

Investigation of University Students' Opinions on the Power Exercised by Teachers in EFL Classes: The Case of Türkiye

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the students' opinions on the power exercised by their teachers in the EFL classes in Türkiye. The participants of the study, which was designed as a survey method, consisted of 243 university students. To collect the data, the "Teacher Power Use Scale" was developed. The scale was developed in three stages. The results obtained supported a five-factor structure consisting of 36 items. The factors were named as "expert power", "reward power", "referent power", "coercive power" and "legitimate power", respectively. Descriptive statistics were computed to display the students' overall responses to the Teacher Power Use Scale. T-test was conducted to determine whether there were any significant differences in gender variable. One-way ANOVA was conducted to investigate whether there were any differences in the opinions of students on the teacher power exercises in terms of attending office hours, and accessibility of EFL teachers variables. It was obtained that teachers exercised expert power, referent power at high level while they exercised reward power, coercive power and legitimate power at moderate level. There was a significant difference in the coercive power dimension in terms of students' opinions on the power exercises in the classroom in favor of male students. Attending office hour was not a significant variable in terms of students' opinions on the power exercised by their teachers. Finally, the scores obtained from the scale differed significantly in the dimensions of the scale

except for the coercive power and legitimate power according to the accessibility level of EFL teachers.

Keywords: Power, Power relations, Teacher power exercises, EFL classes

1. Introduction

1.1 Power

According to broad definitions, power is the ability to influence someone or group on another to do something (McCroskey & Richmond, 1983). A person is said to have power over another to the extent that he/she is able to influence the other's behavior (Brown & Gilman, 1960). Power is also said to be created naturally as a result of interactions between people and that it circulates around participants (Fairclough, 2003). According to Cubillos and Novoa (2005), power is a significant aspect that is evident in how people connect with one another. In a similar vein, power is something that each and every person possesses naturally (Fairclough, 1989). As seen, power is not an object that can be owned by any individual. Therefore, instead of individuals creating power, human actions are shaped by power.

1.2 Types of Power

Although power is a difficult concept to conceptualize, there are various opinions on this subject. French and Raven (1968) argued that changes in power in individuals are the result of a direct influence by someone else. According to this view, they mentioned five types of power as coercive power, reward power, legitimate power, referent power and expert power.

Coercive power is when students believe that they will be punished by their teacher if they do not comply with the teacher's wishes. The effect of teacher coercive power depends on student perception of the possibility of getting punishment for inappropriate behavior. In environments with strong student groups, teacher may not have coercive power. Therefore, the coercive power of the teacher depends on the deduction of possible punishments from other sources, such as peers, depending on the degree of negative consequences that such punishments entail.

Reward power is students' belief that they will receive a reward when they comply with teachers' wishes. Rewards can be in the form of providing something positive or removing something negative from the environment. The connection between coercive and rewarding power is often not acknowledged, however, these two forms of power are opposite to each other.

Legitimate power is the belief that it is normal for the teacher to hold power. In this type of power, teacher thinks that he/she has the right to make certain demands and requests from the students as a requirement of his/her position. This type of power often encompasses issues related to classroom management and classroom interaction, such as controlling classroom time, determining which topic to study, and organizing interaction.

Referent power refers to the way in which students view their teachers as a figure of authority and hold them in this regard. This type of power is based on the relationship between

individuals. Specifically, it is the identification of the less powerful with the stronger and the desire to please him/her.

Expert power is that students see the teacher as more knowledgeable and expert in certain subjects. Much of the knowledge learned in the classroom is rooted in the power of expertise. This knowledge is shared with the assumption that it will be received and accepted by the student. The main effect of expert power is the changes it creates in one's mind (Paulsel, Chory-Assad, & Dunleavy, 2005).

Smith and Hains (2012) stated that these five types of power can be combined and often used in different ways in education to maintain order in the classroom. For instance, power in adult education is often obtained from sources such as expert and reward power. This is due to the perception that educators have exceptional knowledge and skills in a certain field of study, and the ability to assess the students' performance in class (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1997). Besides these, Cummins (2009) distinguished two types of power as coercive and collaborative power. Coercive power involves the utilization of oppression, abuse, inequity, and totalitarianism. It involves a person, group, or nation exerting control and influence over another individual, group, or nation to their disadvantage. On the other hand, collaborative power has a democratic expression, and it includes human rights and freedom. Collaborative power relations refer to 'being enabled' or 'empowered' to achieve more. In this study, the types of power classified by French and Raven (1968) were taken into basis.

1.3 Power Relations in the Classroom

The topic of power has been a subject of discussion in academic settings and the subject of various research studies since the early 1980s. Power in the classroom environment is the ability of the teacher to influence students without the students' own control (Méndez & García, 2012). According to Manke (1997), power is defined as a relationship structure that is built together by teachers and students. Teachers exercise power in the classroom to keep students under control (Plax, Kearney, McCroskey, & Richmond, 1983). They apply different types of power directly or indirectly. Both legally and traditionally, teachers have the right to make the final decision on educational matters. Along with the legal right, the school system and society affirm the reward and coercive power (Smith, 1977). Furthermore, it is stated that the type and extent of teacher power largely depend on the way teachers communicate with their students (McCroskey & Richmond, 1983). The best teacher power emerges as a result of using power to support the holistic physical, mental and moral development of students (Aidinlou & Amineh, 2016).

