

PRE- SERVICE TURKISH TEACHERS' SELF-ASSESSMENT ON THEIR ACADEMIC SKILLS

Türkçe Öğretmen Adaylarının Akademik Çalışma Becerilerinin Özdeğerlendirilmesi

Esra Lüle MERT¹

Abstract

In this study, considering that the improvement of academic thinking skills is of importance to the in educational system, pre-service Turkish teachers were asked to assess themselves regarding their academic thinking skills. The aim was to analyze their self-assessment. In this regard the problematic sentence of this study is specified as "at which level do pre-service Turkish teachers define their academic thinking skills?" The objective of this study was to have pre- service Turkish teachers assess themselves in terms of learning, planned study, effective reading, listening, note-taking, class participation, writing, library use, preparing for and taking an exam and motivation. For this purpose, "the test to evaluate the study and learning activities", which was devised by Yıldırım, Doğanay and Türkoğlu (2000), was used as the measurement instrument and it was applied to 200 pre-service Turkish teachers. This test consists of 10 sections and 80 questions. The test applied is Five- Point Likert Scale composed of 80 affirmative questions. The answers of pre-service teachers to the questions were scored between 1 and 5 and were analyzed with the SPSS 11.5 package programme. Their replies scored as "(5) I am highly competent, (4) I am competent, (3) I am fairly competent, (2) I am a little competent and (1) I am not competent at all. Consequently it was concluded that pre-service Turkish teachers regarded themselves, by and large, to be "fairly competent" in respect to their academic study skills.

Key words: Academic achievement, academic thinking skills, higher education, self assessment.

Özet

Eğitim- öğretim sürecinde akademik düşünme becerilerinin gelişiminin önemli olduğu düşüncesinden hareketle bu çalışmada, Türkçe öğretmen adaylarının akademik düşünme becerilerine ilişkin özdeğerlendirme yapımları ve yapılan bu değerlendirmelerin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu bağlamda araştırmanın problem tümcesi "Türkçe öğretmen adayları sahip oldukları akademik düşünme becerilerini hangi düzeyde tanımladı" olarak belirlenmiştir. Türkçe öğretmen adaylarının öğrenme, planlı çalışma, etkili okuma, dinleme, not alma, derse katılma, yazma, kütüphaneyi kullanma, sınava hazırlanma ve girme, motivasyon özellikleri bağlamında kendilerini değerlendirmeleri amaçlanan çalışmada, 10 bölüm ve 80 sorudan oluşan Yıldırım, Doğanay ve Türkoğlu'nun (2000) geliştirdiği 'Ders çalışma ve öğrenme etkinliklerini değerlendirme testi' ölçme aracı olarak kullanılmış ve 200 Türkçe öğretmen adayına uygulanmıştır. Uygulanan test 80 olumlu maddeden oluşan 5'li likert tipindedir. Öğretmen adaylarının 80 soruya verdiği yanıtlar (5) üst düzeyde yeterliyim, (4) yeterliyim, (3) orta düzeyde yeterliyim, (2) biraz yeterliyim, (1) hiç yeterli değilim olacak biçimde 1'den 5'e doğru puanlandırılarak SPSS 11.5 paket programında analiz edilmiştir. Sonuçta, Türkçe öğretmen adaylarının akademik çalışma becerileri bağlamında genel olarak kendilerini orta düzeyde yeterli gördükleri belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Akademik başarı, akademik düşünme becerileri, yüksek öğretim, özdeğerlendirme.

¹ Doç. Dr. İnönü Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Türkçe Eğitimi ABD, esralule@gmail.com

Introduction

Today one cannot achieve success in school just by working hard. Knowing a great number of learning methods and techniques, using them and taking the educational processes into consideration are also important aspects in achieving success in school. Learning, planned study, effective reading, writing, listening, note-taking, class participation, actively using the library, exam preparation and motivation are regarded as major study skills and learning activities. (Yıldırım et al., 2000; Frender, 1990; Luckie & Smethurst, 1998). The research carried out on these subjects suggest that the students fall short in study skills of (Yıldırım et al., 2000; Koşar, 2004; Bay, Tuğluk and Gençdoğan, 2005) and show that a better education on study skills may enhance the academic success level and self-reliance of the student (Gall et al., 1990). Furthermore the research proves that there is a positive relationship between study skills and the academic success of the students (Eliot, Godshall, Shrout & Withy; 1990; Bay, Tuğluk, Gençdoğan, 2005). The most important responsibilities of the student are to orientate his own learning process actively, evaluate the weakness and strengths of this process, take a step to make it more efficient and develop effective study and learning skills. The students who are unable to develop effective study and learning methods fall short in motivating themselves to learn, planning the learning process and evaluating themselves as the class level rises (Yıldırım et al., 2000).

