

THE EFFECT OF COGNITIVE BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION TECHNIQUE ON
TEST ANXIETY LEVEL OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

A Master Thesis

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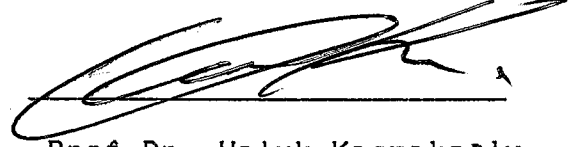
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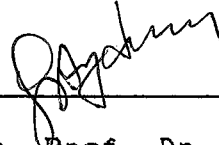
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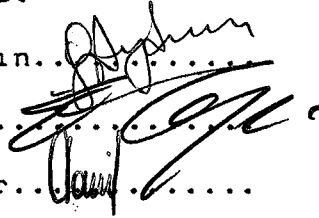
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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECT OF COGNITIVE BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION TECHNIQUE
ON TEST ANXIETY LEVEL OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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The purpose of the present study was to adapt the Meichenbaum's Cognitive Behavior Modification Technique to the elementary school students with the aid of a continuous story and examine the effectiveness of this technique on reducing the fifth grade elementary school students' test anxiety.

Subjects of the study were twenty high test anxious students (10 girls, 10 boys) who were randomly selected among the 144 fifth grade elementary school students pretested with the Turkish version of test anxiety inventory and, assigned to treatment and control groups.

Total, worry and emotionality test anxiety scores of the subjects were submitted to three separate 2 (sex) X 2(experiment-control) X 2 (pre-posttest) ANOVA's with the last factor serving as repeated measure.

Results indicated the effectiveness of Story-Based Cognitive Behavior Modification Procedure in reducing total test anxiety scores of fifth grade elementary school students. Contrary to the expectation, the results showed that the treatment procedure which actually aimed at reducing the worry scores of the subjects produced a significant decrease in the emotionality scores.

Keywords: Test Anxiety, Total Test Score, Worry and Emotionality Scores of Test Anxiety, Story-Based Cognitive Behavior Modification Technique.

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ÖZ

BİLİŞSEL DAVRANIŞSAL DEĞİŞİKLİK OLUŞTURMA TEKNİĞİNİN
İLKOKUL ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN SINAV KAYGISINA ETKİSİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı Meichenbaum' un geliştirdiği Bilişsel Davranışsal Değişiklik Oluşturma tekniğini bir hikaye yardımıyla ilkökul öğrencilerine uyarlamak ve bu tekniğin ilkökul beşinci sınıftaki öğrencilerin sınav kaygısını azaltmada etkili olup olmadığını incelemektir.

Çalışmanın deneklerini oluşturan yüksek sınav kaygılı yirmi öğrenci (10 kız, 10 erkek), sınav kaygısı envanteriyle ön testten geçirilen 144 ilkökul beşinci sınıf öğrencisi arasından rastgele seçilerek, deney ve kontrol gruplarına yerleştirilmiştir. Deneklerin sınav kaygısı envanterinden aldıkları kuruntu, duyuşsallık alt testleri ve toplam puanlarına 2 (cinsiyet) X 2 (deney kontrol) X 2 (öntest-sontest) faktörlü, son faktörde

tekrar ölçümlü varyans analizi uygulanmıştır. Bulgular Hikayeye Uyarlanmış Bilişsel Davranışsal Değişiklik Oluşturma Tekniğinin ilkokul beşinci sınıf öğrencilerinin toplam sınav kaygısı puanlarını azaltmada etkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Bulgular ayrıca deneklerin kuruntu puanlarını azaltmayı amaçlayan bu tekniğin, beklenilenin tersine, duyusallık puanlarında anlamlı bir azalmaya neden olduğuna işaret etmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sınav Kaygısı, Toplam Sınav Kaygısı Puanı, Sınav Kaygısının Duyusallık Puanı, Sınav Kaygısının Kuruntu Puanı, Hikayeye Uyarlanmış Bilişsel Davranışsal Değişiklik Oluşturma Tekniği.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Anxiety as a Fundamental Human Emotion

Ever since they have existed in the world human beings have experienced two fundamental emotions: fear and anxiety. The concept of fear according to Cohen (1969) was first reflected in Egyptian hieroglyphics. On the other hand, theme of anxiety (not delineation of concept but awareness of the affect) literary appears first in the "Epic of Gilgamesh". The story was concerned with Gilgamesh's anxiety about his mortality and his attempt to gain some degree of immortality by achieving fame (cf. Sarason and Spielberger, 1975).

The term anxiety is derived from the latin word *anxius*. It's English usage can be traced in to seventeenth century when it meant the same as it does today, namely, a state of agitation or depression with feelings of distress (Spielberger, 1972). The development of concept of anxiety became apparent with the beginning of religious movement,

in other words with Christianity. Prior to that time, what had been called preindividualistic period of civilization, humans tended to categorize themselves primarily as the member of their group and only secondarily view themselves as a source for their actions and decisions. Characteristically, humans in this period perceived themselves in a passive way, attributed the major decisions to the God.

With the Christianity humans were given the solace as well as dignity that they constantly sought. However, this caused anxiety in individuals because, by being responsible from their actions they experienced guilt for their failures that did not meet their responsibilities and, this feeling of guilt inevitably caused anxiety (Sarason and Spielberger, 1975).

In subsequent centuries, with the increased rationality and knowledge, humans started to discover the world and, became more confident about themselves. Consequently world witnessed many scientific, technological and social advances like Renaissance, the French revolution and the industrial revolution in England. However, all these advances have not prevented humans from experiencing

feelings of anxiety. On the contrary, in the 20th century anxiety has become a central theme of modern life. In this century, certain historical and cultural factors like the cold war, rapid scientific technological advances, social changes, estrangement and alienation of individuals in competitive urban society heightened feelings of anxiety in humans (cf. Sarason and Spielberger, 1975).

May (1974) suggested that the reason for general rise of anxiety in this century was that "man had lost himself in his world", that he no longer had the power to communicate with his world, with others and with himself (cf. Sarason and Spielberger, 1975).

Kierkegaard as an existential philosopher in his work "The Concept of Dread" (1944) made an interpretation of anxiety. The basis for this interpretation was that, strong individuation and self awareness necessarily made persons free and at the same time responsible for their choices from the multitude of possibilities. Kierkegaard also pointed out that in the awareness of necessity to make choices to gather with the possibilities of failure and guilt lay the sources of ones anxiety. Anxiety is thus viewed as a necessary accompaniment of increased

individuation (Sarason and Spielberger, 1975).

1.2 Theoretical Approaches to Concept of Anxiety

In literature many people dealt with anxiety concept, especially philosophers of the 20th century like Nietzsche, Schelling and Kierkegaard. However, the first important person who had contributed to our understanding of anxiety concept was Sigmund Freud. In 1894 Freud conceptualized the anxiety neurosis as a discrete clinical syndrome that was different from neurasthenia. He also regarded anxiety as a main problem in all neurotic symptom formation and defined anxiety as an unpleasant emotional state that was universally experienced (cf. Spielberger, 1972).

In his earliest thinking about anxiety, Freud believed that anxiety was produced by the repression of the sexual impulses which created a dammed-up state and, in turn, created tension and toxic effects that presumably accounted for anxiety. Later he regarded anxiety as an internal reaction or response that served as a signal to indicate the presence of a danger situation (Spielberger, 1972).

Freud (1936) also differentiated objective as well as

neurotic anxiety. This distinction was based on whether the source of danger was stemmed from external world or from individual's own internal responses. Objective anxiety which was seen as synonymous with fear was viewed as a complex internal reaction to anticipated injury or harm from some kind of external danger. The intensity of the objective anxiety was proportional to the magnitude of the external danger that evoked it (cf. Spielberger, 1972).

Similar to objective anxiety, neurotic anxiety was viewed as a danger signal but the source of danger was individual's own repressed sexual and aggressive impulses, not some kind of external danger. In other words, neurotic anxiety is the end product of a complex process in which internal impulses evoke an anxiety reaction that signals the danger of future punishment if the impulses are expressed (cf. Spielberger, 1972).

Following Freud, the concept of anxiety was viewed in several ways by different researchers. Until the 1950's there was not a commonly accepted definition of anxiety.

May (1950) in his attempt to find the common features of definitions and theoretical approaches to anxiety noted

that anxiety has the following properties 1) It is a diffuse apprehension 2) It differs from fear that it is unspecific, vague and objectless 3) It is associated with the feelings of uncertainty and helplessness 4) It involves a threat to core of the personality (cf. Spielberger, 1972).

According to Rogers (1951) anxiety is experienced when the individual perceives an event, situation or experience as a threat to his self-concept. It is assumed that, discrepancies between the self as conceived and, perception of reality which cannot be ignored, generate tension and it is this tension which provides a base for anxiety. Rogers stated that if the individual becomes aware of his tension or discrepancy, he feels anxious, that he is not united or integrated, that he is unsure of his direction. Thus he believes that anxiety is related to lack of integration and inability to direct oneself.

In summary, Rogers views anxiety as the awareness of discrepancy between the self and reality at a more profound level, as a disintegration of the self-concept.

Spielberger (1972) also explained anxiety as most oftenly used concept to describe an unpleasant emotional

state or condition which was characterized by subjective feelings of tension, apprehension and worry by arousal of the autonomic nervous system. Spielberger's definition involves two related yet logically different functions which are trait and state anxiety. According to him state anxiety is evoked whenever a person perceives a particular situation or stimulus as potentially threatening, harmful or dangerous. A states (state anxiety) vary in intensity and fluctuate over time as a function of the amount of the stress that individual is faced with.

The term anxiety is also used as a personality trait to refer to the relatively stable individual differences in anxiety proneness. In other words, trait anxiety concerns with the differences between people in tendency to perceive the wide range of situations as threatening and responding to them (Spielberger, 1966).

Spielberger (1966) showed that component characterological variables in trait anxiety factor included ergic tension, ego weakness, guilt proneness, suspiciousness and tendency to embarrassment, while physiological variables such as respiration rate and systolic blood pressure markedly loaded on the state

anxiety factor but had only slight loadings on trait anxiety.

In addition to these approaches, Lang (1968) has offered a three system model to anxiety. He states that, anxiety may be construed in terms of thoughts, physical sensations, feelings or behaviors, and that these three systems are interconnected having a direct effect on each other.

Similar to Lang, Borcovec (1976) included subjective as well as physiological arousal in his definition of anxiety and concluded that the conceptualization of anxiety necessitates the multiple measurement of three distinct but interacting response channels, the cognitive, behavioral and physiological domains.

Researchers later have focused their attention on the specific types of anxieties and the test anxiety has been the most widely studied one of these conditions.

1.3 The Nature and Dynamics of Test Anxiety

Test anxiety has probably been existed ever since tests have been used to evaluate performance. However evidence about the study of test anxiety was first seen in 1940's. In these years anxiety was a focus of research interest of educational psychology and researchers basically dealt with the relationship between underachievement and anxiety. Later in 1950's following investigations of Sarason and Spielberger the study of test anxiety became more popular.

The term test anxiety has been used to describe a multifaceted condition which encompasses task irrelevant cognitions, heightened physiological arousal and inefficient study behaviors exerting a debilitating effect on academic performance (Kirkland and Hollandsworth, 1980).

Mandler and Sarason (1952) interpreted differences in performance on the basis of learned psychological drives which were evoked by the test situation. First of these learned psychological drives are task-directed drives which stimulate the behaviors to reduce the drive by completing the task. Second are learned anxiety drives which stimulate

two opposite behaviors a) task relevant efforts to finish the task and thereby reduce the anxiety b) self-directed task irrelevant responses which are manifested by the feelings of inadequacy, helplessness, heightened somatic reaction, anticipations of punishment or loss of status and self-esteem and implicit attempts to leave the testing situation.

