NEGATIVE FEELINGS OF TURKISH STUDENTS IN EFL LEARNING PROCESS

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Abstract

The students might have either negative or positive feelings for different components of foreign language process. While positive feelings and emotions support the language acquisition process and push the students to learn the language, negative feelings block the process as they cause the learner to erect barriers to learning a foreign language. In case this process is directed by a teacher who is aware of the barriers of the students and sensitive to them, it is possible to replace negative feelings with the positive ones. The purpose of the current study is to reveal the sources of the negative feelings which hinder EFL learning process of the students in English language preparatory program in Eskişehir Osmangazi University Foreign Languages Department. Case study research design was used in order to examine the phenomenon of underlying reasons of negative feelings students associate with language learning process. Self-reports of the participants constituted the data source of the study. The data of the study was gathered through the interviews conducted with 31 students and 20 English instructors and the data gathered was analyzed inductively. The findings revealed four categories that represent the sources of students' negative feelings: teacher-oriented negative feelings, classroom oriented negative feelings, and system oriented negative feelings, and student-oriented negative feelings. The results imply a need for instructional design studies targeting to incorporate affective domain variables into teacher education programs and in-service teacher training programs. Also, suggestions for future research are presented.

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1. Introduction

21st century has been the era of innovations and great changes for both the individuals and the societies. As a result of the technological innovations mainly in the field of the communication and information technologies and greater mobility of people across countries, people's access to different cultures and the interaction of different nations and societies have increased. Today, the globalized world forces people to embrace the deep changes the modern era has brought into the skills and the qualifications people have to gain to survive. English language is one of the most significant skills for the people to guarantee and maintain their existence in the new modern world.

Despite ambitious and far-reaching reforms of the education policy-makers (introduction of 12-year compulsory education and Fatih project), and long-standing efforts of students (1000 + hours till the end of the grade12) Turkey has a relatively low level of success in teaching and learning English. As 80% of teachers have necessary qualifications and language skills to deliver effective lessons, the students are expected to graduate with at least intermediate level English skills. However, most of students have a basic (beginner or false beginner) level English when they graduate from high school (TEPAV Project Team, 2013). Besides, Turkey ranks very low on international English proficiency measurements. For example, on English proficiency index (EPI), Turkey ranks 62nd out of 80 countries (English First, 2017).

Foreign language learning process is influenced by such social factors as language policies, the attitude of the society towards foreign language learning, sub-systems of the society (economy, employability, etc.) and also, such dynamics of the classroom as the qualifications of teachers and students, facilities of school, and attitudes of students, teachers and the administration towards language learning (Gillies, 2014, Dörnyei, 2014). The extent of language competency a student develops in the process depends on the interaction of these factors. As each student constructs her/his own success or failure while learning a foreign language, each student's learning process is personal to oneself. Therefore, the conceptions students develop to the language related factors impact the ways students make sense of new stimuli and construct the knowledge (Williams and Burden, 1999). The students need to internalize the components of a new culture they are not familiar earlier so affective factors play a significant role in this process. Affective factors generate the most consistent predictors of the success in language learning (Dörnyei and Skehan, 2008). The findings of a research having investigated current state of foreign language teaching in Turkey has found out that motivation level of Turkish students decrease as they progress through the grades and levels, and most students find English classes difficult or boring. Besides, the students interviewed in the study put forward reasons about affective domain to explain their failure in learning English (TEPAV Project Team, 2013). Consequently, it is necessary to investigate affective factors which hinder the language learning process of the students.

In the most general sense, affective domain is the combination and interaction of a variety of feelings and emotions in learning process. Although many definitions of affective factors exist in literature, the definition suggested by Anderson and Bourke (2000) is adopted in this study. According to them, a human characteristic should meet five criteria to be classified as affective. Firstly, it must involve emotions or feelings. Secondly, it must be typical of the feelings or emotions of the person. Intensity, direction and target are three other criteria suggested. Intensity refers to the degree or strength of the feelings. The feelings might be weak, strong, tense, or moderate. Direction is concerned with feelings being positive or negative. For example, while hating English classes is a negative feeling, joy and pleasure are positive ones. Lastly, target refers to the object, person or ideas the feelings are directed to. Similarly, Betsy McCoach, and others (2013) refers to Anderson and Bourke (2000) to define the boundaries of affective variables. They state "*affective characteristics represent qualities that present people's typical ways of feelings and expressing emotions*" (p. 6).

