ANDRAGOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL ORIENATIONS OF ADULT LEARNERS LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract

This study aimed to study the andragogical and pedagogical orientations of adults learning English as a foreign language. The Turkish version of the Educational Orientation Questionnaire (Christian, 1983) was used. Sixty adults at evening classes in Turkey were included in the study. The results of the study revealed that the subjects were more andragogically oriented. However, the wide range of scores suggested that they were not rigid in their orientations and tended to hold pedagogical tendency towards learning too.

Since Malcolm Knowles (1973, 1980) popularized the term andragogy in 1970s, which he defined as “the art and science of helping adults learn” (Knowles, 1980, p. 38), there has been a spate of discussion over the term itself and the word pedagogy, which is defined as “the art and science of educating children” (Knowles, 1980, p. 38).

Knowles (1980) says that the term pedagogy derived from the Greek stem paid- (meaning “child”) and agogos (meaning “leading”). As the derivation suggests, pedagogy can refer only to children and teaching or leading them. On the other hand, the term andragogy stems from the Greek word aner with the stem andra meaning “man, not boy” or adult, and agogus meaning “leader of.” These stems make it clear that the two terms refer to totally different things.

It was not Malcolm Knowles who used the term andragogy for the first time. It was first coined by Alexander Kapp, a German teacher to describe the educational theory of Plato in 1833 (Davenport & Davenport, 1985). However, another German, Johan Frederick Herbart, opposed the use of andragogy for this purpose, and the term was forgotten for a long time. It was taken up again in the first half of 20th century in Europe and gained popularity in the second half of the century in France, Holland, and Yugoslavia. Martha Anderson and Eduard Lindeman introduced the term to the United States in 1927, but they did not develop the concept. On one of his trips to Europe, Malcolm Knowles was introduced to the term, and was carried away with the meaning of it, which, he believed, compromised the elements of his theory, which he was developing at the time.

According to Knowles (1980), andragogy is a set of assumptions about adults as learners and a series of recommendations for the planning, management, and evaluation of adult learning. This explanation of the concept has two important presuppositions. First, self-directedness is a core of adulthood. Second, andragogical practice involves collaboration with the learners in their quest for learning.

Knowles (1980) states that the four assumptions that underline adult learning differ from those underlining the pedagogic teaching:

http://education.fiu.edu/newhorizons
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as a person matures, (1) his self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality toward one of being a self-directing human being; (2) he accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning; (3) his readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his social role; and (4) his time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly his orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of problem-centeredness. (p. 39)

These assumptions underlying the theory of andragogy imply some issues that need to be considered in adult education: Learners (a) have the right to know why something is important to learn, (b) need guidance about how to direct themselves through information, (c) need to be able to relate the topic to their experiences, (d) can learn when they are ready and motivated to learn, and (e) might need help to overcome inhibitions, behaviors, and beliefs about learning.

The andragogical model differentiates the roles of the teacher (or rather the facilitator) from those in the pedagogical model. The andragogical model is a process model, and in this model the facilitator prepares in advance a set of procedures for involving the learners (and other relevant parties) in a process involving these elements: “(1) establishing a climate conductive to learning; (2) creating a mechanism for mutual planning; (3) diagnosing the needs for learning; (4) formulating program objectives . . . that will satisfy these needs; (5) designing a pattern of learning experiences; (6) conducting these learning experiences with suitable techniques and materials; and (7) evaluating the learning outcomes and rediagnosing learning needs” (Knowles, 1973, p. 54).

Jarvis (1985) compares the assumptions of pedagogy and andragogy. In the pedagogical approach the learner is expected to be dependent and the teacher is the one who dictates the content to be learned while andragogical approach gives the learner independence, meaning that the learner is supposed to be self-directed. The learner’s experience, according to the pedagogical approach, has little relevance. In andragogical approach, however, the learner’s experience is valuable for learning, and, therefore, among the methods to be used are discussion and problem solving. While pedagogy supposes that society dictates the learner what to learn, andragogical approach acknowledges what people want to learn, which necessitates learning programmes to be organized around life applications.

Davenport and Davenport (1985) also point out some of the andragogical and pedagogical differences in application. In pedagogical philosophy, the instructor is the one who diagnoses the needs of the learners, prepares objectives and evaluates the process. The instructor is the knowledge transmitter; therefore, the learner has a passive role. In contrast, an instructor with andragogical philosophy aims to create an informal, collaborative and respectful climate. He involves the learner in the process of designing and evaluation of the learning activities which are based on the learner’s problem areas. The techniques include group discussion, role-playing, action project, case studies etc.