Persons who have strong anxiety drives show task irrelevant behaviors that impair performance. However, low test anxious persons are less burdened by self-centered tendencies and can attend more easily to task relevant behaviors that enhance achievement (cf. Hembree, 1988)

Based on the factor analytic studies of Mandler and Sarason's test anxiety questionnaire, Liebert and Morris (1967) proposed that test anxiety is a bidimensional concept consisting of the components of worry and emotionality. The cognitive component that is identified as worry involves expression of cognitive concern about performance (eg. thinking about consequences of failure). The emotional component which is labelled as emotionality refers to physical and affective reactions to stress of the test situation per se. This distinction was also supported

by the finding that while worry was negatively related to performance expectancy, emotionality appeared to be unrelated to performance (Liebert and Morris, 1967). In other words, emotionality component of test anxiety did not seem to effect the performance whereas the worry component had a significant impact on performance.

Spiegler, Morris and Liebert (1968) indicated that these components not only differed in their relationship to expectancy but also responded differently to the presentation of the cues of the testing situation. Thus emotionality was found to increase sharply from five days before to immediately before an examination and decrease just as sharply from immediately before to immediately after the test. No corresponding changes in worry were found, rather worry changes were found to be a function of expectancy changes.

Later, Morris and Liebert (1970) studied the relationship between cognitive and emotional components of test anxiety and performance expectancy, and pulse rate of both high school and college students. Results of this study were consistent with their previous findings that the effect of anxiety on academic or intellectual performance

was caused by the worry component while emotionality and pulse rate was unrelated to performance.

With the work of Morris and Liebert, theory of test anxiety shifted toward the cognitive orientation. Doctor and Altman (1969) supported this view and hypothesized that because worry component reflect the preoccupation with performance, it should interfere with adequate reasoning, memory and intellectual activities during the examinations and thus, tend to hinder performance. On the other hand, emotionality should have no significant effect on cognitive activity. Therefore, they reasoned that high-worry, high-emotionality scorers on test anxiety measures should perform poorly than low-worry and low-emotionality scorers. Results of their study also showed that worry interfered with test performance and high-worry high emotionality scored subjects performed poorly on the exam situations.

Wine (1971) supported this view and proposed an attentional theory to explain how test anxiety decrements performance. Wine's attentional theory suggests that emotionality appears to have no consistent relationship to performance, to intellectual or cognitive tasks, while worry is consistently and negatively related to

performance. Because high test anxious person, contrary to low anxious one, focuses on self evaluative and self deprecatory thinking and perception of autonomic responses. Since the difficult task on which test anxious person does poorly requires full attention for adequate performance, the test anxious person cannot perform while dividing his attention between internal and task cues.

Similarly, Deffenbacher (1977) investigated sources of interference in highly test anxious individuals under evaluative stress. Results of his study indicated that high test anxiety-high stress group a) reported more anxiety during testing b) rated their abilities and task more negatively c) estimated spending less time on task d) experienced more interference from anxiety f) reported greater distraction of attention from the heightened emotional arousal, worry and task generated interference than did the low-anxiety high-stress group and high-anxiety low-stress group.

These approaches which have been explained above represent cognitive-attentional models, which are also named as interference models. Until 1980's these models which claim that cognitive-attentional variables such as

worry, task irrelevant thinking and negative self preoccupation cause test anxiety and interfere with performance have dominated the test anxiety research (Smith, Arnkoff and Wright, 1990).

The interference model of test anxiety assumes that, the effect of test anxiety on performance occurs in the testing situations that is, anxiety during tests interferes with the students ability to retrieve and use information that is known well (Culler and Holahan, 1980).

Eventhough, test anxiety was found to be related with performance or school achievement, some recent studies showed that lowered test anxiety was not always accompanied by performance improvements in tests. For example, Galassi, Fierson, and Sharer (1981) have explained that the reduction in test anxiety accompanied by improvements in actual performance have shown to occur only in 29.6 % of treatment studies. Therefore they suggested that researchers should make more careful examination of the relationship between test anxiety and performance. These findings have motivated the researchers to develop more comprehensive models of test anxiety to identify other variables which might have affected test performance.

Therefore in recent years, a different model for test anxiety which gives importance to both cognitive and academic skill variables has been offered.

In relation to this view, Culler and Holahan (1980) stated that test anxiety-academic performance relationship was at least partially a function of differential study-related behaviors between high and low test anxious individuals.

Mitchell and Ng (1972) found similar results and concluded that a reduction of test anxiety was not a guarantee of subsequent improvement in academic performance when the level of study habit competence was ignored.

Culler and Holahan (1980) investigated a) the relationship of test anxiety to performance b) differences in study related behaviors between high and low test anxious individuals and, c) differential effectiveness of study related behaviors for both groups. Results indicated that decrement in grade point average was associated with test anxiety and high test anxious students were found to have poorer study skills.

Contrary to this finding, Benjamin et al., (1981) found that the performance of high test anxious individuals was not only related with the study skills they have but also with the situation in which they take the exam. Because in non-evaluative situations the high test anxious student with good study habits performed much better than did the high test-anxious students with poor study habits. However in evaluative situations there were practically no differences in the performance of these two groups. Following these results two types of hypothesis were derived. The first claimed that the major problem of those high test anxious subjects with good study habits was the test situation itself and in non evaluative situations they performed quite well. In contrast, high test anxious students with poor study habits did poorly in every situation.

Zatz and Chassin (1983) examined the relationship between cognitions, test anxiety and performance among elementary school students. They also compared the cognitions of low, moderate and high test anxious children in an analogue test situation. The findings of their study showed differences in cognitions between high test anxious, moderately test anxious and low test anxious children. High-

test anxious children reported significantly more task debilitating cognitions than did either moderate and low anxious subjects, including negative evaluations and off-task thoughts. High test anxious subjects also differed in their positive thoughts and approached testing situation with negative and self-defeating thoughts. Whereas low test anxious children approached testing with more positive thoughts of mastery and competence. In these respects, the cognitions of test anxious children were similar to those of test anxious adults. In addition to these findings, moderate and high-test anxious groups reported significantly more off-task thoughts than did the low anxious group.

On the contrary to previous findings the results of Zatz and Chassin study (1983) indicated that the relationship between test anxiety and performance was weak and this finding was interpreted in two alternative ways; first it reflects the fact that anxiety played only a little role in children's task performance, second other variables such as motivation, study habits and task taking behaviors could be more important.

Zats and Chassin (1985) replicated their previous

study by investigating the cognitions of low, moderate and high test anxious children under naturalistic test-taking conditions. As it was predicted high test anxious students reported more task debilitating cognitions during testing than did the low anxious subjects. High test anxious children approached testing with thoughts of unfavourable social comparisons, difficulties with concentration, and desire to escape from test situation. This study also examined the role of classroom environment on test anxiety and performance. Similar to Benjamin, Mc Keachie, Lin and Hollinger's (1981) study, results indicated that, the performance of high test anxious subjects was impaired as compared to their less anxious peers, but only in high perceived threat classrooms. In other words, evaluative stress seem to evoke performance through interfering behaviours of the high test anxious students.

In conclusion, research directed toward investigating the nature and dynamics of test anxiety gives considerable emphasis to the role of cognitive processes. Consequently it was proposed that in the treatment of test anxiety the ultimate change should be produced in the cognitive domain.

1.4 Treatment Approaches Used to Reduce Test Anxiety.

1.1.1 Systematic Desensitization as a Treatment Method

In the treatment of test anxiety different approaches have been used and numerous studies have assessed the effectiveness of these various procedures in reducing test anxiety.

Systematic desensitization is the most widely used one of these techniques. Systematic desensitization as a treatment method was developed by Wolpe for the purpose of modifying behavioral and autonomic responses (Wolpe and Goldfried, 1971).

Systematic desensitization is conceptualized as a passive reconditioning process in which responses antagonistic to anxiety (eg. muscular tension) are paired with the increasingly threatening levels of phobic stimulus. Over a number of trials the competing physiological state of relaxation eventually displaces fear.

The widespread clinical use of systematic desensitization showed its effectiveness in alleviation of fears and phobias. Also beneficial effects of the use of systematic desensitization procedure on test anxiety have been reported. Two assumptions underline the use of systematic desensitization as a treatment method for test anxiety. The first assumption is that test anxiety differs only in degree from specific types of anxieties such as snakes and spiders phobias and similar conditions which have been treated with systematic desensitization. The second assumption is that the arousal component or heightened emotional arousal is the main character of test anxiety. Thus, through lowering the arousal level of high test anxious subjects with the relaxation procedure the number of task irrelevant responses increased which later improved performance.

Zeamore (1975) treated subjects who have suffered from both public speaking and test anxiety using systematic desensitization and self controlled desensitization. Results of his study indicated that both treatments were found to be equally effective in reducing both types of anxiety and the subjects were reliably better than the subjects who did not receive any treatment.

Although systematic desensitization was found to be effective in reducing self reported test anxiety, research findings have yielded inconsistent evidence about the effectiveness of the procedure.

Deffenbacher, Daley, Michaels, and Michaels (1980) stated that systematic desensitization proved to be effective in reducing circumscribed anxieties or phobias but significant problems remained after implementation of systematic desensitization. First, the effect of the desensitization seems limited. Second, desensitization procedure requires the anxiety arousing cues be specifiable, so that hierarchy can be constructed. Third, desensitization places no emphasis on prevention or self control when clients experience stress in future, so that they may have to return for further desensitization simply because, they are not taught the generalized coping skills that when necessary they can use to cope with future stress.

Holroyd (1976) investigated the effects of cognitive, arousal reduction, and combined cognitive-arousal treatments on test anxiety. Results of the study revealed that cognitive therapy was most effective in reducing test anxiety and improved the grade point average than the

other treatment procedures. He also explained the reasons of obtaining inconsistent results with the systematic desensitization in reducing test anxiety, stating that systematic desensitization procedure mainly focuses on reducing emotional arousal elicited by exam situation. However, recent approaches explained the performance decrements of test anxious persons as a function of cognitive and attentional responses rather than emotional arousal. Therefore, it is accepted that treatments which explicitly focus on modifying cognitive and attentional components of test anxiety will be more effective in reducing test anxiety.

In summary, literature suggests that implementing behavioral treatment procedures per se remains insufficient in reducing test anxiety. Therefore treatments that are used to reduce test anxiety should mainly focus on modifying the cognitions.

1.1.2 Cognitive Behavior Modification as a Treatment Method

Initial strategies for cognitive behavioral interventions are based on Ellis's Rational Emotive

Therapy (1963) A variation of this procedure is Meichenbaum's cognitive behavior modification technique (cf. Meichenbaum, 1972).

Under the heading of cognitive behavior modification procedures different treatment techniques such as cognitive restructuring procedures, skill training programs (stress inoculation training, anxiety management training, problem solving training), and self control procedures are considered.

Literature shows that cognitive behavior modification may be implemented in diverse ways but this intervention procedure is basically an active, short term and a structured approach.

In implementing the cognitive behavior modification technique counselor works with clients to

1) help them better understand the nature of their problems

2) view their cognitions (automatic thoughts, images) and accompanied feelings as hypothesis rather than facts.

3) encourage them to perform personal experiences and review consequences of their actions as evidence which is

contrary to their expectations and beliefs.

4) learn new behavioral, interpersonal, cognitive and emotional regulation skills (Goldstein, 1986).

The cognitive behavior modification procedures have been used effectively with both children and adults. Major use of cognitive behavior modification procedures with children involves the training of self control skills with especially hyperactive, impulsive and aggressive children. It is also employed with socially withdrawn, mentally retarded, psychotic, learning disabled and delinquent and as well as with normal ones to enhance their academic and interpersonal skills (Goldstein, 1986).