In case different components (teacher, past learning experiences, classroom environment, overall system, curriculum…etc) of foreign language learning process were the target of students' feelings, different students might be located along a continuum according to the intensity (strong, weak moderate, neutral) and direction of their feelings (positive or negative) (McCoach, and others, 2013 and Anderson and Bourke, 2000).
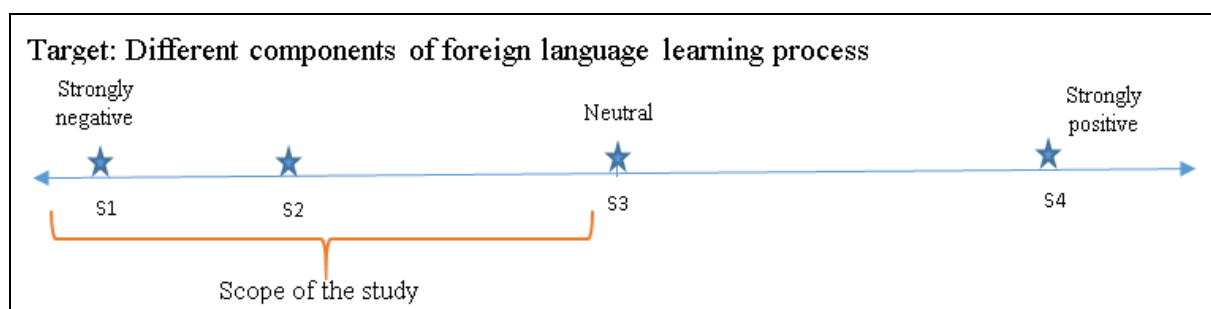
Figure 1: Locations of individuals on an affective continuum

Figure 1 shows that student-1 and student-2 are located on the left side of the continuum as they have negative feelings for foreign language learning, but the feelings of the student-1 are more intense compared to the student-2. The student-3 is neutral about language learning; she has neither direction nor intensity. Whereas, the student-4 has positive feelings for foreign language learning and his positive feelings are strong enough as the student is close to the right end of the continuum. He enjoys learning a foreign language. Besides, the scope of the study is located along the continuum. As the Figure 1 shows, the study covers the negative feelings located along the left side of the continuum.

The students might develop either negative or positive feelings for different components of foreign language process. While positive feelings and emotions support the language acquisition process and push the students to learn the language, negative feelings block the process as they cause the learner to erect barriers to learning a foreign

language. According to affective filter hypothesis of Stephan Krashen (1982), some affective variables which are motivation, anxiety and self-confidence play a significant role in language learning process. Learners with self-confidence, high motivation, low anxiety, and a good self- image are more successful in language learning process as they have a lower level of filter and are more eager and ready to learn a new language. On the other hand, high anxiety, low motivation, and low self-esteem raise the filter and form a mental block which prevents learner to process the information presented. Learning a foreign language is fundamentally different from learning another skill in terms that the learner might perceive an attack to one's personality associated with mother culture. The fears and barriers of the students in this process is concerned with negative feelings for unknown. In case this process is directed by a teacher who is aware of the barriers of the students and sensitive to them, it is possible to replace negative feelings with the positive ones (Cohen and Norst, 1989; Mercer, 2008).

In conclusion, the language learning process is influenced by a combination of factors from general ones (educational policies, place of language learning within the society etc.) to more specific ones (teacher, classroom environments, students etc.) and it is crucial to investigate the sources of negative feelings students associate with English learning in depth and take necessary steps for a more effective EFL (English as foreign language) teaching process.

2. Purpose and the research question

To examine the sources of the negative feelings which hinder EFL learning process of the students in English language preparatory programme in Eskişehir Osmangazi University Foreign Language Department (ESOGUFLD), the following research question was posed: What are the sources of negative feelings aroused among the students learning EFL in English language preparatory program in ESOGUFLD.

3. Material and Methods

3.1 Design
Based on the nature of the research problem, case study, a qualitative research method, was used. Case study research is used to thoroughly describe a complex phenomenon, such as an event, important issue, or a program in order to get a deeper understanding of this phenomenon. A case may be based on various units of analysis: a group of individuals, a class, a school, or an event (Creswell, 2014, and Mertens, 2014). Self-reports of the students and the instructors were data sources of the study. Anderson and Bourke (2000) suggest self-report method to gather information about affective characteristics relevant within the context of school and schooling. The self-report method, either written reports or interviews, refers to gathering information by asking questions of the person and listening to the responses provided. One-to-one interviews, a form of self-report method, let the researcher gather detailed research data through open-ended questions (Creswell, 2014). Likely, Buissink-Smith & Shephard, (2011) put

forward two approaches to be adopted in qualitative studies exploring affective domain. While short-term primary-source approaches draw data directly from the learner, secondary-source approaches involve collecting data from someone other than the learner. In the current study, both a short-term primary-source approach, interviewing students, and secondary-source approach, interviewing instructors, were used to obtain data.

The interview questions were prepared by the researcher after an extensive literature review. The questions explored the negative feelings the students associate with their previous and current learning experiences. After the questions were edited according to the feedback received from an expert on curriculum and instruction, interviews were administered by the researcher herself at her office in ESOGUFLD or in the department's canteen. The data recording protocols containing the instructions for the process of the interview and the questions to be asked were used during the interviews, and the questions and responses were audio-taped (Creswell, 2014). While student interviews lasted for an hour on average, teacher interviews lasted from thirty to 80 minutes.

