



**What Obstacles do English Teachers in Turkey Encounter**  
**While Teaching English as a Foreign Language**

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## **Declaration**

I declare that this is solely my personal research work. All sources employed in this project have been properly referred to and documented based on the relevant academic regulations. Individual or organisational contributions and assistance received will also be mentioned in the acknowledgement section. I declare that this work has not been sent to any other academic institution for qualification or assessment. I acknowledge that I take full responsibility of the work and the content is entirely my own intellectual property.

## **Abstract**

The aim of this study is to investigate obstacles that English teachers encounter in Turkey while teaching English as a foreign language to adult learners. The focus of the study was learners' mental mindsets, beliefs, and expectations and other factors that affect language learning. Using qualitative research methods data was obtained from teachers teaching English in Turkey by using open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis became the chosen approach for data analysis, and the themes revealed included: learners' beliefs and expectations, factors affecting thoughts, fears and difficulties, importance of self-regulation and metacognition, effectiveness of practical-life situation learning, external factors interfering with learning, and effective learning methods. The findings emphasise the necessity of knowing learners' experiences to develop an environment where learning could prosper. The study demonstrates the advantages of practising real-world contexts in language teaching to expand learners' interest and their language skills.

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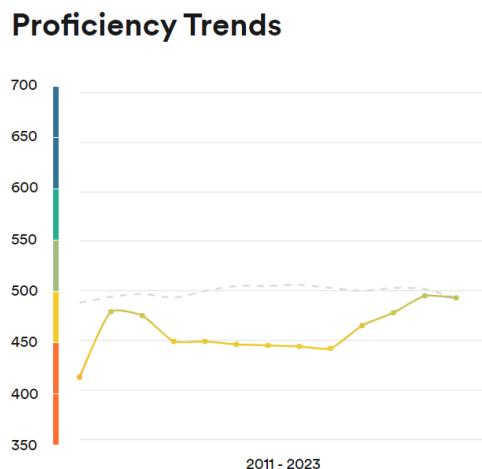
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# **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Background**

The importance of English language learning in adult education among adult learners has been increasing due to its role as an essential tool for global communication, professional development and personal growth (Warriner, 2015). The fact that English is the preferred language used to conduct business, academics and international diplomacy requires individuals to get proficiency in this language to excel in globalised world. According to Altan (2017) globalisation has changed the way business, communication, or education was conducted as in most of the activities English language is the medium of interpersonal relationships. Therefore, English teaching faculty and strategies have gained significance in Turkey. Ellis (2015) agrees that the greatest challenge for tutors is to equip the language learners with the skills and knowledge that they can excel in demographically diverse societies. However, Turkey was ranked very low (66<sup>th</sup> out of 113 countries) in English Proficiency Index in 2023, reflecting low proficiency in the language and there has been moderate improvement in the past ten years (Figure 1) (English Proficiency Index, 2023).



*Figure 1 English Proficiency Index (Turkey) (2023)*

As compared to children who can master language effortlessly, adults find it challenging. Nevertheless, the teaching of English as a foreign language to adult learners is marked by specific difficulties stemming from learners' age, prior language learning experiences, cultural background, and educational settings (Wyatt and Dikilitaş, 2015; Lardiere, 2017). The challenge



of acknowledging the barriers faced by English instructors in Turkey while they teach adults arises from the necessity of raising the quality and effectiveness of language teaching. Linguistic barriers recognition and evaluating the ways to overcome them allow educators to move towards better language acquisition strategies and a more language-competent workforce and society. According to Ellis (2015) SLA (Second Language Acquisition) has brought to light the complexity of the interaction of cognitive, affective, social, and contextual factors in the language learning process, which calls for the examination of learners' beliefs, motivations and strategies. Furthermore, the socio-cultural environment of Turkey directs the way learners think and make expectations in learning. Long (2017) states that cultural norms and societal values that bear historical contexts impact the manner in which learners perceive the learning of language and involvement in the activities of language learning. It is in understanding the socio-cultural factors that are the major prerequisite to design instruction that is cultural-specific and contextually relevant. Further, progress in educational technology and digital platforms for learning have paved the way for new approaches to English language teaching by means of self-learning, collaboration, and practice of the target language in real-life situations (Karademir et al., 2019). Technology-enhanced language learning tools and resources may integrate into instructional practices with a sole purpose to improve learner engagement, motivation and autonomy.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) to adult learner in Turkey brings a handful of complex issues which affect the delivery mode of the language teaching. One of the main problems is the fact that there is a large variety of mental backgrounds, assumptions, and suppositions that adult learners have about language learning (Reyhan, Emre and Stefan, 2021). These individual's beliefs and attitudes can differ greatly which in its turn influences their motivation, involvement, and the way they study the language. According to Lou and Noels, (2020) learning learners' mental mindset is of the utmost importance for teachers to create the most fitting instructional strategies, aligning them with learners' motives and inclinations so as to obtain the best results from the learners. Another important link of the problem statement entails the research of adult learners' previous knowledge and information about foreign language learning. Many adult participants in language classrooms may start the courses with some wrong

ideas about the process of language acquisition or gaps in their knowledge of language learning. These gaps can be detrimental to their learning and performance as they learn the language. It is important for teachers to pinpoint and fix these misconceptions to give individualised aid and differentiated learning experiences. On one hand, many adults undergo confronting their fears, worries, and distrusts when they embark in the process of learning a new language, which can often hinder their progress and confidence. It is key for educators to identify the underlying reasons of these negative emotions as the environment conducive to learning can only be created. Through working with learners to conquer their fears and inhibit their performance, the educator can create a hospitable learning environment that is conducive to risk-taking, experimentation and growth (Juliani and Dafit, 2024). In addition to this, unsuccessful language learning strategies used by adult learners can create major aches in the process of their second language learning journey. Several learners will settle on approaches that are inefficient, frustrated, or unsuitable to specific learning styles and preferences. Identifying and rectifying these inefficient techniques is a cornerstone for instructors to improve teaching methods and guarantee that more valuable learning outcomes are achieved. Also, the role of learner views and ability on metacognition and self-regulation in the language learning process is very critical (Muijs and Bokhove, 2020). Cognitive skills such as setting of goals, monitoring progress, and ongoing reflection on learning strategies are also important as they help learners to take control of their learning and make educated decisions about their language acquisition process.

### **1.3 Aim and Objectives**

The aim of this study is to investigate obstacles that English teachers encounter in Turkey while teaching English as a foreign language to adult learners. For the achievement of this aim, the research objectives of the study are:

- 1- To investigate learners' mental mindset (beliefs and expectations) on language learning
- 2- To examine learners' previous knowledge on language learning in terms of the gaps or inaccuracies, misunderstandings, and false assumptions
- 3- To ascertain the reasons why learners', have fears, frustrations and mistrust during the learning process.
- 4- To identify ineffective learning strategies applied by learners.

- 5- To determine the impact and importance of learners' awareness on their metacognition and self-regulation
- 6- To examine learners' transfer of learning to activate acquired knowledge.
- 7- External factors impacting foreign language learning in adult learners in Turkey.

#### **1.4 Research Rationale**

The rationale behind conducting this research is to underline the importance of English language proficiency in a globalised world and the problems of English teachers in Turkey in the context of teaching English as a foreign language to adult learners. Turkey, which is positioned at the junction of Europe and Asia, is in an extraordinary situation that is fully dependent on English proficiency as a country with high expectations from education, work, and social life. While learning English becomes an important part of adults' daily life in Turkey, the learners can face some barriers which can impact their learning process negatively. The first important point of this research is to reach understanding of the insufficiencies encountered by English teachers in Turkey. Even though there is already research on methods of language learning and teaching, there is a paucity of studies narrowing down on the specific problems of the English teachers in Turkey concerning their adult students. This research will search for these problems in more detail and therefore, with the aim of providing suggestions that could be helpful for the provision of more effective teaching strategies and support platforms in an attempt to address the specific learning needs of adults in Turkey.

The scope of this study includes factors resulting in existing barriers, e.g., the learners' conceptions, expectations, and past experiences in language learning. Learning the attitudes of adult learners and the misconceptions they might have about language learning is very vital because this will enable the design of instructional methods that not only address these beliefs but also provide the adult learners with a positive learning experience (Suprpto, 2020). Educators can help learners by identifying inappropriate learning strategies and solving their doubts, thereby correlated with the development of supportive environments that favor engagement and the acquisition of the foreign language. Secondly, this research is to explore how learners' perception of metacognition and self-regulation are in the language learning process. Metacognitive awareness and self-regulatory skills are the driving force for learners' empowerment to take the control of their learning process and formulate successful study

strategies (WONGDAENG, 2022). This way educators can motivate learners achieve their goals by helping them find solutions to problems and adjust their strategies to their specific needs. Furthermore, this research aims at investigating the contribution of foreign language learning among adults in Turkey by taking into account of various external factors. Therefore, factors including the availability of resources, the opinion that the dominant society has towards language learning and cultural practices can play a crucial role in shaping a learner's motivation, engagement and achievements as well. By identifying and addressing these external factors, educators will be able to create more inclusive and supportive environments that take into account the diversity of the adult learners.

### **1.5 Dissertation Structure**

The dissertation is composed of five comprehensive chapters. In Chapter 1, the Introduction discusses the background about the significance of second language learning and factors motivating adults to learn second language. Furthermore, problem statement, research rationale, research aim, and objectives are also given in this chapter. In Chapter 2, the literature review explores the existing literature on language learning, teaching approaches, and English teachers' challenges in Turkey. Chapter 3, methodology covers research design, data collection methods, sampling strategy, and analysis approach that are applied in the research that maintain transparency and robustness in the research process. The Chapter 4, Results and Findings, provides a thematic analysis of the data collected with particular attention to the beliefs, expectations, fears, frustrations and the impact of external factors on the learners' language learning journey. Lastly, chapter 5 provides the conclusion that reviews the critical findings that discuss the summary of the research and provide valuable suggestions for future studies for English teachers and policymakers.

## **CHAPTER 02 – LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter of the research is presented as an overview of previously published information regarding the topic and summarises the relevant sources. In further, the chapter of the literature review significantly demonstrates an understanding and knowledge that critically evaluates the context and synthesises it into a cohesive summary of previously available research articles. Within the empirical research, the section of literature review substantially offers a comprehensive foundation and overview of relevant information from the past. Overall, this chapter critically follows to understand the current state of knowledge regarding the research topic, highlights the knowledge gap and illustrates theoretical underpinnings under the theoretical framework.

