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An Investigation of Teachers' Opinions About the Effects of Erasmus+ Mobility Programme to the Speaking Skills of High School Students

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Abstract

International student mobility transforms the development of high school students by enabling them to explore their identities and life goals. This study investigates how Erasmus+ has affected the speaking skills of high school students in Samsun, Turkey. The study examines how English teachers see the overall effects of the programme, identifies factors believed to improve speaking skills, and explores the challenges and limitations teachers face in developing students' speaking skills. A quantitative study was conducted with 30 Samsun high school English teachers who participated in a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire consists of three parts: teachers' impressions, programme details and barriers. Descriptive statistics, including mean scores, were used to assess teachers' perceptions and answer the study questions. According to the research results, Erasmus+ improves the speaking skills of high school students. However, issues and constraints should be addressed to maximize the effectiveness of the programme.

Keywords: Erasmus+ , high school students, teacher views, speaking skill

Introduction

Cojocar (2018) describes Erasmus+ as a large educational exchange scheme. This program lets high school students study abroad to enhance their language skills, especially speaking. Erasmus+ is extensively utilized, however teachers' perspectives on its influence on high school students' speaking skills need to be examined.

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The literature largely discusses students' experiences and outcomes, not teachers who actively monitor and evaluate students' speaking skills. This study examines high school teachers' perceptions on Erasmus+'s influence on students' speaking ability to address this gap in the literature. This research examines language education professionals' viewpoints to establish the program's impact on students' speaking skills. This study will examine teachers' views on Erasmus+'s speaking benefits. Study abroad curriculum and teaching techniques, language immersion and exposure to the target language, cultural and social variables impacting language learning, and teachers shortcomings and limits in assisting speaking skill development may be issues.

This study examines teachers' views on Erasmus+'s influence on high schoolers' speaking. To determine how Erasmus+ enhances speaking, language teachers are questioned. Teachers understand classroom dynamics and language development, so understanding their opinions is crucial. Researchers will examine their viewpoints to determine Erasmus+'s impact on students' speech. This will help educational leaders, program managers, and language teachers assess the program's effectiveness and make evidence-based decisions.

This study affects language instruction, study abroad, and Erasmus+ stakeholders. Both theory and practice will benefit from this research. This study contributes to the literature on Erasmus+ and high school students' speaking skills by exploring teachers' perspectives. The study advances our knowledge about language learning and the function of teachers as language observers and assessors.

This report has implications for language education stakeholders, study abroad programmes and Erasmus+. It advances theory and practice by examining teachers' views on how Erasmus+ has affected high school students' speaking skills. Programme designers and managers can use these findings to improve programme design, while teachers can improve teaching. Student support services and counselors can use the study to adapt language learning assistance, evaluate and optimize the success of the programme.

Research questions for this study:

1. How do English teachers in Samsun see the impact of Erasmus+ on high school students' speaking skills?

2. Which aspect of Erasmus+ do English language teachers think has improved the speaking skills of high school students the most?
3. According to English language teachers in Samsun, what are the challenges or limitations of the Erasmus+ mobility programme in improving students' speaking skills?

The environment of Samsun and the size of the sample of English teachers may limit the generalisability of this study. English language teachers in this region may not reflect all Erasmus+ mobility project English language teachers. This study is limited to the self-reported views and impressions of the English teachers. The 30 English teachers working in Samsun may limit the generalisability of the study. The responses of teachers with a special interest or expertise in Erasmus+ may create sampling bias.

The effectiveness of Erasmus+ may depend on students' language skills, socioeconomic background and family support. This study cannot address these external influences, but they should be considered as limits. Furthermore, this survey only takes into account the views of English language teachers. Their comments are useful, but the lack of direct input from high school Erasmus+ mobility programme participants hinders our understanding of their speaking skills.

Several assumptions guided the research and interpretation of this study. Firstly, English language teachers in Samsun need to have knowledge about Erasmus+ and its effects on high school students' speaking skills. It was assumed that they know the aims and principles of the programme in order to form opinions and perceptions. Secondly, this study believes that English language teachers' opinions and perceptions appropriately represent their ideas about the effects, aspects, barriers and limits of Erasmus+ on students' speaking skills. Their comments are assumed to be honest and based on observations. Thirdly, the participating English language teachers are expected to have sufficient Erasmus+ student experience. They need to understand first-hand the impact of the programme on students' speaking skills in order to form educated opinions. Finally, English teachers are expected to answer the questionnaire honestly and impartially. It is assumed that they express their opinions without suppressing or altering the facts, thus ensuring the reliability of the data.

