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**THE WASHBACK EFFECT OF ENGLISH TEACHER FIELD
KNOWLEDGE TEST ON PRE-SERVICE EFL TEACHERS AND EFL
TEACHER EDUCATORS AND THEIR LEVEL OF AWARENESS
AND PERCEPTION IN TÜRKİYE:
A SCALE DEVELOPMENT STUDY**

BY
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ÖZET

Demet ÜNAL AYDIN

Türkiye’de Uygulanan İngilizce Öğretmenlik Alan Bilgisi Testi’ nin İngilizce Öğretmen Adayları ve Öğretmen Eğitimcileri Üzerindeki Ket Vurma Etkisi ve Sınavla ilgili Farkındalık ve Algı Düzeyleri: Bir Ölçek Geliştirme Çalışması

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Bu çalışma, Türkiye’deki İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının mesleğe atanması için Yüksek Öğrenim Kurumu tarafından geliştirilen ve ulusal çapta uygulanan yüksek etkili bir sınav olan İngilizce Öğretmenlik Alan Bilgi Testi’ nin (ÖABT) İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının profesyonel gelişimi ve öğretmen eğitimcileri üzerindeki ket vurma etkisini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma aynı zamanda İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının ÖABT ile ilgili farkındalık ve algılarını araştırmaktadır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, karma yöntemle tasarlanmış bu çalışmada, bu sınavın ket vurma etkisini değerlendirebilecek bir ölçek oluşturulmuştur. Ölçek 195 katılımcı üzerinde test edilmiş ve uzman görüşleri ve test sonuçlarının sonunda güvenilirlik ve geçerliği tespit edilen ölçek 300 İngilizce öğretmen adayına uygulanmış ve nicel veri elde edilmiştir. Nitel veri için ise, ölçekten elde edilen veriyi destekleyebilmek amacıyla, 5 öğretmen eğitimcisi ile yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Nicel veriler çoklu ANOVA testi ile analiz edilirken, nitel veriler sistematik içerik analizi ile incelenmiştir. Bulgular, İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının bakış açısından, sınavın genel olarak çalışma motivasyonu, konu tekrarı, ülkedeki İngilizce eğitimi ve çıkmış sorulara derslerde yer verilerek ders dizaynına katılması gibi açılardan olumlu bir etkiye sahip olduğunu göstermiş, bu da belli bir dereceye kadar eğitimciler tarafından da desteklenmiştir. ÖABT’nin sınava girenlerin stres seviyeleri üzerinde ciddi bir etkisi olması sebebiyle olumsuz bir etkiye sahip olduğu da vurgulanmıştır. Sonuçlara göre, hem ana paydaşlar hem de karar mercileri için sınavın yeterlik ve güvenilirliğini arttırmak için bazı değişiklikler yapmak ve öğrencilerini sınav sürecinde daha iyi

yönlendirebilmeleri için öğretmen eğitimcilerinin sınav farkındalığını arttırmak gibi bazı pedagojik göstergeler bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İngilizce Öğretmenliği, Öğretmenlik Alan Bilgisi Testi, Ket Vurma Etkisi, Ölçek Geliştirme, Yüksek Etkili Sınavlar

ABSTRACT

Demet ÜNAL AYDIN

**The Washback Effect of English Teacher Field Knowledge Test on Pre-service EFL Teachers and EFL Teacher Educators and Their Level of Awareness and Perception in Türkiye:
A Scale Development Study**

**Başkent University
Institute of Educational Sciences
Department of Foreign Language Teaching
Master In English Language Teaching With Thesis
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This study investigates the washback effect of English Teacher Field Knowledge Test (TFKT), a national high-stake test developed and administered by the Council of Higher Education for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher recruitment in Türkiye, on pre-service EFL teachers' professional development and EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye. It also seeks to examine the awareness and perception of Turkish pre-service EFL teachers related to TFKT. To this end, in this mixed-method study, a scale which could assess the washback impact of the test was developed. The scale was pilot tested on 195 participants, and as a result of the received expert opinions and data analysis, with the established reliability and validity, it was applied to 300 pre-service EFL teachers and the quantitative data were obtained. For the qualitative part, semi-structured interview questions were prepared and 5 EFL teacher educators were interviewed to be able to support the data obtained from the scale. While the quantitative data were subjected to multivariate ANOVA, the qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings revealed that, from the perspective of the pre-service EFL teachers, TFKT exerted a mostly positive influence overall in terms of motivation to study, revision of previous topics, English language teaching in Türkiye and adapting course design to the test by including previously asked test items, which was also supported by the EFL teachers to some extent. A negative washback effect of the test was also emphasized since TFKT affected the test-takers' stress levels considerably. On the other hand, it was also found that the test had no

impact on the design or delivery of EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye. Based on the results, there are some pedagogical implications both for the major stakeholders and the policy makers, such as making some changes in the test to improve its efficiency and reliability, and raising the awareness of EFL teacher educators to better guide their students in this journey.

Key Words: EFL teacher education, Teacher Field Knowledge Test, Washback Effect, High-Stakes Tests, Scale Development

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SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BA	Bachelor of Arts
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ELTE	English Language Teacher Education
HEC	Higher Education Council
MANOVA	Multivariate Analysis of Variance
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
ÖABT	Öğretmenlik Alan Bilgisi Testi
TFKT	Teacher Field Knowledge Test
PPSE	Public Personnel Selection Examination
SSPC	Student Selection and Placement Center

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose and significance of the study and the research questions are presented and discussed.

1.1. Background to the Study

Every country holds the responsibility of providing effective teaching, learning and assessment to their learners. The best way to ensure this lies in quality teacher education programs, and principled and quality teacher recruitment processes. In English language teaching programs, in this sense, lessons related to improving English language proficiency, educational psychology, educational philosophy, educational sciences, principals and methods of teaching, linguistics, research skills, literature, ethics and morals in education, and testing and assessment as components of teaching are included in the curriculum to reach this goal. Also in some countries, even before they are graduated and ready to be recruited, pre-service EFL teachers are offered hands-on site training with compulsory teaching internships in their teacher training programs. The goal of selecting and recruiting teachers is to ensure that there are an adequate number of teachers and that they are accomplished and fit for the profession (Allen, 2005). From this perspective, the interconnectedness of a country's education system and how it assesses teachers to be recruited cannot be denied (Johnstone, 2004).

At this point, it is crucial to discuss Teacher Knowledge Base (TKB) as it is aimed to be tested in examinations for teacher recruitment to be able to choose the best candidates for the profession. The roots of the teacher knowledge base may include both practical experiences, such as day-to-day practice, and formal learning in the past, such as initial teacher education or continuous professional development (Calderhead, 1996). In this sense, teacher knowledge is not distinct from scientific or theoretical knowledge. In contrast, the information that instructors may obtain through their teacher education may be internalized and incorporated into their practical knowledge. Eraut (1994) emphasized

the necessity for extensive study to better comprehend how instructors combine knowledge from many sources into conceptual frameworks that guide their activities in practice. Moreover, the level to which instructors incorporate theoretical information into their practical expertise might vary tremendously. Shulman (1987) categorizes the knowledge base as content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts and knowledge of educational purposes and values. Looking at this from the perspective of foreign language teachers, certain distinctions can be observed in the expected knowledge base. Subject matter expertise (Thornbury, 1997) or subject matter content knowledge (Shulman, 1987), which relates to the quantity and arrangement of knowledge in a teacher's mind, is frequently emphasized in teacher language awareness definitions as it means teaching the English language through courses on syntax, semantics, phonology, pragmatics, and literary and cultural elements of the language (Pineda, 2002). Thus, it can be stated that content knowledge (CK) refers to the understanding of the subject matter that instructors possess, which can include knowledge of relevant facts, concepts, theories, and principles.

Besides this, for a foreign language teacher, it is not sufficient to have the necessary knowledge base on the subject matter, which is language itself in this matter, but they also need to have the pedagogical content knowledge, a term coined by Shulman (2013) to refer to pedagogical knowledge that extends beyond subject matter expertise to the dimension of subject matter expertise for teaching. Understanding the notions and assumptions that students of all ages and backgrounds bring to the study of the most often taught subjects and lessons is also part of pedagogical content knowledge. Pedagogical knowledge (PK) refers to instructors' understanding of how to instruct and how students learn, and this includes a comprehension of various teaching strategies and methods, as well as the cognitive, social, and emotional development of students. All this leads to the necessity of assessing and evaluating all these domains in the most effective way possible in order to be able to “focus upon the teacher’s ability to reason about teaching and to teach specific topics, and to base his or her actions on premises that can bear the scrutiny of the professional community” (Shulman, 1987, p. 20).

The intersection between content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge is pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). In other words, it is the knowledge and abilities

teachers possess regarding how to effectively teach specific content. PCK involves understanding how to convey difficult concepts, recognizing common student misconceptions, and designing learning-supporting activities and assessments. Pedagogical content knowledge for EFL instructors refers to the knowledge required to effectively instruct English language learners. It is the combination of subject matter knowledge (English language) and pedagogical knowledge, which includes instructional strategies, learner characteristics, and assessment techniques. PCK for EFL instructors comprises knowledge of how to instruct language skills such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing, as well as grammar and vocabulary. As stated by Freeman (2016), a teacher of English as a foreign language should have advanced communicative skills; however, command of the target language alone does not guarantee that students will receive the necessary learning opportunities. In addition, it requires an understanding of the cultural, social, and political contexts of English language teaching, as well as the requirements and characteristics of various categories of students. Therefore, language teachers should also develop differentiated language awareness, language learning awareness, and intercultural competencies in order to diagnose their students' performance and, ultimately, enable them to develop competencies in the full range of curriculum objectives related to culture, media, and text. To create stimulating, communicative learning environments and opportunities for developing content-related skills, EFL teachers require specific competencies (Freeman et al., 2015). Lastly, they must ensure the authenticity of the interaction between students and instructors, predominantly through their choice of tasks, and establish an environment conducive to effective foreign language instruction (Gilmore, 2007). EFL teachers with solid PCK can use their knowledge of language and pedagogy to design effective instruction and assessments for their students. Thus, it is essential that teacher education programs provide a balance of all these main categories of knowledge (content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge), as they are all essential for effective teaching. A teacher with strong content knowledge but feeble pedagogical knowledge, for instance, may struggle to effectively convey that knowledge to students. Similarly, a teacher with strong pedagogical knowledge but poor content knowledge may struggle to explain challenging concepts or respond to student inquiries. For this reason, for a thorough evaluation and recruitment of foreign language teachers, assessments such as Teacher Field Knowledge Test should also reflect a balance of content

knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and pedagogical knowledge, as they are all essential components of effective teaching.

The process of evaluating and recruiting foreign language teachers vary throughout the world. One of the foreign language teacher recruitment models can be observed in Finland, the country which has a very successful education system. According to the Finnish National Agency for Education, instructors must possess a master's degree in order to be hired by education providers, who are responsible for calculating the required number of posts. These posts are publicized, and the education committee, municipal committee or school board may choose the individuals to recruit. There is no one selection criterion for teacher appointments, however it is essential that a qualified educator be picked for the role. Teachers who are deemed qualified might instruct at the elementary and secondary levels. As another example, the recruitment of teachers in the United States varies from state to state based on local needs and resources, with the final decision resting with individual schools and school districts. However, instructors are often expected to have finished an undergraduate program and earned a bachelor's degree in order to apply for vacant teaching positions and through an interview procedure in order to be employed by schools. As part of the certification process in the United States, instructors frequently take the Praxis Exams II and III, which assess their subject knowledge and teaching abilities. Governmental, corporate, and non-profit institutions in the United States might require pre-service teachers to take the Praxis II English to Speakers of Other Languages examination (ESOL). The two-and-a-half-hour test consists of one hundred multiple-choice questions that assess instructors' language and pedagogical competence. Teachers must have an understanding of methodology, English grammar, second language acquisition (SLA), cross-cultural communication, and teaching practice. Some institutions may additionally mandate that English instructors hold a credential such as CELTA. Moving onto the recruitment model in Thailand, candidates are required to take a test after completing their pre-service education since there are more graduates than available posts. The recruitment of teachers is performed through a coordinated system nationwide. Candidates are chosen based on their exam scores. Following their selections, students retake a test similar to the one they took previously for employment. The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) has a centralized system for both the employment and payment of educators.

Similarly, in Türkiye, in order to be recruited under the MoNE, EFL instructors must pass the Public Personnel Selection Exam (PPSE), which is administered every two years, at the end of their pre-service education. Graduates of teaching, literature, linguistics, or translation studies departments may apply for and sit PPSE; however, individuals who are not graduates of Faculties of Education must complete their pedagogical training program and obtain their certificate prior to sitting PPSE and being selected by the MoNE (Solak, 2013). English teacher candidates who take the PPSE are evaluated on their general aptitude and world knowledge (the first test), educational sciences knowledge (the second test), and subject matter expertise (the last test). The first examination consists of tests of general aptitude and world knowledge, and the second examination, a test of educational sciences, occurs in the afternoon on the same day as the first one. The last examination, i.e. the Teacher Field Knowledge Test (TFKT) which is also a standardized test used to appoint teachers, is used to determine the classroom efficacy of pre-service teachers by evaluating their content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and teaching skills. This examination occurs on a different day, usually in two months. After getting a valid score on the examination, EFL teachers become eligible to participate in an oral interview, which is the last phase of the recruitment process and which will be held in one of eight cities in the following term. The maximum number of candidates permitted to participate in the oral interview for their main field is three times the number of open positions, ordered from the highest PPSE scores to the lowest. In the oral examination, instructors are assessed by a panel of three individuals (two personnel from the MoNE and, if necessary, one university faculty member) based on their abilities of comprehending and summarizing concepts, self-expression, and reasoning, communication skills, self-confidence, and persuasive abilities, open-mindedness and readiness for the integration of scientific and technological breakthroughs, and public speaking abilities and teacher traits, each of which affecting the overall score by 25%. The candidates scoring at least 60 on the oral interview are permitted to select up to 20 public schools for employment. EFL instructors with the highest PPSE oral interview scores are appointed to the schools of their choosing. Their appointments to districts occur twice every year, first in August and a second time, if necessary, in February. The overall score earned by EFL teachers is valid for two years.

Several other countries have centralized teacher recruitment examinations comparable to TFKT, but the requirements and structure of these examinations vary. In Japan, for instance, the National Test Center for University Admissions includes a foreign language section that assesses candidates' reading, listening, and grammar abilities. The National Teacher Certification Examination in South Korea includes a foreign language teaching section that assesses candidates' knowledge of foreign language teaching methodologies and their ability to create lessons. However, performance evaluations may be required in both instances as part of the certification process for teachers. Notably, in some countries, eligibility for teaching positions is determined by other factors, such as teacher education qualifications or years of teaching experience.

Since the recruitment of EFL teachers is realized by means of two high-stakes tests in Türkiye, PPSE and TFKT, only the latter being in the scope of this study, the concept of washback must be discussed accordingly. As seminal research in the topic of washback, Alderson and Wall (1993) developed fifteen hypotheses on the potential impacts of testing on teaching, learning, what to teach and learn, attitudes, and stakeholders. Consequently, a test will have an effect on teaching, learning, teacher and learner methodology, course content, "the rate and sequence" of learning and teaching, "the degree and depth" of learning and teaching, and "attitudes towards the content, method of learning and teaching"; "tests that have significant consequences will have washback"; "tests that do not have significant consequences will not have washback"; tests will influence "learners and teachers" or "some learners and teachers"; tests will influence (pp. 9-10). To this end, it must also be stated that pre-service EFL teachers' awareness of TFKT in terms of its content and construct and what they think of the test itself are crucial aspects of the study since they might be influential in how they perceive the washback impact of the test on themselves and on EFL teacher education programs. Therefore, their awareness and perceptions must also be discussed thoroughly to provide a better and more comprehensive picture of the washback impact.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Student learning and achievement are linked to teachers' skills, training, and experience (Richardson & Watt, 2016). Research reveals that countries with high student

achievement have qualified teachers as one thing in common (Özoğlu et al., 2013). Considering the role of teachers in society, many important tasks appear to have been undertaken by them. One of the most important of these is the vital role they play in transferring its heritage to new generations.

In Türkiye, English is the international language of access, but it has no official status and serves no regulatory use in administrative or legal circumstances. The most important role of English in Türkiye is its instrumental usage in public and private educational institutions, which are also the principal agents of the spread of language (Doğançay-Aktuna & Kızıltepe, 2005).

As English gained importance globally, many non-English speaking countries, including Türkiye, joined the challenge, which forced them into making reforms and changes in their educational policies. With learning English gaining popularity, English language instructors became a target, as what teachers know and can accomplish has the greatest impact on what children learn (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 1996). For successful students, qualified teachers are a necessity, and to achieve the desired quality in English language teachers, their assessment and evaluation must be a priority.

In relation with this, there can be seen two different foreign language teacher selection and recruitment models throughout the world; one made before they are accepted to teaching programs and one after they graduate, which means that some countries exercise selectivity by limiting the number of people accepted into a teacher training program, while others allow a large number of students to participate in teacher training programs and then use an examination system to select the top candidates based on an examination score, an interview, and/or a demonstration of teaching ability. In Türkiye, the selection of prospective EFL teachers to be appointed to public schools (i.e., primary, secondary, and high schools) is carried out through the Teacher Field Knowledge Test after they complete their higher education.

The use of centralized exams to appoint English teachers in public institutions in Türkiye is the subject of debate, with arguments both for and against the practice. On the one hand, centralized exams can help to ensure that English instructors have the necessary knowledge and skills to teach effectively and provide a fair and objective method for

evaluating applicants. This can aid in ensuring that only qualified and competent instructors are hired, thereby enhancing the quality of English instruction in public institutions. On the other hand, centralized exams can be criticized for focusing too narrowly on specific knowledge and skills, and for failing to take into account other important teaching-related factors, such as motivation, enthusiasm, and interpersonal skills. In addition, centralized examinations are viewed as establishing barriers for entry into the profession and limiting opportunities for teacher development and professional advancement. The ultimate decision regarding the use of centralized exams for the appointment of English teachers in Turkish public schools will depend on a number of factors, including the goals and priorities of the education system, the resources available for teacher recruitment and development, and the perspectives and experiences of stakeholders such as teachers, teacher educators, and parents. Despite the differences of opinion on the topic, since 2013, this recruitment process has been carried out by means of applying TFKT, a high-stakes, nationwide test.

In the face of high-stake tests, it is necessary to delve into the concept of washback, which is, in simplest terms, the impact of testing on teaching (Alderson & Wall, 1993). Throughout time, washback has been referred to by a variety of names, including measurement-driven teaching (Popham, 1987), systematic validity (Frederiksen & Collins, 1989), test-curriculum alignment (Shepard, 1990), and consequential validity (Messick, 1996). Popham (1987) asserts that measurement-driven teaching happens when a high-stake exam of educational accomplishment impacts the instructional program that prepares students for the test because of significant variables connected with student performance. In the case of this study, the curiosity of the researcher stems from the afore-mentioned definitions of washback. On applying a high-take exam, such as TFKT, the washback on test-takers, test-taker achievement, educators, and instructional program is to be examined.

Reviewing the related literature, it can be argued that a reasonable amount of research has been done on PPSE, however to the best of the researcher's knowledge, the body of research on TFKT (e.g., Sert, 2015; Yeşilçınar, 2018) does not seem to be sufficient to provide an extensive insight into the impact of this exam on pre-service EFL teachers. Thus, it has been concluded by the researcher that there is a need to conduct research on the extent to which pre-service EFL teachers are impacted by TFKT, their knowledge and awareness of the exam itself, also the extent to which they are able to draw

on their knowledge of the field in the exam, and EFL teacher educators' level of awareness of this important exam.

1.3. Purpose and Significance of the Study

Research reveals that the process of assessing and evaluating foreign language teachers is crucial, and all nations strive to hire successful and effective educators (Kyriacou, 2009; Moore, 2004; Tsui, 2003). When this process is immediately tied to a high-stake test, as it is in Türkiye, it is sure to bring about some positive or negative impacts along with itself.

Although many variables influence the quality of education in a country, experts agree that the quality of any educational system is contingent on the effectiveness of instructors (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010). For this reason, there appears to be a need for research on the perspectives of key stakeholders on whether the necessary competencies of EFL teachers are evaluated when assigning and assessing instructors in Türkiye, and how it affects them and future pre-service EFL teachers who will take the test as well as other stakeholders (e.g., EFL teacher educators, HEC, Student Selection and Placement Center (SSPC; i.e., ÖSYM)).

Reviewing the related literature, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, there has been a gap in providing a thorough picture of the extent to which pre-service EFL teachers are affected by this life altering examination (TFKT). As Shohamy (2020) states, "the power of tests" cannot be denied since individuals, educational systems, and society as a whole are affected by high-stakes choices based on test results. Tests have the potential to influence the behaviours of educators, students, parents, and institutions, as well as national educational policy (Shohamy, 2001). It seems that the perceptions and opinions of pre-service EFL teachers' and teacher educators' towards PPSE and TFKT has been investigated thus far. However, the scope of the key stakeholders' knowledge, awareness and perception of the exam itself and the washback on the test-takers have not been thoroughly examined.

The purpose of this research is to investigate the washback of TFKT on key stakeholders in English language teacher education (ELTE) programs in Türkiye. To this

end, first, it examines the pre-service EFL teachers' and teacher educators' level of awareness on and perception of TFKT. Second, it seeks to uncover the extent to which the scope and test items in TFKT influence the pre-service EFL teachers' acquisition of the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the requirements of effective EFL teachers throughout their undergraduate education. Moreover, it investigates the extent to which TFKT affect the teacher educators' course programs and teaching strategies in ELTE programs. This study aims to shed light on these aspects since the TFKT is a high-stakes language proficiency examination that is required for English teachers in Türkiye, therefore it is essential to comprehend the impact of the exam on language instruction and learning in the country. Moreover, there is a lack of research on the washback effects of TFKT, specifically how it affects language teaching and learning in Türkiye, so investigating this topic could add to the existing corpus of knowledge on the subject. By examining the perceptions of pre-service EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators regarding TFKT, it may be possible to identify areas in which the exam could be enhanced or modified to better align with language teaching and learning objectives in Türkiye.

In terms of the nature of the topic and material they teach, the approach they employ, and the connections they develop with their students, foreign language instructors are believed to have a substantial impact in language acquisition (Borg, 2006). Due to the probable connection between learning and teaching as well as the prospective influence of instructors, the recruitment model of future EFL teachers has greater relevance. Therefore, the study aims to understand the scope of the washback effect of the TFKT, and it is hoped that the result of the study will shed light on the role and place of TFKT in prospective EFL teachers' lives in terms of their academic studies and career goals, since having to take such a significant test to be found fit to be an effective EFL teacher means there will be positive or negative impacts. Moreover, it is also hoped that with the results of this study, a greater share of the key stakeholders will benefit and become aware of the washback of this examination, since it is a requirement to point out what consequences this exam brings to teacher candidates who take it.

Related to this, it should be noted that the philosophical and psychological concept of awareness pertains to the states of knowing, perceiving, and being cognizant of events. Thus, the condition of being conscious, cognizant, or mindful of a particular subject is referred to as awareness. A person is aware when they comprehend or acknowledge their

immediate environment, thoughts, emotions, behaviours, or an examination in this case. At this point, pre-service EFL teachers' awareness of TFKT both in terms of its content and construct is related to their comprehension of the test, and it might be one of the significant factors affecting their beliefs about the washback impact of the test. Furthermore, perception can be referred to as the cognitive process through which individuals assimilate and comprehend data that they receive from their surroundings, so what pre-service EFL teachers perceive of the test also constitutes a crucial part of their ideas related to the washback impact.

Overall, this study addresses the effect of high-stakes examinations such as TFKT on the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language, which is an important issue in the field of EFL teacher education. It has practical implications for teacher education programs and policymakers in Türkiye, as it may shed light on how to enhance the efficacy of EFL teacher education and testing. Examining the perceptions and attitudes of pre-service EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators towards TFKT, this study is also intended to contribute to the extant literature on the washback effect of language tests. Also, it has the potential to generate new knowledge and insights that can inform future research on the topic and contribute to the development of theories and frameworks associated with language assessment and teacher education. Hence, it has both theoretical and practical significance and the potential to make a significant contribution to EFL teacher education and language assessment.

1.4. Research Questions

The following research questions are formulated for this study:

1. What is the stakeholders' level of awareness on TFKT?

1.1. What is the pre-service EFL teachers' level of awareness on TFKT?

- a) Does gender affect pre-service EFL teachers' level of awareness on TFKT?
- b) Does age affect pre-service EFL teachers' level of awareness on TFKT?

- c) Does the B.A. program affect pre-service EFL teachers' level of awareness on TFKT?
- d) Does being senior or graduate affect pre-service EFL teachers' level of awareness on TFKT?
- e) Does previous test-taking status affect pre-service EFL teachers' level of awareness on TFKT?
- f) Does the preference for appointment to public schools affect pre-service EFL teachers' level of awareness on TFKT?

1.2. What is the EFL teacher educators' level of awareness on TFKT?

2. What do the stakeholders perceive of TFKT?

2.1. What is the pre-service EFL teachers' perception of TFKT?

- a) Does gender affect pre-service EFL teachers' perception of TFKT?
- b) Does age affect pre-service EFL teachers' perception of TFKT?
- c) Does the B.A. program affect pre-service EFL teachers' perception of TFKT?
- d) Does being senior or graduate affect pre-service EFL teachers' perception of TFKT?
- e) Does previous test-taking status affect pre-service EFL teachers' perception of TFKT?
- f) Does the preference for appointment to public schools affect pre-service EFL teachers' perception of TFKT?

2.2. What is the EFL teacher educators' perception of TFKT?

3. What is the washback effect of TFKT on stakeholders?

3.1. What is the extent of the washback effect on pre-service EFL teachers' acquisition of necessary knowledge and skills?

- a) Does gender have an impact on the perceived effect of TFKT?
- b) Does age have an impact on the perceived effect of TFKT?
- c) Does the B.A. program have an impact on the perceived effect of TFKT?

- d) Does being senior or graduate have an impact on the perceived effect of TFKT?
- e) Does previous test-taking status have an impact on the perceived effect of TFKT?
- f) Does the preference for appointment to public schools have an impact on the perceived effect of TFKT?

3.2. What is the extent of the washback effect on teacher educators' course programs and teaching strategies?

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Conceptual frameworks contribute to the consistency, clarity, relevance, and rationale of a literature review and help "organize the researcher's thinking about the research problem, current practices, contextual features of the environment, participant characteristics, theoretical foundations, empirical findings, and appropriate methods for addressing the problem." (Antonenko, 2015, p. 67). It describes the concept of the problem and the possible lines of investigation. With this principle, in this chapter, firstly, teacher education will be reviewed in line with professional development of teachers and English language teacher education. Then, a discussion of teacher assessment and evaluation will be presented. Finally, definitions and discussions related to washback and high-stake exams, and the use of high-stake exams for the recruitment of English language teachers in Türkiye will be presented.

2.1. Teacher Education

During initial teacher training and their first few years in the classroom, the majority, if not the vast majority, of teachers struggle to learn how to teach. Common sources of difficulty and anxiety include managing children, developing appropriate relationships in the classroom, understanding the subject matter, planning activities that help children learn, monitoring their comprehension, and becoming a part of the school's social and institutional structure (Veenman, 1984; Knowles & Cole, 1994). It is therefore rather surprising that early training and assistance for entry into the field appear to have received little attention or reputation within the profession itself (Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997).

Educational institutions contribute significantly to the dissemination of knowledge and information to students in order to bring them from darkness to light. Teachers are the main employees within educational institutions who play a significant role in the implementation of this mission and the development of the lives of individuals. The educator is regarded as the most essential component of the educational curriculum. It is

essential to invest in teacher preparation so that individuals, communities, and the nation as a whole can advance. Teachers are required to be well-prepared and to possess the necessary skills and talents in order to perform their duties and responsibilities effectively. According to the concept of teacher education, the quality and amount of student achievement are primarily governed by instructor competence, sensitivity, and motivation.

Teachers regulate the learning and teaching process by organizing and implementing lessons, evaluating students, maintaining classroom order, and ensuring that students participate in activities that will help them achieve the lesson's objectives. This competence is acquired by teachers through the vocational courses and field experiences included in teacher education programs. According to Jones (2000), a teacher must possess fundamental qualities such as subject matter expertise, motivation for learning, awareness of student differences, planning the teaching process, knowing and utilizing teaching-learning strategies, designing the learning environment, effective communication, and objective evaluation for effective instruction.

Çiftçi et al. (2016) and Ye et al. (2019) acknowledge the structure of teacher education as a social sciences field. As teacher education is the training of educators for various educational levels, target populations, institution types, and topic areas, the multiplicity of teacher education refers to the various types of teacher education knowledge based on content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and general pedagogical knowledge (Blömeke et al., 2016; Shulman, 1987), or the integrated substance, which means technological pedagogical content knowledge. The knowledge-related division of the research field engages research communities from many topic areas in the production of pedagogical content knowledge, that is didactical challenges of conveying content-specific knowledge to students (Schoenfeld & Kilpatrick, 2008).

Teacher education should help to the development of teachers' professional identities, but it is unclear which features are significant and to what extent they are included into this identity development (Lee & Schallert, 2016). Some bodies of research have linked teacher identity to teachers' self-concepts or self-images (Knowles, 1992; Nias, 1987). Other studies have emphasized teachers' roles (Volkman & Anderson, 1998) or reflection in teacher identity development (Maclean & White, 2007; Walkington, 2005). Regarding the relationship between teaching beliefs and teacher identity, Mayer (1999)

asserted that teacher identity is built on core ideas about teaching and what the meaning of being a teacher, and that these views are continually altered throughout the process of becoming a professional teacher. Moreover, according to Korthagen (2004), teachers' professional identities influence both their views about teaching and their teaching practices.

