KARADENİZ TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY * THE INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

APPLIED LINGUISTICS MASTER'S PROGRAM

THE INVESTIGATION OF SEMANTIC PROSODIC AWARENESS LEVELS OF TURKISH ELL STUDENTS THROUGH NEAR-SYNONYM WORDS

MASTER'S THESIS

Tuncer AYDEMİR

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TRABZON

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I, **Tuncer AYDEMİR**, hereby confirm and certify that;

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"something you can't reach is just because you don't try"

June, 2020   Tuncer AYDEMİR

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ÖZET

Eş anlamlı kelimeler anlamsal olarak birbirine yakındır fakat eş dizimsel ve anlamsal doğaları gereği her zaman birbiri yerine kullanılamazlar. Yüksek öğretim seviyesinde yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenen Türk öğrencilerin semantik prozodi, eş dizimsel kelime grupları ve eş anlamlı kelimeleri kullanımı, onların dil öğrenim sürecinde en çok dikkat edilmesi gereken konulardan bazılarıdır. Bu tezin başlıca amacı yüksek öğretim seviyesinde İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı bölümünde öğrenim gören Türk öğrencilerin semantik prozodi farkındalıklarını incelemektir. Öte yandan, bu öğrencilerin semantik prozodisi ile dil seviyesi arasındaki korelasyon; sözlü ve yazılı dil kullanımında semantik prozodi kullanım yöntemleri; semantik prozodi ile ilgili zorluklarla başa çıkma yöntemleri; semantik prozodi bilgi ve farkındalıklarını etkileyen faktörler de bu tezin amaçları arasındadır. Öğrencilerden toplanan veriler nicel ve nitel olarak incelenmiştir. Bir dil seviyesi sınavı, bir semantik prozodi sınavı, bir açık uçlu anket ve bir yapılandırılmış mülakat sırasıyla öğrencilere uygulanmıştır. Çalışmanın bulguları öğrencilerin semantik prozodi seviyeleri ile dil seviyeleri arasında doğrusal bir korelasyon olduğunu ortaya koymuştur fakat öğrencilerin semantik prozodi bilgileri ve farkındalıkları yok denecek kadar azdır. Çalışmanın bulgularından yola çıkarak, eş dizim kelimeler arasındaki semantik prozodinin yabancı dil sınıflarında öğretilmesi önerilmektedir. Öte yandan, yabancı dil öğretmenleri kelimelerin anlamlarının yanı sıra cümle veya konu içindeki bağlamlarını da öğrencilerine öğretmelidir. Öyle ki, bu yöntem yabancı dil öğrencilerinin dil gelişim süreçlerini olumlu yönde etkileyecek ve onların anlamsal olarak daha doğal cümle yapıları (anadili İngilizce olanların yaptığı gibi) kurmalarına olanak sağlayacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Semantik prozodi, eş dizimler, eş anlamlı kelimeler, yabancı dil öğrenenler, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı öğrencileri

ABSTRACT

Near-synonyms are semantically similar words, but they cannot always be used interchangeably because of their collocational and semantic behaviours. The experience of tertiary level Turkish ELL students as EFL learners in terms of semantic prosody and their use of collocations and near-synonyms attract utmost attention in that these learners are largely concerned with improving their language proficiencies. The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the level of semantic prosodic awareness of tertiary level Turkish ELL students, the correlation between their semantic prosodic awareness and English proficiency levels, the ways they use semantic prosody in their speech and written productions and how they cope with challenges about semantic prosody and the factors affecting their semantic prosodic knowledge and awareness. The data collected from the learners were analysed quantitively and qualitatively. A proficiency test, a semantic prosody test, an open-ended questionnaire and a structured interview were applied to the participants, respectively. The findings revealed that the learners' semantic prosodic knowledge is correlated with their language proficiency levels in direct proportion. Yet, learners presented insufficient knowledge and awareness of semantic prosody. Based on the findings of the current study, it could be tentatively suggested that learners in EFL classrooms should be introduced to the prosodic nature of word combinations. More precisely, EFL teachers should help their learners develop awareness regarding how particular words in the language as provided in this study convey meaning within their context. It is believed that this method would positively affect the learning process of EFL learners, and they would be able to create semantically more natural sentences as native speakers do.

Keywords: Semantic prosody, collocations, near-synonyms, EFL learners, ELL students

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BNC   : British National Corpus
CEFR   : Common European Framework
COCA   : Corpus of Contemporary American English
DDL   : Data-Driven-Learning
EFL   : English as Foreign Language
ELL   : English Language and Literature
f   : Frequency
L1   : First / Native language
L2   : Second / Foreign Language
MTELP   : Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency
N / n   : Number / Frequency
OOPT   : Oxford Online Placement Test
P   : Participant
r   : Correlation value
SP   : Semantic Prosody

INTRODUCTION

The aura of meaning with which a form is imbued by its collocates.
Bill Louw

It is possible that, in the process of language learning, many EFL learners around the globe may have gone through a series of questions related to their own learning experience. Equally possibly, one of these questions may have been whether they could use near-synonym words interchangeably in speech or writing in English after they have achieved a certain level of mastery in both. The existence of invisible rules governing the proper use of English lexicon seems to be one of the greatest challenges EFL learners need to overcome one way or another in their entire language learning experiences. One of these "invisible" rules in their attempts to use near-synonym words or collocations may be the consideration of semantic prosodic relations governing the word choices and their semantic sequences in a sentence structure. The positive negative and neutral tendencies of words and word groups in English lexicon may require immediate attention by the language learners as well as immediate pedagogical focus by the language researchers. The researcher believes that there is a need for wide ranging research studies related to the collocational and semantic misuses in the spoken and written discourses of EFL learners since this may be a problematic issue. Put it another way, it seems not only a strong common belief or widespread linguistic conviction towards the existence of several prosodic inappropriateness in the written as well as spoken productions of EFL learners, but also a significant topic of enquiry into the learning experience of those who are occasionally corrected by their teachers for prosodic misuse and semantic drawbacks in writing and speaking performances, which naturally calls into question the notion of semantics and semantic prosody.

Semantics is a linguistic concept concerning itself with meaning(s) in discourse, written or oral practise through formal or informal contexts. However, when its sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic and pragmatic aspects are considered, the functions of discourses, rather than meanings and abstract speculations as to what a discursive pattern can mean, become significant or even a primary linguistic feature that requires attention and scientific treatment. Thus, this significant functional aspect of discourse emerges not only through certain social or cultural contexts but also through certain conventionalised patterns such as prosodic structures, which has been studied within the scope of semantic prosody since the 1980s in parallel to developments in corpus linguistics which   enables researchers to discover the hidden attitudes of language, unearthing the inter-textual, intra-textual, intercultural and secondary inter-relations in addition to prosodic structures in discourses such as frequently used words, word combinations, structures

where by researchers discover and interpret the usage patterns and behaviours of language structures.

As for the native speakers' use of language, linguists are dealing with the similarities or differences between native speakers' and learners' language use in a framework in which native linguistic performance is more or less regarded as the 'standard' or the 'norm' data rather than the end-product data. It would be unrealistic otherwise to make a direct comparison of native and non-native data in a continuum. Thus, it can be justified that that the common belief about the existence of, especially, semantic misuses in the writing and speaking of non-natives deserve pedagogical attention. Particularly in the writing performances, it is seen that semantic and prosodic challenges are frequently due to the productive phases in the language learning processes compared to speaking, reading and listening, since it requires the combination of all other skills like knowledge of grammar, vocabulary or semantics in order to write properly while expressing oneself.

With the developing computer technologies, the two crucial fields of study, semantics and corpus linguistics, are seen to collaborate in various aspects as well as becoming popular in language studies such as dictionary compiling, language teaching and learning, translation, communicational studies, discourse analysis and critical studies. Since semantic prosody explores the forms and patterns of meaning(s), "established through the proximity of consistent series of collocates" (Louw 1993), it can be argued that it adopts a significant role in the investigation of classroom practices in EFL or ESL settings where learners are mostly involved in serious difficulties and remarkable challenges to develop productive language skills. The learners try to combine their semantic experience and vocabulary knowledge together minutely in order to produce a prosodic discourse. In other words, the learners should be aware of "hidden attitudes" (Baker, Hardie and McEnery, 2006: 58) of words in semantic level.

This also happened to the researcher, the author of this thesis, during the teaching experience at tertiary level, finding himself in various ludicrous situations concerning the hidden attitudes of the words and phrases, and hesitating conversations in the consuming decision-making moments about the appropriate word choice. The EFL learners, particularly ELL students as EFL learners in this research, the researcher was working with seemed to have faced with a lot of challenges about using specific vocabulary through a meaningful prosodic structure and the researcher, as the teacher researcher, has increasingly grown curious about the reasons for the preferences of various usages and diverse word choices of the learners.

Considering the fact that the awareness of semantic prosody and collocations has been practically underscored and remarkably undervalued in conventional language teaching methods, it can be argued that EFL learners' semantic prosodic knowledge should prove inadequate and elusive thereby slowing their learning improvement. Hence, it can be seen that the EFL learners'

semantic prosodic knowledge is significantly correlated with their language proficiency levels, which indicates a direct proportion between these scores. On the other hand, the learners' insufficient knowledge mostly indicates a low degree of awareness in semantic prosody. The findings of the current study suggest that the EFL learners should be introduced to the prosodic nature of word combinations on various levels not only from a mechanical but also from a semantic perspective to help increase awareness of particular words in specific contexts calling for specific collocations and prosodic patterns. The study highlights this critical and crucial endeavour to achieve efficiency in the fluency of the language learner and escalate the creative potential of the learner in productive skills such as writing and speaking. All in all, the study discloses the "hidden ignorance" of the learners due to the current situation in educational settings and lays emphasis on the "hidden attitudes" of the collocative words to design educational system and syllabuses for a more natural linguistic insight.

This study is an inquiry into the prosodic awareness of the tertiary level Turkish ELL students as EFL Learners. The aim of this study is therefore to investigate the learner preferences of collocations and near-synonyms from the viewpoint of semantic prosody. The study explores to what degree tertiary level Turkish ELL students have semantic prosodic awareness, and to what extent this awareness is correlated with their language proficiency. Upon considering the research so far, such an investigation and analysis is a promising task to provide further implications about the experience of Turkish EFL learners.

The experience of Turkish in terms of semantic prosody and their use of collocations and near-synonyms attract utmost attention in that these learners are largely concerned with improving their language proficiencies. Turkish EFL learners involved in this study are the first-year students studying at the Department of English Language and Literature, Karadeniz Technical University, Trabzon, Turkey. The participants were native speakers of Turkish, who were likely to demonstrate considerable signs of semantic prosodic un/awareness. The ages of the participants varied between 19 and 21 from similar backgrounds. 40 males and 75 females were included in the research design; however, age and gender were not considered significant variables in this study. The background language experience of the students showed similar characteristics. Their language learning experience mostly started at secondary schools, continued at high schools. Some of them are also reported to have received supplementary pre-intermediate courses in English. Furthermore, all the participants attended English preparatory class for two semesters before graduation. The mixed-method procedures used by the researcher include the following quantitative and qualitative stages as part of the data collection phase: Selection of the participants is marked with convenient sampling with a purposive approach; assessment and survey of grading; correlation analysis of the placement test scores and semantic prosodic knowledge scores. The statistical analysis was additionally employed, which was eventually evaluated and interpreted with qualitative data.

CHAPTER ONE

1. FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

The term "semantic environment" was first uttered by Sinclair (1987: 3) who said that the words are "described by the ways they are co-selected by speakers and writers". This natural co-selection of the headwords and their lexical components are not a coincidence and there is a systematic network behind these combinations. "Semantic prosody" was first termed by Louw (1993: 157) as a useful notion and a valuable analytical category should be investigated as part of the attempts to uncover EFL learners' lexical, textual and discoursal competences in a range of contexts (Dam-Jensen & Zethsen, 2008). Bublitz (1996) pointed out that "Words can have a specific profile, which may be positive, pleasant and good, or else negative, unpleasant and bad,". This definition is very similar to the definition of Louw (1993) who described prosody as an "aura of meaning," which refers to negative or positive or neutral meanings of the node word and the collocate (Bublitz, 1996: 9).

The potential theoretical significance of semantic prosody comes from the fact that they provide very strong evidence for the co-selection of the discourse in speech and writing. Prosodies signal an evaluative meaning for the given words within the discourse and thus ensure the appropriateness of the discourse items together. In practical terms, semantic prosodies give the language user an opportunity to predict the purpose of the utterer regarding the context. This, in turn, gives the reader or the listener a chance to distinguish near-synonyms.

In the research background, several past studies by Bublitz (1996); Hunston (2007); Partington (2004); Stubbs (1995a); and Sinclair (2004) were conducted on several cases of semantic prosody with several sample words such as *happen*, *set in*, *naked eye*, (2004), *build up* (Louw, 1993), *cause* and *happen* (Bublitz, 1996), *break out* (Stubbs, 1995a). All these past research studies pointed out that the use of semantic prosody in a context may have potential to reveal the mental or emotional state of a speaker and writers (Harris, Gries and Miglio, 2014).

It is also the case that many EFL teachers believe or at least inclined to believe the existence of collocational and semantic misuses in the spoken and written productions of EFL learners. Therefore, EFL learners maybe sometimes warned and corrected by their teachers as they had

challenges about using vocabulary properly in their writing and speaking. Collocations, multi-word combinations and idioms are the essential contents for language learners as these concepts distinguish the level of advanced learners from native speakers (Zeneth, 2006).

Accordingly, vocabulary learning is a process that needs more attention and awareness rather than simple vocabulary memorization method. Sinclair's (1991) idiom principle emphasises on the fact that vocabulary learning should be based on multi-word combinations and the connotational features of the lexical items. When EFL learners learn a word with its collocates and its semantic prosody, it would be easier for them to remember the words' correct usages in various contexts similar to the native speakers of that language. Hunston (2002) presents the significance of semantic prosody since it may avoid the misunderstandings of non-natives of English comparing to the natives. She also argues it by relating to subjective discourse reactions that the discourse of ELF learners may sometimes mislead or sound awkward to the native speakers. This maybe probably caused by semantic prosodic unawareness of the EFL learners.

This thesis study was conducted in order to investigate the current situation of Turkish ELL students in terms of semantic prosody and their use of collocations and near-synonyms. The learners involved in this study were the first-year students from the Department of English Language and Literature, Karadeniz Technical University, Trabzon, Turkey. The participants were native speakers of Turkish, who were likely to demonstrate considerable signs of semantic prosodic un/awareness. The ages of the participants varied between 19 and 21 from similar backgrounds. 40 males and 75 females were included in the research design; however, age and gender were not considered significant variables in this study. The background language experience of the students shows similar characteristics. Their language learning experience mostly started at secondary schools, continued at an intense level at high schools. Some of them are also reported to have received supplementary pre-intermediate courses in English. Furthermore, all the participants attended English preparatory class for two semesters before graduation. The mixed-method procedures used by the researcher include the following quantitative and qualitative stages as part of the data collection phase: Selection of the participants is marked with convenient sampling with a purposive approach; assessment and survey of grading; correlation analysis of the placement test scores and semantic prosodic knowledge scores. The statistical analysis was additionally employed, which was eventually evaluated and interpreted with qualitative data.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this thesis is to investigate Turkish ELL students' semantic prosodic awareness levels of English words by using a semantic prosody test to estimate their present level of semantic prosody knowledge. The Semantic Prosody Test designed by the researcher was used to measure the learners' semantic prosodic awareness levels. The Semantic Prosody Test, self-

developed by the researcher, was used to measure the participants' semantic development in English vocabulary. The Semantic Prosody Test scores and the Online Oxford Placement Test Scores were compared and analysed to see the performances of the participants. Another purpose of the thesis is to introduce the notion of semantic prosody and provide an overview of studies about semantic prosody. Based on this overview, the study aims to suggests that semantic prosody should be integrated into EFL vocabulary pedagogy.

1.3. Significance of the Study

The significance of semantic prosody comes from the fact that it has been researched in the last three decades and has attracted by many researchers who recognize the importance of semantic prosody for English as a foreign language (EFL). The primary function of semantic prosody is the expression of the attitude of the speaker or writer towards the communicative situation (Louw, 1993; Partington, 1998; Zhang and Ooi, 2008). As mentioned in the review of literature section, the term "semantic prosody" is a very critical issue in language learning for EFL learners for at least two reasons. The first reason is that when EFL learners learn English, they may ignore the prosodic nature of English lexicon if there is no explicit instruction for raising their awareness towards this concept. Thus, their learning process may probably be slowed down or halted at one time if they are given a prosody test and they failed to achieve it. The second reason is that even if they consider themselves achieving a higher level of language learning process, failure to notice prosodic differences between the lexical items may cause confusions and lack of communication at the intended level. On the other hand, a good recognition of the notion of semantic prosody with its positive, negative, and neutral associations may bring success in the learning process with its insight providing the feature (Hunston, 2002).

Although the study of semantic prosody may relatively be a new phenomenon for the EFL learners, it is clear through the current research that semantic prosody should be integrated into English as a foreign language (EFL) vocabulary learning, reading, writing and teaching. The rationale for doing so is that if taught explicitly, semantic prosodic knowledge may be valuable for the EFL learners who have problems in communicative competence. It can even be suggested that failure to provide explicit instruction of semantic prosodic words and phrases in EFL vocabulary classes may result in misuse of semantic prosodic words and word combinations.

Although there are various studies (Ahmadian, Yazdani and Darabi, 2011; McGee, 2012; and Nevisi, Hosseinpur and Darvish, 2018) in the literature about semantic prosodic awareness of EFL learners, most of those studies only evaluate the semantic prosodic knowledge by using corpus linguistics tools, and revealing whether the learners are aware of some specific usages of languages such as the use of adverbials or adjectives, yet those studies, unarguably, contributed to the

literature a lot for the development of semantic prosody concept, that is to say, only the quantitative data.

At some point, this study especially focuses on the situation of Turkish ELL students as EFL learners. It is seen that there are not satisfactory number of studies about Turkish EFL learners and their semantic prosodic knowledge in the literature. Therefore, this thesis aimed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data in order to reveal more reliable and persuasive results about the problems of Turkish EFL learners with semantic prosody phenomenon. This study evaluated the awareness of Turkish ELL students as EFL learners about semantic prosody concept in details. The difference of this study from similar related studies is that the participants were surveyed by an open-ended questionnaire in order to collect detailed qualitative data from the first hand. The participants provided useful data about their language levels, their semantic prosodic knowledge levels, their behaviours about semantic prosody, and finally possible solutions to the problems.

1.4. Statement of the Problem

This study attempts to explore one aspect of lexical competency which is also called as EFL learners' semantic awareness of English words in speech and writing. It is clear that when EFL learners are learning new words and word groups in the target language, they tend to use their mother tongue rules or lexical structures rather than those found in L2 and this may cause them form rather strange words or word combinations during speech and writing. Thus, this practice may be resulted in forming a wrong mental lexicon in L2 and further results in communication breaks semantically and grammatically. Similarly, failure to consider the different positive and negative connotations of specific words may result in communication problems. There is also a need for coursebook writers to pay attention to the choice of words and phrases to assist in EFL learners in their use of semantic prosody.

The positive and negative connotations of specific semantic prosodic words and their effects on non-natives' written works from various countries is addressed. Textbook and dictionary writers should be meticulous in their choice of words and phrases to assist in non-natives' use of semantic prosody. The implications of not properly learning semantic prosodic words and phrases, collocations, and near synonymous words and phrases results in the learners having troubles with their communicative competence in English. Overall, the EFL learners must be made aware, by the teachers, of the phenomenon of semantic prosody and the concept of lexical patterning that it necessitates.

Wilkins (1972: 111) clearly points out the importance of vocabulary knowledge, "Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed". Yet, vocabulary knowledge is not enough alone, it requires the semantic knowledge complementation.

Lee and Liu (2009) also state that language learners who only use dictionaries make many semantic mistakes as they are provided with the denotational meaning of a word which may not be suitable for the context.

1.5. Research Questions

1. What is general semantic prosodic awareness level of Turkish ELL students?
2. Is there a statistically significant correlation between English proficiency level and the semantic prosodic awareness of Turkish ELL students?
3. How do Turkish ELL students use semantic prosody in their discourse?
4. How do Turkish ELL students cope with the challenges about semantic prosody?
5. What are the factors affecting semantic prosodic knowledge of Turkish ELL students?

1.6. Organization of the Thesis

This research aims at investigating semantic prosodic awareness of Turkish ELL students as EFL learners in accordance with their English proficiency levels. This study is carried out by employing the Oxford Online Placement Test, a Semantic Prosody Test, a set of open-ended questionnaire, and an interview. This thesis consists of five chapters.

Chapter 1, Framework of the Study: This chapter reveals the main problem why this research was studied. It gives the main research purpose which also includes research questions. Moreover, it proposes the importance of the study and identifies the key terms and abbreviations.

Chapter 2, Literature Review: This chapter provides a review of literature related to semantic prosody, collocations, synonymy, semantic preference, semantic profiles, the semantic prosodic awareness of EFL learners, lexical priming, phraseology, and EFL learners and multi-word combinations.

Chapter 3, Methodology: This section of the thesis outlines the employed methodology. The divisions are as follows: participants, sampling, quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods.

Chapter 4, Findings and Discussion: This chapter reveals the results of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis procedures. The statistical descriptions of findings are listed one by one within tables and figures. Possible reasons for semantic prosodic awareness levels of the EFL learners were qualitatively revealed.

Chapter 5, Conclusion: This chapter includes and summarizes the main findings. Possible solutions to increase semantic prosodic awareness of the EFL learners are suggested. Furthermore,

it presents implications for future research. This study closes with a brief comment on the findings and answers to the research questions.

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the review of literature related to the research questions of the study. The major issues are listed as in the titles; semantic prosody, collocations, synonymity, semantic preference, semantic profiles, lexical priming, phraseology, and semantic prosodic awareness of Turkish ELL students as EFL learners. Additionally, frequently occurring problems and challenges about the learners' use of multi-word constructions were argued. Besides, as this is a linguistics study which focuses on English language teaching and learning, the relationship between the learners and multi-words constructions were also argued by referring to the previous studies in the related sections.

2.2. Semantic Prosody

Semantic prosody is a term which was firstly described by Sinclair (1987) by giving the 'set in' phrasal verb example as it was likely to be used for giving negative meaning to the collocates. He found this out by investigating the co-occurrence of the most frequent collocates of 'set in' and interpreting it according to its semantic associations and writers'/speakers' collocational vocabulary choices, and for him, semantic prosody was "an obligatory property of a unit of meaning". It was, then, used by Louw (1993: 157) as "the aura of meaning with which a form is imbued by its collocates". Followingly, this term was also defined by some other linguists; "the spreading of connotational colouring beyond single word boundaries" (Partington 1998: 68); "When the usage of a word gives an impression of an attitudinal or pragmatic meaning, this is called semantic prosody" (Sinclair, 1999); "a word may be said to have particular semantic prosody if it can be shown to co-occur typically with other words that belong to a particular semantic set." (Hunston and Francis, 2000: 137). Baker, Hardie, and McEnery (2006: 58) also defined semantic prosody as "the way that words in a corpus can collocate with a related set of words or phrases, often revealing (hidden) attitudes". Consequently, semantic prosody can be considered as the meaningful attitudes of words and word combinations.

Zhang (2010: 192) states that "in semantic prosody, there is nothing explicitly positive or negative for the node word. It is its characteristic collocates that have a similar particular semantic

association". Therefore, it is hardly possible to identify the semantic prosody of a word alone as Philip (2010) states that semantic prosody is invisible individually so that it must be observed with its collocational structures. In this case, semantic prosody cannot always be accessed by the dictionary definitions and even their example sentences, since the example sentences might be fabricated unnaturally, and mistakenly in concordance. Even though an example in the dictionary gives the correct semantic prosody of a word, it may not always represent the actual prosody of the words. Sinclair (2004) explains this situation as the semantic prosodies and their profiles may change contextually; thus, semantic prosody of a word bears a discourse function. It, again, approves the definition of Partington (1998: 68), "the spreading of connotational colouring beyond single word boundaries".

Sinclair (2004: 34) explains the process of constructing a lexical item as follows that, firstly, the producer chooses a semantic prosody to a lexical item with his/her semantic preference, then, the semantic preference controls the collocational and colligational patterns, and finally, the combination of lexical items consists of the semantic prosodic structure. "Semantic prosody incorporates the reason for choosing a given lexical item in a specific context" (Sinclair, 1996: 87). Sinclair (2004: 34) then stated that "the initial choice of semantic prosody is the functional choice which links meaning to purpose; all subsequent choices within the lexical item relate back to the prosody". This process can be considered as natural language production of a speaker or writer within semantic prosody and lexical priming concepts. According to Sinclair's explanation, the choices during this process, can be succeeded by the native speakers of that language, otherwise, EFL and ESL learners may fail in natural word choices. Accordingly, their language production might be seen or sounded unnatural and possibly confusing as it might be in every language worldwide. Therefore, L2 learners should pay more attention to the semantic attitudes of lexical items.

Sinclair (1991: 112) noted that "many uses of words and phrases show a tendency to occur in a certain semantic environment. For example, the word happen is associated with unpleasant things -accidents and the like" within the framework of his idiom principle. Idiom principle was defined by Sinclair (1991: 110) as "a language user has available to him or her a large number of semi-preconstructed phrases that constitute single choices, even though they might appear to be analysable into segments". This term can be better understood by its contrast, 'open choice principle' which enables language users to make the free vocabulary choice without considering any relationship between lexis and grammar (Francis, 1993). Furthermore, Pawley and Syder (1983), Erman and Warren (2000), and Wray (2002) highlighted the importance of idiom principle in their studies by referring the word 'prefabs'.