### **2.2 Beliefs and Expectations in Language Learning**

Gilakjani and Sabouri (2017) critically defined belief as a psychological underpinning associated with propositions, premises and understandings regarding the new world. In every discipline, belief is the central construct which deals with the behaviour and learning of humans. The research of Al Bataineh (2019) determined that in order to understand the world, belief performs a significant role and instrumentally assists individuals in defining behaviour. Language learning is one of the subjects which deeply indicates the expectations and beliefs of learners (Mokhtari 2020; Lai 2019). In further, Alhamami (2019) illustrated that understanding the learner's beliefs is important to understand the approaches of learners towards language learning and better use the strategies and analyse the impact of mindset, culture and self-efficacy of learners on language learning.

#### **2.2.1 Impact of Psychological Mindset of Learners on Language Learning**

The mindset of the learner usually considers new opportunities and experiences to learn and better absorb the information of the surroundings. Within this context, the research of Wang et al. (2021) significantly supports the framework which shows the mindset of learners' language and its influence on perception. Shao et al. (2020) in their research asserted that the learner mindset has a significant impact on language learning motivation. Concerning the study of Lou and Noels (2019) it was attributed that learners with a fixed mindset believe that they have fixed

traits of language abilities. Irrespective of this, some learners argued that the growth mindset assists in understanding abilities and can be developed through persistence and effort. Overall, it was found that psychological mindset and emotions dynamically affect the learning of students through sustaining and generating student interest and activating different modes of hindering, facilitating, and managing the attentional process, informational process, using cognitive abilities and facilitating self-efficacy of learning.

### **2.2.2 Impact of Self-Efficacy of Learners on Language Learning Success**

Self-efficacy is defined as a belief in the individual and their ability to attain a goal or complete the task through controlling the social environment, performance, behaviour and motivation (Dincer et al., 2019). In the context of language learning, the study of Lai (2019) determined that learners with high self-efficacy have more tendencies to set more challenging goals and prove their abilities in language learning. In further, Bai and Wang (2023) in their research embraced that the aspects of self-efficacy dynamically influence the persistence of learners and influence achievements. Concerning the above context, it was found that self-efficacy performs a crucial role in shaping the achievement, efforts and persistence of learners, as individuals with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to participate in learning language (Lei et al., 2022).

### **2.2.3 Impact of Learner's Culture on Language Learning**

Culture is presented as a significant manifestation of human intellectual achievement and is collectively regarded as a belief and art (Shao et al., 2020). Referring to the aspect of culture, the study of Dewaele et al. (2019) demonstrated that culture significantly influences language learning by shaping the communication strategies, perception and motivation of learners. In further, it was also illustrated that cultural integration dynamically promotes cross-cultural understanding, enhances communicative competency, considers inclusivity and promotes the environment of language learning (Lou and Noels 2019). Culture is directly associated with the language in the context of sentence construction and grammatical principles and also has unique cognitive processes, social systems and cultural norms (Alhamami 2019). Concerning linguistic principles, it is important to understand the culturally specific context of a particular culture, promote effective language acquisition and overcome misconceptions regarding learning knowledge.

## **2.3 Knowledge and Misconceptions of Learners Regarding Language Learning**

Language learning is largely associated with various knowledge and misconceptions. The study of Marshall and Moore (2018) determined that the perception of learners often includes the thoughts and concepts perceived by learners in learning situations. However, Wang et al. (2021) critically argued that significant knowledge about language learning substantially encompasses a broad spectrum of experiential, cognitive and linguistic factors used in the learning process. Overall, knowledge regarding language learning is widely dependent upon the concepts, exposure, different practices and strategies (Gilakjani and Sabouri 2017; Shao et al., 2020).

### **2.3.1 Knowledge of Learners Regarding Language Learning**

In the context of language learning, learners consider cognitive factors which encompass different skills and strategies of learning which include memory capacity and problem-solving skills (Qian and Lehman 2017). Within this aspect, the utilisation of cognitive resources efficiently performs a significant role in internalising linguistic information and enhancing the learning process through regulating learning behaviour and adapting different learning tasks. However, the study of Scovel (2021) argued that the past experiences of learners further influenced language learning under the consideration of attitudes, motivation, failure and success. Referring to this context, the study of Dincer et al. (2019) determined understanding previous knowledge regarding language learning is significant for addressing misconceptions, gaps and inaccuracies and obtaining more successful outcomes related to language learning.

### **2.3.2 Misunderstandings of Learners Regarding Language Learning**

It was found that misconceptions are beliefs which specifically contradict the scientific evidence (Grover and Basu 2017). De Wit (2017) in their study identified that language cannot be described with generalisability because of its complexity. Lei et al. (2022) highlight one of the misconceptions that learning a second language requires unique skills and learners are required to understand the pronunciation patterns, vocabulary usage and grammar rules. Similar to this concept, Marshall and Moore (2018) in their research highlighted that to learn a new language, the researcher required the same skills and language aptitude. In further, under the concept of

language aptitude, Bai and Wang (2023) determined that some people have a high capacity to learn new languages because of a good memory and, the ability to recognise patterns.

### **2.3.3 Significant Strategies Used To Overcome Misconceptions Regarding Language Learning**

Various practices and strategies are required to overcome the misconceptions regarding language learning. Gilakjani and Sabouri (2017) asserted that to clarify misunderstandings, it is significant to offer unique and authentic learning experiences which explicitly promote a deep level of understanding regarding the usage of language. In further, to correct the misconceptions, it is crucial to encourage peer feedback, self-assessment and reflective practices (Lei et al., 2022).

## **2.4 Factors Influencing Fear, Frustration, and Mistrust in Language Learning**

### **2.4.1 Impact of Stress and Anxiety on Fear, Frustration, and Mistrust in Language Learning**

Through analysing and evaluating the study of Rahman et al. (2017), it was found that language learners usually showed nervousness, apprehension, anxiety and stress when learning a new language. In further, the research of Al Bataineh (2019) determined that many language learners experience anxiety intuitively and produce a negative impact. Scovel (2021) illustrated that the anxiety related to language substantially originated from the self-related cognition and self-perception of learners with the differences in target language cultures and self-identity. Concerning the social context, language anxiety is usually experienced by learners because of extrinsic motivators.

### **2.4.2 Impact of Language Learning Environments on Trust and Motivation of Learners**

Various studies illustrated that through encouraging and modelling purposeful rules and safe environments, learners feel more motivated to do things right and efficiently invested in their learning goals (Mokhtari 2020; Lai 2019). Researchers further indicated that an effective learning environment can produce a dynamic impact on acquiring language and the quality of



learning. Across all learning institutions, the results of Qian and Lehman (2019) embraced that a positive learning environment is positively associated with the motivation of learners. The learning environment is one of the fundamental factors in learning a language and this excitement and feeling efficiently offered great enthusiasm and motivation for students to learn different languages in a better way (Dewaele et al., 2019; De Wit 2017).

### **2.4.3 Strategies for Mitigating Fears and Frustration in Language Learning**

It was observed that emotions and cognitive abilities are closely interrelated in different ways. It is significant to use effective strategies for coping with the anxiety related to language learners. Grover and Basu (2017) determined that it is important for learners to develop a positive mindset and focus on progress, achievements and strengths to overcome their failures, fear and frustration. In further, the research of Gilakjani and Sabouri (2017) illustrated that the best strategy for eliminating the misconceptions and mitigating fears and frustration is crucial to prioritise the process of investigation, analysis and learning over the outcome. The fears and frustration can also be mitigated by using metacognitive and cognitive strategies which support each other and enhance the particular language skill tasks (Lei et al., 2022).

## **2.5 Ineffective Language Learning Strategies**

### **2.5.1 Lack of Practical Application of Language in Real-Life Use**

Effective learning of different languages is a rewarding and exciting endeavour which adversely associated with ineffective learning strategies (Csisér and Kontra 2020). Within this context, lack of regular practice and application is a mistake made by language learners and they did not make a consistent practice schedule. The study by Nguyen and Terry (2017) determined that learning a language requires dedicated and regular practice which assists in retaining information better and progressing faster. In further, the research of Shi et al. (2017) demonstrated that for learning languages, practical application and conversation practice is a significant practice which assists learners in improving the skills of listening and speaking in order to understand cultural nuances, enhance vocabulary, develop fluency and build their confidence. However, the research of Ssyska et al. (2017) asserted that the limited use of

learned language might impact skill development and communication effectiveness. In further, limited exposure to native speakers and communication might impact language learning.

### **2.5.2 Lack of Consistency and Discipline**

Consistent language learning is a significant tool specifically used for acquiring proficiency in a new language and assisting to maximise consistent practice and benefit. The research of Atmowardoyo (2018) illustrated that language acquisition potentially requires regular dedication and practice but various learners experience challenges in developing consistent and regular practices of speaking different languages. It was observed that without discipline and commitment, learners usually experience difficulty in making significant progress and retaining knowledge about language learning (Csisér and Kontra 2020; Meena 2020). In order to overcome the challenges, learners must implement strategies to cultivate the aspects of consistency and discipline and practice daily routines to assist in maintaining progress and momentum. Generally through developing consistency and discipline in language learning, learners can enhance their language learning practices.

### **2.5.3 Lack of Comprehensive Vocabulary and Fear of Making Mistakes**

It was found that building a strong vocabulary is significant for fluency in language. Through analysis, the study of Abdulla and Al-Asawi (2024) determined that some learners usually focus on solely grammar and neglect vocabulary expansion. In further, the study by McDaniel and Einstein (2020) determined that a robust vocabulary contributed to improving the overall areas of communication. Lack of comprehensive vocabulary adversely impacts the students in different ways and adversely reflects their language proficiency (Csisér and Kontra 2020; Abdulla and Al-Asawi 2024). Through analysing and evaluating the research of Miranda and Wahyudin (2023), it was also observed that the fear of making mistakes is another barrier. However, learners usually embrace mistakes as an opportunity for learning and growth. It was examined that language acquisition involves making mistakes, errors and trials which negatively impact language abilities, confidence and perfectionistic tendencies. Overall, ineffective strategies can be further improved through enhancing learner awareness metacognition and self-regulation in language learning (Rahman et al., 2017).

## **2.6 Impact of Learner's Awareness on Metacognition and Self-Regulation in**

## **Language Learning**

### **2.6.1 Importance of Metacognitive Awareness for Language Learning Success**

Concerning this aspect, metacognition refers to the concept of cognition which focuses on developing consistent knowledge and decision-making (Rahman et al., 2017). For effective and successful language learning, it was highlighted that metacognition and self-regulation perform a significant role and assist in understanding the learning process of individuals. The analysis of self-regulation aspects refers to the ability to monitor, control, and adjust these processes to achieve learning goals (Shi et al., 2017; Ssysska 2017). However, the exploration of Mumtas and Latif (2017) explored that increased awareness and application of various cognitive strategies can greatly enhance language learning outcomes and make significant decisions regarding various learning practices.