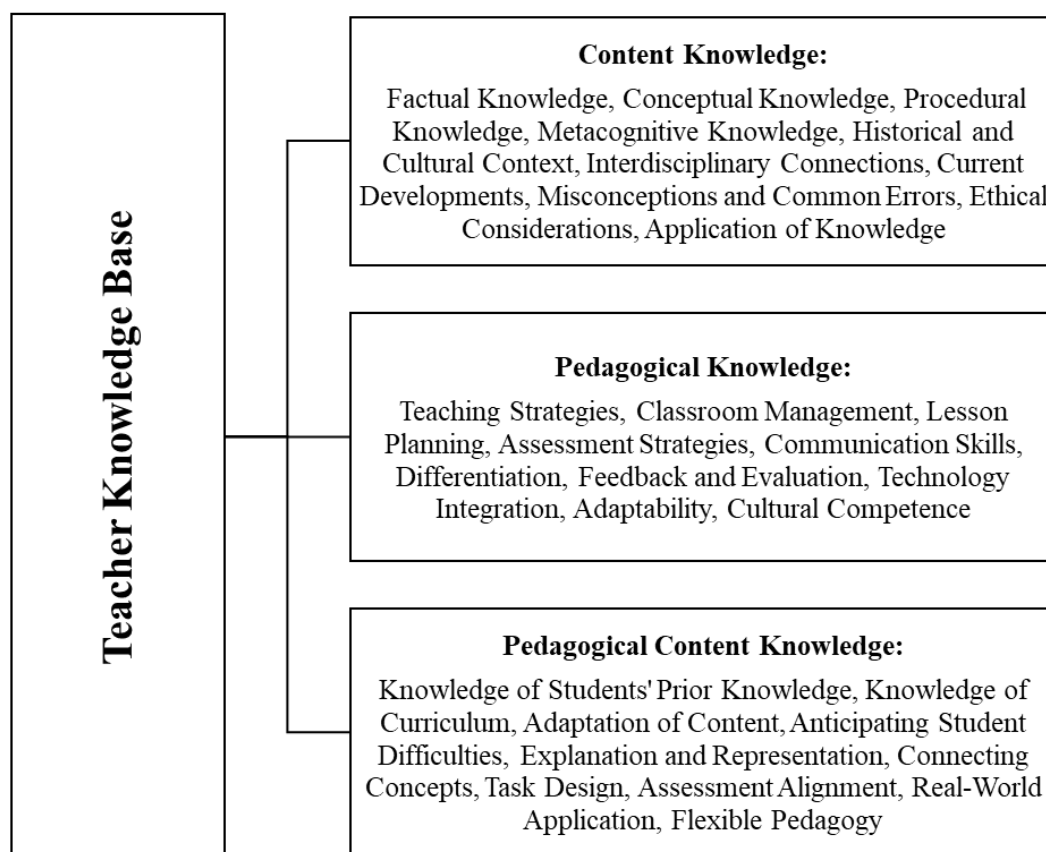
2.1.1. Teacher knowledge base

The impact of Lee Shulman's concept of teacher knowledge, also known as Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), on the field of education has been significant. Shulman (1987) emphasized the significance of teachers' comprehension, reasoning, and reflective abilities in their practice. His concept of PCK emphasizes the essential combination of content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge (Venkat & Adler, 2020). Shulman's framework is widely acknowledged and utilized in teacher education pedagogy (Brooks et al., 2023), and it has supplied a crucial perspective for scholars investigating the relationship between teachers and teaching (Ruifeng & Ping, 2021). His ideas have also been influential in various educational contexts, including the formation of prospective teachers' educators (Almeida & Richit, 2023), the teaching of specific subjects such as mathematics (Howe, 2020), and the promotion of caring education (Puga, 2019). Shulman's work has also influenced the creation of other frameworks, such as the Technological, Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) model, which emphasizes the integration of technology in teaching (Ammade et al., 2020).

Shulman's concept of expert teaching includes seven essential knowledge bases for effective instruction. These seven components include content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values, as well as their philosophical and historical foundations (Krepf et al., 2018). Essentially, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational ends are all subcategories of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge, hence when referring to teacher knowledge base, the main categories are mentioned (see Figure 2.1.). The relevance of teachers' deep knowledge and self-reflection

in their job has been emphasized by Shulman's research, which has been extensively adopted in the field of teacher preparation. His idea of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) has been crucial in ensuring that students with and without impairments have access to engaging educational opportunities (Tandon, 2021).

Figure 2. 1. Shulman's Teacher Knowledge Base



Effective instruction and pedagogical approaches in English Language Teaching (ELT) rely heavily on subject matter expertise, or "content knowledge". Teachers who are experts in their fields are in a better position to help their pupils learn and grow as language users. ELT emphasizes the alignment of teaching tactics with students' learning capacities (Mallillin et al., 2021), through the combination of topic instruction and language learning methodologies. Coursebook content development, problem-solving, and pedagogical reasoning all benefit greatly from content knowledge in English language teaching (ELT) as well as teaching experience (Atkinson, 2021). Incorporating practical linguistic substance into ELT, such as through alphabet poetry, has been shown to improve

students' comprehension of the target language (Dalimunte et al., 2021). Materials like teacher's books are created to give educational affordances and innovation by taking into account local instructors' traditional teaching practice in addition to content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) (Li et al., 2022). Digital storytelling and TPACK are two examples of how technology may be used to improve ELT methods (Tiba et al., 2015). Supporting students' language growth and general learning, ELT relies heavily on bridging language teaching and topic understanding (Hoare et al., 2008).

There are several facets to understanding curriculum in English as a Second Language (ESL), including design, implementation, difficulties, and solutions. Research into the ELT curriculum has revealed the importance of delving into methods of putting theory into practice and fixing problems plaguing ELT in elementary schools. Students' language acquisition and topic understanding are both bolstered by an increased focus on integrating language and content training. It is essential that the curriculum be updated to reflect the requirements of students in the modern technology age. Co-constructing a useful ELT curriculum benefits from stakeholder participation and critical understanding. Curriculum, resources, and teacher preparation may all benefit from hearing the experiences of bilingual parents. Grammar instruction and curricular changes can benefit from the use of pedagogical tools such as mind maps. The expertise and experiences of instructors are deemed crucial from a sociocultural standpoint. Student feedback on the curriculum's delivery reveals problem spots. Effective teaching is bolstered by critical critique of ELT procedures including lesson planning, curriculum development, and textbook creation. Collectively, the following investigations deepen our comprehension of ELT pedagogical lore and offer useful information for improving lesson plans and other curricular components. Güneş & Karaazmak (2017) highlight problems with ELT in elementary schools and offer recommendations for how to fix them. In their analysis of three ELT curriculum models now used in public schools, Graves and Garton (2017) investigate how the theory behind these approaches translates into classroom practice. Hoare et al. (2008) explore the necessity of fostering students' English language development alongside topic material understanding by discussing the integration of language and content education in ELT. In order to meet the needs of students in the modern technological world, Alfahadi (2016) argues, the ELT curriculum must be revised. Mambu (2022) provides a case study on the process of co-constructing a critical English

language teaching (ELT) curriculum, stressing the significance of critical awareness and stakeholder engagement in curricular elements. Curriculum reform is one of the hottest topics in English language education, and Fu & Kuang (2021) examine the development of mind maps for this purpose. Younas (2020) takes a sociocultural approach to the study of ELT curriculum, with a special emphasis on teachers' learning experiences and the construction of a body of ELT knowledge. Neupane (2021) analyzes the Communicative Approach to English Language Teaching in Nepal, focusing on its implementation in the classroom, course development, and textbook creation.

In English Language Teaching (ELT), pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) is essential because it allows teachers to successfully combine pedagogical tactics with subject matter expertise. Numerous studies have looked into numerous angles and methods for improving PCK in ELT. Bayram and Bıkmaz (2018) and Habowski (2012), for instance, found that lesson study experiences and workshops boosted participants' subject knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, respectively. It has been observed that preservice teachers' TPACK can benefit from the use of technology-enhanced content and language-integrated learning (T-CLIL) (Adipat, 2021). Materials for instruction are heavily influenced by researchers' familiarity with local educators' content and pedagogical expertise (Li et al., 2022). Beliefs on the part of teachers, such as those about the connection between content and pedagogical expertise, are also crucial in ELT (Reynolds et al., 2022). According to Li and Zhang (2022), Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) platforms present a chance to develop a public sharing platform for English language training (ELT), one that would integrate material and learning support services. Last but not least, teaching practice is highly valued in ELT teacher education because it provides future educators with the opportunity to put their material and pedagogical expertise into practice in a genuine classroom environment (Babanoğlu, 2021).

Expertise in English Language Teaching (ELT) requires a deep understanding of students and how they learn, which falls under the category of knowledge of learners and their characteristics. It requires being aware of students' various cultural identities, socio-emotional competencies, learning styles, and areas of interest. According to Farrell (2008), the ELT practicum helps teachers better comprehend their students. Chinh (2013) emphasizes the need of embracing cultural diversity in ELT in order to develop students' intercultural skills. Effective English as a Second Language (ELT) has been identified by

Ghimire (2019) as include skilled and energetic teachers, students who are active and creative, and an appreciation of cultural diversity. Alkhaleefah (2017) explains how reading literature may improve students' interest, fluency, and analytical thinking. According to Irwandi (2020), teaching students to study independently and develop a love of the English language is central to ELT's mission. Learning a new language is a source of pride, self-identity, and worry for students, as noted by Rowland (2011). Shrestha (2013) explored the thoughts and actions of ELT instructors. Jha (2019) investigated how the credentials of ELT professionals affect student results. Chowdhury and Ara (2021) analyzed the controversy surrounding the pre-teaching of vocabulary and student agency. The unique pedagogy of Dogme ELT is dissected by Nguyen & Phu (2020).

Furthermore, expertise in English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction relies heavily on teachers' familiarity with their respective educational settings. Educators' ability to successfully adjust instructional tactics depends on their understanding of the individual settings in which teaching and learning occur. Related to this, Tin (2014) examines the methodology used in a typical English language teaching (ELT) classroom in Nepal, arguing that it is crucial to comprehend ELT classroom practice and raising pertinent issues and questions about existing ELT theories and methods. Moreover, Diallo (2014) investigates where international educators in the Gulf region fall short in terms of familiarity with local socio-cultural communities and languages. As evident from the instances of previous studies done on the topic, teachers' familiarity with the educational settings is a great part of teacher knowledge base.

Effective instruction and curriculum development in English Language Teaching (ELT) requires knowledge of educational ends. Teachers can better address their students' individual requirements if they have a firm grasp of the aims and purposes of language instruction. The success of English as a Second Language (ELT) programs can be hindered by factors including student disinterest, outdated teaching techniques, and overcrowded classrooms. Considering several points of view is crucial in ELT because of the impact of cultural settings on attitudes and behaviours. Teachers of English as a Second Language (TESL) must have a high level of linguistic competence in the target languages of their students. The incorporation of environmental education, the use of corpus-based methods, and the evolution of ELT over time all contribute to better language learning results. The effects of globalization on ELT, in especially the English language's dominance, should be

carefully considered. All of these factors help teachers provide students with meaningful and successful language education and guide the development of best practices in ELT. Halik (2020) lists variables including low engagement, low English proficiency, overcrowded classrooms, and outdated teaching techniques as important obstacles to the success of ELT in a given setting. Gu (2010) investigates the differences in perspectives on ELT between Chinese tertiary ELT instructors and British teacher educators, illuminating the impact of cultural settings on understandings of ELT. Freeman et al. (2015) stress the need of instructors of English as a foreign language having specialized language skills related to their classroom duties. Challenges that might have an influence on the efficacy of English as a foreign language (ELT) are discussed by Paschal & Gougou (2022), who pointed out issues such class size, technological integration, multilingualism, teaching resources, and practice opportunities. Güneş and Karaazmak (2017) analyzed the theoretical and practical elements of teaching English as a foreign language in Turkish elementary schools. Laurel et al. (2021) define ELT as "the theory and practice of teaching and learning English for non-native students." Teacher preparation programs, the Ministry of Education, and the families and communities of English language learners are only some of the groups discussed in Gürsoy and Saglam's (2011) discussion of environmental education's incorporation into the ELT curriculum and its relevance. Teacher perspectives on utilizing a corpus-based approach to improve students' vocabulary, grammar, reading, and writing are investigated in Jamal et al. (2021). The article by Selvi (2021) discusses the development and spread of ELT in Türkiye throughout the 1960s. Chiang (2014) talks about how English as a global language has changed and how the dominance of English in Taiwan poses a challenge to ELT.

2.1.2. Professional development of teachers

Research in teacher education cannot provide a unified theory of professional growth (Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997). Clearly, a large number of variables impact the development of teachers' practices, and it is impossible to arrange and classify these variables in a way that gives a single, cohesive account of teacher development that may guide the structure and administration of teacher education. Inquiries into the professional development of teachers, however, have tended to cluster around five models that highlight different aspects of learning to teach and that conceptualize the learning process in

distinctive ways. Each focuses on distinct parts of the process of learning to teach and raises specific concerns about how student teachers might be best prepared for their vocation (Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997).

One aspect can be the socialization process of new teachers into the professional culture. In a longitudinal study of two pre-service teachers, Rust (1994) documented the development of pre-service teachers' relatively child-centred views of teaching and learning during their initial training programme, followed by a reversal to more control-oriented beliefs about teaching in their first year of employment. He suggests that the pressures of teaching in school led them to prioritize fitting into the school, particularly its control-oriented ethos and practices, and that they were unprepared to develop their own teaching style or deal with the negotiations required to develop one's confidence and status within an institutional setting.

The technical, or knowledge and skills, aspect is possibly the most frequently referenced perspective on learning to teach, as it stresses the information and abilities that teachers gain that contribute to classroom practice (Xu, et al., 2020). Berliner (1987), for instance, reveals how pre-service and veteran teachers deemed 'expert' evaluate classroom interaction videotapes differently. The pre-service teachers' descriptions of the videotaped excerpts tend to emphasize the physical characteristics of the children and the classroom layout, whereas the experienced teachers are better able to infer the situation and context, to hypothesize about the children's difficulties, and to predict what might occur next. The experienced teachers had an abundance of context-specific information from which to analyse and explain the events. Studies indicate that experienced teachers possess a vast array of knowledge, not only about the subject matter, but also about students, teaching, and the classroom context that enables them to make sense of classrooms and monitor and change their routines and behaviours, and Shulman (1987) believes that it is essential to endeavour to make this knowledge foundation clear, not just to facilitate teacher education but also to preserve the professional standing of teaching.

In addition to being a practical and intellectual endeavour, teaching is also a moral one, which has inspired an alternate way of understanding teacher education. Teaching is intertwined with caring for the students, and this ethic has been described as an essential aspect of teaching (Valli, 1990), and it is often appreciated by teachers, parents, and

students, but is sometimes overlooked in talks about professional development. Olson (1992) argues that the concerns with educational standards and instrumental attempts to control the processes of teaching and learning toward certain areas of academic accomplishment have obscured the moral component of teaching in many nations. He contends that embedded in all teaching acts are certain value judgements, and that in contemporary education, they may conflict with the fundamental principles to which teachers and the teaching profession may aspire. It is part of a teacher's professional growth, he adds, to investigate these values, to reclaim control over them, and to seek a tighter alignment between values and practices. Becoming a teacher is considered as a process of professional self-actualization in which values and conflict resolution play a vital role.

Studies have also highlighted the intimate link between the personal and professional in teachers' work, as well as the necessity to incorporate personal growth when talking about teachers' professional development. The teachers' personalities are an integral component of their work as educators (Clark, 1988), and teachers need to create working connections with their students, command their attention and respect, and keep courses operating smoothly. According to Bullough et al. (1991), being a teacher needs the formation of a professional self-image. This, they suggest, is accomplished by a re-evaluation of oneself and one's working environment, particularly the others with whom one interacts. In their research of pre-service teachers, they found that metaphors are commonly employed to conceive parts of the self, provide life structure and purpose, and reflect a teacher's fundamental self-perception.

Reflection has also gained popularity in the context of professional development for teachers. Many pre-service and in-service teacher education programs claim to be based on a reflective practitioner approach (Furlong et al., 1994). According to Schön (1987), competent and skilled professional practice rely not mostly on factual information and inflexible decision-making models, but more on the capacity to reflect, interactively defining the problem and generating potential solutions. Schön (1987) contends that reflection-in-action comprises the artistry inherent in professional activity, and that the requisite abilities can only be learned via practice, therefore lays special focus on supervised practical experience, and emphasizes the necessity of the mentor in indoctrinating the beginner into ways of thinking and doing.

2.1.3. Professional development of second language teachers

Within the dynamic realm of education, the development and readiness of pre-service second language instructors are critical elements in promoting the efficacy of language instruction. An in-depth analysis of second language teacher education displays different models that form the foundation of the ongoing professional growth of pre-service teachers who are about to enter the field of language instruction. A crucial component of professional development in second language teacher education is the apprentice-expert model by means of which novice instructors and seasoned mentors engage in conversation, thereby facilitating the transfer of knowledge, skills, and expertise (Beck & Kosnik, 2017). The mentor-mentee relationship holds significant importance in pre-service teacher education, as it facilitates the learning, development, and exercise of teaching knowledge and skills by student teachers during professional placements (Izadinia, 2013). In addition, it has been emphasized that the support and feedback provided by experienced educators to inexperienced instructors is crucial for sustaining and promoting the learning process (Clarke et al., 2014). The apprenticeship-expert model is also applicable to the cultivation of language teaching expertise. Proficient instructors are considered indispensable for the purpose of sharing knowledge, advancing pedagogical standards, and striving towards shared objectives within the language teaching community (Hudson, 2013). In addition, apprentice language teachers must actively engage in dialogue with subject matter experts and language teaching specialists in order to acquire disciplinary expertise and professional conduct (Valencia, 2009). Within the realm of language education, the notion of apprenticeship extends beyond structured mentorship initiatives. The significance of knowledge transfer and experiential learning in language education is reflected in this model (Valencia, 2009). Currently, however, the apprentice-expert model is rarely employed in ESL teacher preparation as a general method to information transfer (Day, 1991).

The rationalist model of second language teacher education stresses philosophical and cognitive language instruction. This approach emphasizes language education theory and cognitive processes, and integrates philosophical and cognitive theories with language teacher education to improve pedagogy and language acquisition (Day, 1991). Philosophy and cognition inform language education methods and instruction under the rationalist

approach. Epistemology, cognition, and educational philosophy shape language instructors' views, attitudes, and methods (Freeman, 2002). It also emphasizes the need of knowing language education theory and language acquisition cognitive processes, and follows the trend of incorporating philosophical and cognitive viewpoints into language teacher preparation to improve language learning and teaching (Johnson, 2006). The rationalist approach emphasizes language education's theoretical and cognitive aspects to improve language instructors' pedagogical understanding and decision-making. Among the four types of knowledge, the rationalist method excels in content and support knowledge but struggles with pedagogical and content knowledge, and it can only handle minimal pedagogical knowledge (Richards & Farrell, 2005). According to Ur (1992), pre-service teachers who take courses based on the rationalist approach feel that theoretical studies do not aid their professional development.

Second language teacher education also benefits from the case studies model, which provides real-world situations for learning and growth. Case studies let teachers participate in real-world teaching circumstances, examine difficult classroom situations, and apply theoretical knowledge (Day, 1991). Language instructors may learn more about language teaching concepts and pedagogical practices and improve their problem-solving abilities in various educational contexts by studying individual situations (Conway, 2000). Case studies in TESOL practice have also helped language instructors develop critical thinking and cultural sensitivity, since they help TESOL practitioners improve professionally by examining diversity, equality, and inclusion problems (Levin, 1995). Case studies have also been used to examine instructors' language teaching views and pedagogical decisions. Case studies in TESOL programs have also helped English-medium students build disciplinary thinking and oral communication, deepening their grasp of language teaching in academic environments (Conway, 2000). Case studies have been used to integrate information literacy into TESOL programs, improving students' research and information fluency (Levin, 1995).

The Integrative model values multidisciplinary collaboration and incorporates findings from psychology, sociology, linguistics, and education. It teaches language instructors cultural competency, sustainability education, and pedagogical innovation in addition to regular language instruction (Richards & Farrell, 2005). In addition, the integrated approach stresses meeting the demands of multiple language education fields

(Day, 1991). It calls for customized training programs to meet the needs of multiple disciplines because language teaching approaches vary by subject and educational setting. The integrated model encourages language teachers to incorporate literature, history, and science into their lessons, as well as multidisciplinary collaboration and language acquisition through meaningful and contextually relevant information to make learning more interesting and successful (Darling-Hammond, 2006). The integrated model emphasizes language instructors' professional growth and ongoing learning, and it promotes collaboration and knowledge sharing among educators from diverse fields to share language teaching best practices (Freeman & Johnson, 1998).

The field of language education is increasingly aware that teachers must constantly reshape their knowledge of teaching and learning throughout their careers, which informs much of language teacher education. Reflective practice requires teachers to examine their professional practice, including what, why, and how they do it, inside and outside the classroom, to make it meaningful to them. According to Day (1991), reflection, or "critical reflection," is the recollection, consideration, and evaluation of an occurrence for a larger purpose. This reaction to prior experience comprises conscious memory and assessment of the event for appraisal, decision-making, planning, and action (Bartlett, 1990). The reflective model in second language teacher education stresses critical self-reflection and introspection as essential to professional growth. This approach invites language educators to critically examine their teaching practices, ideas, and experiences to better understand their pedagogical techniques and their effects on language learning. According to reflective practice, language instructors should evaluate their teaching techniques, classroom relationships, and decision-making. This reflective method helps teachers recognize strengths, weaknesses, and solutions to instructional issues. The reflective model also encourages language instructors to critically assess and apply pedagogical theories in real-world teaching circumstances. Reflective practice helps educators improve their teaching methods, meet varied student needs, and grow professionally. Second language teacher education also uses reflective notebooks, peer observations, and collaborative talks to promote educators' reflective journeys. Language instructors may chronicle their experiences, exchange thoughts with colleagues, and get constructive comments using these tools, fostering professional progress. The reflective approach also emphasizes the need for a friendly, non-judgmental atmosphere for language instructors to reflect. This

inclusive method promotes lifetime learning and ongoing development in language instruction.

2.1.4. Historical overview of higher education in Türkiye

The origins of our nation's higher education can be traced back to Mehmed the Conqueror, who founded the "Sahn-ı Seman" educational institutions, which were the most significant of their time (HEC, 2019). In the eighteenth century, higher education institutions that can be associated with the contemporary concept of university began their studies. In the last two centuries, universities have adopted significant roles, including meeting the education, research, and human resource needs of states.

In this setting, the first college was founded in 1795 as the Imperial School of Military Engineering which is now thought of as the forerunner of Istanbul Technical University (ITU), and higher education schools that opened up until the Tanzimat were set up to teach mostly military skills, which shows how the early stages of Ottoman development worked (HEC, 2019). Before the Tanzimat was announced, getting a college degree was required as part of the plan to build a new citizen bureaucracy, therefore higher education became more important for the people in charge of the empire who wanted to centralize and modernize things (HEC, 2019).

In the years that followed, new schools were opened, such as the Imperial Medical School in 1827, the Imperial Medical School in 1839, the Civil Service School in 1859, the Civil Medical School in 1867, and the Law School in 1880 (HEC, 2019). Some of these schools were also the first places where civilians could get higher education, and they kept going even though their names and locations changed. The establishment of a university (Darülfünun), in addition to the afore-mentioned schools, had been debated from the second half of the nineteenth century, and the first time the name "Darülfünun" was used was in the 1869 law on general education (Maarif Nizamnamesi), which was written when Saffet Pasha was the Minister of Education (HEC, 2019). Grand Vizier Sait Pasha recommended schooling for "Darülfünun-i Şâhâne" in 1900. Ulum-i Ali-i Diniye, Ulum-i Riyaziye, and Ulum-i Tabiiye were founded, and law and medical colleges were opened before Darülfünun (HEC, 2019). In 1909, Mekteb-i Mülkiye's Cağaloğlu school became

Darülfünun-ı Osmani. Grand Vizier Sait Pasha recommended schooling for "Darülfünun-i Şâhâne" in 1900, then Ulum-i Ali-i Diniye, Ulum-i Riyaziye, and Ulum-i Tabiiye were founded (HEC, 2019). Law and medical colleges were opened before Darülfünun. In 1909, Mekteb-i Mülkiye's Cağaloğlu school became Darülfünun-ı Osmani (HEC, 2019).

Higher education has been more significant since the Second Constitutional Monarchy. The Minister of Education at that time, Emrullah Efendi, claimed that education reforms and regulations should start in higher education, not basic education (HEC, 2019). Higher education was altered by Constitutional Era conditions, following this Hendese-i Mülkiye Nafia Nezareti absorbed Mühendis Mekteb-i Alîsi (Engineering School) in 1909, and Darülfünun adds history, literature, and philosophy to its curriculum (HEC, 2019). He regulated Darülfünun in 1912 which had five divisions and connected provincial medical and law schools. During the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), the institution thrived. A 1915 reorganization added 19 German and one Hungarian academics to Darülfünun. During the war in 1914, women's classes and conferences resumed at Darülfünun's conference room, and İnas Darülfünunu was founded. The university received "scientific autonomy" in 1919 (HEC, 2019).

During the Second World War, the Ministry of Education in Ankara oversaw a higher education system comprised of dispersed faculties that congregated under the roof of a university in Istanbul (HEC, 2019). By University Law No. 4936, enacted on June 13, 1946, the university gained "autonomy and legal personality" after the war. Three universities existed in Türkiye in 1946: Istanbul University (1933), İstanbul Technical University (1944), and Ankara University (1946) (HEC, 2019). Between 1955 and 1957, four new universities were founded in Türkiye due to education system changes and social needs. Ege University (İzmir) and Karadeniz Technical University (Trabzon) were opened in 1955, and Atatürk University (Erzurum) was established in 1957. Law No. 7334 established METU-Ankara in 1956. Other universities were founded afterwards. Türkiye had 18 universities in the 1970s as social needs led to the creation of new institutions throughout Anatolia (HEC, 2019).

The establishment of the Higher Education Council (HEC) on November 6, 1981 marked the beginning of a new era. As higher education becomes more accessible, the number of institutions has grown dramatically. In 1984, Bilkent University became

Türkiye's first foundation university after legislative reforms. State universities increased from 53 in 2003 to 129 in 2018. Türkiye has 72 non-profit foundation universities and 5 vocational institutions (HEC, 2019). In the 2000s, the Turkish higher education system transformed along with the rest of the globe, expanding steadily.

HEC assumed responsibility for all institutions of higher education as an institution with autonomy and public identity, within the scope of the powers and duties granted to it by Articles 130 and 131 of the Constitution and the afore-mentioned provisions of the Law (HEC, 2019). HEC is in charge of the strategic planning, coordination, supervision, and surveillance of higher education in Türkiye, as well as the establishment and maintenance of quality assurance mechanisms, and HEC's primary objective is to enhance the quality of education and strengthen social and economic ties through higher education (HEC, 2019).

Prior to the 1960s, only a subset of high school graduates was admitted to universities without examinations. Since these years, faculties with quotas that are exceeded by demand have typically conducted the selection process either by accepting as many candidates as necessary based on the application order, accepting high school graduates from the science and literature departments based on the quality of education provided by the faculty, or recruiting students based on this order by ranking applicants according to their high school diploma. With the growth of high school graduates and the right to apply to higher education for high school equivalent graduates, the student selection techniques indicated above have become insufficient, thus faculties have started to arrange entrance tests for their own objectives. Students had to travel across the country to take the tests, and the fact that they could only take one on the same day and time caused objections from applicants and their parents. Since the 1960s, several universities have organized admission tests for themselves, then collaborated.

Due to the rising number of candidates, examinations now had to include multi-question and objective tests and employ informatics techniques and tools for application, scoring, selection, placement, and reporting results. On November 19, 1974, the Interuniversity Council founded the Interuniversity Student Selection and Placement Center (ÜSYM) to centralize university admission tests which selected and placed university students until 1981. Under the 10th revision of the Higher Education Law No. 2547. and 45., ÜSYM became the Student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM) of the

Higher Education Council in 1981 (HEC, 2019). However, not only is the responsibility of selecting and placing candidates for the university education held by this center, but also a number of appointments are carried out by means of the examinations prepared and administered by them. One of these examinations, which is the focal point of this study, is the Teacher Field Knowledge Test (ÖABT), delivered along with Public Personnel Selection Exam (KPSS). While candidates from diverse programs sit KPSS mainly to be appointed to government offices and organisations, such as the ministries, ÖABT is taken in order to be appointed to public schools as teachers, and as far as this study is concerned, as English teachers.

2.1.5. English language teacher education in Türkiye

There is evidence that teacher education is a strong indicator of teacher quality and student accomplishment (Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Rivkin & Hanushek, 2012). Teacher education programs are supposed to prepare pre-service teachers for their future roles (Allen, 2009), and it is also their responsibility to educate those that will shape the country's future (Keçik & Aydın, 2011) because these programs are the first stage in teachers' professional careers (Musset, 2010). With the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye in 1923, different methods of teacher education have started to be implemented. The history of Turkish teacher education stretches back to 1924, when the "Law of Unification of Instruction" was passed (Çakıroğlu & Çakıroğlu, 2003). However, the two major changes occurred nearly five decades later, one of them being the Basic Law of National Education in 1973, which shaped the general framework of the Turkish national education system, and the reorganization of teacher education through the Higher Education Council (HEC) in 1981, which was previously under the control of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) (Yavuz & Zehir Topkaya, 2013).

