

# Personal Space and Its Effects On Turkish EFL Learners

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by Ahmet Emre KESER,  
Emine Beyza Küçük





- Where do you want to spend time?
- Where do you want to study?





Crowded  
houses!

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# What is Personal Space?

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- How do you define “Personal Space”?
- Type your definitions here:  
<https://jamboard.google.com/d/1nz8bVa7K2Vmz-7IV68WoIMW-uuXY5E1OGh8Drk4kC6g/edit?usp=sharing>

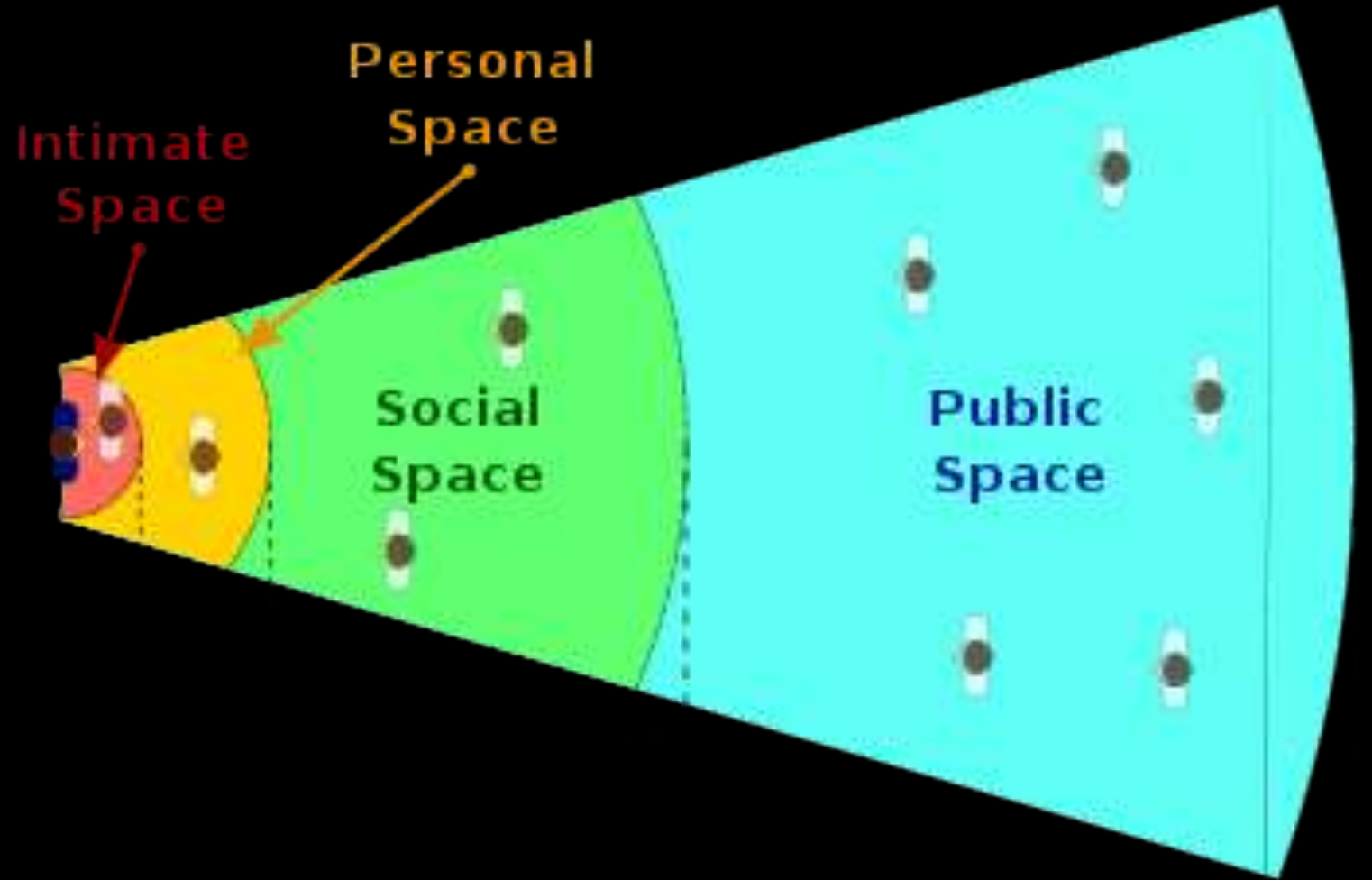


# Edward Twitchell Hall



# Space Categories by *Edward T. Hall*

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# Definition and Meaning

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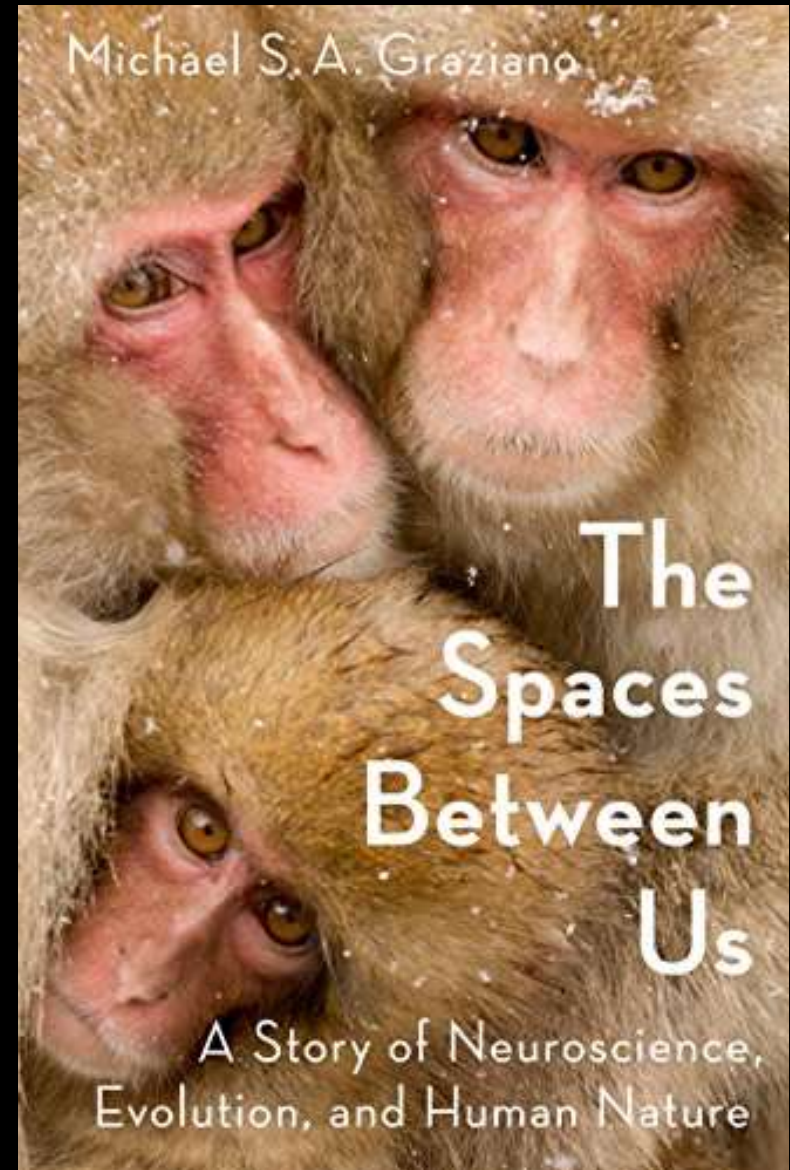
- Personal space is "an area of defended space around an individual". (APA Dictionary)
- Personal space is an area that humans or other animals, psychologically, feel and think theirs. (Edward T. Hall)