3.2 Participants

Participants were 31 students learning EFL and 20 English language instructors in English language preparatory programme in ESOGUFLD. The participants were representative of three proficiency levels in the department. 12 instructors were teaching in beginner level; 4 of them in elementary level; and 4 of them in pre-intermediate level. Similarly, while 21 students were in beginner level, 4 of them were in elementary level and 6 of them were in pre-intermediate level.

3.3 Data Analysis

Inductive, or bottom-up approach, was used to analyze the qualitative data. After the data was collected, the tape records were transcribed in order to prepare them for coding stage in data analysis. Coding stage in inductive data analysis entails following five steps:

1. initial reading of the transcribed texts,
2. identify specific text segments,
3. label the segments of texts to create categories,
4. reducing overlap and redundancy among the categories,
5. creating a model incorporating most important categories. (Creswell, 2014, Thomas, 2006).

In coding stage, initially, the researcher read through the data to obtain a general sense of it. The first stage was followed with the second and third stages in which descriptions, or sub-themes and categories were determined. After the overlap and redundancy among categories were reduced, a model incorporating four categories emerged: teacher-oriented negative feelings, classroom-oriented negative feelings, system oriented-negative feelings, and student-oriented negative feelings. Peer debriefing was used in order to ensure the validity of the research (Thomas, 2006). In

the first three stages of the coding process, the researcher worked in cooperation with another researcher, or debriefer who is an English instructor at a university in Turkey and a doctoral student in curriculum and instruction program. Both the researcher and peer debriefer read the transcribed texts, identified and labelled the segments to create categories. Consensus was achieved by means of revisiting texts and exchanging ideas in case of conflicts. In order to reduce the overlaps and redundancies, the categories and sub-themes were checked and edited by an expert on English language teaching. The findings of the study are examined and presented in terms of the data sources which cross-validate each other and any differences occurring among the two data sources.

4. Findings

The findings of the study are analyzed and examined in line with four broad themes that are teacher-oriented negative feelings, classroom oriented negative feeling, system oriented negative feelings, and student-oriented negative feelings, and they are presented in tables that indicate the views of the instructors and the students separately. The views cross-validated by two sources of data are written in bold.

Table 1: Teacher oriented negative feelings

According to students	According to instructors
Teaching style	
• **Grammar-focused instruction** • **Traditional teaching techniques (lecturing, encouraging rote learning)** • Mismatch between what is covered in the class and real life • Teachers sitting all the time while teaching, • Teacher-centered techniques hindering active participation of students, • Correcting every mistake of students • Maximized teacher talking time	• **Grammar-focused instruction** • **Traditional teaching techniques (lecturing, memorization)**
Improper teacher behaviors	
• **Idling in the class** • **Showing no enthusiasm for teaching** • Getting leave from school frequently	• **Idling in the class** • **Showing no enthusiasm for teaching** • Late-coming • Resistance to change and professional development
Negative teacher-student relationship	
• **Face-threatening acts of teachers: teachers who bully students, insulting, losing temper, personal criticism,** • **Absence of genuine interaction or excessively close relationship** • Treating students unfairly, • Generation gap between students and teachers • Hatred for teacher leading to hatred for	• **Face-threatening acts of teachers: insulting, losing temper, personal criticism,** • **Absence of genuine interaction or excessively close relationship**

lessons • Ignoring needs, interests or preferences of students, • No respect for students as individuals	
Providing feedback	
• Avoiding praise for effort or achievement, • Ineffective use of gestures and mimics clarifying students' comprehension, • Delaying feedback, • Teachers' deconstructive feedback comparing students' performances	

As illustrated in the Table 1, according to students, teaching style adopted to deliver instruction, improper teacher behaviors, negative teacher-student relationship, the way the teachers provide feedback are teacher-related factors that arouse negative feelings among the students in EFL learning process. Similarly, teaching style, improper teacher behaviors, negative teacher-student relationship are the sources of the students' negative feelings in view of the teachers. Concerning the teaching style, findings reveal that there is consensus between the students and the instructors that grammar-focused instruction and traditional techniques arouse negative feelings among students. The students find grammar-focused lessons "boring" and "useless" in terms of language acquisition. Also, it seems that intense grammar teaching demotivates students as it hinders their progress in productive language skills. They ignore communicative side of language learning and focus on formulas, which causes lack of language awareness. Besides, traditional teaching techniques such as lecture-type instruction and rote learning (encouraging vocabulary memorization) cause learners to develop negative attitudes towards language learning as the language they learn in lessons does not correspond to the language in real life. Students in such classes see English as an ordinary school subject. As a result, students observing a mismatch between what is covered in the class and real life are not convinced of the value of learning English. Lastly, teacher-centered techniques, teachers correcting every mistake of the students and maximized teacher talking time hinder active participation of the students to lessons and impede students' ability to perform successfully in language learning class. Such classes disallow students to produce language and internalize the input presented in lessons.