An undergraduate study enabling the improvement of the academic thinking skills may be deemed to achieve its primary objective. The academic thinking and study skills education should not only to be confined to the undergraduate departments of Turkish universities. Planned study, learning the methods of access to knowledge, effective reading, reading comprehension, effective listening, writing, speaking and library use are among the most important qualifications an undergraduate study may contribute to a student. The focus of this research is to determine the success level of the students in gaining aforementioned qualifications, and based on their success level, to teach a course containing these qualifications to the undergraduates. The scale used in this research may be applied to all the students of every country and help us making inferences about their academic study and thinking skills. In this context it may contribute to the undergraduate study, which has considerable shortcomings, through a different perspective and new recommendations.

In this study, based on the assumption that the improvement of academic thinking skills in education is of importance, pre- service Turkish teachers were asked to assess themselves regarding their academic thinking skills. The aim was to analyze their self-assessment. In this regard the problematic sentence of this study is specified as “at which level do pre- service Turkish teachers define their academic thinking skills?”

The sub-problems whose answers were sought in consideration of the problematic of this study are as follows:

1. What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “learning” skills?
2. What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “planned study” skills?
3. What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “effective reading” skills?

4. What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “listening” skills?
5. What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “note-taking” skills?
6. What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “class participation” skills?
7. What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “writing” skills?
8. What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “library use” skills?
9. What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “preparing for and taking an exam” skills?
10. What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “learning motivation” skills?

Methodology

The objective of this study was to have pre- service Turkish teachers assess themselves in terms of learning, planned study, effective reading, listening, note-taking, class participation, writing, library use, preparing for and taking an exam and motivation. For this purpose, “the test to evaluate the study and learning activities”, which was devised by Yıldırım, Doğanay and Türkoğlu (2000), was used as the measurement instrument and applied to the 200 pre- service Turkish teachers. This test consists of 10 sections and 80 questions.

This research found that the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was 0.90. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient and Barley Sphericity test performed in order to assess the factor analysis coherency of data was found to be significant.

The test applied is five-point Likert scale composed of 80 affirmative questions. The answers of pre- service teachers to the questions were scored between 1 and 5 and were analyzed with the SPSS 11.5 package programme. Their replies were scored as “(5) I am highly competent, (4) I am competent, (3) I am fairly competent, (2) I am a little competent and (1) I am not competent at all.

In this research, the grand average score is 3.084. Using the formula $(K-1)/K$ (K = number of options) the result found is $(5-1)/5=0.80$

Table 1. Average values of scale

I am not Competent at all	I am a little Competent	I am fairly Competent	I am Competent	I am highly Competent
1.00- 1.80	1.81- 2.60	2.61- 3.40	3.41- 4.20	4.21- 5.00

In the first page of the questionnaire scale there is personal information about the students regarding their academic year, gender, age, type of high school graduated from and their opinion on whether a course titled the ‘academic study skills’ should be opened or not. The target population of the study involves the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students at Turkish Teaching Department of the İnönü University, Turkey, studying in the 2015-2016 academic year. The sample consists of 200 students who responded to all of the questions on the questionnaire.

Findings

First Sub-Problem: What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “learning” skills?

Table 2. Self-assessment of students regarding their “learning” skill?

Proposition	I am not competent at all	I am a little competent	I am fairly competent	I am competent	I am highly competent
I am aware of the fundamentals of the learning process.	23.3	27.0	21.2	8.5	20
I can use my short and long-term memory effectively and efficiently.	14.3	18	10	29.1	28.6
I use a study method in accordance with the fundamentals of the learning process.	25.9	12.2	28.0	27.0	6.9
I use the spaced studying method to learn better.	22.2	27.5	14.8	15.9	19.6
I use various strategies for rote learning.	16.9	11.1	21.2	34.4	16.2
I use the internalizing learning method for permanent learning.	40.7	8.5	23.8	6.9	20.1
I constantly evaluate methods I use for effective and efficient learning.	29.1	28.6	20.1	5.8	16.4

α :0.8967 average:2.80

Pre- service Turkish teachers, who participated in this research, believe that they are fairly competent in their learning skills. Pre- service Turkish teachers, who think that they are not competent in permanent, effective and efficient learning, who ranked this item as their worst competency skill, stated that they are not highly competent in any of the skills assessed.