Erasmus is short for the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students. This acronym also honors Dutch scholar and writer Desiderius Erasmus (1465-1536), a leading figure in the early humanist movement and one of the greatest northern Renaissance thinkers. On January 1, 2014, Erasmus+ began as a full program. It supports education, sports, and young participation of all ages. The goal is to teach people through grants. The Erasmus+ Programme, run from 2014 to 2020, promotes personal growth and job possibilities by developing skills and nurturing people regardless of schooling.

The European Union's Erasmus+ program supports education, training, youth, and sport across Europe. Learning mobility options promote the movement and interchange of students, professionals, trainees, apprentices, youth workers, and young people, according to the European Commission's annual report (2021). The Erasmus+ project promotes education, training, youth, and sports in line with the Europe 2020 Strategy. From 2014 to 2020, this program included many projects and activities (Kağnıcı, 2016).

There is strong evidence that studying abroad helps people navigate the global aspects of their employment and advance their careers (Teichler, 2007). Students who study abroad gain international competencies, which can lead to top jobs in the global workforce (Bracht et al., 2006). It also greatly enhances the chance of working overseas later in life (Parey and Waldinger, 2007).

Numerous studies show that the Erasmus program considerably improves language development across multiple dimensions, notwithstanding some constraints. Erasmus improves oral abilities for most participants, according to Kinginger (2008). The study reveals that Erasmus's intensive and conversational character helps students practice and improve their spoken language skills. The findings highlight the importance of Erasmus in improving participants' speaking skills.

Llanes et al. (2012) evaluated how Erasmus affected 24 Spanish Erasmus students learning English as a second language in the UK. Oral language improvements were greater than written ones, according to the study. This shows that Erasmus improved students' conversational English more than their writing skills.

Özdemir (2019) examined the impact of studying in Europe on 140 Turkish Erasmus exchange students' English reading, listening, grammar, and vocabulary. This study uses Erasmus OLS test data. The study used OLS test data to assess Erasmus's effects on students listening, reading, grammar, and vocabulary.

Kayaoğlu's (2016) conducted a study about the effect of Erasmus+ programme on students' speaking skills. This study revealed a considerable improvement in oral proficiency. Students said they liked utilizing English in appropriate situations, validating the findings. Erasmus provided participants with fantastic opportunities to practice and develop their spoken language skills, enhancing oral competence.

Cantez (2020) tested Erasmus students' language learning and fluency. Qualitative research indicated that Erasmus boosted participants' English proficiency and desire to study another language. This shows that Erasmus's immersive and participatory components boosted participants' speaking and language learning enthusiasm.

High school Erasmus Plus Key Action 2 mobilities students' English-learning attitudes were assessed by Mulcar (2019). Students' attitudes before and after migration were evaluated. Intercultural Erasmus+ mobilities boosted students' English learning attitudes, the study revealed. The study indicated that Erasmus Plus KA2 mobilities' international interactions boosted students' English learning attitudes. Erasmus Plus could have enhanced students' English language attitudes.

Altıntaş (2021) discovered that Erasmus improves students' language skills. The curriculum improves kids' linguistic skills. Erasmus gives students immersive and engaging chances to practice and improve their language skills, boosting their language competence. This is a great opportunity for students.

Methodology

This section of the term project document describes the research methodology, including the people engaged, the methodologies and techniques used, the data collection process, and the data analysis procedures. A quantitative study technique was used to assess Samsun English

teachers' views on Erasmus+'s impact on high school students' speaking skills. Study independent variable was Erasmus+ mobility program. This variable indicates high school students' study abroad program to improve language and cultural abilities. Erasmus+ offers language immersion, cultural interaction, and collaborative learning. This research examined high schoolers' speaking ability. It means their spoken English communication skills. Speaking abilities include pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammatical precision, and the capacity to communicate with spoken language. This study used English teachers' attitudes as mediating variables. These thoughts connect Erasmus+ mobility programme to high school students' speaking ability. English teachers' perspectives on Erasmus+'s influence on students' speaking abilities are significant. This study statistically examines the Erasmus+ mobility programme and high school students' speaking skills as mediated by English teachers' judgments. Analysis of mean scores simplifies questionnaire data interpretation and reveals English teachers' general views on the program's influence on students' speaking skills.

For this study, 30 English teachers from Samsun high schools who participated in Erasmus+ projects were included. Participants were chosen using purposive sampling to ensure they have high school teaching experience and Erasmus+ understanding. Table 3.1 summarizes participant demographics.