Knowles (1980) argued that learners in a pedagogical learning experience are more teacher-directed. The learning content is generally prescriptive with the emphasis on transmittal of knowledge and both acquire knowledge and skills, and demonstrate their competence to their teacher. These learners also expect the teacher to firmly direct their
learning, motivate them, and be responsible for assessing all the learning. Common practices that support a pedagogical orientation include lectures transmitting factual information, assigned readings, drills, tests, and rote learning. Teachers operate on the assumption that learners are ready to learn whatever is prescribed to them in the form of standardized curriculum. Although pedagogical practices are more appropriate for children, Knowles defended the use of such practices with some adult learners, particularly in circumstances where any other approach is unsuccessful.

In contrast, the practice of andragogy is more learner-centered and the role of the teacher is primarily that of a facilitator. Characteristics of adult learners learning in an andragogical experience include self-direction, autonomy, responsibility for decisions, resource of experience, performance of social roles, and immediacy of application or action. Knowles (1980) recommends this orientation to accomplish more meaningful outcomes because it encourages learners to stress and display their freedom of choice for learning goals, content, and processes. Learners with an andragogical orientation expect the teacher to provide an environment that enhances learning, have at least some control over the process of learning, and encourage higher levels of self-direction.

Despite the differences between andragogical and pedagogical orientations to teaching, such as the roles of the teacher and the learners and the learning climate and environment, many adult education institutions require a diploma or certificate in pedagogy. Therefore, inevitably adult educators in various fields seem to hold their pedagogical beliefs about education. However, to have the desired level of learning, the characteristics of adult learners should be considered. Only in this way can appropriate learning environments be provided for our learners. However, the assumption that all adult learners know and endorse the andragogical model cannot be made. One of the pillars of the andragogical model is to start from where our learners are and to make use of their previous learning experiences. Therefore, the fact that learners may hold strong pedagogical beliefs and expectations cannot be overlooked. If it is overlooked, the andragogical assumption would be imposed onto the learners, resulting in possibly a negative effect on their learning. Therefore, it seems reasonable to suggest that in every adult education program the learners’ beliefs about learning need to be known, which requires teachers to learn the learners’ andragogical-pedagogical orientations.

Previous Studies on Andragogical-Pedagogical Orientations of Adult Learners

A number of studies have been conducted on the on andragogical-pedagogical orientations of adult learners in other fields. The following is a summary of eight representative studies.

Hadley (1975) pioneered the studies on andragogical and pedagogical orientations. However, Hadley’s study was on adult educators’ orientation. The method of his study was taken up by other adult educators who adapted his Educational Orientation Questionnaire (EOQ; Hadley, 1975) in order to investigate the andragogical and pedagogical orientations of adult learners. Van Allen (1982) was the first person to use Hadley’s questionnaire to measure student attitudes in eight North Carolina Community Colleges and discovered that full-time younger female and married students had higher andragogical orientations than other students.
Christian (1983) adapted Hadley’s (1975) EOQ, for civilian-military students attending classes at Tinker Air Force Base. The results of his study revealed differences related to whether classes were mandatory or voluntary. He did not examine possible relationships between educational orientation and age and sex.

Davenport & Davenport (1986) replicated Christian’s (1983) study and included the relationship between age, sex, academic achievement, and educational orientation among students at the University of Wyoming. Their study revealed that female students had a higher andragogical orientation. However, they could not find statistically significant relationship between age and educational orientation and academic achievement and educational orientation.

Grubbs (1981) conducted a study with 332 students in 20 mid-western schools of theology and found that females and younger students were more andragogical than others. Delahaye, Limerick, and Hearn (1994) studied the andragogical and pedagogical orientations of university students studying business management. Using Christian’s (1983) Students’ Orientation Questionnaire (SOQ) they found that the relationship between an andragogical orientation and a pedagogical orientation is not based on a continuum, but is orthogonal. Such a relationship implies that an individual can be located within a two dimensional space that is bounded on one side by andragogy and on the adjoining side by pedagogy. Therefore, a learner could have a higher score on pedagogy and andragogy or lower score on pedagogy and andragogy.

Choy and Delahaye (2002) investigated the learning approaches, study orientation, and readiness for self-directed learning of 266 youth aged 17-24 years old and enrolled in four Technical and Further Education Institutes. Three instruments were used, the Study Process Questionnaire (Biggs, 1988), SOQ (Christian, 1983), and the Learning Preference Assessment (Gugulielmino & Guglielmino, 1991). The data showed that most youth have a predominant surface approach to learning, a preference for an andragogical orientation, and a low level of readiness for self-directed learning. There was no statistically significant difference in the pedagogy scores by gender.

