research needed to be addressed. Many different scholars (Cresswell & Clark, 2011; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) have emphasized this concern by identifying four types of mixed methods strategies namely, convergent design, explanatory design, exploratory design and embedded design.

To begin with, in convergent design quantitative and qualitative data are collected concurrently to obtain a more complete understanding of the research problem. The two data sets are analysed separately by giving equal priority to each strand. As for explanatory design, the quantitative and qualitative data are implemented sequentially. In the first phase, the researcher starts collecting and analysing quantitative data. Then, s/he collects and analyses qualitative data in a second phase as a follow-up to the quantitative results. Finally, the two phases are connected by using the quantitative results to shape the qualitative research questions, sampling,

and data collection. Moreover, in exploratory design, the collection and analysis of the qualitative data is followed by the quantitative data. In other words, the qualitative results are used to shape the quantitative phase by specifying research questions and variables, developing an instrument, and/or generating a typology. Finally, for embedded design, the quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analysed within a quantitative research design, qualitative research design, or research procedure. The collection and analysis of secondary data set occurs before, after and/or during the primary methods.

For the purposes of this study, a convergent design was applied. The quantitative data came from pre- and post- tests whereas the qualitative data were obtained through diaries and observations. The two data sets were analysed separately by giving equal priority to each strand.

3.4 Setting

The present study was conducted at a fifth grade EFL classroom in a private school in Istanbul, Turkey. In this school, students are required to take a placement exam at the beginning of the educational year. According to the gained scores, fifth graders are separated into three proficiency levels namely, entry, standard and high. In each level, students received a total of 15 hours of English instruction every week. The program comprises two basic courses, main course (9 hours) and skills (6 hours). In the main course, teachers mostly focus on the basic subjects of English such as grammar and vocabulary, whereas in skills instruction the emphasis is on the development of four language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) and strategies. Main course instruction is generally undertaken by Turkish EFL teachers whereas the impartation of skills is conducted by native speakers of English.

As for the assessment, the students receive their final grades based on three written and speaking exams, two performance assignments and one project. Their final score is the average of all of these scores, which is estimated by the e-school system (online) of the Ministry of Education.

3.5 Participants

For the purposes of this study, the data were gathered from twenty-three

students and two teachers at a fifth grade EFL classroom. The participants were 12 female and 11 male students with the age average of 10-12 years old. Of the two female EFL teachers, one was the main course and the other one was the skills teacher. Both teachers form the same nationality (Turkish) with an average of six years of teaching experience.

3.6 Procedure

3.6.1 Types of sampling. Sampling refers to the process of selecting the individuals that researcher would like to obtain information. Although there are a number of different methods that might be used to create a sample, they generally can be grouped into one of two categories: probability and non-probability sampling (Doherty, 1994).

In probability sampling there is random selection. More specifically, each sample from the population of interest has a known probability of selection under a given sampling scheme. Simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling, stage sampling and cluster sampling can be grouped under this type of sampling.

On the other hand, in non-probability sampling, the samples are gathered in a process that does not give all the individuals in the population equal chances of being selected. There are four primary types of non-probability sampling methods: convenience sampling sequential sampling, quota sampling, judgmental sampling and snowball sampling.

For the purposes of this study, convenience sampling was used due to the convenient accessibility and proximity of the subjects to the researcher.

3.6.2 Data collection instruments. For the purposes of this study, data were collected through three different instruments. These were pre and post-tests, which constituted the quantitative aspect of the study, and diaries and observations in order to add a qualitative and in-depth sight to the study.

3.6.2.1 Pre- and post- test. The pre and post-test used in the study was Kid's Box Placement Test published by Cambridge University Press. The test comprised

a total of fifty multiple-choice items. The reason why this particular test was chosen was because the test was standardized and parallel to the content covered in the fifth grade English curriculum. Specifically, Kid's Box Placement Test was given to the participating students before and after the implementation of cooperative learning method to investigate the effects of this particular method on students' language proficiency (See Appendix A).

3.6.2.2 Diaries. The two groups of participants (both students and teachers) were asked to keep diaries expressing their perceptions towards integrating cooperative language learning in fifth grade EFL classrooms. Specifically, the students were given a quotation "Working in groups with your friends might be fun while learning English" together with the Turkish equivalent and then, asked to express their ideas briefly (See Appendix B). Since the students were fifth graders, they could express their ideas either in English or Turkish depending on their own preferences to decrease their anxiety level. As for the teachers, they were asked to write their opinions after integrating cooperative learning method in their classroom.

3.6.2.3 Observation. As for the observation, a checklist was adopted from Manitoba Education and Training website: (<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/tech/imym/4/ole/6.pdf>) which aims to improve students' collaborative learning strategies (Appendix C). The researcher herself and an external observer rated each student (N=23) during their engagement in ten lesson plans, which involved collaborative activities such as learning together (LT), group investigation (GI) and Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT) (See Appendix D). The observations lasted for a period of five weeks.

