# USING POSTER PRESENTATIONS TO FACILITATE PRESERVICE EFL TEACHER LEARNING

## Poster Sunumların İngilizce Öğretmen Adaylarının Öğrenme Süreçlerinde Kolaylaştırıcı Olarak Kullanılması

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**Abstract**

This paper aims to explore whether the use of poster presentations facilitates learning when students try to put theoretical knowledge of ELT methodology into practice. The study was conducted with second year undergraduate students of English Language Teaching Department in Buca Education Faculty, at Dokuz Eylul University in 2016-2017 academic year. There were two separate classes and 84 participants in total. The participants were asked to prepare a lesson plan with warm-up, pre-, while-, and post- learning activities based on a type of language teaching method and display it in poster presentations. The data was derived from observation field notes and notes taken during focus group discussions. The recorded data was analysed via content analysis. Applying content analysis, three main themes were identified as contributions of poster presentations to learning and teaching, difficulties experienced by the participants and suggestions given by the participants to overcome difficulties in poster presentations. The results of the study indicated that using poster presentations facilitated learning and teaching since it gave learners a chance to put theory into practice. Poster presentations helped learners work collaboratively in groups, overcome anxiety and gain more self-confidence while presenting. In addition to this, poster presentations improved creativity, promoted learner autonomy, and inspired learners for their future teaching career.

**Keywords:** Poster presentation, self-confidence, working collaboratively, anxiety, learner autonomy.

**Özet**

Bu çalışmanın amacı poster sunumların öğrenme sürecinde kullanılmasının İngilizce öğretim metotlarına ilişkin kuramsal bilgiyi uygulamaya dönüştürme aşamasında öğrencilere yardımcı olup olmadığını saptamaktır. Çalışma 2016-2017 öğretim yılında Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, Buca Eğitim Fakültesi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi bölümünde öğrenimlerini sürdürmekte olan 2. sınıf öğrencileri ile yürütülmüştür. İki farklı sınıftan toplam 84 kişi çalışmanın katılımcılarını oluşturmuştur. Öğrencilerden öğrendikleri dil öğretim yöntemlerinden birine uygun ve derse hazırlık, öğrenme öncesi, öğrenme esnası ve öğrenme sonrası etkinliklerin yer aldığı bir ders planı hazırlamaları ve hazırladıkları ders planını poster sunum biçiminde sunmaları istenmiştir. Veriler odak grup görüşmesi ve gözlem sırasında tutulan alan notları ile toplanmıştır. Yapılan içerik çözümlemesi sonucu poster sunumların öğrenme ve öğretmeye katkısı, poster sunumlarda yaşanılan sorunlar ve poster sunumların kullanımı için öneriler olmak üzere üç temel tema ortaya çıkmıştır. Çalışmanın sonucunda poster sunumların kullanımının öğrenilen kuramsal bilgiyi uygulamaya dönüştürme bakımından öğrenme ve öğretme sürecine yardımcı olduğu görülmüştür. Ayrıca grup içi işbirlikli çalışma, kaygı ile baş etme, özgüvenin artması, yaratıcılığın gelişmesi, özerk öğrenmeye katkısı ve geleceğin öğretmenlerine ilham vermesi gibi olumlu diğer sonuçlara da ulaşılmıştır.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Poster sunum, öz güven, işbirlikli çalışma, kaygı, öğrenen özerkliği.

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### Introduction

Teaching in crowded classes, a strict curriculum to be followed and time constraints for effective practice of students seem to be shared problems for most of the teachers teaching in any fields. Therefore, finding different ways of making students more active in classrooms is important. Using poster presentations in teaching can be an alternative way of engaging students in their own learning processes as it allows teachers to use classroom teaching time more efficiently. In addition to this, especially in education faculties where preservice teachers are trained to give effective presentations, poster presentations can be used as a better option compared to more traditional class-fronted presentations.