Additionally, the findings reveal that improper teacher behaviors are another factor leading negative feelings associated with language learning process. Such behaviors of the teachers as idling in the class without a struggle to teach the lesson, getting leave from school frequently, showing no enthusiasm for teaching, and late-coming influence students' perceptions of significance of English. The students exposed to improper teacher behaviors are not able to raise awareness about the role of English in their future life. In other words, such behaviors devalue learning English in the eyes of the students. Lastly, resistance to change and professional development is another source of negative feelings associated with improper teacher behaviors according to the instructors. The teachers not open to change and learning have difficulty in developing

rapport with students and following recent approaches and techniques, which has a negative impact on both the effectiveness of lessons and attitudes of students. The students instructed by a teacher resistant to change and learning tend to have an unfavorable attitude towards learning English.

Besides, regarding the third sub-theme that is teacher-student relationship, face threatening teacher behaviors and the degree of interaction are two underlying factors yielding negative feelings among students in language learning process. Firstly, the findings reveal concerns for the role of teachers' impoliteness in creating an unsettling classroom atmosphere. Such behaviors as bullying, insulting, personal criticism, losing temper play an anxiety-provoking role in language classes. The students exposed to face treating acts reject participating to lessons actively and expressing their feeling as they don't want to lose face in the class. Concerning the degree of interaction, lack of genuine interaction results in boredom during lessons. Brief social chats the students have with teachers when they feel mentally exhausted have a productive effect on holding students' attention throughout the entire lesson. However, excessively close relationship between teachers and students has a counterproductive effect on language learning process. Teachers having excessively close relationship with their students are not able to ensure maximized learning time as they have trouble with managing classroom, which demotivates students enthusiastic for learning English. Also, students' hatred for English lesson may stem from their hatred for teacher. Students adopting a hostile attitude to teacher do not enjoy being in class and listening to instruction delivered. In addition, teachers' treating students unfairly, ignoring needs, interests or preferences of students, and disrespect for students as individuals are other underlying reasons of an unpleasant language learning environment which arouses negative feelings among students. Last, generation gap seems to impede interaction supporting language learning process of students.

Last but not least, the way teachers provide feedback is another source of negative feelings according to the students. The findings shed light on that students need to know his effort is noticed and rewarded by teachers. Unless teachers provide praise or immediate feedback, students feel that their improvement efforts are eroded by a lack of history of achievements, which demotivates students trying to succeed in learning a language. Likely, feedback comparing performances of students in the class has a negative effect on perceived competence of students losing face. Comparison among students in the class generates the feelings of inefficacy and jealousy according to students. Lastly, the findings prove the significance of use of gestures and mimics in language teaching. As gestures and mimics supply students with clues as to their performance, students are unable to comprehend if they perform well or poorly in the class in case of ineffective use of gestures and mimics.

Table 2: Classroom-oriented negative feelings

According to students	According to instructors
Group dynamics	
• **Disruptive and inattentive behaviors of the students** • **Conflicts between students in the class** • Students dominating others in lessons • Heterogeneous classes in terms of proficiency level of students	• **Disruptive and inattentive behaviors of the students** • **Conflicts between students in class** • Demotivated students in class • Absence of interaction among the students
Physical conditions of classroom	
• **No posters hanged on the wall** • **Traditional seating arrangement**	• **No posters hanged on the wall** • **Traditional seating arrangement** • Crowded classes
Control of classroom	
• **Excessively strict control of classroom** • **Excessively flexible control of classroom**	• **Excessively strict control of classroom** • **Excessively flexible control of classroom**

The Table 2 indicates that group dynamics, physical conditions of classroom and control of classroom are three sub-themes associated with classroom-oriented negative feelings of students. Concerning the first sub-theme, group dynamics in classroom setting may have a negative effect on students' learning behaviors inside the class. Initially, despite their motivation and enthusiasm, students have difficulty in sustaining their attention to teacher talking and learning activities in language classes where disruptive and inattentive students are ample. Therefore, motivated and enthusiastic students are unable to sufficiently benefit from instruction delivered in such classes. Secondly, conflicts between students or the absence of interaction among students threaten group cohesion, or "*the strength of relationship linking students to one another or to the groups itself*" (Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1994). Language teaching techniques aim at developing students' communicative competence by promoting interaction between learners as they participate in communicative events, so language classes require close interaction of students with one another. Resultantly, conflicts between students and absence of interaction between students cause them to lose sense of belonging to learning environment and adopt negative attitudes towards language learning. Third, heterogeneous classes in terms of proficiency level of students and students dominating others are two other underlying reasons of negative feelings associated with group dynamics. High proficient students and dominant students disallow low proficient and timid ones to actively participate to learning activities or express ideas in classroom environment, which decreases self-confidence of the latter ones in language learning process. Lastly, demotivated students set a negative model for other students as they cause this sense to prevail in the whole-class and discourage the motivated students from putting effort into learning English.

