AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH PROGRAM OF THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION FOR BASIC EDUCATION (2$^{\text{ND}}$ – 8$^{\text{TH}}$ GRADES)

Gamze Alabaş

M.A. THESIS

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

GAZI UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

JULY, 2019

TELİF HAKKI VE TEZ FOTOKOPİ İZİN FORMU

YAZARIN

Adı: Gamze

Soyadı: ALABAŞ

Bölümü: İngiliz Dili Eğitimi

İmza:

Teslim tarihi:

TEZİN

İngilizce Adı: An Analysis of English Program of the Ministry of National Education for Basic Education (2nd – 8th Grades)

Türkçe Adı: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Temel Eğitim İngilizce Programının Analizi (2.– 8. Sınıflar)

ETİK İLKELERE UYGUNLUK BEYANI

Tez yazma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyduğumu, yararlandığım tüm kaynakları kaynak gösterme ilkelerine uygun olarak kaynakçada belirttiğimi ve bu bölümler dışındaki tüm ifadelerin şahsıma ait olduğunu beyan ederim.

<div align="right">

Yazar Adı Soyadı: Gamze ALABAŞ

İmza:

</div>

JÜRİ ONAY SAYFASI

Gamze Alabaş tarafından hazırlanan "An Analysis of English Program of the Ministry of National Education for Basic Education (2nd – 8th Grades)" adlı tez çalışması aşağıdaki jüri tarafından oy birliği / oy çokluğu ile Gazi Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı'nda Yüksek Lisans tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

Danışman: Prof. Dr. Kemal Sinan Özmen

İngiliz Dili Eğitimi, Gazi Üniversitesi   ………………………….

Başkan: Prof. Dr. Paşa Tevfik Cephe

İngiliz Dili Eğitimi, Gazi Üniversitesi   ………………………….

Üye: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Gülşen Demir

Yabancı Diller ve Kültürler, Ufuk Üniversitesi   ………………………….

Tez Savunma Tarihi: 23.07.2019

Bu tezin İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı'nda Yüksek Lisans tezi olması için şartları yerine getirdiğini onaylıyorum.

Prof. Dr. Selma YEL

Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü Müdürü   ………………………….

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH PROGRAM OF THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION FOR BASIC EDUCATION (2ND – 8TH GRADES)

(MA Thesis)

Gamze Alabaş

GAZİ UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

July, 2019

ABSTRACT

The fast-changing advanced technology and the globalization have been removing the borders in the world. In order to build intercultural connections across the globe, learning the other countries' languages is indispensable for all individuals. English is widely acknowledged as the lingua franca, operating as the linguistic tool for global communication among societies. In this regard, English language teaching (ELT) has been standing at a critical point among researchers for a long time, and concerns heavily relate to the ways that may help increase the opportunities for learning English and the quality of ELT. However, as for the local context, a considerable amount of research indicates that there has always been a gap and a disparity between language policies and classroom applications in Turkey. In this respect, an analysis of the national English language curriculum for primary education is of the utmost importance.

This study aims to analyze and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the primary English curriculum descriptively. The study is based on a concurrent mixed-method study. The curriculum, developed for basic education by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in 2017, was taken as the major data. The major points of research focus were the content of the curriculum and syllabi and the views of one specialist and two English as a

foreign language (EFL) teachers, working for the Ministry. Exploiting a content analysis, the study focused on the pedagogic objectives, vocabulary, syllabus themes, suggested contexts, tasks and activities, vocabulary, functions, outcomes and quantified these variables to reach a wider portrait. Simultaneously, the qualitative data were collected through interviews, designed by the researcher to yield data concerning teachers' perspectives. The document analysis displayed that the CEFR principles and the innovations in the field of language teaching were highly followed in the 2017 ELTP and the authentic language use was the key principle of the recent revision. The results also revealed that there was a meaningful connection between the nature of the program and the testing procedures held in the 2017 ELTP. There was a great variety of contexts, tasks and activities which through the learners were equipped for real-life interactions and different needs, interests and styles of learners and learning strategies were addressed. On the contrary, the inadequacy in the introduction of the target culture and technology exploitation and the lack of pronunciation practice were the weaknesses discovered by the content analysis.

The findings related to the teachers' perceptions indicated that the English teachers had mostly positive opinions about the content of each syllabus in terms of themes, functions, outcomes, vocabulary and suggested contexts and tasks/activities. However, some weaknesses were stated such as the unconformity between the theory of the curriculum and the teachers' practice, insufficient class hours, lack of technological and intercultural elements. The findings of the study may help develop strategies to take precaution for probable problems of English curricula.

MİLLİ EĞİTİM BAKANLIĞI TEMEL EĞİTİM İNGİLİZCE PROGRAMININ ANALİZİ (2. – 8. SINIFLAR)

(Yüksek Lisans Tezi)

Gamze Alabaş

GAZİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ

EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ

Temmuz, 2019

ÖZ

Hızla gelişen teknoloji ve küreselleşme dünyadaki sınırları ortadan kaldırmaktadır. Dünya çapında kültürlerarası bağlantılar kurabilmek amacıyla, diğer ülkelerin dillerini öğrenmek tüm bireyler için kaçınılmaz olmuştur. İngilizce herkes tarafından toplumlararası küresel iletişimi sağlayan dilsel bir araç gibi faaliyet gösteren ortak dil olarak tanınır. Bu bağlamda, İngiliz dili eğitimi araştırmacılar arasında uzun bir süredir kritik bir noktada durmaktadır ve endişeler ciddi ölçüde İngilizce öğrenme imkanlarını arttırma yolları ve İngiliz dili eğitimi kalitesi ile ilgilidir. Bununla birlikte, yerel bağlamda, önemli miktarda araştırma Türkiye'de dil politikaları ve sınıf içi uygulamalar arasında daima boşluklar ve uyumsuzluklar olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu bakımdan, ulusal temel eğitim İngilizce programının analizinin yapılması son derece önemlidir. Bu araştırmanın amacı tanımlayıcı bir şekilde ilköğretim İngilizce programının analizini yapmak ve programın güçlü ve zayıf yönlerini tespit etmektir. Araştırma eş zamanlı karma desen metotu üzerine kuruludur. Çalışmanın ana veri kaynağı Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından temel eğitim için 2017 yılında geliştirilen İngilizce programıdır. Araştırma odağının ana noktaları öğretim programı ve izlence içeriği ve bakanlık için çalışan bir uzman ve iki İngilizce öğretmeninin görüşleridir. İçerik analizi yönteminden yararlanarak, çalışmada pedagojik hedefler, kelime dağarcığı, izlence temaları, önerilen bağlam, görev ve aktiviteler, işlevler ve kazanımlar

üzerine odaklanılmış ve daha geniş bir portreye ulaşmak için bu değişkenler niceleştirilmiştir. Eş zamanlı olarak, araştırmacı tarafından öğretmenlerin görüşlerini ortaya çıkarmak adına hazırlanan görüşmeler yoluyla nitel veri toplanmıştır. Döküman analizi 2017 İngilizce öğretim programının İngiliz dili eğitimi alanındaki yenilikleri ve CEFR ilkelerini büyük bir ölçüde takip ettiğini ve otantik dil kullanımının programın ana prensibi olduğunu göstermiştir. Sonuçlar programın niteliği ile programda kulanılan ölçme teknikleri arasında anlamlı bir bağ olduğunu ortaya çıkarmıştır. Program öğrencilerin gerçek yaşam ilişkileri için donatıldığı ve farklı ihtiyaç, ilgi, öğrenme stilleri ve stratejilerine hitap edildiği çok çeşitli bağlam, görev ve aktiviteler içerir. Öte yandan, hedef kültür tanıtımı ve teknoloji kullanımındaki yetersizlikler ve telaffuz pratiği eksikliği içerik analizi tarafından ortaya dökülen eksikliklerdir. Öğretmenlerin görüşlerine ilişkin bulgular tema, işlev, kazanımlar, kelime ve önerilen bağlamlar, görevler ve aktiviteler anlamında İngilizce öğretmenlerinin izlence içerikleri hakkında olumlu görüşlere sahip olduğunu göstermiştir. Bununla birlikte, teori ve uygulama arasındaki uyumsuzluk, yetersiz ders saatleri ve teknolojik ve kültürlerarası öğelerin eksikliği belirtilen zayıf noktalardır. Çalışmanın bulgularının İngilizce programlarının olası problemlerine karşı önlem almak için stratejiler geliştirmeye yardım edeceği düşünülmektedir.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The MoNE   Ministry of National Education

ELTP   English Language Teaching Program

ELT   English Language Teaching

CLT   Communicative Language Teaching

EFL   English as a Foreign Language

ICT   Information and Communication Technologies

EU   European Union

CALL   Computer Assisted Language Learning

CEFR   Common European Framework of References for Languages

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Education is defined by Ertürk (1988, p. 13) as "the process of creating a deliberate change in individuals' behaviors through their own experience". In this respect, the modern education system aims at aiding learners to perform and compete smoothly in the future world of complication and innovation (Topkaya & Küçük, 2010). Curriculum is the mechanism operating this system since the teaching programs act as tools through which the intended outcomes are actualized (Lovat & Smith, 1995). That is to say, "the institution of education is activated by a curriculum" (Olivia, 1997, p. 22).

