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## Pre-Service ELT Teachers' Perceptions of Media Literacy in Turkey

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## Pre-Service ELT Teachers' Perceptions of Media Literacy in Turkey

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### Abstract

In a media-saturated society, it is becoming extremely difficult for audience, especially the young ones, to discern between positive and negative, fact and fiction, true and false, reliable and unreliable content in the media. In such an environment, Media Literacy, the ability to critically analyze, evaluate and discern media content and its production are imperative. Through a survey with participation of 183 undergraduate ELT students from Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University (Turkey), this paper attempts to find out media literacy perceptions of pre-service teachers based on the theories provided by the scholars in this field as well as to explore the relationship between Media Literacy perceptions of the students and their age, gender and class levels. Results showed that pre-service teachers attending English Language Teaching Department are eminently aware of the concepts of Media Literacy, no significant statistical differences were observed between the genders and among classes, the frequency of participants' use of media forms is not so high in comparison with their level of Media Literacy perception, they are highly aware of the benefits of Media Literacy to teaching and learning English Language.

### Keywords

Media Literacy, Pre-service ELT Teachers, Teachers' Perceptions

## INTRODUCTION

At the outskirts of the 21<sup>st</sup> century we find ourselves living in a media saturated, technologically dependent, and globally connected world. Facts and figures, up-to-the-minute news broadcasts, cell phone text messaging, downloadable music are all instantly available with the click of a mouse or the button on a touch pad.

How do students deal with all of these media messages? How do they interpret the messages they take in every day through television, the print media, radio and the Internet? Our students are bombarded by countless media messages daily coming from all directions.

Kellner and Share (2007) summarize the impacts of media on the society and individuals. The power of media shapes opinions, affects-decision making, and in many

cases, defines a world view of society and expected life experiences. Media culture is a form of pedagogy that teaches proper and improper behaviour, gender roles, values, and knowledge of the world. This situation calls for critical approaches that make us aware of how media construct meanings, influence and educate audiences, and impose their messages and values.

Heins and Cho (2003) state some of the dangers involved when interacting with media at a young age. The content of mass media is powerful in the eyes and ears of all people, young people especially. If we are hoping to grow a responsible and healthy-minded generation, we have to give them necessary “Media Literacy” education so that they can fully understand the motives, the agenda, and even the behind-the-scenes creation of media’s messages to which they are constantly exposed.

In a report of European Commission (2007) it is argued that “Media Literate” people will be able to exercise informed choices, understand the nature of content and services and take advantage of the full range of opportunities offered by new communications technologies. They will be better able to protect themselves and their families from harmful or offensive material. Therefore the development of “Media Literacy” in all sections of society should be promoted and progress followed closely.

Fedorov (2003) summarises the purposes of “Media Literacy” and draws its borders. “Media Literacy” relates to all media, including television and film, radio and recorded music, print media, the Internet and other new digital communication technologies. The aim of “Media Literacy” is to increase awareness of the many forms of media messages encountered in our everyday lives. It should help citizens recognize how the media filter their perceptions and beliefs, shape popular culture and influence personal choices. It should empower them with critical thinking and creative problem-solving skills to make them judicious consumers and producers of information.

In this study, first of all, media and “Media Literacy” will be defined. Several topics will be covered in literature review section to form a foundation of information useful in understanding the case. What “Media Literacy” is, the inescapable nature of mass media messages, media related risks, current “Media Literacy” trends in Turkey, and why Media Literacy education is needed at all levels of education will be addressed. Then, an overview of the current state of Media Literacy programs in Turkish Educational institutions will be provided. These topics all serve to build the case which students in Turkish schools and universities would greatly benefit from learning “Media Literacy”.

Although fairly new in Turkey, “Media Literacy” has long been a critical learning outcome in the international learning community. For nearly three decades, countries such as Canada, Britain, and Australia have mandated the integration of media education into elementary and secondary schools (Andersen, Duncan & Pungente, 2000).