# *The Spaces Between Us* by Michael Graziano

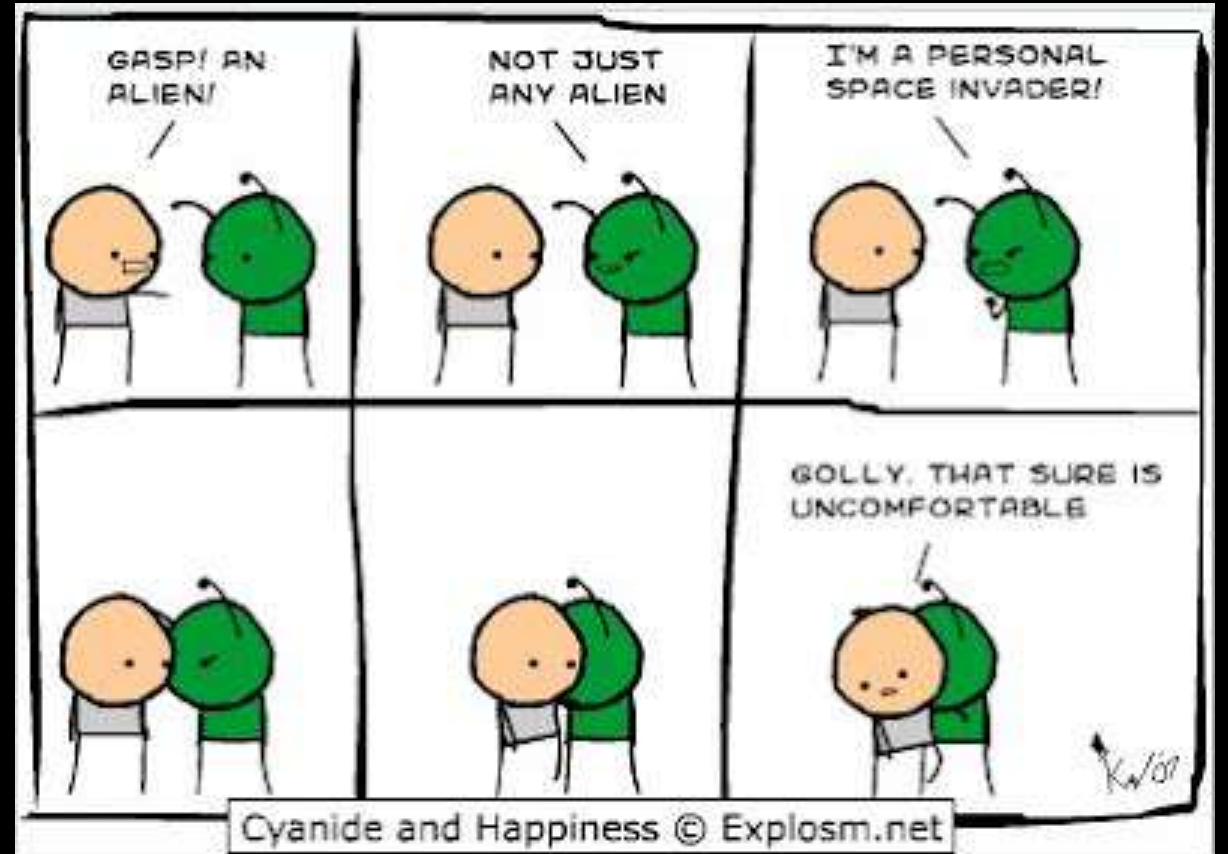
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- Graziano states that our personal space is more like a second skin, and it might be something that we have to have and defend in order to sustain our lives, at least in a healthy way.





# Violation of Personal Space



# Violating Factors

- Our personal space could be violated not only by the physical appearance of the people around us but also by various factors that invade our precious space, such as cats, dogs, or whatever pet we have.
- Moreover, we may feel uncomfortable even by the presence of inanimate objects in our own room and think that they violate our territory.



# An Interesting Study!

- Alekseeva & Prokopeva (2015) studied adolescents whose personal spaces and other privacies are deprived by different factors. According to the results of this study, if the personal spaces and interests of the adolescents are violated, they are most likely to end up as angry and so-called "abnormal" in the future.

# Purpose of our study

- This study aims to describe what personal space is, how Turkish EFL learners perceive the term "personal space", and to what extent it affects the English learning processes of Turkish EFL learners.
- Another aim of this study is to find out possible factors that violate Turkish EFL learners' personal spaces and the effects of these violations on their English proficiency levels.





## Data Collection, Participants, Data Analysis

We prepared questionnaire consisting of 20 questions and shared on a Facebook platform named "100. Yıl Evleri".

The participants (n=45) of this study are METU students from all degrees and faculties whose L1 is Turkish.

The numerical data was analyzed via Google Forms.

# Limitations

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- We could not find many sources related to the effects of personal space on Turkish EFL learners as abundant in the literature as I expected.
- Also, the number and profile of the participants are not enough to generalize the findings.