In the definition given by University of Leicester (2009:1) "Posters are often used to share information and are an important part of many conferences, seminars and exhibitions. They may be used to present quite complex material, and so it is important that the information on them is well laid out, legible and attractively presented." Poster presentations were first introduced to scientific gatherings in 1970s and since then they have proved to be a popular means of displaying information at conferences (Gosling, 1999). For instance, more than 200 poster presentations were delivered in TESOL International Convention and English Language Expo held in the USA, in 2017 (TESOL, 2017). Although poster presentations are widely preferred in scientific meetings, they are comparatively being used as a teaching tool in several disciplines. Posters are seen as "neglected type of instructional material" (Osa & Musser, 2004: 16). However, posters are:

   i.    an excellent alternative medium for developing communication skills,

   ii.    involve students in the assessment process,

   iii.    encourage students to investigate a topic thoroughly,

   iv.    provide opportunities for peer-learning,

   v.    promote a positive attitude in students.

    (Berry & Houston,1995:21-27)

Studies have shown that using poster presentations in teaching facilitates learning in several ways. For example, Chabeli's (2002) study found that using poster presentations in nursing education promoted creative, critical and reflective thinking skills. It was also indicated that preparing poster presentations within a group facilitates student participation which also led helping students experience problem solving skills. Increase in student's independence was another important finding of the study.

O'Neill and Jennings (2012) suggest that posters are a popular means of assessment since they allow teachers to have a different approach in terms of assessment. In a study by Zerin and Khan (2013) poster presentation was used as a tool for alternative assessment for the students in an ESL speaking class. The findings showed that using poster presentations increased the vocabulary of students, developed their presentation skills, removed shyness while presenting and helped the students to organize information effectively. Additionally, using different colours, pictures, and diagrams to present the content was entertaining for all the participants of the study. The teachers who were asked about the implementation reported positive opinions about the students' progress in terms of motivation, self-confidence and collaborative work. Furthermore, the assessment was more useful and efficient for teachers.

The research in the field shows that poster presentations help teachers to assess their learners when they teach large classes. Koshy (2011) implemented poster presentations

as an assignment in a large communication class to assess students' work at university level. It was concluded that using poster presentations was effective for the students to develop verbal and presentation skills even when they learn in crowded classes. Besides, using poster presentations was reported as an efficient way of teaching through assessment.

Literature reports on the benefits of poster presentation for academic success, too. For example, Arslan, Keskin and Bora (2005) explored the effects of poster presentations on student achievement using an experimental study design. The study was conducted with freshmen students in a senior high school. The control group prepared a traditional homework whereas the experimental group prepared poster presentations in biology lesson. The pre-test and post-test results showed that there was a significant positive difference in test results in favour of the experimental group. Gioko (2013) also mentioned that as posters require information that is synthesized and the listeners ask questions to the presenter for better understanding, the information given in poster presentations assists learners in getting prepared for exams and performing better in examination settings. Similarly, Eker (2016) identified a direct positive impact on students' academic achievement scores in his experimental study.

Poster presentations not only increase achievement of students but also change students' attitudes towards lessons in a positive way. When poster presentations are used in instructional settings, teachers observe a high level of interest and participation of students (Tanner & Chapman, 2012). Hess and Brooks (1998) designed a project that enabled students to present their studies in a professional-style class poster conference. The findings of their study indicated that using poster presentations was an excellent learning experience for their students. Köklü (2001) conducted a study with the participation of third year undergraduate students taking Educational Research Methods at the Department of Educational Administration and Planning in Ankara University. The students were given an attitude scale measuring their attitudes towards research and research courses. In the study, the experimental group students who presented their research assignments using posters had more positive attitudes towards the research and research courses compared to those who presented their assignment in a traditional way. In the same study, open-ended questions were asked to the students and they evaluated the poster presentations. The students reported that poster presentations were effective to learn better and helped both presenters and listeners to actively engage in the learning process.

Using poster presentations seems to have a positive influence on overcoming speaking anxiety, too. Speaking anxiety is a problem for speakers of a foreign language. The anxiety level increases when especially low-achievers have to present in front of a classroom. As a result, students with high anxiety levels make poor presentations and this affects their motivation negatively. Poster presentations may help especially those students. To exemplify, in an experimental study conducted by Prichard and Ferreira (2014), the students who delivered poster presentations felt significantly less nervous than the students who presented in a traditional way. Moreover, as Prichard and Ferreira (2014) stated, compared to traditional ways of presentation, this type of presentations may be a much better way of practicing and evaluating public speaking skills of learners. Similarly, Morgan (2012) found that poster presentations helped previously unconfident students develop their speaking fluency in an EFL learning context. In another study, Köseoğlu (2011) evaluated the students' poster journals after implementing poster presentations as an assessment tool. The students noted that the poster presentations and poster exams helped them overcome their anxiety and stress as they found the learning atmosphere more relaxing.