Specifically, during the observation, the two raters used a checklist consisting of five categories namely, students' stay on task, listening to group's ideas, participating in group discussion, encouraging group members and exhibiting positive attitudes. Based on these five categories, each rater gave the fifth grade students a number ranging from 4 "always" and 1 "rarely". Table 2 summarizes the research questions and the corresponding procedures.

Table 2

Overview of Research Questions and Corresponding Procedures

Research question	Data collection instrument (s)	Data analysis
1. What are the perceptions of students and teachers towards integrating cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diaries kept by the fifth grade EFL students and teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994)
2. To what extent is integrating cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms effective in terms of the following five criteria: 2a. students' stay on task 2b. listening to group's ideas 2c. participating in group discussion 2d. encouraging group members 2e. exhibiting positive attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observation checklist about the integration of cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms (adopted from Manitoba Education and Training) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentages
3. Is there any influence of integrating cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms in terms of students' language proficiency?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre- and post- test scores of the fifth grade EFL students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paired samples <i>t</i>-test

3.6.3 Data analysis procedures. The data gathered for this the study were analysed both from quantitative and qualitative aspects. The quantitative data collected by means of pre- and post-tests were analyzed through SPSS statistical analysis program by means of paired samples t-test to find whether there was a significant difference between the fifth grade students' language proficiency before and after the implementation of cooperative learning method. Since paired samples t-test is designed to compare the values of means from two related samples before and after treatment (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2008), it served best to the research objectives of this study.

As for the qualitative aspect, the data gathered from diaries kept by the students and teachers after the implementation of cooperative learning were subjected to content analysis. That is the, items cited were labelled and relabelled. After the labelling process the categories and sub-categories were identified. Then, these labels were reviewed and, typically, a slightly more abstract category was attributed to several incidents or observations. The incidents then were put onto a qualitative data category card (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and then analyzed to find out the fifth grade students' and teachers' perceptions about using cooperative language learning in fifth grade EFL classrooms.

Finally, data gathered from the observation checklist were analysed quantitatively by estimating the percentages to find out the effectiveness of this particular method in fifth grade EFL classrooms. For the interrater reliability, the percentage of absolute agreement was calculated. The correlation between the ratings of the two observers was calculated and 90% agreement was reached. Other 10% was solved through negotiations.

3.6.4 Trustworthiness. Guba and Lincoln (1994) posit that trustworthiness of a research study is important to evaluating its worth. Trustworthiness involves establishing:

- Credibility: confidence in the 'truth' of the findings.
- Transferability: showing that the findings have applicability in other contexts.
- Dependability: showing that the findings are consistent and could be repeated.

- **Confirmability:** a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivation, or interest (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

In an attempt to establish credibility, prolonged engagement and member check strategies were met for the purposes of this study. In other words, the researcher herself spent sufficient time in the field to learn or understand the target context and interpretations and conclusions with members of those groups from whom the data were originally obtained were continuously tested.

Furthermore, thick description was sustained for transferability with a detailed representation of the institution, and comprehensive background information about the participants.

As for the dependability, an external evaluator took part during the observation process of the study for the accuracy in relation to whether or not the findings, interpretations and conclusions were supported by the data.

Finally, confirmability was established by triangulation method in this study with three types of quantitative and qualitative research methods: pre- and post- tests, observations and diaries.

3.6.5 Limitations. In this study, there are several limitations to be considered while interpreting the effects of cooperative learning and the perceptions of the students in the classroom. These limitations are related to the participants, and the size of the groups.

In this study, fifth grade students were grouped randomly. As a result, some of the students complained about their groups. Instead of randomly chosen groups, letting them to choose their groups might have worked better. This way, undesired arguments among the students could have been overcome in advance.

The sample size of the groups in the study was suitable to conduct the research with young learners but a larger sample size may be efficient to generalize the results gained in the up-coming studies.

Chapter Four: Results

4.1 Overview

This chapter includes the results in relation to the integration of cooperative learning methods in fifth grade EFL classrooms. Data were gathered from diaries kept by the students and teacher after the implementation of this particular method, observation done by the researcher during collaborative classes, and pre- and post-scores of the fifth grade EFL students.

Specifically, the research findings are presented on the basis of the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of students and teachers towards integrating cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms?
2. To what extent is integrating cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms effective in relation to the following five criteria:
 - 2a. students' stay on task
 - 2b. listening to group's ideas
 - 2c. participating in group discussion
 - 2d. encouraging group members
 - 2e. exhibiting positive attitudes
3. To what extent does cooperative learning influence the fifth grade Turkish EFL students' language proficiency?