The positions of teachers and students in the classroom are also partly shaped by traditional societal roles. Typically, there is an unspoken dominance held by the teachers in the classroom (Song, 2021). In the traditional classroom environment, all decisions regarding the course are made by the teacher. In his study, Brooks (2016) found that the teacher acts as the questioner in a face-to-face setting, the teacher acts as the director, and students act as responders. Kyriako (2001) indicated that the development of teacher power is based on four key areas: teacher status, effective teaching, administrative control and discipline, and effectively handling disruptive student behavior in the classroom. Based on this, it can be

argued that the perception of teachers and teaching profession are also effective in the power bases in the classroom.

Contrary to teacher-centered classroom environment, in student-centered education, the course design is carried out in cooperation between the teacher and the student. By changing the balance of power in this way, it is possible for students to be more involved in the learning process, to be independent learners, and to make decisions about their own learning (Brackenbury, 2012). Studies on student-centered education also state that students should take an active role in the learning process; power should be distributed, requiring teachers, administrators, and decision-makers to empower students by giving them more control (Weimer, 2002). Overby (2011) stated that the power in the classroom should not be solely in the hands of the teacher. Both students and teachers should work together to create a shared power dynamic, and the teacher should not bear sole responsibility for the events and outcomes in the classroom. In the study conducted by Sakui (2007) it was obtained that some of the teachers had the opinion that the power does not lie in the hands of teachers, but also with the students. Manke (1997) also emphasized that while teachers have the resources to impact students' behavior, students themselves also have the means to shape the behavior of the teacher. Therefore, although the concept of power in the classroom includes relationships in the classroom, this power does not belong only to the teacher.

According to Doyle (2011), teachers who do not understand the power dynamics in the classroom and need to be in constant control are afraid to involve students in the decision-making process, and they perceive this as a threat for their authority and legal teacher positions. Teachers think that making all decisions and being responsible for everything in the classroom environment benefits students. In this situation, they cannot be sure on how they direct students' learning (Depaepe, De Corte, & Verschaffel, 2012). Research on learning motivation also shows that controlled environments reduce students' motivation (Broom, 2015). The fact that students have no right to make any decisions in their own education process prevents them from being independent learners and causes them to be dependent on authority, unable to do anything without rules and obligations (Weimer, 2002). In addition, according to Manke (1997), the view that the power belongs to the teacher and cannot be shared with the students causes teachers to overlook the learning needs of the students. As seen, when teachers control the learning processes, students' motivation and self-confidence are negatively affected. Therefore, teachers should share the power with the students and students should be given more responsibilities.

Agustina and Cahyono (2016) stated that teacher power is not to be questioned. Students constantly want to obey the teacher because they perceive him/her as the strongest person in the classroom due to the power dynamics. In fact, the power of the teacher in the classroom would not exist without his/her interaction with the students. Lack of classroom interaction causes the teacher to lose power. Therefore, if there is no interaction in the classroom, the instructor cannot guide the students and cannot exercise power. Vlčková, Mareš, and Ježek (2015) confirmed that in some studies teachers were found to be experts in the subject matter they thought, however they lacked the power dynamics that can make them rude and harsh. Anagaw and Mossu (2019) found that despite being well-prepared and knowledgeable,

teachers still struggled to successfully connect, inform, and relate to their students, which was due to poor communication skills (Maftoon & Shakouri, 2012). Based on this, it can be argued that the teacher power to some extent is useful.

The teacher power in the learning environment strongly affects student-teacher relations, student motivation and learning outcomes (Schrodt, Witt, & Turman, 2007). Critical evaluation of power dynamics leads to better teaching, more efficient classroom management, and a more sensitive and conducive environment in meeting students' academic, affective and social needs (Black, 2009; Hogan, 2002). However, with the economic, cultural, and educational developments in the world, it is crucial for teachers to gain a deeper understanding of power, the way power operates, and the various roles related to power among all participants involved in the teaching process. In this way, better teaching, more effective classroom management and a more effective classroom environment that can meet the social and academic needs of students will emerge (Lovorn, Sunal, Christensen, Sunal, & Shwery, 2012). Therefore, these power elements should be addressed in the learning-teaching environments.

1.4 Power Relations in EFL Classes

With the intense developments in science and technology in the 21st century, the borders between countries have begun to disappear and relations have begun to intensify. The fact that these developments take place in all areas of life and direct these areas has led people to communicate intensively with other nations, and therefore, knowing a foreign language has become a necessity (Moeller & Catalano, 2015). Therefore, individuals need to know a foreign language in order to closely follow these advances in science and technology, to keep up with these developments and to communicate internationally. Today, English language is a widely used international language. Compared to other languages in the world, English is widely used in academia, education, international communication, tourism, finance and business. It is possible for individuals to communicate with each other in international dimensions with English language. Therefore, it is common to teach English as a foreign language in education systems (Karakaş & Boonsuk, 2020).

In language classes, interaction plays a critical role. Besides using language to present the lesson, teachers also use language to build rapport with the students. Based on this, it becomes clear that interaction lies at the heart of language teaching (Walsh, 2011). In EFL classes, an important factor in how well students learn is the teacher-student relationship. In this situation, the teacher, who typically imparts knowledge, must be proficient in language use. The only way to guarantee that the learning outcome can be attained is to make sure that the teacher-student relationship serves this purpose (Purwati & Setiawan, 2022). When the students are active in English learning process (Hasan, Othman, & Majzub, 2015), teachers create a supportive classroom environment for students, and there is interaction between teacher and student in the classroom, students' English skill improves (Gupta, 2019). Similarly, Gómez et al. (2015) stated that when the power is successfully transferred towards the students, they feel responsible for their own learning, they develop positive attitudes towards learning while learning a foreign language.