The use of cognitive behavior modification procedures with adults also includes diversity of problems like interpersonal anxiety, test anxiety, pain control, depression, sexual disfunction, and alcoholism (Goldstein, 1986).

Meichenbaum (1972) as a major contributor of cognitive behavior modification technique used it effectively in the treatment of test anxiety. Meichenbaum's cognitive behavior modification technique focuses upon the cognitive factors

and tries to deal with both worry and emotionality components of test anxiety.

Meichenbaum (1972) suggests that the first aspect of cognitive behavior modification treatment approach is to make test anxious subjects aware of their thoughts, self verbalizations, and self instructions emitted prior to and during test situations which contributed to their performance. This aspect of counseling is designed to make high test anxious subjects aware of their internal and external cues which signal to anxiety and task irrelevant behavior by means of group discussions and modelled examples.

The second aspect of cognitive behavior modification technique is a modification of systematic desensitization which includes coping imagery procedure, requires the subjects to visualize oneself becoming anxious and tense for each of the proposed imagery scene. Later, subjects are instructed to imagine themselves handling and coping with this anxiety by means of slow deep breaths and self instructions to attend the task (Meichenbaum, 1972).

The cognitive behavior modification treatment

procedure is a specific insight oriented therapy which fosters awareness of anxiety evoking thoughts. It also includes a modified desensitization procedure which employs coping imagery to handle test anxiety through relaxation and task relevant instructions. The cognitive behavior modification treatment is thus designed to deal with two major components of test anxiety which are worry and emotionality.

Meichenbaum (1972) compared the effectiveness of cognitive behavior modification therapy with systematic desensitization in reducing college student's test anxiety. The results of his study indicated that the cognitive modification treatment procedure, which attempted to make high test anxious subjects aware of their anxiety producing self-statements and the incompatible self-instructions and behaviors that they should emit, was most effective in reducing test anxiety.

Similar to Meichenbaum's findings Leal et al., (1981) study showed the superiority of cognitive behavior modification technique over desensitization in reducing self reported measures of test anxiety.

Klingman and Zeidner (1990) assessed the validity of a teacher implemented program for primary prevention of test anxiety among elementary school students. The program which was based on cognitive behavior modification techniques aimed at helping students to cope with evaluative classroom contexts. Results indicated that 80 percent of the students participating in this study found the treatment program helpful in actual testing situations. More specifically, program was found to be helpful for students in a) alleviating anxiety reactions during testing b) being relax during the exam period c) fostering positive thinking d) increasing examinee's confidence by self reinforcing techniques e) organizing and managing time effectively during test and f) improving overall test attainment scores. The researchers pointed out that about 69 percent of the students in the experiment group applied the technique that they learnt in real test situations. The most frequently used techniques were in the following order: a) deep breathing relaxation exercise b) test taking and problem solving skills c) positive thoughts and attention focusing d) self reinforcement and e) guided-coping imagery. Results also showed that teachers participating in the experimental treatment program believed that the training program was helpful in enhancing students coping

skills and reducing their test anxiety.

Kaplan et al., (1979) attempted to find out the more effective component of cognitive behavior modification in reducing test anxiety. Results indicated that the cognitive component of Meichenbaum's cognitive behavior modification procedure for test anxiety was more effective than both the desensitization component and the combination of cognitive and desensitization techniques.

Finger and Galassi (1977) designed a study to test the differential treatment effects of the cognitive and emotional components of test anxiety. The test anxious students were randomly assigned to one of the four groups: attentional treatment, relaxation treatment, combined attentional-relaxation treatment and a waiting list control group. Results of their study failed to support the predictions that emotionality-focused treatments would reduce scores of emotionality without effecting worry and, cognition focused treatments would reduce scores of worry without affecting emotionality. In addition, no significant changes were found in performance of the subjects related to the different types of treatment.

Similarly, Lazarus and Averill (1972) point out that the emotional and cognitive components of test anxiety can be identified and defined independently. However these components interact as a single process in test anxiety. Lazarus and Averill (1972) also suggest that increased levels of arousal can mobilize cognitive appraisals (arousal-->cognition-->test anxiety) or cognitive appraisals can lead to increased level of emotional arousal (cognition-->arousal-->test anxiety) within this process. It is evident that affecting either component of test anxiety during treatment would result in a corresponding effect upon the unitary or global measure of test anxiety.

Tyron (1980) reviewed 85 studies aimed at treating test anxiety and concluded that desensitization and other behavioral techniques usually attend to emotional rather than cognitive component of test anxiety, so improved performance through these methods should not be expected since emotionality component of test anxiety does not seem to be related with the test performance. Cognitive behavior modification or study counseling combined with desensitization seemed more likely to reduce test anxiety and raise performance.

From the results of the above reviewed studies it can be concluded that cognitively oriented therapies are more effective in reducing test anxiety, even if cognitive behavior modification basically treats the cognitive component of test anxiety the outcome will lead to a global improvement.

Recent research has placed a considerable emphasis on early prevention of test anxiety because of the evidence obtained about the emergence of test anxiety in elementary school years. It has been reported that test anxiety begins to appear at elementary school at about the second grade and tends to increase gradually grade by grade across the elementary school years (Mandler and Sarason, 1952; Klingman and Zeidner, 1990).

Schwarzer and Schwarzer (1982) also explained the reasons of appearance of test anxiety at the elementary school level. He suggested that the classroom as a social context provides standards for social comparisons. While bright students in a poor class make profit from their social environment, poor performers suffer from a good class. So that, a student's rank in an achievement distribution partly determines his\her academic self

evaluation and consequently his \ her test anxiety and self-esteem. Students who are ranked below the median of the class may worry about their poor performance and perceive test situations as threatening. In other words they may become test anxious.

1.5 Test Anxiety Research in Turkey

In Turkey interest in test anxiety research started with the study of Öner (1986). Öner (1986) adapted the Spielberger's Test Anxiety inventory to the Turkish culture acknowledging the need for such a scale because test anxiety was about to become a serious issue in Turkey which required further research.

Kuyucu (1990) compared the differential effects of modified Systematic Desensitization with the classic Systematic Desensitization procedure in reducing university student's test anxiety. Contrary to the differential treatment effects, the results showed that the two treatment groups did not differ significantly in their response to treatment. In other words, test anxiety level of subjects in both groups decreased significantly and no significant differences were found between the groups. This

result indicated that both Systematic Desensitization and modified Systematic Desensitization procedures were effective in reducing university student's test anxiety. In addition, no significant difference was found between the effects of both treatment procedures in reducing worry and emotionality components of test anxiety.

Arikan (1991) investigated the relationship between the applicants' test anxiety scores and their achievement level on the first phase of the University Entrance Examination. The results showed that a negative relationship existed between the test anxiety level and achievement on university entrance examination and this relation was more stronger for the worry component of test anxiety than was the emotionality. However, it was not possible to explain the decrease in the students performance on the examination only with test anxiety because students who were unsuccessful on the university entrance examination were also found less prepared, had low motivation and had low academic ability. The results of this study support the role of worry component in producing test anxiety and subsequent performance decrements.

1.6 Significance of the Study

In the light of the research findings it seems clear that treatment programs which aimed at reducing test anxiety should start at elementary school level where test anxiety begins to appear. So that, it will be possible to prevent test anxiety before it becomes a more serious problem for students in the future years.

There seems to be a great need for such prevention programs especially in Turkey, because compared to other cultures, existing child rearing practices and the educational system appear to foster the emergence of high test anxiety among students (Öner, 1986).

Indeed, starting from the early elementary school years the academic life of the Turkish students seems to depend on passing a series of examinations which might have a profound effect on their later school life. Students, at all levels of the educational process, express apprehension, tension and worry over school matters, particularly on being successful on examinations rather than concentrating upon learning itself.

It is also observed and frequently expressed by many educators that parents and teachers who prepare the students for the examinations also become more and more anxious and transfer their anxiety onto the students.

It is not difficult to estimate that placing such an emphasis on examinations at such an early age may produce a vast majority of anxious students in Turkey. If this is the case, it is clear that there is a great need to develop and implement some intervention strategies for managing the elementary school students' test anxiety before it becomes a persistent problem. It seems that test anxiety research in Turkey has not yet received the attention it deserves. Specifically, there has been a paucity of research into counseling test-anxious children. The present study aims at filling in of this gap and investigates the effect of a story-based cognitive behavior modification procedure on elementary school students' test anxiety level. The present study, which is designed in a preventive manner, predicts that the story-based cognitive behavior modification procedure would reduce the total test anxiety scores of the fifth grade elementary school students. Further, it is expected that the story-based cognitive behavior modification procedure would be more effective in

remediating the worrying cognitions of the test anxious children.



CHAPTER II

METHOD

2.1 Subjects

A total of 144 fifth grade elementary school students, (65 girls, 79 boys) who will attend the Anatolian Schools Entrance Examination, from Tegmen Kalmaz İlkokulu, in Ankara, participated in the study.

The subjects were pretested with the Turkish version of the test anxiety inventory (TAI). The pretest TAI score of the subjects ranged from 21 to 69 with a mean of 39.38 and standard deviation of 8.10. Eighty two students in pretest sample scoring above the cut off point of 50th percentile (which corresponds to raw score of 39 for females, 37 for males, for four and fifth grade primary school students (Öner, 1990)) were considered as high test anxious and, 20 subjects (10 males, 10 females) among them were randomly selected and assigned to the story based Cognitive Behavior Modification (CBM) and control group conditions.

t-test comparisons between the mean scores of girls,

boys and the total subjects of the treatment and control group conditions indicated no significant differences among the means. ($t=1.64$, 0.4 and 0.009 respectively).

2.2 Instrumentation

Test anxiety inventory (TAI) which was developed by Spielberger (1980) and standardized for Turkish culture by Albayrak-Kaymak (1987) and Öner (1986; 1990) was used in the present study as a measure of test anxiety (cf. Öner, 1990).

The original English version of TAI is a self-report scale which is designed to measure individual differences in test anxiety as a situation specific anxiety trait. It consists of 20 items including two 8-item subscales of "worry" and "emotionality" and four additional items (Öner, 1986). Subjects respond to these items on a four point Likert type scale; almost never, sometimes, frequently and almost always.

The Turkish version of TAI, similar to the original one, is a four point Likert type scale which includes 12 emotionality, and 8 worry items. The weight for every answer changes between 1 and 4 only the first item scored in a reverse direction. The inventory yields an

emotionality and worry score as well as a total test anxiety score. The highest and lowest emotionality scores range from 12 to 48, a worry scores from 8 to 32 and total scores from 20 to 80 (Öner, 1990).

The reliability and validity studies of the Turkish version of the inventory yielded satisfactory evidence and supplied norms for the fourth and fifth grade elementary school students, separately for boys and girls (Öner, 1990).

Öner (1990) reported that for the purpose of obtaining evidence for its reliability, TAI was administered twice to 1031 Turkish subjects (434 females, 597 males) from primary, junior high school, senior high school and universities. The subjects were drawn from two different SES (Low and high). The TAI was administered to subjects at five different intervals ranging from same day to three weeks. The test-retest correlation coefficients were .91 (for same day), .93 (for one day), .90 (for one week), and .91 (for two weeks) , .72 (for three weeks).

The internal consistency of the inventory was assessed by Cronbach Alpha and Alpha coefficient for the total scale was .87 (Öner, 1990).

2.3 Training material

In the present study Meichenbaum's cognitive behavior modification technique was used as the treatment technique. However this technique was not used in its original form and modified with the aid of a continuous story to make it more understandable and attractive to children.

The continuous story was written by the researcher and divided into eight parts, each part corresponding to the each of the treatment sessions.