4.2 The Findings about the Perceptions of Students' and Teachers' Towards Integrating Cooperative Learning Method in Fifth Grade EFL Classrooms

In an attempt to find out the perceptions of teachers and students towards using cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms, data were gathered from diaries kept by the two groups of participants after the implementation of this particular method.

To begin with, before the students wrote their diaries about working collaboratively, they were provided with the following quotation, "Working in groups with your friends might be fun while learning English" together with its equivalent in their first language, Turkish. Then, they were asked to express their thoughts about learning cooperatively in their native language briefly.

In addition, the teachers were asked to keep a diary by sharing their ideas with respect to incorporating collaborative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms.

Based on the obtained data, the fifth grade EFL students and teachers highlighted the necessity of the integration of cooperative learning method in their lesson basically for learning from each other and having fun. They agreed that through collaboration the students could help each other by sharing their ideas, which would aid with their improvement in English. The following excerpts from three of the participants clarify this point:

While working in groups we can learn English better. We both have fun and learn. I think working in groups is good (Student, Interview).

I think working in groups is important because we learn from each other by exchanging our ideas. This helps us learn better. I love working in groups (Student, Interview).

I believe that the students enjoyed working in groups. They learned from each other and participated in the lesson, which helped them learn English (Teacher, Interview).

Another opinion emphasized by the participating groups was that the students enjoy working in groups since they shared their responsibilities, learned from each other and thus, finished the activities faster. A student and a teacher commented on this issue as follows:

Working in groups is enjoyable. I love collaborating with my friends. Everyone has his own responsibility and thus, we can finish the task faster” (Student, Interview).

While working in groups the students share their responsibilities, which help them finish the activities faster. They really enjoy being together (Teacher, Interview).

Again, in line with the perceptions of the students and teacher about learning cooperatively, the participants pointed out that working in groups is effective since they can ask questions to each other whenever they need to clarify a subject and also come up with different ideas on a given topic indicated below:

Group work is important because we can ask questions and share different ideas on a given topic with our friends (Student, Interview).

The students can both enjoy and learn from their friends while working together. They can ask questions and help each other to clarify a subject (Teacher, Interview).

On the other hand, the two groups of participants shared some different viewpoints related to using cooperative learning in fifth grade EFL classrooms. To exemplify, the students stated that although they enjoyed working in groups they would prefer to choose their own friends. One of the students said:

Although I love working in groups, I think that it would be better if we are asked to choose our own friends. This will be more enjoyable (Student, Interview).

Moreover, the fifth grade EFL teachers indicated that although the students enjoyed collaborating, some of them had concentration problems while working with their peers and thus, needed teacher's extra attention. Regarding this point, a participating teacher made the following comment:

Although the students enjoyed collaborating, some of them did have problems with concentrating while doing group work so I had to give them some extra attention (Teacher, Interview).

4.3 The Findings about the Observations in Relation to the Effectiveness of Integrating Cooperative Learning Method in Fifth Grade EFL Classrooms

In an attempt to find out the effectiveness of using cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms, the data obtained from the observation checklists were analysed under five categories namely, students' stay on task, listening to group's ideas, participating in group discussion, encouraging group members and exhibiting positive attitudes. Specifically, the two raters gave a number ranging from 4 (always) and 1 (rarely), which were turned into percentages. Table 3 reports the average of the two observers' ratings.

Table 3

Percentages for the Effectiveness of Integrating Cooperative Learning Method in Fifth Grade EFL Classrooms

Participants	Stays on Task	Listens to the Group's Ideas	Participates in Group Discussion	Encourages Group Members	Exhibit Positive Attitude
	<i>f%</i>	<i>f%</i>	<i>f%</i>	<i>f%</i>	<i>f%</i>
D.M.	100	75	75	75	75
Y.	75	75	50	75	75
S.E.	100	75	75	75	75
E.	100	100	75	100	100
S.T	75	75	75	75	75
D.	75	75	50	50	75
B.A	100	100	100	75	100
B.N	100	100	75	100	75
M.	100	75	100	75	75
B.C	100	75	100	75	75
B.O	100	100	100	100	100
B.	100	100	75	75	100
G.S.	100	100	100	100	100
S.K.	100	75	75	75	100
B.	75	100	75	100	100
S.N.	100	75	75	75	75
R.D.	75	75	50	50	50
D.D.	100	75	100	75	75

S.D.	100	100	75	75	100
D.İ.	100	100	75	75	100
Z.D.	100	75	100	75	100
S.A.	100	100	75	100	75
Y.G.	75	75	75	75	75

Note: 4=100%, 3=75%, 2=50%, 1=25%.

As shown in Table 3, 93.47% of students stayed on task while working in groups; 85.86% listened to the group's ideas; 79.34% participated in group discussions; 79.34% encouraged group members; and 84.78% of them exhibited positive attitudes towards working collaboratively.