## LITERATURE REVIEW ON MEDIA LITERACY

### **What is Media?**

The Oxford Online Dictionary (2012) define a “medium” as “a means by which something is communicated or expressed” and “the intervening substance through which sensory impressions are conveyed or physical forces are transmitted”. A medium is something we use when we want to communicate with people indirectly—rather than in person or by face-to-face contact. The word “media” is just the plural of “medium.” This dictionary definition tells us something fundamental about the media. The media do not offer a transparent window on the world. They provide a channel through which representations and images of the world can be communicated indirectly. The media intervene: they provide us with selective versions of the world, rather than direct access to it. The term “media” includes the whole range of modern communications media: television, the cinema, video, radio, photography, advertising, newspapers and magazines, recorded music, computer games and the internet. Media texts are the programmes, films, images, web-sites (and so on) that are carried by these different forms of communication (Divina, 2006).

### **Defining Media Literacy**

One fundamental problem in the field of Media Literacy is agreeing on a definition. Depending on the end being advocated technical prowess, personal expression, and critical thinking the operational definition of “Media Literacy” varies. Hobbs (1994) wrote that media education in the U.S. is “a child with a thousand names”. Different terms are used to describe the same basic concept of Media Literacy. Although different people categorize and define the concept of media education using different terms, the most broadly accepted phrase is “Media Literacy” (Chen, 2007). After surveying what many different researchers have speculated about Media Literacy’s meaning, one widely accepted definition emerged: “Media Literacy is the ability to decode, access, analyze, evaluate and produce communication in a variety of forms” (Aufderheide & Firestone, 1993).

In today’s world, it is more critical than ever for young people to be informed consumers of the information made available through diverse forms of media accessible to them (Semali, 2005). Media allow for the mass distribution of information and it is important to approach these information sources as socially constructed forms of communication and representation with inherent messages, values, and biases (Kellner, 2002). There has been a renewed public interest in Media Literacy both as a concept and as an educational goal. Media Literacy in educational terms involves teaching students to

be critical consumers of existing media forms (Buckingham, 2003; Brunner & Tally, 1999; Kellner, 2002).

The Audiovisual Media Services Directive (2007), one of the central instruments of European media policy, puts forward the definition of Media Literacy as the 'skills, knowledge and understanding that allow consumers to use media effectively and safely'.

Aufderheide & Firestone (1993) expresses that the fundamental objective of Media Literacy is, according to the Aspen Institute definition, a 'critical autonomy relationship to all media' organized around a set of common beliefs or precepts, which recognise that the media are constructed and that they have wide commercial, ideological and political implications.

The US Centre for Media Literacy (CML) identifies five key concepts in its CML MediaLit Kit (CML, 2009):

1. All media messages are constructed.
2. Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.
3. Different people experience the same messages differently.
4. Media have embedded values and points of view.
5. Media messages are constructed to gain profit and/or power.

The European Charter for Media Literacy has produced a comprehensive definition and set of principles which it invites institutions and individuals to sign up to. Encompassing an extensive range of cognitive and practical skills, the Charter proposes that media literate people should be able to (cited in O'Neill & Barnes, 2008):

1. Use media technologies effectively to access, store, retrieve and share content to meet their individual and community needs and interests;
2. Gain access to, and make informed choices about, a wide range of media forms and content from different cultural and institutional sources;
3. Understand how and why media content is produced;
4. Analyse critically the techniques, languages and conventions used by the media, and the messages they convey;
5. Use media creatively to express and communicate ideas, information and opinions;
6. Identify, and avoid or challenge, media content and services that may be unsolicited, offensive or harmful;
7. Make effective use of media in the exercise of their democratic rights and civic responsibilities.

### **Media Literacy is Not...**

Thoman and Jolls (2005) note that, because the definition of media literacy can be quite vast, it is almost easier to define what Media Literacy is not. For instance, they state that media literacy is not media bashing, but involves critically analyzing media messages

and institutions. It is not just producing media, although production skills should be included. It is not just looking for stereotypes or negative representations, but exploring how these representations are normalized in society. It's not just based on one perspective; rather, it encourages multiple perspectives and various viewpoints. Finally, media literacy is not an effort to restrict media use, but to encourage mindful and critical media consumption

In the report prepared by Divina (2006) it is stated that “Media Literacy” is not simply teaching with videos, the Internet, or other technologies, but it is teaching about the media in society. Media education is about developing young people’s critical and creative abilities. Media education is concerned with teaching and learning about the media. This should not be confused with teaching through the media, for example, the use of television or computers as a means of teaching science, or history. Of course, these educational media also provide versions or representations of the world. But media education is not about the instrumental use of media as “teaching aids”: it should not be confused with educational technology or educational media.