Looking at the history of language teacher education in Türkiye, the first foreign language department formed following the founding of the Republic of Türkiye was the French language department at Gazi Institute in 1941, followed by the English language department in 1944 and the German language department in 1947 (Demirel, 1991), and the length of education in these departments was two years, admitting the graduates of teacher training high schools (Uygun, 2003, as cited in Hatipoğlu, 2017). Although admittance to

these programs were strict in those days with exams comprised of multiple stages measuring distinct skills, this began to change later on. In fact, after 1974, Student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM) in Ankara started to prepare and administer a centralized exam for the placement of candidates to these programs (Hatipoğlu, 2017). With the second major reform made in 1981, as mentioned above, when the responsibility of teacher training made the transfer to HEC, the Faculties of Education started to provide teacher education within a four-year program following the curriculum prepared by HEC and being allowed make amendments in the 20% of it, (Hatipoğlu, 2017), which has been the case since.

MoNE developed the first list of generic teacher competences in 2006 as an attempt at standardization, and in 2008, the Ministry of Education additionally outlined subject-specific skills for English Language Teaching at the elementary level (Kartal & Başol, 2019). It was thought that the modifications to the competencies will affect teaching methods (Arıkan, 2010). MoNE adhered with the recommendations of the European Commission and Council of Europe, as well as the research in the fields of general pedagogy, teacher education, teacher training, and teacher cognition, while establishing standards. In 2017, MoNE amended the general competences, and in 2018, HEC altered the ELTE program. Current ELTE programs in Türkiye address comparable competences as TESOL, such as language and linguistics, SLA theories, learner variables, English teaching techniques, foundations of learning and teaching, practicum, instruction, assessment/evaluation, and educational/pedagogical topics (Mahalingappa & Polat, 2013). As stipulated by HEC (2010), these competences are further classified into three domains: Language Teaching Subjects; General Culture; and Pedagogical Formation. Despite the fact that all programs must adhere to these fundamental HEC standards, they are allowed to provide electives for their students, affording them some degree of curriculum design flexibility.

2.2. Teacher Assessment and Recruitment

As a result of the belief that instructors influence students' academic progress, several nations change and update their teacher evaluation systems in an effort to improve their education (Yeşilçınar, 2018). Although there are several aspects that contribute to

student achievement in schools, teacher quality appears to be the most essential (Harris & McCaffrey, 2010) as it has not only short-term but also long-term consequences (Jackson, 2014), and this leads to a growing desire to have qualified teachers in classrooms. Therefore, developing a valid, fair, and reliable mechanism for assessing and evaluating teachers should be the first step each government takes to improve the quality of education in their country (Thaman, 2007).

There is a general agreement that every pre-service teacher's pedagogical knowledge, subject-area knowledge, and professional teaching ability must be evaluated prior to becoming a teacher using a combination of multiple measures, as no single measure is capable of evaluating the effectiveness of teachers (Yeşilçınar, 2018). In other words, if the purpose of teacher assessment is to choose and recruit English language pre-service teachers, their knowledge and ability to use that information should be evaluated to guarantee that the selection of the individual for teaching English is right.

Reviewing the available literature related to teacher assessment, it can be seen that the majority of research (Clark & Paran, 2007; Chen & Lin, 2009; Chen, 2012; Darling-Hammond, 2002) on teacher recruiting in foreign contexts focuses on either the characteristics sought by administrators or the selection and recruitment procedures. Researchers (e.g. Rutledge et al., 2008) identified portfolios, recordings of instruction, and demonstration lessons as potential strategies for assessing the teaching competence of student teachers. In Türkiye, however, the centralized recruitment process is managed by MoNE, and pre-service teachers who wish to work in public schools (from primary to upper secondary) must pass a norm-referenced paper-pencil exam administered by ÖSYM (Ölçme, Seçme ve Yerleştirme Merkezi, or Assessment, Selection and Placement Center), (Yeşilçınar, 2018). Darling-Hammond (2014) contends that standardized test results may offer a basic picture of what student teachers know and can accomplish, but they are not reliable measurements of student teachers' performance since they do not provide specific information about how they can teach in the classroom.

A fair and reliable assessment method necessitates the collection of different sources of information concerning teacher practice, taking into account the traits and practices of a competent teacher (Yeşilçınar, 2018). Consequential validity considers the logic of a high-stakes educational intervention from the perspectives of various stakeholders (Cook &

Lineberry 2016), the high-stakes educational intervention being TFKT, and stakeholders being pre-service English teachers, graduates of English-related departments and teacher educators in the context of this study.

2.3. Washback

Washback Effect, which is commonly known and defined as the impacts of testing on learning and teaching, is sometimes referred to as the "Backwash Effect." Alderson & Wall (1993) argue that there are no semantic or pragmatic reasons to employ each term. "Backwash effect" is utilized in general education circles. In addition, according to Pan (2009), "some authors used the term "washback" while others used "backwash" to characterize the impacts or influences brought about by exams or examinations." According to Wall (1997), however, test impact refers to any influence a test may have on persons, policies, or practices within the classroom, school, educational system, and society as a whole.

There have been several other definitions for the term "washback". Washback is defined by Messick (1996) as the amount to which the introduction and implementation of a test influences language and teachers to do things that they would not normally do to enhance or inhibit language development. It is also defined as the links between testing and learning by Shohamy et al. (1996). Pearson (1998) states that public examinations influence the attitudes, behaviours, and motivation of teachers, learners, and parents, and because examinations frequently occur at the end of a course, this influence is viewed as functioning in reverse, hence the name washback. Cheng (2005) defines washback as the intentional or unexpected (accidental) direction and function of curricular change on areas of teaching and learning through a change in public assessments. In addition, Green (2013) defines washback as the interaction of exams, teaching, and learning.

Alderson and Wall (1993) put forward 14 prospects about the phenomenon of washback. A test has the potential to impact various aspects of the educational process. These include: (1) the methods used by teachers, (2) the acquisition of knowledge by learners, (3) the content taught by teachers, (4) the instructional techniques employed by teachers, (5) the knowledge gained by learners, (6) the learning strategies employed by

learners, (7) the pace and order of instruction, (8) the pace and order of learning, (9) the level and thoroughness of teaching, (10) the level and thoroughness of learning, and (11) the attitudes towards the content and methods of teaching and learning. Furthermore, (12) tests with significant implications will result in washback, while tests without significant implications will not. Additionally, (13) all tests will have washback on both learners and teachers. However, (14) certain tests will only have washback effects on specific teachers and learners, while others will not be affected at all.

Among these tests, language examinations have traditionally been seen to have a detrimental impact on teaching. However, the phenomenon of washback can have both negative and positive effects (Alderson and Wall, 1993; Bailey, 2005; Hughes, 1989; Taylor, 2005). Negative washback refers to the potential undesirable result of a particular exam on the process of teaching and learning (Alderson and Wall, 1993). Conversely, "positive washback" promotes effective teaching methods after the test has been administered (Taylor, 2005, p. 154). There is a widespread misunderstanding that the nature of washback is directly linked to the test's quality. Contrary to this oversimplification, it is not accurate to assert that the connection between positive and negative washback is directly proportional to the quality of testing. Alderson and Wall (1993) argued that a test can have positive washback, regardless of its quality, as long as it leads to desirable outcomes. For instance, a poor test may prompt teachers and learners to prioritize the topic, improve lesson preparation, or complete homework. These actions can be seen as beneficial and therefore contribute to positive washback. Positive and negative washback are influenced by contextual factors and can occur in both directions. Therefore, while studying the washback of a particular exam, it is important to have a thorough understanding of the educational environment (Cheng and Curtis, 2004).

As a type of exam, Pearson (1998) highlights the significant impact that public examinations have on the attitudes, actions, and motivation of instructors, learners, and parents. Examinations, often administered at the conclusion of a course, exert a retroactive impact, resulting in what is known as washback. Such examinations are known as "high-stakes" ones. The term 'high-stakes test' indicates that the outcome of such a test can have a significant impact on the future advancement and possibilities of the test-takers. Au (2008) contends that testing programs are high-stake when achievement on such examinations results in some sort of consequence or reward for students, their teachers, school

administrators, schools, school districts, or school systems. According to Cheng (2005), the outcomes of tests (often public examinations or large-scale standardised tests) are used to make key judgments regarding test takers' future academic and employment chances, which can have substantial effects on the test takers.

Some high-stakes exams for students include examinations that determine whether or not unique academic requirements are satisfied, advancement to a higher class or level of education, or the attainment of a diploma. In other words, it means transitioning to higher education or the corporate sphere and acquiring life-essential information and abilities (Başaran, 2005).

According to domain experts, high-stake tests, despite their use in judging the quality of education, are ineffective in altering education. Exam results, particularly in the field of education, propel institutions unintentionally into a competition and race (Donlevy, 2000). At this stage, the cause of the problem is the impact on instructors and pupils of the examination precautions related to control and predictability of outcomes on instructors and students. One of the detrimental consequences of high stakes exams on education is the use of high or low scores gained from examinations using multiple-choice responses to reward or penalize students (Johnson, 2007). Another issue associated with high-stakes testing is that lesson schedules are restricted based on test results (Paris, 2000). In particular, the inability to assess higher-level cognitive abilities based on these tests leads in the failure of these skills or the emphasis on teaching lower-level cognitive skills. From this perspective, the amount of life preparation training in education reduces over time, and as a result, although the number of people preparing for exams grows, the quantity and quality of people obtaining life skills decreases (Kumandaş & Kutlu, 2015).

Classical assessment techniques like as multiple-choice and true-false, which are used to evaluate student activities, are insufficient for assessing abilities such as reading comprehension, written expression, presentation, inquiry, and investigation that are intended to be seen (Kutlu et.al., 2014). From this perspective, it is underlined that such tests, which are administered for a variety of reasons and intended to assess this type of lower-level cognitive skills, have harmful effects on school learning (Jehlen, 2003). Especially when education is centred on these assessments, pupils tend to study just exam-relevant content (Looney, 2009).

Under the concept of washback, whether the influence of testing is regarded to be positive or negative should also depend on who actually conducts the inquiry inside a certain education context, along with where, the school or university contexts, when, the time and duration of employing such assessment methods, why, the justification, and how, the many ways utilized by different participants within the context (Cheng & Curtis, 2004). According to Pearson (1988), a test's washback effect is bad if it fails to represent the learning principles and course objectives to which it purportedly corresponds, and it is positive if the effects are beneficial and promote the entire spectrum of desired changes.

In Türkiye, TFKT, which determines whether a graduate of English language related departments is fit to be appointed as an English teacher to public schools, is one of the high-stakes tests employed. If a test is to be employed in order to make such a significant decision as being competent enough to be appointed as a teacher, naturally it can be assumed that it should have a substantial impact on its key stakeholders. Sharing a similar perspective, Linn (1992) urged the measurement research community to argue that the implementation of any new high-stakes testing system should pay greater attention to assessments of both the intended and unforeseen impacts of the system.

2.4. English Teacher Recruitment in Türkiye

Until 1982, the Ministry of Education was responsible for teacher selection, education, and recruiting. In accordance with the National Education Basic Law number 1739 enacted in 1974, primary school teachers were educated in two-year institutions, renamed 'educational colleges' in 1982 (HEC, 2010). Secondary school teachers were also educated in educational institutes and advanced teacher schools. As a result, educational colleges and faculties of education began training elementary and secondary school teachers, respectively, after universities assumed responsibility for teacher education. In the 1989-1990 academic year, the term of two-year education colleges was extended to four years, and in the 1992-1993 academic year, these colleges were turned into faculties of education. Changes that resulted in a severe teacher shortage were the result of a lack of efficient coordination and planning efforts between the MoNE and universities (Yeşilçınar, 2018).

In 1985, pre-service English instructors took a centralized test for the first time. Due to the teacher shortage in 1992, the test requirement for teachers was reinstated, and in 1996, about 50,000 individuals became teachers without pedagogical training and without passing an examination. However, beginning in 2001, teacher candidates were retested under KMS (Kurumlar için Merkezi Eleme Sınavı or Centralized Examination for Institutions), which was renamed KPSS in 2002 (Yeşilçınar, 2018). The Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE, i.e., KPSS), which decides if the student teachers merit the appointment and is administered in four parts, is a prerequisite for student teachers to work in public schools. Through the PPSE, student teachers must pass multiple-choice examinations in general culture, general skills (120 questions), and educational sciences (80 questions). The initial test of this process comprises of general knowledge and abilities. In the second test, their educational scientific knowledge is evaluated. To become an English language teacher, student teachers must complete the third test as well, which is Teacher Field Knowledge Test (TFKT, i.e. ÖABT), consisting of two main parts: the Field Knowledge Test, which assesses language proficiency, linguistics, and literature; and the Field Educational Test, which assesses methods, approaches, and teaching language skills. The questions for the first and second test in PPSE are presented in Turkish, while the questions for the third test, TFKT, are presented in English. Also, as a relatively new addition, interviews are done in Turkish as the last step of the recruitment process to evaluate the eloquence of applicants after they get their final scores from the three separate tests explained above and ordered according to the scores they received.

2.5. Related Studies

Washback has been a significant topic of research in the field of education, and an abundance of washback studies has been conducted in Türkiye as well. In 2010, for instance, Yıldırım evaluated the effects of the English Component of the Foreign Language University Entrance Exam on the language proficiency and academic performance of prospective EFL teachers in Türkiye during their first year of university and revealed that the exam has a negative impact on students' language proficiency and their performance in their freshman year of university.

Özmen (2011a) conducted a mixed-method study with 164 pre-service EFL teachers to analyse the washback effect of "The Selection Examination for Professional Posts in Public Organizations" (SEPPPO, i.e., KPSS) in Türkiye, the results of which revealed that SEPPPO exerted negative and harmful effects on pre-service EFL teachers, educational faculties and families. Özmen (2011b) also examined the impact of the Inter-university Foreign Language Examination (ILE) on academic candidates in Türkiye, and the results indicate that ILE has a negative washback effect on a variety of micro- and macro-level factors. The washback effect of two high-stakes examinations (KPDS and ÜDS) on receptive and productive skills of academicians was also examined by Akpınar & Çakıldere (2013) and it was determined that there are substantial distinctions between reading and writing, reading and listening, but not between reading and speaking.

Furthermore, Hatipoğlu (2016), in her study, first addressed the sociocultural and historical framework of how English is taught and assessed in Türkiye, and then the opinions and perspectives of pre-service teachers towards English evaluation in Türkiye in order to examine the impact of University Entrance Exam on EFL education. The results of her study demonstrated not only how language assessment policies create and change teaching beliefs and practices in the country, but also how pre-service teachers' perspectives on assessment may be situation-specific and, therefore, difficult to comprehend when removed from their context.

The investigation of TFKT has also received notable academic focus, with a somewhat wide range of research examining different aspects of this crucial evaluation instrument. The current study in this field has mostly focused on analyzing the views of test-takers, providing insights into their experiences, difficulties, and thoughts during the assessment procedure. Moreover, studies have utilized Bloom's Taxonomy as an analytical framework to examine the cognitive levels engaged by these assessments in order to determine the extent and intricacy of instructors' subject expertise. In addition, several research have explored attitudes by examining the subjective perspectives and feelings of persons regarding the teacher field knowledge test.

Atav and Sönmez (2013) conducted a study to examine PPSE-TFKT in terms of its significance for pre-service teachers. The study was carried out with 300 participants from various programs in Education Faculties, including pre-service EFL teachers. As a result of

the study, it was found that test-takers believed there was an inconsistency between their program content and the test content, therefore they had to attend private courses to succeed in the test. Another result revealed by the study was that the pre-service teachers thought the test had a negative effect on their social life and undergraduate education. They also believed that the exam was not suitable for selecting qualified teachers, and suggested an oral section along with an applied one to appoint teachers and that this should be repeated after appointment as well.

Sert (2015) sought to investigate the perspectives of those who underwent test preparation in order to analyse the field examination. Hence, their perspectives on the advantages of this field examination were gathered. Open-ended inquiries were formulated and the study was carried out with 34 participants. The findings indicated that instructors recognized the importance of the examination process, as it allowed for their appointment.

Yağcı and Kurşunlu (2017) investigated the appointment process of teachers through PPSE-TFKT, with a specific focus on the perspectives of prospective teachers on the correlation between PPSE-TFKT and the curriculum at faculties of education. A total of 200 pre-service teachers from Izmir took part in the study. The findings indicated that aspiring teachers perceived the professional education they got in their programs as inadequate. The aspiring educators indicated their proficiency levels in anticipation of the examination as 'intermediate'. Participants indicated a lack of alignment between the information and abilities taught in their teacher education program and those emphasized in the test. They further asserted that it was an unreliable and subjective examination. In addition, the pre-service teachers also emphasized that it was an inadequate assessment tool for properly identifying suitable individuals for the teaching profession.

Memduhoğlu and Kayan (2017) conducted research to reveal the perspectives of pre-service teachers on the Public Personnel Selection Exam (PPSE) and the newly added field assessment known as the Teacher Field Knowledge Test (TFKT). The study was done with a total of 16 pre-service instructors. All participants in the research expressed a positive attitude towards the addition of TFKT to PPSE and believed that PPSE was insufficient for evaluating teaching abilities. However, they also considered the PPSE test to be the most appropriate method of recruitment given the circumstances in our country.

Karaer et al. (2018) studied the perspectives of prospective teachers on TFKT. To achieve this objective, a survey was administered to a sample of 306 teacher applicants across 16 different branches. Based on the collected findings, the teacher candidates expressed that they believe their graduation grades are adequate for assignment and they prefer not to take an examination. However, if an examination is to be conducted, they suggest that it should be based on the TFKT criteria.

Yeşilçınar (2018) established The English Teachers' Attitudes towards Recruitment System Scale (ETARS) by drawing upon the existing literature. Data were gathered from several stakeholders, including policymakers, education experts, teacher trainers, teachers, and pre-service teachers. The results demonstrated that the ETARS, consisting of 23 items and three dimensions, is a valid and trustworthy tool. Ultimately, the ETARS was utilized to assess the perspectives of 260 English instructors about the Turkish teacher assessment and evaluation (TAE) model, taking into account different factors. Evidence revealed that English instructors held unfavorable sentiments towards the existing TAE approach.

Benek and Akçay (2021) investigated the impact of the COVID-19 social isolation measures on the metacognitive abilities, emotions, and individual traits of candidate teachers who were preparing for the PPSE-TFKT in Türkiye. The study's sample comprised 20 pre-service teachers selected from various branches, including English Language Teaching. The pandemic-induced social isolation effectively regulated the cognitive processes of teacher candidates, including planning, monitoring, assessment, debugging, and information management. The study observed that this approach had both good and negative effects on the emotional aspects of teacher candidates' attitudes, motives, and beliefs about the test.

Karataş and Okan (2021) conducted a comprehensive examination of the effective utilization of the PPSE-TFKT. The study was carried out with 4 senior year students of ELT at Çukurova University. It specifically focused on the origins of its influence, as well as its ramifications and repercussions. Initially, the elements that made up the participants' collective understanding of the effective utilization of the KPSS were determined. Subsequently, the interconnections among these components within their collective perceptual system were introduced, and the results suggested that the PPSE-TFKT resulted

in a series of unforeseen outcomes and repercussions. However, it should be mentioned that the inquiries made in the study were strictly related to PPSE rather than TFKT.

As evident from the cited studies done on washback and TFKT, it can be seen that, as far as the researcher is aware, no study so far has specifically attempted to assess the washback impact of TFKT. Since this is one of the most important high-stakes tests in this country, which determines pre-service EFL teachers' future employment, this gap in the literature ought to be filled with an extensive study such as this.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the research context, design, participants, data collection instruments and data analysis procedures will be presented and discussed.

3.1. Research Context

In Türkiye, there is an application of 4+4+4 compulsory education system, in which the students have 4 years of primary school education, 4 years of secondary school education and 4 years of high school education as a must, which started to be implemented with the beginning of 2012-2013 education period. In this system, the onset of English language teaching is the 2nd grade at primary school and is assessed in almost every national examination until students reach the level of tertiary education. If the medium of instruction is English at higher education level, the university provides a compulsory year of English education to its students before moving onto their departments, and if the medium is Turkish, then the students have compulsory English courses embedded in their curriculum. In primary school, students have 2 hours of English lessons weekly in their 2nd, 3rd and 4th years. In secondary school, this number increases per week, and students receive 3 hours each week in their 5th and 6th years and then 4 hours each week for the last 2 years. Finally, in high school, depending on the type of high school students attend, weekly English lessons vary from 2 to 4 hours, however if there is Preparatory English class in the school, students have 20 hours of English lessons per week. After finishing high school, a nationwide examination prepared and carried out by Student Selection and Placement Center (SSPC) is taken to be eligible for tertiary education, as a result of which many programs in universities accept students based on their scores, and this is also how pre-service EFL teachers are selected and placed in English Language Teacher Education programs, by means of 80 multiple choice questions focusing on the candidates' reading comprehension, grammar and vocabulary knowledge.

To raise qualified and competent teachers, therefore, the English Language Teaching Education curriculum in Türkiye consists of a four-year training in faculties of education as they are the responsible body for teacher education. The primary objective of the first year of the programs is to develop the language abilities of students, with courses concentrating on each area individually. Thus, four out of ten courses aim to improve the competency of pre-service teachers in reading, listening, writing, and speaking the foreign language. Two courses attempt to familiarize students with pedagogical terminology and educational sciences. In the first-year curriculum, there is a course designed to develop students' knowledge and competence with information technology. The new curriculum requires that first- year students acquire one additional foreign language. The following two courses are designed to expand pre-service teachers' knowledge of Turkish language and Turkish history. In addition to general education classes, pre-service teachers begin taking subject-matter courses such as linguistics, literature, and language-teaching technique during the second year of the program. In the third year of the program, in addition to subject-matter courses such as literature, teacher candidates primarily take ELT technique courses concentrating on teaching language skills to students of all ages and, especially, teaching English to young learners. In methodology courses, teacher candidates are expected to design lesson plans and resources for each skill properly. In both semesters of the final year, teacher candidates are required to observe classrooms and conduct demonstration lessons in schools with the assistance of a supervisor from their faculty and a mentor teacher from the school. This is the sole chance teacher candidates have to put theory into practice and apply what they have learned in their initial ELTE program. As shown in Table 3.1., the program consists of 48% content knowledge, 34% pedagogical knowledge, and 18% general culture, all of which are taught to teacher candidates.

Table 3. 1. The Structure of Initial ELTE Programs in Türkiye

Content	%
(CK) Content Knowledge	48
(PK) Pedagogical Knowledge	34
(GC) General Culture	18

The present program was put into effect in 2018 in an effort to comply with the Bologna Process 1999, creating core programs for undergraduate programs providing education in the same field in the world, and in this context, it was necessary for HEC to update the undergraduate programs of the faculties of education / educational sciences and create common core programs. Within the scope of the Bologna process, it is necessary to include elective courses in the curriculum by at least 25%, and according to HEC (2019), although these elective courses were included in teacher training programs, it was observed that hundreds of elective courses were opened in faculties under different names in relation to elective courses. With this regulation which was to be applied effective 2018-2019 academic year, ELTE programs were left with little room to make any difference, which led to a more standardized approach. Although this program format is partially in line with TESOL standards (Mahalingappa & Polat, 2013) and can be viewed as a unified model of teacher education, the implementations of these programs, the opportunities they present to teacher candidates, and their eventual impact on the professional development of pre-service teachers have yet to be determined. The vast majority of studies in the sector (Altan & Sağlamel, 2015; Gürsoy & Damar, 2011; İpek & Daloğlu, 2017; Karabuğa, 2016; Uzun, 2016;) focusing on various components of these programs suggests substantial issues and claims to be inadequate in preparing instructors for real-world situations.

Teacher candidates who graduated from the faculty of education could be appointed as teachers, as well as candidates who have graduated from the Pedagogical Formation Certificate Program (PFSP) at the faculty. Within the scope of PFSP, formation education is provided to students who have graduated from or are studying at other faculties outside the faculty of education for a certain fee and within the framework of a certain program within the faculty of education. Candidates who completed the program and were eligible for certification took the Public Personnel Selection Exam (PPSE, i.e., KPSS), just like graduates of the faculty of education, in order to be able to work as a teacher in public schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education (MoNE, i.e., MEB). Until 2013, the assignments of teacher candidates according to PPSE were based on the results of the Educational Sciences Test (EST), General Culture Test (GCT), and General Aptitude Test (GAT). However, in addition to these tests, the Teacher Field Knowledge Test (TFKT, i.e., ÖABT) was introduced in October 2013. EST contributed 40%, and GCT and GAT contributed 30% to candidates' PPSE scores until 2013; yet with the arrival of the new

examination, now TFKT contributes 50%, EST contributes 20%, GCT and GAT contribute 15% to their KPSS scores. In 2016, an interview was also introduced in addition to these four tests for appointments based on KPSS score. In this system, in the case of English language teacher appointment, the eligibility to take the exam is related to graduating from faculties of education or faculties of science and letters.

In TFKT, pre-service EFL teachers' Teacher Knowledge Base is assessed. Of the 75 questions asked in the test, 45 questions fall under Field Knowledge and the remaining 30 fall under Field Educational Knowledge as can be seen in Table 3.2. Related to Field Knowledge, pre-service EFL teachers are assessed in terms of language proficiency, linguistics and literature, all of which can be categorised as content knowledge in EFL. Specifically, candidates are tested on their reading comprehension, pedagogical grammar and grammar knowledge with language proficiency questions (25 questions in total). They are also asked 10 linguistics and 10 English literature questions. In the rest of the exam, as their pedagogical content knowledge is assessed with 30 questions in total, pre-service EFL teachers have to answer questions related to Approaches, Methods & Techniques in English Language Teaching, Teaching Language Skills in ELT, Teaching English to Young Learners & Classroom Management, Materials Development, Adaptation and Evaluation and Testing in ELT, on all of which they receive extensive training throughout their 4-year ELTE programs, mostly beginning in the second year of their education. With the 2018 regulation of HEC standardizing the ELTE program contents, it was also made sure that all pre-service EFL teachers received the same content, which was a crucial development since TFKT coverage is determined by the coverage of ELTE programs, and since TFKT is a country-wide government regulation, all pre-service EFL teachers should be able to learn the same content related to English language teaching.

Table 3. 2. The Detailed Content of TFKT

English Language Teaching & TFKT Content		Overall Percentage	Approximate Number of Items in TFKT	Time Allocated
Field Knowledge Test		60%	45	
1	Language Proficiency		25	
2	Linguistics		10	
3	Literature		10	
Field Educational Knowledge Test		40%	30	
1	Approaches, Methods & Techniques in ELT		4	
2	Teaching Language Skills in ELT		14	
3	Teaching English to Young Learners & Classroom Management		3	120 minutes
4	Materials Development, Adaptation & Evaluation		4	
5	Testing in ELT		2	
6	Language Acquisition		3	
Total		100%	75	

The purpose of the TFKT is to guarantee that only the most qualified and competent teachers are chosen for jobs in the Turkish education system, and it may have originated in Türkiye due to the need for a standardized and objective method of evaluating the subject matter (content) knowledge and teaching skills of prospective instructors. Due to the growing importance of education in Türkiye and the rising demand for highly educated teachers, it became essential to develop a reliable and valid instrument for evaluating the classroom preparation of teacher applicants. The need to ensure that instructors have the necessary content knowledge to properly instruct their students was one of the motivating factors behind the establishment of the TFKT. Due to the increasing number of students enrolling in schools and the significance of education for social and economic development, it was essential that teachers possess the knowledge and skills necessary to provide high-quality instruction. The ambition of the Turkish government to improve the quality of its teaching personnel was another significant factor. Education officials can

evaluate the knowledge and skills of prospective teachers and ensure that only the most qualified candidates are selected for teaching positions by administering a uniform and objective examination. As a high-stake exam attended by thousands of candidates each year determining the future of prospective English teachers, its impact should be investigated. Table 3.3. provides an overview of the number of test-takers, standard deviation and the mean scores of the English Teacher Field Knowledge Test in the last four years. It can be seen that the mean scores decreased each year except in 2021, while the number of test-takers increased, which might lead to the idea that either the 2018 HEC regulation may not have achieved its aim in standardizing ELTE programs which provides the content of the test, or Student Selection and Placement Center (i.e., ÖSYM) may have prepared increasingly more difficult items for test-takers.

Table 3. 3. Statistics of ETFKT in the Last 4 Years

Year	Number of Test-takers	Mean Scores	Standard Deviation
2020	15.297	35.6	15.4
2021	14.905	37.4	14.5
2022	15.474	31.2	14.2
2023	17.268	30.1	15.2

The beginning of English as a Foreign Language teacher education in Türkiye may be traced back to a number of important elements. One of the main factors was the rising awareness of how important it is to have a strong command of the English language, as well as the necessity of having trained educators, in order to satisfy the requirements of a more globalized society. In Türkiye, there was an increase in interest in learning and teaching English during the middle of the 20th century. English was viewed as a valuable asset that could facilitate communication and increase international engagement opportunities. This increasing demand for English language instruction necessitated hiring qualified instructors who could effectively instruct English to Turkish students. Consequently, EFL teacher education programs were developed to satisfy this demand and ensure that teachers had the necessary skills and knowledge to teach English as a foreign language. The objective of these programs was to provide teachers with a solid foundation in English language proficiency, teaching methodologies, and classroom administration techniques. In addition, the influence of educational policies and initiatives contributed to the growth of EFL teacher education. The Turkish Ministry of National Education has

played a significant role in defining the education system, including the establishment and regulation of programs for teacher education. The ministry's emphasis on English language instruction as a curriculum component and its efforts to enhance the quality of EFL instruction have contributed to the establishment and growth of EFL teacher education in Türkiye. As teaching English became more and more widespread in Türkiye, there came a need to meet in terms of recruiting qualified teachers to schools. As afore-mentioned, while this was done through PPSE for a long time, since 2013 TFKT has been carrying the responsibility of determining the best candidates for the job.