Physical conditions of classroom are another sub-theme associated with classroom-oriented negative feelings. The findings reveal that both the students and the instructors find classes with no posters hanged on the wall "unsympathetic" and "gloomy". In view of the students, the classes with empty walls do not have a

welcoming atmosphere. In addition to unpleasant learning atmosphere, the classes with no posters, or pictures deprive students of optimal learning conditions, according to the instructors. The materials hanged on the wall provide students with opportunities to practice the language form or vocabulary peripherally. Peripheral learning triggers para conscious part of the mind to help students to acquire language implicitly. They learn from what is presented in learning environment, even if they don't pay conscious attention to it (Lozanov, 1978). The classes with traditional church-like seating arrangement is the second underlying reason of students' negative feelings associated with physical conditions of classroom in view of the students and the instructors. The instructors show main concern for negative effect of traditional seating arrangement on interaction. According to them, church-like seating arrangement does not support interaction between students and teacher, or interaction among students contrary to u-shape seating arrangement that facilitates interaction in language classes. Unlike the instructors, the students think traditional seating arrangement interferes with students' preferences of seating. Lastly, the findings indicate that classes with small group of students are more appropriate for language learning, because uncrowded classes present a more comfortable learning environment to shy students who have a tendency to conceal their feelings or emotions from other people.

Control of classroom is the last sub-theme associated with class-oriented negative feelings. In view of both groups of participants, excessively strict or flexible control of class impedes the effectiveness of English lessons. While excessive flexibility causes students to underestimate the seriousness and discipline learning process requires, excessively strict control leads to a tense and oppressive learning environment ignoring individual learning preferences.

As Table 3 shows the students' system-oriented negative feelings stem from students' past learning experiences, English language preparatory curricula implemented and administration.

Table 3: System-oriented negative feelings

According to students	According to instructors
Students' past learning experiences	
- Lessons in which students prepare for central examinations - Central examinations excluding language skills and placing students at high schools or universities. - Repetitive language content across grades and levels - Teachers from different professions - Adaptation problems resulting from frequent change of teachers	
English language preparatory curricula implemented	
Mismatch between what is learned in the class and difficulty level of exams, **Course-book driven curriculum** - Negative side of teaching materials	**Mismatch between what is learned in the class and difficulty level of exams** **Course-book driven curriculum** - One-fits-all approach pursued in curricula, - Need for extra material to vary the lessons - Unattainable goals set for beginner and elementary level students, - Intense instruction delivered to beginner level students hindering them to digest content - Absence of extracurricular and out-of-class activities
Administrative problems:	
Compulsory attendance to lessons	**Compulsory attendance to lessons** - low pass mark (60)

Firstly, the findings prove that central examination system excluding language skills and placing students to high schools or universities negatively affect students' perceptions of significance of learning English. Students avoid expending a great deal of effort to acquire English until they start preparatory program as they underestimate importance of learning English compared to the lessons included into the central examinations. The findings show that students devote English classes to prepare for the central examinations in their 11th grade junior year and/or 12th grade senior year. Besides, repetitive language content across grades and levels is another problem associated with past learner experiences. Students are not exposed to intermediate and above level English as the curriculum repeats the same language content across grades and levels, which dampens students' enthusiasm for learning English. The students think they have been learning the same things since primary school. Last, teachers from other professions and adaptation problems resulting from frequent change of teachers are last two factors effecting the quality of language learning process and disallowing students to develop positive feelings for English learning.

Secondly, English language preparatory curricula implemented are another source of students' negative feelings. First of all, according to the findings, negative feelings of students result from in-class activities at odds with difficulty level of the