The Centre for Media Literacy (2009), also, argues that looking at a media message or experience from just one perspective is not Media Literacy because media should be examined from multiple positions and that media Literacy does not mean “don’t watch”; it means “watch carefully, think critically”.

### **Main Purposes of Media Literacy Education**

Media Literacy Education (MLE) is important today as more and more children have practical access to a variety of media both at home and at school. There is a need to develop new skills and competence that support users and consumers to become information literate. Because of the fact that MLE has a vital place in the education life of our children, a great number of Media Literacy experts have done a lot of studies to find out the purposes of MLE.

According to the research conducted by Fedorov (2003) MLE experts from all over the world agreed upon the list of purposes of MLE below:

1. MLE is needed to develop person’s critical thinking/autonomy.
2. MLE is needed to develop an appreciation, perception and understanding & analysis of media texts.
3. MLE is needed to prepare people for the life in the democratic society.
4. MLE is needed to develop an awareness of social, cultural, political and economic implications of media texts (as constructions of media agencies).
5. MLE is needed to decode media texts/messages.
6. MLE is needed to develop person’s communicative abilities.

7. MLE is needed to develop an appreciation and aesthetic perception, understanding of media texts, estimation of aesthetical quality of media texts.
8. MLE is needed to teach a person to express him/herself with the help of media.
9. MLE is needed to teach a person to identify, interpret, and experience a variety of techniques used to create media products/texts.
10. MLE is needed to learn about the theory of media and media culture.
11. MLE is needed to learn about the history of media and media culture.
12. MLE is needed for the development of creative skills of students (with the development of critical thinking and critical autonomy).

### **Media Literacy in the ELT Classes**

Haynes (2004) stated that students in English courses are increasingly using Internet and other authentic sources of the language for research and for pleasure. Many are choosing to go abroad to experience the language in other countries and cultures. In the English language classroom, as the skills of our students evolve, teachers can begin to show learners the subtleties of how vocabulary and images are used not only to convey meaning but also to influence our purchasing decision, for example, or to further the values of a given community. In addition to developing critical thinking skills, the goal of media literacy education is to encourage students to become more prudent consumers and more discerning world citizens by maintaining a healthy inquisitiveness about the information produced by the media.

Students in English courses often have trouble seeing beyond the words and pictures on the page to interpret the meaning behind the symbols. They have not yet learned to recognize what is not obvious. Media literacy education is one way to show them how to formulate questions about the symbols they see (Haynes, 2004).

Yildiz (2002) draws our attention to the difficulty of interpreting the correct messages sent by signs and symbols in the texts. Many of our students do not yet understand that the message that was intended by the sender is not always the message that the students interpret.

Training in basic Media Literacy helps develop linguistic, academic, and critical thinking skills, which include knowing what questions to ask, taking context into consideration and imagining what is missing in a picture or report, and questioning the validity of an item by cross referencing with an alternative source. It also engages students' metacognitive skills through questioning, identifying "what you know" and "what you don't know," and considering diverse points of view. Media Literacy studies can assist learners in critically analyzing the information and the language they encounter, and help them learn to recognize "loaded" words and forms of expression. A high level of language ability is not as necessary as is a curiosity about how people obtain

their information, how that information is presented to them, and how what is presented shapes their values. This awareness can also lead to greater use of the student's creativity in oral and written expression (Haynes, 2004).

Haynes (2004) further argues that many EFL students throughout the world currently use a great variety of media sources in English to do research for presentations, reports and essays. Recognizing reliable Internet sources, for example, is part of the skills one develops through a study of media literacy. Learning to decipher fact from opinion is essential when supplying sources to support a thesis. Recent course books deal with a wide variety of controversial social issues. Students can be drawn to the role the media plays in shaping public opinion and attitudes around these topics: how the story is presented, what information is given and what is omitted.