One another function of semantic prosody is its discourse function. Stubbs (1995a; 1995b) investigated semantic prosody with various words with collocates including *provide, care, cause,*

commit, standard, etc. Besides, he investigated the discourse and pragmatic functions of semantic prosody in his corpus-based studies. Similarly, Sinclair (2004: 35) also mentioned about the discourse function of semantic prosody by discussing it as "the phrase 'true feelings' typically occurs in a sequence such as he may not want to admit his true feelings…, which expresses a 'reluctance or inability' to talk about emotional matters". He argues that a word should carry the unity of meaning, possibly indicating the discourse function, rather than the headword alone. Hunston (2002: 60) also argues it by relating to subjective discourse reactions that the language of ELF learners may sometimes mislead or sound awkward to the native speakers.

As seen in the definitions, semantic prosody is a new term in language studies. Accordingly, it has some connections with the developing technologies. According to Louw (1993), it is not very possible to find out the semantic prosodies of words manually with human instincts; on the other hand, they can easily be known with accurate computational methods such as corpus tools. With corpus linguistics, it is possible to identify the words with their positive, negative, or neutral behaviours to their contextual collocations. Besides, Hunston (2001: 142) suggests that "semantic prosody can be observed only by looking at a large number of instances of a word or phrase, because it relies on the typical use of a word or phrase". Corpus linguistics and its tools are used as the best method for analysing and evaluations words by easily reaching large amounts of data. This analysis not only covers the word alone, but also covers sentences, phrases, lemmas, and even punctuations. Sinclair (1991: 2004) states that "the concordance lines reveal that many words occur frequently in recurring sequences, suggesting that large proportions of running text might be composed of semi-fixed 'chunks'".

The best advantage of using these tools is the fact that researchers can easily access and analyse loads of data, which includes millions of words, in seconds. In addition, this data optionally can consist of naturally occurring texts, which provides invaluable information for semantic prosody. Channell (2000) also claimed that such kind of phenomena can only be found out by using large corpora. This statement is because of the fact that semantic prosodies are formed by frequent sets of hidden features of words which cannot be easily detected observation. Nowadays, some frequently used corpora are BNC (British National Corpus) with 100 million+ words and COCA (Corpus of Contemporary American English) with 500 million+ words. On the other hand, Stewart (2010: 81) argues that the researchers should make inferences from the findings of corpus analyses in order to find semantic prosodic behaviours of lexical items; otherwise, computer software is unable to evaluate connotations solely. Also, as mentioned before, Philip (2010) states that semantic prosody is invisible individually so that it must be observed with its collocational structures which cannot always be accessed by the dictionaries so that it requires computational analysis with corpus tools. For example, Wei (2002) examined semantic prosody of 'cause' in JDEST corpus and found that it has a negative prosody rather than positive in English texts. The examples of some lexical items found by corpora are that Sinclair (1991) *break out*, *happen*, *set in*,

bent on (negative SP); Stubbs (1995a) *accost*, *cause*, *signs of* (negative SP) and *provide*, *career* (positive SP); and Partington (1998) *commit*, *peddle*, *rife* (negative SP) and *impressive* (positive SP). Moreover, in the compilation process of the Semantic Prosody Test, which was used in this research, the lexical examples mentioned above were used in some test questions.

The necessity of semantic prosody was clearly explained by Morley and Partington (2009: 144) as "maintaining connotational harmony is very important to avoid sending mixed messages". Unless being ironic, using words together randomly may cause confusion (i.e. Let battle set in). They also highlighted the importance of semantic prosody as much as any other grammatical mechanism by claiming semantic prosody as the biggest proof of co-selection principle. Besides, Sinclair (1996: 87) argues the pragmatic function of semantic prosody as "it expresses something close to the 'function' of an item, it shows how the rest of the item is to be interpreted functionally; thus, without semantic prosody, the string of words just 'means' as it is not put to use in a viable communication". Here, the argument of Hunston (2002) presents the significance of semantic prosody since it may avoid the misunderstandings of non-natives of English comparing to the natives. Besides, the lack of semantic prosody in a word-combination may provide insincerity in language or cause irony (Louw, 1993). Therefore, the message might be considered unacceptable and intolerance by some receivers.

The connection of semantic prosody with language teaching and learning is obvious as Sardinha (2000) states that semantic prosody creates a bridge between language producer and receivers such as writer and reader, and speaker and listener. It adds extra meaning to the text or speech, enhances comprehension. Ozbay and Aydemir (2007) investigated the use of maximizers by Turkish EFL learners and revealed that Turkish EFL learners partially failed while using some adverbials within semantic prosodic concept. They related this incompetence to the lack of semantic prosodic awareness of the learners. It was recommended that exposure of semantic prosody and collocational patterns by reading and listening would possibly enrich the English language skills of the EFL learners. Zhang (2010) points out that researchers revealed the importance of semantic prosody for the EFL learners' vocabulary learning with the help of corpus linguistics. Similarly, many researchers enlightened the use of corpus linguistics for teaching vocabulary within semantic prosody and data-driven-learning concepts (Johns, 1994; Seidlhofer, 2002; Bernardini, 2004; Chambers, 2005; Castagnoli, 2006).

Data-driven-learning is frequently considered as a useful method for teaching and learning foreign languages. It provides language learners with self-discovery of mostly vocabulary, multi-word combinations and semantic prosody. Johns acknowledges that EFL learners can explore the correct or erroneous structures in their own texts. Thus, they are supposed to be encouraged and motivated for learning the language. Similarly, Seidlhofer (2002) states that self-made corpora by EFL learners motivated them when they discover the linguistic patterns in native texts were parallel

with their owntexts. Finally, Chambers (2005) claims that DDL enables EFL teachers to create awareness about language patterns for their learners. Consequently, corpus-based studies and data-driven-learning may contribute the language learning process of EFL learners positively.

2.3. Collocations

As it can be understood by the word itself, collocation is the combination of words which are located together in harmony. The term collocation was firstly used by Firth (1957: 194) as he stated that words should be known and learnt with the company they keep. He proposed it as a technical term to the literature. Then, Firth (1968: 181) also claimed that collocations are the habitual or customary statements of the words they accompany. Thus, collocations are considered according to their ranks quantitatively. Followingly, Greenbaum (1974: 82) defined collocation as "the frequent co-occurrence of two lexical items in the language". These definitions refer to the statistical structure of collocations which was accepted by many corpus linguists later, such as following definitions. Kjellmer (1987: 33) stated that "a collocation is a sequence of words that occur more than once in identical forms and which is grammatically well-structured". Hoey (1991: 6) also claims that "collocations appear together with greater than random probability in its context". Sinclair (1991), Stubbs (1995a), Partington (1998), and Hunston (2002) are also the main linguists who stated similar definitions about this term.

Sinclair's (1996) 'open choice principle' and 'idiom principle' can enlighten the nature of collocations. His open choice principle suggests that any lexical item can co-occur without intentions and create a collocational structure. On the other hand, 'idiom principle' suggests that some lexical items within partnership or phraseology can co-occur to create lexical bundles or prefabs (Hunston, 2002: 138). In fact, the distinction between the two principles is the semantic or pragmatic behaviours of the collocates within each other. Stewart (2010: 85) argued this distinction with the mutual attitudes of lexemes "to create certain meanings or functions".

Louw (2000: 57) associates the term collocation to semantic prosody in relation by saying that "a form of meaning which is established through the proximity of a consistent series of collocates". Similarly, Stubbs (2002: 225) also states that "there are always semantic relations between the node word and its collocates, and among the collocates themselves". Stubbs (1995a) also exemplifies collocations' different behavioural structures by referring to semantic prosody that he says some near-synonym words may have semantically different collocates such as "cause" mostly has negative collocates (cause death) while "bring about" has mostly positive collocates (bring about happiness). However, semantic prosodic dimension of collocations is related to the language proficiency, especially of the native level. Likewise, Ozbay and Aydemir (2007) found some problems about the use of collocational structure and semantic prosody by EFL learners so

that the learners do not tend to use collocational structures like the native speakers do. This issue is also mentioned in the following title "Semantic Profiles".

On the other hand, collocates are not only lexical words but also can be grammatical forms such as prepositions, modals or adverbial connectors… etc. As it is mention previously, a word or grammatical form, whatever frequently repeats rather than a random co-occurrence, they can be simply considered as collocates. For example, even the words 'of' and 'the' can be considered as collocations as they are one of the most frequent pairs in the English language. Similarly, the auxiliary verb 'is' and articles 'a/an' could be considered as collocates which grammatically complete each other in pair. On the other hand, collocations are not necessarily the pair of two lexemes, they can be group of three, four or possibly more lexemes which frequently co-occur (i.e. *on the other hand*). Greenbaum's (1974: 82) definition approves this view that any statistically frequent co-occurrence of lexemes can be considered as collocations. Furthermore, Hoey (1991: 6) points out the degree of frequency in order to consider word-combinations as collocates as "with greater than random probability in a textual context".

The easiest way to find out collocations is to use corpus linguistics and its tools as McEnery and Hardie (2012: 123) define collocations "to refer to a wide range of different co-occurrence patterns that may be extracted from a corpus." Corpus tools (such as AntConc, Sketch Engine, Word Smith and Lancs Box) help researchers or individuals to reach a large amount of data especially the texts produced by native speakers, then, they provide the whole statistical data in seconds, including from two-word combinations to any optional preference. Thus, it easily enables us to observe the nature of language and its hidden features, especially linguistic patterns. For the semantic prosodic dimension of collocations, corpus tools do not provide qualitative results to the researchers, whereas it only gives the statistical data. Therefore, the researchers must interpret the concordance lines, keywords, wordlists, or clusters. Thereby, hidden features of language in collocational and semantic base could be revealed.

One another issue about collocations is to teach or learn the collocational patterns. As collocations take part a significant role in language, they have to be used properly, especially by L2 learners. Collocation learning seems challenging especially when considering its semantic, pragmatic and discourse functions; thus, it goes beyond a simple vocabulary memorization process. Leed and Nakhimovsky (1979: 109) suggests that vocabulary activities should be related to collocational structures (i.e. heavy smoker, deep trouble); thus, the learners may easily overcome vocabulary and collocational problems they experience. While some researchers (Hoey, 2000) suggest that collocations can be learnt with the help of computational methods such as concordance investigations in texts within self-discovery method, in addition to collocation dictionaries in classroom environment; some researchers (Lewis, 1997; Conzett, 2000; Nation, 2001) suggests collocations should be taught the learners consciously that teachers could introduce the

collocational patterns in coursebooks or listening activities, then encourage the learners to use similar collocational patterns. Consequently, in both cases, the learners need to gain some awareness about collocations at first.

2.4. Synonymy

Synonymy is simply the sameness of two different words; however, some pioneering linguists propose some types of synonyms according to their functions and the nuances between these so-called same words. Xiao and McEnery (2006: 108) identify synonyms as "having very similar cognitive or denotational meanings, but which may differ in collocational or prosodic behaviour. As such, synonymous words are not collocationally interchangeable". Consequently, while EFL learners combine words together while creating collocational structures, they may still have prosodic problems because of connotational nuances between near-synonym words (i.e. *high man* rather than *tall man*). Stubbs (2002) points that semantic prosody contributes to synonymous vocabulary choice rather than a random choice. Similarly, Murphy (2003) says that synonyms and semantic prosody specifically completes each other to convey the correct message to the listener or reader as they assume the attitudes of the speaker or writer.

Cruse (2000: 157) classifies synonyms into three categories as absolute synonymy, cognitive synonymy and near-synonymy. He defines the absolute synonym as a set of the complete identity of all meanings in every context which could not be possible natural in a language. This means that synonyms can be used interchangeably in all contexts. Palmer (1981: 7) also argued it the same way that synonyms cannot be absolute synonyms because exactly same words cannot survive in a language as one of them will be unnecessary and unmotivated, and accordingly, it would be abandoned soon. For example, truck and lorry are sometimes given as absolute synonym words although they are not always used interchangeably in every context that a truck is used in American context while a lorry is used in the UK. Moreover, a truck may refer to different vehicles such as large pick-ups while a lorry may not. Furthermore, absolute synonymity has not been proved or exemplified so far.

Lyons (1981) defines cognitive synonymy as incomplete synonymy or non-absolute or partial synonymy. According to his description, lexemes situationally standing for each other can be considered as cognitive synonyms. He gave the examples of "liberty and freedom", "statesman and politician". Cruse (2000: 159) also suggest that cognitive synonymy could be clearly differentiated from near-synonymy by claiming that language users can intuitively make distinctions between synonyms and non-synonyms. Cognitive synonyms seem easier to be distinguished by the learners since they are used interchangeably in rare contexts or sometimes only evoke each other rather than interchangeability.

Near-synonymity is the usual type of synonymy as language users intuitively know. Palmer (1981: 7) described it as "loose synonymy" that words can replace each other in "most" of contexts rather than all. Furthermore, Stanojevic (2009) describes it as the synonyms which could be found in dictionaries or thesaurus (e.g. play (n): comedy, drama, opera, musical, performance, show …etc). Murphy (2003: 155) identifies it that "the sense of near-synonyms overlaps to a great degree, but not completely". Murphy (2004: 146) also states that "near-synonyms as, words with similar senses, are context-dependent". According to these definitions, near-synonyms refer to the lexical pairs which have similar meanings but may have different prosodic or collocational behaviours. Cruse (2000: 159) exemplifies it by the sentence that "He was killed, but I can assure you he was not murdered, madam".

These definitions given above enlighten the methodology of this research. Near-synonymy is particularly related to this research's objectives to measure the semantic prosodic awareness of ELF learners as they decide between synonymous pairs. Either one of the pair can be used in a specific context or both lexemes can be used interchangeably in that context. The participants are expected to show the awareness of semantic prosody and collocational patterns through the near-synonyms. Like in semantic prosody and collocations, the use of synonyms requires a great attention or intuitive knowledge in order to avoid any misunderstandings or sending confusing messages to the target. Otherwise, even native speakers of English may consider the problematic usages as awkward or amusing.

2.5. Semantic Preference

Sinclair (1996: 87) defines semantic preference as "a lexical set of frequently occurring collocates which share a semantic feature". Similarly, Stubbs (2001: 65), defines as "the relation, not between individual words, but between lemma or word form and a set of semantically related words", Partington (2004: 145) defines as "the relationship between a lemma and a set of related words", and Bednarek (2008: 120) defines as "a lexical item's habitual co-occurrence with words or phrases which share a semantic feature or belong to certain semantic fields". On the other hand, Zhang (2009: 3) states that "semantic preference does not belong to speakers' conscious knowledge of a language". In contrast, it happens intuitively and simultaneously during language production. Xiao and McEnery (2006: 126) explains it as "native speaker intuition certainly can detect the usage of a word at odds with its semantic prosody". Similarly, Louw (2000: 3) also explains it as "semantic preference is the part of all native readers' prior knowledge".

Although semantic prosody and semantic preference have similar definitions, still they have nuances. Sinclair (1996: 87) identifies prosody as "at a further stage of abstraction than preference" while Partington (2004: 151) also suggests that "semantic preference is a narrower phenomenon relating the node item to another item from a particular semantic set than prosody which can affect

wider stretches of text". While semantic prosody and semantic preference occur within the contextual meaning and collocations, semantic preference is based on the discourse of the speakers additionally. Sinclair (1996: 87) points that "semantic preference is the semantic field of a word's collocates, whereas semantic prosody alludes to the positive/negative character of these collocates". For example, Partington's (2004: 148) research on maximizers and their collocational behaviours revealed that some near-synonyms such as *completely, entirely, totally and utterly* frequently co-occur within the context of 'absence of state'. Similarly, Stubbs (2001: 65) investigated the semantic preference of the word *large* and found that it was frequently used as the common feature of size and quantities such as 'large amount' or 'large number'. Lastly, as the well-known example of this term, Sinclair (2004) pointed the semantic preference of the phrase 'the naked eye' for visibility. Thus, one can simply say that while semantic prosody is the meaningful combinations of collocates, semantic preference is the connotational harmony of lexical items.

In the present study, the importance of semantic preference was expected to be revealed within the framework of semantic prosody and collocational knowledge of Turkish ELL students as EFL learners. The Semantic Prosody Test does not only evaluate the semantic prosody awareness of participants but also evaluates their semantic preferences. Xiao and McEnery (2006: 126) argues that "learners' L2 intuition is inevitably less reliable than their L1 intuition". Therefore, semantic prosody and semantic preference can always be a challenge for the learners with their vocabulary choice. They can intuitively prefer unusual collocates in specific contexts. Awareness or competence of connotations of lexical items provide the the learners with better understanding the context of any text or speech, also with expressing themselves effectively to the readers or listeners; thus, misunderstandings and sending confusing messages would be avoided. As to reveal the current situation of the learners and to find possible reasons and solutions to the problems if there was, the questionnaire of this research aimed to reveal both semantic prosodic awareness and semantic preference process of Turkish ELL students. The data collected from Turkish ELL students by the semantic prosody test and the questionnaire brought about remarkable insights to the research with by assessing whether the participants were familiar with the connotations of lexical items in the test.

2.6. Semantic Profiles

Sinclair (1987: 112) proposes a new point of view to collocations and semantic prosody concepts. He argues that a word form is likely to be followed by a semantically positive or negative collocate by giving the example of phrasal verb 'set in' mostly refer to unpleasant affairs (as usually co-occurring with bad weather, gloom, decline). Thus, the synonymous word choice of a speaker or a writer may show their attitude by the semantic association they did. This concept is mostly analysed in discourse studies. Hunston (2007: 250) also classifies some collocations as

'positive' vs 'negative' or 'favourable' vs 'unfavourable'. As mentioned before, Louw (1993: 157) defined semantic prosody as "consistent aura of meaning with which a form is imbued by its collocates" that is the meaningful harmony of lexical items both within themselves and with the words they accompany. Besides, Partington (2004: 131) interprets it as "the habitual co-occurrence between the word and a set of words that share similar semantic traits". These so-called tones and semantic traits refer to connotative meanings which are positive, negative or neutrally occurring consistent collocations.

Sinclair (1987) revealed that the phrasal verb 'set in' always referred to some unpleasant issues, such as dark, sadness, or bitterness; thus, it is considered as having the negative profile. Moreover, Louw (1993: 160) and Cheng (2013: 4) state the example of the word 'utterly' as having negative semantic prosody as it frequently collocates with semantically negative words. Similarly, Ozbay and Aydemir (2017) found out by corpus-based research that the word 'utterly' is mostly used with negative collocates by native speakers of English. In this sense, the replicability of corpus methods and their usefulness were proved with these studies done in different time periods. In addition, Ozbay and Aydemir (2017) stated that the near-synonym of 'utterly', 'absolutely' frequently co-occurs with positive words. Thus, it can be inferred that near-synonyms are also semantically context-based words which cannot be always used interchangeably. Their research also shows that EFL learners sometimes tend to use such near-synonyms semantically wrong. For example, while native speakers use the maximizers 'totally' and 'utterly' with negative prosody, Turkish EFL learners use them mostly with positive prosody (Ozbay and Aydemir, 2007). Therefore, it can be suggested that EFL learners need more awareness and attention to connotational meanings of lexical items they use.

On the other hand, Louw (1993: 164) suggested that semantic prosodies and profiles are "the product of a long period of refinements through historical change". According to this statement, semantic prosody is not only a context-based concept but also having a diachronic nature. For example, the word 'gay' means 'happy' in old and middle English whereas it currently refers to 'a homosexual man' which may be considered as a negative phenomenon in some societies. Similarly, the semantic profile of the word 'Islam' suddenly changed to mostly negative in the USA and some other western countries after the dramatic event on 11 September 2011, as stated in the related studies (Alharbi, 2017; El-Sharif 2011). Similarly, Whitsitt (2005: 287) also states that "the essence of the phenomenon of semantic prosody is, however, historical change: meaning being transferred between terms which appear together frequently over time". For him, semantic prosodic change can be observed by using a synchronically collected and organized corpora.

2.7. Semantic Prosodic Awareness of EFL Learners

Background of this study and statement of the problem, as mentioned before, are directly related to semantic prosodic awareness of EFL learners. According to the review of the literature and the general implications of foreign language teachers, EFL learners have challenges in semantic prosody. Their general implications show that learners are having difficulty in expressing their actual feelings in L2. Some pioneering linguists also argued these implications as follows. Siepmann (2005) claimed that if EFL learners are not aware of semantic prosody or lack of its knowledge, they may make pragmatic errors while using the language. Xiao and McEnery (2006) suggest that the awareness of semantic prosody provides learners with effective communication. Zhang (2009) claims that semantic prosody may help to interpret and understand the hidden attitudes of lexical items appropriately. Moreover, Zhang (2010: 193) states that "the knowledge of semantic prosody can provide insight into the teaching of vocabulary, especially near-synonyms". Fan (2010) also suggests that semantic prosody provides a new and better perspective to differentiate near-synonyms rather than experience and intuition. The current research also aimed to reveal semantic prosodic awareness of tertiary level Turkish ELL students as EFL learners.

As considering the language and discourse of native speakers of English "standard", it was widely observed, as mentioned above, that EFL learners sometimes have challenges about using the language, especially in word-choice. Wu (2009) points that vocabulary knowledge is the essence of language teaching or learning. Vocabulary can be seen the most troublesome issue in language learning comparing to the four skills of language which can be learnt through practice over time, and they are all dependent to the vocabulary knowledge (Lewis, 1992). Moreover, the vocabulary knowledge does not mean memorizing the denotations from dictionaries or other sources, yet, it requires more attention and awareness about discourse rather than the mechanical language. Xiao and McEnery (2006) state that EFL learners' lack of semantic prosodic awareness cause inappropriate word choice in their language production. In this sense, Zhang (2010) suggests the knowledge of semantic prosody may decrease the level of this vocabulary challenge, especially the confusions about near-synonyms. Ozbay and Aydemir (2017) found that EFL learners' semantic prosodic awareness was very high enough to successfully use near-synonyms in their discourse as they had problems about deciding between near-synonyms and send clear messages to the receivers; thus, it might cause misunderstandings or confusions. They highlighted the importance of semantic prosodic awareness of EFL learners, by referring to their research and the previous studies, that semantic prosody was necessarily required to teach the learners by providing awareness directly or indirectly in classroom environment; otherwise, it may take a long time for the learners to gain awareness themselves that may slow down their learning process.

2.8. Lexical Priming

Priming phenomenon has been acknowledged as a psychological explanation regarding how words in language are used in company with other words. That is to say, priming is said to occur when a word makes another word come to mind more easily and faster during spoken or written communication. For instance, the word *cheese* is recognized faster when it is preceded by a similar word in terms of semantics, such as *milk.* In this instance, the word *milk* is said to prime *cheese* as they are semantically similar to each other (Durrant, 2008: 105). Although priming phenomenon was first introduced by Meyer and Schvaeneldt (1971), the term lexical priming was put forward by Hoey (2005: 1), which the author identifies as "a new theory of language". According to him, every word in language has a way of accumulating in language users' mental lexicon with their accompanying contexts through linguistic encounters. Correspondingly, as indicated above, words are primed to occur with certain semantically related words for speakers or writers of a language as a result of such linguistic encounters. Based on this explanation, it could be argued that words do not occur by chance in texts. Rather, there appears to be a psychological reason why certain words are used in company with other words in spoken and written discourse. In other words, co-occurrence of words is not a random process, it is rather a "psychological concept" (Hoey, 2005: 28), which is encompassed by lexical priming.

According to Hoey (2005), priming phenomenon is not necessarily restricted to co-occurrence of words, collocations in particular. Regarding that, he suggests that not only all words in language are primed to be used together (i.e. *collocates*), they are also used in specific contexts, indicating that all words are bound to be used with particular semantic associations. The author further exemplifies such co-occurrence of words in certain semantic environments by suggesting that the word *hour* appears to be primed with particular words that are semantically related with *number* and *ride* for native speakers of English. More precisely, even though the corpus the author employed for his research reveals that the word *hour* frequently occurs with words like "*half an, one, two, three, four, and twenty four",* explaining this observation solely with collocations "would have nothing to say about linguistic creativity and be of little or no theoretical importance." (Hoey, 2005: 16). Based on this argument, it could be suggested that words are primed to co-occur with specific words as well as in certain semantic associations (i.e. *hour* is primed in *number* and *ride* related semantic contexts). From this point of view, Stewart (2009: 155) also argues that priming phenomenon can be seen not only in the relationship between words, but also in longer units depending on contexts of words. According to the author, it could be claimed that every linguistic unit in language, whether they are words or longer units, carry properties of semantic prosody that are likely to fuse together within spoken and written discourse in order to generate "functionally complete utterances." (2009: 156). This may suggest that lexical priming constitutes a model in which language users use particular linguistic units in certain semantic environments.

Based on the discussion of lexical priming above, it appears that words are stored in language users' mental lexicon with their particular contexts through linguistic encounters. In this sense (Hoey, 2005: 10) argues that such effect constitutes "part of our knowledge of a lexical item that it is used in certain combinations in certain kinds of text." This indicates that language is not generated by haphazardly bringing words together to achieve meaning. Instead, words appear to be primed in certain contexts particular to themselves. To illustrate, the word *cause* is stated to occur in contexts carrying negative meaning (Stubbs, 1995b: 247). That is, *cause* has a negative semantic prosody. From this point of view, an utterance such as *cause success* by an EFL learner could be problematic in terms of semantic prosody. Bearing in this mind, in this instance, it would be tentatively suggested that the word *cause* does not prime semantically negative words for the EFL learner.

2.9. Phraseology

While the term "phraseology" is increasingly used by writers in a variety of language-related disciplines, it seems that the field is not yet widely recognized in applied linguistics and it is not fully understood by the researchers or easily available to language teachers. When the literature is reviewed, it can be seen that the concept "phraseology" has various definitions. According to the definition of Oxford English Dictionary (Web), the term, phraseology is: "The selection or arrangement of words and phrases in the expression of ideas; manner or style of expression; the particular language, terminology, or diction which characterizes a writer, work, subject, language, place, etc."