In order to identify the significant areas of improvement, previous research evidence asserted that metacognition and self-regulation enable learners to reflect on various strengths and language learning strategies (Hromalik and Kossalka 2018). In order to further evaluate these aspects, the study of Mitsea and Drigas (2019) demonstrated that language learners need to understand that they need to retain their comprehensive vocabulary through visual aids irrespective of repetitive memorisation. Concerning the study of Davis et al. (2018), it was observed that the conceptualisation of metacognition is considered for foreign or second language education literature as a theoretical framework and assists in the teaching and learning process. Overall, it was found that metacognitive awareness allows learners to identify and overcome obstacles more effectively regarding learning a language.

### **2.6.2 Influence of Self-Regulated Strategies in Language Acquisition**

Regarding the field of language learning and teaching, irrespective of having wide-ranging literature regarding metacognition, self-regulated strategies are limited. It was found that self-regulation empowers learners to manage the learning process and potentially optimise learning-related processes (Sheng et al., 2020). In further, the study of Meena et al. (2020) demonstrated that language learners crucially employ self-regulation techniques to improve and modify their cognitive processes. However, self-regulation is also practised as a managerial

technique which efficiently employed to promote learning practices. Referring to the study of Anthonysamy et al. (2020), it was found that metacognitive, cognitive and resource management techniques are significant self-regulatory techniques which assist in supporting the quantity and quality of learning.

In the context of self-regulation, learners through utilising self-regulatory strategies practice their communication and language and enhance their level of proficiency. The study by McDaniel and Einstein (2020) determined that self-regulated learners exhibit greater resilience and motivation in the face of challenges. Through analysing the key findings of Nguyen and Terry (2017), it was also observed that some language learners may not be fully aware of metacognitive and self-regulation strategies. However, this limitation towards awareness led towards frustration and misconceptions about the learning process. Thus, it is important for learners to develop various self-regulation skills and meta-cognitive practices.

### **2.6.3 Promoting Language Learning Through Reflective Practice**

It was examined that the reflective practice substantially role to reflect the particular beliefs learning and teaching critically analyse the strengths and weaknesses and undertake significant responsibility in order to improve the practices and actions (Miranda and Wahyudin 2023). The research of Abdulla and Al-Asawi (2024) demonstrated that promoting language learning through reflective practice involves encouraging learners to systematically evaluate their learning experiences, identify areas for improvement, and set goals for future development. It was also found that reflective practices significantly contribute to enhancing metacognitive awareness and self-regulation skills, leading to more effective and autonomous language learning (Csisér and Kontra 2020).

However, the study of Atmowardoyo et al. (2018) illustrated that learners usually consider reflective activities and practices in order to incorporate regular opportunities which reflect their strategies, challenges and progress. Learners usually consider the practice of reflection to attain their respective language learning goals contribute to generating feedback and provide guidance to support the reflective practices of learners (Mumtas and Latif 2017; Mitsea and Drigas 2019). Concerning the context of learners, it was also investigated that reflection encourages learners to set specific goals which help them to identify the strategies and resources and overcome the areas of weaknesses (Sheng et al., 2020). Subsequently, it was critically

determined that reflective learning practices are significantly used to overcome the respective challenges and effectively attain the language learning goals.

## **2.7 Transfer of Learning in Language Acquisition**

Within the field of learning and education, Language transfer significantly facilitates or hinders language acquisition and further depends upon the number of differences and similarities between the two languages. The research conducted by Susanto and Nanda (2018), illustrated that language transfer significantly provides knowledge and new learning in order to promote positive information for students. However, in language acquisition, the transfer of learning particularly refers to the application of strategies, skills and knowledge to facilitate the acquisition of learning language (Shang and Qin 2018). In the context of positive transfer, the acquired linguistic skills and knowledge facilitate the learning of a new language. In order to facilitate the learning of a new language, learners might transfer this knowledge to the acquisition of a second language, aiding comprehension and production (Hromalik and Kossalka 2018). However, it was also found that the native language significantly leads towards rapid or immediate acquisition and promotes the targeted language.

In order to evaluate the aspects of negative transfer, it was observed that it usually occurs when differences between languages dynamically lead towards interference or errors in learning (Rahman et al., 2017). However, it was also observed that the transfer of learning dynamically increases the speed of the learning process. Analysing the study of Davis et al. (2018) asserted that with respect to the native language, learners usually have effective comprehension skills which role to recognise the differences and similarities between the languages. The critical analysis of the research of Rahman et al. (2017) it was also demonstrated that learners can leverage the transfer of learning by helping learners recognise similarities and differences between languages. Concerning this negative transfer of learning, it was observed that it also provides opportunities for practice and reinforcement and encourages the application of previously acquired skills and knowledge to new linguistic contexts (Anthonysamy et al., 2020). Thus, the overall findings revealed that the transfer of learning is important for language learning because it makes it easier to apply previously learned skills and information to new language contexts.

## **2.8 External Factors Affecting Language Learning**

### **2.8.1 Socioeconomic Status and Language Learning Opportunities**

After evaluating and analysing different language groups, it was determined that people usually use more formal language and have more access towards education with the proper use of grammar and complex vocabulary by people who belong to lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Connor et al., 2020). In regards to this, the study of Fan et al. (2020) asserted that socioeconomic status substantially impacts the opportunities for language learning through accessing resources and developing a language environment. The key findings of Jensen et al. (2019), presented that children who have a low socioeconomic status tend to receive less high-quality and high-quantity language experience which affects the development of language processing, grammar and development of vocabulary.

In order to investigate more about socioeconomic status, the findings of Nguyen and Terry (2017) were investigated which illustrated that within the Socioeconomic Status group, various differences exist regarding the quality and amount of parents' speech to the children and relate them to the language development of children within the low Socioeconomic Status population. Considering the language learning programs, socioeconomic disparities in the educational system potentially increase the inequalities and often lack of resources. Similar to this context and under the consideration of these disparities, the study by McDaniel and Einstein (2020) highlighted that significant efforts are needed to provide access to high-quality learning resources for families, and support for language-rich environments can help mitigate the effects of socioeconomic status on language development and promote more equitable opportunities for all learners.

### **2.8.2 Technological Influences on Language Learning Accessibility**

In order to evaluate further the flexibility and accessibility, technology provides learners with potential access towards language learning resources anywhere and anytime. It was also highlighted that technology potentially provides learners with access to online language learning applications, interactive platforms and courses as they offer flexibility which allows individuals to learn at their own pace (Sheng et al., 2020). The critical analysis of Connor et al. (2019), asserted that interactive language learning platforms and applications often incorporate multimedia elements and gamification which make the learning process more engaging.

The findings of Shang and Qin (2018), determined that technology allows to promotion of personalised learning experiences, and overcomes the specific weaknesses and strengths in language acquisition. Investigating and evaluating the research of Lou and Noels (2019) demonstrated that technological advancement is greatly influenced by personalised, flexible and convenient approaches for learners. However, the research of Susanto and Nanda (2020) argued that technology substantially enables adaptive and personalised learning approaches and assists in overcoming learner proficiency levels, preferences and learner needs. Subsequently, it was explored that the technological influences on language learning accessibility have transformed the landscape of language learning, making it more inclusive, and dynamic (Abdulla and Al-Asawi 2024).

### **2.8.3 Role of Social Support Networks in Language Acquisition**

In order to further explore the context of language acquisition, it was found that social support networks perform a crucial role in language acquisition and provide opportunities for learners related to motivation, feedback and interaction (Sheng et al., 2020). It was highlighted that different social support networks contribute to promoting the language learning process. In order to identify similar aspects the research of Maslan et al. (2023) illustrated that social support networks efficiently provide significant opportunities through collaborative activities, discussions and conversation. It was also highlighted that the interaction between proficient learners and native speakers was found they significantly expose language learners to promote the authentic use of language and assist them in developing communication skills, comprehension and fluency (Davis et al., 2018). In discussion with the above knowledge, it was also examined that social support networks significantly offer accountability, encouragement and motivation which are essential for maintaining commitment and enthusiasm in language learning. Concerning the crucial findings of Fan et al. (2020), asserted that the network of social support promotes positive reinforcement from teachers and peers in order to achieve language learning goals and overcome challenges. Discussing these key facts, the analysis of the previous research of García-Péres et al. (2021) presented that social support networks can facilitate cultural understanding and integration, providing learners with insights into the cultural nuances and context of language learning.

## **2.9 Theoretical Frameworks in Language Learning: Understanding**

## **Approaches and Perspectives**

### **2.9.1 Behaviourist Theory**

Under the aspects of theoretical framework, the behaviourist theory significantly presents the idea which focuses on the behaviour of individuals which includes interpretations, expectations and assumptions while interacting with the environment (Shang and Qin 2018). The research of Miranda and Wahyudin (2023) in their study determined that the behaviourist theory is specifically based on the idea that behaviour is associated with conditioning, interaction and environment. This theory substantially illustrated that language learning occurs through habit formation, reinforcement and stimulus-response association. Through analysing this context of language acquisition, the theory significantly implies focusing on environmental factors and observable behaviour which assist in language development (Connor et al., 2020). This theory further implies to promotion of repetitive practices, exercise and drills which might be further supported through reward and praise. However, this behaviourist theory further supported to simplify the complexity of language learning and supports the process involves the formation of stimulus-response associations, where specific language cues trigger automatic linguistic responses (Hromalik and Kossalka 2018).

### **2.9.2 Cognitive Learning Theory**

Cognitive learning theory significantly assists in developing exceptional insight and focuses on the idea which leads individuals towards the arousal of certain beliefs, thoughts and emotions and promotes adaptive behaviour and healthy emotions (Anthonysamy et al., 2020). Through critically evaluating the context of this research, it was found that this cognitive learning theory considers the role of mental processes in language acquisition. The analysis of the aspects of language learning illustrated that the cognitive learning theory is actively associated with active mental engagement, construction of meaning and problem-solving practices (Rahman et al., 2017; Jensen et al., 2019). It was examined that this cognitive learning theory actively implies internalising and processing language rules, patterns, and vocabulary through cognitive processes such as attention, memory, and comprehension. In the analysis of the research of Lou and Noels (2019), it was observed that the activities that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and language production are central to cognitive language teaching



methodologies. It was observed that this cognitive learning theory widely role in constructing knowledge and understanding, leading to deeper language learning experiences.

### **2.9.3 Socio-Cultural Theory**

Through investigating the theoretical aspects of Social Culture Theory, it was found that it includes knowledge which crucially generated through promoting cultural and social activities where systems, artefacts and tools mediate interaction, action and thinking (García-Péres et al., 2021). However, this sociocultural theory has an importance in shaping and developing individuals and demonstrates them about sociocultural, learning and cognitive functions. It was found that the theory implies promoting language acquisition which occurs through participation, collaboration and social interaction of learners in cultural practices. In relation to this context, it was found that language is not only a tool for communication but also a means of accessing cultural knowledge and social identity (Mumtas and Latif 2017). The observational study of Fan et al. (2020) demonstrated that sociocultural approaches to language learning emphasise the importance of meaningful communication, social interaction, and immersion in authentic language contexts. Subsequently, this theory significantly highlights the dynamic relationship between language, culture, and social interaction in the process of language acquisition.