questions the students are required to answer in the exams. Mismatch between what is covered in the classroom and the assessment procedures cause students to constantly fail the exams and evoke resultant feelings of disappointment and anger against the components of language learning process. Besides, in context of ESOGU, a series of course book from beginner to intermediate level is used in all classes in three levels, which evokes negative feelings resulting from course book-driven curriculum, need for extra materials to vary the lessons, and one-fits-all approach pursued in curricula. Obligation of completing the course book throughout the entire academic year and teachers' tendency to stick to the course book without preparing extra materials create some affective problems. Firstly, teachers' always being in rush to catch up with the syllabus without adding any extra materials to lessons causes students to feel confused about the overall goal of English language preparatory curricula. Actual goal of the curricula that is "to acquire B1+ or above level English" substitutes for the goal "to complete course-book" in view of the students. In addition, students find lessons lack of a range of authentic and published materials "dull" and "monotonous". Such lessons are unable to meet individual learning needs and cause teachers to encounter problems in trying to implement learner centered techniques. One-fits-all approach pursued in curricula leads problems about individual learning needs, as well. Students assigned to three different proficiency levels (beginner, elementary and pre-intermediate) have to pursue the same EAP (English for Academic Purposes) program offered by ESOGUFLD. The course-book and assessment procedures differentiate neither the levels nor the individual students. Taken all together, one-fits-all approach pursued in curricula deskills teachers and robs them out of their capacity to respond to students individually and to think professionally. Lastly, unattainable goals set for beginner and elementary level students and intense instruction delivered to beginner level students are the sources of negative feelings associated with the curriculum. The students in three levels in ESOGUFLD are expected to attain the exit level B1+ to start their department. It is a challenging period for these students because they are obliged to drop out or transfer to Turkish-medium departments unless they can succeed in EAP program. The goal seems to be unattainable for beginner and elementary level students as they do not have a reasonable amount of time to achieve it. Also, it puts them under an intense pressure throughout the entire year, so they have to cope with such feelings as high-anxiety and fear of failure which have a counter-productive effect in language learning process. Similarly, intense instruction delivered in these two levels puts a heavy teaching load on the instructors, which demotivates both them and the students. Lastly, negative sides of teaching materials (repetitive themes and long and boring reading texts) and absence of extracurricular and out-of-class activities are the factors decreasing the effectiveness of the lessons and language learning process. While negative sides of teaching materials lead to boredom in lessons, absence of extracurricular and out-of-class activities hinder students to link English they learn in the class with real life.

Last but not least, administrative problems arouse negative feelings in language learning process. Students' compulsory attendance to lessons does not facilitate English

learning as disinterested students attending lessons set a negative model for other students. Lastly, as the pass mark students are required to attain to exit the preparatory program is not high enough, the students avoid devoting great effort to acquire English.

According to students	According to instructors
Pre-conceived notions associated with EFL	
Disbelief of needing English in the future: I don't think I will need English in the future. **Belief of disability to learn English: I have some kind of disability, I can't learn English no matter how hard I try** **Disinterest of learning English :I have no interest in English** **Boredom during lessons: I find English lesson boring** - Disbelief of possibility to learn English in a Turkish-speaking country - Concerns related to intelligence type impeding language learning process: As I am a math person I don't have an aptitude for English - Feeling of obligation to learn English leading to boredom and anxiety - Disinterest of in-class English but interest in real-life English especially the one in movies: I am interested not in English taught in the lesson, but in English I hear in movies.	**Disbelief of needing English in the future: I don't think I will need English in the future.** **Disbelief of aptitude for learning English: I am not good at learning English** **Disinterest of learning English :I have no interest in English** **Boredom during lessons: I find English lesson boring** - Lack of intercultural awareness causing reactions against learning English as Turks - Unawareness of the fact that neither talent nor aptitude but effort yields successful acquisition of language
Personality Traits	
Introversion	**Introversion** - Students with no outside interest - Intolerance of ambiguity - Students with poor social skills
Learning strategies	
Lack of knowledge about self-study skills (I can't achieve good exam grades)	**Lack of knowledge about self-study skills** - Students' setting unrealistic learning goals - Inability to link English with real life
Affective Problems	
- High-Anxiety - Lack of confidence	- Overconfidence - Reluctance to make effort to improve language skills - Demotivation

Table 4: Student-oriented negative feelings

Student- oriented factors are the last category arousing negative feelings among students. As the Table 4 indicates, pre-conceived notions associated with EFL, personality traits, learning strategies, and affective problems are the sub-themes of the student-oriented negative feelings. Firstly, the results shed a light on that eight-year EFL learning experience the students have before they begin preparatory program end

up with notions students associate with English learning. Students bring the beliefs they hold about English learning with them into the classroom at outset of preparatory program. While positive beliefs facilitate language learning, false beliefs may have a counter effect on English learning experience students have in preparatory program. According to the findings, the preconceived notions students associated with EFL learning are disbelief of needing English in the future, belief of disability to learn English, disinterest of learning English, boredom during lessons, disbelief of possibility to learn English in a Turkish-speaking country, concerns related to intelligence type impeding language learning process, disinterest of in-class English but interest in real-life English especially the one in movies, lack of intercultural awareness causing reactions against learning English as Turks, unawareness of the fact that neither talent nor aptitude but effort yields successful acquisition of language, and feeling of obligation to learn English leading to boredom and anxiety. These preconceived notions lead students to begin preparatory program with fairly negative expectations of their own ultimate success. Feelings of hopelessness, fear, anxiety, disinterest, nonchalance accompany these students throughout the entire year and cause them to give up making effort to learn English. Also, it puts extra load on teachers desiring to involve them in English learning.