Second Sub-problem: What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “planned study” skill?

Table 3. Self-assessment of students regarding their “planned study” skill

Proposition	I am not competent at all	I am a little competent	I am fairly competent	I am competent	I am highly competent
I study my courses according to a plan.	32.3	18.5	29.6	3.2	16.4
I make a study plan for a certain period	21.7	7.4	31.2	13.2	26.5
I make a monthly study plan.	10.1	50.3	1.6	4.8	33.3
I make a weekly study plan.	34.9	43.4	17.5	1.1	3.2
I make a daily study plan.	17.5	19.0	25.9	27.5	10.1
I reorganize my study plan in accordance with actual homework and activities.	34.9	41.3	6.9	2.6	14.3
There is a certain period of time to study I put aside for every day of week.	22.8	34.4	15.9	9.0	18.0
There is a certain period of time for after-school activities I put aside for every day of week.	27.5	20.1	12.7	14.3	25.4
I do not start doing a newer homework before completing current one.	17.5	24.3	4.8	14.3	39.2
In making a study plan I try to create a balance between course work and social activities	27.0	16.9	7.4	37.0	11.6

Tablo 3'ün devamı

Proposition	I am not competent at all	I am a little competent	I am fairly competent	I am competent	I am highly competent
I try to assess how effective and efficient my plans are.	17.5	12.2	30.2	19.0	21.2
I adhere to my study plan to a great extent.	21.2	22.8	20.1	21.2	14.8

α : 0. 8369 Average: 3.36

Pre- service Turkish teachers, who participated in this research, believe that they are fairly competent in their planned study skills. Pre- service Turkish teachers, who think that they are not competent in planning study time and putting aside time for after-school activities, who ranked these items as their worst competency skills, state that they are highly competent in understanding lessons, organizing studying methods and carrying out their homework, ranking these items as their best competency skills.

Third sub-problem: What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “effective reading” skills?

Table 4. Self-assessment of students regarding their “effective reading” skill

Proposition	I am not competent at all	I am a little competent	I am fairly competent	I am competent	I am highly competent
I make a preliminary review at the courses before making a general review.	20.7	10.1	29.3	18.1	21.8
I check study questions, if any, about subject and try to find their answers.	22.2	19.6	29.1	23.3	5.8
For active reading I ask questions related to subject to myself while reading and seek for their answers.	24.9	19.6	28.6	17.5	9.5
I underline important knowledge while reading and take notes on side of book.	15.9	42.3	34.9	4.8	2.1
I spare time for visual knowledge while reading subject and associate it with content.	20.1	20.1	6.9	36.0	16.9
I prepare questions about chapters I read to ask in classroom.	24.9	42.9	7.4	4.2	20.6
I review chapters I read periodically and brush up on my knowledge.	27.5	2.6	28.6	31.2	10.1
I use techniques that are relevant to my reading purpose.	32.8	7.4	15.9	20.1	23.8

α :0.8053 Average: 2.86

Pre- service Turkish teachers, who participated in this research, believe that they are fairly competent in their effective reading skill. Pre- service Turkish teachers, who think that they are not competent in preparing questions and reading techniques, who ranked these items as their worst incompetency skill, state that they are not highly competent in any of the skills assessed.

Fourth sub-problem: What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “listening” skill?

Table 5. Self-assessment of students regarding their “listening” skill

Proposition	I am not competent at all	I am a little competent	I am fairly competent	I am competent	I am highly competent
I am aware of factors preventing me from listening to the teacher.	24.3	31.7	4.8	6.3	32.8
I use various techniques to concentrate on listening to the teacher.	10.6	24.3	37.6	11.1	16.4
I avoid stimulative factors that may hinder me from listening to the teacher.	13.8	31.7	7.9	13.2	33.3
I use various listening methods to listen to teacher more effectively.	36.0	30.2	11.6	9.5	12.7
I make a preliminary preparation for effective listening.	38.1	30.7	15.9	10.6	4.8
I take notes in classroom to support my listening.	11.6	34.9	23.8	7.4	22.2

α :0.8982 Average:3.29

Pre- service Turkish teachers, who participated in this research, believe that they are fairly competent in their listening skills. Pre- service Turkish teachers, who think that they are not competent in using listening techniques and preliminary preparation, who ranked these items as their worst incompetency skill, state that they are highly competent in awareness and avoiding the conditions that may hinder their listening, ranking these items as their best competency skill.