As language teachers we can assist our students in making sense of the innumerable messages in English that overwhelm them daily in their academic and personal lives. Through media literacy they can become more aware of how they interpret the messages they take in on television and Internet and in the print and entertainment media. Media literacy education is a path along which they learn formulate questions about the symbols they see, whether pictorial or verbal. By learning to distinguish words and expressions that carry double meanings learners are more able to critically analyze the information and the language they encounter. In fact, if learners understand how and in whose interests the media operates, when they experience media from an authentic source, they will realize that the source itself is part of that cultural context (Haynes, 2004).

### **Teaching “Through” or “About” the Media**

There has always been confusion about teaching through media and teaching about media. Duncan et al. (1989) state that teaching through the media, while concerned with the language of media, primarily focuses on using media as a vehicle to initiate discussion or as a motivator for Language Arts classes. In other words, in teaching through the media, teachers use the media as a delivery system for subject content. No attempt to examine the delivery system itself is made. On the other hand, in teaching about the media, the delivery system, i.e. the medium and the message, are examined. Teaching about the media stems from the notion that media shape the world in which we live and therefore it is becoming increasingly important for students to understand the infrastructures of society (Fedorov, 2003).

Media education describes the process of teaching and learning about media and is different from teaching through or with media (Buckingham, 2003). However, many of the teachers who integrate media texts into classroom instruction are teaching through media instead of about media. In other words, teachers tend to use media forms solely as

vehicles for delivering informational content instead of as tools for teaching critical thinking about the content and form of media messages (Hobbs, 2005).

### **Media Literacy in Turkey**

Although it seems an approximately 80 year's background all around the world, the concept of 'Media Literacy' has had a quite short history on the agenda of Turkish educational policy (Taskiran, 2009). İnceoğlu (2006) states the current Turkish media, in particular popular TV, has a very big influence on the daily life of citizens.

The necessity of 'Media Literacy' education required some legal precautions within the frame of educational regulations. Ministry of National Education (MEB) established a commission of academics and media professionals to prepare a social awareness-media literacy course for elementary schools throughout the country in 2003 (Taskiran, 2009). RTÜK (Radio Television Authority in Turkey) and the Ministry of Education in cooperation began the 'Media Literacy' courses in five pilot cities (Ankara, İstanbul, İzmir, Adana and Erzurum) in 2004 following the training of the 30 teachers. This program was intended to be applied countrywide in the 2007-2008 educational year as an optional course for the 6th, 7th and 8th grade of 35,000 schools in 81 cities. RTÜK officials mentioned that their intention is to make it an obligatory course, and also stressed the importance of parental education on different platforms (Bek, 2006). Tüzel (2012) assert that from 2007 and on "Media Literacy Education", after piloting in several schools, has been taught as an optional course in the 6th, 7th and 8th grades of secondary schools.

Diğdem (2009) states that motivated by an inoculative approach, the aim of this movement was to protect 'vulnerable' children against harmful effects of media and to create critical and knowing recipients of media messages. As a result of this primary aim, these efforts could not go beyond the inoculative approach which can be seen as the immature phase of Media Literacy education. Additionally, the prevailing perception of considering children and youngsters as the passive receivers or victims of media prevented to elaborate the new relationships and uses of new media environment.

In almost every expression by RTÜK's head and its officers, the basis of media literacy is seen as children's being able to recognize the difference between fact and fiction. In the guide book prepared in cooperation with the Ministry of Education the protective approach can be traced in the focus of children seen as the 'most sensitive group' open to media effect, their being in danger, their being 'defenceless receivers', and the need to raise their consciousness against the media. As an education program, it gives priority to protecting children and youth against the possible harmful effects of the media. Therefore, the basic rationale of Media Literacy education is described as 'reducing the negative effect of the media on them' (Bek, 2006).

## METHODOLOGY

### Objectives

This study basically attempted to comprehend “Media Literacy Perceptions” of the pre-service teachers of English Language Teaching Department, as well as to explore the relationship between “Media Literacy” perceptions of the students and their class levels.