Another benefit of poster presentation is that it fosters learner autonomy. As students are given choices about what to use and how to use and work collaboratively with their group members, they take a more considerable role in their learning (Reilly, 2007). In order to foster learner autonomy, teachers should find ways to increase learner control and give learners a chance to take responsibility in their own learning process (Benson, 2001). By using poster presentations, learners are involved in decision-making process which may lead them to manage their own learning, too. In addition, as Benson (2001) highlighted, collaborating with other learners while learning and being given a chance to manage classroom activities may assist learners in controlling their cognitive aspects of learning process.

Although the studies show that poster presentations have positive effects on both teachers and learners, there are also a few study results that display the possible drawbacks of using poster presentations in learning settings. These are the cost of materials and time involved in creating them (Reilly, 2007) and the difficulty to teach how posters should be designed and presented (O'Neill, G. & Jennings, D., 2012).

**Aim of the study**

Ideas for research questions can arise from different sources. Sometimes the researcher reads an article and some concepts or terms lead him/her to identify a problem that needs to be solved. Alternatively, a researcher may experience a problem in real life and start to look for solutions to overcome the problem. The starting point for this study was, in fact, a problem encountered by the researcher herself.

Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching is a course taught in the second year of all English Language Teaching Departments of education faculties in Turkey. Split in two terms, this three-credit course covers all language teaching methods starting with Grammar Translation Method and extends to more contemporary methods such as Multiple Intelligences, Lexical Approach, Communicative Language Teaching and Cooperative Language Learning. The students are expected to learn all the theoretical information about each method. Theory of learning, theory of language, activities, materials, teacher and learner roles are among the subtopics of each method to be studied.

In this study, two classrooms, one with 40, the other one with 44 students and a vast number of methods to be taught were involved. Lectures given by the researcher and some sample activities for each method might help the learners to have an idea about each method. Nevertheless, the practice part would be missing because of the number of students and time constraints.

If those learners who are the English language teachers of the future do not know how to apply the language teaching methods, then all the theoretical knowledge of English Language Teaching methodology is useless. Those students need to understand how to transfer all this theory into a language teaching setting. In other words, they need to practice what they study. Presentations may be useful in such settings. However, due to time constraints, presentations are very difficult in large classes. A solution may be the use of poster presentations.

The primary purpose of this study was to explore whether the use of poster presentations facilitates learning when students try to put their theoretical knowledge of English Language Teaching methodology into practice. This research also aimed to see how effective poster presentations were in crowded classes to facilitate learning. The following research questions were posed in this study:

1. Does using poster presentations in teaching facilitate preservice EFL teacher learning?

2. What are some possible positive outcomes of using poster presentations in teaching?

3. What are some possible negative outcomes of using poster presentations in teaching?

**Methodology**

A qualitative research model was used in this study in order to find the participants' experiences and perceptions about how effective they utilized poster presentations while learning.

**Participants**

The study was conducted with the second year undergraduate students of English Language Teaching Department in Buca Education Faculty, at Dokuz Eylul University in 2016-2017 academic year. There were two separate classes and 84 participants in total.

**Data collection tools and analysis**

The data was derived from observations of the researcher and focus group discussions. The researcher was a participant observer during the poster presentations and took field notes. In observational methods for data collection, the researcher has to wait for the things to happen. Although there are advantages of observation, it is not a controlled or structured way of data collection. Focus group discussions, on the other hand, are organized and structured events. Focus group discussions enable the researcher to gather data about the participants' attitudes, opinions, beliefs, experiences, behaviours or feelings in such a way that may not be possible using other tools such as questionnaires or one-to-one interviewing (Morgan & Kreuger 1993). The participants of the focus group discussions were chosen using non-probabilistic sampling. The sample was determined by choosing students from different presenting groups and considering the number of female and male participants. 20 students were interviewed in focus group discussions. Two sessions were held with 10 participants each time.

The observation of the researcher was recorded as written field notes and some photographs were also taken as visuals (See Appendix 1) after having the participants' consent. Also the focus group discussions were recorded with the approval of the participants. A content analysis was conducted after all these recorded materials were written down. The themes, the sub-themes, and the codes were determined after the raw data was examined. The coding procedure and themes were completed by the researcher and another expert in the field separately first. After the comparison, a final decision was taken for the themes and subthemes.