4.4 The Findings about the Influence of Cooperative Learning on Student Language Proficiency in Fifth Grade EFL Classroom

The gained scores of pre and post- tests were used to compare and find out whether or not there was a significant difference between the fifth grade EFL students' language proficiency. Specifically, a paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare the results of these two tests, which were applied before and after the implementation of cooperative learning method (See Table 4).

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics and Paired samples t-test Results for Pre- and Post- Tests

Outcome	Pre test		Post test		n	95% CI for Mean Difference	r	t	df
	M	SD	M	SD					
	32.91	3.50	35.04	5.30	23	-4.09, -.16	.03*	-2.24*	20

*p<.05.

As displayed in Table 4 there was a statistically significant difference in the gained scores of the 5th grade EFL students, before implementation of cooperative learning (M=32.91, SD: 3.50) and after implementation of cooperative learning method (M=35.04, SD=5.30) conditions; $t(22) = -2.24$, $p = 0.03$, 95% CI for mean difference 4.09 to .16, $r = .03$.

The obtained results revealed that cooperative leaning had a positive effect on the English language proficiency of fifth grade students. Specifically, after the implementation of cooperative language learning method, the proficiency level of fifth grade students increased.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusions

5.1. Discussion of Findings for Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of cooperative learning on teaching English to fifth grade Turkish EFL learners by exploring how the participating students and teachers perceive such language classes, and to find out whether cooperative learning has influence on the learners' language proficiency. In this study, data were collected both quantitatively and qualitatively.

5.1.2 Discussion of findings of RQ 1: What are the perceptions of students and teachers towards using cooperative leaning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms? The first research question attempted to investigate the students' and teachers' perceptions about integrating cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms. The data collected from the diaries kept by the two groups of participants, revealed working collaboratively is enjoyable. In general terms, the participants were happy to be in a group, and found group-work and working together very important with respect to learning from each other which helped them learn English better. Besides, the results received from the diaries also suggested that students liked being in a group since they could share their responsibilities and finish the given tasks faster. Finally, the participating groups perceived group work to be effective since the students could ask each other questions whenever there was a need for clarification on a certain subject and they could also come up with different ideas on a given topic.

These findings echo the theory of Vygotsky (1962) in which he emphasized the importance of social interaction with other people and the idea of 'zone of proximal development', and Bruner (1978) who pointed out the importance of appropriate social interactional frameworks and the concept of 'scaffolding' When we consider the heterogeneous formation of group it may be possible that the actual development and the potential development of the participants will overlap and in that area their support and interaction with each other may increase their knowledge.

On the other hand, the fifth grade EFL students and teachers shared two negative points about working collaboratively. To elaborate, some of the students stated that the groups were not arranged, as they wanted. They suggested that

studying together might be more enjoyable if they were asked to choose their own group members. Besides, the teachers indicated that some of the students had concentration problems while working with their peers and they needed extra attention to be paid by the teachers. Therefore, more attention should be given to selecting group members and helping students concentrate on a given task while integrating this particular method in fifth grade EFL classrooms.

As discussed in the above overviews, the overall analysis of the diaries showed that cooperative learning method was perceived highly positive both by the students and teachers. This conclusion can be attributed to the fact that this particular method could be integrated in fifth grade EFL classrooms.

5.1.3 Discussion of findings of RQ 2: To what extent is integrating cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms effective in relation to the following five criteria: students' stay on task, listening to group's ideas, participating in group discussion, encouraging group members, exhibiting positive attitudes? The second research question of this study aimed to find out the effectiveness of integrating cooperative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms effective in terms of the five criteria namely, students' stay on task, listening to group's ideas, participating in group discussion, encouraging group members, exhibiting positive attitudes.

The analysis of the ratings done by the two observers based on the checklist showed that learning cooperatively had positively influenced the participating students' staying on tasks, listening to the group's ideas, participating in group discussions, encouraging group members and exhibiting positive attitudes.

These results are parallel to Cohen (1994) who mentioned that discussion within the group promotes more frequent oral summarizing, explaining, and elaborating what one knows; cooperative learning promotes greater ability to take the perspective of others; in the group setting, one's thinking is monitored by others and has the benefit of both the input of other people's thinking and their critical feedback. Likewise, Brown (1994) supported that the cooperative learning helps to promote student-student interaction via working in small groups to maximize their learning and reach their shared goal and it can be used to stimulate students to

acquire the knowledge as well as interpersonal and team skills.

5.1.4 Discussion of findings of RQ 3: To what extent does cooperative learning influence the fifth grade Turkish EFL students' language proficiency?

As for the last research question of the present study, the purpose was to examine if cooperative learning had any effects on the language proficiency of the fifth grade EFL students.