The definition of phraseology covers several different concepts used by various researchers. Terms used for this concept include formulas, ready-made language, pattern grammar, extended units of meaning/lexical items, lexical bundles, lexical phrases, clusters, n-grams, skiagrams, phrasemes, phrase-frames, phrasal constructions, prefabs, and recurrent word combinations (Weinert, 1995; Wray, 2002; Cheng, Greaves, Sinclair, and Warren, 2009). According to Teliya et al. (2005: 55), phraseology is "a domain of linguistic study which to a high degree illustrates the correlation between language and culture". On the other hand, Cowie (1994:316) defines phraseology as "the study of the structure, meaning, and use of word combinations." Gries (2008: 4) also makes a broader definition as: "the co-occurrence of a form or a lemma of a lexical item and any other kind of linguistic elements (word/grammatical patterns)".

The term phraseology has been differently regarded by various scholars as "formulaic sequences" (Schmitt, 2004), "lexical bundles" (Biber and Barbieri, 2006; Biber, Conrad, and Cortes, 2004), "lexical chunks" (Schmitt, 2000), and "collocations"- that is, the "occurrence of two or more words within a short space of each other in a text" (Sinclair, 1991: 170). Some of these

sequences can be learned together as single "big words" (Ellis, 1996: 111), while others can have "slots" or be created of "collocational frameworks" (Renouf and Sinclair, 1991).

In teaching and learning a foreign language, phrase-focused approaches are becoming more important day by day since phraseology can provide more fluent, native-like, or expert production. It is true that different aspects of phraseology can be regarded as native-like versus non-native-like productions or beginner versus expert writing. O'Keeffe et al. (2007: 210) state that language chunks can be described as "register- (or genre-) specific". Hyland (2008: 5) stressed the importance of phraseology as "naturalness" in "competent participation in a given community" for the EFL learners. Moreover, according to him, the lack of such language clusters can be considered as "the lack of fluency of a novice or newcomer to that community".

In the academic context, Coxhead (2008: 149) emphasizes the importance of phraseology as the typical words in the academic communication as well as stresses the significance of the groups to which these words belong. The researchers generally agree that native learners' linguistic competence has a wide and significant phraseological component. These familiar phraseological components help language learners to understand and use many linguistic items rather than merely memorising. In this regard, it can be significantly stated that in the process of teaching a foreign language to the EFL learners, the importance of phraseology cannot be underestimated. Since EFL learners can have a better understanding of the great number of lexical items thanks to these fixed or formulaic expressions.

2.10. EFL Learners and Multi-Word Combinations

Collocations, multi-word combinations and idioms are the essential contents for language learners as these concepts distinguish the level of advanced learners from the native speakers (Zeneth, 2006). Therefore, vocabulary learning is a process that needs more attention and awareness in addition to simple memorization method. The awareness can be gained by either self-study and intuitions or the EFL teachers. Zhang (2009: 8) states that the teachers frequently tend to provide their students with vocabulary lists to memorize within the framework of grammar-translation method. In this regard, the learners may fail conveying the correct message appropriately as they combine words together with their L2 intuitions. Consequently, teachers are expected to emphasis on teaching collocations rather than individual words without context (Zhang, 2010: 190). However, this teacher-student issue may be discussed in further studies since their educational background circle continues similarly when considering the syllabus and teaching method factors.

According to the review of literature, EFL learners tend to use multi-word combinations partially erroneous. This might be because of unawareness of semantic feature of collocations, or

direct translations from native language to the target one. Cortes (2004) found that EFL learners misuse or underuse some specific lexical bundles which were frequently used by native speakers of English. In addition, Wei (2006) investigated Chinese EFL learners and found three types of word combinations as typical collocations, interlanguage collocations and unusual collocations. The unusual collocations might be considered the most problematic issue as it is caused by total unawareness of collocational patterns. Similarly, Wang and Wang (2005) also investigated Chinese EFL learners and found out problematic issues about collocations used by the learners within the framework of semantic prosody. Zhang (2009: 3) believes that collocations and semantic prosody should be taught in vocabulary courses, if not, learners may commonly tend to use inappropriate word combinations during their language production process.

Numerous linguists believe that EFL/ESL learners should learn collocations consciously by gaining awareness from their teachers. The learners can use dictionary of collocations for learning such patterns; however, Conzett (2000: 70) suggests teachers to motivate their students to with self-discovery method as selecting books which include various collocations and promoting the students to find out the collocational patterns and study on them. In this way, the learners might be more motivated to learn (comprehension and production) such multi-word combinations. In addition to dictionary of collocations and reading activities, Hoey (2000: 224) suggests corpus tools in order to explore collocational patterns that the learners can investigate concordance lines and find out frequently used multi-word combinations in context.

CHAPTER THREE

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The research design of this thesis includes following steps; firstly, one hundred fifteen Turkish ELL students as EFL learners were selected as participants. Secondly, the English proficiency levels of the learners were examined by the Oxford Online Placement Test. Thirdly, the semantic prosodic awareness levels were examined by a semantic prosody test. After these tests, the statistical analysis was carried out by SPSS software. At the end of the study, the statistical and qualitative data were analysed to answer the related research questions. As the statistical data may not always provide satisfactory results alone, it is always better to support the findings with qualitative data such as a questionnaire or descriptive data. Finally, the learners were surveyed to collect qualitative data. In addition, exceptional cases were interviewed to be investigated about their reasons of being considered as exceptions. Consequently, the combinational results of qualitative and quantitative data enable the researcher and the audience to better understand the reasons underlying the findings.

3.1.1. Research Protocols

This research is designed to follow up essential protocols used by the researchers all over the world. These protocols primarily require the ethical concerns, hypothetical validity, representative sampling and data collection, quantitative and qualitative processing of the data and argumentative tone in presentation. The hypothetical aspect of the research foregrounds a problem that needs exploration and consolidated prediction as to the answer of a question: Is there a significant correlation between the proficiency levels of the learners and their semantic prosodic levels. The estimated answer is the existence of a supposed correlation. The thesis is aimed at, firstly, exploring the truth value of such a supposition, and secondly, investigating whether such a correlation, if there is any, indicate semantic prosodic awareness. The results of the research will be beneficial for those who are interested in syllabus development and curriculum design as well as teaching strategies used in classroom.

3.1.2. Research Guideline and Steps to be Taken

Table 1: Research Steps of the Thesis

	STAGES
Stage 1	Statement of the problem and research questions
Stage 2	Review of the literature
Stage 3	Settings and Participants 1: Settings
Stage 4	Settings and Participants 2: Participants
Stage 5	Data Collection 1: Quantitative Data (Oxford Online Placement Test)
Stage 6	Data Collection 2: Quantitative Data (Semantic Prosody Test)
Stage 7	Data Collection 3: Qualitative Data (Open-Ended Questionnaire)
Stage 8	Data Collection 4: Qualitative Data (Structured Interview)
Stage 9	Data Collection 4: Processing (statistical analysis, procedural classification, content stratification)
Stage 10	Data Analysis: Description
Stage 11	Data Analysis: Discussion
Stage 12	Conclusions
Stage 13	Implications

3.2. Participants and Setting

One hundred fifteen Turkish ELL students as EFL learners participated in this study. All participants were studying at the first grade of English Language and Literature Department in Karadeniz Technical University, Trabzon, Turkey, and were native speakers of Turkish. The ages of the participants were between 19 and 21, they were 40 males and 75 females. In fact, age and gender were not considered as variables in this study. The background of the students is quite similar to each other as they studied in foreign language departments of high-schools or had some

pre-intermediate level language and linguistics support. In addition, all the participants studied one-year intensive English preparatory class before their bachelor's degree.

Table 2: Demographical Information of the Participants

Number of Participants	115 Turkish ELL students as EFL learners				
Genders	75 Females			40 Males	
Setting	Karadeniz Technical University, Trabzon, Turkey				
Major Study	English Language and Literature (Freshmen)				
Ages	19 - 21				
Languages	L1 - Turkish			L2 - English	
L2 CEFR Levels	A1 - 10	A2 - 55	B1 - 35	B2 - 12	C1 -1
L2 background	Three-year-study in foreign language department at high-school, One-year English preparatory class before bachelor's degree				

The study traces back to 2015, when the researcher has begun to study with the supervisor since then and covers a relatively wide range of participants as well as duration. Seventy-five of the participants represent previously enrolled learner group who were freshmen students with similar backgrounds. Their proficiency levels and semantic prosody levels were examined (2015) and the supplementary data were obtained from the participants studying at the same department of language and literature (2019). One of the remarkable and significant aspects of this study is that it covers two different generations from the same department with almost the same educational setting, curriculum, syllabus, lecturers, and social and linguistic medium.

3.3. Sampling

The purposive sampling used in the research covers the tertiary level Turkish ELL students as EFL learners. Purposive sampling method is a method of selecting the participants for a research by considering the typicality or possession of the participants within the basis of specific needs of the research (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007: 110). The data were collected by deciding and reaching the target group and directly inviting them to the research as participants. The students were supposed to be Turkish ELL students as EFL learners who just started their higher education after foreign languages education in high school and preparatory class before their bachelor's degree. Thus, the participants could possibly have similar backgrounds without any external factors such as exposition of language outside the classroom (i.e. study abroad experience). The participants of this research were the freshmen students of English Language and Literature Department in Karadeniz Technical University in Trabzon, Turkey. The participants with a total number of 115 (75 + 40) studied at the same department in 2015 and 2019, respectively. All the participants were between the age of 19-21 and had similar backgrounds in terms of education as presented in Table 1. They all studied in foreign language departments at high-school, they were examined and had similar results in the exam for attending university, and finally they studied and

succeed one-year intensive English preparatory class with same lecturers and syllabus. Therefore, both groups can be considered as equals in educational background; however, there might be some differences in external factors of their language learning due to the time setting of tests. This situation was argued in conclusion and further suggestions sections.

3.4. Quantitative Research Method

Quantitative research method has many advantages such as using computational tools for saving time and reducing efforts. This approach is used for collecting data and analyse it for statistical results which will be interpreted by the researcher in the following levels of the study. Bryman (2001: 20) states that "qualitative research method places emphasis on numbers and figures in the collection and analysis of data". This method is replicable, and it guarantees the anonymity for any potential ethical issue.

This method's another advantage is to reach large amount of data easily and make generalizations with the results of analysis. The nature of quantitative research allows the results of a sample group to generalize to a larger group. In this present study, 115 Turkish ELL students as EFL learners who study at Karadeniz Technical University in Trabzon is supposed to represent the tertiary level Turkish EFL learners all over the country. Considering the background of the students, they already come to this university from various cities in different regions of Turkey. Thus, the generalization may be considered as reliable and valid. In any further hesitation about the results, replicability of the data is another benefit of its.

Within the concept of this method, an Oxford Online Placement Test and a Semantic Prosody Test were carried out. The results of both tests were transferred to statistical data analysis tool, IBM SPSS Statistics 26. This data analysis tool calculated Pearson Correlational Values and also Split-Half Reliability of the data and methods.

3.4.1. Oxford Online Placement Test

With the purpose of understanding the levels of the participants Oxford Online Placement Test was applied. Based on the scores, the participants were classified in levels with The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as A1 beginner, A2 elementary, B1 intermediate, B2 upper intermediate, C1 advanced and C2 proficient. Professor James Purpura from Columbia University, New York explains the goals of Oxford Online Placement Test (OOPT) as follows (Purpura, Web, nd.):

The Oxford Online Placement Test is designed with three goals in mind: (1) to measure the language knowledge that these students have and to place them as accurately and reliably as

possible into levels that align with the CEFR; (2) to provide students, teachers, and institutions (i.e., the stakeholders) with detailed information, so that they can make informed decisions about teaching and learning; (3) to provide stakeholders with an online placement test that is highly practical (i.e., inexpensive, flexible, easy-to-use, and adaptable), and reliable in its measurement of students' abilities.

The Oxford Online Placement Test can be used for various purposes, especially, for quickly measuring the general language ability of a target group of students. Universities, language schools, training companies, human resources, other institutions and organisations and people for individual purposes are the main user of this test. The main distinctive feature of this test from the other classical ones is the fact that it measures more language skills instead of classical grammar and vocabulary measuring classical methods. Moreover, as it is an interactive test, it also measures the level of participant according to CEFR standards by providing an interactive level of difficulty in questions. Lastly, flexible setting, automatically marking instant results, British or American English selection, electronic result tables are the other benefits of Oxford Online Placement Test. "The Use of English Section is designed to measure how much learners know about grammatical forms and the meanings that these forms encode. It also measures the extent to which learners can use these language resources to communicate in English language situations." (Purpura, Web). There are various questions in the test, measuring the knowledge of literal meaning, intended meaning and implied meaning. Therefore, this test can be considered as one of the best options for applying in this research with the purpose of the ultimate possible compatibility of current Semantic Prosody Test.

As the Oxford Online Placement Test was a pre-paid test, the supervisor and the researcher of this thesis bought the tests for both student groups to apply in different years. Although the study seemed a little costly, this test was believed to increase the validity of the whole research since its reliable testing quality which examines reading, vocabulary, listening, writing and grammar skills. Therefore, it had some distinctions from the similar studies done in this field such as Ahmadian, Yazdani and Darabi (2011), and Nevisi, Hosseinpur and Darvish (2018) that used Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP) as the instrument. Although MTELP is a universally well-known and accepted test, it has some limitations as of evaluating only by fixed multiple choice paperback questions. On the other hand, OOPT is an online interactive test which provides the participants with evaluative difficulty level questions. For example, when the participants answer some questions correctly in a row, the difficulty level of questions increases interactively, and vice-versa.

Tests were carried out online within the guidance of researchers in computer classrooms of the university. After all the participants complete their test, the results were automatically given in an excel table on the administrative interface of Oxford Online Placement Test platform (www.oxforenglishtesting.com). Moreover, the results of the test were automatically sent to the

participants via e-mail. These results were transferred to the statistical data analysis tool, SPSS, to make the relevant calculations such as Pearson Correlational Analysis. As the scores of the participants were calculated for the Common European Framework and Oxford Scoring (out of 120 points), the scores were normalized to 100 for an easier data analysis in the future steps of the research. The normalization was done manually by multiplying the Oxford Score with 100 and then dividing the result to 120. For example, 72 (Raw OOPT Score) x 100 / 120 = 60 (normalized OOPT score).

Figure 1: ELL students while taking Oxford Online Placement Test in Computer Lab

(See Appendix 2 for more images)

3.4.2. Semantic Prosody Test

Semantic Prosody Test used in this study was combined from various previous studies in this field. With a detailed research in the literature, various studies about semantic prosody were selected, their target words, test contents and the words mentioned as problematic were collected. The correctness of these collocates in the test was also checked by corpus tools. Louw (1993: 157) stated that "analyses of the semantic prosodies related to certain words are not commonly reachable by the humans' instinct, they can only be known computationally through its accurate computational methods". Considering the native speakers' discourse the "standard", the collocations were controlled by corpora of native speakers' academic writings by Sketch Engine tools.

The semantic prosody test used in this thesis has 80 questions in total. The keywords and collocational sets in each question were combined by the most problematic and challenging words as reported in previous studies (Sinclair, 1991; Louw, 1993; Stubbs, 1995a; Partington, 1998; Hunston, 2002). Some of the sentences were directly taken by those sources and some of the semantic sets were replaced with recently invented sentences. A similar test named Vocabulary Choice Appropriateness Test (Mansoory and Jafarpour, 2014) was also used for contribution to the current test. As the maximum score was 80, the scores of the participants were normalized to 100 for the easier comparison and calculation. Like the Oxford Online Placement Test, the results were multiplied to 100 and it was divided to 80. Thus, the normalized scores of both tests were obtained. For example, 40 (raw SP score) x 100 / 80 = 50 (normalized SP score).

The questions in the Semantic Prosody Test were designed in a strict criterion with gap filling method with multiple choices. Four choices were given in the answer section (A, B, C, D). Choice A and B are always near-synonym words in each question. Choice C refers to both A and B meaning that both near-synonym words can be used in the context of question. Choice D is the selection of "I am not sure". Question 15 is given as example below. For more questions, see Appendix 1.

Q: The fifth was a very ……… man.
   a. tall
   b. high
   c. both 'tall' and 'high'
   d. I am not sure.

As seen in the sample question and answer section, the participant is supposed to fill in the blank with one of the answers. A refers to "only *tall* is subsequent", B refers to "only *high* is subsequent", C refers to "both *tall* and *high* are subsequent" and D refers to "I am not sure about the answer" that the participant is not aware of the difference or similarity between the near-synonyms given in the question. It is realized that some learners skipped a few questions with giving any answers, those questions were considered as chosen the last answer "I am not sure".

3.4.2.1. Validity and Reliability, and Piloting of Semantic Prosody Test

While compiling the Semantic Prosody Test of the current study, as mentioned in the previous section, the questions were collected from different Semantic Prosody Tests and frequently researched structures. It was also strictly paid attention to the reliability of the tests benefited. For example, Ahmadian, Yazdani and Darabi (2011), whose study helped a lot to design the current study, run *Kuder-Richardson formula (KR-21)* which is thought as the best method to find out the consistency of any test (Brown, 2004; Best and Kahn, 2006). Besides, they applied

some more measurements which are *Internal Consistency* and *Concurrent Validity*, for proving the reliability of the test. The results showed that the test relatively fulfils the criterion of concurrent validity (Ahmadian Yazdani and Darabi, 2011: 292).

The reason for compiling a new semantic prosody test rather than using the available ones in the literature was the fact that the researchers found some limitations such as having less number of questions in the tests, and they predicted that the questions may not be challenging and evaluative for the level of target participants. Therefore, a new semantic prosody test was designed by developing the current ones. The questions were categorized, ordered and the varied to 80 questions as seen in Appendix 1. As a new test was designed, it required piloting for its reliability and validity. Piloting was carried out with 10 Turkish ELL students with the same level of English as the participants of this study had. According to the results of piloting, it was observed that the learners showed a balanced success in the test as expected. While the questions taken from previous studies were easier for the learners, new questions were more challenging, that is, distinctive and selective for their semantic prosodic knowledge levels. In addition, Split-Half reliability method was applied to the test to increase its validity and reliability evidence as given in Table 2 and Table 3 in the following section.

On the other hand, compatibility of Semantic Prosody Test and the Oxford Online Placement Test shows a comparatively functional mean values as seen in Table 2 and Table 3 for manual interpretation of the data; however, the compatibility of the tests is not a determinant factor since the nature of Semantic Prosody Test has not the top limit or strict levels as the Oxford Online Placement Test has. For this reason, the comparisons and calculations were made by the SPSS Statistical Data Analysis Tool. The correlational analysis was calculated with the individual scores of each student rather than comparing the total mean values. Therefore, the findings of the data gave more valid and reliable results to the research.

3.4.3. SPSS Statistical Data Analysis Tool

The data analysis part is the most challenging process of this study. As this is an academic, therefore, scientific research, qualitative data is not always enough for proving the thesis. As already mentioned in the statement of the problem, the starting point of this research is the teacher inclinations and intuitions which are only orally told by them. Moreover, the data collected from the students cannot be possibly analysed manually. For this reason, some statistical analysis software is used for data analysis. On the other hand, this statistical analysis software was used to calculate the reliability of the Semantic Prosody Test. Correlation of the test questions was calculated after a manual split-half method which is not easy to calculate manually. The tool used in the present study was IBM SPSS Statistics, version 26, which was released in 2019.

3.4.3.1. Pearson Correlation Analysis

In order to find out the best answers to the related research questions, various analyses were done in this thesis. One of them was Pearson Correlation Analysis which was used for finding the answer of the Research Question 2, whether there was a correlation between the semantic prosodic awareness and English proficiency levels of Turkish ELL students, or not. Therefore, the researcher used SPSS Statistical Data Analysis Tool and its function, Pearson Correlation Analysis in order to calculate the statistics. Result of the analysis was given in Results and Discussion section below.

Possibly, the best way to find out whether there is a relationship between two variables is to calculate correlation values. Correlation is the relation between two variables in pair. Correlation values change between zero and one with the minus (negative) or plus (positive) values so that the values are always between -1 and +1. When the correlation value is close to -1 or +1, it means that the variables are correlated to each other negatively or positively. The correlation value is represented by 'r'. The significance level of the correlation is automatically shown by the analysis tools with (*) symbol in the results table.

3.4.3.2. Split-Half Reliability

Even though the questions were collected from already used tests which were designed with strict and reliable design criteria, a new calculation for the current compiled test was a must. As there are 80 questions in the Semantic Prosody Test, the split-half method can be considered as suitable for proving its reliability. For an easier calculation and comparison, a manual split-half method was used by defining the scores of first and last forty answers of students in semantic prosody test. Then, their mean values and correlations were calculated by SPSS Statistical Analysis Tool.

Table 3: Split-Half Mean Statistics for Reliability of Semantic Prosody Test

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
FIRST 40 ANSWERS	16.9739	3.99223	115
LAST 40 ANSWERS	14.7043	4.03488	115

Table 3 shows the mean values and standard deviations of the correct answers given by the participants to the first forty and the last forty questions of the semantic prosody test. The mean values look quite similar to each other; thus, it can be intuitively inferred that the test seems reliable in itself. The participants of the test correctly answered more or less the same amount of questions both in the first part and the last part of the test. It shows that the difficulty level of questions is similarly distributed in the whole test. For a statistical analysis for scientifically proving it, a

correlational analysis was done with the SPSS Statistical Data Analysis Tool as presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Split-Half Reliability and Correlation Statistics of Semantic Prosody Test

Correlations			
		FIRST 40 ANSWERS	LAST 40 ANSWERS
	Pearson Correlation	1	.510[**]
FIRST 40 ANSWERS	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	115	115
	Pearson Correlation	.510[**]	1
LAST 40 ANSWERS	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	115	115

[**]. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows the correlational analysis of split-half data of the semantic prosody test to prove its reliability. According to the results, the correlation of both parts of the split is significant at the level of 0.01. Therefore, the test could be used within the aim of this research. As stated in both Table 3 and Table 4, there is a balanced distribution of the questions and their difficulty levels. The significant correlation also means that the learners faced with a fairly distributed difficulty of questions when they first started the test and through the end of the test, so that the difficulty level does not increase once the learners pass to the following questions, on contrary, the difficulty level keeps similar.

3.5. Qualitative Research Method

To enrich the results of the study and to find possible answers to the related research questions, qualitative data analysis is an absolute must in this study. This method will help to understand and find out the hidden concepts, possible reasons, and results which the researcher is unable to discover and interpret himself. The collected qualitative data provides first-hand information for the analysis.

3.5.1. Open-Ended Questionnaire

At the end of the Oxford Online Placement Test and the Semantic Prosody Test, the participants were asked to answer a few open-ended questions for the purpose of collecting qualitative data in order to investigate the attitudes and experiences of the participants towards semantic prosody and collocations. The questionnaire was designed in order to collect qualitative data related to the research questions and the conclusion part of the study. The open-ended questionnaire questions are given below.

"In general, how did you decide correct word while filling in the blanks?"

"What were the challenges you had while choosing the correct word?"

"How did you find the differences between near-synonym words in the test?"

"How did you decide which word is correct between the near synonyms in each question?"

"What was your criteria while deciding between near synonyms in writing or translation before?"

"How do you decide between near synonyms in writing or translation in general?"

"How were you deciding between near synonym words in high school?"

"Do you think it is necessary to decide while choosing between near synonym words?"

"What do you think to do for learning the differences between near synonym words?"

"Have you ever heard of the term 'Semantic Prosody'? When and where?"

"To what extend this Semantic Prosody Test created awareness for you? Explain briefly."

"... numbers were chosen among your correct answers in the SP Test. How did you decide these answers were correct while solving the test? Please, summarize."

This questionnaire provided us with a lot of data for discovering the potentials of Turkish ELL students towards semantic prosody, the reasons whether they have problems with semantic prosody and their opinions about studying semantic prosody. The questions were designed with the aim of finding possible answers to related research questions, and of reaching logical conclusions to the study. The data collection was done in the classroom via open-ended questionnaire by asking them to write their opinions about the questions given in the questionnaire. The participants were free to answer the questions in Turkish or English languages. Thus, they felt more relaxed and motivated while expressing their actual thoughts. On the other hand, making the questionnaire in written method provided the participants with a comfortable environment as they had time to think about the answers before writing. After the questionnaire, the researcher translated the answers given in Turkish into English with a special attention to convey the same message as in original.

In the data analysis section, questionnaire answers were organised and classified within the order of importance and relation to each other. Then, the answers were classified in categories with keywords such as 'context', 'proficiency', 'intuitions' etc. For example, "*Proficiency: My English was not enough for differentiate between the near-synonyms.*". The reason for categorizing the answers in keywords was to present understandable graphics and to ease the interpretation of the results. Moreover, the results in this way provided a clear data for both the researcher and the readers.

3.5.2. Structured Interview

After the collection and processing the data collected by the Oxford Online Placement Test, the Semantic Prosody Test and the Open-Ended Questionnaire, the findings showed that there were

some exceptional cases in the data when comparing the two tests to evaluate their correlation levels. Ten participants out of one hundred fifteen presented inverse proportional scores in their tests. First group of participants are the three ELL students (P15, P54 and P115), and the second group of participants are the seven ELL students (P7, P35, P44, P61, S62, P68 and P73). Their detailed information was given in Table 8 and Table 13 in the following section. Group 1 had higher scores in their proficiency levels while they had lower scores in their semantic prosody levels. Group 2 had higher scores in their semantic prosody levels while they had lower scores in their proficiency levels. The exceptional cases were selected in accordance with the range of their scores in the tests. The range of the scores showed unusual distance comparing to the rest of participants.