In such a world that has been globalizing rapidly, international relationships have been enhanced by the factors such as the prevalence of mass media, importance given to the foreign travel and the increase in cultural and business relations. Therefore, mastering a foreign language is a must for all individuals in order to build intercultural connections and to keep up with the technological, cultural and social changes in the world (Demirel & Cephe, 2014). At this point, due to its widely-acknowledged role as a lingua franca of today's globally evolving world, the vital effect of English language curriculum on reaching the macro-level plans of the countries is undeniable.

As for the Turkish context, being located at the intersection of Europe and Asia requires Turkey to serve as a bridge between West and East and to communicate in international situations. Moreover, Turkey has been holding political-military consultations with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU), as a full and an associate member, respectively. In this regard, due to the significant geopolitical and

strategic position of Turkey and foreign affairs, learning English is inevitable for Turkish citizens (Kırkgöz, 2007; Sarıçoban, 2012). Touching upon the necessity of learning English, the 2017 English language teaching program (ELTP) (MoNE, 2017, p. 3) highlights that "there is no question that the key to economic, political and social progress in today's society depends on the ability of Turkish citizens to communicate effectively on an international level, and competence in English is a key factor in this process". In this respect, the MoNE constantly evaluates the teaching programs and makes fundamental reforms with the purpose of meeting the country's altering educational needs depending on worldwide changes in the technology, science, society and politics in order to provide a quality education creating great opportunities for the individuals in employment processes and enabling them to gain a place in such a competitive global society (Çelik, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

"…Curriculum development is not static. It draws on emerging views of modernism and postmodernism, new understandings of cognitive theories, new understandings of the anatomy and physiology of the brain, and new formulations of instructional design and systems theory. The melding of thought regarding the various world and educational philosophies is also having an impact on curriculum development" (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2018, p. 209).

In this regard, acknowledging the priority of learning English to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world, Turkey made four major curricular reforms in the ELTPs, taking place in 1997, 2006, 2013 and 2017, the last of which is the main data of the present study. Until 1997, ELT was introduced at the secondary grade level in Turkey. That year, with the extension of compulsory education from 5 to 8 years, English was added to the curriculum of the primary state schools and students at fourth grade, whose ages range between 10 and 11, began to learn English in Turkey (Kırkgöz, 2007). However, the research studies showed that in spite of being based on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in theory, the practice of the approach was not common in the real classroom settings, which was attributed to the inadequacy of piloting and teacher training by Kırkgöz (2007). In addition, due to the other weaknesses of the program such as the insufficient time allotted for the units and objectives to reach, the lack of guidance about testing and crowded classrooms, the MoNE designed a new curriculum in 2006, which was relatively more learner-centered, communicative-based and grounded on the constructivist theory (Büyükduman, 2005; Erdoğan, 2005; Kırkgöz, 2007). Nevertheless, as a result of the studies done in the field of ELT, researchers argued that the age of learning makes a

2

difference in language acquisition and the foreign language education should start at the very early ages (Brown, 1995; Cameron, 2001; Lightbown & Spada, 2003; LittleWood, 1984). With the new 4+4+4 education system launched in 2013, the introduction of English language teaching in Turkey shifted from 4th to 2nd grade in order to catch up with the world education applications (Seçkin, 2011; Topkaya & Küçük, 2010). According to the research, the 2013 ELTP had similar problems with the other programs such as the need for revision of the objectives, the inadequate materials and physical condition, the mismatch between the teachers' applications and the theory of the program and insufficient teacher-training (Alkan & Arslan, 2014; Çankaya, 2015).

In the light of such information, it's quite obvious that new reforms bring new problems as well as the solutions. Fullan (as cited in Çelik & Kasapoğlu, 2014) indicates that it's highly demanding to put a new regulation into action as it may be hindered by the factors such as social and political concerns or the problems in supplying the materials and staff. In this respect, although ELT has been a matter of debate for a long while in Turkey and in spite of the reforms done in the field, the academicians of the related field, teachers or the parents still moan about the inadequacy of English teaching by most especially pointing out the inability of the learners to speak the language (Haznedar, 2010; Kırkgöz, 2009) and the research reports of the Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV, 2014) revealed that Turkey underperformed in the field of English language teaching. Moreover, according to the results of Suna and Durmuşçelebi's study (2013), the problem is not only about learning English but also about a general controversy between language policies and implementation. Kırkgöz (2009, p. 681) states that "Turkey needs to resolve existing incongruence between the idealized macro policy objectives and their realizations in practice at micro-level teaching situations". Therefore, the crucial questions such as "how has the English language teaching been applied in the classrooms?", "at which points of English teaching do we have deficiencies?", and "what kind of regulations or innovations do we need?" have to be answered (Kandemir, 2016, p. 4). At this point, it is thought that the analysis of the primary English curriculum, which is considered as a basis of English language teaching in the Turkish education system, may play an important and active role in finding the related answers. Although many content analysis studies done in the literature, which mostly focus on only one grade, there is a scarcity of research done in the context of all grades. In this respect, since the 2017 ELTP has been in practice for two years, there is a need to analyze this program as well.

As the first attempt including all the grades in primary education to evaluate the new 2017 ELTP, the study aims to analyze the content of the available English language curriculum of the primary education and identify the strengths and weaknesses descriptively.

Significance of the Study

Changes in the social world and, so naturally, in working environment are highly influential in education and the profession of teaching, which are the transmitters of improvements and changes to next generations (Çankaya, 2015). In this regard, going through the alterations in parallel with the worldwide changes in terms of education and politics, curriculum development is a continuous process which has to be scientifically evaluated in order to investigate the curriculum efficiency and ensure an effective teaching fulfilling the needs of today's world (Brown, 1995; Kırkgöz, 2009). The starting point of improving a teaching program is the examination of its merits and demerits (Adıgüzel & Özüdoğru, 2014). Gathering systematic data, curriculum analysis enables the curriculum designers and the implementers to determine the curriculum's weaknesses and strengths and to make essential revisions and upgrades (Weir & Roberts, 1994). The components of newly developed curricula can be improved with the help of contextually composed knowledge by organized and constant research (Arıkan, 2005). Jansen and Reddy (1994, p. 4) states that curriculum analysis is the best way "to identify potential and actual problems as early as possible and recommend possible solutions; to make decisions about the future continuation of the curriculum; to see if the different parts hold together and to determine whether the goals have been met".

On the basis of the above information, the present study, aiming to analyze the primary English curriculum with a great extent of scope, is assumed to be of great importance. First and foremost, the literature is full of studies evaluating the primary ELTPs in Turkey (Alkan & Arslan, 2014; Dönmez, 2010; Erdogan, 2005; Kambur, 2018; Seçkin, 2011; Topkaya and Küçük, 2010; Yanık, 2007; Yücel, Dimici, Yıldız, & Bümen, 2017). However, they all focus on one or just a few grades and most of them are based on only the teachers' or students' perceptions. In other words, there is a scarcity of research done analyzing each dimension of an English curriculum in depth in addition to the views of teachers or students in the context of all grades. Therefore, since the 2017 ELTP has been in practice for two years, there is a limited number of studies on the recent revision (Erdem

& Toy, 2017; Kambur, 2018; Kaya, 2018). The present study is the first and the largest in its kind since it analyzes the grades from 2nd to 8th (the whole primary curriculum) with a holistic perspective taking several dimensions of the English primary curriculum into account along with the perceptions of teachers. Filling such a gap in the literature, it is considered that the study has crucial importance in the field.

To the best knowledge of the researcher, surveys or interviews are the frequently used instruments in the research design of the related studies in the literature. The recent study is thought to be one of the unique analysis studies exploiting a concurrent mixed-method design in a way to increase the validity of the study with an interview and two different checklists for a descriptive content analysis, one each for pedagogic objectives of the curriculum and the components of the syllabi, developed by the researcher under the light of the relevant past and present literature.

The present study, carried out with an aim to provide real and descriptive multi-dimensional data on the recent curriculum in terms of its merits and demerits and perceptions of teachers, may provide feedback and insight for program designers to realize how the planned curriculum has been functionalized in the real classroom atmospheres and to step into action in order to make the 2017 ELTP operate better.