The authorities must have taken into account previous studies that reflected the perspectives of teacher candidates, given the above-mentioned concrete measures in teacher appointments today. Until 2013, there was no TFKT among the PPSE tests. In 2013, TFKT was introduced in some areas, and its weighted contribution to the PPSE score was set at 50%. Consideration of the studies comprising the opinions of pre-service teachers sitting PPSE may be one of the primary causes of this transformation, since, in the majority of studies conducted prior to 2013, candidates stressed the need for a field knowledge test. The addition of the interview score to the PPSE score, which has been implemented since 2016, is another concrete development. It can be said that this development is also a consequence of the opinions of pre-service teachers, as they have argued that the KPSS should not be the only criterion for teacher appointment.

On the basis of all these positive developments, it is believed that such research should continue; therefore, the purpose of this study is to cast light on the awareness and perceptions of pre-service EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators, and the washback impact of the test so that the gap in literature in this topic could be filled and the examination can be improved if necessary.

3.2. Research Design

Quantitative research procedures are used to examine causation and generalizability of effect, whereas qualitative research methodologies are used to examine why or how a phenomenon happens and to construct a hypothesis (Fetters et al., 2013). In this study, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies was utilised to gather data in a

number of ways from different participants adopting data and participant triangulation (Mackey & Gass, 2021). As a mixed-method research design, a convergent parallel mixed-method research design was adopted. This research design is utilised when the researcher implements the quantitative and qualitative stands concurrently during the same phase of the research, gives equal priority to both methods, keeps the strands of data independent in the analysis stage and then mixes the results for an overall interpretation (Creswell, 2009). This allows the researcher to collect various but complementary data on the same issue (Morse, 1991) so that the research problem can be investigated thoroughly.

The utilization of a mixed method research dates all the way back to the nineteenth century. According to Hesse-Biber (2010), research conducted in the 1850s on the topic of poverty in families in Europe utilized mixed methodologies, which entail the utilization of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. DuBois (1899) stated that statistical data should be used in conjunction with observational data. Campbell and Fiske (1959) made a contribution to mixed methods with their multitrait, multimethod matrix, which advised the use of many techniques, some of which are quantitative and some of which are qualitative, to assess each of the numerous traits in order to boost the validity of research results, and this was done in order to improve the reliability of research findings. Combining quantitative and qualitative data in single research is nothing new, as many evaluators have come to realize instinctively (Mertens & Hesse-Biber, 2013). This is especially true when assessing complicated social programs. It was not until the late 1980s and early 1990s that mixed methods research became a recognized and self-conscious strategy, with focus on how to effectively combine quantitative and qualitative approaches (Maxwell, 2016).

Defining Mixed Methods in a general sense, Creswell and Plano Clark's (2007) study can serve as the starting point for discussions concerning the nature of mixed approaches. Research in mixed methods is not restricted to a single methodological approach. Stakeholder perspectives, epistemologies, methodologies (theoretical orientations), and axiological assumptions all influence the selection of an evaluation's methods (Hesse-Biber, 2010). This concept of mixed methods in assessment recognizes the philosophical assumptions that underpin evaluation issues in order to guide thinking about ethical activity, the nature of knowledge, and the nature of reality (Mertens, 2018). Evaluators work in a world with numerous paradigms, each with its own set of philosophical

assumptions, and these assumptions lead to different methodologies, such as those that emphasize the importance of studying individuals' real-life experiences (interpretive methodologies); those that emphasize hypothesis testing and causality as the most important goal of social inquiry (positivist and post-positivist methodologies); and those that emphasize issues of power and control and social justice (trident methodologies) (Mertens, 2018). Within any of these methodological frameworks, mixed techniques can be applied, however the assumptions that describe the evaluator's methodological attitude will impact how they are applied.

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), the overarching goal of mixed methods research as well as its fundamental assumption is that the utilization of quantitative and qualitative research procedures in combination gives a greater knowledge of study challenges and complex phenomena than either approach alone. When one set of findings is triangulated with another set of results, the validity of the inferences that may be drawn from those results is increased. This can lead to a better understanding. Other important purposes, rationales, and advantages of mixed methods research are pointed out by Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989). These purposes include complementarity, development, and expansion, complementarity referring to the elaboration or clarification of the results from one method with the findings from the other method, development referring to when the researcher uses the results from one method to help develop the use of the other method, and expansion referring to the process of attempting to broaden the scope and depth of an investigation by employing a variety of research approaches for various aspects of the investigation (Molina-Azorin, 2016).

Without a doubt, the ever-increasing difficulty of research issues and the yearning for an understanding that is both profound and comprehensive, which may be provided by qualitative and quantitative data, respectively, are the factors that have contributed to the surge in interest towards mixed methods research. The growing significance of the relationship between research and policy has also had a role, as has the increased availability of data offered by the internet. The internet makes it possible to combine diverse data sets in a variety of ways, which provides a fuller and more informed picture of social phenomena. Philosophically speaking, mixed methods research integrates paradigms, allowing exploration from both the inductive and deductive viewpoints, and therefore allowing researchers to combine theory creation and hypothesis testing within a

single study (Jogulu and Pansiri, 2011). Moreover, Creswell (2014) suggests that the integration of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies offers distinct advantages since, specifically, this approach allows for the acquisition of multiple perspectives facilitating a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem, enables the collection of a greater volume of data, thereby enhancing the richness of the study, permits the incorporation of contextual details, such as the setting, location, and personal experiences, which can provide valuable insights, allows for preliminary exploration with individuals, ensuring that instruments, measures, and interventions are suitable for the participants, and augment the overall rigor and depth of the study.

On the other hand, both Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) and Bryman (2007) noted that doing research using mixed methodologies is not a simple task, and that there are various obstacles along the way. Studies that employ a combination of research approaches present a number of difficulties due to the increased amount of labour, time, and resources that they need. The time it takes to implement the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the research each contribute to the overall increase in the amount of time that is required. In addition, doing research using mixed methods necessitates that researchers develop a more diverse set of abilities that encompass both quantitative and qualitative aspects of research.

The purposeful and strategic decision to employ a mixed-methods research design in this study was made with the intention of capitalizing on the respective advantages of qualitative and quantitative techniques, in order to get a thorough comprehension of the research inquiries at hand. The qualitative aspect of the research was enhanced by the valuable insights obtained from experienced teacher educators, whose expertise and viewpoints contributed to the depth of the qualitative findings. Nevertheless, it is crucial to emphasize that the main data source was from the pre-service EFL teachers. The participants' replies, obtained via quantitative measurements, were the main focus of the study, providing a strong basis for statistical analysis and generalizable results. The contribution of the teacher educators, although highly significant, had a secondary impact on enhancing the depth and complexity of the overall narrative. The decision to use this methodology was based on acknowledging the pre-service teachers as the main participants in the research, prioritizing their perspectives in influencing the results of the study.

3.3. Participants

The data were collected from pre-service EFL teachers (n=300) and EFL teacher educators (n=5). To be able to achieve enhanced validity, the population was sampled from a variety of universities in a variety of cities in the country. A list of all the state and private universities providing English Language Teaching programs (n=71) in Türkiye was prepared based on the information provided by HEC, and both the teacher educators and pre-service EFL teachers were contacted mainly from the universities in this list. However, there were participants from other universities that were not in the list since TFKT can be taken by not only the graduates of ELT programs, but also by those of other English-related programs such as English Language and Literature, American Culture and Literature, English Linguistics and Translation Studies as long as the prerequisite of Pedagogical Formation is fulfilled. With this random sampling, the researcher aimed to achieve a more reliable set of results.

3.3.1. Pre-service EFL teacher participants in the pilot study

The pilot study was comprised of 195 respondents with similar demographic information to the target audience of the main study. These respondents were contacted via sharing a link on two social media applications, where pre-service EFL teachers, both senior year students and graduates, were a part of online channels. As the aim of the main study was to find out the awareness and perception of pre-service teachers and the washback effect of the test on them, respondents from various parts of the country were targeted to provide reliability.

The respondents of the pilot study included both males (n=22) and females (n=173), and their ages ranged from 20 to 42. To gain a better understanding of the washback effect of the test in particular, it was the researcher's aim to have a wide range in terms of the ages of participants. Moreover, as TFKT is a test which can be taken by both graduates of ELT programs and other language-related programs, such as English Language and Literature, American Culture and Literature, English Linguistics or Translation Studies, as long as Pedagogical Formation prerequisite is fulfilled, the participants were either still studying in their programs or were graduates of the afore-mentioned programs.

Out of the 195 participants, 21 were still receiving their education, while the remaining 174 graduated in different years, yet 3 of the graduate participants did not provide an answer related to their year of graduation (See Table 3.4.). It was seen that only 7 of the respondents had graduated before the introduction of TFKT (See Table 3.5.).

Table 3. 4. The List of the Programs that Respondents Were Enrolled in or Graduated from and their Educational Status

Program	Frequency	Percent
English Language Teaching	101	51,8
English Language and Literature	80	41
American Culture and Literature	3	1,5
English Linguistics	6	3,1
Translation Studies	5	2,6
Status		
Senior (4 th year)	21	10,8
Graduate	174	89,2
Total	195	100,0

Table 3. 5. Respondents' Year of Graduation

Year	Frequency	Percent
2007	1	5
2009	2	1
2010	2	1
2011	2	1
2013	4	2,1
2014	4	2,1
2015	3	1,5
2016	8	4,1
2017	8	4,1
2018	11	5,6
2019	18	9,2
2020	20	11,8
2021	18	9,2
2022	37	19
2023	30	15,4
Total	171	87,7

Moreover, the participants were also asked if they have taken TFKT before or not as part of the demographic information since the existence of hands-on experience and lack of it could affect their awareness and perception of the test. The aim of the researcher in doing so was also to ensure reliability of results. It was found that among the respondents 27 participants did not take the test while 168 of them did. From those who have taken the test before, information related to the total number of taking the test and the results of the last exam they took was requested. Related to this, in addition to the 27 participants who did not take the test, 1 participant chose not to answer, while the rest (n=167) provided answers.

According to the obtained information, to give a better understanding, test-takers who got a score lower than 40 were categorized as low achievers (n=2), those who got a score between 40 and 70 were categorized as mediocre achievers (n=73), and those who got a score higher than 70 were categorized as high achievers (n=48) and the data were analysed accordingly. It is also important to note that the participants who took the exam in the summer of 2013 had not received the results of the test yet at the time of the pilot study, therefore they were categorized as “not announced yet” (n=23). Moreover, 22 respondents in addition to the 27 who did not take the test, a total of 49 respondents, chose not to answer this question. As part of the demographic information, the participants were also asked if they would like to be appointed to public schools in Türkiye as English Teachers, and as a result it was seen that the vast majority of respondents (n=165) desired to be appointed, while 19 respondents were hesitant about appointment, and finally 11 respondents stated their unwillingness to be appointed.

3.3.2. Pre-service EFL teacher participants in the main study

For this study, the data were collected from two groups of respondents. The first group (n=300) which formed the primary data was comprised of pre-service EFL teachers receiving their education in English Language Teaching (ELT) programs and those who graduated from ELT programs, along with the prospective EFL teachers who were studying in and graduated from English Language and Literature, American Culture and Literature, English Linguistics and Translation Studies programs since they are also eligible to take TFKT as long as they fulfil the requirement of holding Pedagogical

Formation (Table 3.6.). In this group, those who were still in education were all senior year students (n=99). Among the graduates (n=201), the graduation years ranged from 2007 to 2023. At this point, it is important to note that 8 of the participants graduated before 2013 when TFKT was not applied and the appointment of EFL teachers to public schools was conducted through PPSE only. 30 of participants graduated between 2013, when TFKT was first introduced, and 2017. Finally, the remaining 163 graduated after 2018, when an update was introduced to the test.

Table 3. 6. Participants' Programs of Study and Educational Status

Program	Frequency	Percent
English Language Teaching	173	57,7
English Language and Literature	112	37,3
American Culture and Literature	5	1,7
English Linguistics	7	2,3
Translation Studies	3	1,0
Total	300	100,0

A total of 300 respondents took part in the study, 65 of whom were males and 235 were females. The ages of the participants ranged from 20 to 54. To provide a more compact description, the harmonic averages of the participants' ages were calculated to be reported (See Table 3.7.). In addition, the participants took part in the study from a total of 21 different cities and 24 different universities. The greatest number of participants came from Ankara (n=86), Denizli (n=26) and Bursa (n=20).

Table 3. 7. Age Groups Created for the Analysis

Age Group	Ages	Harmonic Average
20 - 24	20, 21, 22, 23, 24	22,41
25 - 29	25, 26, 27, 28, 29	26,95
30 - 34	30, 31, 32, 33, 34	31,94
35 - 39	35, 36, 37, 38, 39	36,91
40 and above	41, 43, 45, 54	45,18

As part of the demographic information, the participants were asked whether they knew about TFKT or not, which also helped the researcher to gain a better understanding

about the awareness level. It was seen that among the 300 respondents, only 22 did not know what TFKT was. Moreover, they were also inquired about their previous experiences with TFKT, if any, and as a result, it was seen that 180 of the participants had already sat the test at least once before. The highest number of taking the test was 7, which was a response provided by 5 of the 180 participants. From these participants, the score of the last test they sat and the number of correct and incorrect items of that test were also demanded. The responses were categorised into “low achievers” with a score up to 40 points (n=2), “mediocre achievers” with a score between 41 to 70 (112), “high achievers” with a result over 70 (n=45), and finally “not recalled” as some respondents could not remember the exact scores or number of correct and incorrect responses at the time of inquiry (n=21).

The participants were also asked when they plan to take the test again. According to the results, 189 were planning to sit the next test in 2024, while 95 respondents were not sure. Finally, 16 stated that they would never like to take the test. When asked if they would like to be appointed to public schools, 234 respondents responded that they wished to be appointed, whereas 43 were not indecisive about being appointed. The remaining 23 stated that they would not like to work as an EFL teacher in a public school.

3.3.3. EFL teacher educator participants in the main study

The qualitative data was collected from five EFL teacher educators through semi-structured interviews. With a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 25 years of teaching experience, their ages ranged from 38 to 46. All five of the EFL teacher educators who were interviewed are currently teaching in the ELTE program, two of whom working in the same university, while the remaining three are from different universities. While one of the teacher educator participants had their M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Linguistics, the other four completed their M.A. and Ph.D. studied in ELT. Two of the participants had experience with teaching primary, lower secondary and upper secondary school students along with being an academician. Also, three of them share an interest in language assessment practices, while for the other two participants, it was stated that it had never been their interest. Table 3.8. provides the necessary demographic information of the teacher educator participants.

Table 3. 8. Demographic Information of the EFL Teacher Educators

Participants	Age	Affiliation	M.A.	Ph.D.	Total Experience
Interviewee 1	46	State University	ELT	ELT	25 years
Interviewee 2	38	Private University	Linguistics	Linguistics	16 years
Interviewee 3	45	State University	ELT	ELT	15 years
Interviewee 4	46	State University	ELT	ELT	17 years
Interviewee 5	38	Private University	ELT	ELT	15 years

3.4. Data Collection

To answer the research questions of the present study, both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were utilized. In this regard, the primary data gathering instruments were the scale applied to pre-service EFL teachers, and EFL teacher educator semi-structured interviews.

In order to collect the quantitative data, a scale was used because as stated by Dörnyei (2007), by giving a scale to a group of people, a vast quantity of data may be gathered in a short time, and this method also allows anonymity to the respondents. The tool which was applied to the pre-service EFL teachers was developed by the researcher and comprised of Likert scale items since a Likert scale is a psychometric scale with numerous categories from which respondents can select to reflect their ideas, attitudes, or feelings regarding a certain problem (Allen & Seaman, 2007). The questions were prepared by analysing the literature and focusing on its washback effect, along with pre-service EFL teachers' beliefs and perceptions of and awareness on TFKT. Before the application of the pilot test, expert opinions of five scholars in the field were taken on the first draft of the survey. There was a pool of questions, and the questions were pilot tested with 195 informants similar to the individuals for whom the tool was developed as suggested by Dörnyei (2007) in order to see if the respondents would reply to the items in the manner that is intended by the scale developer. After the analysis, the questions were edited the final version of the scale was obtained. The aim of the researcher in collecting

the data mainly quantitatively from the pre-service EFL teachers was to provide a better understanding of the result in an objective way and to achieve reliability.

In order to collect the qualitative data, semi-structured interviews with teacher educator participants of the study were carried out. According to Dörnyei (2007), semi-structured interview is a middle ground between the two extremes, since although there is a predetermined set of questions and prompts, the approach is exploratory and the interviewee is invited to comment on the themes presented. In other words, the interviewer gives advice and direction, but is also eager to pursue developments and allow the interviewee to expound on certain topics. Interview questions were also prepared through analysing the related literature, and a similarity between the questions in both tools were aimed to be able to get the most reliable data. The aim of the researcher in benefiting from this was to provide a more extensive picture related to how TFKT is perceived by the teacher educators.

Moreover, as part of the data collection procedure, all universities which hold English Language Teaching programs were sent emails to have their permission to collect the data. Based on the responses of these universities, the necessary permits were obtained from a total of 24 universities in 21 different cities in Türkiye.

3.4.1. Perception, awareness and washback scale for pre-service EFL teachers

A scale aimed at assessing perception and awareness of pre-service EFL teachers and the washback effect of the test itself on test-takers and EFL teacher education was developed by the researcher. The scale consisted of 46 items measured on a Likert scale, along with a single open-ended item. It comprised of five primary sections, with the objective of gathering data pertaining to the level of awareness of TFKT, perceptions of pre-service EFL teachers regarding TFKT, and its current impact on the participants themselves and EFL teacher education along with its anticipated impact on them in their future professional life. The initial section of the scale, Part 1, is designed to collect demographic information from the respondents, including background details such as gender, age, program or graduation status. Additionally, the scale seeks to ascertain participants' prior experiences with TFKT, if applicable, as well as their preferences

regarding appointment to public schools (MEB schools) in Türkiye. The subsequent section of the scale adopts a Likert-scale format and is further subdivided into three distinct sections. Part 2 comprises a set of 9 items designed to assess the level of familiarity the respondents have with TFKT. Participants are instructed to indicate their level of knowledge by selecting one of the following options: "Definitely," "Probably," "Not Sure," or "Definitely Not." Part 3 of the scale seeks to ascertain the viewpoints of the participants regarding TFKT. The evaluation of the perception of the respondents is conducted through 10 items. In this section, participants are instructed to indicate their level of agreement by selecting from the options "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Disagree," or "Strongly Disagree." This is done to determine the perceived value and usefulness of TFKT. Part 3 aims to evaluate the washback effect on the participants themselves as well as the potential impacts TFKT might have on their future professional career through 18 items. The final part, Part 5, of the survey comprises the sole open-ended question, prompting participants to provide their insights or recount their experiences pertaining to their prior encounters with TFKT. Additionally, respondents are invited to offer any supplementary comments regarding aspects they believe should have been addressed in the survey.

3.4.2. Semi-structured interviews for EFL teacher educators

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with lecturers teaching in English Language Teacher Education Programs in both public and private universities in Türkiye. All interviews were held online via the application Zoom and recorded. The questions in the interview were developed by the researcher based on review of literature. The data obtained from the semi-structured interviews provided the qualitative part of the research. Given that the interview format is semi-structured, the guiding questions have been intentionally formulated to allow for flexibility in accommodating any required modifications or supplementary information (Dörnyei, 2007, as cited in Şahin, 2019). Semi-structured interviews provide researchers with the flexibility to alter the sequence or content of questions, thereby facilitating more comprehensive follow-up responses and fostering more in-depth interactions (McDonough & McDonough, 2006). This approach also enables the collection of more well-coordinated data (Şahin, 2019).

The semi-structured interview for this study was comprised of five sections. Section one aimed to gather demographic information from the teacher participants (e.g., age, field of study) and consisted of 5 questions, with two of them including a total of five sub-questions. In section three, teacher participants' level of awareness is aimed to be investigated through 6 main questions and five sub-questions in total. Next, in section four, the researcher's aim was to find out teacher participants' perceptions towards TFKT through 6 main questions. Section five of the interview was comprised of 7 main questions and 11 sub-questions in total aiming to investigate the washback effect of TFKT from the perspective of teacher participants. The final section had 3 questions to close the interview.

3.5. Constructing and Piloting the Data Collection Tools

Pilot testing has significant importance within the realm of educational research as it serves to ascertain the viability, acceptability, and efficacy of treatments or programs. The process entails doing a preliminary assessment of the intervention's effectiveness on a limited sample size prior to its widespread implementation. According to Craig et al. (2013), pilot testing serves the purpose of identifying prospective concerns or obstacles and facilitating the implementation of necessary improvements.

The implementation of pilot testing for data collection instruments is of the utmost importance, as it provides numerous advantages that enhance the research's overall quality and validity. To begin with, the utilization of pilot testing facilitates the evaluation of the data collection instruments' viability and efficacy (Audet et al., 2023). By doing so, scientists are able to detect any deficiencies or constraints in the instruments and implement the required modifications to guarantee the gathering of precise and dependable data (McHugh, 2012). Additionally, the utilization of pilot testing ensures consistency and mitigates potential biases by standardizing the data capture process among reviewers (Audet et al., 2023). This increases the validity and dependability of the gathered data. Furthermore, the utilization of pilot testing enables researchers to evaluate the accessibility and quality of retrospective data, facilitating the implementation of any required revisions or enhancements (Audet et al., 2023). Additionally, pilot testing affords scientists a perception of authority and effectiveness in the administration of the undertaking (Aycock et al., 2016). It mitigates errors and enhances the research's reputation in a favourable light.

With this in consideration, opinions of five experts in the field were taken and necessary changes were made accordingly (Please see Section 3.5.1. for more detail). Then, a pilot study was conducted to identify and rectify any ambiguous or obscure sections of the data collection instruments, the perception and awareness scale for pre-service EFL and the questions to be asked in the semi-structured interviews, so as to preclude any potential issues with the scale prior to their administration to the participants for data collection.

3.5.1. Constructing and piloting the perception, awareness and washback scale for pre-service EFL teachers

Determining the content of the scale items in explicit terms is an initial stage in the process of composing them since ambiguous content specifications can significantly compromise the data collection tool's validity and reliability (Dörnyei, 2003, as cited in Şahin, 2019).

Prior to undertaking a scale study, it is imperative to perform a comprehensive literature review pertaining to the topic. When undertaking this task, it is imperative to consider which inquiries or subjects ought to be assessed in relation to the scale topic (DeVellis, 2021). In accordance with the format established for the measurement technique, the item/question pool must be developed (Devellis, 2021). Care should be taken to ensure that the items are straightforward and easily understood, and that no single judgment or expression corresponds to more than one item (Ekici et al., 2012). Following this, an expert opinion request is submitted for the created item pool. The evaluation of the queries' necessity, clarity, and specificity is conducted by experts. As a result, they might propose the elimination or modification of certain statements. Nevertheless, the determination of whether to approve or reject the recommendations should rest with the scale's developer (DeVellis, 2021). In a pilot test, the scale, which is developed based on the insights of experts, is administered to the initial sample group. The pilot test is crucial to the scale's functionality. It is essential that the sample accurately reflects the intended population (Karakoç & Dönmez, 2014). Once the preliminary application has been reviewed, the final version of the scale is provided following assessments of its validity and reliability (DeVellis, 2021).

Therefore, in order to prepare the scale items in the first step, the researcher looked at previous studies (Akpınar & Çakıldere, 2013; Hatipoğlu, 2016; Külekçi, 2016; Özmen, 2011a, 2011b; Sayın& Aslan, 2016; Yavuzer & Göver, 2012; Yıldırım, 2010) that examined the effects of high-stakes testing on students, educators, and the educational system as a whole. Examining "instructional methodologies and teaching strategies, and student attitudes and perceptions about exams" (Toksöz & Kılıçkaya, 2017; p.186), the majority of these research focus on the washback impact of the tests in the Turkish setting, as a result of which a pool of questions was listed and sorted according to their aims and the scale was prepared in its first draft (Appendix 1).

Part 1 of the scale aimed to collect demographic information from the participants (e.g., age, gender, university), and information about their previous experiences with TFKT and if they would like to be appointed to public schools. Part 2 of the scale was designed as a 4-point Likert scale (1=Definitely, 2=Probably, 3=Not Sure, 4=Definitely Not). Parts 3 and 4 of the scale also adopted a 4-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Agree, 2=Agree, 3=Disagree, 4=Strongly Disagree). The aim of the researcher in creating a 4-point Likert scale is that it characterized by its simplicity and accessibility to participants. It offers respondents a concise and unambiguous method to indicate their concurrence or dissent with a given statement or inquiry. An even number of response alternatives, such as four, decreases the probability that respondents will select the neutral or "neither agree nor disagree" alternative. This can be advantageous when wanting the respondents to avoid hesitating and instead make a definitive decision. Moreover, by providing only four response options, participants are incentivized to adopt a stance regarding the given statement, which can be advantageous in situations where one wishes to provoke strong opinions or attitudes, as it dissuades participants from selecting a neutral or moderate response, as it is in this study. Finally, Part 5 of the scale was formed by the only open-ended item which asked for the participants' feedbacks, suggestions or personal experiences related to TFKT.

As the second part of developing the scale, which is a crucial one, expert opinions of five instructors in the field were taken. The experts that the researcher consulted worked in different universities with a minimum of 8 years of teaching experience and thirty years the most. One of the experts consulted had first-hand experience with TFKT, while the remaining four did not, yet they were knowledgeable in educational assessment and

evaluation, language assessment, and measurement and evaluation in education. To ascertain the relevance of individual scale items to the study's framework and to verify the exclusion of crucial items or indicators (Creswell, 2013; Dörnyei, 2003, as cited in Şahin, 2019), the content of the scale was systematically reviewed by the experts. In response to the recommendations and corrections provided by the experts, modifications were implemented to the scale to enhance its readability. Additionally, the wording of the items was revised to mitigate the potential for misinterpretations and misunderstandings (Appendix 2).

As the next vital step following this, a pilot test was conducted with 195 respondents with similar features to the target population. For this stage, the scale was prepared online using Google Forms and distributed to the sample population by sharing a link on social media, specifying that it should be filled out by senior year ELT students and graduates. The collection of data from the 195 respondents lasted for two weeks, and when this step was finalized, the data obtained were transferred to SPSS version 27.0.1. In order to check the reliability of the scale, Cronbach's alpha analysis was administered. This analysis was administered separately for the first 12 and the remaining 34 items of the scale, as the four determiners for the awareness scale and those for the perception and washback scale were different. As a result, the Cronbach's alpha value for the former was determined as ,804 (See Table 3.9.), which corresponds to a good level of internal consistency. However, the analysis also revealed that 3 items out of 12 would increase the reliability of the scale if eliminated, which were items 1, 6 and 7 (See Table 3.10.). On further examination of the results, it was found that item 1 could be eliminated since it was an overarching item whose answer could also be obtained from items 2, 3, 4 and 5. Moreover, item 6 was also eliminable as it did not serve an immediate purpose to any of the research questions. Finally, item 7 was also decided to be eliminated since it was found to be a double-barrelled item.

Table 3. 9. Initial Reliability Statistics for the Awareness Scale

Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items		
Cronbach's Alpha		N of Items
,804	,797	12

Table 3. 10. Initial Item-Total Statistics

Item	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 1	17,80	,178	,205	,807
Item 2	17,46	,300	,321	,803
Item 3	17,62	,427	,488	,792
Item 4	17,46	,404	,630	,794
Item 5	17,44	,490	,527	,786
Item 6	17,29	,220	,122	,812
Item 7	17,42	,184	,112	,812
Item 8	16,74	,531	,494	,782
Item 9	17,14	,686	,770	,765
Item 10	17,06	,644	,663	,769
Item 11	17,27	,650	,750	,770
Item 12	17,14	,641	,768	,769

After assessing the results of the analysis, the items in question were eliminated and another reliability test was administered to see the difference it made. The second Cronbach's alpha value with the changes made was obtained as ,831 (See Table 3.11.).

Table 3. 11. Reliability Statistics for the Awareness Scale after the Changes

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,831	,829	9

When the results of the Cronbach's alpha analysis for the perception and washback scale was examined, it was revealed that the scale had an excellent level of reliability with ,919 (See Table 3.12.). However, there were a total of six items that would increase the level of reliability if eliminated from the scale (See Table 3.13.). On further examination of the suggested items, it was found that items 15, 33 and 40 aimed to assess attitude towards TFKT rather than perception, which was not evaluated in this study, and therefore decided to be eliminated. Items 18 and 20 were realized to be assessing the same construct, since item 18 aims to find out if respondents believe TFKT assesses memorized knowledge and item 20 aims to see if they believed their higher-order thinking skills were not assessed in the exam. As a result, these two items were also eliminated. Item 34 also came to be excluded from the scale since an insight about whether TFKT effectively assesses abilities as an EFL teacher or not could also be reached through item 22.