However, English teachers tend to focus more on teaching language context than examining the power dynamics established in the classroom. This is due to the numerous responsibilities they have such as planning, instructing, adhering to a syllabus, grading, etc. It should be noted that unfair power relations in the classroom prevent students from learning in a safe and pleasant way (Toohey, 2001). In a study conducted by Forero-Rocha and Gómez-Rodríguez (2016), it was found that unequal power dynamics in the classroom had a detrimental effect on the English learning process. When frequent and disrespectful interruptions happen in class, students struggle to concentrate and grasp the material being taught. In addition, power relations affect class participation. Tananuraksakul (2019) emphasized that attractive power and reward power exercised by teachers can increase students' motivation and help them develop positive attitudes towards learning while learning a language. Similarly, expert power can help students enrich their knowledge and has positive impact on language learning. Tananuraksakul (2011) obtained that reward power and attractive power had positive effects on students' confidence in speaking English and attitudes toward teaching and learning the language. These findings show that, as in other fields, power relations in the classroom affect the language learning process. Furthermore, students' understanding of what they are learning can be increased. Hence, the purpose of this study is to make a significant contribution to existing research in the field.

1.5 The Present Study

The use of English by more and more people, especially for communication between non-native speakers, has led to the teaching of this language as a compulsory foreign language and the emergence of new understandings in the teaching process. Despite the efforts of individuals to learn the English language and use it effectively, there are various problems encountered in teaching this language effectively. Although teaching English as a foreign language is very important in Türkiye, the desired levels could not be reached in this process. In various studies, it is stated that the deficiencies in the education system (Aktaş, 2005; Oktay, 2015); deficiencies in the foreign language teacher training system, the inability to make effective language planning (Işık, 2008); problems such as passive students in the language learning process, not using technological tools enough, not adopting current methods and approaches, and not giving enough importance to foreign language education due to the examination system (Kuşçu, 2017) prevent reaching the desired level in teaching English as a foreign language effectively in Türkiye. It is discussed that students who take foreign language lessons, especially in public schools, starting from secondary education until the end of higher education, do not acquire skills at the desired level in subjects such as reading, listening and writing. It is a common understanding that foreign language cannot be learned in Türkiye (Oktay, 2015).

Despite these problems, sharing the power with students in higher education contributes to the character development of students. Additionally, when students are encouraged to contribute to their own learning processes, they are more involved in the curriculum (Humphreys, 2012). Power relations in language classes strives to develop autonomy in learning. Moreover, power sharing empowers students and frees teachers from the burden of undue responsibility (Korompot, 1999).

The teaching profession has a long and revered history in Türkiye, where teachers are often considered figures of dignity and authority. This perception of teachers is rooted in a traditional view of the classroom, where teachers were seen as the sole source of power and knowledge (Tombak-İlhan & Gündüz, 2022). In such an environment, teachers were expected to dictate the pace and content of learning, with students playing a passive role in their education. However, in recent years, there has been a shift towards a more student-centered approach to education, where teachers are encouraged to empower students and share power in the classroom. This new approach seeks to engage students more actively in their own learning and to create a collaborative, supportive environment in which students feel valued and respected. Despite these changes, the traditional perception of teachers as figures of dignity remains strong in Turkish society, and teachers continue to play a critical role in shaping the educational experiences of students. Therefore, it is important to understand how teachers communicate with students and to determine the power exercised by teachers in the classroom. Based on this, this study aims to determine the power exercised by the teachers in EFL classes in Türkiye. Accordingly, the following sub-problems were sought to be answered:

- (a) What is the level of power exercised by teachers in EFL classes in Türkiye?
- (b) Do the students' opinions on the power exercised by teachers in EFL classes in Türkiye differ significantly according to variables as gender, attending office hours to meet their advisors, and accessibility level of EFL teachers?

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

This study, which aims to determine the power exercised by teachers in the classroom, was designed as a survey study. The main purpose of the survey model is to reveal the current characteristics of a group such as attitudes, ideas, beliefs and behaviors without any intervention (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009).

2.2 Study Group

In the study, firstly the “*Teacher Power Use Scale*” was developed and applied on university students. The study group of the scale development stage consisted of 250 university students. In the determination of the study group, convenience sampling method was used. 138 of them were female and 112 of them were male. 89.2% were studying in a social department while %10.8 were studying in a technical department.

In the next stage, the developed scale was applied to university students in the EFL classes to determine their opinions on the power exercised by their teachers in the classroom. 169 of the students were female and 74 of them were female. Majority of the students (87.2%) stated that they did not attend the office hours to meet their advisors. 112 of the students thought that their EFL teachers were accessible at sufficient level. However, 25 of them stated that they found their EFL teachers insufficient in terms of being accessible.

2.3 Data Collection Tool

In the study, the “*Teacher Power Use Scale*” was developed to determine the level of the power exercised by the teachers in the classroom environment (Appendix-I). The development of the scale was completed in three stages. The first stage involved generation a pool of items and assessing content validity. In the second stage, both Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were conducted. Finally, in the third stage, reliability analyses were conducted.

2.3.1 Item Pool Generation

In the first stage, the creation of the item pool and content validity were performed. In the scale development study, it was seen that the structure and dimensioning of teacher power use were clear. Based on this, deductive approach was utilized (Tay & Jebb, 2017). French and Raven (1968) discussed the concept of power in terms of the classroom environment and mentioned five types of power. It is seen that there are enough explanations about these power types mentioned in the literature. For this purpose, national and international studies on the subject were examined in detail. Based on the deductive approach, the classification made by French and Raven (1986) was taken as the basis and it was decided to structure the scale as five dimensions.