As the difficulties faced by the teachers, as well as the facilities, have been revealed by this study, the English teachers may take advantage of the findings and take probable precautions before the implementation of the related program in terms of materials, resources, instruction methods and planning.

Providing a detailed look of the primary English curricula, the recent study is expected to establish a framework for the future research on curriculum development studies with the help of the findings related to the content of the new revision, the deficiencies found, the difficulties experienced and the suggestions made by the teachers.

Aim of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to analyze the content of the available English language curriculum of the primary education in the context of pedagogic objectives, suggested contexts, tasks and activities, vocabulary, syllabus themes, functions, outcomes and testing. Thus, it is aimed to define the strengths and weaknesses of the recent curriculum descriptively. The study also aims to reveal the opinions of one specialist and two English

teachers working for the Ministry on the components of the 2017 ELTP needed to be excluded, revised, changed, adapted or maintained. Accordingly, it is intended to provide insight for the implementers and the designers about the practicality and the effectiveness of the recent revision.

In accordance with the purposes stated above, this study aims to find the answers for the following research questions:

1. What are the theories and assumptions underpinning the linguistic and pedagogic dimensions of the English program for state schools?
2. How are the English syllabi structured across the grades?
3. What are the perceptions of English teachers about the English program?
4. What are the perceptions of the MoNE authorities on the English Program?

Assumptions

The current study has some assumptions in terms of the data collection instruments, data collection process and the participants.

The primary assumption of the study is that the two checklists, the main data collection instruments in the study developed by the researcher in the light of the related past and present literature, are far-reaching enough in a way to contain the essential items to analyze the whole content of the 2017 primary ELTP in all its aspects.

Secondly, the semi-structured interview, another tool developed by the researcher to reveal the teachers' opinions on the 2017 ELTP, is assumed to have been carried out without causing any wrong impression and biased responses on the part of the participant teachers. Besides, the participants are assumed to have honestly responded to interview questions in a way to express their sincere opinions.

Limitations

One of the limitations of the study arises from the small number of participant teachers. Since the main focus of the study is the content analysis of the 2017 ELTP for the primary education, the number of the participants is limited to the one specialist and 2 teachers who have been implementing the related program and working for the Ministry in Ankara province. The study has been conducted in the national scope. Thus, it is unable to generalize the results to all universe concerned due to the possibility of different variables

in other contexts. However, in order to validate the findings of the study, further study may be carried out on the same teaching program with a larger number of participant teachers and in different contexts.

Definition of the Terms

Curriculum: Curriculum is "a broad description of general goals by indicating an overall educational-cultural philosophy which applies across subjects with a theoretical orientation to language and language learning with respect to the subject matter at hand. A curriculum is often reflective of national and political trends as well" (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986, p. 34). Nunan (1988) asserts that curriculum deals with organization, application, assessment and administration of programs while the selection and grading of the content is the focus of the syllabus.

English Language Curriculum for Basic Education: It is the recent update of the national English curriculum for primary education put into implementation in the primary state schools in Turkey in 2017. In the study, English language curriculum and English teaching program are used interchangeably.

Syllabus Design: Syllabus design is the process of creating a syllabus which results in lists what to teach and to test of a course, the sequence the content is presented through, the time needed and the methods to be used (Nunan, 1988; Richards, 1990; Richards, 2001). In language teaching, the concept of syllabus design is the starting point of designing a language program rather than a step of curriculum development taking place in the middle of the process. The major and essential basis for developing a language program is the questions related to the linguistic content of a language program. Since language is remarkably complicated and impossible to be taught all at the same time, effective teaching needs a material selection in accordance with the predetermined objectives, level and the duration of the course, which refers to the syllabus. The perspectives of language and language learning of the syllabus designers have a huge impact on the perception of the nature of a syllabus (Nunan, 1988; Richards, 1990). Moreover, the type of syllabus is closely related to the content to be taught and the goals of the course (Reilly, 1988).

Program Analysis: "Program analysis unpacks a curriculum into its component parts (e.g. learning, teaching, knowledge, society, resources); evaluates how the parts fit together, say in terms of focus and coherence; checks underlying beliefs and assumptions; and seeks

7

justification for curriculum choices and assumptions" (Jansen & Reddy, 1994, p. 3). In the study, program analysis refers to the examination of the 2017 ELTP for primary education in terms of its pedagogic objectives and the content within two different criteria developed by the researcher.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

What is Curriculum?

There have always been different descriptions of the curriculum from different researchers based on some particular philosophy or criteria. While some of them associate the term curriculum with the predetermined content or the subject matter, the others assert that it refers to the experiences that a student has under the guidance of the school (Cary, 2006; Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000; Hewitt, 2006; Taba, 1962). Gress (1988) attributes the wide diversity of curriculum definition to the focus shift in the learning process at certain times. To illustrate; while goals and objectives, content or behaviors of learners were taken into account at one term, the focus was materials and assessment methods at another term.

To begin with Eisner (1994), he proposes that the term curriculum stems from the word "currere" in Latin which means the course to run. The word signifies the barriers in a track for a runner to break through in order to attain something. From this point of view, Eisner (1994, p. 31) claims that the curriculum could be regarded as "a series of planned events that are intended to have educational consequences for one or more students".

Historical Development of Curriculum Definition

Based upon Eisner's implication, the curriculum initially meant getting through the course of study, which is a very limited definition which regards curriculum as a product. The proponents of this narrow view of curriculum predicate their arguments on the notion "curriculum as a document or as an organized content". The idea implies that the

curriculum includes the subject matter of a course, teaching strategies and lesson plans in an attempt to promote students' learning. However, this limited perspective of the curriculum may cause some problems as it hinders the flexibility of teachers by restricting the content and instructional methods and not giving any chance to teachers for using their own knowledge or experiences (Wiles & Bondi, 2007, p. 1). Glatthorn, Boschee, and Whitehead (2006, p. 3) call this narrow notion of curriculum as "prescriptive perspective" which shows the teachers what should occur in the class. They explain their disagreement with this perspective by stating that teachers play a prominent role in determining whether to follow what is offered by the curriculum planner. "Planned curriculum", which regards the curriculum as a predetermined plan or a written document consisting of certain strategies to obtain the intended objectives, is another name given to the prescriptive view of the curriculum. "Planned curriculum", which was brought into prominence in sixties by Ralph Tyler (Tanner & Tanner, 1995), is described as a systematic plan which includes specified goals, organized content, guided teaching methods, materials and assessment types and which specifies a certain outline of learning and teaching (Taba, 1962). Hewitt (2006) objects to this traditional view by arguing that a written document cannot provide everything the teachers need and will experience during the lesson. Kelly (2004, p. 6) calls this view as "official curriculum" and claims that the actual classroom atmospheres never correspond to the plans of the curriculum designers.

In the eighties and nineties, the concept of curriculum started to have a wider and more meaningful meaning with a descriptive approach. The focal points of the approach are the experiences of the teachers and learners. In contrast to the prescriptive view, it enabled the practitioners to move beyond the notion "what should happen" to "how the process works in reality of the classrooms" (Glatthorn et al., 2006, p. 3). "Experienced, the actual or the received curriculum" referring to what learners actually acquire are the other names given to the descriptive curriculum (Kelly, 2004, p. 6). In parallel with this view, Cary (2006) highlights that the teacher's experience is a vital element for the enhancement of learning and teaching. When the teachers take advantage of their own experiences and knowledge in teaching, the narrow perspective of the curriculum can be developed from a rigid document to a learning journey. The curriculum should be regarded as a journey the teachers do with knowledge including the story of their experiences and this travel is much more complicated what is written in a document (Pınar, 2004). More attention should be paid to what is actually gained by learners, which is the responsibility of teachers (Kelly,

2004). In addition, there are other curriculum types, "the hidden or shadow curriculum", referring to the things like social or sex roles that learners learn at school but not explicitly mentioned in the planning and even the teachers or the designers are conscious of (Null, 2011). Marsh and Willis (2007) highlight the importance of striking the balance between the types of curriculum in order to provide a more meaningful and effective education process and at this point, the teachers and learners' participation in planning the experiences of learning is of the utmost importance.