**Procedure**

Approaches and methods in ELT- II courses started on 13th February 2017 and during 6 weeks 6 different language teaching approaches were taught to students by the researcher. Multiple Intelligences, Neurolinguistic Programming, The Lexical Approach, Competency Based Language Teaching, Communicative Language Teaching and The Natural Approach were instructed. On the 5th week students were announced that they were expected to prepare lesson plans for the methods they had studied and a mini lecture about how to prepare poster presentations was also given. The good and bad examples of posters, the important points to consider and the parts of the lesson plan that would be in presentations were explained. The students were asked to write the

name of the language teaching method, some principles of it, and a lesson plan with a warm up, pre-, while- and post-learning activities. The importance of using visuals and a legible hand-writing were also emphasized during this mini lecture. Groups were formed according to the students' choices. There were 3 or 4 group members in each group. The students drew lots for the methods to be presented. The Natural Approach was excluded as it would be unfair for the groups that could choose it in terms of time needed for preparation. The students asked their questions either directly or via e-mail to the researcher for guidance when they encountered difficulties.

In the seventh week of the second term, in two different days, all groups presented their work in the garden of the school. There were two sessions with a 10-minute break. The posters were hung on the walls of the school garden, the presenters waited in front of their posters and the audience listened to their presentations. Each group had 5-10 minutes for presentations and questions. Then the audience moved to another poster following a clockwise direction. After each presentation, the listeners filled in a feedback form (See Appendix 2) given by the researcher to evaluate the presentations. The items in the feedback form were taken from the Poster Presentation Feedback Form prepared by Kelch (2012). Some items were excluded or shortened. The reason to use the feedback form was to help the listeners to focus on the presentations. The feedback forms were not used to gather data. During the presentations, the researcher took field notes to be analysed later. Some photographs from the presentations were also taken. The following two weeks were for the mid-term exams. After the mid-term exams, two focus group discussions were held with the participation of 10 students for each.

**Findings**

The findings of the study are presented under the themes and sub-themes here by using the data from the observation field notes of the researcher and the recorded focus group discussions. Table 1 indicates the themes and sub-themes detected after the content analysis.

**Table 1:** Themes and sub-themes detected after applying content analysis

| Themes & sub-themes |
| --- |
| 1. Contributions to learning and teaching process |
| i. Seeing how theory may work in a real teaching atmosphere |
| ii. Self-awareness about strengths and weaknesses |
| iii. Practicing conflict resolutions in team work and collaborative working |
| iv. Gaining self-confidence |
| v. Transferring lesson plan and activities to future teaching experience |
| vi. Positive effect on preliminary exam preparation |
| vii. An opportunity to reflect creativity |
| viii. A motivating and fun learning environment |
| ix. Fruitful feedback for the teacher |
| |
| 2. Difficulties experienced by the participants |
| i. Difficulty to gather with group members |
| ii. Conflicts about planning the group work |
| iii. Completing feedback forms |
| |
| 3. Suggestions from the participants for further practice |
| i. Choices to work either individually or within a group |
| ii. An example poster presentation by the lecturer |
| iii. Shorter feedback forms or reflective reports |

The themes and sub-themes are presented in detail below.  Some example sentences used by the participants are also included as they might allow more in-depth exploration of perceptions and views.

**Theme 1: Contributions to learning and teaching process**

### i. Seeing how theory may work in a real teaching atmosphere

Before the poster presentation activity, the students were given lectures about the different language teaching methods. Some short practices were also given as examples in the class hours. Nevertheless, one can never be sure if students can visualize those methods in real teaching settings. During the focus group discussion sessions, all the participants confirmed that poster presentations helped them to picture how each method may work in their teaching in the future. They also mentioned that having lectures about the theory helped them a lot to prepare their presentations.

*"Poster presentations helped me to understand the theory of the methods and how I can implement them in the classroom"*

*"I listen to your lectures very carefully and find them very useful. My group's task was NLP. When I first heard it I said: Ohh, nooo! It was very difficult for me to picture NLP techniques in a language classroom. So I worked really hard, searched a lot and now I believe that I can use NLP in my teaching comfortably."*

### ii. Self-awareness about strengths and weaknesses

The participants of the focus group discussion were really honest about evaluating themselves about the poster presentation activity.