Based on the pre- and post- test scores, there was a significant difference in the proficiency level of the students. In other words, the proficiency level of fifth grade EFL students had increased, after they were intensively engaged in cooperative learning method classes. These results are in accordance with Felder and Brent (2007), who mentioned that cooperatively taught students tend to exhibit higher academic achievement.

5.2 Theoretical Implications

The present study has both practical and empirical implications for program design and evaluation. The results of the study provided insight into the effectiveness of integrating collaborative learning method in fifth grade EFL classrooms. According to the findings gathered from the diaries, observations and pre- and post-test scores, the students should be provided with adequate grounds for interaction in a social context within the principles of cooperative learning because interaction is essential for learning as proposed in Social Constructivist Theory and also, context is important to understand what occurs in society and to construct knowledge (Derry, 1999; McMahon, 1997).

According to what's been discussed above, training programs should be included for pre-service teachers to raise their awareness about integrating cooperative learning in EFL classrooms. Full collaboration is needed between the administrators, teachers and students throughout this process in order to attain success in the program. In this sense, the results of this study can be taken for granted while implementing group-work in different EFL contexts.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Research

This study has several recommendations for further research. First of all, the perceptions of students and teachers are believed to vary across tasks and contexts. Therefore, it is recommended to replicate the present study in different fifth grade classrooms to compare the differences across different EFL settings.

Additionally, future research should also investigate the attitudes and feelings of students and teachers towards working collaboratively.

Finally, since this was a case study, there needs to be a more experimental and longitudinal study to investigate the effectiveness of this particular method in various EFL contexts.

5.4 Conclusions

The results of the study indicated that integration of cooperative learning has positive effects on English learning and teaching in fifth grade classrooms. The data collected from diaries and observations revealed that the students and teachers enjoyed working collaboratively by exchanging their ideas and learning from each other. In addition, comparative results of pre and post-test implied that, after being engaged in lessons based on cooperative learning the students' proficiency in English increased. All these findings showed that cooperative learning has positive influence on teaching and learning in fifth grade EFL classrooms.

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APPENDICES

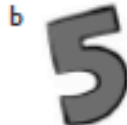
A. PRE- AND POST- TEST SAMPLE

Kid's Box Placement test

Name: Class:

Part 1
Circle the correct answer *a*, *b*, or *c*.

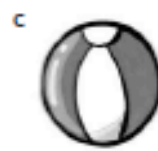
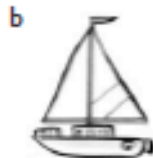
1 five



2 pencil



3 ball



4 a big dog



5 eyes



Kid's Box Placement test

6 I've got a long tail.

a



b



c



7 socks

a



b



c



8 I can't ride a bike.

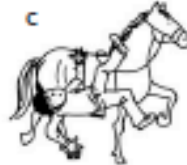
a



b



c



9 bedroom

a



b



c



10 I like ice cream.

a



b



c



Kid's Box Placement test

11 eighteen

a 19

b 18

c 17

12 These are kites.



13 lamp



14 They're eating fruit.



15 juice

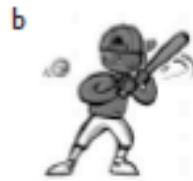


Kid's Box Placement test

16 It can swim and jump.



17 badminton



18 There is a shop between the hospital and café.



19 grandparents



20 She's getting dressed.



Kid's Box Placement test

31



- a The horse is thirsty than the dog.
- b The horse is thirstier than the dog.
- c The horse is thirstier than the dog.

32



- a Giraffes are the taller animals in the world.
- b Giraffes are the tallest animals in the world.
- c Giraffes are taller than animals in the world.

33



- a He didn't ate sandwiches for dinner.
- b He not eat sandwiches for dinner.
- c He didn't eat sandwiches for dinner.

34



- a The man walked in the library.
- b The man walked into the library.
- c The man walked on the library.

35



- a It's half past two.
- b It's quarter past two.
- c It's quarter to two.

Kid's Box Placement test

36



- a They're going to catch the bus.
- b They going to catch the bus.
- c They go to catch the bus.

37



- a This is the room which you brush your teeth.
- b This is the room where you brush your teeth.
- c This is the room who you brush your teeth.

38



- a He was eat dinner at 8 o' clock.
- b He was ate dinner at 8 o' clock.
- c He was eating dinner at 8 o' clock.

39








- a The first month of the year is January.
- b The first month of the year is July.
- c The first month of the year is June.

40



- a Is paper made to wood?
- b Is paper made of wood?
- c Is paper made in wood?

Kid's Box Placement test

- 41  a The tea looks like hot.
b The tea look hot.
c The tea looks hot.
- 42  a You shouldn't to carry heavy bags.
b You shouldn't carried heavy bags.
c You shouldn't carry heavy bags.
- 43  a She win the match.
b She's won the match.
c She's wonned the match.
- 44  a Will the rocket go to the moon?
b Will the rocket goes to the moon?
c Will the rocket going to the moon?
- 45  a They were walked in the forest when they seeing an owl.
b They're walking in the forest when they're seeing an owl.
c They were walking in the forest when they saw an owl.