In spite of the effort to present a wider definition to the term curriculum in the nineties, it still lacked some crucial points such as kinds of curriculum occurring out of the classroom, in informal environments like home, clubs or school travels. However, in the 21st century, the curriculum has obtained a deeper and more extensive meaning, pointing not only to the subject matter but also to the whole educational process which is effective in students' learning such as organization of the overall instructional program, goals, objectives, materials, sources, tools of evaluation, training for teachers and even extra-curricular activities (Ross, 2000). In this regard, Kelly (2004, p. 7) divides the curriculum into two as "formal curriculum", defined as official activities performed according to a schedule planned by the school and "the informal curriculum", referring to the unofficial activities done generally based on voluntariness after school or on holidays such as school clubs, societies, teams and trips which are called extra-curricular activities. Related to the broader concept of curriculum, Allen (as cited in Nunan, 1988, p. 6) claims "the curriculum is a very general concept which involves consideration of the whole complex of philosophical, social and administrative factors which contribute to the planning of an educational program". Besides, Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000, p. 184) defined the term as "an official document led by a central educational authority, which serves as a framework or a set of guidelines for the teaching of a subject area in a brad and varied context". They also add that the cultural, social and political perspectives of the society where it will be implemented should be expressed by the curriculum and that it should combine the past and present ideologies, experiences, philosophies and also expectations for the future. The other significant development related to the curriculum process in the 21st century is adding the term future to the definitions. Moore (2015, p. 12) claims that what is learnt and done in the present can form, build and direct the future so the designers should bear in mind the questions like "what kind of society, world or nation and global citizens do we want and how do we create it?" and the curriculum planners should also take the future's

11

unpredictable aspect into consideration and recognize the fact that the plans may fall through due to some things occurring beyond the control. Therefore; a curriculum requires providing the learners with productive skills to deal with the unpredictable problems of the future independently and in cooperation. With reference to this, the curriculum should be adjustable, dynamic and ever-developing.

Curriculum in English Language Teaching

In terms of ELT, the term curriculum is defined by Clark (1987, p. 1) as "a function of the inter-relationships that hold between subject-specific concerns and other broader factors embracing socio-political and philosophical matters, educational value systems, theory and practice in curriculum design, teacher experiential wisdom and learner motivation". From this perspective, Erarslan (2016) points out that the curriculum functions as a tool to combine both the micro-level aspects of education like goals and the content of the curriculum and the macro-level aspects of the country such as politics and economy. In this regard, Richards (2001) states that one of the largest enterprises in terms of education in the world is learning a foreign or second language studied by millions of children and adults. Therefore; as the most important elements of the educational system, both the learners and the instructors exert themselves for this educational endeavor by arranging the lessons, choosing and adjusting the materials and implementing their plans in the classrooms. At this point, the vital effect of English language curriculum, which is a lingua-franca, on reaching the macro-level goals of the countries is undeniable. Hence, the curriculum is a constant and dynamic decision-making process in which the goals and the methods are integrated in such a way that the goals are functionalized into the reality of classrooms by the methods (Lovat & Smith, 1995, p. 23). It acts as a device that actualizes hypothetical language policies determined pursuant to the government's needs for global aims (Erarslan, 2016). With regard to the function of curriculum as a bridge between the countries' targets and the actualization of them in real classroom atmospheres, Wiggins and McTighe (2006) mention that the curriculum serves as a device obtaining the content from the local goals and external norms and transforming it into a detailed plan for an efficient teaching and learning. For this reason, it's not only the skills and topics list (the input) but also a guide of how to attain the desired learning outcomes (the output). In terms of language curriculum, Richards (2013) notifies that the 'input' signifies the course's

linguistic content to teach while the 'output' symbolizes the learning attainments achieved by the learners at the end of an instruction process.

What is Syllabus?

As a beginning, clarifying the terms 'syllabus' and 'curriculum' would be appropriate as there is a great variety of contradictory perspectives on how the syllabus differs from the curriculum. Stern (1983) accounts for this contradiction by claiming that the usage of the terms in British and North American education system differs from each other. In both of the countries, the term curriculum is employed, rather than the syllabus, to mean the consideration of the goals, the subject matter, implementation and evaluation of an educational system. On the other hand, British educationists use the term syllabus to explain the particular curricular activities and the sequence of the content to be taught.

Nunan (1988) asserts that curriculum deals with organization, application, assessment and administration of programs while the selection and grading of the content is the focus of the syllabus. The other differentiation is made by Dubin and Olshtain (1986, p. 34) in that they identify curriculum as "a broad description of general goals by indicating an overall educational-cultural philosophy which applies across subjects with a theoretical orientation to language and language learning with respect to the subject matter at hand. A curriculum is often reflective of national and political trends as well". Contrarily, a syllabus is regarded as "a more detailed and operational statement of teaching and learning elements which translates the philosophy of the curriculum into a series of planned steps leading towards more narrowly defined objectives at each level" (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986, p. 35). In line with Dubin and Olshtain, Nunan (1988) states that as language is remarkably complicated and impossible to be taught all at the same time, effective teaching needs a material selection in accordance with the predetermined objectives, level and the duration of the course, which refers to the syllabus. Besides, Van Ek specifies the essential components of a language syllabus:

> "the situations in which the foreign language will be used, including the topics which will be dealt with; the language activities in which the learner will engage; the language functions which the learner will fulfill; what the learner will be able to do with respect to each topic; the general notions which the learner will be able to handle; the specific (topic-related) notions which the learner will be able to handle; the language forms which the learner will be able to use; the degree of skill with which the learner will be able to perform" (Van Ek, as cited in Nunan, 1988, p. 7).

Consequently, in the light of all these descriptions, it can be inferred that syllabus is associated with the selection, grading and sequence of what to teach according to the predetermined objectives in a particular course of study whereas curriculum is a broader concept including not only the content but also how the learners acquire the language, how the teachers teach in terms of materials, styles and methods they use, how they assess what is learned and the kind of facilities in which the teaching and learning take place (Rodgers, as cited in Richards, 2001).

Syllabus Design in English Language Teaching

In language teaching, the concept of syllabus design is the starting point of designing a language program rather than a step of curriculum development taking place in the middle of the process. Syllabus design appeared as a main point in language teaching much prior to the emergence of curriculum development tracing back to 1960s. The major and essential basis for developing a language program is the questions related to the linguistic content of a language program. A well-built and designed syllabus ensures effective learning since it serves as a linguistically and psycholinguistically ideal beginning for the target language (Richards, 1990).

As a part of curriculum development but not similar to it, syllabus design is the process of creating a syllabus which results in lists what to teach and to test of a course, the sequence the content is presented through, the time needed and the methods to be used. In other respects, curriculum development is a far-reaching process containing all the activities done to identify the needs of learners, to determine the goals and objectives to meet those needs, to design a suitable syllabus, course structure, methods and materials and to evaluate the language program derived from these processes (Nunan, 1988; Richards, 1990; Richards, 2001).

Where to obtain the content from has been the primary question to answer for the syllabus designer (Nunan, 1988). Until the 1970s, the syllabus design was centered on the idea that the learners should master over the grammatical, phonological and vocabulary elements preselected and ordered according to the difficulty and usefulness. This view brought along some problems for the syllabus designers with regard to the procedures named as "selection" and "gradation". Since a limited amount of time is allotted to teach in any language program, what to select from the whole corpus of the target language and to

include in course books and teaching materials are the main questions to be answered (Richards, 2001, p. 4). Mackey (as cited in Richards, 2001) indicates that in language teaching, the field of selection copes with the selection of suitable units of the language for teaching aims and with the creation of techniques and processes which are the most beneficial to the learner. In the early part of the twentieth century, vocabulary and grammar selection in designing a syllabus attracted a great deal of attention in language teaching. Since one of the most apparent components of language is vocabulary, the first question to be answered was which words to teach in a foreign language. The objectives of the course and the allotted time for teaching had a big influence on the selection of words. Determining the word frequencies by searching the large amounts of texts was one of the earliest approaches. The words to teach first were considered as the words of the highest frequency. However, there were some doubts about the usefulness of the frequent words because the type of texts analyzed might not be appropriate to the needs of learners. In addition, as frequently used words did not include some simple ones such as book, pen or desk, some other principles were taken into account such as "teachability" meaning that the concrete words are taught firstly as they can easily be presented with pictures; "similarity" referring that the words that are similar to the ones in the native language are chosen. In addition to the vocabulary selection, the other concern of applied linguists was grammatical selection which aimed to draw up basic structure lists put into a reasonable order for a progressive introduction to the English grammar language, which is known as "analytic approach" (Wilkins, 1976, p. 75). Unlike vocabulary selection, grammatical elements were not chosen according to the frequency criteria but to the principles "simplicity" that is the choice of simple structures rather than the complicated ones and "learnability" drawing on the idea that there is a certain sequence in the acquisition of grammatical elements in language learning (Richards, 2001, p. 8). However, syllabi started to contain not only the grammatical items but also the functional skills helping the learners communicate in the target language properly, which was a result of the communicative views of language teaching during the 1970s and the sources for developing a syllabus have started to change. One of the recent techniques to collect information developing a language syllabus has been the analysis of learners' aims to learn the language, which is called as need analysis. Needs analysis is divided into two different types used by language syllabus designers. One of them is learner analysis which seeks for the objective information such as age, native language and nationality and subjective data revealing the

aims, priorities and reasons for learning the language of the learner. Task analysis is the second type of analysis used to determine and classify the skills of language needed to fulfill the actual communicative tasks (Nunan, 1988). In addition, Munby (as cited in Nunan, 1988, p. 19) determined some criteria to collect data for language syllabus designers:

- Participant: The information about the learners such as age, sex, nationality, native language

- Purposive domain: The aims why the target language is needed

- Setting: The consideration of the environment in which the target language will be used

- Interaction: The people whom the learners will communicate

- Instrumentality: The medium of language such as spoken or written, the mode of communication such as monologue or dialogue and the channel of interaction such as face to face or indirect

- Dialect: The determination of the dialect

- Target level: The specification of the proficiency degree which the learner will require to obtain

Approaches to Syllabus Design and Syllabus Types

The perspectives of language and language learning of the syllabus designers have a huge impact on the perception of the nature of a syllabus. To illustrate; owing to the effect of traditional grammar-oriented views of language, the content of language syllabuses was composed of grammar, vocabulary and sentence patterns. However, the emergence of communicative approaches to language learning has led syllabus designers to develop more function-based syllabi (Richards, 1990). Moreover, the type of syllabus is closely related to the content to be taught and the goals of the course. As a result of different contents, there are various syllabus types dealing with different aims. For example; when the content serves for linguistic aims, a syllabus type in which the linguistic elements are prioritized needs to be employed. On the other hand, the teaching should focus on communicative tasks when the goal of the content is communication (Reilly, 1988).

With regard to the field of foreign language teaching, Nunan (1988, p. 27) classifies syllabi into two: "Product-oriented syllabi" and "Process-oriented syllabi". The focus of product syllabi is knowledge and skills gained by learners as a result of an instruction period

whereas learning experiences are the focal point in the process syllabi. Furthermore; the other syllabi distinction is drawn by Wilkins (1976, p. 75) as "Analytic and Synthetic Syllabi". Although they use different terms referring to the syllabus types, Nunan and Wilkins support each other in terms of the aims of syllabi. Since the product, that is the result, is emphasized in synthetic syllabi, it is also known as product-oriented syllabus. That is to say, the synthetic approach recommends the teaching of different parts of language separately and gradually in order that acquisition occurs as a result of gradual accumulation of parts until all the language structure has been constructed. In a similar way, the analytic and the process-oriented syllabi have fairly similar focal points. Wilkins (1976, p. 75) defines the analytic syllabi as "organized in terms of the purposes for which people are learning the language and the kinds of language performance that are necessary to meet those purposes". Like in process-oriented syllabi, analytic syllabi are centered on the process such as tasks and activities through which the linguistic knowledge and skills are acquired by learners, not on the result the student reach with the completion of a program (Nunan, 1988). Under the approaches mentioned above, there are several types of syllabus varying in terms of organization and material selection.

Structural Syllabus

The structural syllabus is centered on the grammatical items such as verbs, nouns or past tense and the structures to be learned determine the organization and the sequence that is from simple to complex (Brown, 1995; Özkan, 2004). This type of syllabus presumes that functional ability can be gained from structural knowledge and developing linguistic competence should be the first aim of a language course. Nevertheless, the structural syllabus is widely criticized for focusing only on the form and not including any communicative functions (Girard, as cited in Şahin, 1991).

Situational Syllabus

The content of situational syllabi is composed of possible real-life situations that learners may encounter such as at a bank, a hotel, a restaurant or a gym. This type of syllabus arose from the idea that "structures are dead without the situations which engender them" (Croft, as cited in Şahin, 1991, p. 12). Unlike structural syllabi, the language use rather than the

usage of the structure is the emphasis in the situational syllabus. Being able to choose relevant content to the learners' need and interest out of various situations is the main advantage of situational syllabuses (Şahin, 1991). Brown (1995) states that topical syllabus is parallel with the situational syllabus. Nevertheless, in topical syllabi, the organization of the content depends on themes such as health, food rather than the situations.

Functional/Notional Syllabus

Social functions such as requesting, asking for an address, apologizing, ordering food and introducing oneself determine the organization and the sequence of the syllabus. This type of syllabus is often considered along with the notional syllabus (Özkan, 2004). Dubin and Olshtain (1986, p. 37) claim that the organization of the notional syllabus is centered on the "semantic unit" and "general notions" such as "space, time, obligation, quantity, quality, distance" selected by the utility and sequenced by chronology and frequency.

Task-based Syllabus

In this type of syllabus, the content includes plenty of purposeful tasks such as making appointments, filling out a form, being interviewed that the learners may need to perform in the target language (Krahnke, as cited in Rahimpour, 2010). The purpose of the task-based syllabus is not the language learning but the experience that learners gain through accomplishing the task and also to help them develop communicative competence along with linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence (Katsara, as cited in Erarslan, 2016). The task choice is dependent on the needs, cognitive and linguistic readiness of learners (Nunan, 2001).

Skill-based Syllabus

The primary focus is the four basic language skills in this syllabus type. Language skills that the learners will most need throughout their academic life constitute the content. The skill based-syllabus is based on the subskills. To illustrate, skimming, scanning and inferring in a reading course or listening for gist or main idea and summarizing in a

listening course are the sub-skills used to meet the needs of learners (Erdoğan, 2005; Özkan, 2004).

Brown (1995, p. 7) lists seven types of syllabus shown in the table below:

Table 1

Syllabus Types

Syllabi	Ways of Organizing Courses and Materials
Structural	Grammatical and phonological structures are the organizing principle-sequenced from easy to difficult or frequent to less frequent.
Situational	Situations (such as at the bank, at the supermarket, at a restaurant, and so forth) from the organizing principle-sequenced by the likelihood students will encounter them (structural sequence may be in background).
Topical	Topics or themes (such as health, food, clothing, and so forth) from the organizing principle-sequenced by the likelihood that students will encounter them (structural sequence may be in background).
Functional	Functions (such as identifying, reporting, correcting, describing, and so forth) are the organizing principle-sequenced by some sense of chronology or usefulness of each function (structural and situational sequences may be in background).
Notional	Conceptual categories called notions (such as duration, quantity, location, and so forth) are the basis of organization-sequenced by some sense of chronology or usefulness of each notion (structural and situational sequences may be in background).
Skills	Skills (such as listening for gist, listening for main idea, listening for inferences, scanning a reading passage for specific information, and so forth) serve as the basis for organization sequenced by some sense of chronology or usefulness for each skill (structural and situational sequences may be in background).
Task	Task or activity-based categories (such as drawing maps, following directions, following instructions, and so forth) serve as the basis for organization-sequenced by some sense of chronology or usefulness of notions (structural and situational sequences may be in background).

Brown, J. D. (1995). The elements of language curriculum: A systematic approach to program development. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

In conclusion, with an aim to achieve the most effective results, a combination of different syllabus types may be needed, which is commonly known as integrated syllabus. All approaches are precious under certain situations and the best type is the integrated syllabus blending the merits and demerits of each syllabus to meet the learners' needs (McKay, 1980).

Syllabus Formats

Organization and the shape of the syllabus change in accordance with the objectives of the course (Özkan, 2004). Five formats of the syllabus are presented below:

The Linear Format

Nunan (1988, p. 28) defines this type of format as the strictest grammatical syllabuses in which one element is presented at the prescribed time. The learners are required to learn it before passing to the next one. Going through the syllabus with minimum errors from the beginning to the end is the purpose of the linear format (Rivers, 1981, p. 111). The most significant factors in this format are sequencing and grading. The teacher cannot change the unit order or omit some units. In linear design, the materials are divided into small parts which are called 'frames' and learners are supposed to give a frequent response for every frame (Lefrancois, as cited in Darabi, 2014).

The Modular Format

This type of syllabus consists of modules which are similar to units. The modules are composed of frames corresponding to a lesson or a learning session and the frames have their own objectives stemmed from the general objectives of the module (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986). The modular format combines thematic or situational content with skills-building tasks based on the learners' needs and interests. This format provides the teacher with maximum flexibility as the modules are not dependent on each other and can be re-ordered and skipped without distorting the overall objectives of the course (Özkan, 2004).

The Cyclical Format

In cyclical or spiral format, the same topic, functions or structures can be studied more than once in order to ensure a better repetition and retrieval. The key factor here is that each time, the subject matter should be represented at a more complex or difficult level (Özkan, 2004).

The Matrix Format

The design of this format is based on choosing topics from a set of contents in random order. The matrix format provides maximum flexibility to the teacher since it doesn't require following a certain method. However, it is very complicated and burdensome to design this format because the designer should consider completely different tasks, communicative activities in parallel with different situational settings in the matrix in order to have an effective matrix format (Özkan, 2004).