### **2.10 Influence of Literature on Instrumentation of Methodology**

Through critically analysing and evaluating the previous research findings of the study, it was observed that this literature efficiently provides a theoretical framework, empirical evidence, and practical insights that inform the development and implementation of research methodologies and instructional practice. Concerning the context of language learning, this literature's findings perform a significant role in developing a comprehensive understanding of previous evidence with findings, methodologies and theories. However, these literary evidences regarding the research evidence, studies, theoretical context and offer valuable insights into language acquisition theories, effective teaching strategies, and the cultural contexts of language learning.

In further, these literature findings also develop insight and designed structured approaches associated with the learner's needs and evidence-based practice. These literature findings further imply facilitating language learning practices under the consideration of valuable

resources. It was found that this literature crucially promotes critical thinking, language proficiency and intercultural competence among learners. Through the critical analysis and evaluation of previous literature, it was found that the literature regarding language learning assists in promoting the practical implementation of various language teaching approaches. Overall, the literature further illustrated information about learning practices which assist in creating research paradigms, data collection and data analysis.

### **2.11 Chapter Summary**

Subsequently, this chapter critically summarises the previous information and knowledge regarding the beliefs and expectations related to language learning and determines the impact of psychological mindset, self-efficacy and culture of learners on language learning. In further, this chapter also illustrates knowledge regarding the misconceptions and knowledge of learners regarding language learning and illustrates the significant strategies and practices used to overcome the misconceptions regarding language learning. This chapter of the literature review further highlights the factors which influence fear, frustration and mistrust in language learning and also demonstrates effective strategies to mitigate frustration and fear related to language learning. In the context of ineffective learning strategies, this chapter highlighted the importance of metacognition and self-regulation and asserted some external factors which impact language learning. Overall, this chapter also embraced theoretical findings and concepts related to language learning in order to understand relevant perspectives and approaches used for language acquisition.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

Research methodology refers to the general systematic process that researchers adhere to in the process of obtaining, analysing, and interpreting information of a given topic (Bhattacharyya, 2006). Alternatively, it may refer to the various techniques, procedures, and research tools that are in use in drawing research-based conclusions (Davidaviciene, 2018). The most common methods of research include quantitative research, qualitative research, and mixed-methods research, whereas other common methods include case studies, experiments, surveys, and so forth. The strengths and limitations for each methodology are as per the research purpose, and hence the researcher has to make a choice for one method (Panday and Panday, 2021). Research methodology is of great importance in the research process as it assures the validity, reliability, and credibility of research findings attained through a well-structured approach. With the use of well-defined methodology researchers can save time, budget, and resources since data collection and analysis methods are used most effectively (Mutherjee, 2019). Essentially, the research methodology is a strong pillar toward producing high-quality and credible research findings that will add value to the pool of knowledge already in place on the subject under consideration.

### **3.2 Research Objectives**

Present study aims to investigate obstacles that English teachers encounter in Turkey while teaching English as a foreign language to adult learners. For the achievement of this aim, the research objectives of the study are:

- To investigate learners' mental mindset (beliefs and expectations) on language learning
- To examine learners' previous knowledge on language learning in terms of the gaps or inaccuracies, misunderstandings, and false assumptions
- To ascertain the reasons why learners', have fears, frustrations and mistrust during the learning process.
- To identify ineffective learning strategies applied by learners.
- To determine the impact and importance of learners' awareness on their metacognition and self-regulation

- To examine learners' transfer of learning to activate acquired knowledge.
- External factors impacting foreign language learning in adult learners in Turkey.

### **3.3 Research Methodology**

For the present study 'Research Onion' introduced by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016) is adopted to make methodological choices to achieve research aim and objectives. Research onion facilitates the researchers to select research processes and methods systematically. The first layer of the onion encapsulates the most essential basic layer that involves the research philosophy. Later, research approaches (inductive, deductive or abductive) is selected according to research type and nature. In the next layer, the research strategy or design that is chosen for the study, such as experiments, surveys, case studies, or ethnography are selected (Iovino and Tsitsianis, 2020). Time horizon layer considers the time span of the research that is being done; it could be either cross-sectional or longitudinal in nature. The decisions under the data collection layer focus on the approaches through which the data will be collected, such as the use of interviews, questionnaires, observations, or document analysis. Finally, the last layer requires decisions that the researcher finally makes about specific details of the study, like sample size, data collection tools, and context of the research. The metaphor of research onion is used to elucidate that the research-decision is layered, with each layer influencing decisions made at another layer (Tajvidi et al., 2015). Considering each layer of the research-onion would help in designing a complete and comprehensive research project, which would be a well-thought-of design and could help align it with one's goal and objectives.

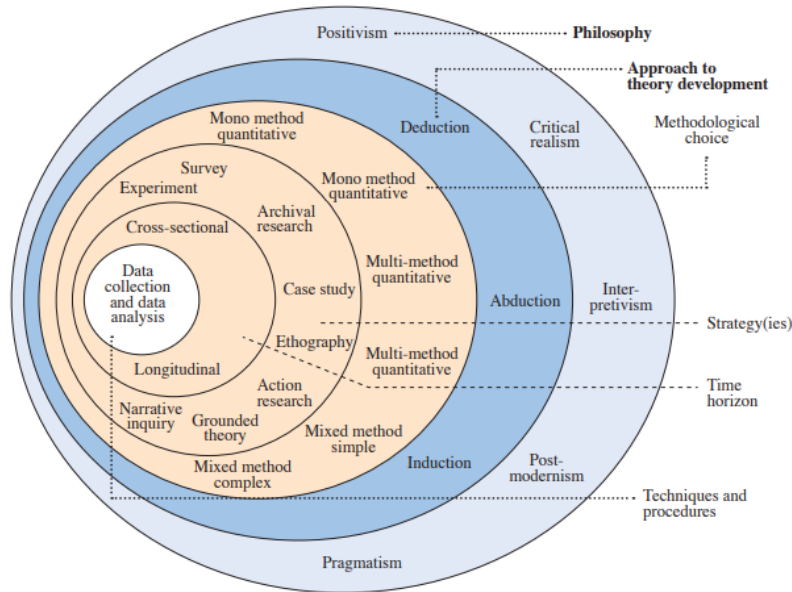


Figure 2 Saunders Research Onion (Melnikovas, 2018)

The present study used the research onion framework, as it contains all the relevant aspects related to the research process, right from the broad philosophical stance at the outer layer to the actual techniques for data collection at the inner layers. Thus, research onion facilitates following up on each component of the study. According to Melnikovas (2018) Saunders' research onion is a flexible model that fits different research contexts and disciplines. It is selected for present study as researchers can modify and tailor the approach to fit specific research questions, methods, and goals. Tajvidi et al. (2015) agree that research onion is clear enough in a manner that it lays the relationships and the organisation of various things in a study very clearly. However, it is critiqued for some limitations as well. According to Iovino and Tsitsianis (2020) research onion offers a linear approach to research processes which is not possible in all types of research. Furthermore, there is less emphasis on reflexivity and flexibility in its rigid structure.

### **3.4 Research Philosophy**

Research philosophy is the set of beliefs, principles, and assumptions guiding the approach of the researcher to the conduction of research. The philosophy affects the kind of research methods, the techniques for collecting research data, and data analysis procedures that the researcher will employ (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020). Research philosophy is an exploration

of knowledge nature, the role of the researcher in relation to knowledge creation, and the relationship between the researcher and the research subject. There are three core types of research philosophies: positivism, interpretivism, and realism. "Knowledge," under positivism, is objective, based on observable reality, and quantifiable (Ryan, 2018). The positivist approach perceives research that should reveal general laws and regularities to be discovered by systematic observation and measurement. The approach particularly emphasises applying deductive reasoning, hypothesis testing, and quantitative data analysis techniques. The basic assumption underpinning positivist approaches is that reality exists independently of the will of the researcher and is knowable through empirical inquiry.

The epistemological assumption behind interpretivism is that the basis of reality is subjective, and, therefore, social phenomena have to be researched from the standpoint of the people involved in them. The research undertaken by the researchers under the research philosophy of interpretivism leads to the the subject matter of research consisting of the meanings, interpretations, and experiences. According to Junjie and Yingxin (2022) human behavior and perception is determined by context, culture, and language. Therefore, study of social phenomenon is not possible without their incorporation. Critical realism is a combination of the two main philosophies—positivism and interpretivism. It suggests that "reality" is observed in such a way as to be multifaceted, multidimensional in nature, containing both observable structures and mechanisms and those which, at a prima facie level, may not be obvious. Interpretivism is selected for present study due to the belief of the researcher that study of social phenomenon is not possible without involvement of researcher. In addition, language learning is completely a subjective issue that can provide diverse experiences, viewpoints, and perceptions, therefore, with the use of interpretivism research philosophy underlying mechanisms, factors, and challenges in second language learning can be identified.

### **3.5 Research Approach**

In general terms, the research approach is a general plan or strategy which the researcher follows while studying a given field. It includes the framework of methodology, data collection methods, and procedure for data analysis through which the research questions or objectives are being met (Goswami, 2010). There are two common approaches to research: the inductive and deductive approaches. The inductive approach indicates moving from specific observations or

data to broad generalisations and theories. This is based on the collection and analysis of qualitative data, which will, in turn, result in the identification of patterns in the data, thereafter the development of a hypothesis or theory. In the inductive approach, a researcher first observes different phenomena, collects data, and then identifies various patterns or themes existing within the data. The conceptual models or theories are further developed, and then tested through more data collection and data analysis. Deductive approach refers to the movement from general theories or hypotheses towards particular observation or data. It is a process that starts with the explanation of a hypothesis or theory about relations between variables, based on knowledge of existing theories. Deductive reasoning is where the hypothesis is followed by testing or experimenting with empirical observation (Heit and Rotello, 2010).

The inductive approach is selected for the present study as it agrees with interpretivism research philosophy and facilitates exploring new aspects of the phenomena, generating theories and provides rich, context-specific insights. The inductive approach is especially appropriate if the study is situated in a case where the purpose is to identify an under-researched phenomenon or even find new insights. According to Hayes, Heit, and Swendsen, (2010) data are collected and analysed within a specific context with the aim of reaching deeper knowledge about the influence of factors, among others, such as organisational structures, culture, and social norms on the phenomenon under study. An advantage of inductive research is that it makes it possible to be open to finding something unexpected and prepare researchers. Inductive approach is most suitable for identifying challenges faced by tutors in teaching second language as learning a second language is a complex topic which can affect background knowledge, experience and belonging to diverse settings or cultural background. Quantification of data would hinder capturing richness and complexity of human experiences, perceptions, or behaviors.