# Findings

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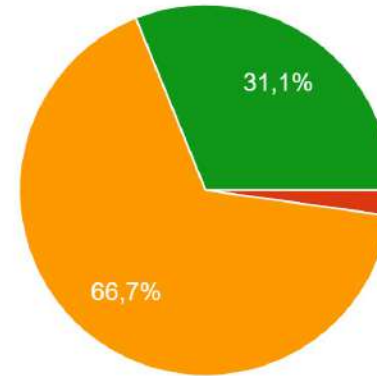


# Personal space matters for the EFL students at METU.

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11) What is your perception of personal space? Which option is closer to your ideal personal space definition?

45 yanıt



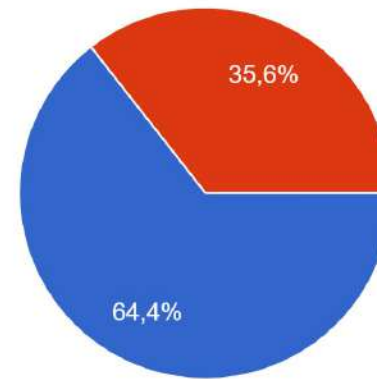
- A) It is just a physical area.
- B) It is just a psychological border.
- C) It is both physical area and psychological border.
- D) It is more than a physical area and psychological border.

Most of the  
participants  
had personal  
space.

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10) During your primary, secondary and high school periods, did you have a private room where you spent time freely without being distracted by the people, pets, or objects?

45 yanıt



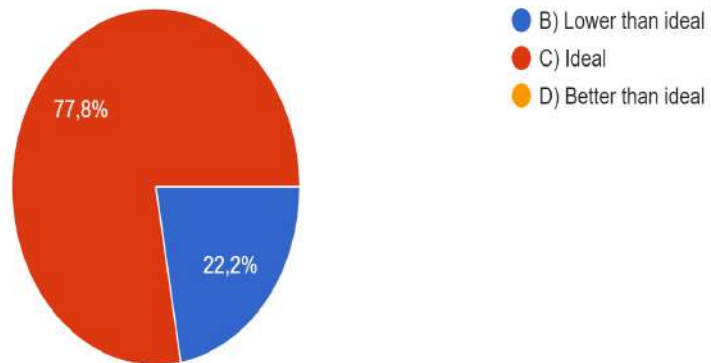
● A) Yes  
● B) No



Note that most of them lived in urban areas and had one or two siblings. And, their economic situations are “ideal”.

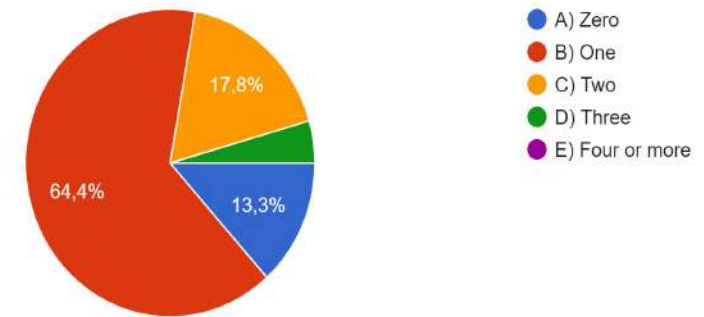
5) How do you define your (or your family's) economic situation? (In terms of monthly income.)

45 yanıt



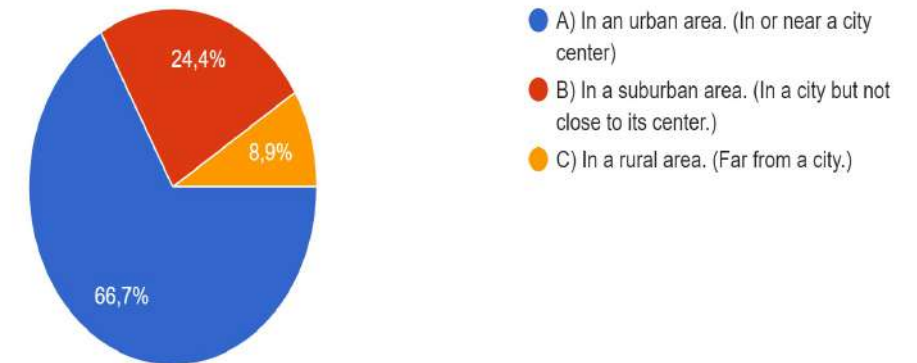
6) How many siblings do you have?

45 yanıt



7) Where did you live during your primary school period?