Table 3. 12. Initial Reliability Statistics for the Perception and Washback Scale

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,919	,918	34

Table 3. 13. Initial Item Total Statistics

Item	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 13	81,55	,375	,356	,918
Item 14	81,09	,563	,513	,915
Item 15	81,89	-,069	,307	,922
Item 16	80,96	,676	,720	,914
Item 17	80,91	,672	,721	,914
Item 18	81,86	-,125	,191	,923
Item 19	80,96	,596	,562	,915
Item 20	81,44	-,050	,176	,924
Item 21	81,24	,596	,581	,915
Item 22	80,77	,580	,556	,915
Item 23	80,95	,593	,513	,915
Item 24	81,37	,603	,588	,915
Item 25	81,04	,634	,634	,914
Item 26	80,85	,689	,648	,914
Item 27	80,81	,404	,376	,917
Item 28	81,40	,662	,620	,914
Item 29	81,08	,683	,649	,914
Item 30	80,67	,519	,608	,916
Item 31	80,89	,601	,592	,915
Item 32	80,59	,461	,518	,917
Item 33	81,52	-,060	,496	,924
Item 34	81,70	-,232	,424	,925
Item 35	81,00	,622	,580	,915
Item 36	81,13	,682	,710	,914
Item 37	81,05	,730	,800	,913
Item 38	81,13	,692	,680	,914
Item 39	81,26	,534	,568	,916
Item 40	81,49	,212	,476	,920
Item 41	81,37	,559	,514	,915
Item 42	80,72	,489	,661	,916
Item 43	81,00	,748	,734	,913
Item 44	80,63	,583	,688	,915
Item 45	81,59	,438	,411	,917
Item 46	80,80	,679	,658	,914

Once the suggested six items were excluded, another Cronbach's alpha test was administered to the revised scale, as a result of which the reliability level rose to ,940 which corresponds to an excellent level of internal consistency (See Table 3.14.), and the perception, awareness and washback scale was finalized (Appendix 3).

Table 3. 14. Reliability Statistics for the Perception and Washback Scale after the Changes

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on	
	Standardized Items	N of Items
,940	,939	30

3.5.2. Constructing and piloting the semi-structured interview questions for the EFL teacher educators

As with all research methodologies, it has been established that rigorous data collection procedures are the primary determinants of quality and reliability in qualitative studies (Kitto et al., 2008) and have a substantial impact on the study's findings (Gibbs et al., 2007). Interviews are the prevailing approach for gathering data (Taylor, 2005). In qualitative research, the interview technique that is most frequently employed is the semi-structured format (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

Kallio et al. (2016) defined the five phases comprising the development of the semi-structured interviews as a result of their systematic methodological review, which are ascertaining the preconditions for employing semi-structured interviews, retrieving and applying prior knowledge, constructing the preliminary semi-structured interview, conducting pilot testing of the interview, and delivering the finalized semi-structured interview.

In order to initiate the development of the semi-structured interview, it is imperative that the researcher possesses the ability to identify certain aspects of the phenomenon by drawing upon prior knowledge (Turner, 2010). When considering research topics, the semi-structured interview method is appropriate for investigating individuals' perspectives and viewpoints on intricate or emotionally charged matters (Barriball & While, 1994; Astedt-Kurki & Heikkinen, 1994). A semi-structured interview provides an opportunity to

delve into topics that hold personal significance to the participant, thereby facilitating the expression of a wide range of perspectives (Cridland et al., 2015).

In the second stage of development, prior knowledge is retrieved and utilized. The objective of this stage is to acquire a thorough and sufficient comprehension of the topic, which necessitates a critical evaluation of prior knowledge and the potential requirement for supplementary empirical data (Kallio et al., 2016). A pre-established framework is established for the interview through prior knowledge (Barriball & While, 1994; Turner, 2010). It relies on preparations made prior to the interviews (Turner, 2010) and the researcher must have a thorough understanding of the research's subject matter (Rabionet, 2011). In order to undertake a critical evaluation of prior knowledge, it is possible to conduct a comprehensive literature review that is related to the purpose of the study (Krauss et al., 2009). Thus, the interview is grounded in a conceptual framework established by prior knowledge (Astedt-Kurki & Heikkinen 1994).

In the third stage of the process, the preliminary semi-structured interview is formulated. The objective of this stage is to develop an interview guide, which is a compilation of questions that steers the interviewee's discourse towards the research topic (Kallio et al., 2016). The analysis of the gathered data and the execution of the interview are both influenced by the quality of the interview guide (Barriball & While, 1994; Krauss et al., 2009; Rabionet, 2011; Cridland et al., 2015). The semi-structured interview guide is characterized by its loose and flexible format (Dearnley, 2005; Turner, 2010). This characteristic permits open dialogue throughout the interview (Whiting, 2008; Cridland et al., 2015), the ability to rearrange the questions (Dearnley, 2005), and smooth transitions between questions (Astedt-Kurki & Heikkinen, 1994).

In the fourth phase of development, this semi-structured interview guide is pilot-tested. The objective of this stage is to validate the comprehensiveness and pertinence of the formulated preliminary guide's content, as well as to identify potential requirements for question reformulation and implementation testing. Through the process of assessing the interview guide, informed modifications and alterations are possible to the interview questions (Chenail, 2011; Barriball & While, 1994). This enables an enhancement in the quality of the data collection. Additionally, pilot testing may yield valuable insights

regarding the integrity of research and enhance the researcher's capacity to conduct data collection and pre-evaluation of research ethics (Chenail, 2011).

In the final and fifth phase of development, the comprehensive semi-structured interview guide is included in the research paper. For data collection, the objective is to generate a lucid, comprehensive, and logical semi-structured interview guide. The guide that is delivered is predicated on and a reflection of the preceding stages of the process of development (Krauss et al., 2009). The mechanism it offers proves to be practical in addressing the objectives of the research (Barriball & While, 1994), and its universality allows for its application by other scholars as well (Krauss et al., 2009).

Therefore, for this study, as the awareness and perception of teacher educators and their insights related to the washback effect of the exam could be best obtained through verbal interaction and conducting an in-depth inquiry, the researcher decided to develop a semi-structured interview. Then, a thorough review of literature (Yıldırım, 2010; Özmen, 2011a, 2011b; Yavuzer & Göver, 2012; Akpınar & Çakıldere, 2013; Hatipoğlu, 2016; Külekçi, 2016; Sayın & Aslan, 2016) was carried out, and to the best of the researcher's knowledge, it was seen that the views of teacher educators had not been investigated before, which also justified the utilization of semi-structured interviews as the data collection tool. After this step, a pool of questions was prepared (Appendix 4) and five experts in the field were consulted. With a minimum of eight years and a maximum of thirty years of teaching experience, the experts consulted by the researcher were affiliated with various universities. Although all were knowledgeable in educational assessment and evaluation, language assessment, and measurement and evaluation in education, only one of the consulted experts had direct experience with TFKT. With the comments and suggestions made by the experts, the necessary changes were made (Appendix 5) and the semi-structured interview was ready to be pilot tested. The pilot test was conducted with an expert in the field who was a member of Faculty of Education and the time to be allocated for the interview was determined to be on average 45 minutes. After the pilot test, once again the necessary changes were applied and the semi-structured interview was finalized (Appendix 6).

3.6. Data Analysis Procedures

Qualitative data analysis procedure of this study, which consists of the responses from the semi-structured interviews with the EFL teacher educators, was done using qualitative content analysis based on Tesch's (1990) eight coding steps. Dörnyei (2007) also suggests four fundamental phases for the analysis of recorded spoken data: (1) data transcription, (2) pre-coding and coding, (3) idea generation and data display, and (4) interpretation and conclusion drawing (p. 246). Similarly, Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013) detail the qualitative data analysis techniques and identify four steps: (1) coding the data, (2) identifying themes, (3) amending codes and themes, and (4) interpretation.

For the quantitative sets of data, since in the scale, the data were gathered by means of close-ended Likert scale items, the researcher reached numeric data, for which SPSS 27.0.1 program was utilised running the necessary statistical tests depending on the collected data. The analysis of the collected data was done through a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) test, before which a Normality test was conducted as a prerequisite for MANOVA. To examine how several groups' means differ from one another, statisticians often employ MANOVA (Finch, 2005). The ability to compare the means of response variables across several groups at the same time makes it very useful when dealing with numerous outcome variables (Cole et al., 1993). Because it accounts for multiple testing, MANOVA is preferable than doing a string of individual ANOVAs, and it is particularly suggested when the collection of dependent measures forms a variable system (Cole et al., 1993). Furthermore, MANOVA is an effective method for identifying group differences as it can show differences that would not be noticeable in a string of individual ANOVAs (Oser et al., 1991).

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Each of the research questions that were developed for this thesis is followed by a presentation of the study's findings, and extensive discussions. Illustrative remarks and quotations from the qualitative data collected from ELT instructors and the qualitative data collected from the awareness, perception, and washback scale administered to pre-service EFL teachers provide further support for the results.

4.1. Research Question 1.1: What is the pre-service EFL teachers' level of awareness on TFKT?

The first overarching research question of the study was related to the level of awareness held by the key stakeholders of TFKT. As the first group of stakeholders, this sub-question aimed to measure the pre-service EFL teachers' level of awareness on the matter. It should be also noted that the awareness level was measured by means of a 4-point Likert scale, which measured two factors, the level of construct awareness and the level of content awareness. According to the analysis, the level of awareness in total along with that of construct and content awareness was found to be high in all age groups, showing a mean of 1.3467, at which point it should also be mentioned that since "Definitely" was assigned 1, "Probably" was assigned 2, "Not Sure" was assigned 3 and "Definitely Not" was assigned 4 in the scale, a mean of 1.3467 shows a high level of awareness. Moreover, when the level of construct awareness and content awareness was analysed, a mean of 1.3300 for the former and 1.6633 for the latter were determined. Therefore, it could be concluded that participants in all age groups had a slightly higher level of awareness in terms of the test construct than the test content (See Table 4.1.).

Delving into more detail, the mean scores for the level of awareness in total exhibited little variation across different age groups, with values ranging from 1.1053 for the 35-39 age group to 1.6000 for the 40 and above age group. The standard deviations also exhibited variability, indicating variations in the spread of scores within each group. These findings

indicated that individuals across various age groups exhibited comparable degrees of awareness, although with minor discrepancies. The standard deviations revealed a certain degree of variation within each group, with the 40 and above age group exhibiting less dispersion, probably due to the lower sample size. Regarding the level of construct awareness, there was a consistent pattern where the average scores varied from 1.1053 to 1.6000 among different age groups. Standard deviations quantified the extent of variability in responses. These results suggested that the participants had a uniform degree of awareness when it comes to the construct of the test. Once again, the standard deviations served to emphasize the extent of variation within each group. Lastly, the level of content awareness displayed mean scores ranging from 1.5436 to 2.0000, suggesting variations in participants' views among different age groups. The standard deviation for the age group of 40 and above was 0.00000, suggesting that there was very little variation within this small sample.

Table 4. 1. Descriptive Statistics for the Level of Awareness

	Age groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Awareness Level (Q.1 through 9)	20-24	1,3557	,58210	149
	25-29	1,3564	,62585	101
	30-34	1,3846	,49614	26
	35-39	1,1053	,31530	19
	40 and above	1,6000	,54772	5
	Total	1,3467	,57816	300
Construct Awareness Level (Q.1 through 4)	20-24	1,3826	,58814	149
	25-29	1,2970	,53934	101
	30-34	1,2692	,53349	26
	35-39	1,1053	,31530	19
	40 and above	1,6000	,54772	5
	Total	1,3300	,55569	300
Content Awareness Level (Q.5 through 9)	20-24 age	1,5436	,70215	149
	25-29 age	1,7723	,71946	101
	30-34	1,9231	,74421	26
	35-39	1,5789	,69248	19
	40 and above	2,0000	,00000	5
	Total	1,6633	,71533	300

Having analyzed the impact of age on pre-service EFL teachers' level of awareness related to TFKT, it was found that the impact of age on total awareness was not statistically significant ($F = 1.114, p = 0.350$). The partial eta squared (η^2) value was 0.015, indicating that a little amount of the variability in awareness range scores may be attributable to age. The modified R squared value of 0.002 indicated a limited explanatory capacity of age in relation to awareness of the test in general. Similarly, the impact of age on construct awareness was not statistically significant ($F = 1.584, p = 0.178$). The partial eta squared (η^2) was 0.021, pointing to a minor effect magnitude. The corrected R squared value of 0.008 displayed a relatively low level of explanatory power of age on the level of concept awareness. The impact of age on content awareness was statistically significant ($F = 2.901, p = 0.022$). The partial eta squared (η^2) was 0.038, signifying a modest effect size. The adjusted R squared value of 0.025 showed that age accounted for a substantial amount of the variability in content awareness scores.

Looking at the gender factor in terms of awareness, it was seen that male participants had a higher mean score (1.4923) than female participants (1.3064), indicating that males had a somewhat lower level of awareness in total on average. The standard deviations revealed some variation within both groups, with males having a greater standard deviation (0.66434) than females (0.54671). In line with total awareness, male participants got a higher mean score (1.4769) than female participants (1.2894) in terms of construct awareness, which means that males again reported a somewhat lower level of awareness about the construct of TFKT on average. Again, there was variation within both groups, with males having a greater standard deviation (0.61511) than females (0.53238). Furthermore, males had a higher mean score (1.8154) than females (1.6213) for content awareness. This showed that males experienced a lower level of awareness for content-related features of the test on average. The standard deviations showed diversity within both groups, with males (0.70472) and females (0.71400) having similar degrees of dispersion.

Independent samples t-tests were also employed to examine possible disparities in participants' views, categorized by gender, across three constructs: level of awareness in total, level of construct awareness, and level of content awareness. The assumption of equal variances was not broken for both level of awareness in total and level of construct awareness. Statistically significant differences were observed between male and female

participants, with p-values of 0.005 and 0.003, respectively. The average disparities were 2.30507 and 1.31129, signifying significant discrepancies in these concepts. In terms of level of content awareness, despite the p-values (0.066 and 0.065) being marginally significant, there were still discernible disparities in perceptions between genders. These findings were consistent with the impact sizes mentioned previously, highlighting the practical importance of the observed differences. Therefore, this study found that there was a noticeable difference between genders in terms of their level of awareness of constructs especially. Specifically, females showed a much greater average level of awareness compared to males. This observation contributed a subtle aspect to the wider comprehension of gender disparities in how participants perceive the specific concepts investigated in this study (See Table 4.2.).

Table 4. 2. Independent Samples T-Test Results for Gender Differences in Awareness Constructs

Construct	Levene's Test (Variances)		t-Test (Equal Variances)			t-Test (Unequal Variances)		
	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Awareness Level Construct	2.563	0.110	2.857	298	0.005	2.591	90.572	0.011
Awareness Level								
Content Awareness Level	2.943	0.087	2.970	298	0.003	2.759	93.050	0.007
Content Awareness Level								
Content Awareness Level	1.457	0.228	1.846	298	0.066	1.866	103.738	0.065

Next, analysis was conducted to evaluate the influence of various academic programs on participants' degrees of awareness in total, along with construct awareness, and content awareness. The comprehensive model, which includes the intercept term, exhibited statistical significance (Pillai's Trace = 0.504, $p < 0.001$). This indicated that there was a substantial variation in at least one dependent variable among the academic programs. However, upon examining the impact of the academic program variable, the findings indicated that there were no significant impacts on any of the three dependent variables:

awareness in total, construct awareness, and content awareness (all $p > 0.05$). This suggested that the selection of an academic program did not have a substantial impact on the range of participants' awareness levels. The Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances confirmed that the assumption of equal variances across groups was satisfied for all dependent variables. Ultimately, the academic curriculum did not appear to have a substantial impact on the degrees of awareness, both construct awareness and content awareness (See Table 4.3.).

Table 4. 3. The Effect of Academic Program on Awareness Levels

Dependent Variable	Source	<i>df</i>	<i>F-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
Awareness Level	Program Studied	4	0.388	0.817	0.005
Construct Awareness Level	Program Studied	4	0.782	0,538	0.010
Content Awareness Level	Program Studied	4	0.171	0.953	0.002

Another analysis sought to investigate possible differences in awareness, construct awareness, and content awareness across individuals with varying educational statuses. The descriptive data indicated that seniors, on average, exhibited poorer levels of awareness ($m = 1.4040$) and construct awareness ($m = 1.4343$) compared to their graduate counterparts (total awareness: $m = 1.3184$, construct awareness: $m = 1.2786$). Nevertheless, when it comes to content awareness, seniors ($m = 1.5960$) exhibited somewhat higher average values compared to graduates ($m = 1.6965$). Multivariate testing revealed a statistically significant overall distinction between seniors and graduates across the three dependent variables. Levene's test identified a notable variance difference for construct awareness. However, the tests of between-subjects effects indicated that only the construct awareness variable showed a significant difference between the seniors and graduates, however the magnitude of these variations was rather minor. These data indicated that

there may be differences in the degrees of concept awareness among seniors and graduates, but the overall effect on awareness and content awareness appeared to be insignificant.

Furthermore, participants were also categorized based on whether they knew about TFKT or not. The average values for total awareness, construct awareness, and content awareness for those who replied “yes” were 1.2986, 1.2770, and 1.6331, respectively. The averages for those who were not informed and so replied “no” were 1.9545, 2.0000, and 2.0455. Participants who knew about TFKT expectedly had greater mean values for all three variables compared to those who were not informed. These findings indicated that an individual's level of awareness was positively correlated with higher scores on these categories. The multivariate tests indicated that there were statistically significant variations between the aware and not aware groups in relation to the three dependent variables. The Partial Eta Squared values represented the proportion of variation that was accounted for by the awareness component. In the case of total awareness, around 12.1% of the variation could be accounted for by whether participants knew about TFKT or not. The R Squared values represented the percentage of variability in the dependent variables that can be accounted for by the independent variable (awareness). In the case of total awareness, approximately 8.8% of the variability could be accounted for by the awareness factor. Levene's tests revealed that there were notable disparities in error variances between total awareness and construct awareness, indicating a potential violation of the assumption of equal variances (See Table 4.4.).

Table 4. 4. Impact of Previous Knowledge of TFKT on Awareness

Factor	Total	Construct	Content	F-value	Percentage of Variance
	Awareness	Awareness	Awareness		
	Mean	Mean	Mean		
Informed about TFKT	1.2986	1.2770	1.6331	28.673	8.8%
Not informed about TFKT	1.9545	2.0000	2.0455	38.886	11.5%

According to the demographic information, the participants were separated into further two groups: those who took TFKT (n=180) and those who did not (n=120). Descriptive statistics showed that mean scores for total awareness, construct awareness, and content awareness differed significantly. When compared to those who did not sit the test, TFKT takers have higher mean scores across all three factors. Multivariate tests,

notably Pillai's Trace, showed that there were substantial differences between the groups. The effect sizes indicated that TFKT taking status accounted for 3.3% to 6.3% of the variation in the dependent variables. Furthermore, Levene's tests revealed considerable disparities in error variances, indicating possible variability issues. Therefore, it could be stated that TFKT participation appeared to be connected with changes in participant awareness.

The final analysis examined the effect of participants' choice to be assigned to public schools on their degree of awareness. The sample was divided into three categories: those who would like to be appointed (n=234), those who would not (n=23), and those who are uncertain (n=43). Clear differences in the average scores for total awareness, construct awareness, and content awareness were shown across the three groups. Participants who have made a decision to be appointed consistently demonstrated higher average scores across all categories in comparison to those who do not wish to be appointed and those who are unsure. More specifically, the mean of total awareness of the first group was shown to be 1,2564, while means of awareness were 1,9130 for those who said “no” and 1,5349 for those who were unsure, which showed that their awareness level was more mediocre than those who want to be appointed. Pillai's Trace test demonstrated substantial overall distinctions across the groups. The effect size indicated that around 7.8% to 12.5% of the variation in the dependent variables may be attributable to the decision for appointment. Levene's tests demonstrated statistically significant variations in the error variances, highlighting the presence of possible issues related to variability. In addition, further analyses with Games-Howell tests precisely identified distinct variations across groups. Significantly, those who would like to be appointed regularly exhibited distinct characteristics compared to the other groups. These findings emphasized the possible impact of participants' appointment decisions on their awareness, providing insight into the intricate connections between decision-making and cognitive factors.

Overall, in response to the first sub-research question, the findings showed that pre-service EFL teachers' level of awareness on TFKT was high. In addition, the participants' construct awareness, i.e., their knowledge in terms of the structure of the test such as the number of test items and question types, was higher than their content awareness which is related to the coverage of the test as a whole. These findings are also compatible with the responses obtained from demographic information, especially about their decision to be

appointed to public schools, as those with little or no awareness related to the test and those who do not wish to be appointed showed similar proportions. Table 4.5. presents a summary of the descriptive analysis of the responses provided to each item in the awareness scale applied to pre-service EFL teachers.

Table 4. 5. Summary of the Descriptive Statistics of Awareness Scale

Item	Definitely	Probably	Not Sure	Definitely Not
I have reviewed the previous ÖABT questions in order to familiarize myself with the exam.	51,0%	22,3%	9,3%	17,3%
I know the number of questions that are typically asked in the exam.	63,3%	17,7%	12,0%	7,0%
I know the types of items or questions that are commonly asked in the exam.	44,7%	32,7%	16,7%	6,0%
I am knowledgeable about the topics that are assessed in the exam.	49,0%	33,3%	13,3%	4,3%
ÖABT includes items to assess my overall English Language Proficiency.	42,0%	34,0%	18,7%	5,3%
ÖABT assesses my knowledge on English Linguistics.	47,0%	35,7%	13,0%	4,3%
ÖABT assess my knowledge on English Literature.	43,7%	34,3%	16,0%	6,0%
ÖABT assesses my knowledge and skills regarding English Language Teaching Methodology.	50,0%	31,3%	14,0%	4,7%
ÖABT assesses my knowledge and skills regarding English Language Testing and Assessment.	47,0%	34,3%	14%	4,7%

4.2. Research Question 1.2.: What is the EFL teacher educators' level of awareness of TFKT?

The EFL teacher educators' level of awareness was evaluated through 6 main questions and 5 sub-questions in total. Table 4.6. provides the awareness-related items of the semi-structured interviews. As a result of the analysis, it was found that all EFL teachers were knowledgeable about the recruitment process of English teachers to public schools, and they rated their level of familiarity at a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 10 out of 10. Moreover, all EFL teacher educators were found to have a relatively high level of knowledge about TFKT based on their responses. Although three of them were not quite

sure about the number of test items, their knowledge of test coverage and the question types was seen to be high despite at times being based on inferences. These findings also complement those obtained from the pre-service EFL teacher participants of the study, since their level of awareness was also high.

In terms of the contribution of EFL teacher education programs to the preparation of pre-service EFL teachers to TFKT, there was a consensus that it was not the aim of the program to prepare their students to any test, not just TFKT. It was stated by all the participants that the purpose of the program was to raise qualified and competent English teachers, not to prepare them to any kind of multiple-choice test. However, one participant stood out among the others stating that the content of TFKT is aligned with that of ELTE programs, so the program contributes to the preparation process to a great extent. Related to the contribution of the participants' own program and courses in particular, the same theme emerged in general.

Interviewee 4: *“Well, honestly speaking, **we don't care, and we shouldn't be caring about any national or international examinations** but the thing is that the program itself should have **certain national standards** that are based on the priorities and needs of the country, **and international standards**, which means there must be **certain scholarly infrastructure** as well as the frame that should speak out loud about English language teaching and **say the program is internationally valid** which is done by Bologna process 1999, and Turkey has been part of it and we have been accredited by those institutions. **The problem is, with ÖABT or alike examinations, maybe TKT or any other European versions, whether they are able to assess the outcome or the competencies given by the programs carefully or not, that's the question.**”*

Moreover, all EFL teacher educators mentioned books and some private courses when asked how pre-service EFL teachers should prepare to succeed in TFKT. It was also mentioned that universities are not the places to prepare or help students prepare for multiple choice tests. The aim of the program is to “produce language teachers, teacher candidates who are eager to produce four skills or skill-integrated teaching (P1)”. Yet, it was a common idea and observation that pre-service EFL teachers, especially senior year students, attend private courses and take mock tests to get prepared. For the question related to the support and resources available to EFL teacher educators to help their

students prepare for the test, once again, all participants pointed to the fact that it is not their or the program's responsibility to provide any kind of support, however they are aware of the existence of test books and textbooks specifically published for exam preparation.

Interviewee 5: *“Well, there are **published materials** because this exam has been administered for at least 11 years -I couldn't count but for 11 years I guess- many publishers, and myself, have published **directly related textbooks**, also **topic-based books**, so they can have a look at those sources. Or they, themselves, can directly analyze **the previous ÖABT tests** and see what types of questions and what concepts and contents they ask, for example, as questions.”*

Table 4. 6. Items Assessing Awareness Level in the Semi-structured Interviews

Item	Questions
1.	What is the recruitment process of English teachers to public schools in the Turkish education system by the Ministry of National Education?
2.	On a scale of 1 to 10, how familiar are you with the Teacher Field Knowledge Test, i.e., ÖABT, in terms of its content and purpose? Please clarify.
3.	What do you think is the extent of your knowledge about ÖABT? a) How long has the test been administered? b) How many items are there in the test? c) What question types are there in the test? d) What does the test cover?
4.	To what extent do you think EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye contribute to the preparation of prospective EFL teachers for ÖABT? Please explain. a) What about the contribution of your program, and courses in particular?
5.	How do you think prospective EFL teachers should prepare to succeed in this test (i.e., ÖABT)?
6.	What kinds of support or resources are available to EFL teacher educators to help them prepare their students for the ÖABT?

4.3. Research Question 2.1.: What is the pre-service EFL teachers' perception of TFKT?

To be able to answer the first sub-question of the second main research question, a MANOVA was performed to examine the impact of age on participants' perceptions. The Pillai's Trace statistic, which measured the total impact of age on these beliefs, produced a very significant outcome ($F(4,295) = 242.463$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.806$). The investigation,

conducted on a sample size of 300 individuals divided into five age groups, demonstrated significant variations in perceptions among different age groups. The F-statistic of 242.463 showed a strong influence, and the p-value of less than 0.001 suggested that the observed impact of age was highly unlikely to be a result of random chance. The impact size of 0.806 highlighted the extent of this influence, indicating that age accounted for a significant share (80.6%) of the differences in participants' judgments. Therefore, it can be stated that the results indicated a strong and meaningful correlation between age and the perceptions of the individuals included in the study.

The multivariate tests conducted for the relationship between gender and perception revealed a statistically significant overall impact (Pillai's Trace=0.039, $p < 0.001$), indicating that there are discernible variations in perception scores between male and female subjects. Univariate tests indicate the presence of a statistically significant influence of gender on perception ($F = 4.435$, $p = 0.036$). Upon analysing the mean scores, it was evident that males ($m=1.800$) and females ($m=1.876$) exhibited distinct degrees of perception in relation to the perception variable. The findings indicate that, on average, males possessed a somewhat more positive perception of the examined phenomena in comparison to females. Ultimately, the research revealed a notable gender disparity in the perception variable, suggesting that male and female participants had distinct perceptions of TFKT.

Moving onto the effect of educational status, the average perception values offered insight into the primary trend of participants' replies. The mean score for senior participants was 1.7980, but graduate participants had a slightly higher mean score of 1.8905. The data indicated that, on average, both senior and graduate participants expressed generally positive perceptions, with graduate individuals showing a somewhat more neutral opinion. The standard deviations quantified the extent of variation in the answers. The similar standard deviation values for both groups (0.68482 for seniors and 0.67673 for graduates) indicated that there was a comparable amount of variability in perception scores within each educational status group. The multivariate analysis, which incorporated Pillai's Trace and Hotelling's Trace, demonstrated a noteworthy overall impact of participants' educational status on perception. The Pillai's Trace (0.044) and Hotelling's Trace (0.046) both demonstrated a statistically significant, if tiny, impact of educational status on perception.

An examination of perception across several academic programs uncovers illuminating trends. The descriptive statistics indicated that participants in English Language Teaching had the largest average perception range (1.9017), suggesting that, on average, participants in this program demonstrate a comparatively more positive perception of the test. They were followed closely by participants from English Language and Literature (1.8125), English Linguistics (1.7143), and American Culture and Literature (1.6000). Translation Studies, which was represented by just three participants, had a mean perception range of 2.0000, showing a neutral perception of the test. The multivariate tests demonstrated a statistically significant overall impact of participants' programs of study on perceptual range, highlighting variations across the different groups. However, the subsequent tests on the effects amongst different participants indicated that although the adjusted model showed statistical significance, the program itself did not have a significant effect. This disparity pointed out that although there was a general effect, it was not exclusively ascribed to the program. The Tukey HSD post hoc test confirmed that there were no significant variations in perception among the different study programs.

Moreover, participants who have knowledge of TFKT (i.e., those who replied “yes”) had a higher level of average perception (1.8489) in comparison to those who were unaware (i.e., those who replied “no”), whose average perception is 2.0000. These findings indicate that those who have knowledge of TFKT had a more positive perception than those who were not informed of the test beforehand. The Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices reveals a statistically significant disparity in the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables between the groups with Yes and No knowledge of OABT. This suggests that there is variation in perceptions across these groups. The Pillai's Trace statistic for the impact of having information on perception was 0.123, suggesting a statistically significant albeit minor effect. These findings indicated that having knowledge of TFKT was linked to a notable disparity in how participants perceived different concepts related to the test. The Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for the perception variable yielded a Levene Statistic of 0.023, indicating a non-significant p-value of 0.880, which suggested that the premise of equal variances remained intact, thereby confirming the dependability of the statistical tests.

As another factor effecting the level of perception, test taking status was also analysed. Participants who have sat the test exhibited a mean perception value of 1.8722,

whereas those who have not taken the test had a somewhat lower mean of 1.8417, which showed the latter had a more positive perception on the test. The Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices yielded a significant result ($p = 0.001$), suggesting that there were substantial disparities in the covariance matrices across the groups categorized by TFKT taking status. The Pillai's Trace analysis indicated that the effect of taking the test before on perception was 0.101, showing a statistically significant albeit modest impact. The result of Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for the perception variable was not statistically significant ($p = 0.633$), suggesting that the assumption of equal variances was satisfied. The Type III Sum of Squares for the perception variable was 0.067 with a significant p-value ($p = 0.704$). This implied that test taking status had a notable impact, yet the magnitude of this effect was quite minimal. Thus, there appeared to be variations in perceptual range between those who have taken the test and those who have not, however these changes may not have a substantial practical impact.