The Story-Line Format

In this format, the units are comprised of several episodes. The episodes should be relevant to each other; nevertheless, they shouldn't be completely interdependent for the sake of readability of each episode as it is impossible for learners to attend all the classes. The point that should be taken into consideration is that teachers should choose stories which are short, not linguistically too complex and full of illustrations and repetition. The format combines the situational, functional and structural perspectives (Özkan, 2004).

Curriculum Development in ELT

Having defined the term curriculum, it's necessary to mention about curriculum development, also known as curriculum planning or design, to fully understand the concept of curriculum analysis.

Curriculum development is defined by Richard (2001, p. 2) as a number of comprehensive and interrelated processes dealing with improving the quality of language teaching through the use of systematic designing, development, implementation, evaluation and revision practices in all aspects of a language program. From this point of view, he claims that

language curriculum development seeks answers to the questions related to the procedures used to determine the content of a language program, learners' needs, goals and objectives to meet those needs, course materials, methods of instruction and to design a suitable syllabus, course structure, and lastly to evaluate what results from these processes.

Approaches to Curriculum Development

Several approaches based on various philosophies to curriculum development have been proposed by different experts in the field (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018; Stenhouse, 1975; Tyler, as cited in Richards, 2001). To start with, one way of differentiating the curriculum development approaches is via "the product" and "the process" approach. The product approach advocated by Tyler (as cited in Richards, 2001, p. 25) is regarded as the traditional or the rational approach. The focal point of this approach is the outcome reached at the end of the learning process. This approach is based on behaviorism. The learning outcomes are specified based on behavioral objectives which are explicitly stated in the curriculum planning process and which refer to the change in behavior expected from the learners at the end of the program. In this approach, the content is chosen based on the behavioral objectives and then arranged systematically and implemented via classroom instruction and the results are evaluated.

Unlike the product approach, the process approach advocated by Stenhouse (1975) focuses on the interaction of teachers, learners and knowledge and the whole teaching-learning process, not on the end product. For this reason, it argues that there's no need for a predetermined plan put into action in the classroom. The broad-perspective of the curriculum is reflected by Stenhouse (1975, p. 4) in his definition: "A curriculum is an attempt to communicate the essential principles and features of an educational proposal in such a form that it is open to critical scrutiny and capable of effective translation into practice". The term "educational proposal" is used in the definition instead of an educational plan in order to emphasize the importance of the entire process rather than a predetermined plan. Furthermore; the use of the expression "critical scrutiny" highlights that the curriculum can be analyzed and adapted when needed; it's not a rigid document that has to be obeyed without questioning. Therefore; the objectives, content and means aren't strictly stated beforehand, they are developed through the interaction of teachers and learners. In this approach, the learners are considered as subjects instead of objects and

each learner and the learning situation is regarded as unique. Process approach promotes innovative thinking and more meaningful language programs in which the learners play an active role in the class (Stenhouse, 1975).

The other distinction between the approaches to the curriculum is made by Ornstein and Hunkins (2018, p. 210) as "technical or scientific" and "non-technical or non-scientific". Curriculum development is regarded as a beneficial blueprint or a plan to structure the teaching and learning environment by technical-scientific approach. The approach emphasizes on the means-end analysis and pre-determined objectives. Therefore, it is not wrong to say that the product approach parallels with the technical approach. On the contrary, the main focus of non-technical approach, like the in-process model, is on the learner, not on the outcomes and view students as participants of the process (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018, p. 207).

Curriculum Development Models

The literature presents several curriculum development models representing the ideologies of three different value systems, which are "Classical Humanism, Progressivism and Re-constructivism" (Clark, 1987, p. 8).

The desire of "Classical Humanism" is to "promote broad intellectual capacities, such as memorization and the ability to analyze, classify and reconstruct elements of knowledge" (Clark, 1987, p. 8). In this traditional system, the curriculum design is content-oriented in which the subject matter is divided into units of knowledge and rigidly sequenced from simple to complex. The role of the teacher is to convey this knowledge to the learners. From the perspective of the product-process approach, the classical humanism complies better with the product approach and supports the Grammar Translation Method in language teaching. The rationale behind the "Reconstructivism" is giving rise to a social change via the educational system in order to eliminate the social inequality generated by "Classical Humanism", causing a social division. Therefore, this philosophy focuses on creating equal opportunities for all learners and giving importance to individual learning differences. The curriculum is goal-driven in which the subject matter is obtained from an analysis of learners' needs and the behavioral outcomes are systemically prespecified and tried to be accomplished by several classroom techniques. According to this system, the learners should be always aware of levels of learning and the outcomes they are expected

to be achieved. The teachers serve as managers of the whole learning process. Due to the emphasis on the pre-specification of behavioral objectives and outcomes, this system fits better with the product-approach and advocates the Audio Lingual Method in which a "subject-centric" perspective of teaching and learning is taken in language education (Clark, 1987, p. 33). Lastly, "Progressivism" is a learner-centered approach that deals with providing natural learning experiences to the learners and with building skills on learning how to learn. In curriculum planning, this system is process-driven in which the subject matter is not predetermined and the whole learning process is composed of meaningful activities leading to classroom interaction. The teacher acts as a facilitator using appropriate teaching strategies, innovative activities and relevant assessment types rather than an instructor who transmits the knowledge. This school of thought parallels with the ideas of process-approach and as a result of shifting such a process-based and learner-centered philosophy, the methodology of language teaching changed towards Communicative Language Teaching (Clark, 1987, p. 49).

Under the light of these three value systems, various curriculum models have been advocated by curriculum designers who developed different frameworks breaking down the curriculum development process into components. Between the dates 1920s and 1960s, the focus of the curriculum development was on the content. The three phases to the curriculum planning were drawn by Rugg (as cited in Cincioğlu 2012, p. 17) as "determining the main objectives, choosing activities and the other materials of instruction and finding the most effective organization and placement of this instruction". Tyler, who brought a revival for the nature and process of curriculum planning, asserts that any curriculum developers should answer the following 4 main questions which respectively refer to "aims and objectives, content, organization and evaluation": "What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?"; "What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?"; "How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?; "How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?" (Tyler, as cited in Richards, 2001, p. 39).

Taking the Tyler's model as a basis, Taba proposed a model including seven crucial elements in a curriculum design: "Diagnosis of needs; Formulation of objectives; Selection of content; Organization of content; Selection of learning experiences; Organization of

learning experiences; Determination of what to evaluate and the means to evaluate" (Taba, 1962, p. 12).

Even though the models above are the sources of inspiration for many designers in the field, Nunan (1988, p. 10) criticizes these traditional curriculum models for their inflexibility and determining the needs much earlier to the course. He points out that in learner-oriented models, designers collect the first data before learners begin the course but then, teachers start to evaluate needs of learners, develop the syllabus and modify it during the process if necessary whereas the traditional ones analyze the needs long before meeting the learners and do not evaluate them whether to change or not. The second criticism made by Nunan (1988, p. 10) is on the step of evaluation. He proposes that while traditional models carry out the evaluation only at the end of the course, the learner-centered ones evaluate every phase of the learning process. The model suggested by Nunan (1988) is as follows:

- Pre-course planning procedure (Needs analysis, grouping learners)

- Determining and grading the content (setting objectives)

- Selection of methodology

- Designing materials

- Evaluation (Nunan, 1988, p. 10)

Another design model is proposed by Brown (1995, p. 20) who asserts that a language curriculum includes 5 steps comprising of needs analysis, goals and objectives, testing, materials and language teaching.