Fifth sub-problem: What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “note-taking” skills?

Table 6. Self- assessment of students regarding their “note-taking” skill

Proposition	I am not competent at all	I am a little competent	I am fairly competent	I am competent	I am highly competent
I attend class after reviewing the notes of the last course	20.1	4.2	33.9	12.7	29.1
I complete the reading assignment of relevant course I will take before the attending class.	62.4	10.1	1.1	22.8	3.7
I note down what the teacher writes on the blackboard.	14.8	1.6	4.2	18.5	60.8
While listening to teacher I try to understand the more significant points and take notes about them.	18.5	19.6	4.2	42.3	15.3
In my notes I reflect relations among concepts using visual instruments such as graphics and figures.	18.0	18.0	9.5	32.8	21.7
I use abbreviations and symbols while taking notes.	18.5	21.7	20.1	11.1	28.6
I use different note-taking techniques according to the nature of the course and subject.	46.0	16.9	4.8	20.1	12.2
I ask questions to the teacher about topics I cannot understand.	9.0	36.5	9.5	24.3	20.6
I make a balance between listening and taking notes.	24.9	22.2	21.7	20.1	11.1
I compare my notes with those of my classmates and check them whether they are complete.	27.5	25.4	12.7	15.3	19.0

Tablo 6'nun devamı

Proposition	I am not competent at all	I am a little competent	I am fairly competent	I am competent	I am highly competent
I review my notes from the course afterwards and correct my deficiencies.	30.7	7.4	15.3	25.9	20.6
I make additions to my notes I get during the course from the course book to make them complete.	21.7	21.7	22.8	24.9	9.0

α : 0.8286 average: 2.59

Pre- service Turkish teachers, who participated in this research, believe that they are a little competent in their note-taking skills. Pre- service Turkish teachers, who think that they are not competent in making preliminary preparations for a course, using note-taking techniques and associating them with their listening skill, checking notes and correcting the deficiencies, who ranked these items as their worst incompetency skills, state that they are highly competent in noting down what the teacher writes on the blackboard and using abbreviations and symbols, ranking these items as their best competency skill.

Sixth sub-problem: What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “class participation” skill?

Table 7. Self- assessment of students regarding their “class participation” skills

Proposition	I am not competent at all	I am a little competent	I am fairly competent	I am competent	I am highly competent
I make an effort to actively participate in class.	9.0	27.0	20.1	22.8	21.2
I try to answer the teacher's questions during the class.	25.4	23.3	28.0	8.5	14.8
I try to ask questions about the subject during the class.	25.9	10.1	24.9	21.2	18.0
I actively participate in in-class group activities.	19.1	16.9	31.2	15.9	16.9
I volunteer to make a presentation during the class.	21.7	24.9	19.0	19.0	15.3
I attend the class regularly.	20.6	21.7	24.3	12.7	20.6
I make a preparation for the class beforehand.	11.1	18.0	31.7	13.2	25.9

α :0.9826 Average: 2.93

Pre- service Turkish teachers, who participated in this research, believe that they are fairly competent in their class participation skills. Pre- service Turkish teachers, who think that they are not competent in asking questions related to the course during it, those who ranked this item as their worst incompetency skill, state that they are not highly competent in any skills assessed.

Seventh sub-problem: What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “writing” skills?