Kid's Box Placement test

46



- a There are enough foods to eat.
- b There is enough food to eat.
- c There are enough food to eat.

47



- a The door bell rang but no-one was at the door.
- b The door bell rang but anyone was at the door.
- c The door bell rang but everyone was at the door.

48



- a They might need their coats.
- b They might to need their coats.
- c They may to need their coats.

49



- a He's excited.
- b He's afraid.
- c He's brave.

50



- a I'm never eating Italian food before.
- b I never eat Italian food before.
- c I've never eaten Italian food before.

B. DIARY TEMPLATE



Name: _____

Think and write your ideas about the question, which is given bellow.

“Working in groups with your friends might be fun while learning English.”

What do you think about this idea? Briefly explain.

“Grup içerisinde arkadaşlarıyla çalışarak İngilizce öğrenmek için eğenceli olabilir.”

Bu konuda sen ne düşünüyorsun? Kısaca açıkla.



C. OBSERVATION CHECK LIST

GROUP PARTICIPATION OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Date: _____

Group task name: _____

Rating Sale: 4=Always 3=Usually 3=Sometimes 1=Rarely

Student Names	Stays on Task	Listens to the Group's Ideas	Participates in Group Discussion	Encourages Group Members	Exhibit Positive Attitude

D. Sample Lesson plan and Materials

Date: 05/04/2014 Time: 40 minutes

TP No: 1

Trainee:

STAGE AIMS What is the reason for the stage of the lesson?	PROCEDURE What do you do? What do the students do?	INTERACTION (SS-SS, T-SS)	TIME	MATERIALS	Elements of cooperative Learning and Models:
Lead-in	<p>T elicits the names of the meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner and ask which their favourite is. <u>Ss</u> look at the picture on the smart board. Which meal is it? (breakfast)</p>	SS-T	3 min	Smart Board	-
Introducing vocabulary	<p>T shows pictures of a grapes, cereal and jam. T elicits from the student what it is. T ask following CCQ's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you eat cereals for dinner? - Is a grape a vegetable or a fruit? - Are grapes big or small? - Do we eat jam for dinner? <p>T drills the following words: grapes, cereal, jam, fruit, oranges, banana, yoghurt, biscuits, meat and sausages. T writes the words on the right side of the board.</p>	SS-T	3 min	Flashcards	-
Introducing TL	<p>T shows a picture of eggs and a picture of water coming from the tap. T asks to count how many eggs there are in the picture. T asks if we can count the water. So eggs are countable, water is uncountable. T points out that drinks and meat are always uncountable. T asks following CCQ'S:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can we count drinks? (no, they are uncountable) - Can we count eggs? (yes, they are countable) 	SS-T	4 min	Flashcards of eggs and water	-

<p>Controlled practice of TL</p>	<p>SS-SS</p>	<p>5 min</p>	<p>Picture cards</p>	<p>Learning Together</p>
<p>Controlled practice of TL</p>	<p>SS-T</p>	<p>4 min</p>	<p>White board</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>Freer practice of TL</p>	<p>SS-SS</p>	<p>10 min</p>	<p>HO2</p>	<p>TGT</p>

T writes the following words on the board: milk, jam, apple, biscuits. T elicits if the words are countable or uncountable. T gives cards with different kinds of countable and uncountable foods and drinks. Ss categorize them in groups. T asks following ICQ's:

- Are we working alone or in groups?(in groups)
- Are we writing or talking?(talking)

T monitors. T writes right answers on the board. T corrects mistakes during error correction.

T writes the following sentences on the board:

Singular: There's / there are a banana.

Plural: There's / there are eight eggs.

Uncountable: there's / there are some butter.

T elicits which is the correct one. T asks following CCQ's:

- if there is one do we use there is or there are?(there is)
- if there are more do we use there is or there are?(there are)
- if it is uncountable do we use there is or there are?(there is)

T drills the following sentences:

- There's an apple.
- There are a lot of grapes.