In order to investigate the reasons and effective factors of these exceptional cases, a structured interview was designed for those participants. The structured interview provides the participants with a set of pre-prepared questions before the meeting. Some of the participants were interviewed face to face while some others were interviewed through phone and e-mail. As there are two groups of exceptional cases, two sets of questions were asked during the interview. The structured interview questions of both groups were given below:

- Can you tell me about the reasons why your OOPT score is high while your SPT score is low? (Group 1)

- Can you tell me about the reasons why your SPT score is high while your OOPT score is low? (Group 2)

- Do you think there is a relationship with language proficiency level and semantic prosody level? (Group 1-2)

- Did you have any experience in past in order to gain awareness about semantic prosody of collocations? (Group 1-2)

- How was the decision process while answering the questions in SPT? (Group 1-2)

CHAPTER FOUR

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Data Analysis

In this chapter of the study, the data collected from the participants were analysed with the aim of finding possible answers to the related research questions. Firstly, quantitative data were analysed to reveal the awareness levels of Turkish ELL students as EFL learners, and to give detailed information about their semantic prosodic knowledge and English proficiency levels. As mentioned in the methodology part, the correlational analysis was done, related to the research questions. Secondly, the qualitative data were analysed in order to find out the real intentions and attitudes of the learners towards semantic prosody, within the concept of related research questions.

4.1.1. Quantitative Data Analysis

In this part, the qualitative data, collected from Turkish ELL students by the Oxford Online Placement Test and the Semantic Prosody Test, will be analysed accordingly and connectedly. Here, finding possible answers to the research question 1, the general awareness levels of the learners was supposed. On the other hand, Table 5 given blow, provided background information about the participants' situations for the following research questions and data analyses.

Table 5: English Proficiency Scores and Semantic Prosody Scores of the ELL students

Number of Participants	115 (from P1 to P115)
Genders	75 Females, 40 Males
English Proficiency Levels in CEFR	A1 (Elementary) to C1 (Advanced)
Average of English Proficiency Scores	38,37 / 100
Average of Semantic Prosody Scores	39,69 / 100

(See Appendix 3 for the individual scores)

Table 5 shows the ID, gender, CEFR grade, English proficiency level and semantic prosodic knowledge levels of Turkish ELL students who participated in the current study. By considering this information, the following analyses were carried out. According to Table 5, there are 115 participants consisting of 75 females and 40 males. The proficiency levels of the participants vary from A1 to C1. In addition, their Oxford Online Placement Test scores vary from 8 to 64 with the

average of 38,37, and their Semantic Prosody Test scores vary from 21 to 59 with the average of 39,69. According to the results, the average numbers of all students' English proficiency levels and semantic prosodic levels are quite similar. One can claim by the manual calculations that the results of both tests may be correlated to each other on average. Both of the scores were calculated with the minimum score of zero (0) and maximum score of one hundred (100). The results of individual statistical analysis of each participant are given in Table 6 below. When looking at the individual scores of the participants, English proficiency levels and semantic prosodic knowledge seem balanced; however, there are few exceptions, for example, P61 and P62 have lower English proficiency levels (18 and 8 in order) than their semantic prosodic knowledge (43 and 33 in order). These exceptional cases were additionally investigated at the end of the research.

Figure 2: English Proficiency Levels of the Participants
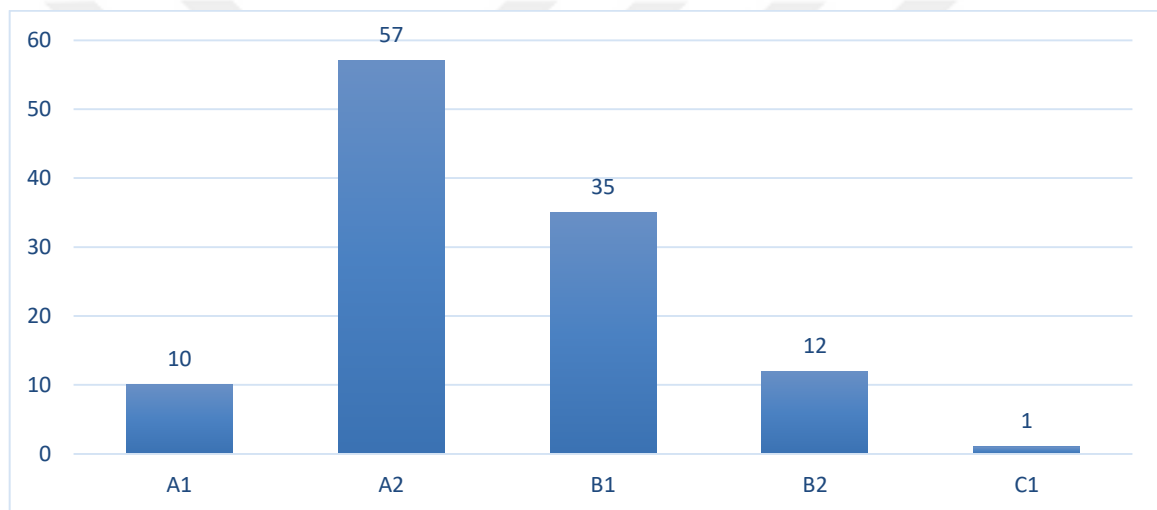
Figure 2 shows the English proficiency level distribution with the scale of CEFR (Common European Framework). The distribution of English proficiency level is that there are 10 elementary level (A1) learners, 57 pre-intermediate level (A2) learners, 35 intermediate level (B1) learners, 12 upper-intermediate level (B2) learners and 1 advanced level (C1) learner as seen in the figure. According to the table, most of the learners (n: 92/115) have pre-intermediate and intermediate levels on average, as 80% of the learners. This distribution seems quite reliable for the purpose of this study. Having 80% of the participants in similar levels provides a consistent sampling group; furthermore, the variety of other levels (even 20%) would balance the standard deviations and distributions. On the other hand, this distribution also provided some inverse proportion within the scores of some participants. For example, while some learners have higher level of English proficiency, they have lower level of semantic prosodic awareness (i.e. P15, P54, P115) or vice-versa (i.e. P7, P35, P44, P61, P62, P68, P73). Those learners as exceptional cases with inverse proportion scores were additionally interviewed and investigated at the end of the research.

Even though English proficiency levels of the participants were given within CEFR as in Figure 2, it was not possible to give a similar figure for their semantic prosodic knowledge since it had no commonly accepted assessment and scale in the literature. Therefore, the correlational analysis was carried out by the individual semantic prosody knowledge scores and their higher and lower positions within itself. The same method was applied to the use of English scores of the learners, then the both scores were compared and analysed by the statistical data analysis tool as in Table 6. Besides the statistical data, Figure 3 presents a manually prepared visualization of the correlational values. Thus, the values can be well-understood and interpreted in the data analysis process.

Figure 3: Distribution of English Proficiency Scores and Semantic Prosody Scores of the Participants
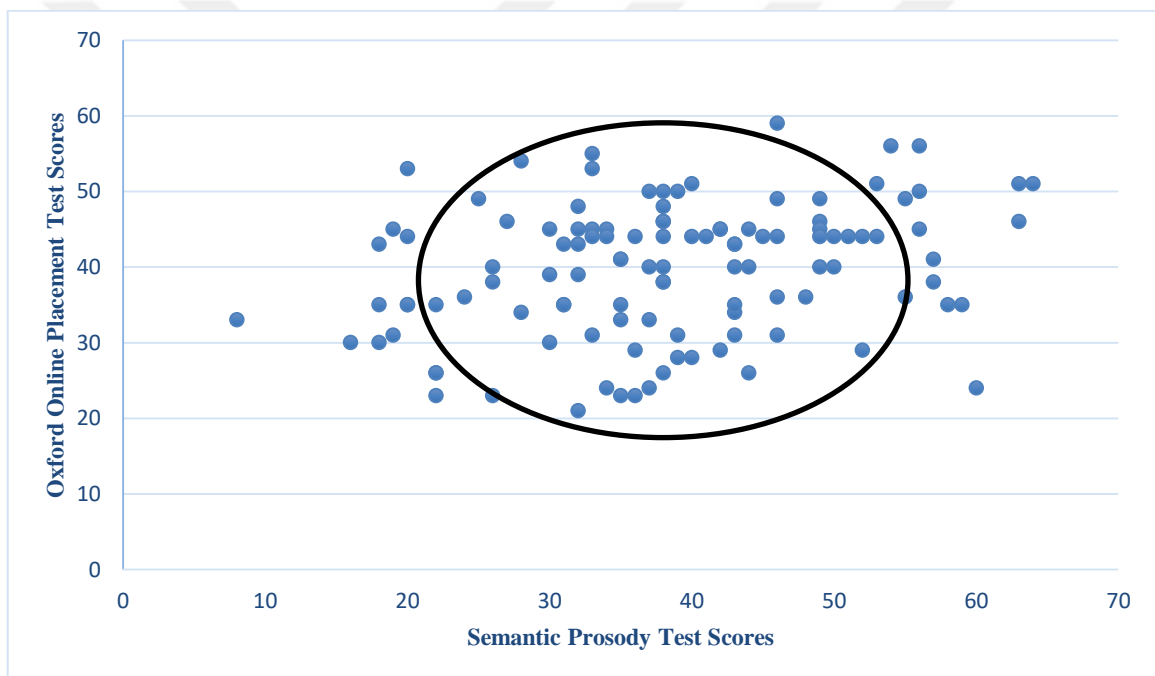
Figure 3 shows the distribution of each participant's individual junction point on the scatter plot. The dots represent the cross points of both vertical and horizontal directions referring to the Oxford Online Placement Test scores and Semantic Prosody Test scores of each participant. According to the figure, values are central to the middle of the chart as gathered in the ellipsis (mostly gathered between the values, 20 and 60 in both directions), which means that English proficiency levels and semantic prosody knowledge of the learners might be considered as correlated individually. It is also statistically calculated with SPSS Statistical Data Analysis Tool's Pearson Correlation Analysis function in Table 6.

In order to reach statistically valuable and trustworthy findings, Pearson Correlation Analysis was done by SPSS Statistical Data Analysis Tool. This method provided the individual

comparisons of semantic prosody scores and use of English scores of each participant. Then, the ratios were calculated within total average, finally, the analysis presented the statistical correlation values of two tests. The results of this calculations automatically provided information about the proportional significance levels with the symbol of stars (**). In addition, the result of the statistical data analysis automatically indicated whether the variables were significantly correlated or not by providing an explanatory statement below the table (**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, 2-tailed).

Table 6: Correlation Statistics between English Proficiency Scores and Semantic Prosody Test Scores of the Participants

Correlations		ENGLISH PROFICIENCY	SEMANTIC AWARENESS
USE OF ENGLISH	Pearson Correlation	1	.268**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004
	N	115	115
SEMANTIC AWARENESS	Pearson Correlation	.268**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	
	N	115	115

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on the statistical analysis given in Table 6 above, the result shows a significant correlation between students' English proficiency and semantic awareness levels. As seen in the Sig. (2-tailed) results, the value is 0.004 which is a vast scale of closer to 0 ($p<0.005$); therefore, the calculations give ** 0.01 level statistically significant correlation. The number of inputs is the same on both sides as N=115, which represents the number of students who participated in the research. The calculations made on IBM SPSS Statistics Data Analysis software. To find the correlation values of two tests, 2-tailed Pearson Correlation calculations were done in the analysis.

The fact that there is a statistically significant relationship between learners' English proficiency levels and their semantic prosodic knowledge levels means that when English proficiency level of an EFL learner increases, his/her semantic prosodic knowledge or awareness increases too so that these levels are correlated to each other. Furthermore, this correlation can possibly be considered that the semantic prosody level is related to the English proficiency level; however, there is no tangible data regarding this issue. The statistical analysis calculation in Table 6 is reliable and valid because the statistical analysis tool calculates the scores of each learner one by one instead of comparing only the total average point. Semantic prosody test scores and Oxford Online Placement Test scores of 115 Turkish ELL students were calculated with individual comparison, then the significant 1 / 0.268** Pearson Correlation values were found. Although McGee (2012) could not find any direct correlation between semantic prosodic awareness and

language levels of EFL learners, this current research showed a direct correlation between these variables. Thus, the research question 2 was answered with this limited size of sampling.

This analysis shows that semantic prosodic awareness levels of EFL learners increases or decreases, within direct proportion, with their English proficiency levels. Considering the proficiency level of a language covers reading, listening, writing and grammatical competence as evaluated in the Oxford Online Placement Test, semantic prosodic awareness is gained through all these language skills consciously or not. As mentioned in the literature review part above, semantic prosody should be learnt for better comprehension or expression in the use of language. It can be suggested here that semantic prosody can be a subject to teach or at least to create awareness in language classes to speed up the learning process and enrich the communicative skills.

4.1.2. Qualitative Data Analysis

In this section, the students were evaluated according to their answers to the questionnaire questions. These questions aimed to find out the awareness, methods, and ideas about students' use of semantic prosody and vocabulary choice, their challenges if there are, and the factors affecting their semantic prosodic knowledge. The participants' strategies are given in keywords in the figures and tables. Although 115 ELL students participated in the study, some students stated more than one method, and some students skipped some of the questions. Therefore, instead of discussing the raw frequencies of the methods, discussing the percentages of the methods gives more reliable output to the findings. In addition, some sample answers are given in below each figure to enhance the clarity and to help the interpretation of the data.

Table 7: The Open-Ended Questionnaire

1	In general, how did you decide correct word while filling in the blanks? Summarize the process.
2	What were the challenges you had while choosing the correct word?
3	How did you decide the differences between near-synonym words in the test?
4	How did you decide which word is correct between the near synonyms in each question?
5	What was your criteria while deciding between near synonyms in writing or translation before?
6	How do you decide between near synonyms in writing or translation in general?
7	How were you deciding between near-synonym words in high school?
8	Do you think it is necessary to decide while choosing between near-synonym words?
9	What do you think to do for learning the differences between near-synonym words?
10	Have you ever heard of the term 'Semantic Prosody'? When and where?
11	To what extend this Semantic Prosody Test created awareness for you? Explain briefly.
12	Explain how you decided some specific answers which were chosen from the correct answers in Semantic Prosody Test.

The questions were given one by one in order, and the classified answers were presented in pie charts for better understanding and interpreting within graphics. Each chart was analysed and interpreted, and their sample answers, given by the participants, were presented. These questions aimed to find out potential answers to the related research questions.

Q1: In general, how did you decide correct word while filling in the blanks? Summarize the process.

Figure 4: Distribution Chart of Answers to Question 1
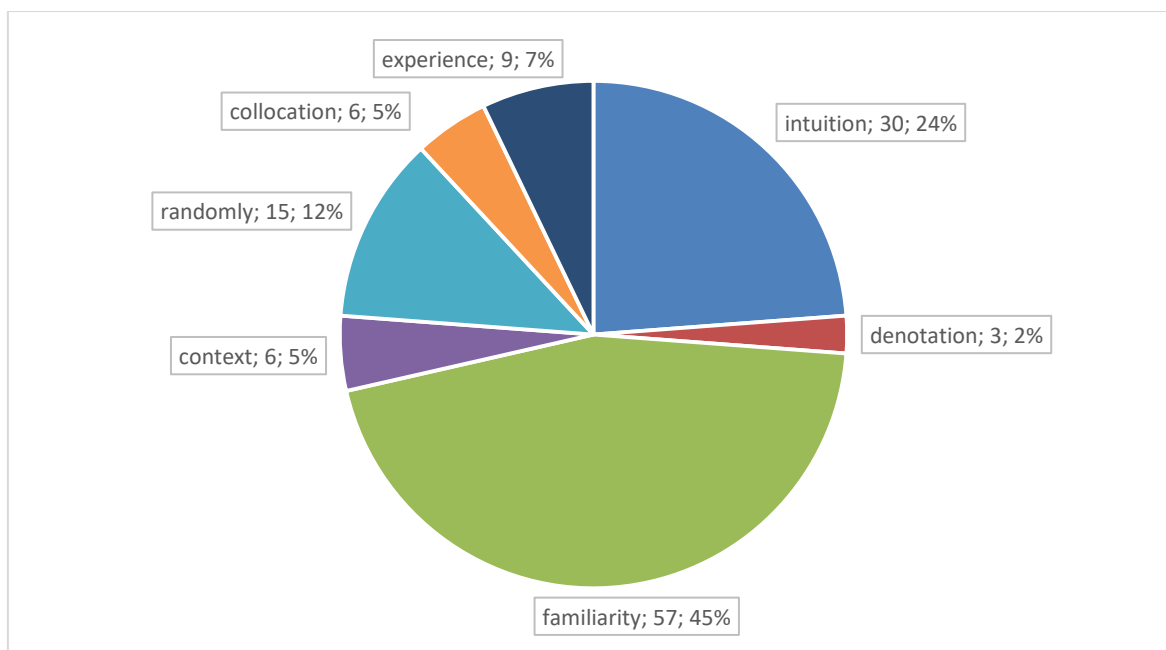
According to the chart, most of the students stated that they choose the most familiar words (45%) and used their intuitions (24%) while choosing between the synonyms in the semantic prosody test. The students who decide the words by paying attention to contextual meaning (5%) and the collocations (5%) are the minority of the groups. Contextual meaning awareness and checking collocations are the methods which were supposed to be chosen within the framework of semantic prosody concept. On the other hand, some students stated that they randomly (12%) chose the words without thinking any nuance between synonyms. Last minor groups are the ones who used their experiences (7%) and the ones who decided according to the denotations (2%) that they only knew the meaning of one word in the synonym pairs.

Familiarity : *I chose the best ones which sound familiar.*
             : *I chose the ones I am familiar with.*
Intuition   : *I chose the logical ones.*
             : *I tried to read the sentences by filling the words in. I chose the suitable ones.*

Randomly	*: For me, they are all synonyms so that I chose most of them randomly.*
	: I chose randomly, I did not think a lot.
Experience	*: I tried to choose according to my daily language.*
	: I chose with previous experiences since the beginning of my English learning process.
Context	*: I chose the words with their meaning in the sentence.*
	: I chose them according to their functional meaning.
Collocation	*: I chose according to the fluency and collocates of the words in the sentences.*
	: I chose them with the words used together.
Denotation	*: I chose by thinking about the first meaning of word.*
	: I chose them as they are shown in dictionaries.

The students mostly highlighted the strategy of choosing familiar words such as the ones they had seen or heard of them in past. Although they knew the meaning of both words in each question, they prefer choosing the one of the near-synonyms that they believed to remember from their educational or social backgrounds (i.e. classroom or internet sources). In addition, the students tend to use their intuitions to choose between the near-synonyms as the native speakers do which is also argued by Hunston (2002) as a problematic issue that may cause confusion in communication and decrease the level of intelligibility. Finally, random word-choice was another strategy for the ELL students when they cannot decide between the near-synonyms. This strategy seems much more problematic when comparing to intuitional selection by the students.

Q2: What were the challenges you had while choosing the correct word?

Figure 5: Distribution Chart of Answers to Question 2

vocabulary; 12; 13%
proficiency; 21; 22%
collocations; 6; 6%
nothing; 3; 3%
similarity; 54; 56%
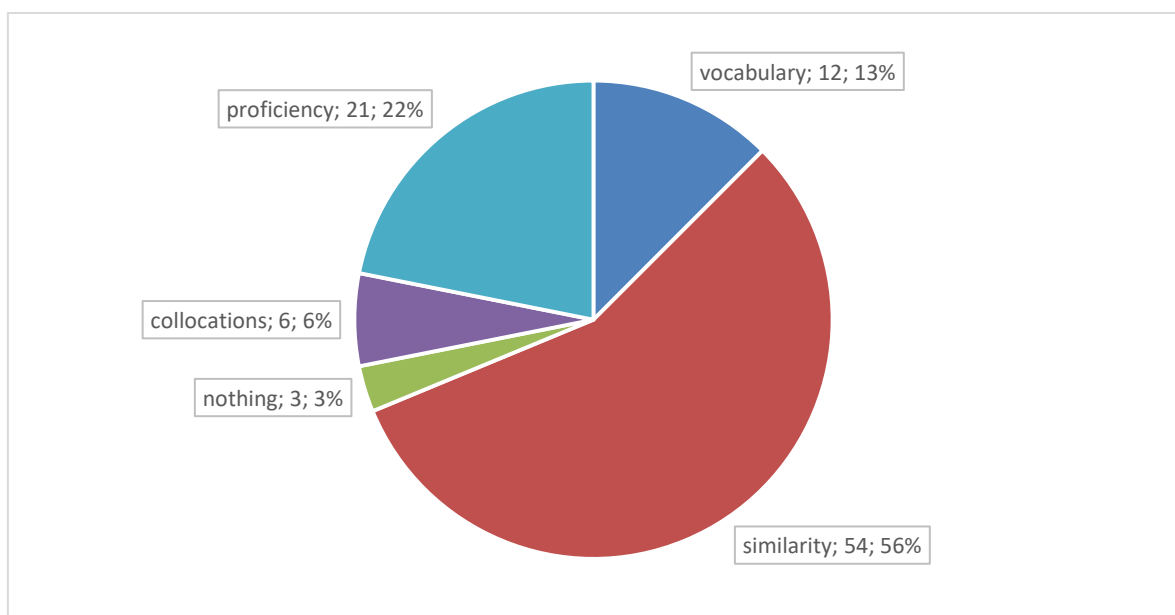
According to the chart, the majority of the students (56%) stated their challenges as the similarity of near-synonym words that it was the supposed result of the question. The second and third group of challenges are English proficiency (22%) and vocabulary knowledge (13%) of the students. They stated their English levels are not adequate to make a powerful decision between near-synonym words in some questions. Another challenge which was stated by the students was the collocational knowledge (6%) that they were aware that they were supposed to pay attention to collocations while deciding between the near-synonyms; however, their collocational knowledge was not enough to make the choices. A minor group of students stated that they had no challenges (3%) in the semantic prosody test. However, this minor group did not consist of the students with the highest grades, probably they unconsciously thought they had answered most of the questions correctly with their intuitions.

Similarity : *Synonyms were challenging because I feel they were all suitable for the sentences.*

: *It was challenging because of near synonymity.*

Proficiency : *My English was not enough for differentiate between synonyms.*

: *Some sentences were difficult to understand.*

Vocabulary : *I did not know the meaning of some words.*

: *I have not even heard of some words.*

Collocations : *It was challenging because I forgot collocational structures.*

: *I could not relate the words to the ones nearby.*

Nothing : *It was not challenging at all.*

: *For me, it was very easy.*

Majority of the students, within a humble tone, complained about the similarity of near-synonyms. They said that they hardly found the nuances between the words given in the options as they felt the words were completely same and suitable in all contexts. On the other hand, some students revealed that their proficiency levels were not enough to comprehend all the sentences and the use of words in the Semantic Prosody Test. The vocabulary was also one of the challenges to some students as they stated the did not know the meanings of some words.

Q3: How did you decide the differences between near-synonym words in the test?

Figure 6: Distribution Chart of Answers to Question 3
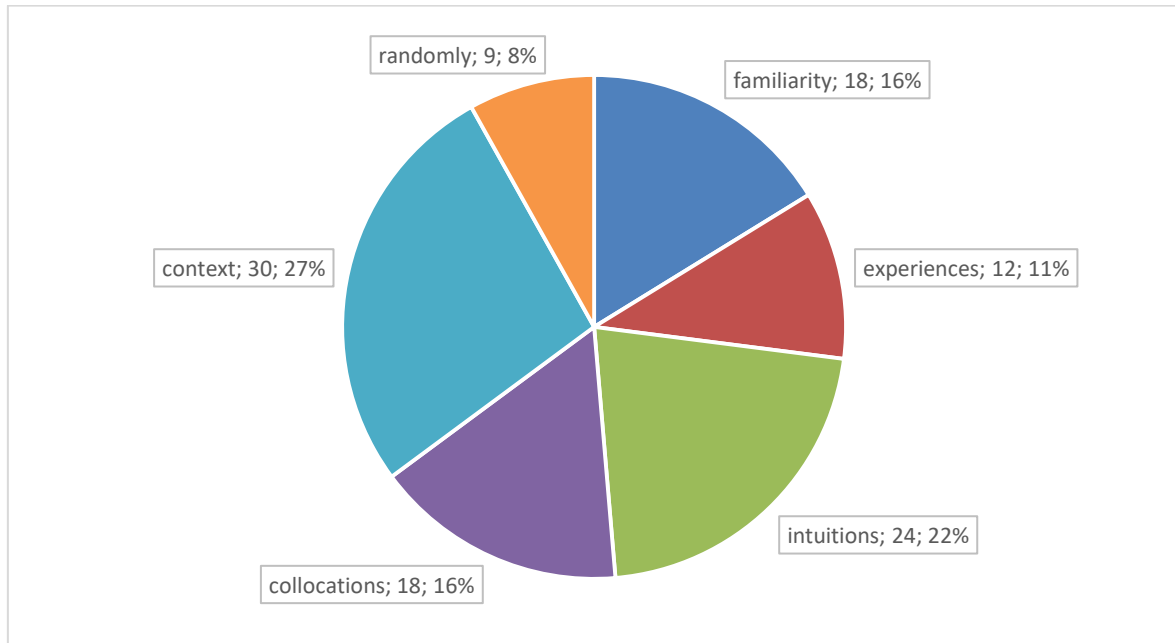
However, this question seems like the first question, this one especially asked the students about the near-synonym decisions rather than general process. In contrast to other charts, there seems a balanced distribution in this chart, still, there are some differences in the number of groups. Majority of the students stated that they paid attention to the context of the sentences (27%) while filling in the blanks by deciding between near-synonym words. The second frequent answer was the intuitions of the students (22%) as supposed. Third frequent answers were the familiarity of the target words (16%) as they commonly saw or heard and collocational awareness (16%) of the students. Another answer was the experiences of the students (11%) as they already used those target words in context. And the least frequent answer was the random choice (8%) of the students that they had no conscious intention while deciding.