The validity of the story was obtained in several steps. First, it was given to three elementary school teachers to judge whether the language used in the story was appropriate for the students' developmental level. Some minor critical comments were received and necessary changes were made accordingly.

Second, the story was given to four academicians who work in the field of Guidance and Counseling. They were asked to evaluate the story on the following grounds: whether 1) the two main characters of the story represent the test anxious individuals 2) the steps of the technique followed in the story were consistent with the

CBM and covered all the steps of the procedure 3)the self talks of the characters were changed from negative to positive and, finally 4)the story emphasizes the importance of the task oriented behaviors in reducing test anxiety.

Although the story has not received any harsh criticism about the issues stated above, it has been criticized by the judges for overly emphasizing relaxation procedure, modelling and not having a clear definition of the counselor's role in each session.

After having received this feedback the researcher made the necessary changes in concert with the criticisms received by the judges. The new corrected version of the story was then given back to academicians in order to obtain their comments on the grounds which have been previously criticized.

Fourth, the final form of the story ,which was approved by the academicians, were given to a Turkish language and literature specialist for making the necessary grammatical corrections.

2.4 General Information About the Continuous story and the Corresponding Sessions of the CBM Procedure

The continuous story is mainly about two test anxious children (one boy and one girl) who try to overcome their anxiety with the help of their friend (a boy) who was also previously test anxious but was able to overcome his anxiety with the aid of a professional. Throughout the story, the non-test anxious child helps the other children to learn the way of overcoming test anxiety which is mainly through being aware of the negative thoughts about the examinations and replacing them with positive and task oriented ones.

In the first part of the story which covers the first session, the non-test anxious character of the story explains the treatment rationale. In his explanations, he points out that the test anxiety is caused by negative thoughts such as "I will not be successful" , "I will not be able to answer the questions". Then, he adds that he used to feel this way previously but after going through the treatment procedure, which focused upon changing anxiety-producing negative thoughts with positive ones, he managed to overcome his test anxiety.

The aim of this session was to give the treatment rationale to the children in the group. Therefore researcher made some additional explanations about the story, summarized the story, asked some questions to the children to check whether they understood the issue and closed the session after being convinced that each member of the group fully understood the treatment rationale.

In the second part of the story, which is read in second session, the non-test anxious child asks the two characters of the story to find their negative thoughts that occur to them before the examinations by using cognitive imagery technique.

In the corresponding session, the purpose was to make the children in the group aware of their negative thoughts. As the characters of the story did, the members of the cognitive behavior modification group too, found their negative thoughts by using cognitive imagery technique.

In the third part of the story, like the previous one, with the instructions of the non-test anxious child the other characters of the story find their negative thoughts during and after the exam situation by using cognitive imagery technique.

Similarly children in the Cognitive Behavior Modification Group in this session were instructed to find their negative thoughts during and after the examinations utilizing cognitive imagery.

In the fourth part of the story the non-test anxious character of the story asks his friends to find their positive and task-relevant thoughts before the examinations using cognitive imagery technique.

At this session children in the group again carried out the same activity and found their positive and task relevant thoughts before the examinations.

In the fifth part of the story, which is read in the fifth session, the non-test anxious child asks the other children to find their positive and task relevant thoughts during the exam situation and, helps them to learn the breathing exercise which will assist them to feel relax while finding their positive thoughts.

Children in the group, at this session as did the characters of the story, found positive and task relevant thoughts during the exam situation. They also practiced the breathing exercise as a group first and, later each

member of the group had a turn and practised the exercise.

In the sixth part the story the non-test anxious child again asks other children to find their positive and task relevant thoughts after the exam situation using cognitive imagery.

In the corresponding sixth session, children in the group also found their positive and task relevant thoughts which occurred to them after the examinations.

In the seventh part of the story, the non-test anxious child first repeats the core of the treatment procedure which is replacing negative thoughts with the positive task relevant ones. Second, he asks the other two children in the story to imagine themselves one or two day before the exam, in the exam day, half an hour before the exam and during the exam. He also asks his friends to be aware of their negative thoughts in those situations and stop their negative thoughts when they become frequent. In this part characters in the story take deep breaths and change their negative thoughts with positive and task relevant ones that they found previously.

In the corresponding session after having read the

story, the experimenter asked the children in the group to take a turn and do the same exercise in the group. After each child had a turn the members of the group were assigned a homework which was consisted of trying this exercise in "in vivo" situations whenever possible.

The eight and the last part of the story, which corresponds to the eight session, includes the reports of the characters about their success in overcoming their test anxiety by applying the cognitive behavior modification technique in real life exam situations and, being more self confident and relax in those situations. After the story was read, the experimenter asked children in the treatment group to share their personal experiences about their attempts to apply the treatment procedure in real exam situations. After each member took a turn the treatment procedure was completed.

2.5 Procedure

The present study was carried out in three steps. In the first step, 20 test anxious students, as explained in the subject part, were selected and assigned to the control and story-based cognitive behavior modification treatment conditions.

The second step consisted of the application of the story based cognitive behavior condition modification technique. The continuous story was used as a base for treatment throughout the eight sessions. In each session one part of the story which covers one or two steps of the technique was read aloud to the children in the cognitive behavior modification group. The treatment procedure lasted for three weeks consisted of 45-minute sessions that were held three times a week. The sessions were regularly conducted in the mornings at the teacher's office of Tegmen Kalmaz İlkokulu.

In the first meeting, researcher introduced herself and explained that the group members were selected randomly and the aim of the procedure was to help them to manage their anxiety in exam situations. The place, duration of the group, the limits that should be followed and what was expected from the members were also explained. After providing this structure, the researcher answered the questions of the children about the procedure.

The instruction format which was used in the story based CBM treatment condition was as follows "I am a research assistant and a master's student in METU, and I am going to conduct a study in this school. You are a

small group of students who were randomly selected for this study from this school. We will meet three times a week at eight o'clock in the morning, in this room for three weeks. Each meeting will last approximately 45 minutes. In these meetings I will read one part of the story which is about some test anxious children, and we will discuss the message that the story tries to give you. You are expected to carry out the activities that are done by the characters in the story. In addition, I would like to assure you that what we discuss here will be kept confidential".

After giving this format the researcher read the first part of the story to the children in the group, summarized the important points of the story, and asked the children some questions to clarify the issue that was presented in the story.

In the subsequent sessions summary of the previous sessions were made, and the related part of the story was read aloud. The summary of the sessions was either made by the researcher or by the children depending on the flow of the conversations. Later, activities in the story were repeated by the children in the group. Also, in some sessions the related homeworks in the story were given to the subjects.

At the end of the last session, the summary of all the sessions were made, necessary support and encouragement were given to the children in the cognitive behavior modification group for applying this treatment procedure in the future.

The researcher did not take an active part in the activities but contributed to the group discussions to help the children to comprehend the correct message.

In the last step TAI was readministered to the story-based cognitive behavior modification treatment and control group subjects as a post test measure.

2.6 Analysis of Data

The statistical tests that were used to analyze data were t-test and split-plot factorial analysis of variance with the last factor serving as repeated measure (Kirk, 1968; pp. 283).

A t-test comparison was used to test the equivalence of mean Test Anxiety Inventory scores of the treatment and control group subjects.

Three separate 2 (sex) X 2 (experiment-control) X 2

(pre-posttest) analysis of variance with the last factor serving as repeated measure were employed to total, worry and emotionality Test Anxiety Inventory scores of the subjects.

Tukey test comparisons among the means of the subjects' total, worry and emotionality Test Anxiety Inventory scores were also carried out.



CHAPTER III

RESULTS

The results of the study are presented in different subsections. The first subsection includes the means, standard deviations and t-test comparisons of story based CBM and control groups subjects prior to treatment. In the second subsection, analyses related to the effectiveness of story based CBM treatment are documented.

3.1 Comparison of the Group TAI Score means Prior to Treatment

For the purpose of ensuring the equivalence of the mean TAI scores of the treatment and control groups, t-test procedures were performed on the pretest scores of the boys, girls and the total subjects of the treatment and control group subjects. These analysis revealed no significant differences between the TAI scores of girls, boys and the total subjects of the treatment and control groups ($t=1.64$;0.4 and 0.009 respectively).

Table 3.1 presents the pretreatment TAI means and standard deviations of the girls, boys and total subjects

Table 3.1. Pretreatment TAI Scores Means and Standard Deviations of the Girls, Boys and Total Subjects.

Group		X	SD
	Girls	57.4	5.94
CBM (n=10)	Boys	52.6	2.70
	Total	55.0	5.33
	Girls	56.0	3.97
Control (n=10)	Boys	54.4	2.96
	Total	55.2	4.99

3.2 Effectiveness of the Story-Based CBM Treatment

In order to assess the effectiveness of the story-based cognitive behavior modification procedure the subjects' total, worry and emotionality scores were submitted to three separate 2 (CBM-Control) X 2 (sex) X 2

(pre-posttest) ANOVA's with the last factor serving as repeated measure.

Table 3.2 shows the means of the total TAI pre and posttest scores of the subjects.

Table 3.2 Means and Standard Deviations of the Total TAI Pre-Posttest Score of the Subjects.

Group	Pretest		Posttest		
	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	
CBM (n=10)	Girls	57.4	5.94	41.0	8.36
	Boys	52.6	2.70	44.4	8.90
	Total	55.0	5.33	42.7	8.34
Control (n=10)	Girls	56.0	3.97	55.0	5.83
	Boys	54.4	2.96	50.0	9.64
	Total	55.2	4.99	52.5	7.69

The results of the ANOVA applied to the total TAI scores of the subjects is also presented in Table 3.3

Table 3.3 The Results of the Analysis of Variance Employed to the Total TAI Scores of the Subjects.

Source	SS	df	MS	F
A(group)	250.5	1	250.5	4.23
C(sex)	40.5	1	40.5	0.68
AC	16.4	1	16.4	0.27
B(pre-post)	563.0	1	563.0	16.54*
AB	229.9	1	229.9	6.75**
BC	13.1	1	13.1	0.38
ABC	84.6	1	84.6	2.48
B sub w.gr	544.6	16	34.0	
Total	5382.4	39		

*p <.01

**p <.05

As can be seen from the table 3.3 results of the ANOVA applied to the total TAI scores of the subjects yielded significant main effect of pre-posttest measures ($F_{1,16} = 16.54$; $p < .01$) and an interaction effect of pre-posttest measures X treatment conditions ($F_{1,16} = 6.75$; $p < .05$).

The significant interaction effect of pre-posttest measurement X treatment condition ($F_{1,16}=6.75$; $p < .05$) suggested that the difference between pre and posttest measures was a function of treatment condition. Comparisons among the means of pre-posttest X treatment interaction by using Tukey test indicated that mean TAI scores of story based CBM group subjects as compared to the mean TAI scores of the control group subjects, decreased significantly after the treatment (pretest $\bar{X}=55$; posttest $\bar{X}=42.7$; $p < .05$). No significant difference was found between the mean pre-posttest scores of the control group subjects.

In addition to within group comparisons, mean posttest TAI scores of CBM (42.7) and control group (52.5) were also compared employing Tukey test.

The results showed that the differences between mean posttest scores of these two groups was significant ($p < .01$) indicating a decrease in the TAI scores of the story based CBM group after treatment.

A 2 (CBM-Control) X (sex) x 2 (pre-posttest) analysis of variance was also applied to the emotionality TAI subscores of the subjects. The means and standard deviations of

the emotionality subscores of subjects are shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Means and Standard Deviations of the Emotionality Subscale Pre-Posttest Scores of Subjects.