Table 3.1. Demographic information about the participants.

Demographics	Description	Number
Age	Under 30 years	2
	30-40 years	11
	41-50 years	16
	Over 50 years	1
Gender	Female	21
	Male	9
Education	Bachelor's degree	20
	Master's degree	10
	Ph.D. or higher	-
Experience	Less than 5 years	-
	5-10 years	4
	11-20 years	17
	Over 20 years	9

Table 3.1 shows the participants' ages, teaching experience, and education. It shows 2 people under 30, 11 between 30-40, 16 between 40-50, and 1 beyond 50. For teaching experience, 4 participants have 5-10 years, 17 have 11-20 years, and 9 have above 20 years. Additionally, 21 individuals have Bachelor's degrees and 9 have Masters. Their varied experiences enhance their comprehension of the issue.

In this study, a Likert scale questionnaire was used. There are five answers in section 1 and 3 from "completely disagree" to "completely agree". The options in section 2 are from "most significant contribution" to "no contribution". The scale for the first and third parts of the questionnaire is 1 point for completely disagree and 5 points for completely agree and for the second part of the questionnaire 1 point for most significant contribution and 5 points for no contribution. The questionnaire uses Likert scale and rating questions to collect quantitative data on English language teachers' views on the impact of Erasmus+ on high school students' speaking skills. The questionnaire standardized data collection and calculated question mean scores. The questionnaire consists of a total of three sections, each investigating one of the three research questions. In the first part about the effect of Erasmus+ on students' speaking skills, in the second part about which aspect of Erasmus+ contributes the most to students' speaking skills, and in the third part about the limitations and difficulties of the programme in contributing to students' speaking level.

For this research, a systematic questionnaire was applied to English language teachers in Samsun. Ethical issues were addressed before data collection. A structured questionnaire was developed based on the objectives and questions of the study. The questionnaire asks English teachers about the impact of Erasmus+ mobility programme on high school students' speaking skills using Likert scale and rating questions. The questionnaire items were carefully designed for clarity, comprehensibility and relevance.

Research participants were selected through purposive sampling. English teachers with high school experience and Erasmus+ knowledge were included in the study and 30 English teachers from high schools in Samsun were sampled. To guarantee diversity, teaching experience was also analyzed.

Online and offline ways were used to administer the questionnaire to the selected English teachers. Teachers were able to administer online questionnaires at their convenience via e-

mail or survey platforms. Paper-based questionnaires were used for teachers who preferred to use paper or had limited internet access. It was clearly explained how to complete and submit the questionnaire with all required fields.

Data from the questionnaire were collated after collection. Likert scale responses were numerically coded for quantitative analysis. The mean scores for each question show the mean scores of the English teachers. The mean scores were used to measure teachers' perceptions of the impact of Erasmus+ on high school students' speaking skills.

To analyze the data, mean scores were calculated for each questionnaire question. The mean score is the average of the scores given by the English language teachers for each question. The mean scores were used to measure the English teachers' perceptions of the impact of Erasmus+ on high school students' speaking skills.

In the analytical part of the thesis, the mean scores are interpreted and analyzed. The distribution of mean scores across the questionnaire items and trends or patterns in responses were interpreted. This research shows how English language teachers think the Erasmus+ mobility programme has affected students' speaking skills. Using mean scores, the researcher interprets the data in relation to the study questions and relevant literature. The interpretations address data trends, strengths, flaws and glaring inconsistencies or patterns.

Findings

The first part of the questionnaire investigated how English teachers in Samsun perceived the overall impact of the Erasmus+ mobility programme on the speaking skills of high school students. Table 4.1 shows the mean scores of the responses of 30 English language trainers.

Table 4.1. The mean scores of part 1 of the questionnaire.

Statement	Mean Score
The Erasmus+ mobility programme has a positive impact on high school students' overall speaking skills.	4.2
Participation in the Erasmus+ mobility programme improves students' fluency in speaking.	3.9

The Erasmus+ mobility programme enhances students' vocabulary usage in speaking.	4.1
Students who participate in the Erasmus+ mobility programme demonstrate improved pronunciation skills.	3.8
The Erasmus+ mobility programme increases students' confidence in speaking English.	4.3
Study abroad experiences provided by the Erasmus+ mobility programme foster better cultural understanding, which positively impacts students' speaking skills.	4.0
The Erasmus+ mobility programme promotes effective communication and interaction skills in students' spoken discourse.	4.2
The Erasmus+ mobility programme encourages students to take risks and experiment with the target language, leading to improved speaking proficiency.	4.1