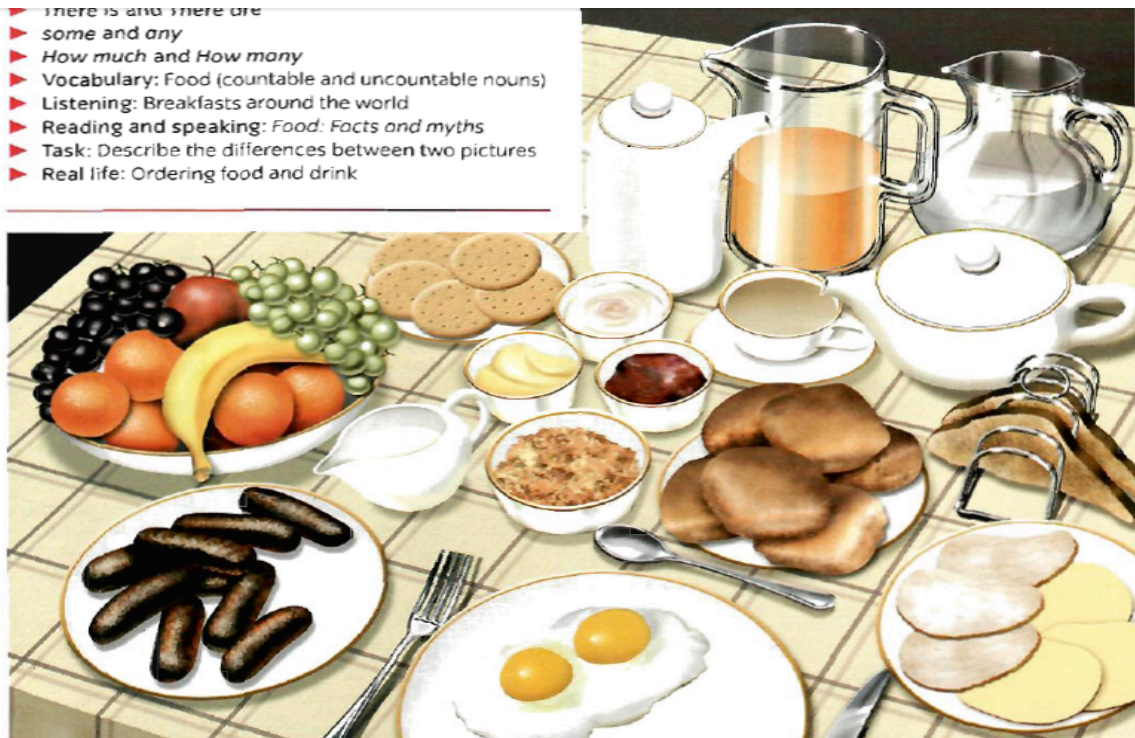
T shows that the words are connected.

T pairs up the ss. One ss gets a picture with different kinds of countable and uncountable foods and drinks. The other ss gets a blank sheet. The ss with the

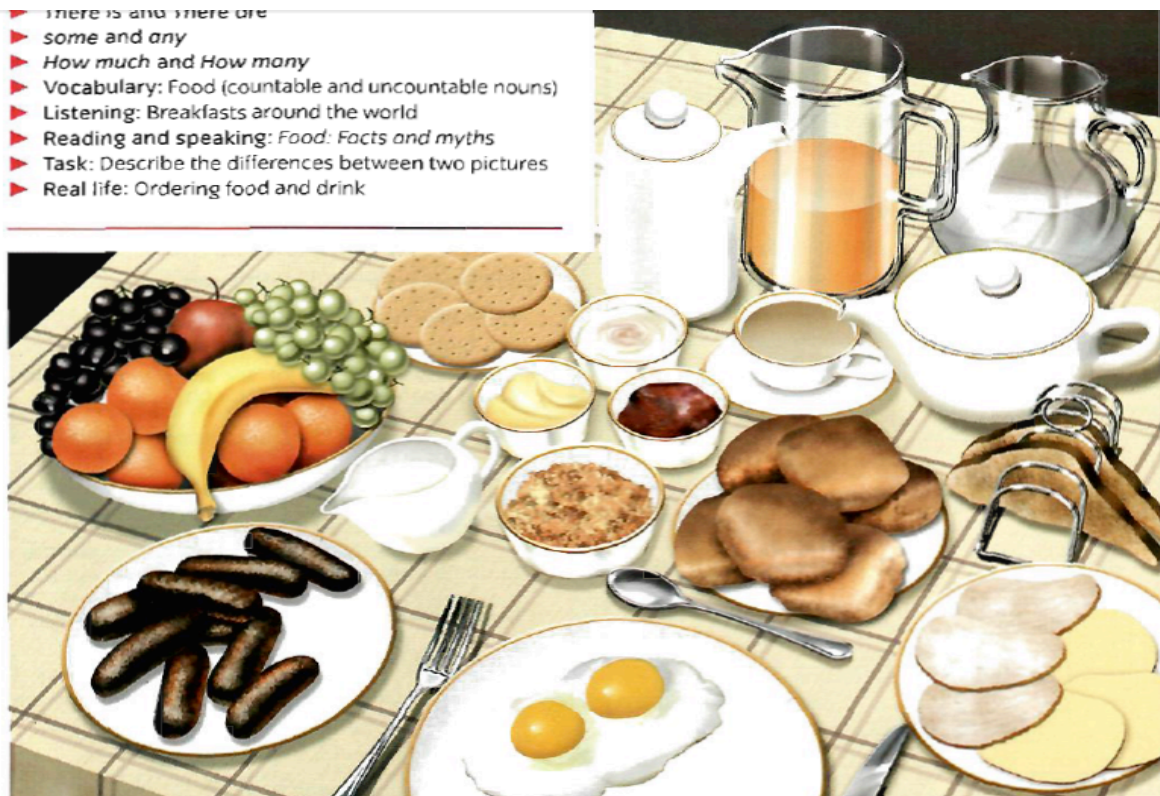
Lead-out	<p>picture has to describe his picture to the other ss and the other ss has to draw it. They have to use there's and there are sentences. In the end the ss compare their pictures. T models this with a ss first. T asks following ICQ's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are we showing our picture?(no) - Are we drawing?(yes) - Are we talking?(yes) - Are we using there's and there are sentences?(yes) <p>T monitors and writes down mistakes for error correction.</p> <p>T regroups the Ss and gives them a food menu from a restaurant. Students will have two minutes to prepare a small theater using countable and uncountable nouns. They have to make one mistake and the opponent group has to find it.</p>	SS-T	10min		GI
----------	--	------	-------	--	----