Table 8. Self- assessment of students regarding their “writing” skill

Proposition	I am not competent at all	I am a little competent	I am fairly competent	I am competent	I am highly competent
While writing homework or reports I take key features of this process into consideration.	13.8	43.4	36.0	3.7	3.2
I make preliminary preparation for writing.	23.8	7.9	34.3	10.6	23.3
I know how to do research in a library for writing.	26.5	11.6	32.3	22.8	6.9
I make a plan before starting to write.	27.0	19.0	23.3	26.5	4.2
First I write a draft report. Then I make necessary corrections and modifications on it.	18.5	11.6	43.4	24.9	1.6
I regularly note down resources used in my report and refer to them in it.	3.2	32.8	37.0	15.9	11.1

α : 0.7617 Average: 3.14

Pre- service Turkish teachers, who participated in this research, believe that they are fairly competent in their writing skills. Pre- service Turkish teachers, who think that they are not competent in making a plan before starting to write, those who ranked this item as their worst incompetency skill, state that they are not highly competent in any skills assessed.

Eighth sub-problem: What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “library use” skills?

Table 9. Self- assessment of students regarding their “library use” skill

Proposition	I am not competent at all	I am a little competent	I am fairly competent	I am competent	I am highly competent
I use the catalogue system of the library.	28.6	46.6	6.9	11.6	6.3
I benefit from various departments of library (such as references and periodicals).	5.8	31.2	38.1	6.3	18.5
I detect required clues in library to search resources and use them.	7.9	25.9	25.4	27.0	13.8
In a library. I can easily find a book whose pressmark I know.	20.1	22.8	23.8	26.5	6.9
I use the electronic data bank of a library	19.0	25.9	10.6	36.0	8.5
I browse information through the Internet connection of a library.	21.7	10.6	32.8	10.1	24.9
I use reference resources (dictionary and encyclopaedia etc.) of a library.	25.4	28.0	21.7	4.2	20.6

α :0.8403 Average: 2.98

Pre- service Turkish teachers, who participated in this research, believe that they are fairly competent in their library use skills. Pre- service Turkish teachers suppose that they insufficient competency nor highly developed competency skills in terms of library use skills.

Ninth sub-problem: What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “preparing for and taking an exam” skills?

Table 10. Self- assessment of students regarding their “preparing for and taking an exam” skill

Proposition	I am not competent at all	I am a little competent	I am fairly competent	I am competent	I am highly competent
I make a study plan to prepare for an exam.	36.0	25.9	9.5	16.9	11.6
I ask the teacher which subjects will be covered in the exam.	2.1	12.7	42.9	34.9	7.4
I check the questions asked in previous exams.	10.6	31.2	22.2	20.1	15.9
I review the notes I got during the course and subjects I learnt from the textbook before the exam.	2.6	50.3	38.1	8.5	0.5
I try to guess questions which may be asked in an exam and find their answers.	36.0	3.7	15.9	38.6	5.8
I read the exam instructions carefully and give answers accordingly.	28.6	1.6	20.1	41.8	7.9
I find key words of from the exam questions and underline them.	28.6	4.8	32.3	25.4	9.0
I make a plan before starting to reply to questions. I use my time efficiently.	26.5	18.5	29.6	14.8	10.6
I never leave the classroom before checking my answers to the questions.	20.6	37.0	32.8	2.6	6.9

α :0.8952 Average: 3.75

Pre- service Turkish teachers, who participated in this research, believe that they are somewhat competent in preparing for and taking exam skills. Pre- service Turkish teachers, who think that they are not competent in exam preparation, who ranked this item as their worst incompetency skill, state that they are not highly competent in any skills assessed.

Tenth sub-problem: What is the self-assessment of pre- service Turkish teachers regarding their “learning motivation” skill?

Table 11. Self- assessment of students regarding their “learning motivation” skill

Proposition	I am not competent at all	I am a little competent	I am fairly competent	I am competent	I am highly competent
Taking intrinsic and extrinsic factors into consideration I orientate my learning motivation.	17.5	30.7	34.9	12.2	4.8
I assess self- concept related to success.	19.0	26.5	30.2	14.8	9.5
I consider my basic and high level needs in the learning process.	17.5	24.3	32.3	14.8	11.1
I use some methods to concentrate on studying better.	34.4	13.8	26.5	16.4	9.0
I find various reasons to motivate myself to study.	14.3	26.5	30.7	19.0	9.5
I review my future plans to increase my learning motivation.	16.9	24.9	31.2	18.0	9.0

α :0.8365 Average: 3.14

Pre- service Turkish teachers, who participated in this research, believe that they are fairly competent in their motivation skills. Pre- service Turkish teachers, who think that they are not competent in using various methods while studying, who ranked this item as their worst not-competency skill, state that they are not highly competent in any skills assessed.