Another issue to be considered in scale development studies is to decide on the target audience of the scale, the format of the items (Tay & Jebb, 2017). In the study, the scales related to the use of power in the national and international literature were examined and it was decided to develop the scale as a 5-point Likert scale. The items consisting of 55 items ranged between (1) I strongly disagree, (2) I disagree, (3) I partially agree, (4) I agree, and (5) I strongly agree.

In clarifying the feature desired to be measured in the study, various resources (Schrodt, Witt, & Turman, 2007; Lintner, 2008; Lovorn, Sunal, Christensen, Sunal, & Shwery, 2012; Vlčková, Mareš, & Ježek, 2015; Aidinlou & Amineh, 2016, Reid & Kawash, 2017; Özaslan, 2018) were used. After this stage, an item pool was created. While creating the item pool, it is recommended to write more items than the number of items designed to be included in the final scale form (Tezbaşaran, 2008). Moreover, it is recommended that the items should be simple, understandable, avoid jargon, use concrete words instead of abstract, and be specific (Tab & Jebb, 2017). These opinions were taken into consideration while writing the items, and an item pool consisting of 55 items related to the five dimensions determined was created.

After the item pool was created, the items were reviewed. For this purpose, expert opinion was taken. Opinions of two experts in the field of curriculum and instruction working at two different universities in Türkiye were taken. Moreover, a Turkish lecturer was consulted to control the items in terms of Turkish language. A pilot study was conducted by applying the draft form to 20 university students. Therefore, necessary arrangements were made in line with the opinions of the experts and the pilot application, and the number of items was reduced to 51.

2.3.2 Validity of the Scale

The study followed a two-step process for the validity, first conducting EFA and then CFA. The researchers first checked the data set for any missing data and found none. After verifying the assumptions, EFA was performed to assess the construct validity of the scale using IBM-SPSS software. The KMO and Bartlett's Sphericity tests were used to determine the appropriateness of the data for factor analysis. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.933
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	12788.653
	df	1275
	Sig.	.00

Table 1 reveals a KMO value of .93 for the 51-item factor analysis. A KMO value close to 1 (.93) signifies that the data is appropriate for factor analysis. The Bartlett's test also produced a significant Chi-square test statistic, $\chi^2 = 12788.653$, $df = 1275$, $p < 0.001$. Based on these values, it was concluded that factor analysis can be carried out on the 51-item scale.

EFA was applied to characterize construct validity. Factor analysis is used to reveal the underlying structure of many variables. After the analysis, the Teacher Power Use Scale, which was prepared as 51 items, was reduced to 36 items and these items were grouped under 5 factors. The explanatory total variance analysis results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Total variance explained table of Teacher Power Use Scale

Component	Initial Eigen Values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	15.527	43.130	43.130	15.527	43.130	43.130	8.690	24.139	24.139
2	4.923	13.676	56.806	4.923	13.676	56.806	5.335	14.821	38.960
3	2.512	6.977	63.782	2.512	6.977	63.782	5.326	14.794	53.754
4	1.569	4.358	68.140	1.569	4.358	68.140	3.788	10.521	64.275
5	1.316	3.656	71.796	1.316	3.656	71.796	2.708	7.521	71.796

Factors with Eigenvalues greater than 1 are deemed significant. The varimax rotation showed that these factors explained 71.796% of the total variance. The first factor explains 14.139% of the total variance, the second factor explains 14.831%, the third factor explains 14.794%, the fourth factor explains 10.52%, and the fifth factor explains 7.521%.

While creating the item pool, five types of power (reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, referent power and expert power) stated by French and Raven (1968) were taken as the basis. In this context, the 5 factors obtained were named as “*Expert power*”, “*Reward Power*”, “*Referent Power*”, “*Coercive Power*” and “*Legitimate Power*”. In the next step, the rotated components matrix was conducted, and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Factor loadings of Teacher Power Use Scale

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
M34	.873				
M41	.861				
M40	.859				
M42	.811				
M39	.805				
M36	.793				
M38	.784				
M35	.770				
M37	.734				
M33	.666				
M18		.847			
M22		.829			
M17		.823			
M20		.761			
M19		.719			
M16		.635			
M21		.582			
M7			.730		
M4			.709		
M6			.689		

M5			.681		
M3			.680		
M2			.667		
M1			.650		
M10			.647		
M47				.804	
M49				.767	
M50				.748	
M46				.736	
M48				.639	
M45				.564	
M51				.486	
M28					.775
M24					.714
M29					.705
M31					.593
Eigen Value	24.139	14.821	14.794	10.521	7.521

As displayed in Table 6, a 36-item scale consisting of five factors was obtained. The first factor consisted of 10 items, the second factor consisted of 7 items, the third factor consisted of 8 items, the fourth factor consisted of 7 items, and the fifth factor consisted of 4 items. The factor loadings of the 36 items ranged from 0.486 to 0.873.

Finally, Pearson's coefficient of correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationship between all the factors of *the Teacher Power Use Scale*, and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Inter correlations for the scale factors

Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Expert power	-	.578**	.782**	-.052	.217**	.828**
2. Reward power	-	-	.683**	.137**	.351**	.831**
3. Referent power	-	-	-	-.062	.184**	.841**
4. Coercive power	-	-	-	-	.509**	.325**
5. Legitimate power	-	-	-	-	-	.532**
6. Total	-	-	-	-	-	-

Note. $n = 250$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Table 4 shows that there is a significant positive correlation between the total mean score sub-dimension of the scale and its sub-dimensions. According to Büyüköztürk (2010), a correlation between 0.70 and 1.00 indicates a strong correlation, between 0.50 and 0.70 indicates a moderate correlation, and a range between 0.00-0.29 indicates a weak correlation.