Secondly, the findings prove that personality traits of students determine their success in English learning. As emphasized above, language classes require close interaction of students with one another or with teacher. Introvert students and students with poor social skills avoid involving themselves in interaction in classroom setting, which does not let them to internalize language content presented. Similarly, socially active students with outside interest outperforms the socially inactive ones with no outside interest as the former ones are open to interaction. Intolerance of ambiguity is the last factor arousing negative feelings among students. Students intolerant of ambiguity look for formulas they can stick to while learning language and they are unable to tolerate hesitations they have in language learning process.

Learning strategies is the third-sub-theme associated with student-related negative feelings. Lack of knowledge of self-study skills yields students to fail the exams no matter how hard they try to succeed, which demotivates them in learning process. Secondly, the unrealistic goals students set for them are another reason of demotivation. Unrealistic goals such as acquiring a native-like accent, or comprehending every single word in a text or in movies reduce self-perceived capacity of students. Consequently, high goals shutter students' belief in utility of in-class English. As English classes are unable to fulfil the expectations of these students, they think in-class English is useless and unhelpful. Lastly, students who are incapable of linking in-class English with real life have difficulty in showing enthusiasm for learning English.

Last, affective problems students experience in EFL classes are one of the sources of negative feelings. İnitially, lack of confidence or overconfidence are two factors hindering English learning according to the findings. While lack of confidence leads to fear of making mistakes and prevents students to try new and complex structures,

overconfidence restrain them from trying hard. Overconfident students think their proficiency level is high enough to obtain the pass mark required to continue their departments. High anxiety, demotivation and reluctance to learn English are last three affective variables yielding negative feelings and hindering language learning process of students.

5. Discussion

The findings of the study shed light on underlying reasons of negative feelings Turkish students associate with EFL learning process. Considering that freshmen students from diverse range of social, economic and educational backgrounds pursue an intense EAP curriculum in English language preparatory program, the findings seem to represent Turkish students learning EFL in higher education. The findings of the current study support the results of previous studies in the literature.

Firstly, findings prove that negative feelings of students in EFL learning process may result from different components of instruction that students associate with teacher such as teaching style, improper teacher behaviors, providing feedback, and teacher-student relationship. Grammar-focused teaching style and traditional teaching techniques lead to dull and monotonous lessons and impede the improvement of students' productive language skills. The findings are in line with the results of the report on current state of foreign language teaching in Turkey. According to the report, motivation level of Turkish students decreases as they progress through the grades and levels and most students find English classes difficult or boring (TEPAV Project Team, 2013). The findings support the results of previous studies exploring teacher-students relationship, as well. According to the results of a multi-method study examining experiences that promote or undermine students' feelings of connection to school, teachers with engaging instructional style and a commitment to student learning, and teachers caring students heighten students' sense of belonging to school (Ozer, Wolf & Kong, 2008). Additional support for the significance of teacher-student relationship to academic achievement is derived from a longitudinal study conducted with African-American and white students. The results of the study confirm that the relationship the students have with school and teacher explain why African-American students are less likely to continue higher education than white American students, despite the similarity in their educational goals (Wimberly, 2002). Last, the results of the study conducted by McHugh, Horner, Colditz, & Wallace (2013) demonstrate the negative effect of teacher's inattention and lack of effortful engagement on perceptions of students. Consequently, the findings of the current study imply the significance of up-to-date teaching techniques that supports active participation of EFL students into the lessons and aim at improving their productive language skills. Also, the findings show that teachers need to develop rapport with their students in order to present them effective learning conditions. Obviously, teacher candidates should be informed about the techniques of building up a good rapport with the students in addition to teaching techniques and approaches in EFL teaching. The foreign language teachers need to raise an awareness

of the significance of providing effective feedback, building up a good rapport with the students through various professional development activities.

Secondly, classroom oriented feelings may yield negative feelings students associate with English learning. The group dynamics, physical conditions of the classroom and control of the classroom are the factors relating to classroom environment. The results indicate that group dynamics of a classroom determines the quality of group cohesion in the class. Conflicts or absence of interaction undermine the sense of belonging and group cohesion in the class. The finding is parallel to the findings of a number of existing studies (Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, K. A.; 1994; Evans and Dion's, 1991; Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997). According to the results of a meta-analysis study, there is a significant positive relationship between two variables that are group cohesion and group performance. Cohesive groups tend to be more productive compared to non-cohesive ones (Evans and Dion's, 1991). An awareness of classroom dynamics may help teachers create learning environments where language learning is rewarding because group characteristics and group processes significantly contribute to any success or failure in the L2 (Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997). Besides, posters, pictures, word lists hanged on the wall are significant in terms of presenting optimal learning conditions and a welcoming learning environment to the students. The results are in line with the results of a range of previous studies proving the importance of classroom's physical conditions in learning English (Badri, Badri & Badri, 2015; Rokni, 2014). The findings imply that the curriculum of teaching programs should entail the techniques for creating group cohesion and dealing with the conflicts in the classroom. Also, the workshop and reflection techniques used in professional development programs may help foreign language teachers to exchange ideas in order to provide solutions for the conflicts in language classes. Also, the teachers may benefit from action researches to resolve the conflicts in their classes, and create a learning environment where all students enjoy learning.