Context	*: I remember the contexts of some words.*
	: I decided with my contextual knowledge of words.
Intuitions	*: I chose the logical ones.*
	: I filled the words in the blanks by deciding.
Collocations	*: I remembered the collocational patterns.*
	: I paid attention to the collocates before and after the blanks.
Familiarity	*: I choose the ones which sound familiar to me.*
	: I chose the ones which make some associations.

Experience	*: I already saw the words somewhere. I frequently use synonyms in my writings.*
	: I used my knowledge and previous experiences in my reading and listening.
Randomly	*: I could not decide. I chose them randomly.*
	: I chose synonyms randomly.

The general decision process of the differences between the near-synonyms in the test emerged various strategies by the students. When the students read a question and the options for the blank, they realized they had to make a choice between the near-synonyms. Some students preferred checking the contextual meaning of the sentences and the connotation of words, some students used their intuitions as felt which answer was correct for them, some students tried to find collocations of the options in the sentences, while some students tried to remember the words which they were familiar. Past experiences and random choices were also used as strategies in this process. It can be inferred that there was a fairly balanced distribution in the strategies used in this process.

Q4: How did you decide which word is correct between the near synonyms in each question?

Figure 7: Distribution Chart of Answers to Question 4
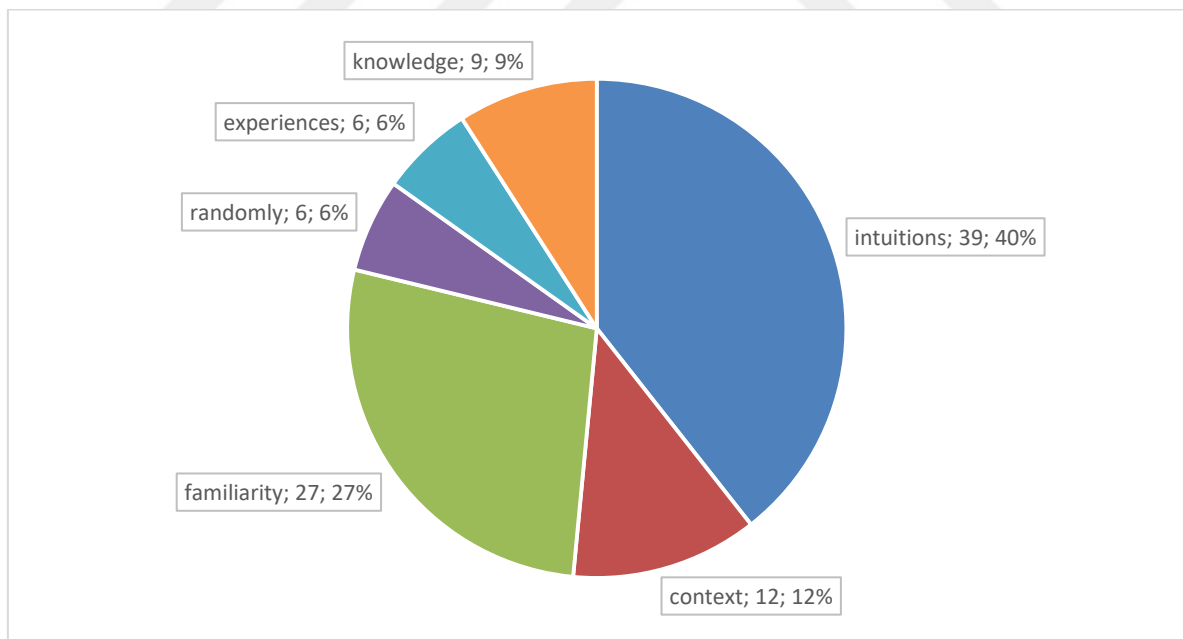
This question also seems quite similar to the previous one, yet, it asks students about each question individually in order to get various answers if they used more than one method while deciding. According to the answers they gave, majority of students stated that they use their intuitions (40%) and their familiarity (27%) to the given vocabulary. Rest of the answers presented

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that contextual meaning (12%), and language proficiency and knowledge (9%) helped students while deciding between near-synonyms. Lastly, 12% (6+6) of the students stated that they tend to choose near-synonyms randomly and through their previous experiences.

Intuitions	*: I used my prediction and intuition.*
	: I decided which word sounded better in the sentence.
Familiarity	*: I decided which word sounded familiar.*
	: I chose frequently used words.
Context	*: I thought about the contextual meaning of the words.*
	: I decided according to the context of the sentences.
Knowledge	*: I read all the words one by one. I used my previous knowledge.*
	: I knew the usage of the words.
Randomly	*: I chose the words randomly.*
	: I chose synonyms randomly.
Experience	*: I choose the words as I saw before.*
	: I used my experiences in previous studies.

When the students consider the questions individually, they stated that they mostly used their intuitions and predictions while choosing the correct answers in the test. On the other hand, familiarity to the given vocabulary was an effective factor for some students to choose between the near-synonyms. Still, these strategies seem unsatisfactory for an EFL learner to make decisions. In fact, they were expected to pay more attention to contextual meanings and collocations.

Q5: What was your criteria while deciding between near synonyms in writing or translation before?

Figure 8: Distribution Chart of Answers to Question 5
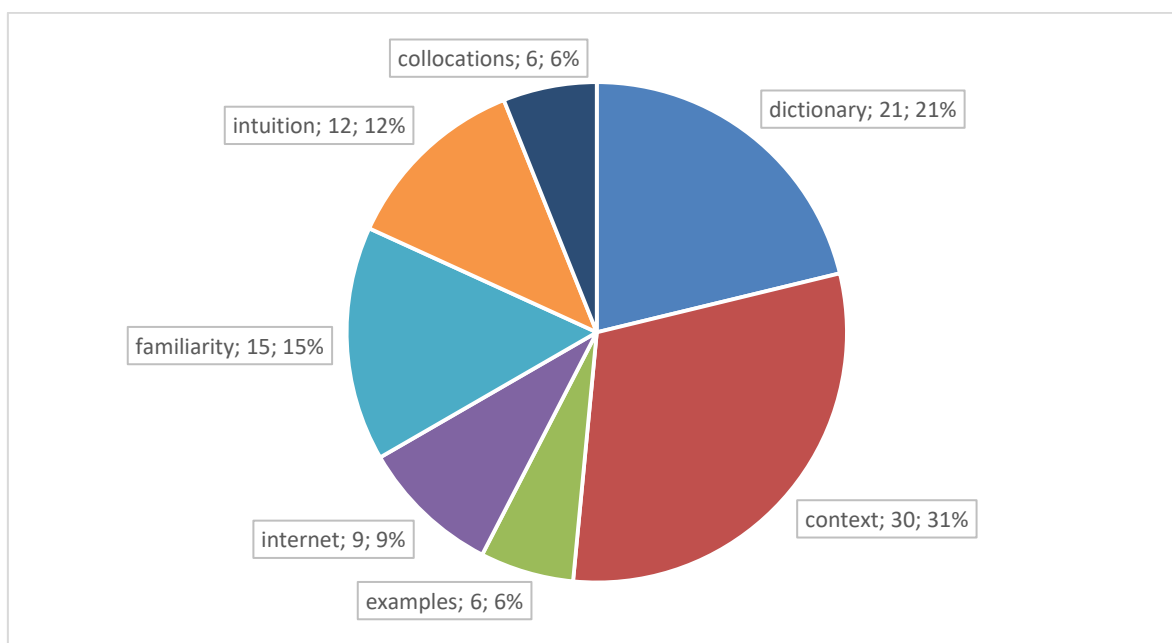
In this question, students' experiences and criteria while deciding between near-synonyms were asked. Figure 8 shows that a great number of students pay attention to the context (31%) as in question four. Then 21% of the students prefer using dictionaries to learn the actual usages. Followingly, students stated that familiarity (15%) was a criteria for them. Similarly, their intuitions (12%) is also a criterion for deciding between near-synonyms. Rest of the answers follow as internet sources (9%), example sentences (6%) and collocations (6%).

Context	*: It depends on the context; some words are more formal.*
	: I check the contextual meaning of words before using.
Dictionary	*: I use English-English dictionary to find the correct usage of a word.*
	: I decided by checking the common and other usages in the dictionaries.
Familiarity	*: I choose vocabulary according to frequently used ones.*
	: I choose the words which sound familiar.
Intuitions	*: I choose the most fluent in context.*
	: I pay attention that the word should be clearly understandable in the sentence.
Internet	*: I use internet for vocabulary choice when I do not know the usage.*
	: I use internet for vocabulary choice.
Examples	*: I check dictionary and sample sentences.*
	: I find example sentences with those synonyms.

Collocations : *I choose vocabulary according to the collocates before and after.*

           : *I pay attention to collocations and word combinations while choosing vocabulary.*

When the students were asked to explain their experiences about synonymous word-choices in their writings and translations before, they stated that they had mostly paid attention to the contextual meaning what they produce. Some students, on the other hand, preferred checking dictionaries as not to take risk; however, they still might have done mistakes if they check the dictionary deliberately since some dictionaries may not give adequate examples if they are not corpus-based. Moreover, some students also stated that they used familiar words as they frequently use, and some of them used intuitions in word-choice. There were some other less preferred strategies by the students such as internet sources, examples in coursebooks, and collocational harmony of words.

Q6: How do you decide between near synonyms in writing or translation in general?

Figure 9: Distribution Chart of Answers to Question 6
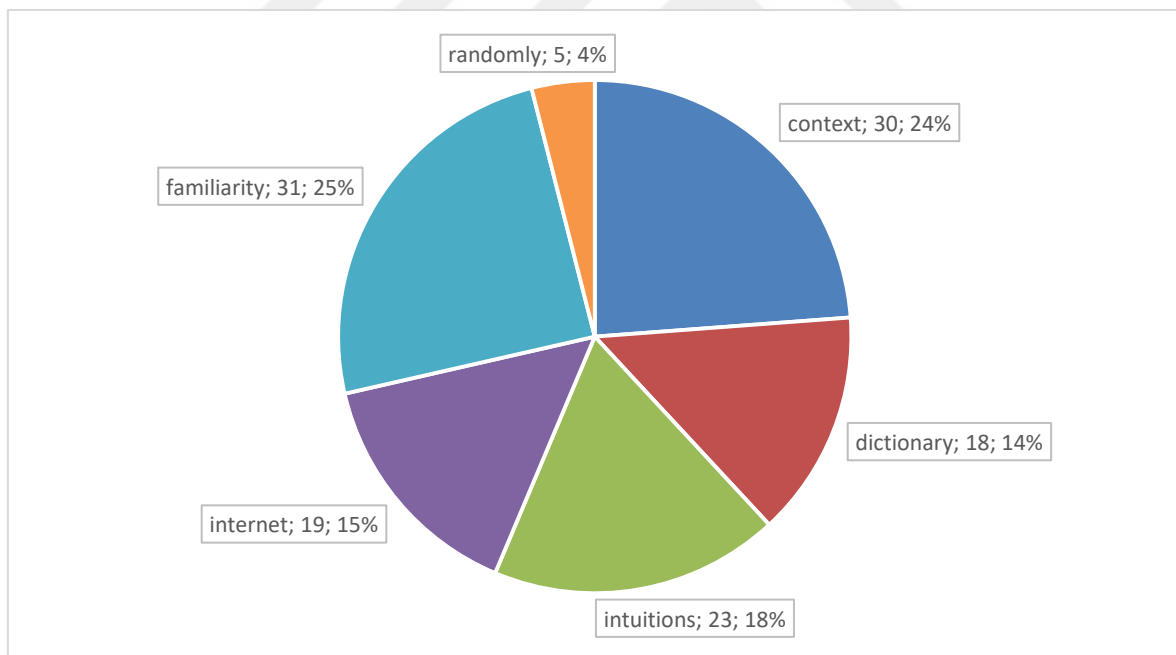
In this question, students' general process of word choices among near-synonyms while producing a text was asked. According to Figure 9, the majority of classifications in the chart distributed quite equal to each other within five categories out of six. In general, the students decide between near-synonyms as follows respectively; familiarity to a word in the pair (25%), the context of the sentence (24%), their intuitions (18%), internet sources (15%), checking dictionaries (14%) and random choice (4%).

Familiarity : I choose frequently used words.

: I choose words which I feel familiar.

Context : I am aware of contextual difference of synonyms, so I check the context first.

: I choose words according to their daily usages or academic usages.

Intuitions : I choose suitable words for me.

: I choose the most suitable words for the sentences.

Internet : I use internet.

: I check sample sentences from internet.

Dictionary : I use dictionary and the sample sentences in it.

: I use online dictionaries.

Randomly : I randomly choose words.

: I have no intention to make a choice.

When the students were asked to explain their general (rather than only past experiences) strategies about word-choice in their writings and translations, they stated various reasons which had a fairly balanced distribution. Familiarity to the words, context of their productions, their intuitions, internet sources, checking dictionaries were the strategies they mainly use. On the other hand, random vocabulary choice was still an option to some students.

Q7: How were you deciding between near-synonym words in high school?

Figure 10: Distribution Chart of Answers to Question 7
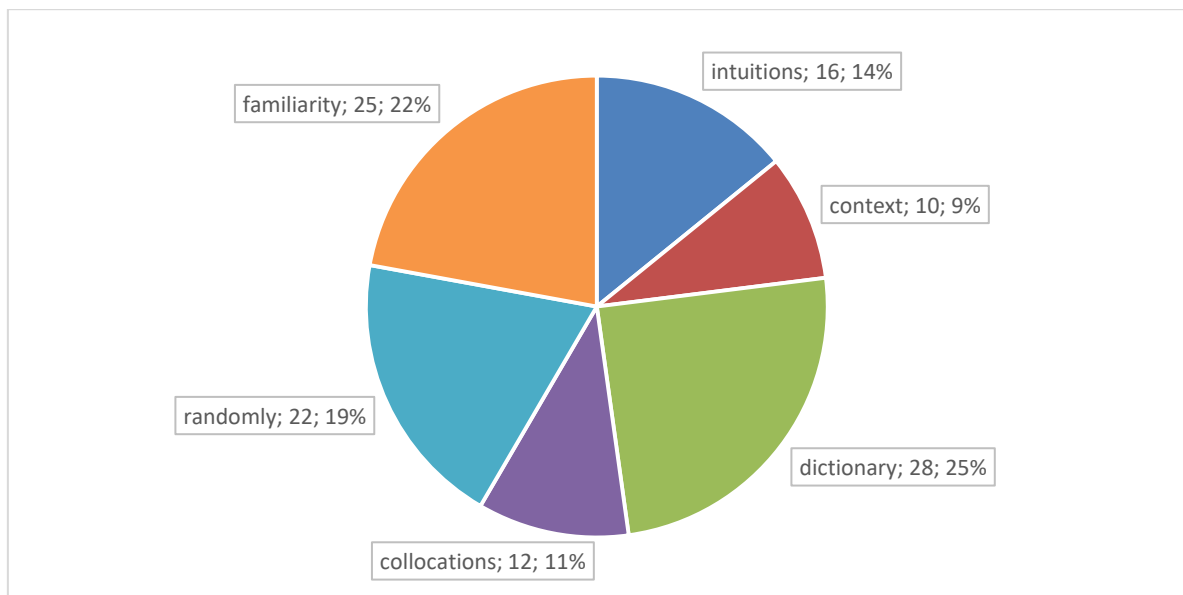
This question is also very similar to the previous ones which ask the past experiences of the ELL students as EFL learners. It especially asks their methods in the academic environment.

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According to Figure 10, in high school, the participants tend to use dictionaries (25%), choose familiar words (22%) and make random choices (19%). Besides, they were also using their intuitions (14%), collocational knowledge (11%) and contextual knowledge (9%).

Dictionary : *I was using dictionary.*

: *I was using dictionary and checking sample sentences.*

Familiarity : *I was preferring the frequently used words.*

: *I was using the most familiar words to me.*

Randomly : *I was using words unconsciously. I was not aware the differences between synonyms.*

: *My English was not very good in high school.*

Intuitions : *I was using logical words for me.*

: *I was using the words which I feel correct.*

Collocations : *I was deciding the words according to their patterns.*

: *I was paying attention to the collocations of the words.*

Context : *I was deciding the words according to the context.*

: *It was all about the contextual meaning.*

Considering the inexperienced periods of the learners, they were asked to explain their experiences about near-synonyms in the beginning of foreign language education, in high school. By emphasising on dictionary usage and familiarity to some words, they showed a fairly balanced distribution in strategies of deciding between near-synonyms. As predicted, random word-choice was an outstanding strategy for them.

Q8: Do you think it is necessary to decide while choosing between near-synonym words?

Figure 11: Distribution Chart of Answers to Question 8
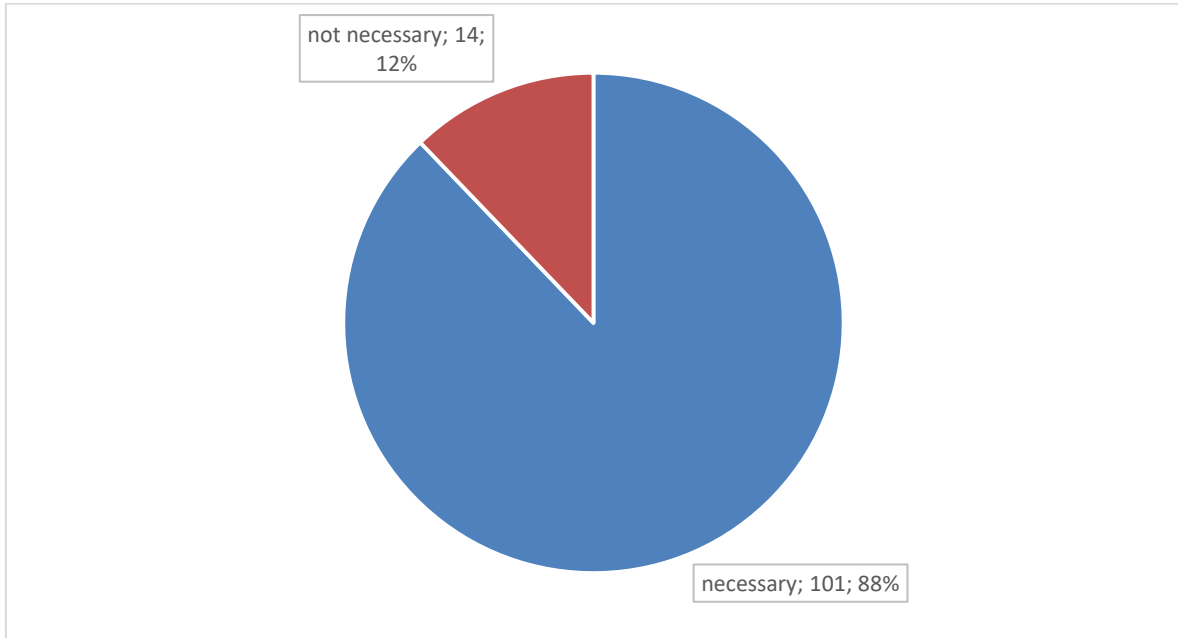
As Question 8 is a yes/no question, the distribution in the pie chart seems quite simple. The necessity of deciding between near-synonyms was asked to the participants. Majority of the students (88%) defend the idea of choosing between near-synonym words, while 12% of the students consider it unnecessary.

Necessary	*: I think it is necessary because we cannot use same words in spoken language and academic language at the same time.*
	: Of course, it is necessary. Some words may be synonyms, but they cannot be used interchangeably as in Turkish.
Not necessary	*: It is not necessary.*
	: I think it is not very important.

Majority of the students highlighted the importance and necessity of word-choice between near-synonyms. Although they did not always apply this strategy in their use of language, as they stated in the other questions, they still are aware of the necessity of word-choice. Some students explained the necessity by giving examples in their native languages.

Q9: What do you think to do for learning the differences between near-synonym words?

Figure 12: Distribution Chart of Answers to Question 9
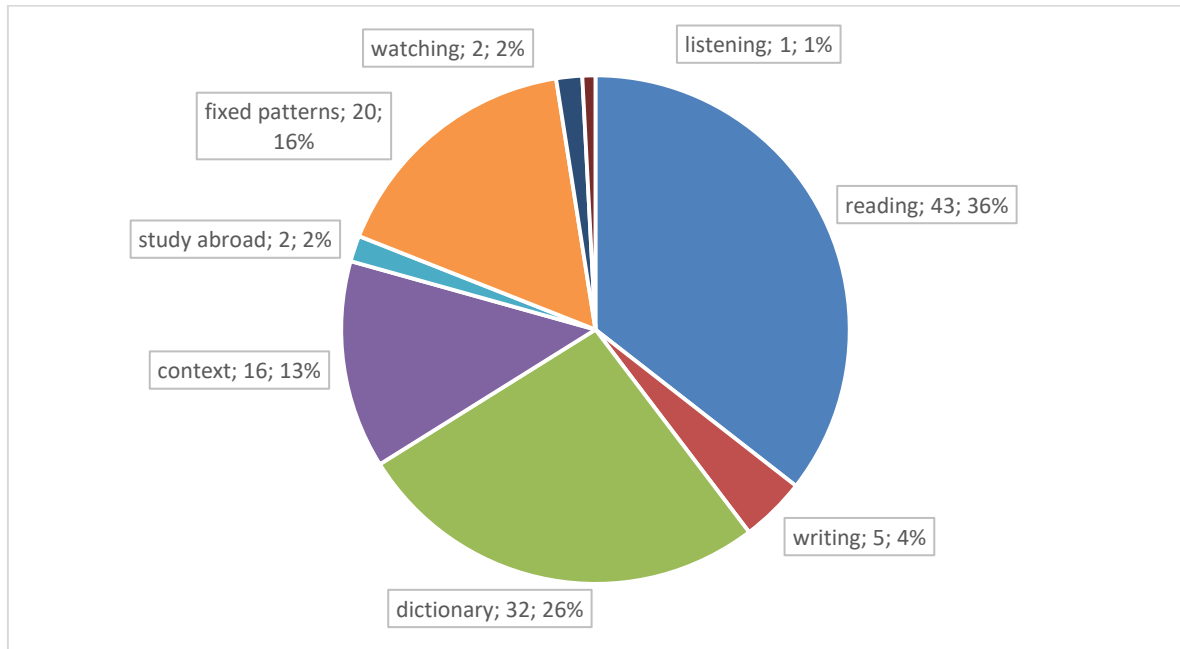
In Question 9, it was asked how to learn the connotations between the near-synonyms. The students presented various answers in classifications. As seen in Figure 12, they claim that the best ways to learn the differences could be reading activities (36%), frequently using dictionaries (26%), learning fixed collocational patterns (16%) and paying attention to the context of the sentences (13%). Some other suggestions from the students are the writing exercises (4%), watching videos (2%), studying abroad (2%) and listening activities (1%).

Reading	*: We can read cultural things.*
	: We have to read a lot.
Dictionary	*: We need to use dictionaries.*
	: Dictionaries should be used.
Fixed Patterns	*: Collocation of the synonyms should be checked.*
	: Best solution I had was to buy a collocation dictionary.
Context	*: It is important to pay attention to contextual meaning.*
	: Checking the contextual meanings of those synonyms can be helpful.
Writing	*: Writing activities provide practice.*
	: Reading and writing what we read can be useful.
Study Abroad	*: Student exchange programmes such as Erasmus help a lot.*
	: Travelling and meeting native speakers help to improve language skills.

Watching   *: We can learn from movies or TV series.*

                        : Visual sources are quite reliable for learning synonyms.

Listening   *: Listening to music will be helpful for familiarity.*

The students stated their options about increasing their knowledge about near-synonyms and their usages in this question. While most of the students emphasised on traditional ways such as reading, using dictionaries, and memorizing fixed patterns. Some others stated various strategies from listening to music to study abroad options. On the other hand, these strategies were mostly their ideas rather than the strategies which they currently used. Moreover, the results strikingly showed that the students emphasised on reading strategy rather than listening; however, both are regarded as receptive skills in a language. The possible reason for this situation may be language learning methods of traditional foreign language education approaches. It can be suggested here that listening activities should also be increased by breaking the conventional strict and limited conceptions.

Q10: Have you ever heard of the term 'Semantic Prosody'? When and where?

Figure 13: Distribution Chart of Answers to Question 10
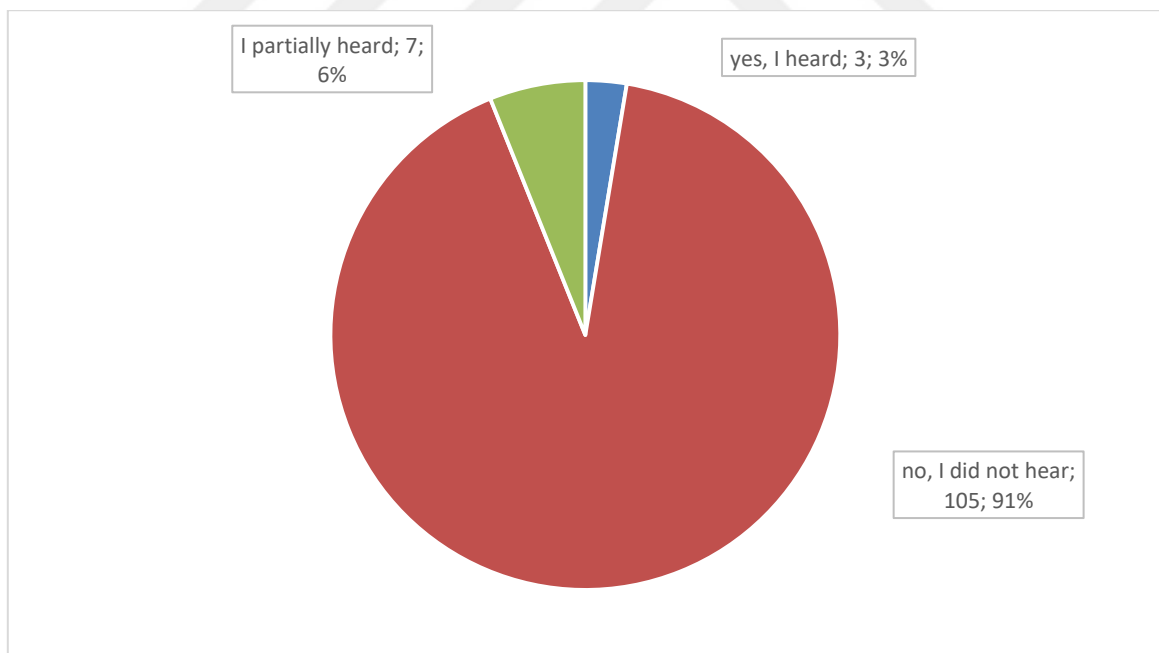
Question 10 asks the students whether they heard about semantic prosody or not. If yes, when and where. This question directly asks them if they are using semantic prosody consciously or unconsciously. As seen in Figure 13, majority of the students stated that they have never heard of this term (91%), on the other hand, 6% of the students said they partially heard of it which means

that they only heard the name of this term. Lastly, 3% of the students claimed they heard of the term but they have not given any details about it.