2.3.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The construct validity of the scale was assessed through CFA, and the results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Error and fit index values

Fit Index	Values of the Scale	Good Fit Index Values	Acceptable Fit Index Values
χ^2/df	2.945	$0 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 5$	$2 < \chi^2/df \leq 5$
RMSEA	0.09	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq .05$	$.08 < RMSEA \leq .1$
CFI	0.83	$.95 \leq CFI \leq .97$	$0 \leq CFI \leq .1.00$
TLI	0.82	$0 \leq TLI \leq .08$	$.80 \leq TLI \leq .90$
SRMR	0.10	$0 \leq SRMR \leq 0.05$	$0.05 \leq SRMR \leq 0.10$

As seen in the table, χ^2/df ratio ($\chi^2 = 1720$ and $df = 584$, χ^2/df 2.945) is in an acceptable range (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). A RMSEA value equal to or less than 0.05 indicates good fit, between 0.05 and 0.08 an adequate fit, a value between 0.08-1 indicates acceptable fit, and a value greater than 1 indicates unacceptable fit (Kaplan, 2008). The CFI value varies between 0-1 (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu, & Büyüköztürk, 2010). A TLI value between .80-.90 indicates acceptable fit (Yaşlıoğlu, 2017), while a SRMR value between .05-.10 indicates acceptable fit

(Scherbelleh-Engel & Moosbrugger, 2003).

2.3.4 Validity of the Scale

The internal consistency method was used for the reliability of the scale, the findings are given in Table 6.

Table 6. Reliability of Teacher Power Use Scale

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Cronbach Alpha</i>
Expert power	.96
Reward power	.93
Referent power	.94
Coercive power	.83
Legitimate power	.81
Total	.94

The Cronbach Alpha value of the factors of the scale ranged between .81 and .96. The overall alpha value of the scale was found to be .94. An alpha value higher than .70 is an expected condition for internal consistency. The results show that the internal consistency coefficients of the scale are sufficient, and the scale is reliable.

2.4 Data Analysis

In order to determine the appropriate analysis, firstly it was checked whether the obtained data showed normal distribution. For this, skewness and kurtosis values were taken into account. In terms of the normal distribution, skewness and kurtosis values in the range of ± 1 are ideal, and acceptable if they are in the range of ± 2 (George & Mallery, 2003). The results showed that the data displayed a normal distribution for the relevant variables. Additionally, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test was employed to ascertain whether the scores had normal distribution. The results at this significance level did not demonstrate a significant difference from the normal distribution, as indicated by the fact that the computed p value in the analysis was higher than .05 ($.200, p > 0.05$). Based on these findings, parametric tests were conducted as part of the data analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means, and standard deviations were computed to display the students' overall responses to the Teacher Power Use Scale. Since the scale is a 5-point Likert-type scale, the Score Interval = (Highest score - Lowest score) / 5 formula was used to determine the levels. Based on this, the range between "1.00-1.79" was determined as very low level, "1.80-2.59" was low level, "2.60-3.39" was moderate level, "3.40-4.19" was high level, and "4.20-5.00" was very high level. T-test was conducted to determine whether there were any significant differences in gender variables. One-way ANOVA was conducted to investigate whether there were any

differences in the opinions of students on the teacher power exercises in terms of attending office hours and accessibility to EFL teachers' variables.

3. Findings

In this section, the findings of the study are presented in accordance with the sub-problems.

3.1 The Power Level Exercised by EFL Teachers

The findings related to the power level exercised by teachers are given in Table 7.

Table 7. Mean and standard deviation scores for Teacher Power Use Scale

Dimensions	\bar{X}	SS
Expert Power	3.93	.66
Reward Power	3.18	.84
Referent Power	3.47	.76
Coercive Power	2.64	.66
Legitimate Power	2.93	.66
Total Score	3.32	.45

When Table 7 is examined, it is seen that the mean score of expert power ($\bar{X} = 3.93$), the mean score of referent power ($\bar{X} = 3.18$) were at high level. On the other hand, the mean score of reward power ($\bar{X} = 3.18$), coercive power ($\bar{X} = 2.64$) and legitimate power ($\bar{X} = 2.64$) dimensions were at moderate level. Similarly, the total mean score was found to be at moderate level ($\bar{X} = 3.32$).

3.2 Students' Opinions on the Power Exercised in EFL Classes According to Various Variables

Another aim of the study was to determine whether students' opinions on the power exercised in EFL classes differed according to various variables. Independent sample t-test was utilized to see whether the students' opinions on the teacher power in EFL classes differed in terms of gender variable, and the findings are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Independent samples t-test results for gender variable

Dimensions	Gender	N	X	SD	T	p
Expert Power	Female	169	3.96	.65	.786	.433
	Male	74	3.88	.68		
Reward Power	Female	169	3.15	.84	-.877	.381
	Male	74	3.25	.85		
Referent Power	Female	169	3.48	.77	.438	.662
	Male	74	3.43	.75		
Coercive Power	Female	169	2.56	.62	-2.932	.004
	Male	74	2.83	.73		
Legitimate Power	Female	169	2.89	.65	-1.437	.152
	Male	74	3.02	.69		
Total Score	Female	169	3.30	.42	-.889	.375
	Male	74	3.36	.51		
<i>SD = 241</i>						

Table 8 showed that there was no significant difference between male and female students in terms of expert power, reward power, referent power, legitimate power, and total mean score [$p > 0.05$]. However, a significant difference was noted in the coercive power dimension, with male students having a higher score [$t(-2.932) = 241, p < 0.05$]. Table 9 displays the results of ANOVA analysis comparing the scores from the dimensions of the scale based on whether the students attended office hours to meet their advisors.