Group		Pretest		Posttest	
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD
CBM (n=10)	Girls	37.0	6.96	26.4	4.82
	Boys	30.8	2.28	26.0	5.00
	Total	33.9	5.88	26.2	4.63
Control (n=10)	Girls	37.4	3.97	35.4	4.66
	Boys	31.8	1.92	30.4	6.06
	Total	34.6	4.01	32.9	5.70

The results of the ANOVA applied to the emotionality TAI subscore of subjects revealed significant main effects of CBM-Control conditions ($F_{1,16}=4.60$; $p<.05$) and pre-posttest measures ($F_{1,16}=14.45$; $p<.05$). Table 3.4 also shows the significant decrease in the emotionality subscore

of subjects between the pretest and posttest measures.

The significant interaction effect of the pre-posttest X treatment conditions ($F_{1, 16} = 47.12$; $p < .01$) indicated that the decrease in pretest and posttest emotionality subscores changed as a function of treatment condition. These results are presented in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 The Results of the Analysis of Variance Employed to the Emotionality TAI Subscores of the Subjects.

Source	SS	df	Ms	F
A (group)	136.9	1	136.9	4.60 **
C (sex)	184.9	1	184.9	6.22 **
AC	10.0	1	10.0	0.33
B (pre-post)	220.9	1	220.9	14.45 *
AB	720.0	1	720.0	47.12 *
BC	25.6	1	25.6	1.67
B sub w gr	244.6	16	15.3	1.10
Total	3441.2	39		

* $p < .01$

** $p < .05$

Results of the comparisons among the means of

emotionality subscores of two group subjects utilizing Tukey test following pre-posttest X treatment interaction showed that mean emotionality scores of the CBM group subjects decreased significantly after the treatment (pretest \bar{X} = 33.9; posttest \bar{X} = 26.2; $p < .05$). On the other hand, no significant difference existed between pre-posttest scores of the control group subjects.

In addition, mean emotionality posttest scores of CBM (26.2) and control group (32.9) were also compared by employing Tukey test. The results revealed a significant difference ($p < .01$) between the mean emotionality posttest scores of the CBM and control groups. This result indicated that the significant decrease in the emotionality scores of CBM group results from the effectiveness of the story based CBM treatment in reducing emotionality component of test anxiety.

The same 2 (CBM-Control) X 2 (sex) X 2 (pre-posttest) analysis of variance was also employed to the worry TAI subscores of the subjects.

The mean worry TAI subscores of the CBM and control group subjects are presented in Table 3.6

Table 3.6 Means and Standard Deviations of the Worry Subscale Pre-Posttest Scores of Subjects.

Group		Pretest		Posttest	
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD
	Girls	20.4	1.67	14.6	4.15
CBM	Boys	21.8	3.70	18.4	4.82
(n=10)	Total	21.1	2.90	16.5	4.69
Control	Girls	18.6	3.57	19.6	3.57
	Boys	22.6	1.94	19.6	3.64
(n=10)	Total	20.6	3.43	19.6	3.40

The results of the ANOVA employed to the worry subcores of the subjects yielded a significant main effect of pre-posttest measures ($F_{1,16}=7.19; p<.05$). However there was not a significant main effect of CBM-control conditions and a significant interaction effect of pre-posttest X treatment conditions. The results of the ANOVA are shown in Table 3.7

Table 3.7 The Results of the ANOVA Employed to the Worry TAI Subscores of the Subjects.

Source	SS	df	MS	F
A(group)	295.6	1	295.6	1.20
C (sex)	52.9	1	52.9	3.76
AC	0.8	1	0.8	0.56
B(pre-post)	87.4	1	78.4	7.19 **
AB	32.4	1	32.4	2.97
BC	1.6	1	1.6	0.14
ABC	25.6	1	25.6	2.34
B subw gr	174.5	16	10.9	
Total		39		

** p <.05

As can be seen in table 3.7 the findings pointed out that the story-based CBM procedure was not effective in reducing the worry scores of the CBM group subjects as compared to the control group subjects.

All these results indicated that the story based CBM treatment was effective in reducing the subjects' general

test anxiety. However the story-based CBM treatment was found to be effective in reducing emotionality component rather than the worry component of test anxiety.



CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Since the theory of test anxiety was initially introduced by Mandler and Sarason (1952,1953) various interventions have been studied. However, the majority of the studies have been conducted with college students and treatment methods have been applied in very few studies at elementary school level, the place where the foundation for the test anxiety logically begins (Wilson and Rotter,1986).

Taking the need for preventing the test anxiety into consideration, the purpose of the present study was to develop and implement a preventive treatment procedure to reduce 5th grade elementary school students' test anxiety. Specifically, it was predicted that story-based cognitive behavior modification treatment procedure, which was designed as a combined treatment to modify both the worry and emotionality components of test anxiety, would result in a decrease in the total scores of the 5th grade elementary school students. It was also expected that the decrease would be more apparent in the worry subscores of

the treatment group's subjects as the story-based cognitive behavior modification mainly focused upon the cognitive domain.

Results supported the first prediction and showed that the story based cognitive behavior modification procedure was effective in reducing total test anxiety scores of the subjects.

This finding was consistent with the previous treatment literature (Meichenbaum, 1972 ; Tyron 1980; Crowley & Crowley and Clodfelter, 1986; Dendato and Deiner, 1986; Hembree 1988; Klingman and Zeidner, 1990) which reported the effectiveness of combined treatments (cognitive-behavioral) in reducing total test anxiety scores of the subjects.

However, the results of the present study did not confirm the second prediction that the story-based cognitive behavior modification would significantly reduce the worry subscores of the treatment group subjects. Contrary to this expectation, the treatment procedure significantly decreased the emotionality scores of subjects and failed to show it's effectiveness in reducing the worry

component of test anxiety.

This result supported the previous research findings that failed to show the differential effects of the similar treatment procedures. Finger and Galassi (1977) stated that treatment procedures were not differentially effective in reducing different components of test anxiety regardless of the focus on the specific component of the treatment procedure. In other words, affecting either component in treatment would result in a corresponding effect upon the other component, as well as the global measure of test anxiety.

Kuyucu's finding (1990) confirmed this view and comparative application of purely behavioral and cognitive behavioral modification technique were found to be equally effective in reducing total test anxiety and its components.

Related to this issue a different discussion appeared in Hembree's (1988) meta analysis. Test anxiety was considered " to possess two primary factors; worry or cognitive concern about ones performance and emotionality or autonomic reactions to the test situation. If it should

be the case that both components occur at once with neither needing prompting from the other, then test anxiety would appear to be both cognitive (for worry) and behavioral (for emotionality) components" (Hembree,1988; p.74).

However, if there is a cause and effect relationship between the two components of test anxiety, it would appear that test anxiety is essentially a unidimensional concept.Hembree (1988) examined this relationship in terms of cause and effect relationship and concluded that the purely behavioral treatments were more effective and reduced not only emotionality ,but also generalized to reduce the worry component which suggested that emotionality seemed to trigger worry.

In other words, the more a person experiences heightened emotionality the more she/he gets worried about the examination.Similarly when the person live through a lower emotionality state she/he will have less worrying cognitions.If this is the case, then it is possible to claim that both components interact within a single process, each having a generalized effect upon other following manipulation, regardless of the type of treatment implemented.This view explains the findings of the present study that the following the application of the story-based

cognitive behavior modification, emotionality component was more affected than the worry component. Indeed, in the present study, although it was nonsignificant, the worry scores of subjects also showed a decrease between the pre and posttest measures.

It is also possible to interpret the results of the present study with in the explanation provided by Morris and Fulmer (1976). They stated that worry scores, contrary to emotionality scores, usually remain unchanged after the exam reflecting the student's concern about the exam until the feedback is provided (Morris and Fulmer, 1977). Consistent with this view, although the treatment procedure used in the present study was designed to reduce the worry component of test anxiety, no significant decrease was observed in the worry scores of subjects. Because the subjects participated in the present study had not yet entered the Anatolian School Entrance Examination, when the posttest measure was taken and thus, they were not able to get feedback about the exam and their concern for the exam was still continuing.

Further, in the present study the types of high test anxious students were not assessed. In other words,

different problems of test anxious students (for example, whether they have good study habits or not) were not taken into consideration before the treatment procedure applied. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that story based cognitive behavior modification was not effective in reducing worry subscores of subjects as Naveh-Benjamin (1991) pointed out each treatment procedure may not be convenient for every student as there may be different types of test anxious students that could benefit from different types of treatments.

Finally, this surprising finding might also be due to an important limitation of the present study that the post test measure had to be given to the treatment group immediately after the final session. This limitation stemmed from the teachers' opposition to send the students from the classes for the post test assessment once more. If the students have had the opportunity to receive the posttest measure after a reasonable period of time following treatment, they would probably have had more chance to replace their negative thoughts with more positive ones. This explanations are consistent with the literature, (Liebert and Morris 1967) indicating that changes in worry component of test anxiety requires time, because worry

changes which are the function of expectancy changes, are resistant to modification in a short time.

In conclusion the present study showed the effectiveness of the story based cognitive behavior modification in reducing total test anxiety scores of the 5th grade elementary school subjects. Although treatment procedure was designed to deal with mainly worry component of test anxiety, it resulted in significant decrease in the emotionality component. This finding brings the same questions in to discussion which are whether; worry and emotionality operate as a distinct or single process in test anxiety, different treatment procedures may be needed to deal with different components of test anxiety and, there are different types of test anxious students which require different types of treatments. Further studies to find answer to these questions are necessary since the issue appears to be far more serious for Turkey.

CHAPTER V

IMPLICATIONS

Present Turkish educational system which strikingly seem to depend on achieving rather than learning appear to foster high rate of test anxiety among the elementary school students (Aydin, 1993). Since test anxiety starts at elementary school level, there is a great need for the preventive measures of similar nature implemented especially at elementary school level. The treatment procedure used in the present study may partially meet such a need in the guidance and counseling services of elementary schools. It may also be expected that the use of anxiety management techniques will help students learn to manage their test anxiety starting from an early age. Consequently it will help them to be successful in their future life in which they will face a series of different types of examinations.

In addition, the present study may function as a stimulating and activating factor for the future studies of similar type.

Özer (1990) stated that test anxiety is not a phenomena that is observed in test taking situations since it reflects one's general concern about being evaluated as a person. The use of the Story-Based Cognitive Behavior Modification Technique in guidance and counseling services at elementary schools may not only help these students to reduce their test anxiety, but also may have a generalized effect on similar type of anxieties (such as speech anxiety, social anxiety) that children may experience.

In the present study, children in the treatment group expressed that they viewed the behaviors of their teachers and parents as the cause of their test anxiety. Children's view was consistent with the previously mentioned prediction that while preparing their students or children to the entrance examinations, parents and teachers themselves might become anxious and induce their own anxiety to their children or students without intending to do so. This explanation has several implications .First, it shows how children perceive the cause of their anxiousness, second the necessity of training programs for teachers which will make them aware of their own contributions to childrens' test anxiety and finally, the need for informing society about the negative effects of the present

educational system on students mental health and urgency of precautions that should be realized.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings of the present study the following recommendations could be offered.

First, further studies that either develops other effective treatment procedures or compares the effectiveness of the story-based cognitive behavior modification with other techniques are needed for the prevention and management of test anxiety in children.

Second , the present study should have to be replicated with different subjects from Turkey and other cultures, where the education system is similar to the Turkish system. However, in these replications, in order to refrain from them limitation of the present study post test measure should have to be given at least one or two weeks after the treatment procedure was completed.

Third, further studies which involve the modified versions of the story based cognitive behavior modification

with smaller age group, can be carried out. Further, original cognitive behavior modification technique with subjects from secondary schools to universities are needed to examine the effectiveness of the technique.