Discussion and Conclusion

In the light of this research which questioned the self-assessments of the students regarding their academic study skills it is concluded that: Pre- service Turkish teachers believe that they are fairly competent in their learning skill. This conclusion shows that the students suppose that they are not competent in using various learning methods, such as spaced studying, rote learning or internalizing learning (Usova, 1989), consciously. According to Bansilal, James and Naidoo (2010), the feedback received from students is extremely important for the proper development of the courses.

The awareness of pre- service Turkish teachers, who believe that they are fairly competent in planned study, must be raised about study plan. Planned study, in other words using time effectively, is regarded to be an indispensable skill in school and at work to achieve success (Turkoğlu, Yıldırım and Doğanay, 2000).

Pre- service Turkish teachers defined themselves as fairly competent in to effective reading subsection. Reading skills are a metalanguage skills which are closely related to reading skills, thinking, mother-tongue learning and speaking (Demirel et al. 1998: 12). The course content which may improve advanced level reading skills must be included.

Pre- service Turkish teachers think that they are fairly competent in listening. Their competency related to listening skills may be improved by modifying the content of the listening courses. Listening and interpreting what is heard is an important factor for a person to maintain his/her life. On the other hand the listening skill needs to be improved though one may acquire it innately. The education institutes are obliged to ensure this improvement. Ensuring the listening skills of students in the Turkish educational system is among the principal duties of Turkish course programme, Turkish text and workbooks and Turkish teachers. Though listening is explained to the students theoretically no effort is made to turn this knowledge into behaviour (Özbay, 2009). According to Robertson (2008) the relations between the learning skills and success rate of a student who has an average intelligence is higher than the relations between his/her level of intelligence and success rate. It means, for success, listening is more important determinant than intelligence. Correct listening activity is very important in establishing an has even been almost reled at effective listening (Aydın, 2009). Listening is included less in the curriculum than other language skills. Even it almost has been ruled out (Sawir, 2005; Yalçın, 2002; Yangın, 1999; Özbay, 2009). In order to make listening more efficient the student must use the effective listening techniques correctly (Yıldırım et al., 2009:100).

When teachers step into a classroom, their language proficiency should be so well developed that they can continuously stimulate and enhance learners' thinking abilities. Excellence in thought mustbe purposefullyand systematically cultivated. Therefore, the development of critical thinking abilities and academic language proficiency at Higher Education Level sets a challenge for both students and lecturers to ensure that when leaving a Higher Education institution language abilities and critical thinking abilities are intact to ensure a successful life and career. (Grosser & Nel 2013)

It is concluded that the note-taking skills of pre- service Turkish teachers is moderately sufficient. Introducing the various note-taking techniques to them is essential. It is also important to increase efficiency. The data shows that pre- service teachers are not well equipped with some note-taking techniques such as the Cornell method (Jacobsen, 1989).

Pre- service Turkish teachers state that they are fairly competent in their class participation skill. They must be encouraged to improve their class participation skill. In the writing subsection, pre- service Turkish teachers believe that they are fairly competent. Making new arrangements concerning their writing courses may be proposed. According to Maltepe (2007: 145) you cannot have the students acquire writing skills at desired level just by having them write didactic texts. Writing is an expressive activity, in a process of communication, through which the source individual sends his/her message by writing it. Writing skills, like reading skills, are metalanguage skills which are closely related to thinking, mother-tongue learning and speaking (Demirel et al. 1998: 12). Writing requires a higher level cognitive skills as compared with those of other skills. According to Saussure (1998) the *raison d'être* of writing is to show language.

Pre- service Turkish teachers believe that they are fairly competent in using the library. Lecturers may have the students implement essential studies related to improving their library use skill. Pre- service Turkish teachers define themselves as competent in preparing for and taking an exam. They believe that they are fairly competent in learning motivation. The motivation to learn is defined by Brophy (1988) as meaningfulness, value and benefits of academic tasks to the learner. Lack of motivation is one of the most significant problems in current education systems which must be stressed (Yıldırım, Doğanay and Türkoğlu, 2000).