Table 9. One-Way ANOVA results for attending office hours to meet advisor

Dimensions	Weekly meeting	n	X	SD	S.V.	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Squares	F	p
Expert Power	None	212	3.91	.66	Between G.	2.503	4	.626	1.442	.221
	Half an Hour	8	4.15	.52	Within G.	103.291	238	.434		
	1-2 Hours	14	4.08	.35	Total	105.794	242			
	3-4 Hours	6	3.71	1.00						
	5 Hours and more	3	4.63	.55						
	Total		243	3.93	.66					

Reward Power	None	212	3.15	.85	Between G.	1.891	4	.473	.657	.623
	Half an Hour	8	3.35	.88	Within G.	171.353	238	.720		
	1-2 Hours	14	3.40	.45	Total	173.244	242			
	3-4 Hours	6	3.26	1.03						
	5 Hours and more	3	3.66	1.14						
	Total	243	3.18	.84						
Referent Power	None	212	3.43	.77	Between G.	2.784	4	.696	1.183	.319
	Half an Hour	8	3.82	.74	Within G.	140.000	238	.588		
	1-2 Hours	14	3.68	.47	Total	142.784	242			
	3-4 Hours	6	3.58	1.08						
	5 Hours and more	3	3.95	.81						
	Total	243	3.47	.76						
Coercive Power	None	212	2.64	.67	Between G.	.156	4	.039	.086	.987
	Half an Hour	8	2.67	.55	Within G.	107.327	238	.451		
	1-2 Hours	14	2.56	.79	Total	107.483	242			
	3-4 Hours	6	2.61	.33						
	5 Hours and more	3	2.76	.45						
	Total	243	2.64	.66						
Legitimate Power	None	212	2.94	.67	Between G.	.428	4	.107	.236	.918
	Half an Hour	8	2.81	.54	Within G.	107.644	238	.452		
	1-2 Hours	14	2.80	.61	Total	108.072	242			
	3-4 Hours	6	2.87	.77						
	5 Hours and more	3	2.91	.38						
	Total	243	2.93	.66						
Total Score	None	212	3.30	.45	Between G.	.959	4	.240	1.156	.331
	Half an Hour	8	3.48	.52	Within G.	49.360	238	.207		
	1-2 Hours	14	3.42	.22	Total	50.319	242			
	3-4 Hours	6	3.29	.60						
	5 Hours and more	3	3.74	.54						
	Total	243	3.32	.45						

Note. * $p < .05$.

As seen in Table 9, attending office hours to meet their advisor was not a significant variable for students' opinions on expert power, reward power, referent power, coercive power, legitimate power, and total mean score obtained from the scale [$p > .05$]. Table 10 presents ANOVA analysis results regarding the comparison of the scores obtained from the dimensions of the scale according to the accessibility level of EFL teachers variable.

Table 10. One-Way ANOVA results for accessibility level of EFL teachers

Dimensions	Weekly meeting	<i>n</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>SD</i>	S.V.	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Squares	F	<i>p</i>
Expert Power	None	6	3.00	1.26	Between G.	24.438	4	6.11	17.873	.000
	Insufficient	25	3.44	.61	Within G.	81.356	238	.342		
	Partially	83	3.79	.55	Total	105.794	242			
	Sufficient	112	4.10	.57						
	Very Sufficient	17	4.63	.33						
	Total	243	3.93	.66						
Reward Power	None	6	2.42	1.15	Between G.	15.974	4	3.994	6.044	.000
	Insufficient	25	2.70	.69	Within G.	157.270	238	.661		
	Partially	83	3.06	.80	Total	173.244	242			
	Sufficient	112	3.40	.81						
	Very Sufficient	17	3.6	.88						
	Total	243	3.18	.84						
Referent Power	None	6	2.72	1.14	Between G.	36.078	4	9.020	20.118	.000
	Insufficient	25	2.70	.57	Within G.	106.705	238	.448		
	Partially	83	3.27	.68	Total	142.784	242			
	Sufficient	112	3.72	.65						
	Very Sufficient	17	4.15	.64						
	Total	243	3.47	.76						
Coercive Power	None	6	2.42	.80	Between G.	2.796	4	.699	1.589	.178
	Insufficient	25	2.93	.77	Within G.	104.687	238	.440		
	Partially	83	2.64	.530	Total	107.483	242			
	Sufficient	112	2.58	.67						
	Very Sufficient	17	2.71	.909						
	Total	243	2.64	.66						

Legitimate Power	None	6	3.00	1.11	Between G.	.556	4	.139	.308	.873
	Insufficient	25	3.03	.69	Within G.	107.515	238	.452		
	Partially	83	2.96	.62	Total	108.072	242			
	Sufficient	112	2.89	.68						
	Very Sufficient	17	2.86	.58						
	Total	243	2.93	.66						
Total Mean Score	None	6	2.71	.97	Between G.	10.062	4	2.515	14.871	.000
	Insufficient	25	2.99	.29	Within G.	40.257	238	.169		
	Partially	83	3.21	.40	Total	50.319	242			
	Sufficient	112	3.45	.39						
	Very Sufficient	17	3.69	.41						
	Total	243	3.32	.45						

According to Table 10, the scores obtained from the scale differed significantly in the dimensions of the scale except for the coercive power and legitimate power scores. Significant differences were found in scores in relation to the expert power [F (4-238) 17.873, $p < .05$], reward power [F (4-238) = 6.044, $p < .05$], referent power [F (4-238) = 20.118, $p < .05$] dimensions, and total mean score [F (4-238) = 14.871, $p < .05$]. Scheffe test results were examined to determine the difference between groups of means. It was seen that, in the expert power dimension, this difference was found to be between the groups of “very sufficient” and other groups in favor of “very sufficient” group. Similarly, significant differences were obtained between the “sufficient” group and “none”, “insufficient” and “partially” groups in favor of “sufficient” group.