Brown's model of curriculum planning is called systematic curriculum development. The approach considers the curriculum as a process rather than a product. According to this model of planning, the curriculum should be modified, changed when needed so that it adapts to the changes in language learning theories, student types or politics of the institution to function effectively (Brown, 1995, p. 20).
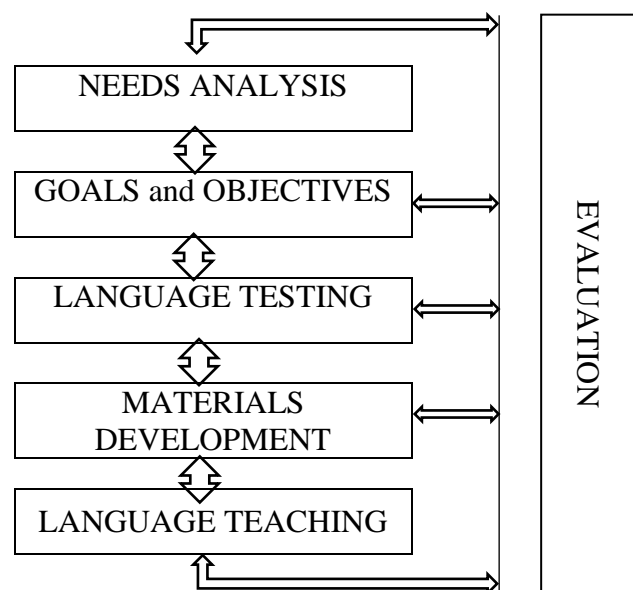
Figure 1. Brown's view of curriculum development. (*Note:* Brown, J. D. (1995). The elements of language curriculum: A systematic approach to program development. Boston: Heinle & Heinle)

In Brown's curriculum figure, curriculum development starts with a needs analysis. In other words, it develops out of students' linguistic needs which reflect the language forms the learners will likely need to use in the target language. Therefore; in compliance with their age, students' needs and also interests should be analyzed properly. In addition to the learners' needs, the needs of the stakeholders such as teachers, learners' families, or the others responsible for the development of the curriculum are analyzed. According to the results of needs analysis, goals which reflect the intended outcomes of the curriculum are presented (Brown, 1995, p. 21). Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000, p. 191) highlight the importance of goal specification in the curriculum development process since there may be various probable general goals such as personal or professional growth and connection with other cultures. In addition, Brown (1995, p. 21) points out that goals play an important role in curriculum development as the objectives, which are more specific statements than goals, are created based on these goals. Objectives are specific statements about which content and skills learners must master in order to achieve a specific goal. In testing part, based upon the goals and objectives; various tests for different aims such as placement tests, proficiency tests, diagnostic tests, achievement tests, etc. are developed because each goal and objective may require different kinds of tests. Two different test types are suggested by Brown (1995, p. 22): "norm-based tests applied to compare the relative performance of learners to each other and criterion-based tests done for measuring

26

the amount of course material each learner has learned". Materials development, which is the fourth part of the figure, is composed of determining the curriculum materials which will be used. Adopting, developing and adapting are the ways for the preparation of the materials. The crucial point at this stage is that age and the cognitive levels of the students must be taken into account as the language learning styles of younger learners and adults differ from each other (Brown, 1995, p. 22).

When these 4 components are done, in the next step, which is language teaching, teaching activities, techniques and exercises are determined. In Brown's curriculum model, the evaluation step is of the utmost importance as it acts as glue connecting and holding all the components of a curriculum. Evaluation is defined by Brown (1995, p. 24) as "the systematic collection and analysis of all relevant information necessary to promote the improvement of the curriculum and to assess its effectiveness within the context of a particular institution involved". Curriculum development is an ongoing process and in order to examine the effectiveness of the teaching plans, this process has to be continuously evaluated. Therefore; in order to be able to assess each component of the curriculum for its effectiveness, the evaluation part processes cyclically. That is to say, this model is not in a linear design. It creates a cycle in which all of the components are interconnected with each other. Evaluating the effectiveness of a program could be carried out with interviews, questionnaires, linguistic analyses, professional judgment and also the data collected before and during the implementation (Brown, 1995).

Another model of curriculum design was put forward by Richards (2001, p. 41), which is composed of "needs analysis, situation analysis, learning outcomes, course organization, teaching materials, effective teaching and evaluation". The curriculum development is identified by Richard (2001, p. 41) as "the range of planning and implementation processes involved in developing or renewing a curriculum". Each element in Richard's model is in a cycle and interconnected to each other. As is seen from the figure below, most of the elements in the cycle are similar to Brown's. Nevertheless, they differ in that the testing part is absent in Richards' model and the situation analysis and course organization are regarded as separate items of curriculum design while Brown categorizes these elements into the needs analysis and materials section respectively (Storey, 2007).
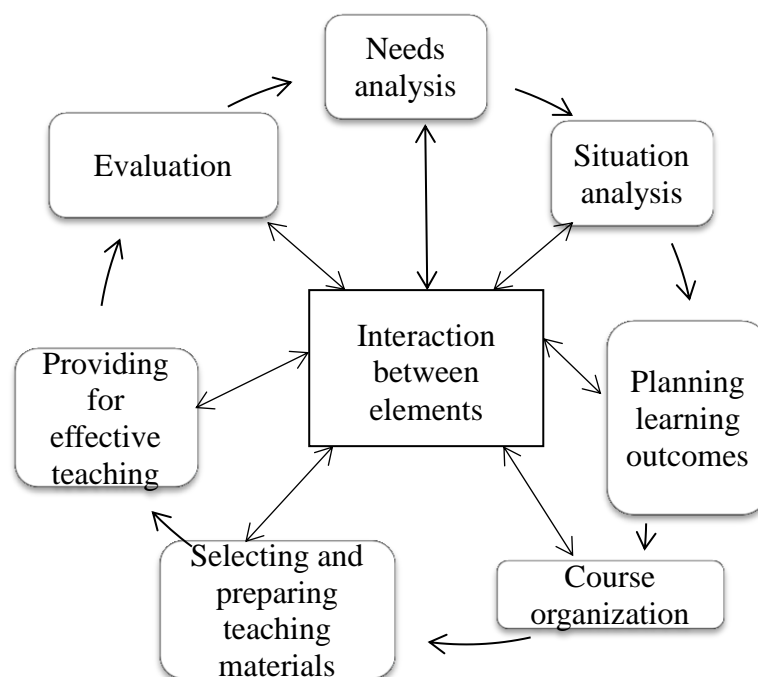
Figure 2. Richards' view of curriculum development. (*Note:* Storey, W.C. (2007). Insights into Language Curriculum Development. Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, 4, (1), 86-107)

Richards (2001, p. 91) defines situation analysis as "an analysis of factors in the context of a planned or present curriculum project that is made in order to assess their potential impact on the project". Situational analysis is essential for an effective curriculum due to the fact that there are several different contexts and situations for language programs and each of them includes factors that may promote or obstruct the success of curriculum implementation. In addition, Richards (2001, p. 112) view the determination of goals and outcomes as a crucial step for developing a curriculum due to the fact that a program whose goals are clearly identified will be more efficient. Moreover, in the course organization part, Richards (2001, p. 145) highlights the importance of determining the course rationale which is the initial point of a course development process and the short explanation of the questions such as who the course is for, what the course is about and what kind of teaching and learning will take place in the course. Choosing the course content is another important part of the course planning process. Richards (2001, p. 148) states that the course content should be determined in accordance with the syllabus type. Besides, the scope and the order of the content are the other crucial steps to be considered. Richards (2001, p. 152) argues that the content can be sequenced in different ways like from simple to complex; from whole to part, part to whole; according to what the learners principally need outside the classroom and lastly as a spiral. In the step 'providing for

effective teaching', the emphasis is laid on the enhancement of effective teaching by providing the necessary conditions and support In this regard, the analysis of the factors such as institutional, teacher, teaching, and the learner is essential (Richards, 2001; Storey, 2007). In line with the Brown's idea on the evaluation part, Richards (2001, p. 286) indicates that although the curriculum planning is over and is in operation, there will be a number of significant questions need to be answered after the implementation such as: "Is the curriculum achieving its goals?"; "What's happening in the classrooms and schools where it's being implemented?"; "Are those affected by the curriculum (e.g. teachers, administrators, students, parents, employers) satisfied with the curriculum?"; "Have those involved in developing and teaching a language course done a satisfactory job?"; "Does the curriculum compare favorably with others of its kind?" (Richards, 2001, p. 286).

Furthermore, Richards (2001, p. 287) claims that evaluation can be conducted on various dimensions of a language program such as:

• Curriculum design: To observe the quality of program planning and organization

• The syllabus and the program content: To determine the difficulty level and the relevancy of the content and the success of assessment and tests

• Classroom processes: To understand how much the program could be implemented appropriately

• Materials of instruction: To figure out whether the materials helped student learning or not

• Teachers: To measure the teacher performance and to take their perceptions about the program

• Teacher training: To reveal whether the training sessions were sufficient to help teachers or not

• Students: To demonstrate what is learned from the program and the level of participation in the lessons and the perceptions of learners about the program

• Monitoring of pupil progress: To implement formative assessment in order to monitor students' learning

• Learner motivation: To have an idea about how much the teachers are effective in helping students to reach goals and objectives

• The institution: To know whether the administration supported the process or not

• Learning environment: To reveal whether the students are provided with a helpful environment in order to be able to fulfill their needs

• Staff development: To reveal whether the staff was provided with opportunities to increase their effectiveness (Richards, 2001, p. 287)

Nation and Macalister (2010, p. 1) proposed another model for curriculum development. This curriculum model is composed of three outer circles, one inner circle which is branched into three sub-circles and an outer circle which covers all.