Table 12. Self- assessment of academic skills of students in terms of level of competence

	n	Average	Level of Competence
Self-assessment of students regarding their "learning skills"	200	2.80	I am fairly competent
Self-assessment of students regarding their "planned study" skills	200	3.36	I am fairly competent
Self-assessment of students regarding their "effective reading" skills	200	2.86	I am fairly competent
Self-assessment of students regarding their "listening" skills	200	3.29	I am fairly competent
Self-assessment of students regarding their "note-taking" skills	200	2.59	I am a little competent
Self-assessment of students regarding their "class participation" routine	200	2.93	I am fairly competent
Self-assessment of students regarding their "writing" skills	200	3.14	I am fairly competent
Self-assessment of students regarding their "library use" skills	200	2.98	I am fairly competent
Self-assessment of students regarding their "preparing for and taking an exam" skills	200	3.75	I am competent
Self-assessment of "learning motivation" of students	200	3.14	I am fairly competent

As a conclusion it is recommended that a compulsory course titled the "academic study skills" be taught to the undergraduates of every country, which may help them raise their awareness of study skills and improve their academic success in their courses.

References

- Aydın, G. (2009). *Effect of the mind mapping technique on comprehension of what is listened to*. Unpublished Master's Thesis. Erzurum: Ataturk University Institute Social Sciences.
- Bansilal, S. James, A. and Naidoo, M. (2010). Whose voice matters? LEARNERS. *South African Journal of Education*, 30(1): 153- 165.

- Bay, E. Tuğluk, MN, Gençdoğan, B. (2005). Study of university students study skills course (Faculty of Education Kazım Karabekir instance). *Electronic Journal of Social Science*, 4, 14: 94- 105.
- Brophy, J. (1988). *On motivating students*. J. D. Berliner & B. Rosenshine (Eds.) Teacher expectancies. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Demirel, Ö. Koç, S. Topbaş, S. Odabaşı, F. Namlu, A. G. Yangın, B. Müftüoğlu, G. (1998). *Turkish Language Teaching*. (Ed. Seyhun Topbaş). Eskişehir: Anadolu University Press.
- Eliot, T. Godshall, F. Shrout, J. and Withy, T. (1990). Problem-solving appraisal, self-reported study habits and performance of academically at-risk college students. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 37, 203- 207.
- Freder, G. (1990). *Learning to learn: strengthening study skills and brain power*. Tennessee: Incentive Publications Inc.
- Grosser, MM & Nel, M. (2013). The relationship between the critical thinking skills and the academic language proficiency of prospective teachers. *South African Journal of Education*, 33(2): 1- 17.
- Jacobsen, DR. (1989). *The effects of taking class notes using Cornell Method on students' test performance and note-taking quality*. Oregon: University of Oregon.
- Koşar, E. (2004). *Uludağ University, "students of the Faculty of Education review of studies on attitudes and habits"*. 12th Congress of Educational Sciences, Book of notification. 1, 165-182.
- Luckie, WR. & Smethurst, W. (1998). *Study power: study skills to improve your learning and your grades*. Brookline Books, Massachusetts.
- Maltepe, S. (2007). Turkish courses in creative writing approach of writing created by products. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 26, 143-154.
- Özbay, M. (2009). *Turkish special teaching methods I*. Ankara: Öncü Press.
- Robertson, AK. (2008). *Effective listening* (Trnslt. E. Sabri Yarmalı). İstanbul: Hayat Press.
- Saussure, F. de (1998). *General Linguistics Courses*. İstanbul: Multilingual Press.
- Sawir, E. (2005). Language difficulties of international students in Australia: The effects of prior learning experience. *International Education Journal*, 6(5), 567-580.
- Temur, T. (2004). *The writing skills of students in fifth grade and school achievements the relationship between*. XIII. National Congress of Educational Sciences, Malatya: Inonu University.
- Usova, GM. (1989). *Efficient studying strategies: skills for succesful learning*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks / Cole Pub.
- Yalçın, A. (2002). *Türkçe öğretim yöntemleri*. Ankara: Akçağ.
- Yangın, B. (1999). *Effective teaching and learning in primary education, teacher's manuals module 4, in primary teaching Turkish*. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı.
- Yıldırım, A. Doğanay, A. Türkoğlu, A. (2000). *For success in school, studying and learning methods*. Ankara: Seckin Press.
- Yıldırım, A. Doğanay, A. ve Türkoğlu, A. (2009). *Course for success in school, work and learning methods*. Ankara: Seckin Yayıncılık.