Finally, when the correlation between the responses provided in the perception variable and the decisions made by participants with respect to appointments was examined, it was seen that the mean values were 1.8120 with a standard deviation of 0,67362 for those would like to be appointed, 2.1739 with a standard deviation of 0,71682 for those who did not wish to be appointed, and 1.9535 with a standard deviation of 0,65296 for those who were not sure, all of which can be interpreted as the decision of appointment leading to a more positive perception of the test. Moreover, the levels of standard deviation point to only a moderate variability within the groups. The significance of the Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices ($p = 0.003$) suggested that there were variations in the covariance matrices among the decision groups. The statistical analysis revealed that the effect of the appointment decision on perception was 0.023, which was modest but statistically significant. The outcome of Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for perception was not meaningfully significant ($p = 0.264$), suggesting that the assumption of variance equality was satisfied. Perception had a Type III Sum of Squares of 3.182 and a p-value of 0.031, which was statistically significant. This indicated that the selection of appointments by participants had a substantial impact on the perception level.

Overall, it can be understood from the responses that the majority of the respondents held a more positive perception related to TFKT. It can also be seen that pre-service EFL teachers were self-assured in their knowledge of test coverage since they felt that what they

had been taught at university was assessed in the test. They had a positive opinion about the test being effective in terms of determining the quality of EFL teachers, yet still a total of 52% of the participants expressed that the test was not a fair assessment tool. Moreover, the majority of the participants seemed to believe that the test was not capable of assessing the necessary knowledge and skills to be a successful EFL teacher, or the ability to apply theoretical concepts to real classroom situations, which was also supported by the EFL teacher educators in the study stating that a single multiple-choice test was not capable of doing so. However, the pre-service EFL teachers were found to be overall positive and optimistic about the opportunities that are brought by TFKT, especially those about improving themselves to be better EFL teachers. Table 4.7. presents the findings of the descriptive analysis of the responses provided for the perception scale for a better comprehension of the results.

Table 4. 7. Summary of the Descriptive Statistics of the Perception Scale

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel confident in my own knowledge of the topics assessed in ÖABT.	17,7%	47,7%	29,3%	5,3%
I believe ÖABT effectively assesses the knowledge and skills we acquire through our lessons at university.	17,7%	38,3%	32,7%	11,3%
ÖABT is an effective assessment tool for appointing qualified EFL teachers to MEB schools.	16,0%	36,3%	31,3%	16,3%
ÖABT effectively evaluates the required knowledge and skills for becoming a successful English teacher.	15,7%	30,7%	39,0%	14,7%
ÖABT adequately evaluates my ability to apply theoretical concepts to real classroom situations.	13,3%	33,3%	36,7%	16,7%
ÖABT is significant for all EFL teachers.	25,3%	38,3%	24,7%	11,7%
The score obtained in ÖABT provides an indication of my potential effectiveness as an English language teacher.	14,3%	29,0%	32,0%	24,7%
I consider ÖABT to be a fair assessment.	15,3%	32,7%	31,0%	21,0%
By preparing for ÖABT, I can enhance my knowledge and skills for the English teaching profession.	27,3%	54,7%	13,7%	4,3%
ÖABT serves as an effective exam for assessing my English language proficiency.	19,7%	38,3%	25,7%	16,3%

4.4. Research Question 2.2.: What is the EFL teacher educators' perception of TFKT?

The EFL teacher educators' perceptions of TFKT was also meticulously examined by means of 6 main questions (See Table 4.8.) with the aim of contributing to the findings obtained from the pre-service EFL teachers and providing a more comprehensive understanding. As a result of the analysis, it was seen that EFL teacher educators differed in their perception of TFKT.

Table 4. 8. Items Assessing Perception Level in the Semi-structured Interviews

Item	Questions
1.	What is your overall perception of ÖABT as a means of recruiting English teachers to public schools?
2.	When it comes to ensuring that qualified EFL teachers are appointed to public schools, how imperative do you think ÖABT is?
3.	How accurately and sufficiently do you think ÖABT measures the knowledge and skills required for effective teaching (i.e., (1) content knowledge, (2) pedagogical content knowledge)?
4.	In your opinion, what are the strengths of ÖABT?
5.	In your opinion, what are the limitations of ÖABT?
6.	In your opinion, what changes, if any, should be made to ÖABT to improve its effectiveness and validity as a measure of EFL teacher knowledge and skills?

As for their overall perception of the test, one of the teacher educators presented a more negative stance against the test stating that the EFL teacher educators' job is to teach pre-service teachers how to be communicative, yet with a multiple-choice test for appointment it seemed like all this effort was in vain, whereas the remaining four were somewhat more positive. The consensus was that in Türkiye there was a need for such a test since "the demand is high yet the supply is low (Int.3)". Two of the interviewees specifically mentioned that the test underwent some changes for the better, thus this development was appreciated. However, it was still emphasized that a single multiple-choice test is not enough for the evaluation of pre-service EFL teachers.

Interviewee 5: *"In the **early years** of the test, it was ... **not effective**, because there were many questions which didn't really evaluate the extent to which prospective EFL teachers can use that concept or topic in their classrooms as a teacher successfully. But **later on**, especially since 2019, the test writers started to add some items like **scenario-based items** ... we can say that the **cognitive level** of the questions now **increased to almost***

evaluation step ... So, I highly appreciate this development, but ... such a test cannot be enough or sufficient to label a candidate teacher a successful one."

When the teacher participants were inquired about how imperative the test was as a way of making sure that qualified EFL teachers are appointed to public schools, still there were differences of opinion among the participants. Two of them strongly objected and stated it was not imperative at all. However, rest of the participants believed it was better than not having anything for the elimination of teacher candidates, and it was practical in terms of application.

Interviewee 1: *"...the backwash effect is terrible on students. You know we try to create an ideal pedagogy for language teacher candidates, but at the end they are eliminated according to their multiple-choice test performances. So, this is like a kind of dilemma. I don't see it as valuable. There is some hypocrisy in it, like what we have been doing and what they are tested on."*

In response to the third question evaluating their perceptions of TFKT which inquired the extent to which TFKT sufficiently and accurately measures the knowledge and skills of pre-service EFL teachers, a common theme emerged: it was not enough. The test was thought to lack synthesizing questions since it was a pen and paper one, which would never a hundred percent sufficiently or accurately measure knowledge or skills. Still, it was found nearly "50 or 60% successful (Int.1)" in terms of assessing candidates' content knowledge by one of the participants, yet others, as mentioned, deemed it insufficient.

Interviewee 4: *"In teacher education, skills and knowledge come together. They compose what we call competency, both procedural and declarative knowledge are called competency. It cannot measure because one: it doesn't have content validity. That means it doesn't have enough number of item types that should be talking about both language proficiency and the content knowledge ... Two: construct validity. In your question, you use the word 'skill' that means it is beyond knowledge, it is about doing ... it has got little or no, actually no ability, flexibility to measure teachers' competency skills."*

To the question related to the strengths of the test, measuring methodology through questions about teaching English as a second language, assessing pedagogical knowledge to some extent although the questions could be improved, inspiring motivation in students

to study more, the fact that we have a test to evaluate prospective English teachers and practicality of the test emerged as the common themes. Therefore, in terms of the strengths of the test, the EFL teacher educators mainly focused on the exam being a kind of placement and selection exam and commented on the strengths of such a test as a whole. On the other hand, the limitations of the test were deemed to be not being able to assess classroom performance of the prospective EFL teachers, reflecting test strategies as it is a multiple-choice test, trying to measure the knowledge that is received in 4 years in a 3-hour test, not having any open-ended questions, not having enough number of items assessing language awareness and TESOL methodology, and not being reliable due to having only one type of item, which is multiple choice.

Interviewee 1: *“Assessing teaching quality is something beyond answering multiple-choice tests, as I have been repeating myself. But, you know, **behaviours, classroom administration, the use of voice, giving feedback to learners, assessing their work...** Such dimensions are **communicative dimensions** of teaching and they are **totally absent in this exam**, but they are **highly crucial**. **Classroom management**, for instance, is **not something you can test with multiple-choice test questions**.”*

Directly related to these weaknesses and limitations mentioned, all teacher educator participants provided suggestions to improve the effectiveness and validity as a measure of EFL teachers' knowledge and skills. One recurring suggestion was that the exam should include a 'demo' session in which prospective teachers' in-class performance can be evaluated to some extent. The ideas around this suggestion involved giving teacher candidates an oral performance chance based on specific issues related to real classroom settings, or asking the candidate to produce a class activity based on a specific skill, such as potential activities for writing, speaking, reading or listening. Another suggestion to improve the test was that the number of items should be increased along with the addition of different question types. One distinct idea that stood out was “asking for a language proficiency ID card” (Int.4), which means there should be a prerequisite of a score of minimum 80 or 85 from YDS (i.e., Yabancı Dil Sınavı) before sitting TFKT, which would at least prove the language proficiency of the teacher candidates is at a desired level. Related to the question content, it was suggested that there should be more synthesis questions. Moreover, as a more technical idea, it was recommended that the score weight of TFKT could be increased or a percentage of pre-service EFL teachers' graduation GPAs

could be added to the final calculation of scores. One suggestion was related to extensive research on “the validity and the reliability of TFKT by collecting the scores of test-takers from the first year the test was administered until now” (Int.5). Finally, it was believed that, by choosing them randomly, ideas from academicians and instructors of ELT programs should be taken in addition to those who are already in the committee preparing the test every year. Table 4.9. presents the limitations and the suggested alterations in the test to improve its effectiveness and reliability of the test.

Table 4. 9. A Summary of the Limitations of TFKT and EFL Teacher Educators’ Suggestions for Improving the Effectiveness and Reliability

Limitations of TFKT	Suggestions for Improvement
Not being able to assess teaching performance	Adding a demo session Asking the candidates to come up with activities on the spot
Not being reliable due to being multiple-choice only	Adding new question types Conducting research on test-takers’ results of the TFKT tests done so far
Not enough items assessing language awareness and TESOL methodology	Increasing the number of items assessing knowledge of methodology Asking for a pre-set YDS score before taking TFKT as a prerequisite

4.5. Research Question 3.1.: What is the extent of the washback effect on pre-service EFL teachers’ acquisition of necessary knowledge and skills?

Regarding the washback variable, the significant statistical outcome indicated significant differences in how participants perceived the range of washback across various age groups. Among the age groups, the mean was shown to be 1.9267, which corresponded to an almost mediocre level of washback effect. While the mean of the two younger groups (20-24 and 25-29 age groups were 1.8523 and 1.9505 respectively, for the remaining groups it was 2.000 and above. The impact size revealed that age explained 80.6% of the variation in participants' replies concerning the extent of washback. This suggested that a significant percentage of the variations in participants' perception of the study intervention's impact can be attributed to their age. In simpler terms, this implied that individuals from various age groups may perceive the impact of washback in varying ways. Since the homogeneity was non-existent among the groups, the results of the Games-Howell post-hoc test were examined in more detail to see where exactly the

variation lied. As a result, the meaningful significance was observed in the 35-39 age group, especially with the 20-24 and 40 and above groups, which supported the descriptive statistics. Moreover, the significant effect size ($\eta^2=0.806$) highlighted the significance of age as a crucial determinant of participants' perspectives on this specific feature of the study, underlining its value for both academics and practitioners in educational environments.

To determine the level of washback in relation with gender, the results were analysed as it was seen that the mean value of the 65 male participants was 1.9538 with a standard deviation of 0.64785. In this instance, a mean value of 1.9538 indicates that, on average, male participants achieved a score around 2 on the washback variable, which would point to a more neutral washback effect, neither entirely positive nor entirely negative. Also, the washback scores for male participants exhibited a high degree of consistency or clustering around the mean based on the standard deviation. The 235 females in the study, on the other hand, showed a mean value of 1.9191 and a standard deviation of 0.65197, indicating that the washback scores for female participants showed a reasonably low level of variability, with most values being close to the mean. Therefore, it could be stated that, keeping in mind that there was no homogeneity, although both groups achieved a score around 2, females seemed to believe there was a slightly more positive washback effect related to TFKT. The F-statistic obtained from the analysis for the gender variable on washback was 0.500, with a p-value of 0.480. This suggested that there was a statistically significant impact. Nevertheless, as previously stated, the partial eta squared value was minimal ($\eta^2=0.002$), indicating that although statistically significant, the practical impact of this effect was restricted.

Focusing on the relation between the educational status of participants (senior vs. graduate) on the washback effect of TFKT, it was seen that the mean value for senior participants was 1.8586, but graduate participants had a slightly higher mean score of 1.9602, which indicated that, on average, both senior and graduate participants' responses reflected a positive washback effect, with senior participants showing a somewhat more favourable perception. The similar standard deviation values for both groups (0.60626 for seniors and 0.66963 for graduates) indicated that there was a similar degree of variability in washback scores within the two groups. The multivariate analysis, which incorporated Pillai's Trace and Hotelling's Trace, demonstrated a statistically

significant overall impact of participants' educational status on washback effect. The Pillai's Trace (0.044) and Hotelling's Trace (0.046) both demonstrated a statistically significant, if tiny, impact of educational status on the washback variable. The results indicated that there were variations in the washback scores between senior and graduate participants, which contributed to a substantial overall impact in the multivariate analysis. Consequently, it can be concluded that the educational background of individuals was linked to differences in their views of the impact of washback.

The descriptive statistics of washback in different research programs exhibited observable trends in participants' responses. The participants in the English Language Teaching program had a significant mean in washback range with 1.9306, suggesting a substantial impact on their judgments on TFKT. Similarly, individuals in the English Language and Literature program also had a significant mean washback range of 1.8929, indicating a comparable impact on their decision-making. Remarkably, those enrolled in the American Culture and Literature program, who had an average washback range of 2.0000, seemed to experience a more neutral impact. Participants in the field of English Linguistics had the lowest average washback range, at 2.2857. This indicated that their judgments may be more strongly influenced negatively compared to other groups. Nevertheless, it is imperative to use caution when interpreting these findings, as the multivariate tests and the adjusted model failed to exhibit statistical significance. The Tukey HSD post hoc test provided additional evidence that there were no statistically significant variations in washback perceptions across individuals in various programs. This indicated that, although there may be differences in average values, the effects on participants' decisions did not have a significant statistical impact.

Moving onto another factor, participants who possessed knowledge of TFKT (i.e., those who replied “yes”) had a mean washback value of 1.9137, whereas those who lacked awareness (i.e., those who replied “no”) demonstrated a higher mean of 2.0909. These findings indicated that individuals who had knowledge of TFKT before had a different perception of the washback effect compared to those who lacked awareness, and the latter apparently thought the test had a more neutral effect than positive. The standard deviations (0.64132 and 0.75018, respectively) suggested that there was some degree of diversity in the replies within each group. The Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices indicated a notable disparity in the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables between

the groups with different levels of knowledge of TFKT. This indicated that individuals with varying levels of knowledge of the test had variable perceptions of the spectrum of washback. The Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for the washback variable yielded a Levene Statistic of 1.430, which was found to have a non-significant p-value of 0.233. This showed that the premise of equal variances remained intact, so confirming the dependability of the statistical tests. The Pillai's Trace value for the impact of knowledge of the test on washback was 0.140. Although the effect size was statistically significant, it was rather small, suggesting that awareness had only a moderate impact on participants' judgments of washback.

Another analysis investigated the correlation between participants' test taking status and their replies in the washback variable. The washback values differed significantly between the two groups (1.9137 for "yes" and 2.0909 for "no"), indicating a possible impact of test taking status. The Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices yielded a statistically significant result ($p = 0.029$), which suggested that there were variations in covariance matrices among different test taking status groups. The Pillai's Trace value for the impact of this factor on washback was 0.101, pointing to a statistically significant yet modest influence. The result of Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for the washback variable was not statistically significant ($p = 0.979$), and it was concluded that the assumption of equal variances was satisfied. The Type III Sum of Squares for washback effect was 0.001, proving a lack of significance with a p-value of 0.971, which implied that the status of taking the test did not exert a substantial influence on the spectrum of washback.

A final examination was done on the effect of whether the participants wished to be appointed to public schools or not on washback. According to the results, the mean washback value for participants who selected "yes" for an appointment was 1.8590, which suggested a moderate degree of perceived washback effect. The data set exhibited a moderate degree of variability in washback perceptions, as indicated by the standard deviation of 0.62955. The mean washback for participants who did not want to be appointed was 2.4348, which indicated a greater degree of perceived washback. A moderate degree of variability in washback perceptions was found with a standard deviation of 0.58977. The mean value for participants who expressed uncertainty regarding the appointment decision was 2.0233, suggesting a moderate degree of perceived

washback in a similar way. Once again, a moderate degree of variability in washback was seen as the standard deviation was 0.67218. The statistical significance of the Pillai's Trace test ($p < 0.05$) showed that significant variations existed in washback perceptions among groups with respect to appointment decisions. The effect size, as measured by partial eta squared, was also of moderate magnitude at 0.059.

Looking at the findings, it can be stated that the overall perception of the washback impact of the test was more positive than negative. In some aspects, such as TFKT positively influencing English teaching in the country, influencing their study habits from the moment they enter university, their instructors guiding them and their courses preparing them in their test journey, instructors designing their courses according to the test, the test positively affecting their academic performance, and having a higher level of motivation to study for the courses in their programs, the responses showed a negative tendency. It could mean that the existence of the test had a negative washback on the pre-service EFL teachers' motivation to prepare for the test, as was supported by the statements of the EFL teacher educators. However, what was perceived as negative from the prospective teachers' point of view was actually not negative in terms of EFL teacher education programs and EFL teacher educators, which proves that the EFL teacher education programs were not affected by the test as is evident from the negative responses coming from the pre-service EFL teachers and the remarks made by the EFL teacher educators. Otherwise, it would be concluded that the test had a negative washback on EFL teacher education programs.

Moreover, the positive perception of pre-service EFL teachers towards the test was seen to be continued in their perception of the effect of the test. The majority of the participants responded that the test was successful in that it provided them a chance to review previous knowledge and increased their motivation to study for the test, which is completely opposite of what they stated about their motivation to study for their courses at university. Therefore, it can be concluded that the test had a positive impact on their motivation to study for TFKT and pass the test, yet a negative impact on their academic performance at school. This can be also supported by the comments of the EFL teacher educators about senior-year students' spending most of their time off-campus in private courses and paying less and less attention to the course content of their programs at university. In addition, it was also believed by the prospective EFL teachers that studying

and preparing for TFKT had a positive impact on their future teaching practise and future professional development, which may be due to the fact that they are becoming more and more equipped with the necessary theoretical frameworks required for effective teaching as they prepared for the test.

Table 4. 10. Summary of the Descriptive Statistics of the Washback Scale

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe that ÖABT has positively influenced the teaching of English in Türkiye.	13,7%	30,7%	38,0%	17,7%
Since I started university, ÖABT has influenced my study habits.	10,7%	21,7%	38,7%	29,0%
ÖABT provides me with an opportunity to review essential knowledge and skills for an EFL teacher.	23,3%	53,7%	18,7%	4,3%
I believe ÖABT offers an opportunity to improve the quality of EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye.	16,3%	45,7%	27,7%	10,3%
During their lessons, the lecturers in my university actively guide us in the preparation process for ÖABT.	12,7%	30,3%	27,0%	30,0%
Preparing for ÖABT positively impacts/impacted my academic performance at university.	17,0%	29,7%	30,7%	22,7%
My university instructors incorporate previous ÖABT questions into their lectures.	11,7%	25,3%	35,3%	27,7%
I think I can perform better as an EFL teacher thanks to ÖABT.	14,3%	36,0%	33,0%	16,7%
ÖABT can be advantageous for EFL teachers in their professional growth.	17,3%	51,0%	21,7%	10,0%
ÖABT encourages me to engage in continuous professional development as an aspiring EFL teacher.	18,0%	43,0%	28,0%	11,0%
ÖABT motivates me to improve my English language skills and knowledge.	20,7%	45,3%	22,0%	12,0%
I feel confident in my ability to perform well in ÖABT.	23,0%	41,7%	27,0%	8,3%
I am motivated to study and prepare for ÖABT.	28,3%	35,3%	22,0%	14,3%
My courses at university prepare me for ÖABT.	12,0%	31,3%	28,7%	28,0%
I feel positive about the impact of ÖABT on my future teaching practice.	19,3%	38,3%	27,0%	15,3%
My university instructors design their course contents according to ÖABT coverage.	12,0%	25,7%	33,7%	28,7%
ÖABT encourages me to read articles about my field of study.	34,7%	42,3%	14,3%	8,7%
Thanks to ÖABT, I have a higher level of motivation to study for my courses at university.	15,0%	25,0%	35,0%	25,0%

4.6. Research Question 3.2.: What is the extent of the washback effect on teacher educators' course programs and teaching strategies?

In order to assess the extent of the washback effect on course programs and teaching strategies, 7 main questions with 11 sub-questions (Table 4.11.). In response to their perception of the overall impact of TFKT, a range of positive and negative answers emerged during the interviews. As part of the positive impacts, refreshing previous knowledge, motivation to study, financial benefits for some lectures as they might teach at private courses, having some tool to evaluate teachers, learning new vocabulary, doing a wide range of reading, an increased tendency for academic and professional development and studying with a higher awareness were pointed out by the teacher educators.

Interviewee 5: *"It influenced how or to what extent teacher candidates' study for their courses at university. ... With more awareness of their courses, they read more ... So, this is one of the greatest effects of ÖABT. ... In line with this contribution, they are more open to academic or professional development. Now, whenever they have completed reading an article which is really suitable to their level, they feel empowered."*

On the contrary, private courses taking time and being costly, creating a high level of anxiety on teacher candidates, the exam leading to memorization instead of delving into the philosophy of teaching in their senior years of study, financial burdens on families, damaging the education system and unnecessary courses being added to the curriculum of the ELT programs since they are covered in the exam were listed as the negative impacts of the test. Thus, it can be seen that the EFL teacher educators pointed out a list of micro and macro impacts on pre-service teachers themselves, their families, ELT programs and the education system itself.

Interviewee 4: *"... But I believe the greatest impact is on the English Language Teaching programs. I mean think about this: we have educational courses, right? Why do we have them? It's in Turkish in METU, it's in English in Boğaziçi, but the rest is in Turkish. Why do we have them? They have got nothing to with English language teaching. General educational science courses. ... are you aware that ÖABT actually validates those courses? So, the Council of Higher Education somehow validates, legitimizes those courses which are utmost unnecessary."*

In terms of TFKT's effect on the course content development and the delivery of EFL teacher education, all the participants agreed that neither was affected at all by the test. It was stressed by all that although some revisions may have been made in their programs, they were never about TFKT. In fact, TFKT has never been their concern based on their responses. As it was stated by one of the teacher educator participants, any changes to the curriculum such as aligning the course content with the exam coverage would be negative washback on EFL teacher education programs. Another point made by one of the teacher educators was that if any changes were made to the programs just because of TFKT, and if TFKT did not even exist next year with a new regulation, they would have lost sight of the core of the program itself. On the other hand, one slight addition rather than change in the course delivery that was mentioned by some of the participants was that as a way of keeping the students interested in the lectures, raising their awareness on some topics or helping them study more for their courses, they mention previously asked TFKT questions in their lectures from time to time. Moreover, in response to the second question, once again what all teacher educators concurred on was that there had been no changes based on TFKT since its introduction. About the instruction delivery, similarly to the previous question, some mentioned that they made small changes or they had heard about or witnessed some colleagues making small changes, mostly outside of the classroom such as sharing some TFKT content on social media accounts. The changes in question are mostly related to exposing the pre-service EFL teachers in their classrooms to some previously asked test items. Then again, one teacher educator mentioned that she had been adding a small number of multiple-choice items in her assessments in EFL teacher education programs for some years, but she also pointed out that it may not have been due to TFKT but her increased knowledge on testing and assessment. Related to the changes in the attitudes and study habits of pre-service EFL teachers since the introduction of TFKT, the majority of the teacher educators cited negative observations. They believed that it caused too much stress on the prospective teachers, which led them to skip classes and spend their time in private courses preparing for the test, and trying to obtain knowledge through multiple-choice test items, which in their opinion was not the intention nor the goal of EFL teacher education programs but something caused by this test's very existence. On the other hand, some teacher educators interviewed also drew attention to the fact that prospective teachers were reading more and studying more, and that they were more aware, which results in paying more attention to

the courses since they knew they would encounter the topics of those courses in the test some day.

When inquired about the test and its impact on the future of English language teaching in Türkiye, there were some serious discrepancies in answers provided by the teacher educators. While two of the teacher educators put forward more neutral responses, saying that if the test was believed to be valid and to be really assessing the quality of pre-service EFL teachers in the best way, then it should have some impact, yet they could not have the chance to observe anything to be able to answer properly, one of the teacher educators believed that since prospective EFL teachers had increased motivation, awareness, language proficiency and knowledge of methodology, it would be sure to be reflected in their teaching, and their students would be receiving English language education from “teachers who are equipped with contemporary methodology, methodological techniques and strategies” (Int.5). It was also stated that since the prospective EFL teachers had now become “critical consumers of the research in their field” (Int.5), they were more aware of teaching and teaching duties to be able to “see to what extent they have developed themselves and what is left there to further develop” (Int.5). On the contrary, the remaining two teacher educators were highly critical of the possible outcomes of the test. It was once more emphasized by both that multiple-choice test could not determine knowledge and skills efficiently and sufficiently, and that although they could be good test-takers, they would not be good teachers just because they were successful on choosing between five options. It was also stressed that standardized tests could not have an impact on individuals’ future decisions, such as professional developments, since that would be considered negative washback of the tests.

Interviewee 4: *“If a test doesn’t have **any construct validity**, that means it **doesn’t measure** being a teacher **properly**. So, Ministry of National Education is **not able to recreate good teachers** or **doesn’t have the** capacity to differentiate good from the bad. So, at least we can say that **ÖABT will never be able to help recruit good teachers**, and that would be the **impact**. But even if you have the finest teachers, whoever has the finest teachers in national education system, **instruction** there **will not get better** simply because there are **horrible applications** you are teaching yourself and you are going to teach English. Impossible. The **instruction** will **not go one step further**.”*

When the idea of the integration of previous test items into courses was examined more deeply, the teacher educators, except for two of them, the rest underscored that the drawbacks of this action would be more than the benefits, since it would limit the course content, and create negative washback. Still, it was again pointed out by two of the teacher educators that benefits seemed to be more in that this leads to familiarity with the test and it is a fact in pre-service EFL teachers' lives whether they approved of the test itself or not. It was thought that this would make them more motivated to study and more attentive towards the courses so that they could reflect their knowledge in a better way when came the test. Moreover, when asked about the unintended consequences of TFKT on pre-service EFL teacher education, all participants reported that they did not witness any changes themselves, yet they concurred on the idea that the existence of the test affected the dynamics of the faculties of education as the test led senior year students to private courses and away from campuses, caused too much stress and anxiety to focus on their own courses, which were recurring themes of the interviews in general.

In terms of the impact of TFKT on the overall perception of teaching profession in Türkiye, one idea was shared by two of the teacher educators which was that the society tended to label those who managed to be appointed as a result of the test and those who did not differently. If the candidates achieved a high score, they would be considered 'good teachers', yet if they took an average or a low score, they would be appointed to the eastern cities of the country, which caused them to be considered 'bad or unqualified teachers.' It was suggested that the mere existence of this examination put the idea in the laymen's mind that passing this test equals being qualified since the society believed this test was valid and reliable, as far as the teacher educators could observe outside. Yet, from quite a different perspective, the rest of the teacher educators stated that an examination alone did not have the power to change the perception of the teaching profession itself in the eyes of pre-service teachers or teacher educators.

Examining the response to the final question about the TFKT's effect on the motivation and morale of the pre-service EFL teachers, the teacher educators approached to the effects from different perspectives. While it was stated that since "people inherently like what is identified and framed, they feel safe" (Int4) about the test, which would mean that they are aware of the coverage and the question types, and they also have access to the previously asked questions, so knowing the scope of the test would bring some level of

comfort and motivation to study. On the other hand, it was also highlighted that the test's psychological impact was terrible on pre-service EFL teachers to the point where the teacher educators cited some minor depression cases due to the pressure of having to pass the test to be appointed. Increased stress emerged as a recurring response among the teacher educators. One interesting perspective to the emotional effects of the test was related to the discrepancy between the salaries and working conditions of public schools and private schools. It was suggested that if they worked under the same conditions, then only those who would really like to be appointed would be more willing to take the test, which would lower the stress level significantly. Yet, since the reality was far from this and since pre-service teachers' primary concerns seemed like earning money and making a living for themselves, they felt like they had to pass this test, hence the increased stress levels.

Table 4. 11. Items Assessing Washback Level in the Semi-structured Interviews

Item	Questions
1.	In your opinion, what is the overall impact of ÖABT? a) How do you think ÖABT has influenced the course content development of EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye, if at all? b) How do you think ÖABT has influenced the delivery of EFL teacher education in Türkiye, if at all?
2.	What changes have you noticed in the following aspects in EFL teacher education programs since the introduction of ÖABT? a) Curriculum of EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye? b) Instruction delivery (in courses) in EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye? c) Assessment (in courses) in EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye? d) Pre-service EFL teachers' attitudes towards courses and study habits? e) On the basis of your observations, have you made any changes to any of these aspects? Please clarify.
3.	How do you think the ÖABT and its impact on teacher recruitment will shape the future of the EFL teaching profession in Türkiye? a) In your opinion, how does ÖABT influence the future professional development of prospective EFL teachers? b) What long-term effects do you anticipate the ÖABT having on the quality of English language education in public schools?
4.	How do you perceive the potential impact of integrating previous ÖABT questions into your course materials? a) What specific benefits do you anticipate? b) What potential drawbacks do you anticipate?
5.	Have you noticed any unintended consequences of the ÖABT on EFL teacher education, such as changes in teaching priorities or emphasis on test preparation?
6.	How do you think the ÖABT affects the overall perception of the teaching profession in Türkiye?
7.	How do you think ÖABT impacts the motivation and morale of prospective EFL teachers?