Thirdly, concerning the system-oriented feelings, negative feelings stemming from the past learning experiences of the students hinder their language learning progress. Obviously, the central exams excluding the questions assessing language skills devalue English lessons with the eye of students. As students are not convinced of the significance and necessity of learning English, they avoid devoting time to improve language skills, which may explain the reason laying behind the fact that most of the students have a basic (beginner or false beginner) level English when they graduate from high school although they are expected to graduate with at least intermediate level English skills (TEPAV Project Team, 2013). Second factor leading negative feelings in language learning process is the repetitive language content across the grades and levels which give the students feeling that they never improve language skills despite their long-standing efforts. Besides, the negative feelings resulting from the English language preparatory curricula implemented negatively affect the students' language learning process. Book-driven curriculum prevents the instructors to include various materials and activities into lessons as they have to stick to the course book used in the department. The instructors' concern of catching up with the syllabus gives the students

the feeling that overall goal of the preparatory curricula is not "to learn English", but "to complete the course book in required time". Lastly, one-fits all approach pursued in curriculum differentiates neither the needs of the students in different proficiency levels nor the needs or preferences of the students individually. The findings have profound implications for language teaching system adopted by National Education Ministry at schools and Preparatory programs at universities.

Last but not least, student-oriented feelings are one of the crucial factors having a negative effect on language learning process of students. Especially, preconceived notions the students associate with EFL learning emerge from their past language learning experiences and determine the in-class and out of class learning behaviors of students. Positive past learning experiences have a productive role in language learning process, because the students having positive notions of language learning process have a high self-perceived capacity from the outset of the academic year. On the other hand, preconceived notions have a counter-productive effect on English learning process. They may cause students to form a mental block against learning English and prevent them to achieve their desired goal. As teachers have neither expertise nor sufficient time to deal with affective problems of students, they attribute their students' poor performance to lack of interest or knowledge, or inability to learn language. However, the findings indicate that teachers need be informed about the influence of affective domain in learning process of students. They should raise an awareness on the fact that it is necessary to find out underlying reasons of students' failure instead of labelling them "lazy, inattentive, unsuccessful ...etc". In conclusion, the findings imply a need for an affective-focused instruction designed to inform language teachers about the components of affective domain, impact of students' feelings and emotions on language learning process, and techniques for dealing with affective problems at language classes.

According to Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986), such false beliefs of the students stem from anxiety reaction the students have in language classes and teachers may use such techniques as relaxation exercises, advice on effective language learning strategies, behavioral contracting, and journal keeping to reduce anxiety in these classes. Creating safe and comfortable language learning environment is another way to reduce anxiety in language classes to allow especially timid or introvert, or highly anxious students to engage in classroom activities. Also, motivational strategies suggested by Dörnyei, (2001) may help language teachers to replace negative feelings of the students with positive ones. Lastly, single case research studies are appropriate for investigating the change in pre-conceived notions of a small group of students in case of use of the techniques suggested by (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope,1986) and (Dörnyei, 2001). Similarly, action research studies may be designed so as to cope with the pre-conceived notions students associate with language learning. Besides, lack of knowledge about self-study skills results in constant failure of students. The findings reveal that the students should be instructed about how to develop their self-study skills in language learning process.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of the current study are important in terms of the potential techniques and content to be included into the teacher education programs. Both the candidate teachers and foreign language teachers need to raise awareness about effect of affective domain on language learning process. The findings reveal a need for instructional design studies that target to include affective domain into teacher education programs, or in-service teacher training programs. The curriculums used in teacher education and teacher training should incorporate following headlines:

- Theoretical knowledge of affective domain
- Significance of affective domain on language learning and teaching
- Influence of students' feelings and emotions on foreign language learning process
- Influence of student-teacher relationship and student-student relationship on EFL students' feelings and emotions which determines efficiency and effectiveness of language teaching and learning.
- Influence of teacher behaviors, characteristics, and preferences (providing feedback, teaching style, ..etc.) on feelings and emotions of EFL learners
- Techniques and strategies for dealing with affective problems in EFL classes
  Lastly, the suggestions for further research are as follows:
- Action research studies designed to find solutions for the conflicts which undermine group cohesion and sense of belonging in foreign language classes
- Longitudinal studies examining the change in emotions and feelings of the students in reaction to strategies teachers use to present optimal affective conditions (strategies for reducing anxiety, motivational strategies, teacher student-rapport, providing positive feedback.. etc.) in language classes.
- Single-case research studies designed to examine the change in feelings and emotions of individual students having erected affective barriers towards FLL.
- Studies investigating the relationship between students' performance and affective strategies.

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