Fourth, in the present study the mean emotionality scores of the subjects were higher than their mean worry scores. However, it is not possible to conclude that the Turkish elementary school students' emotionality scores are generally high since the sample size of this study was too small to reach such a conclusion. Therefore, further research including larger samples is also needed to investigate whether the emotionality scores of the Turkish students are higher than their worry scores.

Fifth, the study skills of the subjects were not assessed in the present study. However, as Naveh-Benjamin Mc Keachie and Lin (1987) stated sometimes not having good study habits themselves may lead to test anxiety in students. For this reason, further studies that assess the study habits of students before the application of the treatment procedure should be carried out.

Sixth, future research that takes the measures of

actual test performance after the application of the treatment procedure implemented are essential to understand whether story based cognitive behavior modification techniques leads to improvement in test taking behavior and academic performance of students.

Seventh, future studies that investigate the effects of teachers and parents behaviors on students' test anxiety should also be carried out considering the explanations that children in the treatment group were made.

Eight, the story based cognitive behavior modification procedure may also be used in future research with some modifications for the purpose of treating other types of anxieties that elementary school students may suffer.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CONTINUOUS STORY

Birinci Görüşme

Onur, Mert ve Ayşegül üç iyi arkadaşları. Üçü de aynı sokakta oturuyor ve aynı ilkokula gidiyorlardı. Birlikteyken canları hiç sıkılmıyordu. Değişik oyunlar oynuyor, hoş vakit geçiriyorlardı. Bazen ödevlerini de birlikte yapıyorlardı.

İçlerinde notları en iyi olan Mertti. Ayşegül de Onur da aslında tembel çocuklar değillerdi. Onlarda derslerine çalışıyorlardı, ama yazılılarda sözlülerde çok heyecanlandıkları için Mert kadar başarılı olamıyorlardı. Her ikisi için de yazılılar sözlüler sanki birer işkenceydi.

Okulların Şubat tatiline girmesine iki hafta kalmıştı. Artık karnelerindeki notları belirleyecek yazılılara giriyorlardı. Bu nedenle Onur' un da Ayşegül' Un de bu notlarını düzeltbilmeleri için bu yazılılılardan iyi

notlar almaları gerekiyordu. Bir gün yine üçü Ayşegül' lerde toplanmış, harıl harıl ders çalışırlarken Onur birden çalışmayı bıraktı ve arkadaşlarına dönerek yarınki yazılıda heyecanlanıp tüm bu çalıştıklarımızı unutacağımı düşünmek beni çok korkutuyor. Mert sen ne kadar şanslısın bizim gibi heyecanlanmıyorsun, senin yerinde olmayı ne çok isterdim bir bilsen dedi.

Mert Onur' un bu sözleri üzerine gülümsedi ve ben de eskiden sizin gibi yazılılarda çok heyecanlanıyordum. Fakat sonraları bu konuda uzman olan bir ablanın da yardımıyla bu korkuyu yavaş yavaş yendim. Şimdi de biraz heyecanlanıyorum ama, yazılılarda soruları cevaplandırmaya başlayınca heyecanım geçip gidiyor. İsterseniz o ablanın bana öğrettiklerini size öğretebilirim, dedi.

Onur da, Ayşegül de bu öneriye çok sevindiler ve o gün için ders çalışmaya bir süre ara verip ilgiyle Mert'i dinlemeye başladılar.

Mert; Arkadaşlar sınav heyecanı kendiliğinden ortaya çıkan, bizim elimizde olmayan bir şey değil. Aslında biz sınavlarda kendi kendimizi heyecanlandırıyoruz. Yani kendimizi heyecanlı hissetmemize neden olan bizim kendi

düşüncelerimiz, sınav öncesinde kendi kendimize bu sınavı başaracağım dersek başarmamız daha kolay olur.Ama yapamayacağım, başaramayacağım gibi kötü (olumsuz) düşünceleri aklımızdan geçirirsek bu bizim sınavlarda başarısız olmamıza yol açabilir.Bunun için önce sizinle birlikte sınav heyecanımıza neden olan bu kötü düşünceleri bulacağız daha sonra da bunları iyilerle değiştirmeyi deneyeceğiz, dedi ve kötü düşünceleri değiştirmenin yollarını arkadaşlarına şöyle açıkladı.

Biz sınavdan önce aklımızdan iyi not alamayacağım, soruları yapamayacağım gibi düşünceler geçiriyoruz.Sınav sırasında; soruları anlamıyorum yapamayacağım.Sınavdan sonra ise yine yapamadım gibi şeyler söylüyoruz.

Daha öncede söylediğim gibi aslında bu düşünceler bizi heyecanlandırıyor ve sınavda başarısız olmamıza yol açıyor.Bir de bizi heyecanlandırmayan, rahatlatan düşünceler var bunlara ise iyi, olumlu düşünceler diyoruz.

Örneğin, sınavdan önce kendi kendimize sınavda başarılı olacağım.Sınavda, heyecanlanmayacağım, rahat olacağım, soruları dikkatli okuyacağım ve sorulardan başka

birşey düşünmeyeceğim.Sınavdan sonra da, sınav kötü geçse bile bir daha ki sefere daha iyi çalışırım gibi şeyler söyleyebiliriz, dedi.

Daha sonra da arkadaşlar, işte sizinle birlikte yapacağımız bu sözünü ettiğimiz kötü düşünceleri iyileri ile değiştirmek, böylece sınav heyecanını yenmek.Çünkü bizi heyecanlandıran sınavlar değil sınav hakkındaki kötü düşüncelerimiz, dedi.

Mert sözlerini bitirince Onur ve Ayşegül Mert'ten biraz daha açıklama istediler.Mert ne yapacaklarını bir kez daha açıkladı.

(Bu oturumda danışmanın amacı uygulanacak tekniğin çocuklar tarafından iyice anlaşılmasını sağlamaktır.Bu nedenle çocukların süreci tam olarak anladıklarından emin oluncaya kadar, danışman açıklamalarını sürdürür.)

İkinci Görüşme

Ertesi hafta birlikte olduklarında Mert, arkadaşlar geçen hafta konuştuklarımızı uygulamaya başladığımızda her şey daha anlaşılır hale gelecek dedi.Sonra da Ayşegül ve Onur dan sınavdan önce akıllarından geçen kötü düşünceleri

söylemelerini istedi.

Ayşegül ve Onur kötü düşünceleri bulmakta güçlük çekiyorlardı. Ayşegül sonunda dayanamayıp Mert' e benim aklıma hiç birşey gelmiyor dedi. Onur benimde diye ekledi.

Mert arkadaşlar sınavdan önce aklınızdan geçen kötü düşünceleri bulmanın en iyi yolu girdiğiniz herhangi bir sınavı gözünüzün önüne getirmeniz; örneğin geçen haftaki matematik yazılısını düşünün bu yazılıdan önce aklınızdan neler geçmişti, onları hatırlamaya çalışın, dedi.

Bu açıklama Ayşegül ve Onur' un hoşuna gitmişti. Hemen matematik yazılısını düşünmeye başladılar. Daha sonra da akıllarından geçenleri not aldılar ve Mert'e anlattılar. Söze ilk başlayan Ayşegül oldu. Ayşegül benim sınavdan önce ilk aklımdan geçen, ya başarısız olursam düşüncesi. Sınav gününü düşündükçe heyecanlanıyorum. Başarısız olacağımı, bu sefer de beceremeyeceğimi düşünüyorum. Bunları düşündükçe de korkuyorum dedi.

Onur ben de öğretmen sınav tarihini belirlediğinde heyecanlanmaya başlıyorum. Her sınavdan önce bu sefer iyi çalışacağım diyorum ama sınav yaklaştıkça ne kadar çalışsam

da sanki hiçbirşey bilmiyormuşum gibi geliyor.Kötü not alırsam annemin babamın üzüleceğini öğretmenimin beni sevmeyeceğini düşünüyorum dedi.

Onur sözlerini tamamladıktan sonra, Mert bu günlük çalışmamız sona erdi. İkinizde sınavdan önce aklınızdan geçen kötü düşünceleri şimdi aklınıza geldiği kadarıyla buldunuz.Bir daha ki görüşmemize kadar bu kötü düşünceler hakkında düşünmeye devam edin ve aklınıza farklı bir düşünce gelirse not edin haftaya konuşuruz dedi.O gün üçü biraz da ders çalışıp Ayşegüllerden ayrıldılar.Haftaya Mertlerde toplanacaklardı.

(Bu oturumda danışmanın amacı çocukların bilişsel imgeleme yoluyla sınavdan önce akıllarına gelen kötü düşünceleri bulmalarını ve bunların farkına varmalarını sağlamaktır.Bu nedenle danışman gruptaki çocuklardan kendilerini herhangi bir sınava girmeden önce hayal etmelerini, daha sonrada akıllarına gelen kötü düşünceleri sırayla gruba aktarmalarını ister.)

Uçüncü Görüşme

Bir daha ki buluşmaya kadar geçen süre Onur ve Ayşegül

için çok uzun gelmişti.Çünkü her ikisi de sınav heyecanından biran önce kurtulmak istiyorlardı.

O gün sözleştikleri gibi Mert' in evinde toplandılar.Onur daha kapıdan içeri girer girmez sınav heyecanını yenme çalışmasına hemen başlayalım, zaman kaybetmeyelim, dedi.Ayşegül de aynı düşüncedeydi.

Mert arkadaşlarının bu kadar hevesli olmasına seviniyordu.Haydi o zaman başlıyoruz, dedi.

Uçü de masanın etrafında yerlerini aldılar.Mert, geçen hafta sınav heyecanını yenme çalışmasının ilk basamağını yaptık.Bu hafta sıra ikinci basamakta.Şimdi sınav sırasında ve sınavdan sonra aklınızdan geçen kötü düşünceleri bulacaksınız.Isterseniz ben size bir örnek vereyim, dedi.

Onur da evet çok iyi olur diye cevap verdi.Mert, eskiden sınav sırasında soru kâğıtlarını elime alınca ilk aklıma gelen başarısız olacağım düşüncesi idi.Diger arkadaşlarıma bakardım, hepsinin soruları cevaplandırıldığını görünce büsbütün telaşlanır, kendime ben yine yapamayacağım derdim.Sanki kafamın içi boşalırdı, okuduğum soruları anlamazdım.Bir türlü kendimi sorulara veremezdim.Böyle

oluncada telaşlanırdım, elim ayagım birbirine dolaşırdı. Fakat bu heyecanımın aklımdan geçirdiğim kötü düşüncelerden kaynaklandığının farkında bile degildim, dedi.

Onur da, Ayşegül de Mert' i dikkatle dinliyorlardı. Mert hadi bakalım şimdi sıra sizde dedi.

Onur ve Ayşegül, düşünmeye başladılar. İkisi de gözlerini kapatmış, kendilerini geçen haftaki fen bilgisi yazılısında hayal ediyorlardı. Bir süre düşündüler, sonra ikisi de not aldılar.

Söze, ilk Onur başladı. Benim kötü düşüncelerim sınavdan bir kaç dakika önce çok artıyor. Kendi kendime sürekli yine yapamayacağım, yine kafamın içi boşalmış gibi oluyor, derken heyecanlandığımı hissediyorum. Sınavda da bu durum öyle artıyor ki, soruları yanlış anlıyor, yanlış cevaplandırıyorum; ya da sorunun cevabını bilsem bile kafamı toparlayıp düzgün bir biçimde yazamıyorum. Kendi kendime hep yapamayacağım, soruların cevabını bilmiyorum, derken ellerim titremeye kalbim çarpmaya başlıyor. Bu da beni çok rahatsız ediyor.

Sınavdan sonra da hiç rahatlamıyorum.Bitti kurtuldum diye düşünemiyorum.Tam tersine kendi kendime soruları iyi cevaplandıramadığımı söylüyorum.Notum kötü geleceği için üzülüyorum ve hep ben başarısız bir çocuğum deyip duruyorum, dedi.