4.7. Discussion

Reviewing the literature, there can be seen several studies conducted on different branches of PPSE, and TFKT. Before the introduction of TFKT, the studies carried out on teacher recruitment were related to PPSE and teacher candidates' perspectives on the selection PPSE only as the sole selection and recruitment method. After 2013, with the arrival of TFKT, several studies examined the test from different aspects. In this part, the findings of this study will be discussed in line with the mentioned studies on the topic.

According to the results of the awareness scale, the participants in the study were found to have a high level of awareness and knowledge related to TFKT, which was significant for the responses to perception and washback scale to be more reliable. Moreover, the EFL teacher participants were included in the study to be able to support the data obtained from the pre-service EFL teachers by means of the scale developed by the researcher, and they also presented a high level of awareness. For the scale items assessing their content awareness on the test, the sum of the more positive answers (i.e., “Definitely” and “Probably”) ranged from a minimum of 76% to a maximum of 82,7%, which means that they must have been aware that what they had already studied in their ELTE programs were included in the test, yet these results did not exactly align with the responses provided to the item about the test assessing the knowledge and skills they acquired through their courses at university (a total of 56% comprising “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” choices). This could be explained by the inference that although they believed the knowledge gained at university was “to some extent” assessed in the test, the skills were not. Related to this, one recurring theme in the interviews with the EFL teacher educators was that pre-service EFL teachers did not have a chance to perform their teaching skills in an oral session or a performance session. Moreover, from the responses to the single open-ended item at the end of the scale applied to pre-service EFL teachers, it was concluded that it was their belief that as long as the exam continues to be a multiple-choice one, it will not be enough to assess the real classroom performance of the teacher candidates, and that there should be a revision in the test in a way that four skills can be assessed.

Some studies came to a similar conclusion. Yeşilçınar (2018) found that the test, as a model of teacher recruitment, was criticized due to not “gauging all the required competencies” (p.122). Moreover, it was found by Sert Aktuğ (2018) that observing

instructors in action is the best way to choose those who will be successful educators, and how they interact with students, use different kinds of resources, and perform in class should be examined, which would be the best way to see if a teacher is effective, by watching how they carry out these tasks. As a result of their study, Yağcı and Kurşunlu (2017) also stated that the participants demanded a performance-based assessment of their knowledge and skills, such as through some tasks, observations and teaching practice sessions. They also said that as a multiple-choice test, it was limited in terms of assessing the necessary communicative abilities, the ability to guide the studies, classroom management or teacher characteristics. These findings can be further supported by Kind (2009) arguing that while possessing subject-matter expertise is the principal responsibility of an educator, teaching also requires particular skill sets, and by Fernandez (2014) emphasizing that mere material knowledge does not adequately define an effective educator. The teaching profession is performance-based. Hence, it is imperative that assessments of the teaching performances of prospective English teachers should also be incorporated in this test.

Moreover, the language teacher knowledge base comprises the integrated and interrelated collection of expertise, skills, and convictions held by language instructors (Andrews, 2001). It includes their comprehension of language, command of the target language, cognizance of language acquisition mechanisms, pedagogical knowledge, and contextual awareness (Turner-Bisset, 2001). It encompasses their proficiency in language-related subjects (e.g., phonology, grammar, and vocabulary) as well as their aptitude for facilitating and instructing language acquisition in a variety of academic environments (Tsui, 2003). Therefore, in line with the afore-mentioned comments, as can be understood from the language teacher knowledge base, much as the knowledge of a language teacher is attempted to be evaluated in TFKT, their capabilities related to facilitating and instructing language cannot be assessed, which is a crucial point to be taken into consideration.

Another finding of this study was that 65,4% of the participants expressed that they felt confident in terms of their knowledge of the topics assessed in the test, which was also supported by the positive responses (64,7%) to the item about feeling confident in their ability to perform well in the test, and to the item about being motivated to study and prepare for the test (63,6). This was also suggested by three of the EFL teacher educators

in this study during the interviews. They were of the opinion that as TFKT had a set framework, where they knew what the coverage was and what the construct was, they felt safe regarding the test. Moreover, since they could always achieve the previous test items published by SSPC (i.e., ÖSYM), they had some idea of what they should expect, which gave them a sense of motivation to prepare for the test. This emerged as one of the aspects which the test exerted positive washback on the pre-service EFL teachers. In addition, this positive attitude was also highlighted by Memduhoğlu and Kayan (2017) since they found that the test was welcomed by the pre-service teachers.

Even though it was found that the test inspired motivation in pre-service EFL teachers to prepare for it to be appointed, the same positivity was not entirely reflected on their motivation to study for their courses at university (40%). Based on this, it could be argued that the pressure of wanting to be successful in the test as it leads to a permanent employment with financial stability causes stress on prospective EFL teachers, which is a negative washback of the test. This result and the comment based on it was also supported strongly by the EFL teacher educators in the study, highlighting that senior-year students were alienated from campus if they were preparing for the test, since they attended private courses for complementary training in their process of test preparation. The teacher educator participants cited instances of their senior-year students asking them to put classes on one day of the week so they could focus on their studies for TFKT, or asking them about resources to prepare for the test. Additionally, although this stress was not reflected concretely on the results obtained from the scale, it was strongly pointed out by the pre-service EFL teachers in the open-ended feedback item at the end of the scale. It was commonly stated that preparing for the exam was stressful for them, and the anxiety caused by the test interfered with test-takers' achievement. TFKT, therefore, could be said to make them nervous firstly because of there are many topics to study, secondly because all their past effort is limited to a few hours of multiple-choice questions, and finally because there is no guarantee that passing the test with flying colors means that they are qualified or well-equipped teachers. Even one of these factors can understandably make the pre-service EFL teachers nervous and stressful in their journey of preparing for the test. These results are in line with the definition of washback made by Pearson (1998) stating that public examinations influence the attitudes, behaviours, and motivation of teachers, learners, and parents, and because examinations frequently occur at the end of a course.

Among the many definitions made of the washback concept, that of Pearson's (1998) was the most suitable one to this study, since it is obvious that TFKT is reported to influence and have influenced pre-service EFL teachers in terms of motivation and feeling nervous.

Similar conclusions were also drawn by Yeşilçınar (2018) who reported that due to the high stakes nature of the PPSE and TFKT, prospective teachers felt pressured to focus only on the abilities tested in order to improve their test results. As a result, they enrolled in private classes and devoted their time solely to studying test-assessable subjects, leading to neglecting crucial competencies and putting off developing important skills like speaking, using technology effectively, and being proficient in assessment. Similarly, Okan and Karataş (2021) reasoned that TFKT was inappropriate for the purpose of selecting future English teachers based on their data. They claimed this was because the test fell short of addressing all of the necessary competencies for an EFL teacher. As a result, since the pre-service EFL teachers were striving for high scores in such a test, they inevitably became stressed and nervous knowing that all their effort came down to a few hours. Moreover, Yurdakal (2020) similarly contended that pre-service teachers felt stress and anxiety pondering about the test and the oral interview process. Consistent with this, Güven and Dak (2017) found that the test was necessary for teacher recruitment, but it negatively impacted quality of life due to variables including stress and anxiety. The findings of this study are also in line with previous other studies conducted on the impact of PPSE on the test-takers' affective domain even before the TFKT component was introduced (Yıldırım, 2010; Özmen, 2011a; Özmen 2011b; Yavuzer & Göver, 2012). Thus, it can be inferred that the assessment and recruitment process has been inducing stress on pre-service EFL teachers since it was decided that this process was to be carried out with a standardized multiple-choice test.

One of the aims of this study was to determine if there was a positive or negative washback of TFKT on EFL teacher education programs. According to the results of the quantitative data, pre-service EFL teachers gave mostly negative answers to items related to this on the scale such as lecturers in the university actively guiding them in the preparation process (57%), lecturers incorporating previous test items into their lectures (63%), courses at university preparing them for the test (56,7%), and lecturers designing the course content according to test coverage (62,4). Although it seemed to be something negative from the perspective of pre-service EFL teachers, the results showed that EFL

teacher education programs were not affected by the existence of the test. This was also evident in the remarks of the EFL teacher educators in the study. They repeatedly and strictly stated that it was not their duty to prepare their students for such tests, but to raise well-equipped, communicative EFL teachers. It was mentioned by three of the teacher participants that the only small change they made in their classes was to add some previous test items in their lectures either to keep their students interested in the lessons or to familiarize them with the test since it was a reality after graduation. The result that EFL teacher education programs did not experience a change in curriculum or content was also reflected in the findings of Karataş and Okan (2021). They found that most ELT courses continued to cover traditional material rather than the TFKT-designed content, yet there were also a handful of teachers who have admitted to having changed their approach or lesson plans, which also supports the findings of the current study. At this point, it can be argued that while the EFL teacher educators claim it was not their job to help their students prepare for a test, it is a fact that they have to sit and pass TFKT in order to become the effective EFL teachers that they were thought to be by their instructors at university. Thus, it is understandable that the pre-service EFL teachers feel the strict opposition to even incorporating some previous test items into their lecture as something negative. Indeed, some research studies (Davison, 2004; Hamp-Lyons et al., 2001) demonstrated that educators frequently encounter a predicament wherein they must choose between what they perceive to be optimal instruction for their students and what the system requires them to teach. This is exactly what can be observed based on the findings of this study, and it leaves a question of morality in the air: “Is it right not to teach for the test when their students’ future is at stake?” It is the researcher’s conclusion based on the findings that pre-service teachers cry for help in their stressful journey to achieving success, and the least that can be done could be to give small amounts of guidance.

The positive washback impact of TFKT found by this study in the eyes of the pre-service EFL teachers may be due to what Shohamy (2001b) called the test's potency, which is shown in the terror and respect it evokes in those impacted by it, ensures an almost inevitable shift in behavior. Karataş and Okan (2021) found that during the testing process, teacher candidates, instead of criticizing the test, mostly recognized the crucial role of TFKT in selecting teacher candidates in a fair and unbiased manner and changed their behavior towards the test. Other research on PPSE and TFKT have also reported similar

findings, as described by Atav & Sönmez (2013), Baştürk (2017), Karataş & Güleş (2013), Karataş & Okan (2019), and Sezgin & Duran (2011). As teacher applicants started to be evaluated based on their results on these standardized examinations, they became widely trusted and accepted assessments in Türkiye which had the potential to become a powerful instrument that played a vital role in their lives. It can be seen that although some negative feelings were reported by both the pre-service EFL teachers and the EFL teacher educators as the effects of TFKT which are in line with the findings of Atav & Sönmez (2013), Baştürk (2017), Karataş & Güleş (2013), and Karataş & Okan (2019), teacher candidates accepted the exam as it was and started to change their behavior by raising their awareness of the test itself and trying to improve their language proficiency, which is evident from the fact that 191 out of 300 participants in this study showed strong agreement with the idea that this test is significant for all EFL teachers that 246 participants believed they could improve themselves by preparing for TFKT.

Another positive washback effect emphasized by both the EFL teacher educators in the interviews, and pre-service EFL teachers in the open-ended item was that they became more engaged in reading articles and vocabulary improvement. It is also believed that TFKT is an advantageous examination for their future development, as supported by 82% of the participants stating that preparing for TFKT can enhance the essential knowledge and skills required to be an effective EFL teacher. It is suggested by the pre-service EFL teachers that studying regularly for the test enhances both reading skills and comprehension skills, in this way they are obtaining more information about the field of teaching, which helps them become better in their job.

The findings of this study are also consistent with those of Karataş and Okan (2021), who found that the policy, in conjunction with the financial outcomes, resulted in some societal repercussions, in that society tends to categorize the teacher candidates based on the scores they received from the test and whether they were able to be appointed or not as suggested by the EFL teacher educators in this study. Related to this, Shohamy (2001) states that the outcome of a single test can impact subsequent events either positively or negatively, pointing out that tests possess significant influences which can lead to social ramifications. Also, looking at the number of participants who would like to be appointed to public schools, it can be concluded that pre-service EFL teachers might feel compelled to get positions under MoNE as they would like to be financially secure.

Looking from a final perspective, based on the results of the current study as well as the review of related literature, it can be seen that since 2013 when TFKT was first introduced, it has not stayed in its original form. Instead, there have been some changes, which could also be called improvements to the test. The positive implementations to the test, such as increasing the number of language proficiency questions and adding more synthesis questions based on scenarios provided before the questions, may have been an outcome of the previous studies which suggested various alterations (Özmen, 2011a; Özmen, 2011b; Atav & Sönmez, 2013; Memduhoğlu & Kayan, 2017; Güven & Dak, 2017; Yeşilçınar, 2018; Sert Aktuğ, 2018), which can also be interpreted as a positive washback effect of the test on itself. The existence of such changes suggests that the policymakers pay attention to the recommendations made by the key stakeholders of TFKT and make an effort to improve the test itself, and its effectiveness and reliability step by step.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

This chapter begins with a concise overview of the research. Following this, a summary of the findings is held, along with the pedagogical implications of the study's findings for English Language Teacher Education and educational policy makers, in particular. Finally, the paper discusses the limitations of the research and provides suggestions for future research.

5.1. Overview of the Study

This study has investigated the pre-service EFL teachers' level of awareness on and perceptions of TFKT, and mainly focused on the washback impact of the test on pre-service EFL teachers and EFL teacher education. With this objective in mind, following a thorough review of literature, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, a lack of a tool to assess the washback effect of TFKT was realized, and therefore, an awareness, perception and washback scale was developed. After a long process of item generation, five experts in the field of EFL teacher education were consulted, and with the proposed alterations, the tool was pilot tested on 195 pre-service EFL teachers. The results showed that some items did not have the intended effect on the respondents and lowered the reliability of the scale, and were removed from the scale, finalizing the scale. Following this, 300 participants from 21 different cities in Türkiye have participated in the study, and the reliability of the scale has proven to be high as tested once again. Moreover, 5 EFL teacher educators have been interviewed as the goal has been to support the finding of the scale with secondary data obtained from the teacher educators. The overall process of data collection lasted for four months.

As can be seen, this study has been designed as a mixed-methods research study, adopting a convergent parallel design (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The quantitative data for the study have been obtained from the pre-service EFL teachers through the developed scale, while the qualitative data have been gathered by means of semi-structured

interviews with EFL teacher educators. As for the data analysis, the quantitative data was analysed on IBM SPSS Statistics Program utilizing MANOVA and T-Tests, along with descriptive statistics showing frequencies to be able to shed light on pre-service EFL teachers' level of awareness and perceptions, and the washback effect of the test. The qualitative data obtained was analysed by thematic content analysis to reveal the recurring themes and differences in the teacher educator participants' responses to be able to support the quantitative findings.

5.2. Summary of the Findings

Within the context of this specific study, the findings of each research question contributed to the development of discussions and evidence by enhancing the findings of the other research questions.

The first research question was formed to investigate the level of awareness of the key stakeholders of TFKT. The first sub-research question was related to the awareness of the pre-service EFL teachers in the study. According to the results, their levels of construct awareness were found to be higher than those of content awareness, which means they were more aware of the format of the test than the actual coverage. Moreover, it was seen that gender, the program studied, and educational status, i.e., being a senior-year student or a graduate, did not affect the level of awareness of TFKT. However, the fact that they knew about the test beforehand, that they sat the test previously and that they wished to be appointed seemed to have an effect on their awareness levels. Findings showed that those who took the test before had higher levels of awareness than those who did not. Similarly, those who would like to be appointed to public schools also showed higher levels of awareness. In addition, EFL teacher educators' level of awareness of TFKT was considerably high although they believed that it was not their job to prepare pre-service teachers to such an exam or even help them prepare for it.

The second question was formulated to assess the key stakeholders' perceptions of TFKT. Findings revealed that while age had no effect on pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions, gender showed a small effect, with males holding more positive ideas towards TFKT, which could be due to a small sample size of the males participating in the study.

Their perceptions towards TFKT were also influenced by their educational status. Though generally positive, a more neutral stance was detected among graduates. Also, those who had information about the test beforehand had more positive thoughts related to the test, as did those who had not taken the test yet. However, a statistically significant effect could not be found according to the results. As the final determiner, the decision to be appointed to public schools had a substantial effect on whether they had a positive or negative perception towards the test, and it was found that the participants who would like to be appointed held more positive views. From the perspective of the EFL teacher educators, on the other hand, the general picture was a little different. With discrepancies between teacher educator participants, the perception of the test was found to be more negative in general. Even though it was commonly believed that it was enough sufficient to assess the knowledge and skills of pre-service EFL teacher due to being a multiple-choice test, it was stated that it was still better than not having any kind of assessment for the evaluation and recruitment of EFL teachers. The strengths of the test were mostly related to applicability and practicality, while the limitations and weaknesses were about not being able to assess the performance of the pre-service EFL teachers and not being reliable, yet suggestions were made to improve its efficiency (Table 4.6.).

The final research question aimed to investigate the washback effect of the test on pre-service EFL teachers and on EFL teacher education. The first sub-question was formulated to see the washback effect from the perspective of the pre-service EFL teachers. The findings pointed to an effect of age on the perception of washback impact of the test. Yet, gender, having information about the test beforehand or test-taking status did not seem to be influential in how the washback effect is perceived. Moreover, it was found that the preference of appointment was somewhat influential on how pre-service EFL teachers perceived the impact of the test, showing that a more negative washback was perceived by those who would not like to be appointed. Overall, the washback impact of the test on pre-service EFL teachers, EFL teacher education and the future development of pre-service EFL teachers was more positive than negative based on the answers given by the participants. However, from the viewpoint of EFL teacher educators, the overall impact of the test was thought to be negative. Teacher educator participants reported that the washback effect of the test could be observed on pre-service EFL teachers themselves, EFL teacher education programs and families. The effect on pre-service EFL teachers was

thought to be mainly stress and anxiety caused by the pressure of the desire to be appointed, on the other hand it was also believed that the test had a positive washback effect on them by creating some level of motivation to study and increased awareness about reading comprehension and vocabulary, leading to better-equipped EFL teachers. Additionally, the inclusion of some courses that are unrelated to EFL teacher education into the programs is an observable negative washback impact of the test. The future professional development, finally, is not believed to be affected by the test, since this was just a stepping stone on the road to appointment, and no test can have an effect on ideas related to professional life.

Furthermore, it should once more be stated that the development of a brand new scale to be able to assess the washback effect of TFKT on pre-service EFL teachers and EFL teacher education programs, as well as their level of awareness and perceptions is one of the most significant outcomes of this study, since it gives the future research a chance to build on the findings of the current study.

5.3. Pedagogical Implications of the Study

This research is distinctive because it is the first of its kind to examine the washback impact of TFKT on pre-service EFL teachers and EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye as well as the awareness and perceptions of the major stakeholders: pre-service EFL teachers and EFL teacher instructors. Along with this, there are also several implications for the test developers.

5.3.1. Implications for teacher candidates and EFL teacher educators

Having knowledge of a test like TFKT from the start of undergraduate programs allows applicants to assess and improve their theoretical understanding of English language teaching, therefore compensating for any deficiencies in their knowledge. Right at this point, it could be more useful for them to receive some support from the educators in their programs. Although it was stated by some of the EFL teacher educators interviewed in this study that it was not their duty to prepare them for such a test, it was also stated that their duty was to raise competent EFL teachers who are equipped to teach

English effectively. For those teacher candidates to be able to teach English, there is a big stepping stone on the way: TFKT. Therefore, as mentioned and kindly demanded by the pre-service EFL teachers of this study, the courses could include a few instances from the test, such as its coverage or previously asked questions, so that they would feel safer and more motivated in the knowledge that they are understood by their educators in this stressful journey and are encouraged to be successful. What is simply suggested by this is that EFL teacher educators could at least mention TFKT, as it is a fact in their students' lives, remind them of the coverage of the test, and present previously asked questions in the topic they are teaching, since it is the pre-service EFL teachers' belief that they could be more successful in the test if they are supported with test knowledge during their education. Hence, the results and objectives of teacher training programs can be reconfigured in accordance with TFKT framework, and educators may enhance their professional development by updating their skills and knowledge according to this test. Furthermore, for the teacher educators to utilize previously asked test items, the whole test should be shared publicly after each test, not just some of the test items, on the official website of SSPC (i.e., ÖSYM). This could also allow potential test-takers to reach the previous exam questions in a more secure way.

Moreover, to cultivate an educated and prepared teaching community in Türkiye, it is essential to adopt a systematic approach to acquaint teacher educators with the intricacies of TFKT, which is one of the clear implications based on the results of the study. This can be accomplished by arranging focused workshops, seminars, and opportunities for professional growth. These sessions aim to explore the complexities of the exam, equipping educators with a thorough understanding of its framework, content, and requirements. Such workshops may be designed to provide interactive forums for educators to engage in discussions around the individual components of TFKT, facilitating the sharing of insights and best practices. Specialized workshops, facilitated by education and assessment professionals, can provide comprehensive evaluations and advice on how instructors can proficiently equip pupils for achievement in the examination. By establishing these venues for exchanging knowledge, we not only provide instructors with the essential information but also foster a cooperative and encouraging community. These activities contribute to the overall improvement of the education system in Türkiye, as

teacher educators play a crucial role in determining the academic achievements of their students as teacher candidates.

Another implication of this study would be to attempt to manage the high levels of stress on pre-service EFL teachers resulting from the pressures of the test. To achieve this, teacher candidates can be introduced to extensive seminars that not only acquaint them with the content and structure of TFKT but also provide guidance on good stress management techniques. Also, workshops may encompass sessions focused on mindfulness, relaxing exercises, and customized time-management tactics that cater to the specific requirements of the test. In addition, seminars conducted by seasoned educators and psychologists can provide valuable knowledge on the psychological factors involved in test-taking. These seminars can offer techniques to help teacher candidates cultivate a positive mindset. Highlighting the significance of a conducive learning environment and cooperative study groups can foster a feeling of community and collective accountability in managing stress.

Moreover, based on the comments made by the pre-service teachers, it can be implied that teacher candidates should be guided to recognize that effective test preparation is not merely about memorization but extends to the cultivation of essential teaching competencies. Workshops and training modules can be designed to underscore how the skills required for successful exam performance, such as content knowledge and critical thinking, seamlessly align with the broader set of competencies needed for effective classroom instruction. Incorporating the test's content into the regular curriculum of teacher education programs can be a strategic move. This integration allows candidates to understand that preparing for the exam is not a separate endeavour but an integral part of their journey toward becoming well-rounded and capable educators. However, it is also obvious that there is a huge gap between EFL teacher educators and policy makers in Türkiye, which makes this integration and the consequent standardization of the EFL teacher education programs nationwide really challenging. Although 75 to 80 percent of the ELTE programs have a standardized content, the way this content is delivered in nearly each education faculty and by nearly each teacher educator leads to a differentiated acquisition of necessary language teacher knowledge base. Thus, ideally, a standardization by means of introducing the test content into the curriculum would benefit teacher

candidates who will eventually sit this test to the highest extent, however as mentioned above, it would be too difficult to implement.

Furthermore, to mitigate the potential negative impact of relying solely on memorization in the process of preparing for TFKT, teacher education programs in Türkiye can strategically prioritize the cultivation of critical thinking skills and the practical application of knowledge. Recognizing that a balance between rote memorization and analytical thinking is essential for effective teaching, these programs can adopt multifaceted approaches to enhance the overall cognitive abilities of teacher candidates. EFL teacher education programs can also promote a culture of inquiry and discussion, encouraging candidates to question, explore, and analyze information collaboratively. By creating a learning environment that values critical thinking, teacher education programs lay the foundation for educators who approach their profession with curiosity and adaptability, which would eventually result in better learning and better performance in the test for pre-service EFL teachers.

5.3.2. Implications for test developers

Upon comprehensive evaluation of the study's data, it can be inferred that in densely populated countries such as Türkiye, a test consisting of multiple-choice questions appears to be the most appropriate method for selecting and appointing instructors to state schools. Nevertheless, the existence of interviews and how they are conducted, the stress induced by TFKT on test-takers, the failure to evaluate metacognitive skills, the reliance on rote memorization rather than critical analysis in questioning, the neglect of practical teaching aspects, the decline in enthusiasm for faculty courses, and the coercion of candidates to enrol in private courses are all adverse consequences of TFKT that are subject to debate. Thus, it can be implied that the test itself needs to be perfected in a way that eliminates most, if not all, of these negative effects if it is to be continued. There have been many instances where the creators of such high-stakes tests took into account the voices of major stakeholders and made attempts to improve the conditions of the test, and the findings of this study should be one of these instances.

As a highly significant test utilized to determine pre-service teachers' professional lives, their livelihood and their future, it should not be exerting much unintended negativity on its takers. The current teacher recruitment system in Türkiye is primarily focused on assessing cognitive abilities and falls short in measuring metacognitive capabilities. Nevertheless, the teaching profession necessitates the mastery of affective, verbal, and social skills in addition to cognitive abilities. Despite the expectation set by MoNE for teachers to cultivate individuals who possess the ability to question, research, and analyze, the existing teacher selection and recruitment system fails to prioritize these talents, resulting in a growing contradiction. What can be done related to this, as implied from the results, could be to increase the number of synthesis questions, providing scenarios to pre-service teachers to at least come a little closer to assessing real-life classroom teaching. Rather than relying on rote memorization of concepts, topics and terms, they could be led to figuring out meaningful outcomes of the provided scenarios, applying what they know and have learned in their four years of training in a more effective way, which could lead to a better "elimination" of candidates as intended by the test itself.

Moreover, to ensure the selection and appointment of competent teachers to state schools, it is necessary to provide a comprehensive exam that assesses the knowledge, abilities, and attitudes required for effective teaching in a school setting. Prior to commencing their career, teacher applicants should undergo personality assessments and objective interviews carried out in the target language by professionals in the field rather than officials from MoNE, as also emphasized by Sert (2015). Additionally, it may encompass the coursework and projects completed by pre-service teachers during their undergraduate degrees, as well as the observations made by practicing teachers and researchers at the faculty. As another suggestion, the pre-service teachers' grade point averages could be calculated as a percentage and added to the scores received from PPSE and TFKT, which would both lead to pre-service teachers making a greater effort in their years at the faculty and contribute to the elimination of candidates, just like the suggestions provided above.

It might be also argued that TFKT is inadequate for evaluating the language proficiency of the teacher candidates with only 20 items (5 cloze test items and 15 reading comprehension items), so the examination should incorporate a higher number of items to evaluate the language proficiency of the pre-service EFL teachers, which may require to

increase number of questions in the test overall along with the time allocated for the test. As another suggestion to tackle the insufficient evaluation of language proficiency of the pre-service EFL teachers, one EFL teacher educator in the study brought up the idea that there should be a pre-requisite of achieving a minimum score from YDS (i.e., Yabancı Dil Testi) which is another high-stake test prepared and administered by SSPC. As it is comprised of only language proficiency questions (80 in total), the pre-service EFL teacher participants of TFKT could be required to submit their results before they can apply for the test.

The objective of TFKT should be to identify EFL teachers with the necessary qualifications. However, the questions in TFKT received criticism from EFL teacher educators and pre-service EFL teachers for their lack of reflection of the content, and insufficiency. Thus, a comprehensive overhaul of TFKT that encompasses all the courses in undergraduate programs, in proportion to the number of questions to be asked, might be proposed. To enhance the accuracy and reliability of this test, it is advisable to include the findings from research connected to TFKT. One way to achieve this is by developing a test that evaluates the professional abilities and monitors the performances of pre-service teachers. Additionally, it was suggested that multiple-choice examinations are inadequate for evaluating professional abilities, so in addition to multiple-choice exams, it is important to monitor applicants' performance, conduct objective and well-structured interviews, and consider their success scores in their undergraduate program. By incorporating these factors into the total evaluation, the most effective teachers may be selected and recruited.

5.4. Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Further Research

In this study, the researcher aimed to achieve the primary data by means of the quantitative data provided by the scale from pre-service EFL teachers, and the secondary qualitative data by means of semi-structured interviews from EFL teacher instructors. Although the qualitative data was mainly intended to be secondary, the number of participants was limited. Therefore, further research may be conducted with a larger group of EFL teacher educator participants to see if the results would change with a higher sample.

In addition, although accessing 495 participants in total over a period of four months in the piloting and data collection process was ambitious, future studies might consider reaching larger samples to be able to see if it can have any effects on the results.

Moreover, as seen from the feedback of the pre-service EFL teachers in the single open-ended item, their university instructors not guiding them in their preparation process either due to lack of knowledge or lack of interest, a further study could be conducted on EFL teacher educators' perspectives on the possible benefits and drawbacks of integrating small bits of information about TFKT in their courses.

Finally, at the risk of sounding too bold, the researcher suggests that the constructors of TFKT themselves should conduct a study in which they could get the first-hand comments, suggestions, demands and criticism of the test-takers, the pre-service teachers if the aim is to select and appoint the best of the best, which would help the improvement of the test in a major way and inspire a sense of trust and a feeling of being “heard” in pre-service teachers.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: First Draft of Awareness, Perception and Washback Scale for Pre-Service EFL Teachers

Dear English Teacher candidates,

The aim of this study is to investigate the awareness and perception of you, pre-service EFL teachers, on Teacher Field Knowledge Test (TFKT, i.e., ÖABT) as well as the washback effect of the exam. Your participation in this survey will greatly contribute to the success of MA Thesis. I assure you that the answers will be completely anonymous and no names will be used throughout the research. You can reach me in case you have any comments or questions regarding the study from the contact information provided down below. Thank you in advance for your valuable contributions.

Demet Ünal Aydın

Sevgi Şahin (Ph.D.)
Thesis Advisor

Consent Form

I voluntarily take part in this study and I have been assured that my name will not be used in any way in this study or any other research paper that will be published by the researcher.