### **3.6 Research Strategy**

The research strategy outlines the general plan or approach to be followed for the research. The research strategy stipulates all procedures and techniques which will be used to answer the research questions effectively or achieve research aims (Engward, 2013). A research strategy entails a number of aspects, inclusive of the choice of research design, data collection methods to be used, data analysis techniques that will apply, and sampling procedures to be followed. Within the inner core layers of the onion model of research by Saunders, the research

strategies are mono-method, multi-method and mixed method. For the present study mono-method qualitative methodological choice has been made to ensure in-depth study of research phenomenon with the use of single method. Grounded theory is selected as a research strategy wherein semi-structured interviews are conducted to collect qualitative data. Grounded theory contributes toward the development of knowledge in getting new insights and an understanding of social phenomena (Heath, 2006). Accordingly, grounded theory broadly applies to exploratory research that details understanding complexity of social phenomena. It helps the researcher understand the phenomenon better by providing profound insight into the underlying patterns, processes, and relationships, which were unrecognised or misunderstood before.

According to Turner and Astin (2021) grounded theory insists on the importance of studying social phenomena within the specified contexts as the type of context explains why the theories developed from it and the findings of the study are valid and relevant to the areas of the study. Grounded theory keeps the perspectives and experiences of the participants at the fore which supports the researcher to get in-depth knowledge about the complexity of human experiences, perceptions, and behavior through interviewing participants, observations for data collection. Grounded theory employs an iterative approach that keeps on using different stages of data collection, analysis, and development of theory and the researchers continue moving between the two sections from the phase of data collection and analysis, whereby what seems to be the emerging concept or theory remains continuously polished and validated (Engward, 2013). In general, grounded theory can be justified as a methodological approach to the construction of theories, conducting exploratory studies of complex phenomena, increasing the possibility for the grasping of the context and the subject's ability to cope with those who are part of the phenomenon under investigation, and concept and theory building in an iterative manner.

### **3.7 Qualitative Data Primary Collection**

The data collection is primary when the researcher collects data directly from the sources despite employing existing information on the topic. However, in secondary data, the researcher access information through government reports, official websites, online databases, and research studies. Interviews, focus-group discussions, observation, field notes, diaries, journals, and document analysis all fall under primary data collection used in qualitative research. Present research is carried out through interviews of the one-on-one or grouped participants, as the



researcher asked open-ended questions that facilitated collecting perspectives, experiences, and opinions. The interviews were conducted face to face, through telephone, or video linkages according to the convenience of participants which allowed for in-depth exploration of topics and provided rich, detailed data.

Semi-structured interviews are opted for the present study due to their characteristic of flexibility. According to Adeoye-Olatunade and Olenik (2021) the open-ended questions or the main topics around which the talk articulate, encourage exploration of unforeseen topics, allowing longer answers without any rigidity. This feature enables the flexibility of capturing rich and detailed data, besides affording participants the opportunity to express themselves at their own convenience. Magaldi and Berleer (2020) agree that semi-structured interviews afford the participants space to offer their details based on the perspective, experience, or opinion. Follow-up questions were also asked to get explanations where the ideas were not clear, and asked for examples or anecdotes where they described either a brighter explanation of the underlying meanings and motivations of the subjects. Semi-structured interviews are very rich in collection of detailed data, as it can be able to capture subtleties and complexities within the research question (Adams, 2015). Since they focus on the participants and views of their world, semi-structured interviews give an idea of the experience of the participants. Engage in open-ended dialogue, active listening, and be able to create an environment of support, non-judgmental in nature, for the participants to feel free in expressing their opinion and feelings (Raworth et al., 2012). This means the approach is participant-centered in such a way that candid and insightful responses are gathered while enhancing trust and rapport between the researcher and the respondents.

A semi-structured design ensured that the elicitation process is perfect to bring out the social, cultural, and contextual factors that construct the experiences and attitudes of the participants about second language learning. The researcher probed issues to do with backgrounds, beliefs, values, and social contexts, which provided a very rich contextual detail for enhancing interpretation and understanding of the data (Magaldi and Berler, 2020). This has been possible through the use of semi-structured interviews in pinning the context to which participants' responses were with respect to their broad social/cultural context. Semi-structured interviews helped the iteration process of data collection and analysis. Learning from early

interviews enabled the researcher to frame subsequent interviews to be made, with a continuously modified interview guide, probing techniques, and analytical frameworks throughout the research process (Adams, 2015). In so doing, such an iterative process allowed for the exploration of the emerging themes, validation of the initial findings, and further development of new lines of inquiry that may advance the depth and rigor of research findings. Semi-structured interviews are also relatively cheaper to administer in comparison to most other qualitative research methods. Open-ended questionnaire is used as research instrument to collect relevant information from the sample population (Appendix A).

### **3.8 Sample and Sampling Strategy**

Considering the research objectives, the study sample population for semi-structured interviews comprised language instructors. Purposive sampling method is employed to recruit most relevant research participants so that rich and valuable information can be collected about the research topic. The language instructors were accessed considering that they can provide useful insight into both the mental set of the learner and the previously acquired knowledge, as well as issues pertaining to learning strategies and transfer of learning. They could also provide information about the effectiveness of some teaching methods or approaches.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

The qualitative data analysis refers to a systematic way of going through, interpreting, making sense, and drawing patterns, themes, or insights of issues emanating from research questions or objectives. The well-known strategies applied in the analysis of qualitative data include thematic analysis, content analysis, discourse analysis, phenomenological analysis, and narrative analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2012). Thematic analysis can be defined as one of the major strategies used to identify and analyse patterns or themes within qualitative data. The collected data is systematically coded, similar codes categorised under themes, and later the interpretation of the underlying meanings or patterns that are contained within each theme (Terry et al., 2017). Thematic analysis is flexible and can be done with any of the approaches used to conduct qualitative analysis research, dependent on whether the themes inform the data or are the basis for existing theoretical frameworks.

Thematic analysis is selected for the current study as it can be applied to all qualitative data in the form of transcriptions of interviews, discussions of focus groups, open responses of surveys, and textual documents. Joffe (2011) elucidates that thematic analysis is very flexible and can be adapted to fit the necessities of any research study, easily accessible to a wide population of researchers, regardless of their discipline or methodological background. Clarke and Braun (2017) add that it is quite straightforward and approachable, thus highly fitting even to any novice researcher or a person new to qualitative research. It does not require highly costly software or lots of training and can be performed through basic tools for qualitative data analysis of manual coding, categorisation, and interpretation. Thematic analysis is advantageous in the way that it allows the researcher to go directly into the data, hence ensuring deeper insight within the context of the research and the phenomena under study (Riger and Sigurvisodottir, 2016).

Thematic analysis is used for examining the richness and complexity of data by capturing both the implicit and explicit themes about perspectives, experiences, and interpretations of the phenomenon under study. Thematic analysis enables transparent and reproducible data analysis and reports the analysis following a clear analytical process (Alhojailan, 2012). Thematic analysis is also amenable, relevant, to the systematic organisation and presentation of data, making the study's findings easily readable and valuable to other researchers. Thematic analysis is open to both inductive and deductive approaches in the data analysis process, making it essentially the most useful in exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, and evaluative research studies among other designs (Neuendorf, 2018; Vaismoradi et al., 2016). It is thus very appropriate to apply in diverse avenues through which qualitative inquiry is undertaken.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

At all stages of the research process during semi-structured interviews and the primary qualitative research, ethical considerations have to be paramount. Before actualising semi-structured interviews, the researcher asked the participants for informed consent and provided full and complete information about the purpose of the study, procedures, potential risks, benefits, the confidentiality to be accorded and the rights of the person as a research participant (Goodwin et al., 2022). The informed consent form in written form was provided to the participants for the assurance that participation of the person is voluntary. The researcher sustained confidentiality, ensuring no access to personal information of the participants by other

unauthorised persons. Identifiable information was taken only if necessary for the research's actual purpose. After data collection, during the data analysis and reporting phase, all the identifiers were either removed or replaced with the appropriate pseudonyms (Stevens, 2013).

The researcher guarded against coercive practices or undue influence that would cajole the participants into unwilling participation. The author of the present study informed the participants that their participation or withdrawal will in no way jeopardise their relationship with the researcher or any other privileges and benefits, including the services that were being extended to them (Halai, 2006). Respect, sensitivity, and professionalism in the treatment of the participants, appreciation of their knowledge, and their contribution, handling issues that may arise, or objections to be made by the participants, all aspects were carefully considered during the research to avoid any violation of ethical considerations. According to Pietila et al., (2020) the researchers must try to build an atmosphere of mutual respect and openness that is non-judgmental. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that research participants are saved from all kinds of physical and psychological harm or discomfort. This involved avoiding topics that were sensitive or could arouse undue distress unless it's really a must for the purpose of the research, giving appropriate support or referral information to participants whenever any of the questions were to raise their level of distress, and monitoring their general well-being through the period of the study (Roberts, 2015). In this relation, potential impacts that this research could have in terms of vulnerability or specific weakening of any population were considered, and measures were taken in this regard. Reflexivity was practiced which involves very careful and critical insight into the positionality of the researcher, possible conflict of interest, and the way it may shape the collection of data, its analysis, and interpretation. The researcher was clear and self-aware of study limitations, offering input from diverse positions.

### **3.11 Limitations**

Although qualitative studies can answer complex social phenomenon, they have quite a number of limitations as qualitative studies depend upon interpretations and subjective judgments, which can highly contribute to researcher biases. This brings a great bias into the finding because the personal beliefs, experiences, and perspectives of the researchers greatly influence the data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Though reflexivity and triangulation help in reducing any bias, it has always been an issue that is present in qualitative research.

Furthermore, in qualitative research a small sample from specific contexts is recruited which at large does not allow generalisation to broader populations or settings (Queiros, Faria, and Almeida, 2017). Unlike quantitative research—whose search, in many cases, aims at statistical representativeness—qualitative research seeks breadth, depth, and places its focus on the understanding of the characteristics of a phenomenon within the context in which they occur. On one hand, while the qualitative findings could transfer meaningfully into similar contexts, the findings are inapplicable to the specific populations identified.