*"My hand-writing is awful but my grammar is good. That's why we organized everything and I checked the grammar of our presentation. Another group member wrote everything on the poster."*

*"First, I thought I would ruin all the work, then I realized that if I work with other people I could do better."*

*"I realized that I am good at organizing things, I trust myself more about it now."*

*"I think I am a visual learner so that experience has proved my belief, too."*

*"I am bad at group working and I need to find ways to solve this problem. Because I will have to work in groups in the future, too"*

### iii. Practicing conflict resolutions in team work and collaborative working

The students experienced some difficulties while preparing their posters. Some of them formed Whatsapp groups to communicate. Some of them divided the task into smaller parts, then came together and prepared the whole presentation. The others worked on the whole task, then came together, discussed their ideas and came up with the most appropriate ones. Some students reported that they asked their previous teachers' help. Either via e-mail or face-to-face communication, some groups also asked for the researcher's help whenever they met a difficulty.

*"First, all group members studied individually and then we met at school. We discussed about the content and the format of the poster. After we decided on everything, one of us pasted the pictures and wrote the titles. Finally, we organized the presentation parts."*

*"We decided on the sub-topics first and everyone chose what they wanted to prepare. Then we met and shared our ideas. We fixed some minor problems and prepared the poster together. Everyone took part in designing the poster."*

*"Meeting was difficult so we formed a Whatsapp group and shared our ideas mostly there. When we were ready, we met and prepared the visual."*

### iv. Gaining self-confidence

Most participants reported that they had felt high levels of anxiety in presenting in front of an audience. Before they started presenting their posters, they all felt anxious at first. However, they said that being outside the classroom and presenting a smaller group of audience relaxed them. Here is what the participants said:

"*I normally feel really anxious and my hands shake. I forget what I want to say. But in this presentation the atmosphere was relaxing, we were outside of the classroom. The audience made me feel comfortable and motivated. My first presentation was a bit more difficult but when I presented it again and again to the other groups, my anxiety was replaced with confidence. The visuals on the poster and my group members also supported my presentation.*"

*"When you have visual materials all the eyes are not on you, the listeners are also looking at the poster, so you feel more comfortable."*

### v. Transferring lesson plan and activities to future teaching experience

The participants said that the activities they used in their own posters and the ones that they heard from their peers gave them some ideas for their future teaching career. Here are what some of the participants said:

*"I especially focused on the activities in the presentations and took notes. I am planning to use them when I become a teacher."*

*"I think I can use them teaching especially for some boring subjects for the students. For example, if I teach a passage about Victorian period, I can ask my students to prepare posters using visuals or some quotes from the period."*

### vi. Positive effect on preliminary exam preparation

After the presentation week, students were going to take a mid-term exam. These presentations seem to contribute to the students for reviewing previously studied subjects.

*"I could not attend two lectures. One of them was Neurolinguistic Programming and the other one was Multiple Intelligences. My poster presentation was about NLP so I studied and learnt it very well with the help of my group members. I listened to the group who presented MI more carefully, and that helped me a lot to cover the topic and answer the questions easily in the exam."*

### vii. An opportunity to reflect creativity

While preparing the poster presentations, the students decided on how to prepare the poster, what materials or colours to use. As they had a limited space they tried to find out the best way to introduce their topic. Some students used photos from magazines, most of them used their own hand-writing with colourful pens, some hung small posters on their necks, and some prepared fruit salads to show their audience how realia can be used in teaching adjectives related to taste.

### viii.    A motivating and fun learning environment

According to the researcher's observations, all students were highly motivated. They were asking questions about the posters to the presenters or suggesting some new ideas. Some groups brought some food and soft drinks which also helped to create more relaxing atmosphere.

"*The audience was the factor that motivated me, because they were really listening*"

### ix.    Fruitful feedback for the teacher

Monitoring the students, the teacher noticed a few grammar mistakes. Normally, in written language, the students were good at using grammatically correct sentences. However, in spoken language they made mistakes especially in the use of verbs in simple present tense for 3rd person singular. The sentences like "*the teacher then ask students.....*", "*the teacher let students.....*" were used during presentations. The teacher decided to leave 5 minutes of her lessons to correct the grammar mistakes detected from the spoken and written language used by the students.