### Developing the Questionnaire

It took a long process to prepare the questionnaire that was used in this study. First of all, thesis, articles, and books related to the field of “Media Literacy” were collected and questionnaires used in this area were carefully scrutinized. Finally, a new questionnaire was developed on the basis of the resources stated in the Reference section.

As a result of the piloting and the comments from the ELT teachers one part was decided to be excluded from the questionnaire. The parts of the questionnaire were finally decided to be as: “Personal information of students”, “Media Literacy perceptions of the students”, “Dealing with media to improve English Language skills”, “Benefits of Media Literacy in English Language learning and teaching”. “To what extent are your teachers Media Literate in English classes”. Moreover, a qualitative semi-structured questionnaire which included open-ended interview questions was also utilised.

### Participants

The study was carried out at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Educational Faculty, Department of English Language Teaching in Turkey. The pre-service teachers who are 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th graders from the Department of English Language Teaching participated in this study.

A hundred and eighty three (183) pre-service teachers in the study. There were fifty (50) male and a hundred and thirty three (133) female students. There were fifty 1st grade, forty nine 2nd grade, forty three 3rd grade, and forty one 4th grade students in the study. The data was collected in the spring term of 2011-2012 academic year. The study was conducted on about the same number of students from each grade in order to be able to compare the results properly. None of the students of all grades had had “Media Literacy” education before. Concerning the semi-structured interview 15 voluntary pre-service students were asked to answer the questions prepared by the researcher. The responses given by the interviewees presented an insight into their knowledge and perceptions about media literacy.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

The questionnaire which is described above was exploited to collect data. This questionnaire has five parts. The first part aims to find out personal information about the participants. These were gender and class level. The second part asks questions to get the general “Media Literacy” perceptions of the students. Thirteen Media Literacy concept statements were included in this part. The statements in this part were designed according to likert scale and had these five options: I agree (5), I slightly agree (4), I am neutral (3), I slightly disagree (2), I disagree (1).

The third section aims to find out how often the students deal with media to improve their English Language skills. The statements in this part were designed according to likert scale and had these five options: Always (5), Usually (4), Sometimes (3), Rarely (2), Never (1).

The fourth part tries to find out students' thoughts about the benefits of “Media Literacy” in English Language learning and teaching. The statements in this part were designed according to likert scale and had these five options: I agree (5), I slightly agree (4), I am neutral (3), I slightly disagree (2), I disagree (1).

The last part aims to discover students' thoughts concerning the extent to which their teachers are “Media Literate” in English classes. The statements in this part were designed according to likert scale and had these five options: Always (5), Usually (4), Sometimes (3), Rarely (2), Never (1).

The data obtained from the questionnaire was analysed with the help of SPSS 15.0 for Windows (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) data editor. First descriptive statistics was used to find the frequencies. Then variance analysis was utilised in order to find whether there is a significant difference among the gender and class level responses. When it was seen that there was significant difference, DUNCAN test which is a multiple-item comparing test was applied to find out where exactly was the significant difference. That is to say, DUNCAN test, finally, was used in order to find out from which group or groups the significant difference derived from.

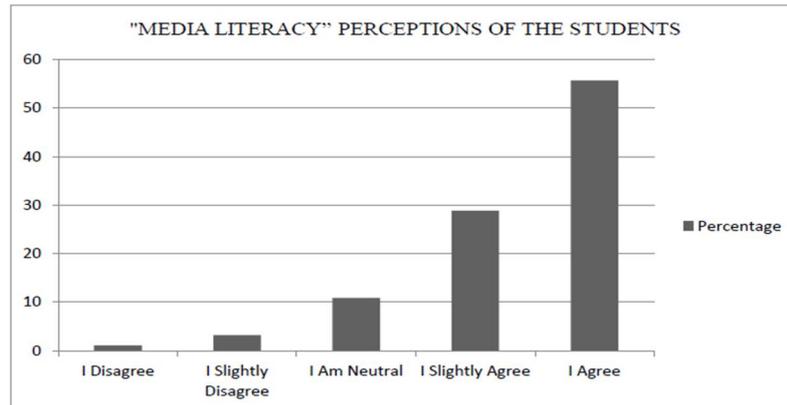
## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Media Literacy Perceptions of the Students**

Part I of the questionnaire was prepared to find out the “Media Literacy” perceptions of the pre-service teachers. The data obtained from a hundred and eighty three (183) participants revealed that about 56% of the respondents agreed, 29% of them slightly agreed, 11% were neutral, 3% slightly disagreed and only 1% of the whole participants disagreed with the Media Literacy concept statements which were prepared by the

researcher after a thorough review of the literature. All the statements that the participants were presented to express their thoughts about are related to the core concepts of Media Literacy which were mentioned in the Literature Review section.