Ayşegül 'de sınavda soruları alınca okudugumu anlamakta güçlük çekiyorum.Aklım karışıyor,kendi kendime ya soruların cevaplarını bilemezsem deyip duruyorum.Cevaplarken de bir soruda fazla takılıyorum.Sonrada yapamıyorum diyorum daha çok heyecanlanıyorum.Ellerim titriyor mideme ağrılar giriyor.Sınav bitince de rahatlamıyorum.Öğretmen sonuçları açıklayınca kadar huzurum kaçıyor.Alacağım kötü notu düşünüyorum, çok üzülüyorum, dedi.

Mert, Ayşegül sözünü bitirdikten sonra, arkadaşlar yavaş yavaş kötü düşüncelerin bizi nasıl etkilediğini anlamaya başladık.Isterseniz, bu haftalık sınav heyecanını yenme çalışmamızı burada bitirelim.Biliyorsunuz yarın yazılıımız var, ona da çalışacağız, dedi.

Ayşegül de, Onur da Mert' in önerisini kabul ettiler.Bir süre daha ders çalıştıktan sonra, haftaya

Onurlarda toplanmak üzere sözleşip, Mertlerden ayrıldılar.

(Bu oturumda danışmanın amacı her bir çocuga bilişsel imgeleme yoluyla sınav sırasında ve sınavdan sonra aklından geçen kötü düşüncelerin ve fiziksel tepkilerin farkına varmasını sağlamak, bunları buldurmak ve sonrada söz alarak gruba aktarmasını sağlamaktır.)

Dördüncü Görüşme

Onur' larda toplandıkları gün Mert, arkadaşlar bugün sınav heyecanını yenme çalışmamızın başka bir aşamasına geçeceğiz.0 da sınavdan önce, sınav sırasında ve sınavdan sonra aklımıza getirebileceğimiz iyi düşünceleri bulmak, dedi.

Onur, Mert daha önce açıklamıştın ama, galiba biraz unutmuşum, iyi düşünceleri niye bulduğumuzu bir daha açıklarmısın, dedi.

Mert biliyorsunuz sınavlarda bizi heyecandıran kötü düşünceler.Eğer biz bu kötü düşüncelerin yerine iyilerin bulup onları kötü düşüncelerle değiştirirsek heyecanımız azalıyor.Çünkü bir şey hakkında ya iyi düşünürüz ya

kötü.Aynı anda hem iyi hem kötü düşünemiyoruz.Örneğin, kendimize sınavdan önce, başarısız olacağım diyorsak başarılı olacağımızı düşünemeyiz ya da tam tersi başarılı olacağımızı düşünüyorsak, kendi kendimize bunu söylüyorsak kötü düşünceler aklımızda duramaz, biz de böylece heyecanlanmayız ve sınavdaki başarımız düşmez, dedi.

(Danışman, gruptaki çocuklara anlatılanları anlayıp anlamadıklarını sorar, anlaşılammışsa tekrar açıklama yapar.)

Onur şimdi sınavdan önce aklımıza getirebileceğimiz iyi düşünceleri de buluyoruz değil mi, diye sordu.

Mert te evet dedi.

Onur ve Ayşegül yine düşünmeye başladılar.Ayşegül bir ara zorlanır gibi oldu.Mert ten bir iki örnek vermesini istedi.

Mert de örnek olarak sınavda kendi kendimize heyecanlanma, sakın ol bu sefer o kadar da kötü olmayacak, başaracaksın demeyi örnek verdi.

Her ikisi de düşünüyor, akıllarına gelenleri not alıyorlardı. Bir süre sonra Onur söz aldı. Sınavdan önce kendi kendime zayıf not alacağımı söylemek yerine elimden geleni yapacağım, sınava çalıştım biliyorum, başaracağım diyebilirim dedi.

Ayşegül' de benimkiler de aslında senin düşüncelerine benziyor. Sınavdan önce ben de elimden geleni yapacağım, başaracağım, bundan önce bir çok sınava girdim, bu ilk değil. Notum düşük gelirse bir daha ki sınava daha fazla çalışabilirim diye düşünebilirim, dedi.

Mert, Ayşegül ve Onur' dan biraz daha düşünerek yeni örnekler bulmalarını istedi. Bu örnekleri de yaptıktan sonra tekrar buluşmak üzere ayrıldılar.

(Bu oturumda danışmanın amacı her çocuğun bilişsel imgeleme yoluyla sınavdan önce akıllarından geçirebilecekleri iyi düşünceler bulmasını ve verilen örnekler dışında yeni düşünceler üretmesini sağlamaktır. Çocuklar bilişsel imgeleme yoluyla buldukları bu düşünceleri kağıtlara yazar ve sonra da sırasıyla bunları gruba aktarırlar.)

Beşinci Görüşme

Tekrar buluştuklarında Mert, ikinizde baştan beri iyi gidiyorsunuz bu işi başaracağız, dedi. Daha sonra, tam sıra sınav sırasında ve sınavdan sonra aklımıza getirebileceğimiz iyi düşünceleri bulmada diyecekti ki, Ayşegül Mert' ten önce söze girdi. Hadi sıra sınav sırasında ve sınavdan sonraki iyi düşünceleri bulmaya geldi, dedi. Bunun üzerine Ayşegül de Onurda güldü. Mert şaşırmişti, Sınav heyecanını yenme çalışmaları gün geçtikçe hepsinin hoşuna gidiyordu.

Ayşegül ve Onur bu kez bir süre düşündüler sonra düşüncelerini kağıtlara yazdılar.

Ayşegül, Onur dan önce bitirdi ve Onur bitirinceye kadar bekleyip sonra söz aldı. Sınavda aklımdan geçirebileceğim iyi düşünceler; şu anda sınavdasın, dikkatini topla, soruları dikkatli oku, kendini tümüyle sorulara ver, anlamaya çalış mutlaka bir bildiğin vardır cevapları dikkatli yaz olabilir, dedi.

Onur' da, sınav sırasında ben kendi kendime senin yaptığın gibi, soruları dikkatli oku dikkatini sorulara

yogunlaştır, anlamaya çalış, cevabını en iyi biçimde yaz diyebilirim.Ama daha önce de söylemiştim ya, sınav sırasında benim elim ayakım titiriyor, kalbim gümbür gümbür çarpıyor, kendi kendime tüm bunlar için ne diyebilirim bilmiyorum, dedi.

Mert bu arada söze girdi.Ben de senin gibi hissediyorum.Yani yazılı kağıdını elime alır almaz beni bir telaş alıyordu.Terliyordum, midem bulanıyordu.Onun için size daha önce sözünü ettiğim ablayla sınava başlamadan önce bulduğumuz iyi düşüncelerin yanında derin nefes alma ve rahatlama egzersizleri yaptık.Isterseniz şimdi birkaç kez derin nefes almayı deneyelim.Dikkat etmeniz gereken nokta, burundan alıp ağızdan vermek kural bu, derin nefes alıp rahatlarsak aklımıza iyi düşünceler getirmemiz kolaylaşır, dedi.Böylece önce üçü birlikte derin nefes alma çalışması yaptılar daha sonra akıllarına iyi düşünceler getirmeye çalıştılar.

(Bu oturumda danışman literatürde sıklıkla rastlanan ve gevşeme egzersizlerinden birisi olan nefes alma egzersizini çocuklara öğretir.Bunun öğretilmesindeki amaç çocukların sınavdan önce ve sınavda akıllarına getirebilecekleri iyi düşünceleri bulmalarına yardımcı

olacak fiziksel rahatlamayı sağlamaktır. Danışman ayrıca gruptaki çocuklardan sınavdan önce ve sınav sırasında akıllarına getirebilecekleri iyi düşünceler bulmalarını ister. Daha sonra her çocuk sırasıyla bu iyi düşünceleri gruba aktarır.)

Mert, arkadaşlar bu günlük bu kadar. Yalnız bir ödeviniz var. Gelecek görüşmemize kadar sınavdan önce ve sınav sırasında aklınıza gelebilecek başka iyi düşünceler bulmaya çalışın. Bunları kağıtlara yazın ve getirin dedi. Günün geri kalanında üçü de sevdikleri oyunları oynadılar. Ayrılırken de haftaya Ayşegül'lerde toplanmak üzere sözleştiler.

(Danışman, yukarıdaki ev ödevini grubu oluşturan çocuklara verir.)

Altıncı Görüşme

Önceki hafta Ayşegül ve Onur sınavdan önce akıllarından geçirebilecekleri iyi düşünceleri bulmuşlardı. Bugün ise sıra sınavdan sonra kendilerine söyleyebilecekleri iyi düşünceleri bulmaya gelmişti. Ayşegül kısa bir süre düşündükten sonra söz aldı ve

sınavdan sonrada, kötü not alsam bile dünyanın sonu değil, bir daha ki sınava daha iyi hazırlanırım diye düşünürüm, dedi.

Onur ben de bundan sonra ki sınavlara daha dikkatli çalışırım, eksiklerimi gideririm. Yeterince çalışıp dikkatimi yoğunlaştırırsam, soruları daha iyi cevaplarım diyebilirim, dedi.

Mert, arkadaşlar bugünkü çalışmamız da bitti. Ama yine ödeviniz var. Gelecek görüşmemize kadar sınavdan sonra aklınıza gelebilecek başka iyi düşünceler bulmaya çalışın. Her zamanki gibi bunları kâğıtlara yazıp getirin dedi. Çalışmalarının o haftalık bölümünü tamamlamışlardı. Hepsi evlerine dağıldılar. Gelecek hafta Onurlarda toplanacaklardı.

(Danışman, bu oturumda gruptaki çocuklardan yine bilişsel imgeleme yoluyla sınavdan sonrası için iyi düşünceler bulmalarını ve bunları gruba aktarmalarını sağlar.)

Yedinci Görüşme

Zaman yine çabuk geçmişti.Bu kez de Onurların evindeydiler.Ayşegül ile Onur yine sabırsızlanıyorlardı.Fazla oyalanmadan hemen sınav heyecanını yenme çalışmasına başladılar.

Mert, bir sonraki basamağa geldik.Şimdiye kadar önce sınav hakkındaki kötü düşüncelerimizi bulduk, sonra iyilerini.Bu aşamada işin en önemli noktasına geldik.Bizi heyecanlandıran düşünceleri iyilerle değiştireceğiz dedi.

Ayşegül, Mert nasıl yapacağımızı anlatacaksın değil mi? diye sordu.

Mert evet dedi ve söze başladı.

Gözlerinizi kapatıyorsunuz.Kendinizi sırasıyla sınava girmeden birkaç gün öncesinde, sınav gününde, sınavdan yarım saat öncesinde ve sınavda hayal ediyorsunuz.Bunları yaparken aklınızdan geçen kötü düşüncelere dikkat ediyorsunuz.Kötü düşüncelerin aklınıza sıkça geldiğini ve kendinizi heyecanlı hissettiğinizi farkettiğinizde, baş parmağınızı kaldırarak dur işareti veriyorsunuz.Yeter

bunları düşünmek istemiyorum diyorsunuz, birkaç kez derin nefes alıyorsunuz, kötü düşünceleri kovuyorsunuz.Daha önce bulduğunuz iyi düşünceleri aklınıza getiriyorsunuz, dedi.Sözlerini bitirince de ilk önce kim denemek ister diye sordu.

Ayşegül anlattıkların biraz karışık geldi ama yinede ilk ben denemek istiyorum, dedi.

Mert evet Ayşegül şimdi iki gün sonra herhangi bir sınava gireceğini düşünmeye başla.Eğer gözünün önüne getirmekte güçlük çekiyorsan gelecek hafta gireceğimiz matematik yazılısını düşünebilirsin, dedi.