Another beneficial feedback was related to seeing how successful the students were to answer the questions addressed by the listeners. In a class hour, the students do not focus on what their classmates ask as they expect the teacher should be the one to reply. Therefore, the teacher decided to change how she answers the questions while lecturing.

### Theme 2: Difficulties experienced by the participants

#### i.    Difficulty to gather with group members

One of the problems mentioned by most of the participants was gathering the group members. As the task was to be performed out of class hour, the participants found it difficult to set appropriate time and place for performing the task.

#### ii.    Conflicts about planning the group work

The participants had a few conflicts about working within a group. These might have resulted from different learning or studying styles.

"*Some people are not so responsible and they do not complete their part on time which makes me feel frustrated*"

"*One of the members in my group was too dominant and wanted everything to be perfect. I thought this is just for learning and we should enjoy it and work together and have some fun. Working with a perfectionist was difficult for me.*"

#### iii.    Completing feedback forms

Before the poster presentations, all groups were given feedback forms. In the feedback forms, the students were asked to evaluate group presentations in terms of poster, content and delivery. The aim was to make the audience and the presenters to be aware of the important points in making a poster presentation. However, all the participants reflected negatively about the feedback forms.

"*It was difficult to criticize your classmates' work. You hesitate to tell negative things about your friends.*"

"*Sometimes it was difficult to concentrate on listening to the presentations as you need to fill in a form. While listening, you think about what to write in the feedback form and miss some points during the presentation.*"

**Theme 3: Suggestions from the participants for further practice**

### i. Choices to work either individually or within a group

Although the researcher did not observe any unconformity among group members during presentations, two of the participants in focus group discussion reported that they felt discomfort while working in the group. They suggested that the teacher should give the students a choice about working either individually or within a group. In this context, because of having too many students, there was not a choice like this because of time constraints. However, for smaller classes this can be taken into consideration by the teacher.

### ii. An example poster presentation by the lecturer

The researcher gave a mini-lecture about how to prepare a poster presentation. Some students said that it would be a better idea to show a poster prepared by the lecturer in the classroom to help students avoid mistakes.

### iii. Shorter feedback forms or reflective reports

The researcher's observations also supported  the idea that the feedback forms were not so useful. Although the aim was to help students to be engaged in the activity more actively, the feedback forms caused a bit confusion among students. Here are some of the suggestions given by the participants.

*"Feedback form and the checklist items in the form might be shorter so that the audience can concentrate on the presentation better."*

*"We could have written reflective reports about the presentations which may help us to focus more on the presentations."*

**Discussion and Conclusion**

As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, teaching in large classes is really difficult especially when you want your students to understand not only the theory of a  language teaching method but also how to practice it. This study started from a need to find out a solution to help students learn more effectively. In general, the study revealed that poster presentations promoted a productive learning experience for the students.

The most important result of this study is that poster presentations give learners a chance to picture the practice dimension of what they study as theories. For each method that they are lectured, they need to figure out activities and design a compact lesson plan. With regard to the teacher, seeing how students transfer their theoretical learnings about English Language Teaching Methodology in practice is a great opportunity. During the presentations, monitoring the students gives the teacher opportunity to reflect on the process and  all the feedback taken from the observations helps the teacher to organize her following lectures. Another benefit for the teacher is these presentations allow the teacher to give a chance to all the students to present their work and attend other presentations in one class time period. This is consistent with Koshy (2011) who reported that using poster presentations in large classes was an efficient way of teaching and assessing students. Time and place constraints can be mostly solved thanks to this implementation.

Poster presentations fostered autonomy among the participants of this study, as well. Although some requirements for the posters were announced to the students, they had the chance to choose the activities, visuals and how to deliver all this information to the

audience. Further to this, they needed to work collaboratively to achieve. Therefore, they improved their social skills to handle conflicts and gained responsibility for their own learning and for their classmates' learning. As they reported during focus group discussion sessions, the participants benefited from the presentations for their future teaching career, too. Such positive findings are supported by the findings in other studies such as Chabeli (2002) and Hess and Brooks (1998). All these findings lead us to conclude that thanks to presenting posters, learners are more aware of both their learning and future teaching processes.