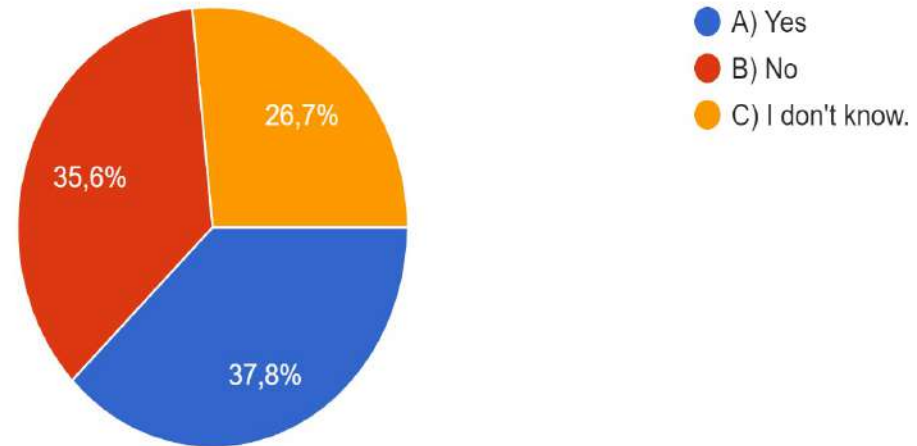
45 yanıt



An even  
contest!

12) Do you think you had enough personal space to practice English before the university period?

45 yanıt



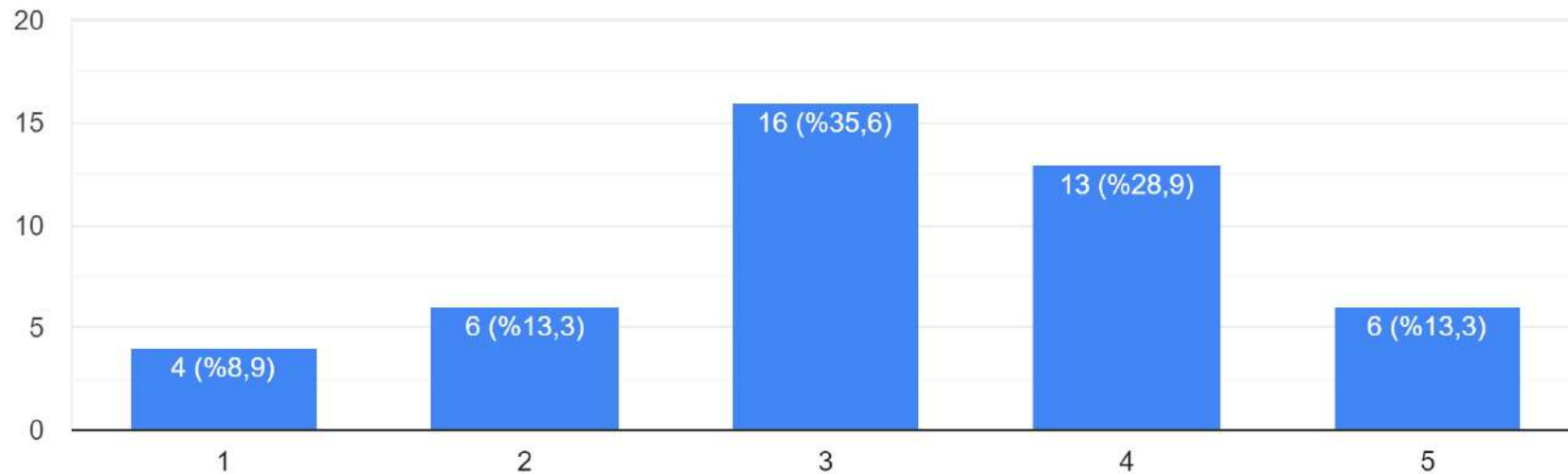
- The option C represents that the participants were not aware of personal space!

Most of the participants stated they had an ideal personal space.

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13) How much personal space do you think you had before the university period?

45 yanıt



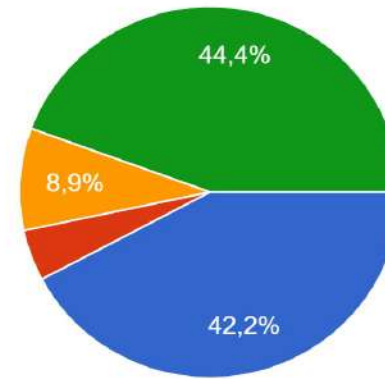


But the ones  
who had  
narrow  
personal space  
mostly blamed  
“parents”.