Qualitative research is also time and resource consuming as it involves a lot of time, effort, and expertise in collecting, transcribing, and analysing the already obtained sets of qualitative data. In addition, qualitative research is an involvement in fieldwork, covering field sites through the reflexive analysis of data that provides meaning to the labyrinth of research processes. Qualitative research places importance on rich and detailed descriptions of phenomena, usually at the expense of measurement and quantification (Schonfeld and Massola, 2012). Even though qualitative data can report in detail what the research participant would feel, perceive, and do, at times, they can fall short of the level of accuracy and preciseness presented by quantitative data. Such limitations become quite complex in quantifying the frequency, magnitude, or even the findings' magnitude, and thus limit the researcher's ability to make definite conclusions or infer causality. That means qualitative research does raise ethical issues regarding the participants in relation to confidentiality, privacy, and the need to give informed consent. Some of the ethical dilemmas that will face the researcher include the protection of anonymity of the participants, voluntariness in participants, and what to subject them to in order to reduce harm or discomfort (Kohler, Smith, and Bhakoo, 2022). Integrity in qualitative research requires attention to issues of power, culture, and recognition of potential impacts which the research may bring to the studied people and communities. Quantitative research is more valid and reliable compared to qualitative study. Therefore, in qualitative research, there should be an alternative form of strategies to be able to ensure that it is credible, and trustworthy.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Present study aimed to investigate obstacles that English teacher encounter in Turkey while teaching English as a foreign language to adult learners. The objectives of the study were: to investigate learners' mental mindset (beliefs and expectations) on language learning; to examine learners' previous knowledge on language learning in terms of the gaps or inaccuracies, misunderstandings, and false assumptions; to ascertain the reasons why learners' have fears, frustrations and mistrust during the learning process; to identify ineffective learning strategies applied by learners; to determine the impact and importance of learners' awareness on their metacognition and self-regulation; to examine learners' transfer of learning to activate acquired knowledge and to identify external factors impacting foreign language learning in adult learners in Turkey. The achieve research objectives primary qualitative data was collected from sample population consisting of English language teachers. An open-ended questionnaire was employed as a research instrument to collect data from seven teachers. During the semi-structured interviews not only, the interviews were recorded but important points were noted down. The follow-up questions were employed to explore additional aspects of the research topic. The collected data was analysed with the use of thematic analysis wherein after the familiarisation with the data recurrent ideas, words and phrases were allocated specific codes which were later combined under analytical themes. After data analysis the developed themes are: Expectations and beliefs of learners towards second language learning; factors affecting beliefs of learners towards language learning; fears and frustrations related to second language learning; importance of self-regulation and meta cognition; effectiveness of learning in real life situations; external factors impacting second language learning and effective strategies for second language learning.

### **4.2 Demographic Detail**

Total nine English language teachers were recruited from different gender, age group, and work experience. Due to data saturation further participants were not recruited. There was an increased likelihood that no new information from new participants will be collected, and the data will be highly repetitive. A purposive sampling strategy was employed therefore; interviewees were selected according to pre-determined inclusion/ exclusion criteria. Out of nine interviewees there were seven male and two female participants. Larger number of participants belonged to the age

group 31-35 (4) while only two participants were from 36-40 years and three were from more than 40 years. None of the participants were from the age groups of 20-25 years and 26-30 years. Hence, it can be assumed that the perception of mature teachers has been incorporated in the study which enhances the credibility of responses. Likewise, most the teachers had work experience of more than six years (4) and 5-6 years (4) while only one participant had 3-4 years' experience. Experienced educators possess in-depth knowledge and firsthand experience of teaching second languages to adult learners. Their insights provided a nuanced understanding of the challenges, successes, and strategies involved in language instruction. Research findings based on experienced responses are often more relevant and applicable to real-world teaching contexts. Detailed demographic information about the research participants is given in table 1.

*Table 1 Demographic information about research participants*

Participant	Gender	Age	Work Experience
1	Male	31-35	3-4
2	Male	36-40	5-6
3	Female	31-35	5-6
4	Male	36-40	5-6
5	Male	More than 40 years	More than 6 years of experience
6	Male	31-35	More than 6 years of experience
7	Male	More than 40 years	More than 6 years of experience
8	Female	31-35	5-6
9	Male	More than 40 years	More than 6 years of experience

### **4.3 Thematic Analysis**

Analytical themes extracted using thematic analysis from the collected data are given along with some extractions from interview transcripts. All the identified themes address the objectives of the study. The results of the analysis and themes are further discussed below:

#### **4.3.1 Expectations and beliefs of learners towards second language learning**

Expectations and beliefs of learners towards second language learning is first theme that developed after combining several words and phrases related to this aspect. ‘Difficulty in learning’, ‘interest in the language for professional development’, ‘language proficiency lead to better opportunities’, ‘personal development’, ‘effective communication’, ‘improved interpersonal interaction’, ‘confidence building’, ‘better understanding’, ‘global citizenship’, ‘academic success’ and ‘ positive attitude towards second language learning’ are recurrent phrases and clauses which led to development of this theme. Interview one stated that,

*"Many learners expect English to be challenging, but they also believe that with dedication and the right resources, they can overcome any obstacles in their language journey."*

Respondent six agreed,

*"A significant number of learners are motivated to learn English due to its potential for career advancement. They believe that proficiency in English opens doors to better job opportunities and professional growth on a global scale."*

For participant five,

*"For many learners, learning English is not just about acquiring a new skill; it's about personal growth and self-improvement."*

Interviewee two responded,



*"Learners believe that speaking English can facilitate meaningful exchanges and foster deeper connections with people from different cultures..... Many learners aspire to academic success and believe that proficiency in English is essential for achieving their educational goals. "*

#### **4.3.2 Factors affecting beliefs of learners towards language learning**

The second theme developed after coding several ideas related to determinants of specific beliefs and expectations towards second language learning is 'factors affecting beliefs of learners towards language learning'. The phrases, 'educational background', 'peer influence', 'intrinsic motivation', 'societal attitudes', 'benefits of learning second language', 'different cognitive abilities', 'diversity in learning styles', 'positive learning environment' and 'supportive system' are some of the factors that formulate specific expectations and beliefs towards second language learning. According to interviewee one,

*"Learners' educational backgrounds, including their exposure to language learning methods and pedagogies, can influence their beliefs about language acquisition."*

Interviewee three elucidates,

*"Social factors, such as peer influence and societal attitudes towards language learning, can impact learners' beliefs and expectations. Positive reinforcement from peers and support from social networks may enhance motivation, while negative social pressures can create barriers to learning."*

The respondent nine agreed,

*"Learners who are intrinsically motivated by personal interest or professional aspirations may have higher expectations for success compared to those who lack motivation or clear goals."*

Participant five stated,

*"Learners' beliefs about the relevance and utility of the foreign language in their lives can influence their expectations towards learning. If learners perceive the language as beneficial, they may have higher expectations for proficiency and success."*

For interviewee three,

*"Languages perceived as more challenging may lead to lower expectations for success, while languages perceived as easier may result in higher expectations."*

Interviewee two has encompassed several aspects related to formation of expectations and beliefs in the following words,

*"Individual differences in cognitive abilities and learning styles can affect learners' beliefs and expectations towards language learning.....effective teaching strategies, supportive instructors, and positive learning experiences can foster confidence and high expectations for success."*

#### **4.3.3 Fears and Frustrations related to second language learning**

The third theme, 'fears and frustrations related to second language learning' developed by combining codes related to ideas about 'learning is age limited activity', 'second language proficiency will be equal to native language expertise', 'fear of making mistakes', 'slow learning speed', 'lack of confidence', 'fear of failure' are some of the reasons that can cause anxiety, fear and frustration among adult second language learners. According to interviewee eight,

*"One common misunderstanding among adult learners in Turkey is the belief that age is a barrier to learning English."*

Another aspect is highlighted by interviewee seven in the following words,

*"Many adult learners in Turkey may have a false assumption that achieving fluency in English means speaking the language with native-like proficiency. This misconception can lead to unrealistic expectations and frustration."*

While interviewee five is of the opinion that,

*"Many adult learners in Turkey may have a fear of making mistakes when speaking English, leading to reluctance to practice speaking and participate in conversations."*

For interviewee one,

*"Adult learners may have a fear of making mistakes when speaking or writing in a foreign language, stemming from concerns about being judged or criticised by others. This fear can*

*hinder their willingness to practice.....the sheer amount of information to absorb and the pace of learning can contribute to feelings of frustration and fear of not being able to keep up."*

Research participant four elucidated that,

*"Adult learners may compare themselves to others who appear to be more successful or proficient in learning a foreign language. This comparison can exacerbate feelings of inadequacy and mistrust in their own abilities, leading to frustration and fear of not measuring up....his lack of confidence can lead to fear of failure and reluctance to engage in language learning activities."*

#### **4.3.4 Importance of self-regulation and meta cognition**

The fourth theme of the study is 'importance of self-regulation and meta cognition' which developed by combining following statements from the research participants. According to interviewee one,

*"Self-regulation and metacognition allow adult learners to set clear goals for their language learning journey and develop effective strategies to achieve them."*

For respondent three,

*"By regularly assessing strengths and weaknesses, adult learners identify areas for improvement, and adjusting their learning strategies accordingly, learners can accelerate their learning speed."*

Similar ideas are shared by respondent nine in the following words,

*By prioritising language learning tasks, minimising distractions, and maintaining a consistent study schedule, adult learners can maximise their learning speed and productivity."*

Interviewee eight agrees,

*"Self-regulation and metacognition enable adult learners to adapt their learning approach based on changing circumstances and individual needs. By being flexible and open to trying new methods or approaches, learners can overcome obstacles more quickly and accelerate their*

*learning progress.....self-regulated learners exhibit high levels of motivation and persistence in pursuing their language learning goals.*

#### **4.3.5 Effectiveness of learning in real life situations**

The theme effectiveness of learning in real life situations developed after coding several phrases from interview transcripts such as ‘second language learning in real life situations’, ‘ flexibility in language learning’, ‘adaptability in language use’, ‘ use of language in daily activities, and ‘use of language’. For interviewee one,

*"Language learning in real-life situations provides learners with opportunities to engage in authentic communication with native speakers and other language users."*

According to respondent five,

*"Cultural immersion enhances learners' understanding of the language and promotes intercultural competence, facilitating more effective language learning."*

Research participant eight believes,

*Real-life situations provide learners with rich and diverse contexts for language learning, allowing them to acquire vocabulary, grammar, and language structures in context. By experiencing language in authentic settings, learners develop a deeper understanding of how language is used in everyday communication,*

While respondent three is of the view,

*Engaging in real-world tasks such as ordering food at a restaurant, asking for directions, or participating in social interactions motivates learners to actively use the language and facilitates deeper learning."*

For interviewee four,

*"By interacting with speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds, learners develop flexibility and adaptability in their language usage, enhancing their overall language proficiency...Language learning in real-life situations provides learners with opportunities to overcome communication barriers and develop strategies for effective communication."*

#### **4.3.6 External factors impacting second language learning**

The theme external factors impacting second language learning developed as the result of synthesizing following responses. According to Interviewee one,