As is known, affective filters are associated with success in language learning. Learners experience stress, anxiety or lack of self-confidence when the affective filter is high. On the other hand, a low affective filter facilitates practicing and learning. The poster presentations in this study seemed to have reduced the speaking anxiety of the students. This echoes the findings of researchers such as Prichard and Ferreira (2014) and Köseoğlu (2011) who reported that students felt less uncomfortable and more relaxed in poster presentations. In this study, the use of a visual material, a relaxing atmosphere and repetition of the presentation for each audience group were among the reasons which may have assisted the presenters in overcoming their anxiety and gaining self-confidence. The information exchange between the presenter and the audience which showed that both were active participants also helped the students overcome their anxiety. The interest of the listeners motivated the presenters and the questions asked by them encouraged them to present with more enthusiasm.

Overall, it can be concluded that poster presentations help students to engage in learning more actively. A few problems encountered by the participants may be solved in the ways that suggested by the participants. Poster presentations can be used in training preservice EFL teachers as they assist in reducing performance anxiety, increasing learner autonomy and providing opportunities to convert theoretical knowledge of ELT methodology into practice in collaborative and creative ways. In addition, implementation of poster presentations in teaching enables teachers to monitor students efficiently.

As a final comment, the data collected in this study shows the results after using poster presentations only once during the academic term. Therefore, a longitudinal research study examining the benefits of poster presentations may be considered for future studies.

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**Appendices**

**Appendix 1: Photographs taken during poster presentations**
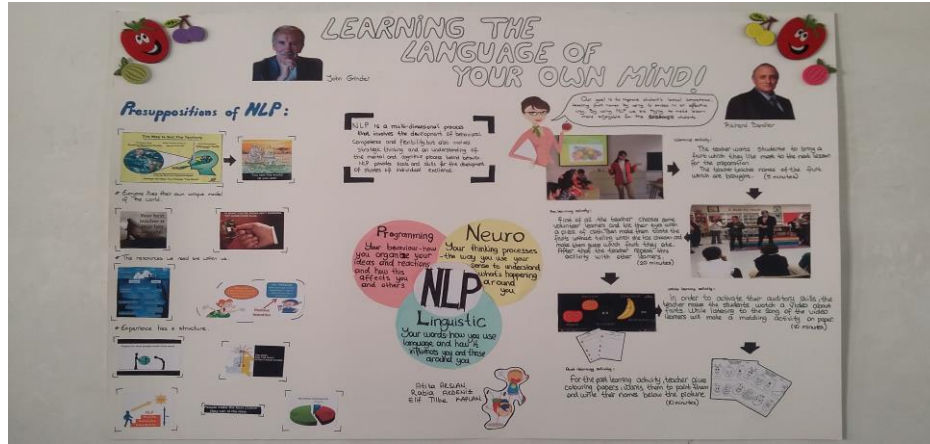
**Appendix 2: Feedback form**

### FEEDBACK FORM FOR POSTER PRESENTATIONS

GROUP NAME: ..........................................................................................

| POSTER DESIGN | (YES/PARTLY/NO/ANY COMMENTS?) |
|---|---|
| Poster is titled with an informative heading likely to catch audience interest. | |
| Poster is clearly organized, with appropriate section headings to guide visitor. | |
| Space is used effectively, with an appropriate balance of text, visuals, and white space. | |
| Visuals contain the right amount of detail. | |
| Poster formatting is helpful, not distracting: text is large enough to read, colours are appropriate, etc. | |

| PRESENTATION | (YES/PARTLY/NO/ANY COMMENTS?) |
|---|---|
| Explained difficult concepts well. | |
| Introduced figures and graphs clearly, then emphasized the main points. | |
| Adapted to the interests of the visitors. | |
| Conveyed confidence and knowledge in the material. | |

| DELIVERY | (YES/PARTLY/NO/ANY COMMENTS?) |
|---|---|
| Body language was welcoming and friendly. | |
| Stood with good posture, in a position that facilitates poster viewing. | |
| Used appropriate voice, gestures, and eye contact. | |
| Pace was appropriate. | |
| Conveyed enthusiasm for the topic. | |

| OVERALL | NOTES |
|---|---|
| | |
| STRENGTHS | RECOMMENDATIONS |
| | |

THANK YOU☺