> ***No***   *: I have never heard of it.*
>   *: I didn't hear.*
> ***Partially*** *: I heard but I don't know what it is.*
>   *: I heard somewhere I don't remember.*
> ***Yes***   *: It is about the knowledge of meaning.*
>   *: I heard; I think I know it.*

Until this part of the questionnaire, similar questions were addressed to the students to consistently reveal their methods of using semantic prosody. When looking at the overall answers intuitively, it seems that students mostly use their familiarity and intuitions while using semantic prosody. The expected method, collocational harmony or contextual meaning come after the intuitions. As mentioned in the literature review part, only L1 speakers can correctly use their intuitions while deciding between near-synonyms (Xiao and McEnery, 2006). Therefore, the EFL learners' intuitions might be possibly wrong or erroneous while using a foreign language.

Q11: To what extend this Semantic Prosody Test created awareness for you? Explain briefly.

This question aimed to discover the potential of the Semantic Prosody Test's effects on the students. As they frequently stated that they had never heard of semantic prosody before, yet, some of them heard of it partially; thus, they are somehow aware of semantic prosody and collocational concept, it is hoped to ring a bell in the minds of the students to have some awareness. As stated in the statement of the problem, the researcher of this thesis was not also aware of it at first even though his teachers warn him about his collocational mistakes. Moreover, the teachers only corrected the mistakes rather than explaining the reasons or mentioning about the concepts of semantic prosody and collocations. Therefore, it took some time to discover the logical explanation in further language studies. Yet, it can be claimed that by teaching semantic prosody and collocations within the curriculum as much as the other language skills, the learning process of an EFL learner might speed up.

The ideas and suggestions of the participants about semantic prosody were asked by the Question 11 in the questionnaire. Some of the most striking answers of the students to Question 11 were listed below:

> *- We require more information about this subject.*
> *- I was already aware of such thing, but I did not know the concept. Now, I understand it better.*

- I did not know the term, but I was aware of this concept.

- I learnt that even though words are synonym, they may have different connotations.

- Now, I am aware of that we must be careful while choosing between near synonym words.

- I realized that near synonym words sometimes should be used in different contexts.

- From now on, I will be more aware and careful about vocabulary choice.

- This test is helpful for me to get awareness about vocabulary choice.

Some of the students stated that they require more information and even lectures about these concepts by requesting to be taught is lessons. Therefore, they believe that they may improve their vocabulary knowledge and language skills effectively. As they had never heard about this concept, they were highly motivated and triggered to learn about it. While some students claimed they were aware of the concept but the term, some others claim the reverse situation. Either case meant that there were deficiency and ignorance in this situation. Those were the ones who stated that they had partially heard about the term semantic prosody. Most of the students stated that they gained awareness about these concepts and they would be more careful in vocabulary choice from now on. They hoped to pay more attention consciously to the synonyms and collocations in their discourse as it was supposed to increase their proficiency and accelerate their learning process. Some students even appreciated being involved in this research since they had gained a great deal of awareness.

Q12: Explain how you decided some specific answers which were chosen from your correct answers in Semantic Prosody Test.

Up until now, the participants were asked to express their experiences, intuitions, inclinations and attitudes towards semantic prosody and collocations. These answers were analysed qualitatively according to the way they informed. In order to crosscheck the answers of the students for triangulation, Question 12 provided the students with their five correct answers in the semantic prosody test. The students were required to re-check their correct answers and sincerely express their reasons and methods of deciding between the near-synonym words. After they stated their decision process, the data were classified within keywords as done in the previous questions. Thus, with this method, the students made self-evaluation for the research. Their contribution brought a lot to the analysis of the study without any potential bias. The ELL students' methods of deciding between near-synonyms were given in Figure 14 and Figure 15 below, additionally Table 8 in Appendix 4.

Figure 14: Distribution Chart of Answers to Question 12
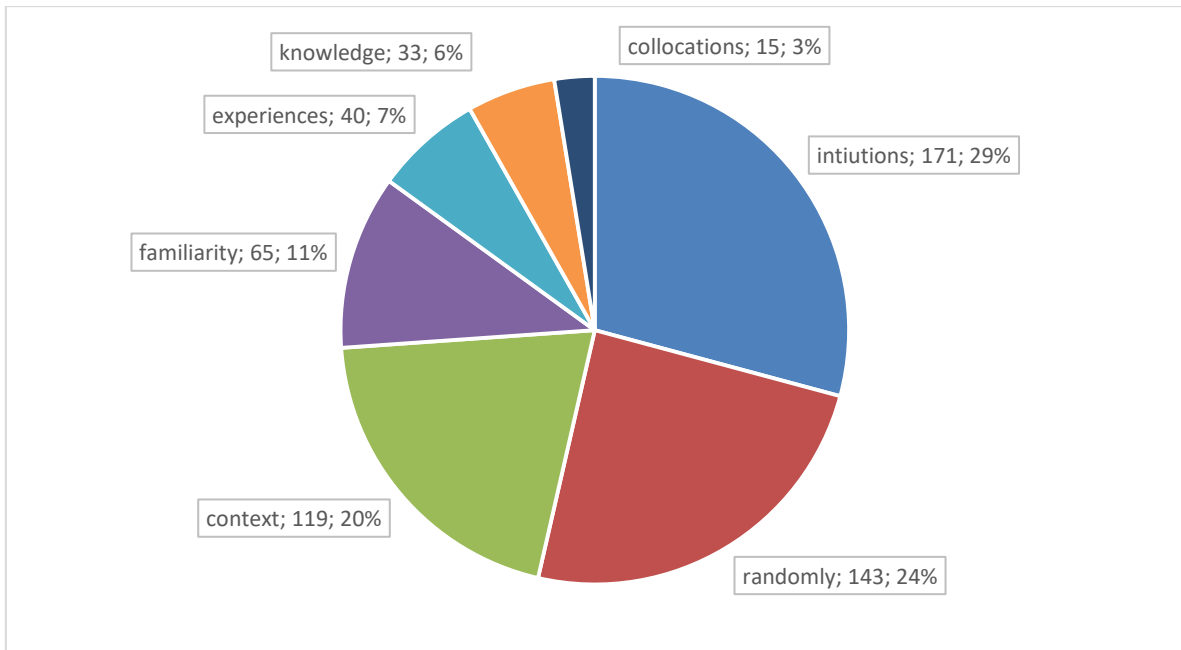
Question 12 was asked to 115 participants to express their reasons and methods while deciding between near-synonyms. In the end, 575 answers (5 sentences to each students) were collected from the students, then the answers were classified in 8 categories. Table 8 in Appendix 4 presents the whole participants' individual answers one by one. In addition, Figure 14 above and Figure 15 below were given as much simpler charts to better understand the real attitudes the ELL students.

Figure 15: The ELL students' Reasons and Methods of Deciding between Near-Synonyms
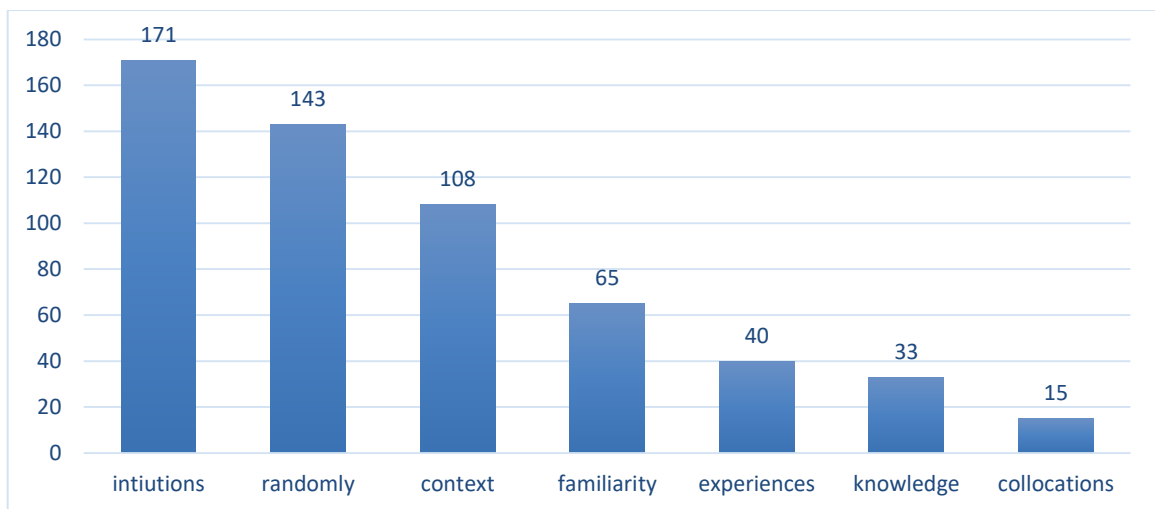

Figure 15, also answering Question 12, shows the overall attitudes of Turkish ELL students as EFL learners towards using semantic prosody and vocabulary choice. The methods were listed

in the table from the most frequent to the least with a linear decrease. Intuitions, random choices and context of the sentences were the most frequently used methods of participants while taking the Semantic Prosody Test. Then, they benefited from familiarity of the vocabulary used in the test, past experiences and knowledge of the participants, and finally the collocations of the vocabulary in the test options. As mentioned in the literature review section, Xiao and McEnery (2006) argues that L1 intuitions are more reliable than language learners, especially in vocabulary choice. Accordingly, it can be obviously seen that the students tend to make possible semantic mistakes in vocabulary choice. Regarding the case of intuitions, random vocabulary choice should be the last option for the students. Moreover, considering semantic prosody as evaluative meaning or connotational colouring beyond single words combinations (Partington, 1998), the learners do not seem very inclined to use the connotations while doing word choices among near-synonym words.

Intuitions and random vocabulary choices are the ways to cope with the challenges in language use of EFL learners; however, they are not aware of the fact that they use the language with full of errors of semantic deficiencies. According to the figure, the students stated that they mostly use their intuitions or random choices in this process that can be considered as the reason of main problem. The students do not seem aware of these concepts which are especially suggested by the pioneering linguists (Xiao and McEnery, 2006) in this field. As seen in the figure, the students do not prefer checking contextual meanings or collocational patterns while constructing a sentence structure. Therefore, it is inevitable to make semantic prosodic mistakes which weakens or misleads the expressions in discourse. It causes either conveying the wrong message to the target or conveying unnatural semantic structures.

When thinking of any L1 speaker, they may somehow or easily comprehend the message with semantic errors, still, it can be a problem for other L2 speakers for a clear communication. Considering English language as the world's communication language, when a mistake is done in language or discourse, it may be expected to spread like a snowball during the interactions between L2 speakers. More importantly, it may ruin the nature of original language structures.

4.1.3. Exceptional Cases

The research showed that there are some exceptional cases. Some of the students got high proficiency scores but their semantic prosody level scores did not correspond to their proficiency level scores. The overall correlation observed between the scores was not supported by these cases. In fact, there is no such correlation as that of the majority of the participants. The number of these exceptional cases is 10 and these exceptional ELL students were seen to exhibit an inverse proportional score in the Oxford Online Placement Test and the Semantic Prosody Test.

Table 8: Group 1 - ELL Students with Remarkably Higher OOPT Scores than SPT Scores

ID	OOPT Score ↑ (38 average)	SPT Score ↓ (40 average)
P15	60	24
P54	44	26
P115	57	38

These three participants in Group 1 have considerably higher grades in the Oxford Online Placement Test comparing to their Semantic Prosody Test scores. These exceptional cases were selected according to their inverse proportional scores of their two tests, and their scores' proximity to the average of the whole sampling. Their interview answers and the analysis were given below with statements, tables, and discussions.

1) Can you tell me about the reasons why your OOPT score is high while your SPT score is low?

P15: *The questions in the Oxford Online Placement Test were similar to the other tests I had done before. I can say that I am used to such kind of exams. I was familiar with the vocabulary in the test. Also, I am good at grammar. On the other hand, I was always in doubt while answering the questions in the Semantic Prosody Test. The answers were very similar to each other, it was difficult to differentiate between the near-synonyms. I choose the familiar answers to me, I did not think about semantic prosody of the words. In my past education, my teachers never mentioned about this prosody of words. Shortly, as the answers were very similar to each other in the Semantic Prosody Test, I was not sure while answering most of the questions.*

P54: *Actually, I was expecting a higher grade in the Oxford Online Placement Test because I believe that I have good English skills, and the exam was easier than I thought. Although it was the first time that I had an online test, it was quite easy to complete the test. But the Semantic Prosody Test was very challenging for me. Although I knew the vocabulary in the test, I had difficulty while understanding the differences between the options. The words were very similar to each other, I thought I could use them interchangeably. For me, those synonyms were all the same.*

P115: *I am happy to have a higher grade in the Oxford Online Placement Test. In fact, I am an average student in my class, but I believe that my English is okay. I always practice my skills that I always read, listen, and watch English materials. I have not heard about semantic prosody before, the test was difficult for me to answer. I knew the meaning of the words, but I did not know in which context they were used. Probably, that is why I had a lower grade in the Semantic Prosody Test. But now I have some ideas about semantic prosody, I will pay more attention to learn about it in future.*

Table 9: Encoded Representation of the Answers to the Interview Question 1 (Group 1)

Question	Representation	Responses
Can you tell me about the reasons why your OOPT score is high while your SPT score is low?	- OOPT questions were familiar. - SPT was a new concept of testing. - Near-synonyms were challenging. - Intuitions were used for SPT questions rather than knowledge.	P15, P54, P115

Table 9 shows the encoded representation of the answers to the interview question 1 by the Group 1 participants. The participants stated that the Oxford Online Placement Test questions were familiar to them as they were used to take grammar and reading test so far. On the other hand, the Semantic Prosody Test was a new concept for them because they stated that it was the first time that they had such a preference test without wrong answers. They also stated that the near-synonyms in the Semantic Prosody Test were very challenging because of the similarity as they had difficulty while choosing between them. According to their answers, they used intuitions during the Semantic Prosody Test while they use their knowledge during the Oxford Online Placement Test. Consequently, it can be inferred from the statements of Group 1 that traditional grammar testing provided them with confidence and easiness as they were used to this type of testing. A new concept of testing (SPT) challenged the participants even though their considerable proficiency levels. Finally, it was revealed that these participants did not have adequate awareness or knowledge about semantic prosody and collocational patterns.

2) Do you think there is a relationship with language proficiency level and semantic prosody level?

P15: *I think the learners with higher language proficiency are expected to have higher semantic prosody knowledge, logically. I believe that I had lower grade in the Semantic Prosody Test because I had not had any education or awareness about this concept in past. Actually, I was expecting to have a higher grade as I had in the Oxford Online Placement Test, but I could not. This situation surprised me.*

P54: *Of course, there should be a relationship because I believe that semantic prosodic awareness can be gained by language level. My English level is in average score, and my semantic prosody score is also low. Both of the scores are not very high. If I had a higher English proficiency level, I believe that my semantic prosodic awareness would also be higher. I learnt that knowing only the meaning of words is not enough to use them in appropriate way.*

P115: *I think yes. They are related to each other. Although I studied in English department in high school and then English prep class, I only learnt the basic language to study and communicate, rather than advanced English. I believe my English score is high and my semantic prosody level should have been high too, but I didn't have any education about semantic prosody*

before. If I had any knowledge about this term, I believe that I could have a higher grade in the Semantic Prosody Test, too.

Table 10: Encoded Representation of the Answers to the Interview Question 2 (Group 1)

Question	Representation	Responses
Do you think there is a relationship with language proficiency level and semantic prosody level?	- Both levels are expected to be related to each other. - Lack of SP awareness caused inverse proportional scores (exceptional cases).	P15, P54, P115

Table 10 shows the encoded representation of the answers to the interview question 2 by the Group 1 participants. The participants stated their ideas that proficiency level and semantic prosody level of a language user should be related to each other in direct proportion. Simply, when the proficiency level is high, semantic prosody level is expected to be high accordingly, and vice versa. Although the participants defended the idea of relationship between the two levels, their exceptional situations were caused by their performances and unfamiliarity to the SPT (as a new testing type and method). On the other hand, the lack of semantic prosodic awareness caused these three participants' inverse proportional scores as exceptional cases. They stated that they had good language skills; however, it was the first time they were evaluated in such a way (by the SPT). Thus, there were remarkable differences between their scores.

3) Did you have any experience in past in order to gain awareness about semantic prosody of collocations?

P15: *As I remember, I had never had education about semantic prosody concept in high school. In addition, I had not gained any awareness about it in preparatory class at university. In high school, our teacher took us a collocation test, but it only consisted of simple word-combinations which we learnt in class so that we did not pay much attention to it.*

P54: *No, I did not have any experience about it. Actually, I was sometimes thinking about it if I could use every word in place of each other's because there are many options when you look at the dictionary. Once, our teacher said that there were many meanings of the word "run" while translating into Turkish. If you write TURENG dictionary "run" there are many options in Turkish. She said that we should be careful while choosing the correct one, but she never told us the reason.*

P115: *I did not the experience about semantic prosody. It was the first time that I heard of this term here. I heard about the collocations, but I did not know their contextual harmony. I thought every synonym can be used for each other. We were memorizing some word-combinations, but they were just fixed combinations such as "take away". I thought it was only about phrasal*

verbs. Now I have more awareness about it. I will be more careful while choosing synonyms in sentences.

Table 11: Encoded Representation of the Answers to the Interview Question 3 (Group 1)

Question	Representation	Responses
Did you have any experience in past in order to gain awareness about semantic prosody of collocations?	- There was no awareness or education about SP in past. - Only simple collocational structures were taught/learnt.	P15, P54, P115

Table 11 shows the encoded representation of the answers to the interview question 3 by the Group 1 participants. The participants stated that they had neither gained awareness nor received education about semantic prosody concept in their past educational process. Moreover, they said they had learnt about collocations in grammar or vocabulary courses; however, it was only about simple collocational structures which were used in lower levels of language. On the other hand, it was inferred that the collocation understanding of the participants was limited to support-verb constructions (with *make*, *take*, *have*, *get*) and phrasal verbs rather than any frequently co-occurring words with greater than random probability (Hoey, 1991).

4) How was the decision process while answering the questions in SPT?

P15: *It was difficult to choose but I tried to choose the words that I heard or seen in sentences before. If I doubt about a question, I chose the answer randomly because I thought that I could use them interchangeably.*

P54: *I used my intuitions while deciding between the near synonyms. I chose which I felt closer to me and which I felt correct. I was not sure about some questions so that I chose them randomly.*

P115: *I thought the Semantic Prosody Test was easier because there were not many options in each question. However, it was not very easy because the words were very similar, and they were even in the same meaning. While deciding the correct answer, I chose the best and most logical options in my feelings.*

Table 12: Encoded Representation of the Answers to the Interview Question 4 (Group 1)

Question	Representation	Responses
How was the decision process while answering the questions in SPT?	- Intuitions. - Random choice. - Past experiences.	P15, P54, P115

Table 12 shows the encoded representation of the answers to the interview question 4 by the Group 1 participants. The participants stated, as in open-ended question 12, that they mostly used

their intuitions with greater proportion than the other methods. Then, they also said that they made random choices, and they sometimes used their past experiences. Consequently, the intuitions of non-natives of a language may possibly cause mistakes and confusions as Hunston (2002) argued. The use of intuitions in word choice should be the ability of native speakers instead of non-natives. Otherwise, possible problematic language productions might arise.

Table 13: Group 2 - ELL Students with Remarkably Higher SPT Scores than OOPT Scores

ID	OOPT Score ↓ (38 average)	SPT Score ↑ (40 average)
P7	16	30
P35	20	44
P44	25	49
P61	18	43
P62	8	33
P68	19	45
P73	28	54

These seven participants in Group 2 have considerably higher grades in the Semantic Prosody Test comparing to their Oxford Online Placement Test scores. These exceptional cases were selected according to their inverse proportional scores of their two tests, and their scores' proximity to the average of the whole sampling. Their interview answers and the analysis were given below with statements, tables, and discussions.

1) Can you tell me about the reasons why your SPT score is high while your OOPT score is low?

P7: *The reason why my Oxford Online Placement Test score was low was that my exam was not very good, and I could not use the time very well. While answering the questions, the exam was over. The Semantic Prosody Test was easier for me because I was not under pressure of time and technology. It was more like the classical tests which I took before. However, it was still challenging to decide between the synonyms.*

P35: *It was the first time that I had an online test. I was a bit excited in the exam. If it were a classical test, I believe I could have a better score in English. I felt more relax in the Semantic Prosody Test because I was in my class with my friends and supervisor. It was like a normal exam. I think the Semantic Prosody Test was difficult. I had higher grade than the Oxford Online Placement Test but if this test was also in paper printed, I believe I could do better than the Semantic Prosody Test because I was not sure for all of my answers in the Semantic Prosody Test as the words were similar.*

P44: *I remember the day we had the Oxford Online Placement Test; it was raining a lot and I was in hurry to reach home as soon as possible; I could not focus on the exam. Probably that is*

why my exam grade was not very high, on the other hand, I trust in my language skills, I could have a better grade in another time. The Semantic Prosody Test was in the classroom some days after the Oxford Online Placement Test. I took this test easily because of the environment as I could focus on the test better.

P61: *I am not sure about this question. The Oxford Online Placement Test was an interactive test so that the questions were getting harder when I answer the questions correctly, some questions were very difficult for me even when it had the timing. In the Semantic Prosody Test, I was more relaxed because the exam was very easy in vocabulary and there was no timing.*

P62: *I am not good at computer skills. Although the Oxford Online Placement Test did not require high skills of technology, I could not feel comfortable while answering the questions because I am not very used to use a computer. I do not have a laptop at home, it was the first time that I had a test on computer. I think I could have a higher grade if it were a classical paperback test as the Semantic Prosody Test. It was not also very easy, but It was as I am used to in general. However, I was not very sure while choosing between the synonyms.*

P68: *I think I was lucky in the Semantic Prosody Test because I choose the answers mostly randomly and by using my intuitions. I was not sure about most of the questions. On the other hand, the Oxford Online Placement Test was a bit difficult for me because it had more options to choose in selections in each question. Random choice and intuitions are not enough for finding the correct answers.*

P73: *I was surprised when I heard that my English proficiency score in the Oxford Online Placement Test was lower that my Semantic Prosody Test score because I was expecting a higher grade. It was very difficult to make choices in the Semantic Prosody Test because the options were very similar and challenging for me. I do not know the reasons of my results.*

Table 14: Encoded Representation of the Answers to the Interview Question 1 (Group 2)

Question	Representation	Responses
What would be the reasons of the fact that your SPT score is high while your OOPT score is low?	- Online testing was new and challenging. - Bad performance than expected in OOPT. - SPT was in a comfortable environment. - SPT had 2 options in answers (chance factor)	P7, P35, P44, P61, P62, P68, P73

Table 14 shows the encoded representation of the answers to the interview question 1 by the Group 2 participants. The participants stated online testing was new and challenging for them as in the Oxford Online Placement Test. Accordingly, they claim that they showed the bed performance than expected in the Oxford Online Placement Test. On the other hand, they stated that the Semantic Prosody Test was carried out in a familiar environment and method even though it was a new test, too. In addition, the fact that the Semantic Prosody Test has two main options (synonymous-word-choice) increased their chance of finding the correct answer. Consequently, it was inferred that the participants were expecting higher grades; however, the testing method

affected their performances negatively. Traditional testing method of the Semantic Prosody Test provided them with better motivation and convenience as it was carried out with paperback test in classroom environment.

2) Do you think there is a relationship with language proficiency level and semantic prosody level?