In the reward power dimension, significant differences were obtained between the groups of “sufficient” and “insufficient” in favor of “sufficient” group. In the referent power dimension, significant differences were found between the groups of “very sufficient” and other groups in favor of “very sufficient” group. In terms of total mean score dimension, significant differences were found between the groups of “very sufficient” and “none”, “insufficient”, “partially” groups in favor of “very sufficient” group. Similarly, significant differences were obtained between the “sufficient” group and “none”, “insufficient”, “partially” groups in favor of “sufficient” group.

4. Results, Discussion and Suggestions

In the study, firstly it was aimed to determine the power level exercised by teachers in EFL classes in Türkiye based on students’ opinions. It was obtained that teachers exercise various power bases at different levels. Students think that their teachers exercise expert power, referent power at high level while they exercise reward power, coercive power and legitimate power at moderate level. The highest mean score was obtained in expert power dimension

while the lowest mean score was obtained in coercive power dimension. Therefore, it can be argued that students perceive their teachers as competent and knowledgeable in specific areas. Emphasizing the use of expert roles in EFL classes can increase students' learning. Moreover, it has a key role for student motivation (Özdemir, 2013), perceptions of justice (Paulsel et al., 2005), effectiveness and productivity (Gündoğdu, 2022). In this respect, the presence of high level of expert power in EFL classes can be considered as a desired situation. When the literature is examined, it is seen that there are some studies with different or similar findings. In the study of McCroskey and Richmond (1983), students indicated that coercive power was less likely to be used than power from the other bases. Additionally, the study by Swasburi (2005) revealed that the students believed that the teachers exercised both coercive and legitimate power more frequently than the teachers themselves believed. On the other hand, the teachers perceived themselves as utilizing reward power, referent power, and expert power in the classroom. Gündoğdu (2022) obtained the finding that lecturers exercise expert power, referent power, reward power, legitimate power and coercive power, respectively in the classes. In some other studies (Paulsen et al., 2005; Turman & Schrödt, 2006; Özdemir, 2013) lecturers were found to exercise expert power more and coercive power less. In a study conducted by Sadık and Nasırcı (2022), high school teachers stated that they exercised coercive power at high level while they exercised legitimate level at moderate level. In the same study, students indicated that their teachers exercised coercive power at moderate level. Based on this it can be argued that power exists and functions in different ways in EFL classes.

In the literature, in some studies the positive effects of teacher power exercises are presented. Paulsel et al. (2005), for example, found that when students think their teachers are knowledgeable and competent, they think the classroom is managed fairly. According to Schrödt et al. (2008), referent power has a significant effect on the empowerment of students as learners. Finn (2012) found that university students were more likely to feel a connection with their instructor and feel understood when they perceived their teachers as being genuine, showing appreciation for their hard work, and exhibiting a mastery of the subject matter. Moreover, Finn (2012) indicated that the power bases had positive relationship with the quality of teacher-student relationships. Goodboy, Bolkan, Myers, and Zhao (2011) found that reward, expert, and referent power yielded a positive relationship with communication satisfaction. When the students had high communication satisfaction, they had less attempts to change their teachers' behavior. Therefore, it can be said that when teachers apply referent, reward, and expert power together, they can create an increased communication climate in their classroom. Another finding obtained in the study was that no significant difference was found in the expert power, reward power, referent power, legitimate power dimensions and total mean score according to gender variable while a significant difference was found in the coercive power dimension in favor of the male students. Therefore, it can be concluded that male students think that they can be punished by their teachers when they do not obey the rules or comply with the teachers' wishes at higher levels than female students. Sadık and Nasırcı (2022) obtained that gender created a statistically significant difference only in terms of informational power. This difference was found to be in favor of female teachers. On the contrary, there was no significant difference in terms of coercive power, expert power,

legitimate power, coercive power and sub-dimensions. The use of legitimate power and referent power by teachers in the classroom was perceived differently by male and female pupils, according to Swasburi's research from 2005. On the basis of these results, one could argue that it is impossible to draw broad conclusions about what students think about teachers' use of authority in the classroom. One could argue that student perceptions of how much their teachers use their authority in the classroom are influenced by interactions between students and teachers, the classroom atmosphere, and different teaching philosophies.