Chen (1994) conducted a study to identify and compare the learning orientation of 683 adults and 699 traditional students in vocational programs of six junior colleges in Taiwan. He used the SOQ (Christian, 1983) to determine the students’ andragogical or pedagogical orientation. The data suggested adult students tended to prefer andragogical orientation more than the pedagogical one. There were significant differences among adult and traditional students in the dimensions of “self-directed learning” and “instructor’s direction” and in the learning orientation of students grouped by gender, age, type of programs, and grade.

Finally, Richardson (1994) aimed to determine if there was a difference in program satisfaction between students who graduated from high school and began their nursing education and those students who waited before beginning their nursing education relative to their preference for andragogical or pedagogical teaching methodology. The study included 481 sophomore, junior, and senior baccalaureate nursing students. The survey instruments obtained data on preference for andragogical or pedagogical teaching methodology, program satisfaction, and demographic characteristics. Analysis of variance was used to determine if there were significant differences in Hadley's (1975) EOQ and a program satisfaction scale scores based on student age, gender, marital status, and year in college. An analysis of
variance was used to determine if differences existed for students who started their pre-
ursing program after high school and those who waited. In general, students preferred the 
andragogical teaching methodology over the pedagogical teaching methodology. There was a 
significant difference between the EOQ mean score and age ($p = .01$) with the 22-24 year olds 
having the highest preference for the andragogical teaching method. There was a significant 
difference in EOQ score and year in college ($p = .00$), with sophomore and senior students 
preferring more andragogical teaching methods than junior students. It was also found that 
there was satisfaction with the program, though junior students were more satisfied with the 
program than sophomore or senior students. Analysis of variance determined there were no 
differences in program satisfaction or preference for andragogical or pedagogical teaching 
methods between students who started their education after high school and those who 
waited.

The Purpose of This Study

Even though the literature has some examples of studies conducted on adult learners’ 
andragogical and pedagogical orientation to learning in other areas and academic subjects, as 
cited above, the field of English as a foreign language (EFL) is devoid of such studies. The 
notion of andragogy is not known, or even given priority. The curriculum of programs 
preparing English teachers seems to focus more on the pedagogical orientation of education, 
which tend not to focus on adult learners. The informal talks and conversations with many 
EFL practitioners, who were either teaching children or adults, lead to the conclusion that the 
term andragogy does not exist in their lexicon.

Such an orientation to teaching will have negative effects on adults’ learning English 
because some adults do feel more anxious about learning a foreign language, believing that 
language learning can best take place in earlier stages of life. Therefore, they may feel at a 
great disadvantage to learn English. If the language education programs do not take these 
adult learners’ characteristics into consideration and language teachers lack the capability to 
adopt pedagogical orientations to teaching adults learning English, the result might be much 
more detrimental.

Because of this pedagogical emphasis, some practitioners who may implement 
andragogical practices in their teaching are likely not aware of their doing so. They call 
themselves “English language teachers” and do not make a distinction between those 
teaching adults and those teaching children, which might point to the lack of interest in 
andragogical language teaching. Therefore, an assessment of the pedagogical and 
andragogical orientation of adult learners learning English can provide material and 
curriculum designers, as well as the practitioners in the field of EFL, with new insights and 
open an andragogical door to English language teaching. The aim of this study was to reveal 
the andragogical and pedagogical orientations of Turkish adult EFL learners.

Method

This section describes the respondents, data collection and analysis procedures, and 
the limitations of the study.
The Respondents

In this study, 60 Turkish adult learners enrolled in community evening EFL classes were included. They had been studying English for about six years on and off. However, for the three months prior to the study, they had been attending their classes regularly. Their ages varied between 17 and 44. The mean age was 26. This was a convenience sample because I had access only to students who I was teaching.

Data Collection and Analysis

In this study, a Turkish version of Christian’s (1983) EOQ has been adopted as the main instrument to gather data (see Appendix). Christian’s questionnaire was similar to that of Hadley (1975), but contained 25 andragogical and 25 pedagogical items. Ten items were omitted due to validity problems. A reliability coefficient of .77 was found for the EOQ using the Kuder Richardson Formula. Content validity was tested by the jury method of validation, with two groups reviewing the instrument. Thirteen prominent adult educators, including Malcolm Knowles, had reviewed the EOQ and found it acceptable. The Turkish version of the instrument was reviewed by the teaching staff at the Department of Adult Education, Ankara University.

The questionnaire followed Hadley’s (1975) six dimensional design that measures: (a) the purpose of education, (b) the nature of the learner, (c) the characteristics of the learning experience, (d) management of the learning experience, (e) evaluation, and (f) the relationship among learners and between learners and educators.