Pictures

- ▶ There is and there are
- ▶ some and any
- ▶ How much and How many
- ▶ Vocabulary: Food (countable and uncountable nouns)
- ▶ Listening: Breakfasts around the world
- ▶ Reading and speaking: *Food: Facts and myths*
- ▶ Task: Describe the differences between two pictures
- ▶ Real life: Ordering food and drink



- ▶ There is and there are
- ▶ some and any
- ▶ How much and How many
- ▶ Vocabulary: Food (countable and uncountable nouns)
- ▶ Listening: Breakfasts around the world
- ▶ Reading and speaking: *Food: Facts and myths*
- ▶ Task: Describe the differences between two pictures
- ▶ Real life: Ordering food and drink



Flashcards



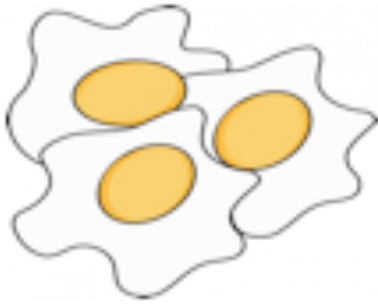








Picture Cards







HO 1

Tick (✓) the sentences that are true about your school. Correct the ones that are false.

- a. There are twenty students in my class.
No, there aren't. There are _____students
- b. There's a laptop in our class.
- c. There are pictures on the wall.
- d. There's some paper in the bin.
- e. There are some plants in the classroom.
- f. There's a water machine in the school.

HO2





E.CURRICULUM VITAE

Ailar Shahamat

Date of Birth: 26.04.1982

Place of Birth: Tabriz/Iran

Maritale Status: Single

Nonsmoker

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Turkey.

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Profile

- Educated to Masters Degree level
- Experienced English Teacher
- Experienced Lab Technician
- Experienced Travel Agent
- Likeable, enthusiastic and dedicated professional.
- Fluent in both written and spoken English, Turkish, Persian and Azerbaijani languages.

Education

2011 - 2014	Bahçeşehir University
	Masters degree in English Language Teaching
2006 - 2010	Tabriz Islamic Azad University
	Bachelors degree in English Language Teaching
2001 - 2003	Tabriz State University of Medical
	Associates degree in Lab Science

Further Training/Conferences/Seminars

- 2014 Cambridge University Press
Classroom Management & Developing
- 2014 Cambridge University Press
ELT Circus
- 2014 Çevre College
10th ELT Conference
- 2013 Istek Schools
3rd International ELT Conference
- 2013 MEV College
ELT Conference
- 2013 Ihlas College
International Storytelling Conference 2012
- 2013 Beykent University
7th International ELT conference
- 2013 Tekden College
1st ELT Conference
- 2012 Yıldız Technical University
1st International ELT Symposium
- 2011 Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization
Technical Manager in Tourism
- 2011 Iran Air Manpower Development & Training Centre
Electronic Ticketing & Amadeus Air Reservation
- 2009 Iran Air Manpower Development & Training Centre
Reservation System (HOMACPLUS)
- 2007 Iran Air Manpower Development & Training Centre
Advanced Passenger Fares & Ticketing

Employment History

2012 -	English Teacher	Istanbul Akademi College
2011 - 2012	English Teacher	Bahçeşehir College
2008 – 2011	English Teacher	Saturn Language Institute
2005 – 2011	Technical manager	Azarpatt Tour & Travel Agency
2004 - 2005	Medical & Clinical Laboratory Technician	Tabriz Emam Khomeini Hospital

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