Table 4.1 shows the mean scores obtained from the first part of the questionnaire in which English language teachers in Samsun, Turkey were asked about the effects of the Erasmus+ mobility programme on the speaking skills of high school students. The participating teachers determined the mean scores of their answers. Table 4.1 shows that the trainers generally liked the impact of Erasmus+ on students' speaking skills. The statement with the highest mean score, 4.3, shows that the training has increased students' confidence in English. Teachers consider that the training has been useful in increasing students' confidence in the target language. General speaking skills, vocabulary use, cultural knowledge, effective communication and risk-taking in the target language also received positive mean scores between 4.0 and 4.2. According to the trainers, the Erasmus+ mobility project improves various areas of students' speaking skills.

Besides the high average scores regarding the impact of the Erasmus+ mobility programme on speaking skills, the statements on fluency, vocabulary and effective communication also received good scores ranging from 3.8 to 4.2. This shows that the programme has improved these speaking skills in students. The statement on the contribution of the programme to improved cultural understanding received an average score of 4.0, acknowledging its role in building intercultural competence among students. This shows that the trainers like the Erasmus+ mobility programme because it enables students to be exposed to new cultures and ideas which improves their speaking skills.

According to the average score of 4.1 for the statement encouraging students to take risks and experiment with the target language, the Erasmus+ mobility programme encourages students to use language outside their comfort zone. This means that teachers acknowledge the programme's ability to encourage experiential learning and practice to improve students' speaking skills.

In the second part of the questionnaire the specific aspects of the Erasmus+ mobility programme that they believe make the most significant contribution to the development of speaking skills of high school students were investigated. Table 4.2 shows the average scores of 30 English teachers.

Table 4.2. The mean scores of part 2 of the questionnaire.

Aspect	Mean Score
Language immersion and exposure to the target language	1.4
Cultural exchange and interaction with native speakers	1.6
Collaborative learning opportunities with international peers	1.8
Supportive and qualified language instructors	1.3
Purposeful speaking practice activities and tasks	1.2
Integration of speaking skills in the curriculum	1.7
Opportunities for public speaking and presentations	1.9
Provision of feedback and assessment on speaking skills	1.5

Based on 30 Samsun, Turkey teachers' replies, Table 4.2 shows the Erasmus+ mobility programme's mean scores. The teachers' mean scores show how each factor improved high school students' speaking skills. Table 4.2 shows that intentional speaking practice activities and tasks had the lowest mean score of 1.2. This shows that teachers respect organized speaking practice activities and assignments in the program because they improve students' speaking skills. Language immersion and exposure to the target language, cultural interchange and engagement with native speakers, and helpful and skilled language teachers also scored 1.3 to 1.6. These results show that teachers think these factors improve students' speaking skills. Integration of speaking skills into the curriculum, public speaking and presentations, and feedback and evaluation on speaking abilities yielded mean scores of 1.7 to 1.9. These ratings show that teachers value these factors in improving students' speaking skills.

The mean scores in Table 4.2 show teachers' positive views of Erasmus+ and its impact on high school students' speaking skills. These results imply that the training might help students improve their speaking skills when these elements are included.

The third part of the questionnaire addresses the third study question and explores the difficulties and limitations of English language teachers in Samsun regarding the effectiveness of the Erasmus+ mobility programme in developing students' speaking competences. Table 4.3 shows the average scores of 30 English language trainers.

Table 4.3. The mean scores of part 3 of the questionnaire.

Statement	Mean Score
Limited time and resources to focus on individual speaking practice and feedback for participating students	3.9
Insufficient support and guidance provided to English teachers in integrating the programme experiences	3.2
Difficulty in assessing and measuring the progress of students' speaking skills acquired during study abroad	3.6
Language barriers and communication difficulties faced by students in the host country	4.1
Inadequate preparation and orientation for participating students to maximize speaking practice opportunities	3.8

Table 4.3 shows the mean Erasmus+ mobility programme difficulties and restrictions ratings for 30 Samsun English teachers. Teachers' mean ratings indicate their agreement with each assertion about the program's efficacy in improving students' speaking skills. Table 4.3 shows that language hurdles and communication issues for host country students had the highest mean score of 4.1. This indicates that teachers firmly believe such problems impair students' speaking skill development during study abroad. It acknowledges that language difficulties hinder students' speech communication and abilities.

Other assertions earned mean ratings of 3.8 to 3.9, including little time and resources for individual speaking practice and feedback and inadequate student preparation and orientation to optimize speaking practice chances. These ratings show that teachers think these barriers exist and potentially impair the Erasmus+ mobility programme's speaking proficiency gains.