P7: *I think there must be a relationship. However, my scores are not very similar. As I said, it was because of my motivation and mood in the time of the Oxford Online Placement Test. Otherwise, I could have a similar grade with my Semantic Prosody Test score.*

P35: *Yes, there should be a relationship between them. The concept of the Semantic Prosody Test seems that it was also evaluating the language knowledge of students. It was about the vocabulary knowledge. I think that the vocabulary knowledge is included in language proficiency as a skill. So that, they must be connected to each other.*

P44: *Of course, there is a relationship. Semantic prosody knowledge can be gained with the proficiency level in time. As I saw in the Semantic Prosody Test, I need more awareness and knowledge about the contextual meanings of words and collocations. For this, I need more practice and higher level of proficiency.*

P61: *Yes. The Semantic Prosody Test was very difficult for me. I could not answer the questions consciously because I did not know the differences between the near-synonyms very well. I realized that knowing the meaning of a word is not enough to use it. You should have a higher proficiency level to use the words properly. I learnt this thanks to these tests.*

P62: *I think yes. There is a relationship between them. You cannot know the real meaning of every word by memorizing the dictionary meaning. For using a word in the sentence, you need more awareness and better English level. Otherwise, you can confuse the reader. You should do more practice for improving your proficiency and semantic prosody levels.*

P68: *Yes, there is the relationship. As it happens in every language skill, semantic prosody level also increases with the others. When you improve a skill, others improve accordingly too. We can consider semantic prosody level as the vocabulary knowledge.*

P73: *Yes, there should be a relationship. I think if someone does not have a high language proficiency level, he cannot be successful in semantic prosody.*

Table 15: Encoded Representation of the Answers to the Interview Question 2 (Group 2)

Question	Representation	Responses
Do you think there is a relationship with language proficiency level and semantic prosody level?	- They are expected to be related to each other. - Collocational knowledge is a part of language skills.	P7, P35, P44, P61, P62, P68, P73

Table 15 shows the encoded representation of the answers to the interview question 2 by the Group 2 participants. The participants' statements show similarity with the Group 1. They say that proficiency level and semantic prosody level of a language user should be related to each other in direct proportion. Simply, when the proficiency level is high, semantic prosody level is expected to be high accordingly, and vice versa. Although the participants defended the idea of relationship between the two levels, their exceptional situations were caused by their performances and unfamiliarity to the OOPT (as a new testing type and method). The unfamiliarity to the test of these exceptional cases is the reverse of the Group 1. While Group 1 stated that SPT is unfamiliar, Group 2 stated that OOPT is unfamiliar in method. Consequently, all the exceptional cases suffered from the testing methods in similar ways.

3) Did you have any experience in past in order to gain awareness about semantic prosody of collocations?

P7: *I did not have any education about it before. It was the first time that I heard about this term. I did not know that I should choose the vocabulary more carefully. If I had learnt it before, my English level could be much higher now. I think I have done a lot of mistakes up until now, I will be more careful from now on.*

P35: *Sometimes, my teacher in high school was warning us about word choices we did, but she did not explain these terms, semantic prosody, and collocations.*

P44: *No, I did not have any experience about it. Actually, sometimes we studied on collocations, but it was very simple, not in details.*

P61: *As I said before, I have not heard about semantic prosody, but I have heard about collocations.*

P62: *In high school and prep class of university, I heard about collocations in grammar lessons. This is the first time that I hear about semantic prosody. Our teachers and the coursebooks say that there are some word combinations which always come together, those are collocations.*

P68: *No, I was not aware about semantic prosody. I just heard it from you. I did not know the term. But I knew the collocations that some words are used together. They are patterns.*

P73: *I have not had any specific experience. I thought the collocations are only about the structure, I did not know their meaningful functions. I learnt it after the Semantic Prosody Test.*

Table 16: Encoded Representation of the Answers to the Interview Question 3 (Group 2)

Question	Representation	Responses
Did you have any experience in past in order to gain awareness about semantic prosody of collocations?	- There was no awareness or education about SP in past. - Only simple collocational structures were taught/learnt.	P7, P35, P44, P61, P62, P68, P73

Table 16 shows the encoded representation of the answers to the interview question 3 by the Group 2 participants. The participants of Group 2 gave very similar answers as Group 1 did. They stated that they had hardly gained awareness and received education about semantic prosody concept. On the other hand, they only studied on simple collocational structures in high school and prep class of university. Consequently, both groups of exceptional cases stated they are totally unfamiliar with the concept of semantic prosody.

4) How was the decision process while answering the questions in SPT?

P7: *I thought I could use the near-synonym words interchangeably, so that I choose most of the answers randomly. I still feel lucky that I have at least better grade than the other exam.*

P35: *The options in the Semantic Prosody Test were very similar to each other, I thought they were all same. I knew the meanings of most of the words, they were the same. I decided to make random choices in the test.*

P44: *When I first saw the options in the Semantic Prosody Test, I realized the options have same meanings and the test was a bit tricky. I realized I had to make better choices to find the best answer. Sometimes I looked at the context, sometimes I choose with my feelings, and sometimes I choose the options randomly when I had no idea.*

P61: *Although I had a good grade in the Semantic Prosody Test, I believe it was by chance because the test was a bit difficult, words were very similar to each other. I could not decide between the synonyms so I choose them randomly because I could not find differences.*

P62: *It depends on the questions. I used many methods while deciding between the synonyms. I knew the usage of some words, I paid attention to the context of the sentences, I used the ones which I feel closer to me, some words seem very familiar to me, and sometimes I selected randomly.*

P68: *The Semantic Prosody Test was the most interesting test I had ever took. There were no wrong answers in the test because the options were synonyms which I think I could use them interchangeably. That is why I selected the options randomly as I wanted.*

P73: *Most of the options were challenging for me because they were very similar in meaning. Sometimes I choose with the contextual meaning of sentences and the option words, mostly I used my intuitions, and sometimes I knew the usage of the words in sentences.*

Table 17: Encoded Representation of the Answers to the Interview Question 4 (Group 2)

Question	Representation	Responses
How was the decision process while answering the questions in SPT?	- Random word choice. - Intuitions. - Contextual meaning. - Familiarity.	P7, P35, P44, P61, P62, P68, P73

Table 17 shows the encoded representation of the answers to the interview question 4 by the Group 2 participants. The participants stated, as in open-ended question 12, that they mostly made random word-choices while answering the Semantic Prosody Test. Then, respectively they used their intuitions, sometimes paid attention to context, and sometimes choose the familiar structures. Consequently, random word-choices and intuitions prevented them to have high grades in the SPT. The fact that they had passed the average grade of the whole sampling can be explained by the chance factor as they stated before.

It can be inferred from the statements of the students that their exceptional cases were mainly caused by the chance factor since they expressed their disappointments in the test (OOPT and SPT) results. In both groups, the students were not expecting such differences in their scores. The first group mostly mentioned about the familiarity of the OOPT and unfamiliarity of the SPT. On the other hand, the second group mostly mentioned about the reverse situation as the unfamiliarity of the OOPT and the familiarity of the SPT method. It can be foreseen that both tests could be considered as new ways of testing by the participants (the OOPT as an online interactive test, and the SPT as a preference test rather than a traditional multiple-choice test) so that there can be a few exceptional cases in the data collection process.

CONCLUSION

The current study investigated the semantic prosodic awareness of Turkish ELL students as EFL learners through near-synonym words. Total semantic prosodic awareness of the learners; the correlation between their semantic prosodic awareness and their English proficiency levels; the ways they use semantic prosody in their EFL; the ways they cope with challenges about semantic prosody; and the factors affecting their semantic prosodic knowledge were among the pivotal concerns of this study. Any research aimed at conducting an evaluative enquiry into the question of semantic prosody requires a long and detailed process, followed and shared in this dissertation in a way that it explicates the parameters of the habitual or developmental performative attitudes of the students in the form of responses to the hidden attitudes of the words and phrases. For this aim, several moves were gripped by the researcher: Firstly, the participants were selected within the strict criteria of the research. The selected 115 Turkish ELL students firstly took the Oxford Online Placement Test, then they also took the Semantic Prosody Test, and finally, they were made involved in a qualitative and reflective questionnaire session about the research process and their experiences during the personal history of foreign language learning. The data collected from the students were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively in line with the mixed design of the methodological aspect of the investigation.

The related literature marks a significant research niche and gap of elucidation as regards the learner attitudes towards the reception, use and awareness of the "hidden attitudes of the lexical items" such as semantic prosodic patterns, phrases and collocations as well as near-synonyms. As understood from the review of the literature and the findings, near-synonymy is the similar lexical pairs which cannot always be used interchangeably in language because of their collocational and semantic behaviours. Therefore, the learners should always be careful while using these lexical items in order to avoid any potential errors in their discourses. Additionally, this issue has always been a stress, foregrounded and highlighted by the EFL teachers about their teaching experience and observational accounts and the critical remarks by certain linguists (Partington, 1998; Hoey, 2000; McEnery and Xiao, 2006).

The concept of collocations and semantic prosody have always been undermined in language teaching and learning process, especially in Turkey. Thus, the participants of this research proved the importance of these concepts with their test results and questionnaire answers. Teaching, learning, or using single words are not always led L2 speaker to reach a great fluency in the language, instead, it causes such problems as argued since the beginning of this research. On the

other hand, it is necessary to teach EFL learners the word combinations, collocational patterns, and the concept of semantic prosody from the very beginning of their learning process. Thus, such kind of useful tips can motivate EFL learners as they gain awareness about the hidden features of the language. The motivation helps the learners to comprehend the structure of language better.

The research is significant in that it draws attention to the ELL students' insufficient knowledge and considerable unawareness of semantic prosody incorporated with the various concomitants of collocations and near-synonyms. Even though the learner fluency and intelligibility are to a great extent liable to the degree of such awareness, the study hypothetically raises the fact that this issue is frequently overlooked in the curricula and syllabi of the educational settings and courses. In fact, these concepts should have been included in the framework of teaching stuff considering the fact that it is so fruitful that the hidden features of the target language can be carried and conveyed through these lexical items in the learning process to improve the learners' accuracy, expressiveness, authenticity, fluency and intelligibility. More than that, the learner's autonomy is balanced and trained by these phrases transforming it to an act of creativity rather than empty neologism and absurd transcreation, which can be acceptable in the figurative genres of discourses such as poetry. Although all the participants from the department of foreign languages have similar backgrounds of intensive English in the past at high-school or private courses, demonstrated a lower level of collocational and semantic prosodic knowledge than expected. It was seen that learners' semantic prosodic awareness is correlated with their language proficiency levels in direct proportion. It was expected them to have a higher level of awareness about this concept since it seemed unbalanced that they had enough proficiency to study on foreign languages, but they had really low awareness level. As it is understood from the findings, the students have a limited degree of awareness about semantic prosody, and it is gained unconsciously because they stated that the majority had never heard about this term.

Also included in the thesis is a discussion section which will be completed with the addition of the conclusive remarks to be presented as follows:

At the end of the data analysis, it was supposed to find possible answers to the related research questions. Based on the findings of the current study, it could be tentatively suggested that learners in EFL classrooms should be introduced to the prosodic nature of word combinations. More precisely, EFL teachers should help their students develop awareness regarding how particular words in the language as provided in this study convey meaning within their context. In this sense, the learners could achieve not only accurate but also natural word combinations in their written and spoken performance. For instance, as shown in the literature review part, the word 'cause' has come to be followed by certain words carrying negative prosody in the English language. In this sense, the lack of such knowledge and awareness may prevent EFL learners from complying with the requirements to reach higher proficiency levels in language.

Moreover, semantic prosody can be suggested to be taught at least as a selective course in English language departments or in their preparatory programmes. If not possible, it can also be included or integrated into grammar, writing, reading or listening courses as a chapter. It is believed that this method would positively affect the learning process of EFL learners, and they would be able to create semantically more natural sentences as native speakers do. On the other hand, teachers are also needed to be trained to teach semantic prosody. As we all come from the same circle, it is arguable that every English language teacher is capable of teaching semantic prosody or integrating it into their classes. This can be a suggestion to further studies that non-native EFL teachers' semantic prosodic awareness levels could be evaluated.

I. Degree of semantic prosodic awareness level of Turkish ELL students

The majority of the participants stated that they had not heard about the notion "semantic prosody" before this research. Underlining the immediate requirement of more and adequate information about the issue, they emphasised their humble state of unawareness. 91% of the participants stated that it was the first time to hear about the notion and some others also maintained the very survey itself helped them be introduced to the term and even increase their awareness. A number of participants said the survey questions drew their attention to the diversity in the types of the words and phrases and similarity and differences between synonyms. Many participants stated that the survey helped them with differentiating between the words in various contexts that call for different collocations. And many participants said the survey became a warning for careful about vocabulary choice.

The findings above show that the notion "semantic prosody" is not included in the curriculum or syllabus. The activities on vocabulary development as part of listening and reading classes are not designed to increase awareness of the collocational phrases. Instead, these lessons are remarkably dealing with isolated vocabulary development or contextual paradigms. However, both serve for the poles open choice principle regardless of the idiom principle associated with an insightful learner attitude whereby the learner can cultivate and exert his/her language autonomy. With an increased awareness of semantic prosody, the learner therefore becomes a more creative and more productive user of language. The learners' somewhat epiphanic moment of consciousness about the existence of the appropriate collocation(s) of a word reveals that the survey itself helped them to be introduced to the term and even increase their awareness. Hence, it can be concluded that there is hardly awareness of the learners, which restricts learner autonomy and related aptitudes such as prosodic creativity. Moreover, the existence of such prosodic inadequacy should be carefully considered in learning experience of those who are intermittently corrected by their teachers for prosodic misuse and semantic drawbacks in writing and speaking performances, which calls into question the notion of semantics and semantic prosody.

II. Correlation between English proficiency level and the semantic prosodic awareness of Turkish ELL students

The statistical analysis exhibits the already expected correlation between the scores of proficiency level and semantic prosody awareness. This correlation indicates individual experiential discoveries presented in the form of unconscious learning or knowledge gained intuitively. In some cases, however, the learners are observed to be influenced by factors of visual or audial habitualisation / fossilisation as well as are acquainted with the familiar collocates. The fact that there is a statistically significant correlation between learners' English proficiency levels and their semantic prosodic awareness levels indicates that when English proficiency level of an ELF learner increases, his/her semantic prosodic knowledge or awareness increases in a way that marks a correspondence between each category.

The quantitative data shows that there is a statistically significant correspondence between the proficiency level and semantic prosodic knowledge. However, what is more significant in this context is that the high proficiency score does not indicate a high degree of awareness of semantic prosody. The majority of the students stated that they circled the correct answer for various reasons but prosodic awareness. This calculation is reliable and valid because the statistical analysis tool calculates the scores of each student one by one instead of comparing only the total average point. Semantic prosody test scores and Oxford Online Placement Test scores of 115 Turkish ELL students as EFL learners were calculated with individual comparison, then the significant 1 / 0.268^{**} Pearson Correlation values were found. Although McGee (2012) could not find any direct correlation between semantic prosodic awareness and language levels of EFL learners, this current research showed a direct correlation between these variables. Thus, the research question 2 was answered with this limited size of sampling.

This analysis shows that semantic prosodic awareness levels of EFL learners parallelly increases or decreases with their English proficiency levels. Considering the proficiency level of a language covers reading, listening, writing and grammatical competence as evaluated in the Oxford Online Placement Test, semantic prosodic awareness is gained through all these language skills consciously or not. As mentioned in the literature review part above, semantic prosody should be learnt for better comprehension or expression in the use of language. It can be suggested here that semantic prosody can be a subject to teach or at least to create awareness in language classes to speed up the learning process and enrich the communicative skills.

III. How Turkish ELL students use semantic prosody in their discourse

What lies beneath 575 true answers was qualitatively explored in the study. The results showed that intuitions, random decisions, context, familiarity, experience, knowledge, collocations

are the frequently referred notions or issues as reasons behind the participants' decisions. A significant number of students stated that they use appropriate words by considering familiarity (the ones they remember seeing or hearing in some patterns before) or they barely check the collocations or look up in the dictionaries. It was reported that checking the collocations is the last option for the students.

As regards the accuracy and fluency in semantic prosody in discourse, the proficiency and semantic prosody level test scores indicate that the students are considerably able to differentiate between various near synonyms and collocates. However, the qualitative data revealed that the learners' productive use of discourse is simply devoid of prosodic knowledge. Rather, they mostly use the appropriate words or phrases intuitively, even randomly. The participants' answers demonstrate that decision-making processes are mainly based on their irregular memory shaped by contextual factors, familiarity concerns, unreliable intuitions, and random inclinations. These parameters in semantic prosodic knowledge, if we can consider it to be knowledge, occasionally and casually gained through writing courses, translation activities, google translation, movie scenes, everyday situations and contexts, remembrance of written or spoken signs, most of which were accessed through unreliable internet sources or nonstandard everyday or school settings.

IV. How to cope with the challenges with semantic prosody

That many learners use words and phrases unaware of their semantic prosodic aspect showed that the learners produce discourse randomly, mostly with intuitions or by chance. They said due to close similarity, lower proficiency, poor vocabulary, or lack of collocational knowledge, they were unable to answer the questions in a confident manner. Their inadvertent, unintentional and casual use of the words regardless of their semantic prosodic aspect, sometimes yield to coincidental accuracy or perchance fluency. Even their reference to dictionaries, worse than that, does not point to a conscious and reflective attitude of a learner because there is no point in looking up a dictionary without having such semantic prosodic awareness. Furthermore, the learners' intensive acquaintance with the internet sources accounted for their familiarity with some collocates or habitualisation, sometimes in the form of mistakes, sometimes in the form of fossilisation.

V. The factors affecting semantic prosodic knowledge of Turkish ELL students

As regards the semantic prosodic knowledge of Turkish ELL students, the research showed that English language proficiency level is among significant and prior factors which have an impact on the written or spoken performance of the students. However, knowledge (or skill) does not necessarily refer to a state of awareness of semantic prosody. In fact, lack of awareness in some cases is a predictable result even with those who have a high score in semantic prosody level test. In the questionnaire, the participants stated that the issue is not adequately and efficiently included

in the syllabus. Moreover, the teachers do not provide adequate insinuation, insight and illumination since they probably had not essential initiation or support during their tertiary level education. Hence, the lack of awareness is a protracted deficiency caused by the common educational circle in which both the teachers and the students (prospective teachers) are involved. Another factor regarding this problem emerges as a shared "learning culture" through which the students are accustomed to using mot à mot translation in their linguistic practice considerably based on their intuitions.

Exceptional Cases

Group 1 with relatively lower degree of semantic prosody level (P15, P54, P115) are interviewed. They stated that they had never heard of SP before even though they were good at structural patterns and grammatical competence in English, which did not help them with the multiple-choice prosody test. They said that they could not differentiate between the near synonyms. What is more significant was that they thought there were more than one appropriate word in the test. They said that they had answered the questions mostly through intuition or random selection. These students' answers also implied that they conceived of language as a rational set of signs having mutual correspondences. However, they needed contextual prosodic knowledge, knowledge of collocates and near synonyms, and, what is more, prosodic awareness of such conventional nature of language which accounts for the appropriate words within a reasonable interval of frequency concerning a certain degree of intelligibility. These students explain their disappointment with the lower results in the prosody test by their lack of experience and awareness. They stated that this was due to previous lack of vocabulary courses or somewhat shallow modules of reading classes. This shows that semantic prosody was not efficiently and adequately included in the curriculum.

Group 2 with relatively lower degree of proficiency level (P7, P35, P44, P61, P62, P68, P73) were interviewed. They stated that they could have got a higher score in the proficiency test, but their performance was low for temporary reasons. They particularly highlighted the fact that they were not experienced enough to be seated in an online exam whereas they were relaxed within a familiar environment and not anxious during the prosody test. These students explained their disappointment with the lower results in the placement test. They were anxious to catch up with the flow of the questions within a strictly limited time. They additionally maintained that they did not have prosodic knowledge or awareness before, and it was surprising that they got fairly higher scores in the prosody test. They said that they accidentally differentiated between the near synonyms as they circled the questions mostly through random selection or intuition. Group 2 presented similar behaviours with Group 1 regarding their strategy of word choice.

Implications

Pedagogical Implications: The number of literature courses should be increased; the content of these items should be ameliorated, and their related material should be enhanced in EFL classroom. The integration of literary content, vocabulary development techniques and semantic prosody strategies can hold an efficient means of increasing awareness. In fact, the literary content should not be limited to strict types so that each learner can be motivated in accordance with their interests (i.e. novel, short story, magazine).

Critical Implications: Regarding critical implications, increased awareness of collocates and near synonyms with high frequency within reasonable range of alternatives may help improve fluency and/or comprehension in figural language (literary language and idiomatic expressions) as well as literal language. Since literature is a combination of stylistic and figural patterns (Cirakli, 2018), the learner's mindset can be alerted about discordances as well as accordance.

Linguistic Implications: The study sets out from the ground setting convictions of postcolonial linguistics that no culture and language is better than the other. Similarly, the descriptive approach of corpus linguistics and the studies on semantic prosody do not draw on what is more appropriate than the other. Rather, the primary issues of intelligibility and communication in language use should be carefully handled in the post-method era and postcolonial period. This implies that the learning settings should increase the learners' awareness of the arbitrary status of language and the appropriateness of the collocates or near synonyms is a matter of historical conventions and deeply rooted social agreements.

Corpus Implications: Corpus is mainly concerned with descriptive picture and organic development of language. What counts in corpus linguistics is not a "standard" language according to which we can judge the linguistic performance of a user. Instead, corpus tries to provide the readers with a reasonable interval of acceptable words with considerable frequency. This is not an imposition of a norm or standard language but equipping the learners with reliable data / knowledge so that they can be more confident in language use and more fluent, accurate, and most importantly "intelligible", regardless of which communication, the primary and essential principle of language, is hardly possible.

Limitations of the Study

Instrument: The semantic prosody test and proficiency test used in the research were open-ended multiple-choice data collection instruments. So, the intrinsic limitations of these instruments should also be considered regarding the results.

Competence-Performance: The semantic prosody test evaluated the competence of the participants rather than their performance concerning their passive memory. The students' productive preferences, inclinations and tendencies were hardly considered and investigated within tangible data.

Sampling: It needs to stress here, not merely as a limitation but as a reminder about the focus of sampling, this study is limited to the tertiary level ELL Students as EFL Learners.

Prescriptive-Descriptive: The fact that the research seems like a prescriptive study rather than its descriptive content (collocations and near-synonyms) might be considered a limitation in such studies; however, the researcher provided the necessary theoretical explanations both in methodology and results sections.

Further Suggestions

By following the same procedures, some other variables could be included in the study such as gender or CEFR proficiency levels. In addition, instead of including only freshmen at university, a whole English language department can be included in the research by classifying them; however, it may bring various variables and external factors affecting the levels of learners. Moreover, while investigating the semantic prosody levels of the students, to what extent their short-term memories, long-term memories and selective memories affected their preferences requires further research. On the other hand, these methods can be applied to EFL teachers by following the same or similar procedures. Thus, EFL teachers' competence for teaching semantic prosody can be evaluated.

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APPENDIXES

SEMANTIC PROSODY TEST

(please fill in the blanks with the word(s) which you think is/are the most appropriate)

1. Finally, Mary's death and……………burial on St. Catherine's Island constitutes the story's main theme.

a. following
b. subsequent
c. both 'following' and ' subsequent
d. I am not sure.

2. In the process of designing reading instruction, teachers can implement the……………strategies in order to improve self-efficacy in reading.

a. following
b. subsequent
c. both 'following' and ' subsequent
d. I am not sure.

3. The interviewing method combines a short scenario conveyed in words and illustrations with   ……………questions related to the scenario.

a. following
b. subsequent
c. both 'following' and ' subsequent'
d. I am not sure.

4. In order to……………both of these tasks, and to reduce the number of variables in the model, we performed two sets of all-subsets regressions.

a. accomplish
b. achieve
c. both ' accomplish ' and 'achieve'
d. I am not sure.

5.Sample size was determined by using a 2-level hierarchical model to……………80% power at a 5% level of significance.

a. accomplish
b. achieve
c. both ' accomplish ' and 'achieve'
d. I am not sure.

6. Teachers often state that there is not enough time to……………desired goals in the classroom.

a. accomplish
b. achieve
c. both ' accomplish ' and 'achieve'
d. I am not sure.

Appendix 1: (Continue)

7. Due to the……………nature of this study, the dearth of information regarding heart rate response to exercise by children with ASD, no hypotheses were proposed.

a. initial
b. preliminary
c. both 'initial' and 'preliminary'
d. I am not sure.

8. ……………findings suggest that benefits are experienced as' bundles' and that adults talk about their participation in adult education as a form of' taking control' of their lives.

a. initial
b. preliminary
c. both 'initial' and 'preliminary'
d. I am not sure.

9. Prosody did improve from……………reading to final reading across all conditions for participants, indicating that repeated reading of passages has an influence on this variable.

a. initial
b. preliminary
c. both 'initial' and 'preliminary'
d. I am not sure.

10. There must be an……………number of staff/advisors to respond to student needs.

a. sufficient
b. adequate
c. both ' sufficient' and 'adequate'
d. I am not sure.

11. Given the positional asymmetries for stopping of fricatives and affricates, it is important that ……………opportunities are provided for evaluating these phonemes in word-initial position.

a. sufficient
b. adequate
c. both ' sufficient' and 'adequate'
d. I am not sure.

12. The outbreak would have been controlled with provision of safe and……………drinking water.

a. sufficient
b. adequate
c. both ' sufficient' and 'adequate'
d. I am not sure.

13. Others range from three feet……………and six inches wide.

a. tall
b. high
c. both ' tall' and 'high'
d. I am not sure.

14. This goal should be facilitated by the current……………position of books in youth popular culture

a. tall
b. high
c. both ' tall' and 'high'
d. I am not sure.

15. The fifth was a very……………man.

a. tall
b. high
c. both ' tall' and 'high'
d. I am not sure.

16. That was a……………surprise.

a. big
b. large
c. both ' big' and 'large'
d. I am not sure.

17. The Karen people are a……………ethnic minority from Thailand and Burma.

a. big
b. large
c. both ' big' and 'large'
d. I am not sure.

18. The maps are displayed on a……………screen above the orchestra.

a. big
b. large
c. both 'big' and 'large'
d. I am not sure.

19. ……………our data suggest that a discrepancy exists between the amount of time leaders spend on their leadership position and the amount of compensation that is derived from their position.

a. lastly
b. finally
c. both 'lastly' and 'finally'
d. I am not sure.

20. ……………the teacher will ask that student to read from the beginning of that sentence.

a. lastly
b. finally.
c. both ' lastly' and 'finally'
d. I am not sure.