The 50 EOQ statements were randomly numbered, with statements 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 32, 33, 36, 39, 40, 41, 42, 45, 47 and 49 the andragogical items, and statements 1, 3, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 28, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 37, 38, 43, 44, 46, 48 and 50 the pedagogical items (see Appendix). Andragogical statements were scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (almost always) to 1 (almost never), and pedagogical statements were reversed, with 1 (almost always) to 5 for (almost never). Hence, a high score represents an andragogical orientation, and a low score represents a pedagogical orientation. Since there are 50 items on the questionnaire, 250 was the highest possible score and 50 the lowest possible score. A score of 150 was the median point and was considered neutral. Scores over 150 would be considered andragogical, whereas scores under 150 would be considered pedagogical. A z-test was conducted to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the scores that show an andragogical orientation and those that show a pedagogical orientation.

The Limitations of the Study

Three limitations impacted this study. First, this study included only 60 learners in the context of the Turkish culture. Therefore, the results of the study cannot be generalized to all adult learners in the field of EFL. The second limitation lies in the sampling procedure. The subjects were not selected randomly. The researcher was limited with the choice of the schools from which the respondents were chosen, as he only went to the schools where he worked previously. However, the results still could be generalized to similar populations of learners at private evening language courses. Third, the socioeconomic level and the educational background of the respondents were not taken into consideration and can also affect the result of the study.
Results

The data gathered in the study revealed three learner groups:

1. Those who tended to be andragogically oriented \((n=51, 83.3\%)\). The andragogical scores varied between 151 and 196.

2. Those who tended to be pedagogically oriented \((n=7, 11.7\%)\). The pedagogical scores varied between 135 and 148.

3. Neutral. Two of the respondents had the score of 150. Because this means a neutral orientation, they were not taken into consideration in the analysis of the data. The standard deviations for the instrument are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

*The Mean of the Pedagogical and Andragogical Scores and the Standard Deviation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>(n)</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>4.358</td>
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<td>Andragogy</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>13.13</td>
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\(z=7.698, z>1.96\)

The mean for the pedagogy \((M=143; SD=4.358)\) was larger than the mean for the andragogy \((M=166; SD=13.33)\). When the pedagogical and andragogical scores were compared, a statistical significance of 0.05 was found \((z=7.698, z>1.96)\). Andragogical scores were found to be statistically more significant than the pedagogical scores, which suggest the majority of the respondents \((83.3\%)\) were andragogically oriented. However, it is important to note that those who were andragogically oriented were not so rigid in their orientation to learning, since their scores ranged from 151 to 196 \((SD=13.13)\). Therefore, the andragogical group tended to be more heterogonous. Also, although they were small in number, those who were found to be pedagogically oriented tended to be a more homogenous group compared to the andragogically oriented group \((SD=4.36)\).

Conclusions

The adults who were learning English as a foreign language tended to be more andragogically oriented in their learning. However, the wide range of scores also indicates a tendency towards pedagogical orientations. Therefore, it would be wrong to assume that the learners would only go for the andragogical and/or pedagogical items.

When the number of the learners found to be andragogically oriented is considered, the purpose and the needs of the learners on a course should be taken into account. Therefore, before starting certain courses, educators need to find out the needs, interests, and purposes of their target groups. For example, if the learners of English wanted to learn the language to use...
it in social groups, the educational program should help them to develop their communicational skills.

Educators should not assume that all their adult learners will be andragogically oriented. In organizing the educational settings and the materials, pedagogical factors need to be taken into consideration. It is also important to be aware of those who could be totally andragogical or pedagogical in a group. Only in this way can educators provide educationally appropriate opportunities for all individual learners, enabling them to reach more learners. Learners who are pedagogically oriented should be approached in pedagogical ways first. Then, step-by-step they could be helped to have and appreciate the andragogical experiences.

Educators need to be informed about the concept of learning orientation. Educators who appreciate the importance of this concept and know how to use it would choose to find out the learning orientation of their learner from the very beginning. Educators should also learn their own orientation, which would allow them to make a comparison between their own and their learners' orientation, giving them the opportunity to build realistic expectations and arrange the learning environment accordingly.

References


Appendix

**ÖĞRENME TUTUMU ANKETİ**

Yaşınız : ..........

Cinsiyetiniz : ..........

Eğitim Durumunuz : ..........

Medeni Haliniz : ..........

Bu anket öğrenmeye yönelik tutumları belirlemek üzere düzenlenmiştir. Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadeleri, öğrenmeye yönelik görüşlerinize uygun olarak cevaplandırınız.