Yes No

PART 1: Demographic Information

In this part, you will answer some questions in order for the researcher to provide a description of the sample participants in the study.

1) E-mail address:

2) Gender: Male / Female

3) Age:

4) Program:

- a) English Language Teaching
- b) English Language and Literature
- c) English Linguistics
- d) Translation Studies
- e) Other (Please specify) _____

5) I am a ... a) senior (4 th year) student b) graduate		
6) The university you are enrolled in or graduated from: _____		
7) Have you taken 'Öğretmenlik Alan Bilgisi Testi' (ÖABT) before? Yes / No a) If yes, how many times have you taken the exam so far? _____ b) What was the score did you obtain from the last exam you have taken? _____ c) Please provide the number of correct and incorrect responses of your last exam. Correct Incorrect <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table>		
8) Would you like to be appointed to public schools (MEB schools) as an EFL teacher? a) If yes, when are you planning to take ÖABT? _____		

PART 2(a)

For questions 1 to 10, please choose the best option that applies to you.

	Definitely	Probably	Not Sure	Definitely Not
1) I know what ÖABT is.				
2) I have analyzed the previous ÖABT questions to get familiar with the exam.				
3) I know how many questions are asked in the exam.				
4) I know which item/question types are asked in the exam.				
5) I know what topics and courses are assessed in the exam.				
6) A separate preparation program (e.g., an online or face-to-face course) is necessary to succeed in the exam.				
7) ÖABT is a test used to appoint EFL teachers to public schools				

(MEB schools).				
8) ÖABT is a successful assessment tool to appoint EFL teachers to public schools (MEB schools).				
9) My instructors at the university integrate previous ÖABT questions in their lectures.				
10) Lecturers at the university guide us in the ÖABT preparation process in their lessons.				
PART 2(b)				
For questions 11 to 35, please choose the best option that applies to you.				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11) I feel confident in my own knowledge of the topics (e.g., Language proficiency, Methodology, Linguistics, and Literature) included in ÖABT.				
12) I believe ÖABT assesses the knowledge and skills we acquire in our lessons at the university.				
13) ÖABT is a difficult exam.				
14) I see ÖABT as a fair and valid measure of English language teaching competence.				
15) I can improve myself in terms of the necessary knowledge and skills for English teaching profession by preparing for ÖABT.				
16) ÖABT effectively measures the necessary knowledge and skills to be a successful English teacher.				
17) ÖABT is a useful exam to measure my knowledge of English language proficiency.				

18) ÖABT can be helpful for EFL teachers in their profession.				
19) ÖABT is important for all EFL teachers.				
20) ÖABT measures memorization.				
21) ÖABT score indicates if I will be an effective English teacher or not.				
22) ÖABT does not measure my higher-order thinking skills (e.g. analysis, synthesis and evaluation).				
23) I believe ÖABT has affected how English is taught in Turkey in a positive way.				
24) ÖABT has affected my study habits since I started university.				
25) ÖABT provides me with an opportunity to review my content and pedagogical knowledge of English language teaching.				
26) I believe ÖABT offers an opportunity to improve the quality of EFL teacher education programs.				
27) Preparing for ÖABT affects my academic performance at university positively.				
28) I feel nervous about taking ÖABT.				
29) I believe ÖABT does not effectively assess my abilities as an EFL teacher.				
30) I feel that I can perform better as an EFL teacher thanks to ÖABT.				

31) I feel confident in my ability to perform well in ÖABT.				
32) I am concerned about the level of difficulty of ÖABT.				
33) I am motivated to study and prepare for ÖABT.				
34) My courses at university prepare me for the exam.				
35) I feel positive about the impact of ÖABT on my future teaching practise.				

Thank you so much for your participation in this study and for your valuable input.

Appendix 2: Awareness, Perception and Washback Scale for Pre-Service EFL Teachers with Revisions After Expert Opinion

Dear English Language Teachers,

The aim of this study is to investigate pre-service EFL teachers' awareness and perception on Teacher Field Knowledge Test (TFKT, i.e., ÖABT) as well as the washback effect of the exam. Your participation in this survey will greatly contribute to the success of this research, and the answers collected via this survey will be utilized for academic purposes only. I assure you that the answers will be completely anonymous, and no names will be used throughout the research. You can contact me if you have any comments or questions regarding the study. Thank you in advance for your invaluable contributions.

Demet Ünal Aydın

*Sevgi Şahin (Ph.D.)
Thesis Advisor*

Consent Form

I voluntarily take part in this study, and I have been assured that my name will not be used in any way in this study or any other research paper that will be published by the researcher.

Yes	No
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PART 1

In this part, you will answer some questions to provide the necessary demographic information.

1) E-mail address (optional):

2) Gender: Male / Female

3) Age:

4) Program:
a) English Language Teaching
b) English Language and Literature
c) American Culture and Literature
d) English Linguistics
e) Translation Studies
f) Other (Please specify) _____

5) I am a ... a) senior (4th year) student b) graduate (Please specify when) _____		
6) The university you are enrolled in or graduated from: _____		
7) Have you taken 'Teacher Field Knowledge Test' (ÖABT) before? Yes / No a) If yes, how many times have you taken the exam so far? _____ b) What was the score you obtained from the last KPSS-ÖABT exam you have taken? _____ c) Please provide the number of correct and incorrect responses of the latest exam you have taken. Correct Incorrect <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table> d) If no, when will you take the exam? _____		
8) Would you like to be appointed to public schools (MEB schools) as an EFL teacher? Yes / No / Not Sure		

PART 2

This part aims to gather information about to what extent you are familiar with 'Teacher Field Knowledge Test' (ÖABT). For questions 1 to 12, please choose the option which best applies to you.

	Definitely	Probably	Not Sure	Definitely Not
1) I know what ÖABT (Öğretmenlik Alan Bilgisi Testi) is.				
2) I have reviewed the previous ÖABT questions in order to familiarize myself with the exam.				
3) I know the number of questions that are typically asked in the exam.				
4) I know the types of items or questions that are commonly asked in the exam.				

5) I am knowledgeable about the topics that are assessed in the exam.				
6) A separate preparation program (e.g., an online or face-to-face course) beside the university courses is necessary to succeed in the exam.				
7) ÖABT is a test designed to assess and appoint EFL teachers to public schools, specifically the Ministry of National Education (MEB) schools in Türkiye.				
8) ÖABT includes items to assess my overall English Language Proficiency.				
9) ÖABT assesses my knowledge on English Linguistics.				
10) ÖABT assesses my knowledge on English Literature.				
11) ÖABT assesses my knowledge and skills regarding English Language Teaching Methodology.				
12) ÖABT assesses my knowledge and skills regarding English Language Testing and Assessment.				
PART 3				
This part aims to gather information about your perception on ‘Teacher Field Knowledge Test’ (ÖABT. For questions 13 to 25, please choose the option which best applies to you.				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13) I feel confident in my own				

knowledge of the topics assessed in ÖABT.				
14) I believe ÖABT effectively assesses the knowledge and skills we acquire through our lessons at the university.				
15) ÖABT is a challenging exam.				
16) ÖABT is an effective assessment tool for appointing qualified EFL teachers to MEB schools.				
17) ÖABT effectively evaluates the required knowledge and skills for becoming a successful English teacher.				
18) ÖABT evaluates memorized knowledge.				
19) ÖABT adequately evaluates my ability to apply theoretical concepts to real classroom situations.				
20) ÖABT does not measure my higher-order thinking skills (e.g. analysis, synthesis, and evaluation).				
21) ÖABT is significant for all EFL teachers.				
22) The score obtained in ÖABT provides an indication of my potential effectiveness as an English language teacher.				
23) I consider ÖABT to be a fair assessment.				
24) By preparing for ÖABT, I can enhance my knowledge				

and skills essential for the English teaching profession.				
25) ÖABT serves as an effective exam for assessing my English language proficiency.				
PART 4				
This part aims to gather information about the impact of ‘Teacher Field Knowledge Test’ (ÖABT). For questions 26 to 46, please choose the option which best applies to you.				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26) I believe that ÖABT has positively influenced the teaching of English in Türkiye.				
27) Since I started university, ÖABT has influenced my study habits.				
28) ÖABT provides me with an opportunity to review essential knowledge and skills for an EFL teacher.				
29) I believe ÖABT offers an opportunity to improve the quality of EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye.				
30) During their lessons, the lecturers in my university actively guide us in the preparation process for ÖABT.				
31) Preparing for ÖABT positively impacts/impacted my academic performance at university.				

32) My university instructors incorporate previous ÖABT questions into their lectures.				
33) I feel nervous about taking ÖABT.				
34) I believe that ÖABT does not effectively assess my abilities as an EFL teacher.				
35) I think that I can perform better as an EFL teacher thanks to ÖABT.				
36) ÖABT can be advantageous for EFL teachers in their professional growth.				
37) ÖABT encourages me to engage in continuous professional development as an aspiring EFL teacher.				
38) ÖABT motivates me to improve my English language skills and knowledge.				
39) I feel confident in my ability to perform well in ÖABT.				
40) I am concerned about difficulty level of the questions in ÖABT.				
41) I am motivated to study and prepare for ÖABT.				
42) My courses at university prepare me for ÖABT.				
43) I feel positive about the impact of ÖABT on my future teaching practice.				
44) My university instructors				

design their course contents according to ÖABT coverage.				
45) ÖABT encourages me to read articles about my field of study.				
46) Thanks to ÖABT, I have a higher level of motivation to study for my courses at university.				
PART 5				
Please provide us with your valuable additional feedback, suggestions, or personal experiences related to ÖABT.				

<i>Thank you so much for your participation in this study and for your valuable input.</i>

Appendix 3: Final Version of Awareness, Perception and Washback Scale for Pre-Service EFL Teachers

Dear English Language Teachers,

The aim of this study is to investigate pre-service EFL teachers' awareness and perception on Teacher Field Knowledge Test (TFKT, i.e., ÖABT) as well as the washback effect of the exam. Your participation in this survey will greatly contribute to the success of this research, and the answers collected via this survey will be utilized for academic purposes only. I assure you that the answers will be completely anonymous, and no names will be used throughout the research. You can contact me if you have any comments or questions regarding the study. Thank you in advance for your invaluable contributions.

Demet Ünal Aydın

*Sevgi Şahin (Ph.D.)
Thesis Advisor*

Consent Form

I voluntarily take part in this study, and I have been assured that my name will not be used in any way in this study or any other research paper that will be published by the researcher.

Yes	No
-----	----

PART 1

In this part, you will answer some questions to provide the necessary demographic information.

1) E-mail address (optional):

2) Gender: Male / Female

3) Age:

4) Program:
a) English Language Teaching
b) English Language and Literature
c) American Culture and Literature
d) English Linguistics
e) Translation Studies
f) Other (Please specify) _____

5) I am a ... a) senior (4th year) student b) graduate (Please specify when) _____		
6) The university you are enrolled in or graduated from: _____		
7) Have you taken 'Teacher Field Knowledge Test' (ÖABT) before? Yes / No a) If yes, how many times have you taken the exam so far? _____ b) What was the score you obtained from the last KPSS-ÖABT exam you have taken? _____ c) Please provide the number of correct and incorrect responses of the latest exam you have taken. Correct Incorrect <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table> d) If no, when will you take the exam? _____		
8) Would you like to be appointed to public schools (MEB schools) as an EFL teacher? Yes / No / Not Sure		

PART 2

This part aims to gather information about to what extent you are familiar with 'Teacher Field Knowledge Test' (ÖABT). For questions 1 to 9, please choose the option which best applies to you.

	Definitely	Probably	Not Sure	Definitely Not
1) I have reviewed the previous ÖABT questions in order to familiarize myself with the exam.				
2) I know the number of questions that are typically asked in the exam.				
3) I know the types of items or questions that are commonly asked in the exam.				
4) I am knowledgeable about the topics that are assessed in the exam.				

5) ÖABT includes items to assess my overall English Language Proficiency.				
6) ÖABT assesses my knowledge on English Linguistics.				
7) ÖABT assesses my knowledge on English Literature.				
8) ÖABT assesses my knowledge and skills regarding English Language Teaching Methodology.				
9) ÖABT assesses my knowledge and skills regarding English Language Testing and Assessment.				

PART 3

This part aims to gather information about your perception on ‘Teacher Field Knowledge Test’ (ÖABT). For questions 10 to 19, please choose the option which best applies to you.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10) I feel confident in my own knowledge of the topics assessed in ÖABT.				
11) I believe ÖABT effectively assesses the knowledge and skills we acquire through our lessons at the university.				
12) ÖABT is an effective assessment tool for appointing qualified EFL teachers to MEB schools.				
13) ÖABT effectively evaluates the required knowledge and skills for becoming a successful English teacher.				

14) ÖABT adequately evaluates my ability to apply theoretical concepts to real classroom situations.				
15) ÖABT is significant for all EFL teachers.				
16) The score obtained in ÖABT provides an indication of my potential effectiveness as an English language teacher.				
17) I consider ÖABT to be a fair assessment.				
18) By preparing for ÖABT, I can enhance my knowledge and skills essential for the English teaching profession.				
19) ÖABT serves as an effective exam for assessing my English language proficiency.				
PART 4				
This part aims to gather information about the impact of ‘Teacher Field Knowledge Test’ (ÖABT). For questions 20 to 37, please choose the option which best applies to you.				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
20) I believe that ÖABT has positively influenced the teaching of English in Türkiye.				
21) Since I started university, ÖABT has influenced my study habits.				
22) ÖABT provides me with an				

opportunity to review essential knowledge and skills for an EFL teacher.				
23) I believe ÖABT offers an opportunity to improve the quality of EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye.				
24) During their lessons, the lecturers in my university actively guide us in the preparation process for ÖABT.				
25) Preparing for ÖABT positively impacts/impacted my academic performance at university.				
26) My university instructors incorporate previous ÖABT questions into their lectures.				
27) I think that I can perform better as an EFL teacher thanks to ÖABT.				
28) ÖABT can be advantageous for EFL teachers in their professional growth.				
29) ÖABT encourages me to engage in continuous professional development as an aspiring EFL teacher.				
30) ÖABT motivates me to improve my English language skills and knowledge.				
31) I feel confident in my ability to perform well in ÖABT.				
32) I am motivated to study and prepare for ÖABT.				

33) My courses at university prepare me for ÖABT.				
34) I feel positive about the impact of ÖABT on my future teaching practice.				
35) My university instructors design their course contents according to ÖABT coverage.				
36) ÖABT encourages me to read articles about my field of study.				
37) Thanks to ÖABT, I have a higher level of motivation to study for my courses at university.				
PART 5				
Please provide us with your valuable additional feedback, suggestions, or personal experiences related to ÖABT.				

Thank you so much for your participation in this study and for your valuable input.

Appendix 4: First Draft of Teacher Educator Semi-Structured Interviews

CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS
Demographic Questions	1) Could you please state the name of your workplace? 2) How many years of teaching experience do you have? a) Where else have you worked before? b) Do you have teaching experience with primary, secondary, and high school students? 3) How long have you been teaching at the undergraduate level? 4) What is your field of study? a) Do you have a specific interest in assessment? b) Have you been involved in any language assessment related practices? 5) What were your M.A. and Ph.D. dissertations about?
Awareness Questions	1) What is the recruitment process of English teachers to public schools in the Turkish education system by the Ministry of National Education? 2) On a scale of 1 to 10, how familiar are you with the Teacher Field Knowledge Test, i.e., ÖABT, in terms of its content and purpose? 3) What information do you have on ÖABT? (e.g., how long the test has been administered, the number of items on the test, item/question types, or coverage) 4) To what extent do you think teacher education programs (your program, and courses in particular) contribute to the preparation of prospective EFL teachers for ÖABT? Please explain. 5) How do you think prospective EFL teachers should prepare to succeed in this test (i.e., ÖABT)?

Perception Questions	1) What is your overall perception of ÖABT as a means of recruiting English teachers to public schools? 2) What is your opinion on the necessity of ÖABT for ensuring that qualified EFL teachers are appointed to public schools? Please explain. 3) What are your thoughts on the extent to which ÖABT accurately and sufficiently measures the knowledge and skills required for effective teaching (i.e., (1) content knowledge, (2) pedagogical content knowledge)? 4) How do you assess the significance of ÖABT for all pre-service EFL teachers?
Washback Questions	1) In your opinion, what is the impact of ÖABT on EFL teacher education programs in Turkey? 2) How do you think ÖABT has influenced the delivery of EFL teacher education in Turkey, if at all? 3) What changes have you noticed in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment in EFL teacher education in Türkiye since the implementation of ÖABT? 4) How do you think the ÖABT affects EFL teacher training and professional development? 5) How do you perceive the potential impact of integrating previous ÖABT questions into your course materials? a) What specific benefits do you anticipate? b) What potential drawbacks do you see?
Suggestion Questions	1) Do you have any criticism towards ÖABT? If yes, can you elaborate? 2) In your opinion, what changes, if any, should be made to ÖABT to improve its effectiveness and

	validity as a measure of EFL teacher knowledge and skills? 3) What is your opinion regarding the inclusion of compulsory or elective ÖABT courses in ELT programs? Please provide reasons for supporting or opposing such a course.
Closing Question	1) Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix 5: Teacher Educator Semi-Structured Interviews with The Changes After Expert Opinion

CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS																						
Demographic Questions	1) Could you please state your age? 2) Could you please state where you graduated in your B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. studies? 3) How many years of teaching experience do you have? a) Where else have you worked before? b) Have you taught students at the primary, secondary, or high school levels? 4) How long have you been teaching at the undergraduate level? 5) What is your field of study? a) Do you have a specific interest in assessment, particularly in language assessment? b) What were your M.A. and Ph.D. dissertations about? c) Have you been involved in any language assessment-related practices as an academician yourself? <tr><td>Awareness Questions</td><td> 1) What is the recruitment process of English teachers to public schools in the Turkish education system by the Ministry of National Education? 2) On a scale of 1 to 10, how familiar are you with the Teacher Field Knowledge Test, i.e., ÖABT, in terms of its content and purpose? Please clarify. <table><tr><td>Not at all-1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>Very-10</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> 3) What do you think is the extent of your knowledge </td></tr>	Awareness Questions	1) What is the recruitment process of English teachers to public schools in the Turkish education system by the Ministry of National Education? 2) On a scale of 1 to 10, how familiar are you with the Teacher Field Knowledge Test, i.e., ÖABT, in terms of its content and purpose? Please clarify. <table><tr><td>Not at all-1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>Very-10</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> 3) What do you think is the extent of your knowledge	Not at all-1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very-10										
Awareness Questions	1) What is the recruitment process of English teachers to public schools in the Turkish education system by the Ministry of National Education? 2) On a scale of 1 to 10, how familiar are you with the Teacher Field Knowledge Test, i.e., ÖABT, in terms of its content and purpose? Please clarify. <table><tr><td>Not at all-1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>Very-10</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> 3) What do you think is the extent of your knowledge	Not at all-1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very-10												
Not at all-1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very-10														

	about ÖABT? a) How long has the test been administered? b) How many items are there in the test? c) What question types are there in the test? d) What does the test cover? 4) To what extent do you think EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye contribute to the preparation of prospective EFL teachers for ÖABT? Please explain. a) What about the contribution of your program, and courses in particular? 5) How do you think prospective EFL teachers should prepare to succeed in this test (i.e., ÖABT)?
Perception Questions	1) What is your overall perception of ÖABT as a means of recruiting English teachers to public schools? 2) When it comes to ensuring that qualified EFL teachers are appointed to public schools, how imperative do you think ÖABT is? 3) How can the ÖABT ensure that it does not disadvantage candidates from diverse backgrounds or with different educational experiences? 4) How accurately and sufficiently do you think ÖABT measures the knowledge and skills required for effective teaching (i.e., (1) content knowledge, (2) pedagogical content knowledge)? 5) How do you think ÖABT impacts the motivation and morale of prospective EFL teachers? 6) What are some potential consequences or implications of relying on a standardized test like ÖABT for teacher recruitment? 7) In your opinion, what are the potential consequences of relying on a single standardized test like ÖABT for teacher recruitment in terms of equity and

	fairness? 8) In your opinion, what are the strengths of ÖABT? 9) In your opinion, what are the limitations of ÖABT? 10) In your opinion, what changes, if any, should be made to ÖABT to improve its effectiveness and validity as a measure of EFL teacher knowledge and skills? 11) In your opinion, what other assessment methods or tools could complement ÖABT to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of EFL teacher candidates? 12) How can teacher educators balance the need to prepare students for ÖABT while also ensuring a comprehensive and well-rounded education?
Washback Questions	1) In your opinion, what is the overall impact of ÖABT? a) How do you think ÖABT has influenced the course content development of EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye, if at all? b) How do you think ÖABT has influenced the delivery of EFL teacher education in Türkiye, if at all? 2) What changes have you noticed in the following aspects in EFL teacher education programs since the introduction of ÖABT? a) Curriculum of EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye? b) Instruction delivery (in courses) in EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye? c) Assessment (in courses) in EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye? d) On the basis of your observations, have you

	made any changes to any of these aspects? Please clarify. 3) How do you think the ÖABT and its impact on teacher recruitment will shape the future of the EFL teaching profession in Türkiye? a) In your opinion, how does ÖABT influence the future professional development of prospective EFL teachers? b) What long-term effects do you anticipate the ÖABT having on the quality of English language education in public schools? 4) How do you perceive the potential impact of integrating previous ÖABT questions into your course materials? c) What specific benefits do you anticipate? d) What potential drawbacks do you anticipate? 5) Have you noticed any unintended consequences of the ÖABT on EFL teacher education, such as changes in teaching priorities or emphasis on test preparation? 6) How do you think the ÖABT affects the overall perception of the teaching profession in Türkiye?
Closing Question	1) Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix 6: Final Version of Teacher Educator Semi-Structured Interview

CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS																						
Demographic Questions	1) Could you please state your age? 2) Could you please state which university and program you graduated from? (B.A., M.A., and Ph.D.) 3) How many years of teaching experience do you have? a) Where else have you worked before? b) Have you taught students at the primary, secondary, or high school levels? 4) How long have you been teaching at the undergraduate level? 5) What is your field of study? a) Do you have a specific interest in assessment, particularly in language assessment? b) What were your M.A. and Ph.D. dissertations about? c) Have you been involved in any language assessment-related practices as an academician yourself? <tr><td>Awareness Questions</td><td> 1) What is the recruitment process of English teachers to public schools in the Turkish education system by the Ministry of National Education? 2) On a scale of 1 to 10, how familiar are you with the Teacher Field Knowledge Test, i.e., ÖABT, in terms of its content and purpose? Please clarify. <table><tr><td>Not at all-1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>Very-10</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> 3) What do you think is the extent of your knowledge about ÖABT? </td></tr>	Awareness Questions	1) What is the recruitment process of English teachers to public schools in the Turkish education system by the Ministry of National Education? 2) On a scale of 1 to 10, how familiar are you with the Teacher Field Knowledge Test, i.e., ÖABT, in terms of its content and purpose? Please clarify. <table><tr><td>Not at all-1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>Very-10</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> 3) What do you think is the extent of your knowledge about ÖABT?	Not at all-1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very-10										
Awareness Questions	1) What is the recruitment process of English teachers to public schools in the Turkish education system by the Ministry of National Education? 2) On a scale of 1 to 10, how familiar are you with the Teacher Field Knowledge Test, i.e., ÖABT, in terms of its content and purpose? Please clarify. <table><tr><td>Not at all-1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>Very-10</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> 3) What do you think is the extent of your knowledge about ÖABT?	Not at all-1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very-10												
Not at all-1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very-10														

	a) How long has the test been administered? b) How many items are there in the test? c) What question types are there in the test? d) What does the test cover? 4) To what extent do you think EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye contribute to the preparation of prospective EFL teachers for ÖABT? Please explain. a) What about the contribution of your program, and courses in particular? b) How do you think prospective EFL teachers should prepare to succeed in this test (i.e., ÖABT)? 5) What kinds of support or resources are available to EFL teacher educators to help them prepare their students for the ÖABT?
Perception Questions	1) What is your overall perception of ÖABT as a means of recruiting English teachers to public schools? 2) When it comes to ensuring that qualified EFL teachers are appointed to public schools, how imperative do you think ÖABT is? 3) How accurately and sufficiently do you think ÖABT measures the knowledge and skills required for effective teaching (i.e., (1) content knowledge, (2) pedagogical content knowledge)? 4) In your opinion, what are the strengths of ÖABT? 5) In your opinion, what are the limitations of ÖABT? 6) In your opinion, what changes, if any, should be made to ÖABT to improve its effectiveness and validity as a measure of EFL teacher knowledge and skills?
Washback Questions	1) In your opinion, what is the overall impact of

	ÖABT? a) How do you think ÖABT has influenced the course content development of EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye, if at all? b) How do you think ÖABT has influenced the delivery of EFL teacher education in Türkiye, if at all? 2) What changes have you noticed in the following aspects in EFL teacher education programs since the introduction of ÖABT? a) Curriculum of EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye? b) Instruction delivery (in courses) in EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye? c) Assessment (in courses) in EFL teacher education programs in Türkiye? d) Pre-service EFL teachers' attitudes towards courses and study habits? e) On the basis of your observations, have you made any changes to any of these aspects? Please clarify. 3) How do you think the ÖABT and its impact on teacher recruitment will shape the future of the EFL teaching profession in Türkiye? a) In your opinion, how does ÖABT influence the future professional development of prospective EFL teachers? b) What long-term effects do you anticipate the ÖABT having on the quality of English language education in public schools? 4) How do you perceive the potential impact of integrating previous ÖABT questions into your
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	course materials? a) What specific benefits do you anticipate? b) What potential drawbacks do you anticipate? 5) Have you noticed any unintended consequences of the ÖABT on EFL teacher education, such as changes in teaching priorities or emphasis on test preparation? 6) How do you think the ÖABT affects the overall perception of the teaching profession in Türkiye? 7) How do you think ÖABT impacts the motivation and morale of prospective EFL teachers?
Closing Question	1) Can you share any personal experiences or anecdotes related to preparing EFL teachers for the ÖABT? 2) Have you received any feedback or input from pre-service EFL teachers regarding their experiences with the ÖABT? 3) Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix 7: Ethics Committee Approval

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 30.01.2023-202033



1993

BAŞKENT ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Akademik Değerlendirme Koordinatörlüğü

Sayı : E-62310886-605.99-202033

Konu : Etik Kurul İzni (Demet Ünal Aydın)

30.01.2023

EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE

İlgi : 12.01.2023 tarih ve 195993 sayılı yazınız.

Enstitünüz İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Demet Ünal Aydın'ın, Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Sevgi Şahin danışmanlığında yürütmeyi planladığı, "İngilizce Öğretmenlik Alan Bilgisi Testinin Ana Paydaşlar Üzerindeki Ket Vuruna Etkisi: İngilizce Öğretmen Adayları ve Öğretmen Eğitimcilerinin Algı, İnanç ve Farkındalık Düzeyleri" adlı tezine ait tez önerisi değerlendirilmiş ve bilgilerinize ekte sunulmuştur.

Prof. Dr. M. Abdülkadir VAROĞLU
Kurul Başkanı

Ek: Değerlendirme Formu

akent-universitesi-etik

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koordinatör

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Sayı : 17162298.600-28
Konu : Tez Önerisi

23 OCAK 2023

İlgili Makama

Üniversitemiz Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Demet Ünal Aydın'ın, Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Sevgi Şahin danışmanlığında yürütmeyi planladığı, "İngilizce Öğretmenlik Alan Bilgisi Testinin Ana Paydaşlar Üzerindeki Ket Vurma Etkisi: İngilizce Öğretmen Adayları ve Öğretmen Eğitimcilerinin Algı, İnanç ve Farkındalık Düzeyleri" adlı tezine ait tez önerisi değerlendirilmiş ve yapılmasında bir sakınca olmadığı tespit edilmiştir. Bilgilerinize saygılarımızla sunarız.

Başkent Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler ve Sanat Araştırma Kurulu

Ad, Soyad	Değerlendirme	İmza
Prof. Dr. M. Abdülkadir Varoğlu	Olumlu/ Olumsuz	
Prof. Dr. Kudret Güven	Olumlu/Olumsuz	
Prof. Ali Sevgi	Olumlu/Olumsuz	
Prof. Dr. Işıl Bulut	Olumlu/Olumsuz	
Prof. Dr. Sadegül Akbaba Altun	Olumlu/ Olumsuz	
Prof. Dr. Can Mehmet Hersek	Olumlu/ Olumsuz	
Prof. Dr. Özcan Yağcı	Olumlu/Olumsuz	

Prof. Dr. Sadegül Akbaba Altun, Üniversitemiz Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Demet Ünal Aydın'ın, Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Sevgi Şahin danışmanlığında yürütmeyi planladığı, "İngilizce Öğretmenlik Alan Bilgisi Testi'nin Ana Paydaşlar Üzerindeki Ket Vurma Etkisi: İngilizce Öğretmen Adayları ve Öğretmen Eğitimcilerinin Algı, İnanç ve Farkındalık Düzeyleri" adlı tezin yapılabileceği; ancak, kullanılacak ölçek ile ilgili olarak izin alınması gerektiği görüşündeler.

Prof. Dr. Özcan Yağcı, Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Demet Ünal Aydın'ın, Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Sevgi Şahin danışmanlığında yürütmeyi planladığı, "İngilizce Öğretmenlik Alan Bilgisi Testi'nin Ana Paydaşlar Üzerindeki Ket Vurma Etkisi: İngilizce Öğretmen Adayları ve Öğretmen Eğitimcilerinin Algı, İnanç ve Farkındalık Düzeyleri" adlı tez önerisinin uygun olduğu düşüncelerini iletmislerdir.