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14) Which is the main reason why you had narrow personal space? (If you had enough personal space, please choose option D)

45 yanıt

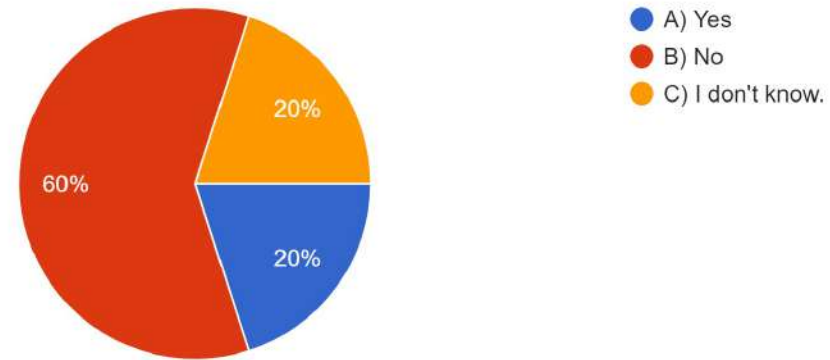


- A) Parent(s)
- B) Sibling(s)
- C) Other people
- D) I had enough personal space

We also  
asked about  
METU  
dormitories!

15) Do you think you have enough personal space in the METU dormitories or in the student apartments to practice English?

45 yanıt

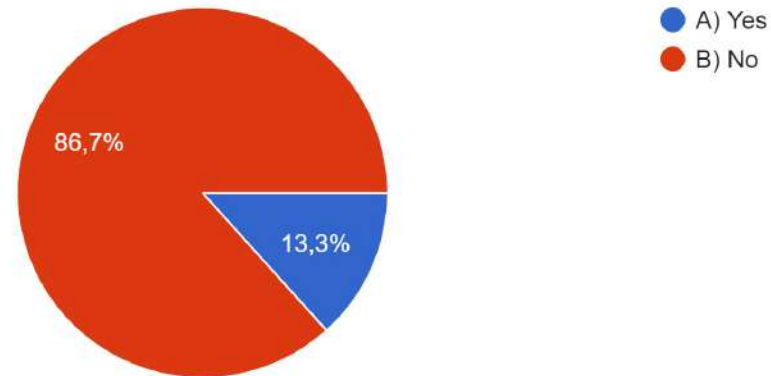


- Remember, METU is a university where medium of instruction is English!

They think  
Turkish EFL  
learners do not  
have enough  
personal space  
in general.

16) In general, do you think Turkish EFL learners have enough personal space during their English learning processes?

45 yanıt

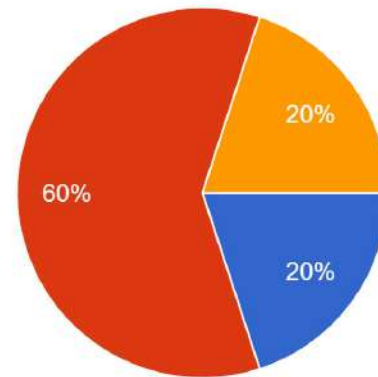




However, they  
do not think  
personal  
space is the  
main factor.

17) Do you think personal space is the most significant factor that affects foreign language learning?