Her bir ifade için, sizin için uygun olan kutucuğa “X” işaret koyunuz.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Örnek: Öğretmen, diğer öğrencilerle iyi bir ilişki kurabileceğim bir ortam sağlamalıdır.</th>
<th>Hem Hemen Hem Her Zaman</th>
<th>Genelikle</th>
<th>Rarend</th>
<th>Nadiren</th>
<th>Hem Hemen Her Bir Zaman</th>
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<td>Öğretmen tüm bilgileri kesin gerçekler olarak sunmalıdır.</td>
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<td>Öğretmen, hislerimi, tutumlarını ve davranışlarını sorgulamam için beni teşvik etmelidir.</td>
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<td>Öğretmen bana öğrenme yeteneğim olduğunu hissettirecek şekilde davranmalıdır.</td>
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<td>Öğretmen neyi nasıl öğrenileceğine karar verme sürecine aktif olarak katılmama izin vermelidir.</td>
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<td><strong>Öğretmen, öğrenciler arasında yarıştı teşvik etmelidir.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Öğretmen deneyim ve becerilerine saygı duyduğunu, onlara değer verdiği hissettirmelidir.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Öğretmenin ana metodu, yakürsüden konuyu kendisi anlatmak, ya okuma ödevleri vermek, veya her ikisi birden salariélmalıdır.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Neyin ne zaman, nerede öğrenileceği konusunda tüm kararları öğretmenin kendisi vermesi gerekli olmalıdır.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Öğretmen nadiren, orta düzeydeki öğrencileri farklı bireyler olarak değerlendirmelidir.</strong></td>
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Öğretmen istedidğim davranış değişikliklerini tanımlamama ve bu değişiklikleri gerçekleştirmeme yardımcı olmalıdır.

Öğretmen kendi öğrenme projelerini seçip bunları yerine getirmem konusunda yeterli olduğuma inanmalı ve bana bu şekilde davranmalıdır.

Öğretmen gelişmeme engel olan düşünce kalıplarından ve kalıplaşmış alışkanlıklarından kurtulmam için yardımcı olmalıdır.

Öğretmen kendi öğrenme aktivitelerini ve materyallerimi yaratma konusunda beni teşvik etmelidir.

Öğretmen ödev vermeli ve bunlara not vermelidir.

Öğretmen konulara dayalı bir kurs planı takip etmelidir.

Öğretmen değerlendirme tamamen kurs hedeflerine dayalı yapmalıdır.

Öğretmen çalışkanlık, azim ve cesareti geliştirmek için öğrenciler arasında yarışmayı desteklemelidir.

Öğretmen, öğrencilerin kendisi ile sıkı ilişki kurabileceği bir ortam sağlamalıdır.

Öğretmen toplumu eleştirisel olarak değerlendirmem ve yeni davranışlar denemem için beni desteklemelidir.

Öğretmen, öğrencileri için neyin daha iyi olduğunu öğrencilerden daha iyi bilmelidir.

Öğretmen hata yaparsa öğrencilerin saygısını kaybeder.

Öğretmen olgunluğun, bilgideki artıştan çok bireyin kendisini anlamak konusundaki gelişmeye bağlı olduğuna inanır şekilde hareket etmelidir.

Öğretmen neyin nasıl öğrenileceğini bana söylemedir.
Öğretmen ilgisiz konularda zaman kaybetmeyi engellemek için öğrenme hedeflerini önceden belirlemelidir.

Öğretmen her şeyden önce öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarını düşünmelidir.

Öğretmen, öğrencilerin sınav hazırlamasına izin vermelidir.

Öğretmen kendi hedeflerini belirlememe izin vermelidir.

Öğretmen kendi kişisel hedeflerimi elde etmeme faydali olacağım karar verdiğim şeyler öğrenmemeye yardımcı olmalıdır.

Öğretmen, öğrencilerinin kendi dışındaki süstimal edecek şekilde faydalanmasını engellemek için çok dikkat etmelidir.

Öğretmen risk alamalırm.

Öğretmen, öğrencilerin aralarında işbirliği yapmalarını, risk almalarını ve yeni şeyler denemelerini desteklemelidir.

Öğretmen sınıfta yapacaklarını dikkatlice planlamalıdır.

Öğretmen sınıfta yalnızca kendi konuşmak yerine grup çalışmaları yer vermelidir.

Öğretmenin öğrencileri ile ilişkisi kişisel olmalıdır.

Öğretmen yapılacak işleri öğrencileri ile birlikte planlamalıdır.

Öğretmen net bir plan yapmalı ve ona bağlı kalmalıdır.

Anketi cevaplandığınız için teşekkür ederiz.