*“Access to online resources, language learning apps, virtual classrooms, and digital communication platforms can facilitate self-directed learning, collaboration, and language practice outside traditional classroom settings.”*

Respondent four states,

*“Access to language education programs, support services, and opportunities for language integration can influence adults' language learning experiences and outcomes.”*

*“Work and lifestyle demands, including time constraints, work schedules, family responsibilities, and other commitments, can affect adults' ability to allocate time and energy to second language learning.”*

For interviewee two,

*“External factors such as personal interests, career aspirations, travel opportunities, and academic requirements can impact adults' motivation to learn and their commitment to achieving language proficiency goals.”*

While interviewee six agrees,

*“Factors such as the quality of instruction, teaching methods, classroom dynamics, and learning materials can impact adults' motivation, confidence, and progress in acquiring the language.”*

Research participant eight is of the view,

*“Social support networks, including family, friends, language exchange partners, and language learning communities, play a crucial role in second language learning among adults. Positive social interactions, encouragement, and opportunities for collaboration and practice can enhance motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes.”*

#### **4.3.7 Effective strategies for second language learning**

The development of this theme is related to multiple words and phrases included ‘learning style’,

‘manageable tasks’, ‘development of sense of accomplishment’, ‘relating it to first language’, ‘usage in everyday life’ which were coded strategies for second language learning. For interviewee nine,

*“By understanding learning style whether they are visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learners, tutors can tailor their learning approaches to maximise effectiveness and retention.”*

Respondent three expresses ideas in following words,

*Breaking down larger goals into smaller, manageable tasks provides a sense of accomplishment and progress, helping students overcome challenges through consistent effort and perseverance.”*

For interviewee seven,

*“By engaging with materials that reflect everyday language use, students develop practical language skills that can be applied in various situations.”*

Research participant five states,

*“Daily immersion in the language through activities such as reading, listening, speaking, and writing helps students build fluency, confidence, and proficiency over time.”*

According to participant four,

*“Developing metacognitive awareness, or awareness of one's own learning process, empowers students to monitor, evaluate, and adjust their language learning strategies. By reflecting on their learning experiences, setting goals, and identifying effective learning strategies, students become more proactive and autonomous learners.”*

For interviewee one,

*“Cultivating a growth mindset, or the belief that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort and practice, helps students overcome foreign language learning challenges.”*

#### **4.4 Discussion**

The first theme of this research which is “expectations and beliefs of learners towards second language learning” fulfils the first objective which is to investigate learners’ mental mindset (beliefs and expectations) on language learning. This finding shows that learners do come across hurdles in their language learning journey, but they keep believing that they can overcome the challenges they face by trying to remain persistent and using the available resources. Additionally, the findings showed that a high percentage of students are mainly driven by the opportunity that proficiency in English brings to enhance their career. In addition, the findings indicate that for most students, language acquisition serves not only as the acquisition of skills but also as a way for self-development and self-improvement. Similarly, the study conducted by Dewaele et al. (2019) states that the learning of language greatly depends on the culture which guides the communication strategies, perception and motivation of learners. The second study from Alhmanni (2019) depicts that language is combined with culture in the aspect of sentence structuring and grammatical because every language has its cognitive skills, societal functioning, and cultural norms. Similarly, Shao et al. (2020) argue that culture is represented as a rich and complex outward expression of people's talent and art. Moreover, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) emphasises the different parts of the social environment affecting people's perception about their worlds, their attitudes and behaviours. In the view of SCT, people recognise that being proficient in the English language is a conduit to better employment opportunities and career advancement, which stimulates their learning of the language.

The second theme of this research is “factors affecting beliefs of learners towards language learning” which fulfils the second objective which is to examine learners’ previous knowledge of language learning in terms of the gaps or inaccuracies, misunderstandings, and false assumptions. According to the findings of this theme, learners' educational experience highly influences their views on language learning, formed through their different experiences of the learning environment. Moreover, this theme encompasses the effect of social factors, including peer pressure and culture, on the perceptions and ambitions of the learners. The peers' approval and belonging to the social network that is supporting can enhance motivation while social pressure can reduce learning. The result of the study also shows the degree to which the learners’ will to use a second language in their daily lives affects their

expectations. Additionally, the results point out that some factors which influence the building of beliefs and mindset in language learning are associated with cognitive abilities and learning style and how they relate to one another. Miranda and Wahyudin, (2023) stated that good instruction, experienced teachers and solid learning experiences are tools for building students' confidence and belief in their proficiency. Abdulla and Al-Asawi (2024) carry out research that points to the necessity of creating an environment where the learners are well-considered and the diversity of beliefs, values, aspirations, and preferences is considered carefully. According to the Expectancy-Value Theory, students' expectations regarding success and the estimated value they attribute to a given task determine their level of motivation and effort. The perception and value of the foreign language in the learners' minds is a major factor in determining their expectations about the learning. People believe that language training is efficient for their personal or professional objectives; they usually have high expectations for proficiency and success.

The third theme of this research is “fears and frustrations related to second language learning” which fulfils the third objective which is to ascertain the reasons why learners have fears, frustrations and mistrust during the learning process. The findings regarding first and second language fears and frustrations highlight the wide range of difficulties adult learners experience which determines their views and attitudes towards the language learning process. Based on these findings, one of the most common misconceptions among adult learners in Turkey is that age is an obstacle to learning the English language, which leads to adverse emotions like frustration and despair. However, the findings show that a great number of adult learners tend to hold unrealistic notions of the language proficiency they will be able to achieve, considering that fluency means native-like proficiency. This misconception, which leads to feelings of frustration by the learners who do not measure up to the unrealistic standards, intensifies their anxiety. Furthermore, the finding suggests that these adult learners might be in self-doubt as they might not trust their abilities when he is around those who seem to be more effective and proficient in foreign language learning by others. This clash adds to the fear of failing and the students begin to lose their dedication to language learning activities. According to Rahman et al. (2017), most language students often experience anxiety, stress, nervousness, and anticipation while learning a new language. Similarly, Bataineh (2019) also notes that many language learners are anxious without obvious reasons and consequently, the learning process is



affected negatively. As applied by the theory of cognitive and behavioural (CBT), the negative emotions and thoughts associated with the language learning process (such as fear of committing mistakes or anxiety due to failure) can stop the learning process.

The fourth theme of this research is “Importance of self-regulation and metacognition” which fulfils the objective of determining the impact and importance of learners’ awareness on their metacognition and self-regulation. These findings come to confirm that self-control and metacognition are important when it comes to adult learning. It allows a student to have a specific objective and develop his approach to achieve it. Furthermore, the findings have indicated planning tasks, no distractions, and continuous study as the keys that produce successful self-regulation during language learning. These principles, as brought out by the interviewed person, will enhance the learning ability and productivity of the students. These findings point to the importance of both flexibility and resilience in learning. Flexibility allows students to bounce back and move ahead faster in their learning through resilience and the ability to adapt their approach to specific needs and challenges. Additionally, according to Rahman et al. (2017), meta-cognition appeared to become one more influential factor that is required for learning success and should be linked with the formation of stable and consistent base decision-making process and knowledge. In addition, the work of Mumtas and Latif (2017) analyses the impact of cognitive strategies on language learning outcomes, clearly emphasising that increased awareness and application of these strategies can findings in improved learning outcomes. According to the socio-cultural theory, language learning is a social process, based on interactions with others within a social environment. Students participate in cooperative activities, e.g. discussions, peer assessments, and joint problem-solving, which boost metacognitive skills and self-regulation learning tactics.

The fifth theme of this research is “Effectiveness of learning in real-life situations” fulfils the objective of the research to identify ineffective learning strategies applied by learners. According to the findings of this research, language acquisition in real life gives learners the chance to communicate naturally with native speakers and with other language users. Cultural immersion is evidenced as an important characteristic which, in addition to sharpening foreign language skills, contributes to intercultural competence, in turn leading to better language learning. The research findings indicate that when learners face real-life situations, they gain a

wide range of vocabulary, grammar, and language context in which they get in-depth knowledge of how language works in real communication. In addition, the findings of this research manifest that having dealings with people of different language groups allows communicators to acquire flexibility and adaptability in their language application thereby enhancing their whole language proficiency. Likewise, Csisér and Kontra (2020) highlight the negative contribution of ineffective learning strategies to the learning of foreign languages. Furthermore, Nguyen and Terry (2017) stress that sufficient and continuous study is the key success factor in the process of acquiring a new language, as it helps in remembering information longer and learning faster. The social-cultural theory proposes that language is acquired through engaging in real-life communicative events where learners interact and make sense of each other. Learners may not be able to internalise and apply those language skills without continuous practice and usage of the target language in authentic contexts.

The sixth theme of this research is “external factors impacting second language learning” which fulfils the objective to identify external factors impacting foreign language learning in adult learners in Turkey. According to the findings of this theme, online sources, learning apps, virtual classrooms, and digital communication platforms help in self-directed learning and collaboration. With such facilities, it implies that one can practice language skills outside traditional classroom settings. Besides, studies reveal that language classes and support systems, and the opportunities for the integration of language help in determining how adult learner experiences and outcomes are affected. Other individual causes, such as interests, profession, and trips, can actually condition the person's motivation for speaking a second language. Based on the present findings, the other suggestion to this study is that the social networks that include people such as family, friends, and language learning communities remain imperative in promoting learners' motivation, engagement, and successful learning findings among adult language learners. The most significant finding in this study is that language competence is developed through shared activities, conversation, and communicative interaction in social support networks (Maslan et al., 2023). Additionally, the study by Shang and Qin (2018) supports the fact that technology enhances personalized learning while assisting students in finding their points of power and difficulties in relation to language acquisition. Technology impacts language learning accessibility in line with the social learning theory by offering

learners chances to watch and socialise with language content and speakers in virtual environments. Technology enables social engagement and collaborative learning experiences through which learners can observe and learn from others' language practice.

The seventh theme of this research is “Effective strategies for second language learning” which aligns to examine learners’ transfer of learning to activate acquired knowledge. According to the findings of this theme, adapted teaching techniques by knowing students' learning styles may include auditory, visual, or kinesthetic, and tutors can maximise the effectiveness and retention rates. In addition, the research establishes that when language goals are shown to students in smaller, workable steps, students develop a sense of accomplishment and progress and then tackle the challenges with consistent efforts and confidence. Based on the study, working with materials that are similar to daily language usage offers practical expertise in language used for differing circumstances. Also, the study shows that students with metacognitive awareness develop the ability to monitor, evaluate, and adapt their language learning strategies that will form the basis of proactive and autonomous attitudes towards studying. Similarly, Susanto and Nanda (2018) postulate that the transference of language greatly contributes to the field of knowledge acquisition, thus offering helpful insights which promote positive learning for students. Research by Hromalik and Kossalka (2018) shows that the transmission of linguistic skills and information from the native language contributes to the faster learning of the second language through the improvement of comprehension and production. According to the Transfer of Learning theory context in language learning, learners may exploit the linguistic knowledge, skills, and strategies they already have in their native language and apply them to the target language. The positive transfer arises when this transfer helps the learning process and improves the understanding and production of the target language.