The findings also indicated that attending office hours was not a significant variable in terms of students' opinions on the teacher power exercises in EFL classes. This finding may be resulted by the fact that in this study, majority of the students indicated that they never attended the office hours. As a result, it can be said, as students do not spend time with their teachers in office hours, their opinions on the power exercises of the teachers do not differ. Consistent with this finding, Guerrero and Rod (2013) discovered that the majority of students failed to attend office hours due to conflicting schedules, forgetfulness, lack of necessity for help, or reluctance to ask for assistance. Smith and Hains (2012) obtained the finding that two-thirds of 625 undergraduate students never attended office hours, with many students declaring they were unaware of the purpose of office hours. Cafferty (2021) found that students did not attend the office hours at high level. Despite these findings, in the literature the importance of office hour is presented. In the office hours, students have the chance to get assistance in a course outside of scheduled sessions or lectures. Office hours also allow students to discuss issues with their teachers and to get emotional support (Pena-Sanchez & Hicks 2007); promote student-faculty interaction and enhance effective student learning (Hong & Hu Tianyou, 2012). According to the study of Guerrero and Rod (2013), office hours were found to have a significant and actual impact on a student's academic achievement. Office hours are crucial in creating good relations between the teachers and students as well as providing a valuable opportunity for individualized teaching and learning. In universities in Türkiye, the office hours application is a commonly used tool for students to connect with their teachers. The application allows students to schedule appointments with their instructors during designated times in the week, typically in the teacher's office. This system provides students with an opportunity to get additional support and clarification on course material, and to discuss any concerns or questions they may have. Office hours also give teachers a chance to get to know their students better and provide personalized attention. The application is designed to enhance the learning experience and promote a sense of community among students and teachers. Additionally, the use of the office hours application helps to streamline the scheduling process, making it easier for students to plan their schedules around their appointments. Despite these benefits, it is seen that some students in Türkiye may still prefer not to attend the office hours due to time constraints or other priorities. To get a better understanding, the reasons for why students do not attend the office hours should be examined. Additionally, teachers can encourage office hour participation by offering rewards for attendance, sending out frequent reminders about the times and places of office hours, providing clear instructions on how to use office hours, and stressing the significance of office hours to their students.

Finally, it was obtained that the teacher power exercises scores differed significantly in most of the dimensions of the scale except for the coercive power and legitimate power scores according to the accessibility level of EFL teachers. It was seen that when the accessibility level of the teachers increased, they exercised the expert power, reward power and referent power more. It was also seen that students' opinions on the level of power exercised by teachers changed depending on their opinions on the accessibility level of their EFL teachers. The students who thought that their teachers were accessible at very sufficient level also had the opinion that their teachers exercised the expert power, reward power and referent power. Based on this, it can be said that the close relationship established between students and teachers affects the students' opinions on the teacher power exercises in the classroom. Improving students' relationships has a positive situation which can lead to higher achievement, more engagement. Teachers and students should interact and communicate on an equal basis in order to realize the dynamic flow of power in the classroom and to advance the effectiveness of instruction (Song, 2021). Similarly, it can be said that in EFL classes, students should have close relationships with their teachers since learning a new language requires active participation in the classes. Therefore, teachers must be fully aware of the power dynamics in the classroom, accept that power should be shared between them and the students.

5. Limitations

Despite promising findings of this study, it has some limitations. This study is limited to EFL students studying at a state university in Konya province, Türkiye. Therefore, to get a better understanding on the power dynamics in EFL classes, more comprehensive studies can be carried out with large number of participants. Similar studies can be conducted by including more universities. This study adopted quantitative research approach and the data of the study were obtained using the Teacher Power Use Scale developed by the researchers. In the future studies, mixed method design can be used by conducting interviews with EFL students. Additionally, teachers' opinions can be taken, and it can be examined to what extent teachers' opinions and students' opinions on power differ or show similarity.

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Appendix A**Teacher Power Use Scale**

Items: 1-10: Expert Power; 11-17: Reward Power; 18-25: Referent Power; 26-32: Coercive Power; 33-36: Legitimate Power.

1. The teacher performs the teaching profession successfully.
2. The teacher can answer difficult and complex questions.
3. The teacher has a very high level of knowledge related to the subject.
4. The teacher keeps me informed about the developments in the field.
5. The teacher is successful in her/his field.
6. The teacher explains the points that I don't understand.
7. The teacher answers my questions about the subject.
8. The teacher organizes the lesson in the best way possible.
9. The teacher presents the topic in a clear and understandable way.
10. The teacher is an expert in her/his field.
11. When I make an effort in the lesson, the teacher appreciates it.
12. The teacher rewards me when I complete my homework on time.
13. The teacher rewards me when I exhibit the behaviors expected by him/her in the classroom.
14. The teacher pays more attention to me when I strive to be successful.
15. When the teacher likes my performance, she/he praises me in class.
16. The teacher appreciates it when I give correct answers to the questions.
17. The teacher rewards me when I make an effort in class.
18. The teacher listens to my problems.
19. The teacher helps me all the time.
20. The teacher tries to understand me.
21. The teacher serves as a role model for me.
22. I also talk to the teacher outside of class.
23. The teacher builds close relationships with me.
24. The teacher builds relationships with me in an open and approachable way.
25. The teacher acts like a friend to me.

26. The teacher punishes me when I do not follow the classroom rules.
27. When I do not fulfill the assigned tasks, the teacher ignores me as a form of punishment.
28. The teacher punishes me if I don't do my homework.
29. The teacher warns me harshly when I do not listen to the lesson.
30. Even though I criticize the rules set by the teacher, he/she wants me to obey the rules.
31. Even if I disagree with him/her, the teacher asks me to do what he/she says.
32. If I do not follow the rules, the teacher takes the necessary disciplinary measures.
33. The teacher states that only he/she can set the rules.
34. The teacher always asks me to follow the rules.
35. The teacher supports the view that she/he is more important than the students.
36. The teacher is in complete control of the classroom.

Note. Items are translated from original Turkish items by using the translation-back translation method. The students are asked to respond the items in the scale by considering their teacher. Therefore, the expression of “the teacher” was preferred.

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