According to the results, as it can be observed from the table, the majority of the participants proved with their responses that pre-service teachers are sufficiently aware of the “Media Literacy” concept.



**Figure 1.** Frequency of Participants' Agreement with the Media Literacy Concepts

The responses given by the participants to the interview questions are in line with the questionnaire results.

To the question “How would you define Media Literacy?” some of the interviewees answered:

Participant 1: “Media Literacy is being knowledgeable about media, TV, radio and other media forms. Being able to choose what you want to watch, hear or read”.

Participant 2: “In my opinion, Media Literacy means going beyond the traditional literacy”.

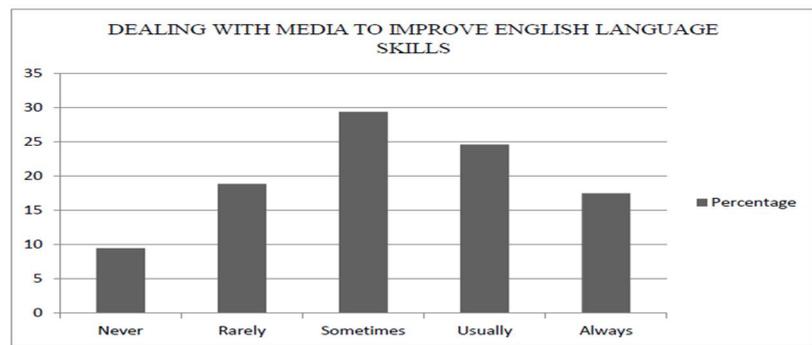
Participant 3: “Media Literacy is being a conscious audience”.

In order to find the answer to the question whether “Media Literacy” perceptions of pre-service ELT teachers are different in terms of gender and class-level, first, variance analysis was used. When it was found out that there were differences, DUNCAN test was utilised in order to reveal among which groups were the differences.

As a result of the variant analysis which was done in terms of “Media Literacy” perceptions, except the item number 101, no significant statistical differences were observed between the genders and among classes, ( $P= 0,078$ ). As for the item 0101, significant statistical difference was observed only among the classes, ( $P= 0,001$ ).

### Dealing with Media to Improve English Language Skills

Second part of the questionnaire was prepared to find out how frequent the pre-service teachers deal with media to improve their English Language skills. Nine questions were prepared by the researcher in order to reveal how frequent the participants exploit different types of media forms for the purpose of improving language skills. The results showed that the frequency of participants' use of media forms is not so high in comparison with their level of Media Literacy perception.

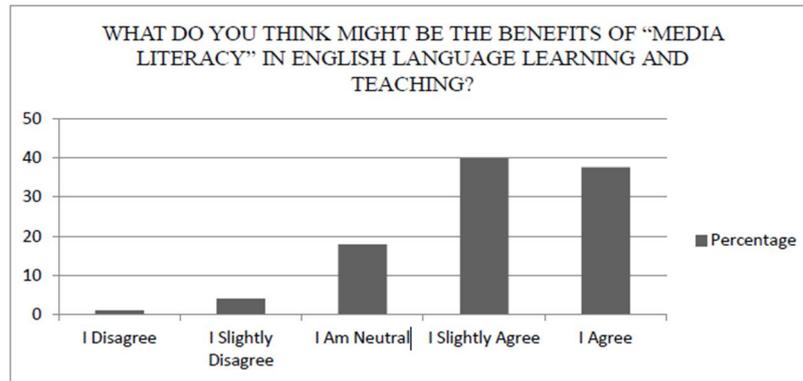


**Figure 2.** Frequency of Participants' Dealing with Media to Improve English Language Skills

The results obtained from the replies given by the respondents revealed that about 18% of them 'always' utilised media which can be accounted comparatively a low degree when we know that their 'Media Literacy' perception is about 56%. Approximately 9% of the participants stated that they never used any forms of media in order to improve their language skills.