21. Participants were asked to follow along silently as the examiner read the story aloud. ……………participants read the passage again to assess prosody and oral retell fluency.

a. lastly
b. finally
c. both ' lastly' and 'finally'
d. I am not sure.

22. I……………that this is what he had in mind.

a. doubt
b. suspect
c. both ' doubt' and 'suspect'
d. I am not sure.

23. No ……………, students learn best when they engage actively in the learning process.

a. doubt
b. suspect
c. both ' doubt' and 'suspect'
d. I am not sure.

24. We……………that insufficient power explains the failure to find a longitudinal relationship between spelling and reading fluency.

a. doubt
b. suspect
c. both 'doubt' and 'suspect'
d. I am not sure.

25. This study will attempt to……………differences in achievement between the two groups of lower performing tutors.

a. compare
b. contrast
c. both ' compare' and 'contrast'
d. I am not sure.

26. An objective was to……………growth with a variable that is less well known: achievement over time.

a. compare
b. contrast
c. both ' compare' and 'contrast'
d. I am not sure.

27. As in the Parisian slaves by Francavilla and Bordoni, Tacca presents the slaves with hands bound behind their backs, but beyond that, their postures and physiognomies expressively……………with each other.

a. compare
b. contrast
c. both ' compare' and 'contrast'
d. I am not sure.

28. An……………voice advised him to leave that place, and so the treacherous Jews could not carry out their design.

a. inner
b. interior
c. both ' inner' and 'interior'
d. I am not sure.

29. The New York……………designer's famous proclamation might serve as a warning to all patrons of domestic architecture.

a. inner
b. interior
c. both ' inner' and 'interior'
d. I am not sure.

30. The survey provides a validated (2123) 15-item total impact score that indicates the overall impact of the child's……………on the family.

a. situation
b. condition
c. both ' situation' and 'condition'
d. I am not sure.

31. How this……………developed is a question insufficiently discussed in books on American music education history.

a. situation
b. condition
c. both 'situation' and 'condition'
d. I am not sure.

32. In this……………, how much actual tutoring do the lower performing students engage in?

a. situation
b. condition
c. both ' situation' and 'condition'
d. I am not sure.

33. Social mobilization efforts to increase vaccination acceptance are ongoing in Katanga because of a relatively high frequency of parents who……………to have their children vaccinated, some for religious reasons.

a. refuse
b. reject
c. both ' refuse' and 'reject'
d. I am not sure.

34. The Faculty of Occupational Medicine (FOM) voted in September 2014 to……………the proposal by their respective boards to come together as a single OH body.

a. refuse
b. reject
c. both ' refuse' and 'reject'
d. I am not sure.

35. If you……………to make a promise, the result is certain and produces immediate anger in a larger number of voters.

a. refuse
b. reject
c. both ' refuse' and 'reject'
d. I am not sure.

36. Given the recent attention to……………reading we wondered if this instructional approach, could be effective.

a. close
b. intimate
c. both 'close' and 'intimate'
d. I am not sure.

37. This issue of " no consequence " is pertinent to an understanding of the painted image of ……………relationships between women and dogs that allow for subjectivity in the experience of pleasure.

a. close
b. intimate
c. both ' 'close' and 'intimate'
d. I am not sure.

38. Grant Street was founded in 1992 to provide a/an……………academic setting to students who could not find success in large urban schools.

a. close
b. intimate
c. both 'close' and 'intimate'
d. I am not sure.

39. This circumstance provides us with the……………to get to know them better than most of the other staff members do.

a. chance
b. opportunity
c. both 'chance' and 'opportunity'
d. I am not sure.

40. It also provided……………for students to combine out-of-school literacies with academic literacies by tapping into their digital world.

a. chance
b. opportunity
c. both 'chance' and 'opportunity'
d. I am not sure.

41. This can improve the……………of pregnancy in women with proximal tubal obstruction.

a. chance
b. opportunity
c. both 'chance' and 'opportunity'
d. I am not sure.

42. These students did not want to share information about their interactions with and impressions of other people in a setting that, to them, did not feel sufficiently …………….

a. safe
b. secure
c. both 'safe' and 'secure'
d. I am not sure.

43. Generally other vaccines are……………, including MMR, which contains only a negligible quantity of egg ovalbumin.

a. safe
b. secure
c. both 'safe' and 'secure'
d. I am not sure.

44. The most……………option with public WiFi is using a virtual private network (VPN) service such as Hotspot Shield.

a. safe
b. secure
c. both 'safe' and 'secure'
d. I am not sure.

45. There they are taught that the astounding opening gambit of the war-- '' the crossing of the most difficult water……………in the world.

a. barrier
b. obstacle
c. both 'barrier' and 'obstacle'
d. I am not sure.

46. Lack of consistent RTI meetings and training became a/an……………for these teachers who, accordingly, expressed concerns about their roles with the RTI specialist and administrators.

a. barrier
b. obstacle
c. both 'barrier' and 'obstacle'
d. I am not sure.

47. With the popularity of mobile technology, lack of access to the Internet is no longer a ……………for seeking health information for people of varying ethnicities, ages, and incomes.

a. barrier
b. obstacle
c. both 'barrier' and 'obstacle'
d. I am not sure.

48. It is reasonable that information from 100 students taught by the same teacher would lead to a more ……………estimate of teacher effectiveness than information from only five students.

a. accurate
b. precise
c. both 'accurate' and 'precise'
d. I am not sure.

49. Three additional principles to further intensify instruction: providing repeated practice, correcting errors, and using ……………language.

a. accurate
b. precise
c. both 'accurate' and 'precise'
d. I am not sure.

50. The vegetation species composition was determined by employing the quadrant method which is the most……………method to survey vegetation variables in a variety of habitats.

a. accurate
b. precise
c. both 'accurate' and 'precise'
d. I am not sure.

51. I fear that this ecumenical……………will not be reproduced in future iterations of training for ministries.

a. promise
b. commitment
c. both 'promise' and 'commitment'
d. I am not sure.

52. I think some level of……………to a team and saying I will be there at these times, I will commit to doing that.

a. promise
b. commitment
c. both 'promise' and 'commitment'
d. I am not sure.

53. Verdier makes her……………to stay in her coach when she leaves the house to run errands.

a. promise
b. commitment
c. both 'promise' and 'commitment'
d. I am not sure.

54. A second approach would be to argue that these new churches or ecclesial communities are not churches in the……………sense.

a. proper
b. appropriate
c. both 'proper' and 'appropriate'
d. I am not sure.

55. Results of this study support the importance of administrators' communicating purposefully about this change, planning for……………training, developing collaboration through learning communities.

a. proper
b. appropriate
c. both 'proper' and 'appropriate'
d. I am not sure

56. The short-cycle reading performance is a monthly grade-level……………reading fluency and comprehension assessment.

a. proper
b. appropriate
c. both 'proper' and 'appropriate'
d. I am not sure

57. In a series of……………poems whose titles read like newspaper headlines," 33 " reports in minute detail the fraud and coercion characterizing voting in his day.

a. ironic
b. sarcastic
c. both 'ironic' and 'sarcastic'
d. I am not sure.

58. I got a C on the Spoken Word unit in English class for turning in……………poems about how Buttercup from Powerpuff Girls was my childhood hero and how great cats are.

a. ironic
b. sarcastic
c. both 'ironic' and 'sarcastic'
d. I am not sure

59. When we were in graduate school, one professor made a……………remark to a grad student who told him that she wished she had more time to spend with her baby.

a. ironic
b. sarcastic
c. both 'ironic' and 'sarcastic'
d. I am not sure

60. What would happen to those adepts " searching after the Philosopher's Stone, " Barbon queried, # if they should at last……………to find it?

a. happen
b. set in
c. both 'happen' and 'set in'
d. I am not sure.

61. Stories……………England and Europe lent a touch of exoticism to the popular tales of premature death and burial and bolstered their credibility.

a. happen
b. set in
c. both 'happen' and 'set in'
d. I am not sure.

62. The current review was……………the context of whether there has been any improvement in tests of speech sound production in children in the 30 years.

a. happen
b. set in
c. both 'happen' and 'set in'
d. I am not sure.

63. Implant rupture or malposition (63, 64) and capsular contracture may ……………more frequently in patients undergoing radiation therapy.

a. occur
b. take place
c. both 'occur' and 'take place'
d. I am not sure.

64. Interdisciplinary thematic units can……………in the general classroom or the arts classroom, or both simultaneously.

a. occur
b. take place
c. both 'occur' and 'take place'
d. I am not sure.

65. This discussion would ……………before the review so that any development needs arising can be incorporated onto the appraisal/performance review document.

a. occur
b. take place
c. both 'occur' and 'take place'
d. I am not sure.

66. Over the years has produced many solid programs and materials for use in local communities in their efforts to meet together, to work on our long history; and to ……………a better world for all people in our society.

a. cause
b. bring about
c. both 'cause' and 'bring about'
d. I am not sure.

67. Most activists have come to believe that the protest wave has transformed into a revolution that will   ……………the fall of the regime.

a. cause
b. bring about
c. both 'cause' and 'bring about'
d. I am not sure.

68. High-energy traumas have the potential to……………several life-threatening injuries such as pneumothorax, closed head injury, arterial injury, pulmonary contusion, and splenic or liver laceration (4, 8).

a. cause
b. bring about
c. both 'cause' and 'bring about'
d. I am not sure.

69. Those who arrived as slaves, and thus had no choice about it, survived an ordeal that is ……………beyond modern imagination and passed that incredible strength down to their descendants.

a. utterly
b. absolutely
c. both 'utterly' and 'absolutely'
d. I am not sure.

70. This list is not……………comprehensive -- no list could be -- but it gives an idea of the things that might cause genuinely persistent crying.

a. utterly
b. absolutely
c. both 'utterly' and 'absolutely'
d. I am not sure.

71. I……………must also thank my predecessors, who have responsibly guided RUSA and contributed an innumerable number of volunteer hours in support of the association and our members.

a. utterly
b. absolutely
c. both 'utterly' and 'absolutely'
d. I am not sure.

72. This……………may be evidence to support an argument that we are correctly identifying which students to refer for services.

a. result
b. outcome
c. both 'result' and 'outcome'
d. I am not sure.

73. ……………of infection is often dependent on the patient's immune competence, but co-infection by other bacteria has been suggested to be relevant in 30% of adult cases of CAP (20).

a. result
b. outcome
c. both 'result' and 'outcome'
d. I am not sure.

74. This is a direct……………of an increase in the students' self-regulation.

a. result
b. outcome
c. both 'result' and 'outcome'
d. I am not sure.

75. The gravest……………of this is sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP), which can occur if AED therapy is inadvertently stopped.

a. consequence
b. aftermath
c. both 'consequence' and 'aftermath'
d. I am not sure.

76. ……………of the recent HeV outbreaks was a move to eradicate bat populations, despite their crucial environmental roles in pollination and reduction of the insect population.

a. consequence
b. aftermath
c. both 'consequence' and 'aftermath'
d. I am not sure.

77. In the ……………of devastation from Hurricane Katrina, traditions of community are key reminders that we can rebuild families, homes, and even our beloved cities.

a. consequence
b. aftermath
c. both 'consequence' and 'aftermath'
d. I am not sure.

78. Many Westerners request antibiotics for these viruses because they want to……………their symptoms.

a. relieve
b. soothe is appropriate
c. both ' relieve ' and 'soothe'
d. I am not sure.

79. Some of these had already died under Clinton, but whereas Clinton had tried to ……………international anger by holding out hope that the United States might eventually ratify them, Bush opposed them on principle.

a. relieve
b. soothe is appropriate
c. both ' relieve ' and 'soothe'
d. I am not sure.

80. This advantage worked to……………the ascetic's anxiety before the martyr, just as much as it provoked the anxiety of the laity before religious lives judged in principle to be more.

a. relieve
b. soothe is appropriate
c. both 'relieve ' and 'soothe'
d. I am not sure.

Appendix 2: Open-Ended Questionnaire

KATILIMCI KODU:		
1.	Genel olarak testteki boşluklara gelmesi gereken kelimelere nasıl karar verdiniz? Genel karar verme surecini kısaca özetler misiniz?	
2.	Boşluklara gelmesi gereken kelimeleri seçerken en çok zorlandığınız noktalar nelerdir?	
3.	Boşluklara gelmesi gereken kelime ile diğer eşanlamlı kelimenin farkına nasıl karar verdiniz? Kelimeler arasındaki farkı nasıl buldunuz?	
4.	Boşluklara gelmesi gereken kelime ya da kelimelerin doğruluğuna nasıl karar verdiniz?	
5.	Daha önce bu tur benzer kelime gruplarına arasında (örneğin yazı yazarken veya çeviri yaparken) seçim yapmanız gerektiğinde neye göre bu seçimi yaptınız?	
6.	Yazı yazarken veya çeviri yaparken eşanlamlı olduğunu düşündüğünüz kelimeler arasındaki farka ve kullanmak istediğiniz kelimeye nasıl karar veriyorsunuz?	
7.	Önceki eğitim hayatınızda (lise) aldığınız İngilizce derslerinde benzer anlama gelen kelime grupları ile karşılaştığınızda seçiminizi nasıl yapardınız?	
8	Sizce eşanlamlı İngilizce kelimeler arasında seçim yapmak gerekli midir? Bu secimi yaparken nelere dikkat edilmelidir?	
9	Sizce benzer anlama gelen kelimeler arasındaki farkları öğrenmek için neler yapılmalı?	
10	"Semantic Prosody" terimini daha önce duydunuz mu? İşaretleyiniz. Nerede ve nasıl duydunuz? Kısaca belirtir misiniz?	Duymadım □ Kısmen duydum □ Duydum □
11.	Bu test "Semantic Prosody" konusundaki farkındalığınızın artmasında ne derece etkili oldu? Kısaca anlatır mısınız?	

12.	Testteki … numaralı sorulara verdiğiniz cevaplar doğru cevaplar arasından seçilmiştir. Buradaki seçimlerinizin doğru olduğuna nasıl karar verdiniz? Kısaca özetler misiniz?	…	
		…	
		…	
		…	
		…	

ATTENDANT ID:		
1.	In general, how did you decide correct word while filling in the blanks?	
2.	What were the challenges you had while choosing the correct word?	
3.	How did you find the differences between near-synonym words in the test?	
4.	How did you decide which word is correct between the near synonyms in each question?	
5.	What was your criteria while deciding between near synonyms in writing or translation before?	
6.	How do you decide between near synonyms in writing or translation in general?	
7.	How were you deciding between near synonym words in high school?	
8	Do you think it is necessary to decide while choosing between near synonym words?	
9	What do you think to do for learning the differences between near synonym words?	
10	Have you ever heard of the term 'Semantic Prosody'? When and where?	I did not hear □ I partially heard □ I heard □
11.	To what extend this Semantic Prosody Test created awareness for you? Explain briefly.	
12.	… numbers were chosen among your correct answers in the SP Test. How did you decide these answers were correct while solving the test? Please, summarize.	… … … … …

Appendix 3: Participants

Table 18: CEFR levels, Use of English Scores and Semantic Prosody Scores of the Participants

Student ID	Gender	CEFR	Oxford – Use of English	Semantic Prosody Score
P1	M	A2	42	29
P2	F	A2	27	46
P3	F	A2	18	35
P4	F	A2	32	48
P5	M	B1	43	43
P6	F	A2	33	55
P7	F	A1	16	30
P8	M	A2	37	33
P9	M	B1	52	44
P10	F	A2	32	39
P11	F	A2	39	50
P12	F	A1	20	35
P13	M	A2	38	50
P14	M	A2	32	45
P15	F	B1	60	24
P16	M	A2	42	45
P17	F	A1	20	35
P18	M	B1	33	45
P19	F	A2	22	26
P20	F	B1	46	31
P21	F	A2	38	48
P22	M	A2	26	23
P23	F	B1	33	44
P24	F	B1	57	41
P25	M	A2	35	41
P26	F	A2	39	28
P27	F	A2	34	24
P28	M	A2	22	35
P29	F	B1	49	40
P30	M	A2	28	34
P31	M	B2	54	56
P32	M	A2	32	43
P33	F	A2	18	30
P34	M	B1	45	44
P35	F	A2	20	44
P36	M	B1	32	21
P37	F	B2	52	29
P38	F	A2	38	44
P39	F	A1	30	39
P40	F	A2	31	43
P41	F	A2	31	35
P42	F	A2	26	38
P43	M	A2	36	44
P44	F	A1	25	49
P45	M	A2	36	29
P46	F	A2	39	31
P47	F	A2	37	40

Appendix 3: (Continue)

Student ID	Gender	CEFR	Oxford – Use of English	Semantic Prosody Score
P48	M	A1	43	31
P49	F	A2	26	40
P50	F	A1	22	23
P51	F	A2	37	24
P52	M	B1	53	51
P53	M	A2	43	34
P54	M	A2	44	26
P55	M	B1	55	49
P56	F	A1	22	26
P57	F	A2	48	36
P58	F	A2	46	49
P59	F	A2	19	31
P60	F	A2	20	53
P61	F	A1	18	43
P62	F	A1	8	33
P63	F	A2	35	23
P64	F	A2	36	23
P65	F	A2	34	45
P66	F	A2	33	53
P67	M	A2	38	26
P68	F	A2	19	45
P69	F	A2	49	49
P70	F	A2	55	36
P71	F	A2	30	45
P72	F	B1	43	43
P73	F	A2	28	54
P74	F	A2	30	30
P75	M	B1	37	50
P76	F	B1	38	38
P77	F	B1	35	41
P78	F	A2	24	36
P79	M	B1	44	40
P80	M	B1	38	40
P81	M	B1	41	44
P82	F	A2	33	31
P83	F	B1	44	45
P84	M	A2	38	46
P85	F	B1	49	46
P86	M	B2	49	45
P87	M	B2	58	35
P88	M	B1	56	50
P89	F	B1	40	28
P90	F	B2	40	44
P91	M	B2	56	56
P92	F	B1	46	36
P93	F	B1	53	44
P94	F	B2	63	51
P95	F	B1	46	44
P96	F	B2	64	51
P97	M	B1	46	59

Student ID	Gender	CEFR	Oxford – Use of English	Semantic Prosody Score
P98	F	B2	50	40
P99	F	B1	50	44
P100	F	B1	51	44
P101	M	B1	35	33
P102	F	C1	63	46
P103	M	A2	31	35
P104	M	B2	59	35
P105	F	B1	49	44
P106	M	A2	35	35
P107	F	B1	43	40
P108	M	B1	38	46
P109	F	A2	34	44
P110	M	A2	40	51
P111	F	A2	38	38
P112	F	B2	56	45
P113	F	B1	43	35
P114	F	B1	42	45
P115	F	B2	57	38
AVERAGES			**38,37**	**39,69**

Table 19: The Participants' Methods of Deciding between Near-Synonyms (Question 12)

	collocations	context	experience	intuition	familiarity	knowledge	randomly
P1	xx		x	x			x
P2	x						xxxx
P3				x	xx		xx
P4		x		x		x	xx
P5		x		x		xx	x
P6		x		xx	xx		
P7							xxxxx
P8	x	xx			xx		
P9		x		xx			xx
P10	x	xx		x		x	
P11			xx	xx		x	
P12					xxx	xx	
P13				x	xxx	x	
P14				xxxx			x
P15			xxx				xx
P16		x	x	xx	x		
P17		xxx		xx			
P18		xxx	x		x		
P19		xx		x	xx		
P20		x		x	xx		x
P21							xxxxx
P22		x		xx	x		x
P23		x					xxxx
P24		xxx		x		x	
P25				xxxxx			
P26		xx		x		x	x
P27				xxxxx			
P28							xxxxx
P29		x		xxx			x
P30				xxxxx			
P31		xxx		x			x
P32		x	x	xx			x

	collocations	context	experience	intuition	familiarity	knowledge	randomly
P33		x		xxx		x	
P34		x	x	x	xx		
P35							xxxxx
P36							xxxxx
P37		xxxx			x		
P38			xxxxx				
P39		x		xxxx			
P40				xxxxx			
P41	xx	x	x	x			
P42	x						xxxx
P43				x	xx		xx
P44		x		x		x	xx
P45		x		x		xx	x
P46		x		xx	xx		
P47							xxxxx
P48	x	xx			xx		
P49		x		xx			xx
P50	x	xx		x		x	
P51			xx	xx		x	
P52					xxx	xx	
P53				x	xxx	x	
P54				xxxx			x
P55			xxx				xx
P56		x	x	xx	x		
P57		xxx		xx			
P58		xxx	x		x		
P59		xx		x	xx		
P60		x		x	xx		x
P61							xxxxx
P62		x		xx	x		x
P63		x					xxxx
P64		xxx		x		x	
P65				xxxxx			

	collocations	context	experience	intuition	familiarity	knowledge	randomly
P66		xx		x		x	x
P67				xxxxx			
P68							xxxxx
P69		x		xxx			x
P70				xxxxx			
P71		xxx		x			x
P72		x	x	xx			x
P73		x		xxx		x	
P74		x	x	x	xx		
P75							xxxxx
P76	xx	x	x	x			
P77	x						xxxx
P78				x	xx		x
P79		x		x		x	xx
P80		x		x		xx	x
P81		x		xx	xx		
P82							xxxxx
P83	x	xx			xx		
P84		x		xx			xx
P85	x	xx		x		x	
P86			xx	xx		x	
P87					xxx	xx	
P88				x	xxx	x	
P89				xxxx			x
P90			xxx				xx
P91		x	x	xx	x		
P92		xxx		xx			
P93		xxx	x		x		
P94		xx		x	xx		
P95		x		x	xx		x
P96							xxxxx
P97		x		xx	x		x
P98		x					xxxxx

	collocations	context	experience	intuition	familiarity	knowledge	randomly
P99		xxx		x		x	
P100				xxxxx			
P101		xx		x		x	x
P102				xxxxx			
P103							xxxxx
P104		x		xxx			x
P105				xxxxx			
P106		xxx		x			x
P107		x	x	xx			x
P108		x		xxx		x	
P109		x	x	x	xx		
P110							xxxxx
P111							xxxxx
P112		xxxx			x		
P113			xxxxx				
P114		x		xxxx			
P115				xxxxx			
TOTAL	**15**	**108**	**40**	**171**	**65**	**33**	**143**

Appendix 5: Photos during Data Collection

Figure 16: Turkish EFL Learners taking Oxford Online Placement Test in Computer Lab

Figure 17: A Realtime Photo of a Question in Oxford Online Placement Test
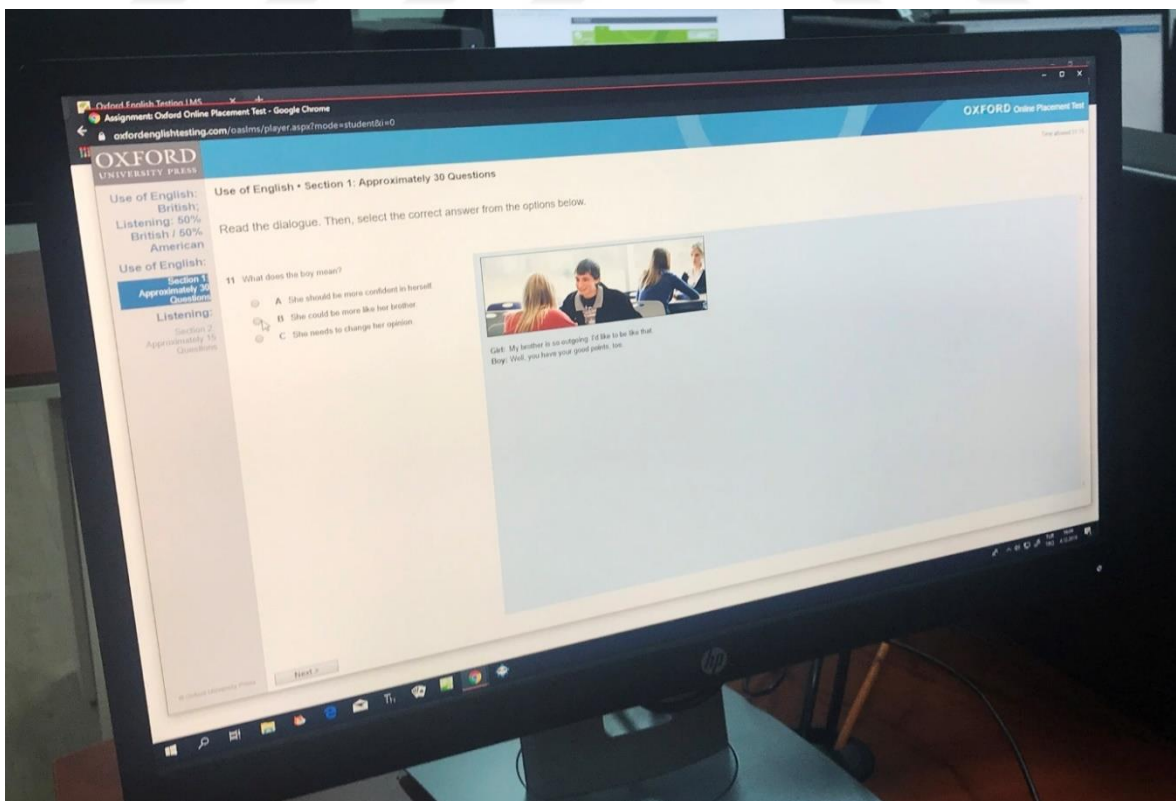
CURRICULUM VITAE

Tuncer AYDEMİR was born in Giresun in June 1991. He graduated from Hamdi Bozbağ Anatolian High School in 2009. Then, he graduated from the Department of English Language and Literature at Karadeniz Technical University in 2016. He started his master's degree in Applied Linguistics Program at Karadeniz Technical University in 2017. Currently, he works as a research assistant in the Department of English Language and Literature at Karadeniz Technical University.

AYDEMİR is single and speaks English.