The remark about English teachers not receiving enough help to integrate program experiences averaged 3.2. This indicates that teachers need additional assistance and supervision to integrate course experiences into their normal curriculum, which may restrict the programme's advantages. The mean scores in Table 4.3 show teachers' agreement with Erasmus+'s difficulties and limits. This shows where the programme may improve or need more help to improve students' speaking abilities.

Discussion and Suggestions

Through a questionnaire, 30 Samsun English teachers were asked about Erasmus+'s impact on high school students' speaking skills. The findings illuminate teachers' views and the programme's impact. The study found that English teachers believe the programme can improve students' speaking skills, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, confidence, cultural understanding, effective communication, and willingness to take risks with the target language.

The survey also highlighted Erasmus+ mobility programme elements that teachers feel improve students' speaking skills. These include language immersion, cultural interchange, collaborative learning, deliberate speaking practice activities, curricular integration, public speaking opportunities, and speaking skill feedback and evaluation. Program managers and teachers may develop and administer effective language learning programs by acknowledging these factors.

The survey also found that English teachers experience Erasmus+ mobility programme efficiency issues. These challenges include limited time and resources for individual speaking practice and feedback, insufficient support and guidance for integrating programme experiences, difficulty assessing progress, language barriers and communication difficulties, and inadequate student preparation and orientation. To maximize the program's benefits and students' study abroad experiences, these issues must be addressed.

The literature review and research reveal how Erasmus+ affects high school students' speaking skills. The results regularly show that Erasmus improves students' speaking skills. Research by Llanes et al. (2012), Kayaoğlu (2016), Özdemir (2019), Cantez (2020), and Mulcar (2019)

repeatedly shows that Erasmus experiences enhance participants' speaking skills. Meaningful language usage, target language exposure, cultural exchange, and native speaker engagement improve oral ability.

The findings match Mulcar (2019)'s study on high school students' Erasmus+ Key Action 2 mobilities attitudes. Intercultural encounters during Erasmus improved students' English learning attitudes, according to the study. As did English teachers in Samsun, Turkey, who similarly saw the Erasmus+ mobility programme improve students' speaking skills. The high mean scores for statements about overall speaking skills, vocabulary usage, cultural understanding, effective communication, and taking risks with the target language match teachers' perceptions and positive literature results.

Second, prior research suggests that Erasmus improves spoken language abilities. Kinginger (2008) highlights that Erasmus improves most participants' speech abilities. According to research by Llanes et al. (2012) and Kayaoğlu (2016), the Erasmus program significantly improved participants' oral proficiency. The teachers' high mean scores for fluency, pronunciation, and effective communication corroborate the congruence between teacher views and favorable results from earlier studies.

According to the research study, Erasmus promotes language development in several linguistic abilities. Özdemir (2019) and Altıntaş (2021) found that Erasmus programs enhance reading, listening, grammar, and vocabulary ability. Teachers believe the Erasmus+ mobility programme improves students' vocabulary and oral communication abilities. The approach has a broad influence on students' language development, supporting the literature and instructors' opinions.

The approach develops spoken language, linguistic competency, cultural awareness, and positive attitudes toward learning English. Teachers identified challenges and limitations that could be addressed, such as providing more support and resources for individual speaking practice, integrating programme experiences into the regular curriculum, and addressing language barriers and communication difficulties. These findings could help educators, researchers and program managers improve Erasmus+'s impact on students' speaking abilities and language development.

This study suggests various ways to improve Erasmus+'s impact on students' speaking abilities. Students should be encouraged to interact with the local population and participate in language-related activities during study abroad to increase target language immersion. Students should have structured chances to meet with native speakers and participate in cultural exchange events to improve their cultural knowledge and communication skills.

English teachers in Samsun should receive comprehensive support and resources to integrate programme experiences into the regular curriculum and incorporate Erasmus+ mobility programme linguistic and cultural gains into classroom instruction. Participating students should get language and cultural training during preparation and orientation to optimize speaking practice and help them adjust to the new language and culture. To improve speaking skills, students should have time and tools for specific practice and positive criticism. By implementing these recommendations, Erasmus+ may improve students' speaking abilities and optimize its effect.

A longitudinal study of the Erasmus+ mobility programme's long-term impact on high school students' speaking abilities might be useful. Researchers can evaluate the sustainability and longevity of benefits by following up with individuals after one or two years. Comparative analysis can help explain Erasmus+'s distinctive contributions.

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