### Benefits of Media Literacy to English Language Learning and Teaching

Part III of the questionnaire was prepared to find out the perceptions of the ELT pre-service teachers about the benefits of Media Literacy to English Language learning and teaching. The data gathered from the respondents revealed that approximately 37% of the respondents agreed, 40% of them slightly agreed, 17% were neutral, 4% slightly disagreed and only 1% of the whole participants disagreed with the stated benefits of Media Literacy to English language learning and teaching. All the benefit statements that the participants were presented to express their perceptions about were adopted from the literature by the researcher after a thorough review of the sources. The results are presented below:



**Figure 3.** Participants' Perceptions about the Benefits of Media Literacy in English Language Learning and Teaching

### Are the Teachers Media Literate in English Classes?

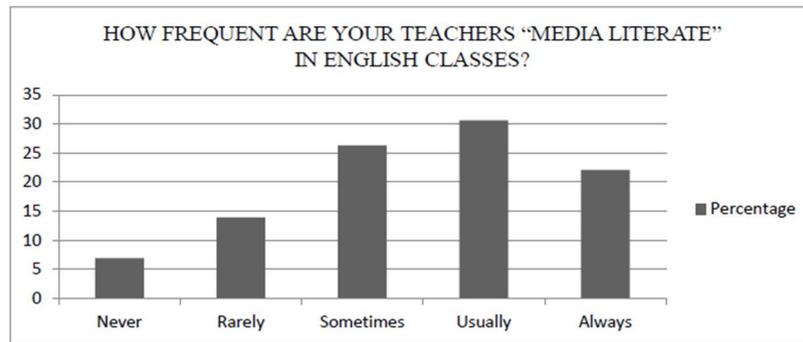
Fourth part was included in the questionnaire in order to find out the perceptions of the pre-service teachers whether their ELT teachers are Media Literate in English Classes or not. Twelve questions were prepared by the researcher in order to reveal students' perceptions about their teachers' being 'Media Literate'. The stated that about 23% of the teachers are 'always', 30% of them are usually, 26% of them are sometimes, 14% of the teachers are rarely, and 7% of them are never Media Literate. The results showed that about 55% of the teachers are most of the times Media Literate. Some of the respondents' answers given to the interview questions are in line with the questionnaire results.

To the question "Do you think your ELT teachers are Media literate? Why? Why not?" some of the interviewees answered:

Participant 6: "Not all of them, because most of them are not aware of using media effectively for English teaching and learning".

Participant 7: "Some of our teachers are Media Literate. They bring a lot of authentic materials into the class".

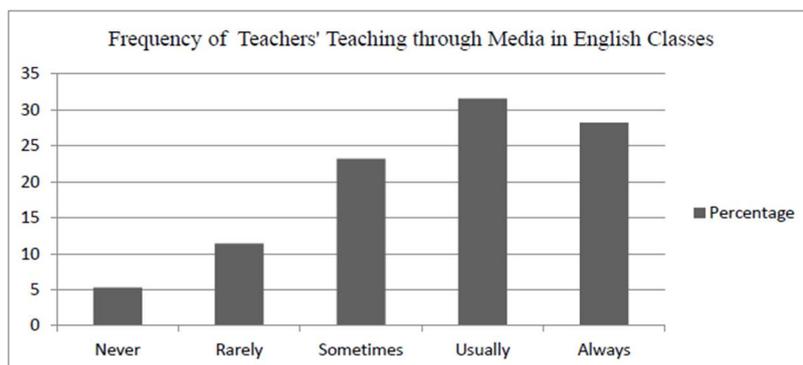
Participant 8: "Several of them are Media Literate. They always try to update themselves and use new things while teaching. But, some of them do not want to renovate their knowledge and teaching strategies. They do not show development about the way they teach something".