Ayşegül' de matematik yazılısını düşünmeye başladı.Sanki o an aklından herşey bir film gibi geçiyordu.Heyecanlandığını hissetti.Aklından kötü düşünceler geçiyordu.Başarısız olacağını, kötü not alacağını, anne ve babasının kızacağını düşünüyordu.

Mert, bu arada Ayşegül sınava girmene çok az zaman kaldığını düşünmeye başla dedi.Ayşegül kendisini iyice kötü hissetmeye başlamıştı.Midesi bulanıyordu, başı dönüyordu. Mert, kendini gergin hissettiğinde başparmağını kaldırarak

kendine bir işaret ver, dedi.

Ayşegül de matematik yazılısını düşünmeye başladı.Sanki o an aklından herşey bir film gibi geçiyordu.Heyecenlandığını hissetti.Aklından kötü düşünceler geçiyordu.Başarısız olacağını, kötü not alacağını, anne ve babasının kızacağını düşünüyordu.

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Ayşegül heyecandan çok kötü olmuştu.Baş parmağını kaldırdı.Mert, bu sırada kötü düşünceleri durduruyoruz.Kötü düşüncelerine dur de.Daha önce denediğiniz gibi bir kaç kez derin nefes al, daha önce düşündüğün iyi düşünceleri aklına getirmeye çalış, dedi.Ayşegül ilk başta kötü düşünceleri durdurup iyi düşünceleri aklına getirmekte güçlük çekti.Fakat, kendi kendine heyecanıma yenik düşmeyeceğim, sınavda başarmak için elimden geleni yapacağım, zaten çalıştım.Bu soruları bildiğimden eminim.Önemli olan soruları anlayabilmem, sorulara kendimi verebilmem, dedi.Ayşegül tüm

bunları düşünürken kendini rahatlamış hissetti.Bu çok güzel bir duyguydu.Sonra gözlerini açtı aferin bana başardım, dedi.

Daha sonra Mert, Onur' a dönerek sıra sende Onur bir kez de sen denemek ister misin ? diye sordu.

Onur da gülerek siz Ayşegül' le denerken ben kendi kendime aynı şeyleri uyguladım zaten, dedi.

Mert şaşırmişti.Peki sen de kötü düşüncelerini iyilerle değiştirmeyi başarabildin mi diye sordu.

Onur ilk başta zorlandığını çünkü kötü düşüncelerin aklına daha çabuk geldiğini; iyi düşünceleri getirmekte de güçlük çektiğini söyledi.

(Danışman, bu oturumda yine bilişsel imgeleme yoluyla kötü düşünceleri iyilerle değiştirmelerini amaçlar.Bunun için gruptaki tüm çocuklardan kendilerini herhangi bir sınavda hayal etmelerini, bu arada akıllarına gelen kötü düşüncelerini durdurmalarını, yerine iyilerini koymalarını ve sınavda hissettiklerini gruba aktarmalarını ister.)

Mert, arkadaşlarına bu günlük bu kadar yeter.Fakat haftaya yine ödeviniz var, dedi.Sizinle bu gün yaptıklarımızı herhangi bir sınavdan önce denemenizi istiyorum.Ayrıca sınavda hissettiklerinizi, aklınızdan geçenleri bir kagıda yazın ki unutmayın.Haftaya bunları konuşuruz dedi.

(Danışman, aynı ödevi gruptaki çocuklara verir.Böylece onların sınav heyecanını yenme çalışmasını bir kez gerçek durumda denemelerini amaçlar.)

Sekizinci Görüşme

Aradan bir hafta geçmişti Mertlerin evinde toplanacakları gün son haftaydı.Yani sınav heyecanını yenme çalışmasının son günüydü.

Ayşegül, artık son basamağa geldik galiba dedi.Mert de anlatın bakalım geçen hafta neler oldu.Ikinizde bir kere heyecanınızı yenmeyi denediniz mi, dedi.

(Danışman, burada çocuklardan tepkilerini alır.Onları tek tek dinler ve egzersiz yaptırır, Öyküye sonra devam eder.)

Sonra da Ayşegül' e senin başarını biliyoruz ama o anda neler düşündüğünü, neler hissettiğini bir de sen anlat istersen dedi. Ayşegül de aslında sözlülerde ne kadar heyecanlandığımı siz de biliyorsunuz. O gün öğretmen sözlü yapmaya başladığın da öleceğim sandım. Sıra bana geliyor du. Yine dilim tutulacaktı konuşamayacaktım. Başaramayacağımı düşünmeye başladım. sonra birlikte yaptıklarımız geldi aklıma. Ben artık sınav heyecanını yenmenin yolunu biliyorum. O zaman kendi kendime denemeliyim, dedim. O anda kötü düşünceleri durdurdum. Arkama yaslanıp derin nefes aldım. Rahatladım iyi düşünceleri aklıma getirmeye çalıştım. Sonra yavaş yavaş sakinleştim. Uzun zamandır ilk defa bir sözlüde öğretmenin sorduğu soruyu doğru düzgün cevapladım. Soruyu anladım. Siz de duydunuz ya öğretmen aferin Ayşegül ne güzel cevapladın dedi. Bana beş verdi. Şimdiye kadar hep çok çalışıyordum ama heyecanımdan bildiğimi gösteremiyordum, çalıştıklarımı anlatamıyordum. Eve gelince anneme babama olayı anlattım. İkisinde çok sevindi. Artık karnedeki notlar düzelecek galibe, Ayşegül. Senin başaracağını zaten biliyorduk dediler. Öyle mutlu oldum ki anlatamam.

Onur ben de Türkçe yazılısında denedim. Heyecanımı yenip kendimi sorulara öyle kaptırdım ki. hepsini yaptım

yazılı bitince de kendi kendimi tebrik ettim ve Onur iyi iş başardın hey başardın dedim, dedi.

Ayşegül ben artık düşüncelerimi kumandası bende olan bir televizyona, sınav sırasında aklıma gelen kötü düşünceleri sevmediğim bir filme, iyi düşünceleride güzel bir filme benzetiyorum, dedi. Nasıl sevmediğim bir filmi televizyonun kumandasına basıp değiştiriyor, iyi bir film buluyorsam, aynısını düşüncelerimle de yapıyorum. Heyecanıma neden olan kötü düşünceleri iyilerle değiştirebiliyorum. Artık kötü düşüncelerin kumandası ben de dedi.

(Danışman, bu sırada gruptaki çocuklardan birer birer kendi deneyimlerini anlatmalarını ister, bu deneyimleri sırasındaki duygularını aktarmalarına fırsat verir.)

Bundan sonra Onur ve Ayşegül için sınavlar işkence değildi. İkisi de artık heyecanlanmaktan korkmuyordu. Heyecanlarının denetiminin kendi ellerinde olduğunu biliyorlardı. Ama ikisi için de yapılması, başarılması gereken önemli bir şey daha vardı. O da tüm bu öğrendiklerini büyük bir sınavda uygulamaktı. Çünkü bu sınav onlar için çok önemliydi.

Mert, o gün ayrılmadan önce arkadaşlarına; ikinizde baştan beri çok emek harcadınız, iyi çalıştınız. Artık sizde benim gibi sınav heyecanınızı yenmeyi öğrendiniz. Ancak, biliyorsunuz gireceğimiz büyük sınava çok az zaman kaldı. Biliyorum, onun için heyecanlanıyorsunuz. Ben de heyecanlanıyorum. Fakat sınav heyecanını yenmenin yolunu hepimiz biliyoruz. Ben hepimizin bu sınavda heyecanımızı kontrol edip elimizden geleni yapacağımızdan eminim, dedi.

Onur ben de dedi. Ayşegül de aynı fikirdeydi. Hepsi kendine güveniyordu.

Sınavdan bir gün önce yine bir araya gelip görüştüler birbirlerine başarılar dilediler.

Sınav günü Onur ile Ayşegül sınava girinceye kadar çok heyecanlıydılar. Kötü düşünceleri bir yana bırakıp iyileri düşünmeye, dikkatlerini sorulara yoğunlaştırmaya başladılar. Sınavda ellerinden geleni yaptılar heyecanlarının onların başarısını engellemesine izin vermediler. Hatta sınavda heyecanlarını bile unuttular ve sınavları iyi geçti.

Sınavdan sonra hemen birbirlerini telefonla arayıp

sınavın nasıl geçtiğini haber verdiler. Uçu de çok mutluydu.Çünkü hiç birisi heyecanına yenik düşmemiştı, hepsi heyecanını yenmeyi başarmıştı.Kendileriyle gurur duyuyorlardı.

Aynı gün Onur ve Ayşegül teşekkür etmek için Mert' e uğradılar.Ikisinin başarısında Mert'in rolü çok büyüktü.O olmasaydı, yardım etmeseydi bu kadar başarılı olamazlardı.

Mert arkadaşlarının gelişine çok sevindi.Arkadaşlar hepimiz birlikte başardık ve iyi bir ödülüde hak ettik.Bu gün bizim günümüz, dilediğimiz gibi eğlenelim dedi.O gün Mertler de gönüllerince başarılarını kutladılar.

(Danışman, bu oturumdan bir kaç gün sonra sınav kaygısı envanterini bir kez daha uygular.)

SINAV TUTUMU ENVANTERİ

İSİM _____ TARİH _____ CİNSİYET K E

YÖNERGE: Aşağıda, insanların kendilerini tanımlamak için kullandıkları bir dizi ifade sıralanmıştır. Bunların herbirini okuyun ve genel olarak nasıl hissettiğinizi anlatan ifadenin sağındaki boşluklardan uygun olanın içini karalayın. Burada doğru ya da yanlış yanıt yoktur. İfadelerin hiçbiri üzerinde fazla zaman harcamadan yazılı ve sözlü sınavlarda genel olarak nasıl hissettiğinizi gösteren yanıtı işaretleyin.

T — K — D —

	hemen hiçbir zaman	bazen	sık sık	hemen her zaman
1. Sınav sırasında kendimi güvenli ve rahat hissedirim.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
2. O dersten alacağım notu düşünmek, sınav sırasındaki başarımlı olumsuz yönde etkiler	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
3. Önemli sınavlarda donup kalırım.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
4. Sınavlar sırasında, birgün okulu bitirip bitiremeyeceğimi düşünmekten kendimi alamam.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
5. Bir sınav sırasında ne kadar çok uğraşırsam kafam o kadar çok karışır	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
6. Sınavlarda kendimi huzursuz ve rahatsız hissedirim.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
7. Önemli bir sınav sırasında kendimi sinirli hissedirim.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
8. Başarısız olma düşünceleri, dikkatimi sınav üzerinde toplamama engel olur	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
9. Bir sınava çok iyi hazırlandığım zamanlar bile kendimi oldukça sinirli hissedirim.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
10. Önemli sınavlarda sinirlerim öylesine gerilir ki midem bulanır.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
11. Bir sınav kağıdını geri almadan hemen önce çok huzursuz olurum.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
12. Önemli sınavlarda kendimi adeta yenilgiye iterim.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
13. Sınavlar sırasında kendimi çok gergin hissedirim.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
14. Önemli bir sınav sırasında paniğe kapılırım	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
15. Sınavların beni bu kadar rahatsız etmemesini isterdim.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
16. Önemli bir sınava girmeden önce çok endişelenirim (kurarım).....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
17. Sınavlar sırasında, başarısız olmanın sonuçlarını düşünmekten kendimi alamam.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
18. Önemli sınavlarda kalbimin çok hızlı attığını hissedirim.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
19. Sınav sona erdikten sonra endişelenmemeye (kurmamaya) çalışır, fakat yapamam.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
20. Sınavlar sırasında öylesine sinirli olurum ki aslında bildiğim şeyleri bile unuturum.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)

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