#### **4.5 Summary**

The following paragraphs outline the findings of the present research with regard to various facets of language learning, focusing mainly on adult learners and their experiences, beliefs, challenges, and effective strategies for learning. It would begin with the exploration of the significance of adult perspectives and responses experienced in research for obstacles to

teachers when teaching an additional language to adult learners. Their research, therefore, looks at the attitude and belief of learners in regard to second language learning with particular reference to communication skills, career advancement, cultural awareness, and personal development. The area goes further to check popular beliefs in regard to language learning, which majorly comprises attitudes and perceptions of difficulty, self-efficacy, and motivation. The work also touches on misconceptions and false assumptions in regard to English language learning among adult learners in Turkey; that is, age barriers, an emphasis on grammar mastery as a priority, and fear of making mistakes. It looks at how such things as past negative experiences, comparison with others, and even differences in culture may serve to engender frustration, fear, and distrust among adult language learners. Further, the work explores how self-regulation and metacognition enhance learning speed by adult learners, emphasizing goal setting, progress monitoring, time management, and reflective practice. It will also discuss the advantages that bring language learning into real-life situations, like authentic practice of communication, immersion of culture, and contextualized learning. Finally, this paper will take an examination of the external factors impacting adult learning, such as immersion environments, access to resource facilities, and even more cultural integration. The article concludes by listing effective learning strategies that would enhance success in language learning for children, among them, being able to identify the learning style, set clear goals, use technology in the learning process, gain feedback from teachers or facilitators, and increasing communicative activities.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION**

### **5.1 Summary**

This research's objective was to discover the obstacles faced by English teachers in Turkey while teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to adult learners. The purpose of this research was to explore learners' psychological mindsets, previous knowledge, fears, frustrations, and ineffective learning strategies, mastery of metacognition and self-regulation, transfer of learning, and external factors which affect language learning. Through a thorough study of these topics, the research aimed to give responses to the difficulties that not only learners but also educators encounter in the educational system of Turkey. The literature review provided a solid base for comprehending the multifaceted nature of language acquisition with various theories and experiments being used as sources of information. It emphasises the role of culture, social networks, cognition, and personality in forming the learners' ideas and attitudes towards language acquisition. Furthermore, this analysis brought to light the significance of self-regulation, metacognition, and powerful learning methods in the process of improving language acquisition results. Through the synthesis of existing research, the literature review of the research objectives was established.

The literature review considers diverse theoretical frameworks and empirical studies concerning language learning, thus providing an excellent basis for the investigation. It studies the complex nature of learner thinking on the subject, emphasising the role of cultural, societal and cognitive factors in language learning. Studies by Dewaele et al., Alhmanni, and Shao (respectively in 2019, 2019, and 2020) emphasised the role of cultural context in the perception, motivation, and attitude of language learners towards language learning. Furthermore, the review focuses on the importance of self-control, metacognition, and learning strategies in improving language learning outcomes as pointed out by Rahman et al. (2017) as well as Mumtas and Latif (2017) and Susanto and Nanda (2018). This confirms the role of goal setting, reflecting, and adaptive learning in language acquisition. The literature review also provides information on the effect of external factors like technology, social networks, and immersion experiences in the learning process and the ultimate outcomes of learning. Through the integration of current

studies, the literature review serves as a holistic starting point for dealing with the research problems and comprehending the complications of learning language in the adult education domain.

The research methodology used in this study is effective and detailed, targeting the challenges encountered by English Language teachers in Turkey while teaching English as a foreign language to adult learners. A qualitative method was employed allowing for a deep exploration of the perspectives and experiences of teachers. The application of open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews helped collect diverse and deep information from a sample population of nine English language teachers. To improve the credibility and relevance of the findings, purposive sampling was applied, in which the selection criteria were set to the degree of gender, age, and work experience diversity among the participants. The data analysis was based on the thematic analysis method, which is a rigorous process that entails the identification of recurring words, phrases and ideas. The thematic analysis uncovered the main themes which directly addressed all research questions. These themes capture different aspects of language learning ranging from language learners' expectations and beliefs, factors that influence these expectations and beliefs, language learning fears and frustrations, the significance of self-regulation and metacognition, learning in real-life situations efficacy, external factors affecting language learning, and effective learning strategies. When analysed, the identified themes were connected to the research objectives, confirming that the findings and the research objectives were in agreement. The thematic analysis enabled an in-depth examination of the issues, giving insight into the complex aspects of language learning in adult education settings. Through the thematic analysis of the data, the study succeeded in presenting the problems caused by English teaching in Turkey and the factors which affect the process of adult language acquisition.

The results of the research offer an important contribution to understanding the complex setting of English language learning for adult learners in Turkey. Learners and teachers face many challenges, beliefs, and experiences that are diverse. By thematic analysis, different important themes that provide different perspectives on language acquisition and teaching were revealed. Firstly, the outcomes clarify the expectations and thoughts of learners about second language learning. Learners had a varied range of

motivations which included career advancement, personal development, and global outlook and hence they persisted in learning the language despite the perceived problems. This research illustrates the importance of taking into account different learners' motivations and expectations in developing effective teaching methods. Secondly, the research identifies those factors affecting the learners' attitudes towards language learning. Educational backgrounds, social status, peer influence, and inner motivation were recognised as the main factors on which the opinions and aspirations of learners depend. The assessment and recognition of these influences are paramount for educators in creating individualised instructional methods that inspire and apply the learners' needs. This research also tries to uncover students' fears and problems that relate to second language learning and it is essential to identify common misconceptions like age-related barriers and unrealistic demands. These findings point out the fact of learners' anxiety and promotion of a learning environment which stimulates resilience and self-efficacy.

The recommendations have been made based on the research findings in this study, and they can be used to improve the second language instruction programs for adult learners in Turkey and to address the challenges identified in this study:

- Educators should be aware of the different motivations for adults to take courses that are related to career advancement, personal development and cultural enrichment. Educators can better promote engagement and motivation amongst students by doing a mapping between the learning goals and learners' goals.
- Developing a supportive and inclusive learning setting is crucial in the process of removing learners' fears. Teachers should build an atmosphere of problem-solving, perseverance, and self-reliance, motivating students to not avoid the challenges but to learn from their mistakes.
- Apart from real-life situations and cultural immersion activities, language instruction can be improved and learners can increase their communicative competence and intercultural awareness. Educators should allow learners to practice real communication, which can be achieved through role-plays, simulations and experiential learning activities that will help learners apply their language skills in practical situations.

- Utilising technology and online-based resources increases language learning accessibility and flexibility for adult students. Teachers should bring in digital devices, language learning platforms, and virtual classrooms in addition to traditional instruction methods and allow students to independently study and collaborate.

## **5.2 Suggestions for Future Studies**

Several areas need to be explored in English language instruction for adult learners in Turkey. Such studies will give more insight and ideas for improving instructional practices. There can be longitudinal research to follow up learners' language learning journeys over a long period. For instance, the studies can offer meaningful insights about instructional strategies sustainability, learner motivation, and the development of language proficiency. Through a comparison of changes in the learners' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours with the timeline, researchers can discover which factors lead to success in and the persistence of language learning. Furthermore, the field could conduct comparative studies by comparing different approaches to instruction, ways of learning, and learning environments. Through the study of the effectiveness of traditional classroom approach versus online language platforms, immersive language programs versus regular curriculum, and teacher-led instruction versus self-directed learning the researchers can see which approach gives better results for adult language learners.

Moreover, cross-cultural exploration could be conducted to examine the impact of cultural elements on language learning attitudes, perceptions and strategies. By comparing the language learning experiences of adult learners from different cultural standings in Turkey and other countries, researchers can uncover cultural elements that affect language learning motivation, involvement, and quality of mastery. Also, intervention research can make related interventions to overcome difficulties found in previous studies, like fear, frustration or unsuccessful learning strategies. Through the creation and implementation of evidence-based techniques relying on data-driven research, teachers can help adult language learners be successful in overcoming difficulties and improving their language skills. Another method used in qualitative research is the use of in-depth interviews, focus groups, and ethnographic observation to uncover learners' lived experiences, their perspectives, and their identities as



foreign language learners. Through an exploration of the socio-cultural factors that influence language learning in Turkey, scholars can attain deeper perceptions about the determinants of learners' beliefs, attitudes, and practices toward English language learning.

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## **Appendix**

### ***Appendix A: Open-ended Questionnaire***

#### **1. Gender**

Male

Female

Other

#### **2. Age**

20-25

26-30

31-35

36-40

More than 40 years

#### **3. Work Experience**

1-2

3-4

5-6

More than 6 years of experience

4. What are general expectations and beliefs of learners towards learning English as second language?
5. What are the factors that contribute to specific beliefs and expectations towards learning of foreign language?
6. Does previous language learning knowledge and experiences impact speed and quality of language learning in adult students?
7. What are most common misunderstandings or false assumptions about English language learning in adult learners in Turkey?

8. What are the major causes of second language learning fears in adult learners?
9. Why frustration and mistrust are prevalent in adult learners towards foreign language learning?
10. What are the most effective learning strategies in second language learning for adult learners?
11. How foreign language learning challenges can be overcome with effective learning strategies?
12. How self-regulation and metacognition (awareness of personal learning process) can enhance the learning speed of adult learners?
13. Do you agree that change of behaviours and habits contribute to improved language learning? How.
14. How language learning in real-life situation is useful for effective learning of second language?
15. Which external factors largely impact second language learning in adults?

## **Submission of Thesis and Dissertation**

### **National College of Ireland Research Students Declaration Form (Thesis/Author Declaration Form)**

**Name:** Ismail Kilic

**Student Number:** 22179712

**Degree for which thesis is submitted:** Master of Science in Entrepreneurship

**Title of Thesis:** What Obstacles do English Teachers in Turkey Encounter While Teaching English as a Foreign Language

**Date:** 06/05/2024

#### **Material submitted for award**

A. I declare that this work submitted has been composed by myself. Yes●

B. I declare that all verbatim extracts contained in the thesis have been distinguished by quotation marks and the sources of information specifically acknowledged. Yes●

C. I agree to my thesis being deposited in the NCI Library online, open access repository NORMA. Yes●

D. Either \*I declare that no material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.

Or \*I declare that the following material contained in the thesis formed part of a submission for the award of \_\_\_\_\_

(State the award and the awarding body and list the material below) Yes●

**Signature of the Research Student:** Ismail Kilic

**Date:** 06/05/2024