**Figure 4.** Frequency of ELT Teachers' Being Media Literate in English Classes

### Teaching through Media

As it can be observed from the table below, the frequency of teaching 'through' media in the classes is relatively high. However, according to the Media Literacy concepts using media forms to teach language doesn't prove that the teacher is media literate.



**Figure 5.** Frequency of Teachers' Teaching through Media in English Classes

## CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate "Media Literacy" perceptions of pre-service ELT teachers attending Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University English Language Teaching Department. Another purpose is to find out to what extent their ELT teachers are "Media Literate". It is also aimed to find out how frequent the pre-service teachers deal with media to improve their English language level and to uncover their perceptions of the benefits of Media Literacy in ELT classes. The results of this study revealed several interesting and unique conclusions. In the lights of this study, it is possible to say that pre-

service teachers attending English Language Teaching Department are eminently aware of the concepts of “Media Literacy”.

The findings of this study revealed that, while majority of the pre-service teachers (56%) agreed with the thirteen “Media Literacy”- concept-oriented statements which were presented in the questionnaire, only 1.1% of the participants disagreed with them. The replies given to the open-ended questions in the semi-structured interview held with the participants also revealed close results. One of the participants' answer given as a definition to “Media Literacy” proves this conclusion: “*Media Literacy is being a conscious audience.*” which perfectly summarises the concepts of “Media Literacy”.

Included in the first part, as an answer to the second research question which was whether there were any significant differences between the “Media Literacy” perceptions of pre-service ELT teachers in terms of gender and class-level, it can be stated, as a result of the SPSS tests, that except the first statement of the first part there are no significant differences.

As for the second part of the survey it was observed that 30% of the participants ‘sometimes’, 25% of them ‘usually’, and 18% of the respondents ‘always’ deal with media in order to improve their English Language skills. One of the participants gave the following answer to the open-ended question if dealing with media could accelerate language learning: “*Of course yes, if it is used in an appropriate and planned way. Media itself has a big influence on language learning. Learners can easily explore the culture of the target language; they can get access to movies, books and magazines*”. These results of the questionnaire with results of the interview show that the pre-service teachers deal with media quite frequently. However, about 10% of the ‘never’ answers shouldn't be omitted too.

According to the findings of the third part participants mostly agree with the benefits of “Media Literacy” in English Language learning and teaching. Approximately 38% of the respondents replied ‘I agree’, and about 40% of them stated ‘I slightly agree’ which proves that pre-service teachers are seriously aware of the benefits of Media Literacy in learning and teaching English language.

As for the fourth part which was aimed to find out how often the ELT teachers of the participants teach ‘through media’ and ‘about media’ in English language classes; while 28% of the students stated that their teachers always teach ‘through media’, only 13% of them said that they always teach ‘about media’ which shows that although the teachers use different kinds of media forms, like journals, magazines, newspapers, internet and computers in English Language Classes they pay less attention to teaching ‘about media’ which underpins the main concept of “Media Literacy” .

### **Implications**

The implications of the present study are possible to be outlined briefly as follows. First of all, the results of this study reveal implications that are important in understanding how the pre-service teachers perceive Media Literacy and its significance in ELT classes. This research may be helpful for the researchers in order to understand students' perceptions of Media Literacy and do further studies. Since this study was conducted at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, the findings and results cannot be generalized to other pre-service ELT teachers of the Country. Because of that reason, further studies in different universities and educational institutions can be conducted to have a vivid view of Media Literacy perception of the students.

### **Limitations**

There are several factors which should be taken into consideration when interpreting the results of this study. We want to acknowledge that, like all studies, ours had several limitations of which we describe two. Firstly, setting and participants are limited to our context. Therefore one should be careful before making generalizations to larger populations. Secondly, our current data suffer from the same limitations as all self report questionnaire data in that it is difficult to determine whether some students may have interpreted items on the questionnaires in unintended ways, or chosen to represent themselves inaccurately.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

This study has some suggestions for further researches and studies. Firstly, similar studies can be conducted in different universities in different cities with students with various cultural and social backgrounds. The sample size can be increased in order to receive more reliable results. Similar studies can be even conducted in primary and high schools. Further future researches may compare different variables with Media Literacy perception. Longitudinal studies related to Media Literacy in ELT classes may also be conducted.

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