45 yanıt

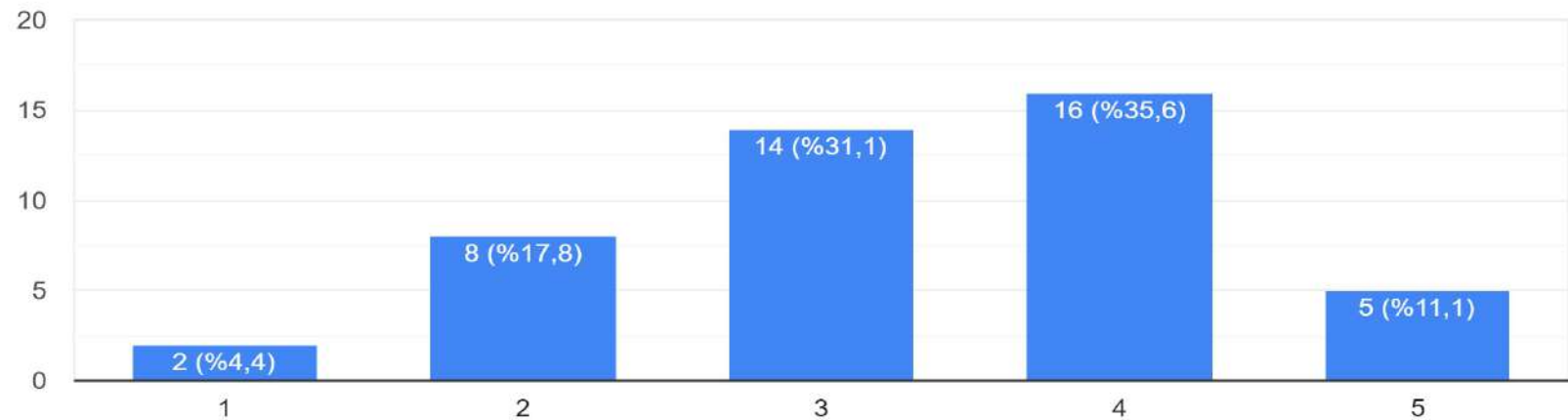


● A) Yes  
● B) No  
● C) I don't know.

Yet, most of them think that personal space affects EFL learning process.

18) How much do you think personal space affects the English learning processes of Turkish EFL students?

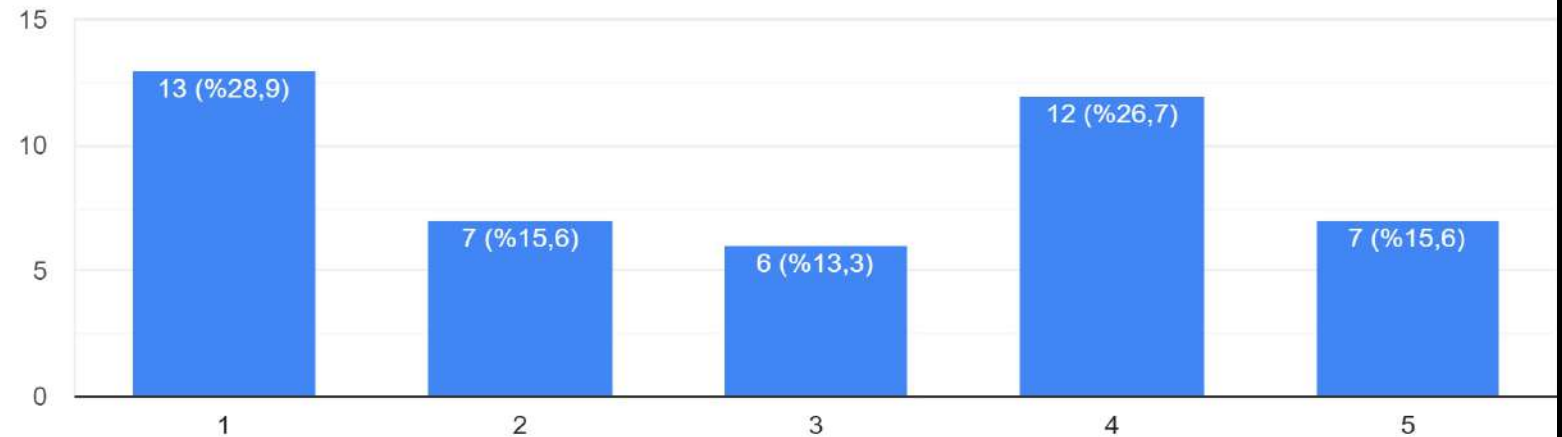
45 yanıt



Another  
even  
contest!

20) How much do you think your English proficiency level would differ if you had a personal space as broad as you want?

45 yanıt



- About 40-45% of the participants think that their English proficiency levels would not be different while the other 40-45% think the opposite.



# Discussion and Suggestions



# More studies and more participants needed!

As this study was conducted with the participation of 45 EFL learners from METU, these findings do not reflect the precise effects of personal space on Turkish EFL learners.

Because METU is one of the “elite” universities in Turkey, and the medium of instruction is English, which is known by many of the students beforehand.

So, we need more information from various regions, age groups, state vs. private schools, etc. to be able to measure the real effect of this phenomenon.

QUESTIONS?



Thanks for  
your  
interest!



# REFERENCES

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