The model starts with the goals in the inner circle in order to highlight the importance of their fundamental roles in the curriculum designing process. The outside circles consisting of needs, principles and environment stand for theoretical and practical concerns that will directly influence and guide the decision-making process of curriculum development. The analysis of the environment may provide the elements relevant to "learners, teachers and teaching-learning situations" while needs analysis reveal the "lacks, wants and necessities" and lastly, the circle of principles includes the stages "content and sequencing, format and presentation and monitoring and assessment" (Nation & Macalister, 2010, pp. 39-40). Finally, the evaluation is the last step of the process. However, as understood from the figure 3, this component isn't carried out only at the end of a course; it surrounds all the steps and examines all the aspects in curriculum planning to determine whether the course is effective or not (Nation & Macalister, 2010, p. 123). Below is displayed the model designed by Nation and Macalister (2010, p. 1):
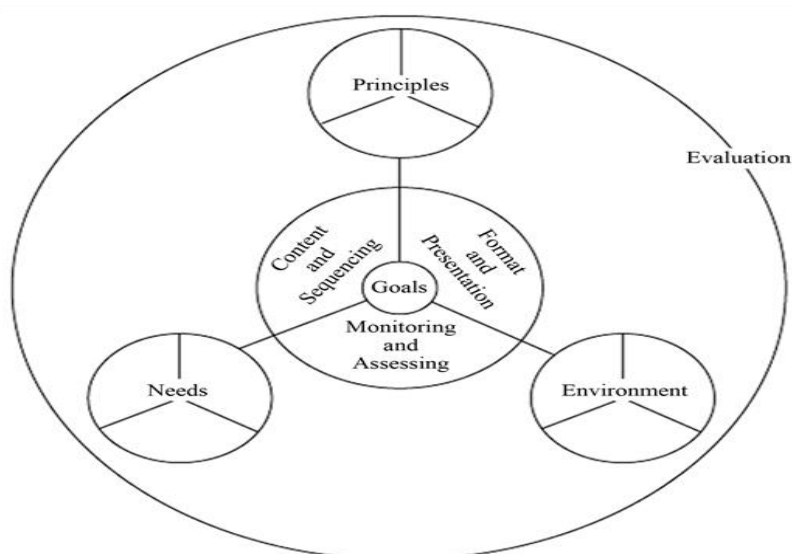
Figure 3. A curriculum design model by Nation and Macalister. (*Note:* Nation, I.S.P. & Macalister, J. (2010). *Language Curriculum Design*. New York: Taylor & Francis.)

Program Design for Different Age Groups

The Differences between Teaching English to Young Learners and Adolescents

The advantages of an early start for learning a language have long been debated in the field of English language teaching although a considerable amount of research results showed that introducing languages at the earliest levels do not always make the young learners superior to the adolescent beginners (Cameron, 2001; Cook, 2008; Garton & Copland, 2019; Rich, 2014; Scott & Ytreberg, 1990). Despite the researchers have not reached a mutual agreement on this debate, they pointed out that young and older learners differ from each other in terms of learning a language and early starters have some superiorities over late starters such as gaining better pronunciation and native-like accent in an easier way (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2018; Tinsley & Comfort, 2012). In spite of not having any firm conclusions on the age debate, the underlying reason for countries' ongoing tendency towards an early start of English results from the crucial role of English as a primary medium of global communication providing long-lasting economic growth and opportunities of better quality for young learners (Enever, 2011). In this regard, the starting level to teach English has been shifted to the early stages of primary education in order to increase exposure to this significant language, lingua franca of the globalized world, in the 21st century (Rich, 2014). In addition, another reason for the introduction of English to young learners at primary education is the notion that an early start is a key for gaining a long-term competence in a language (Nunan, 2003).

EFL Program Design Based on the Different Characteristics of Young and Adolescent Learners

There are a great number of studies in the literature advocating the idea that the characteristics of younger learners facilitate better language learning in comparison to adolescents and adults'. Young language learners are the pupils, whose ages range from 5 to 12, taking foreign or second language classes throughout the first six or seven years of formal education (McKay, 2006, p. 1). Young learners are often more eager to learn and be active as learners in contrast to older learners. They want to satisfy the teacher, not their peers. They will undertake an activity even if they don't completely understand why or

how. With regard to speaking in the target language, they are usually less embarrassed, which enables them to have a more native-like accent (Cameron, 2001, p. 1). In other words, anxiety and inhibition are less observed in young learners compared to the adolescents who are in a term that the judgment of the peer groups is of the vital importance in their lives. The young ones are highly interested and open-minded in terms of experiencing new things. On the contrary, since older learners may have some sort of negative perception towards the target language, which is hard to change, motivation and positive attitude may not be easily built with them (Barrett, 2007; Lesiak, 2015; Read, 2003). In this regard, the characteristics of young pupils are more suitable for developing a positive attitude towards learning a language and its culture and gaining an intercultural awareness, which is the key point of being a global citizen in a globalizing world day by day (The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages [CEFR], 2001; Tinsley & Comfort, 2012). In order to maintain their interest and eagerness on the target language, they should have been praised for their attempts by the teachers; however, since they promote the competition, prizes and rewards should be avoided in the classroom. Based on the Bruner's scaffolding theory, the sense of accomplishment is better developed with support and compliments for their works by hanging them on a wall or expressing likes. An atmosphere composed of cooperation and involvement should be generated in line with the Vygotsky's idea that learning occurs by being active in a social situation (Cameron, 2001; Scott & Ytreberg, 1990). There is a great difference between what motivates young learners and adolescents to learn (Enever, 2011). Being motivated for integrative purposes are very rare among young learners due to the limited communication with native speakers of the target language in most situations. In addition, unlike adolescents, they are not motivated instrumentally as they are too young to be aware of the need for learning a language to move to higher education or to get a better job (Huang, 2011). Therefore, a variety of engaging materials, learning activities and teaching methods should be employed in the language classes of young learners who may not be intrinsically motivated. Such kind of diversity also enables the teachers to address different learning styles and strategies and so cater for all the learners' needs (Oxford, 2003).

McKay (2006, p. 5) mentions the differences between the characteristics of adolescents and young learners within three categories: "literacy, vulnerability and growth". 'Literacy' is a crucial aspect of the difference between two age groups. The development of literacy skills of the younger learners in their native language is still in progress while they are

learning the target language. Therefore, listening and speaking skills are given priority over reading and writing in the English syllabi of the young pupils (Kırkgöz, 2019, p. 173). For the children whose ages are between 9 and 11, Puckett and Black (as cited in McKay, 2006, p. 12) assert that they can "expand reading skills to gather information from a variety of sources and make personal choices in reading for pleasure". At the age of 10 and onwards, pupils are able to control their fine motor skills which are essential for writing; understand what is a written text and realize the differences between languages. Therefore, reading and writing can be added to the syllabi at the age of ten (Cameron, 2001, p. 138).

As for the vulnerability dimension, older learners are more likely to be influenced by criticism of failure. Nevertheless, the sensitivity of the younger pupils should also be carefully handled on account of the fact that they form higher self-esteem when they take the necessary concern and support, otherwise, they experience a negative self-perception, lack of motivation and interest (McKay, 2006, p. 14). The perception of their teachers, learning environment, instruction methods and views of their parents affect the younger children in terms of the attitude towards learning the target language. On the other hand, the attitudes of adolescents are mostly influenced by the opinions of their peers. In this respect, the level of the activities should be adapted in parallel with the developmental level of the pupils for successful learning (Moon, 2005, p. 16).

In terms of cognitive development, young pupils have a shorter attention and concentration span, which is approximately 10 to 15 minutes. They are distracted more easily and cannot keep themselves focused on the activities they find difficult (Cameron, 2001, p. 1). Therefore, the content of the syllabi should be organized around salient, familiar and concrete topics in order to keep attention during the course (Garton & Copland, 2019, p. 380). Scott and Ytreberg (1990, p. 5) state that "variety of activity, pace, organization and voice is a must since their concentration and attention spans are short". Besides, play is another significant point in holding the attention of young learners. Games and game-like class activities such as singing songs, dancing, doing art-craft tasks and physical activities are instrumental in creating an active learning environment in which the youngers learn by doing, interacting and having fun (McKay, 2006, p. 324; Moon, 2005, p. 8; Scott & Ytreberg, 1990, p. 4). Games are not only a source of fun but also a chance for authentic language use and dealing with the target language while concentrating on playing the game. Although the adolescents have relatively higher attention spans, their concentration

may be easily distracted by any reason. Thus, the diversity of tasks and activities is essential for the adolescents' language classes, as well. Like young learners, they also enjoy the games as they are a way of being a winner and show-off, two crucial aspects of an adolescent life (Lindstromberg, 2004).

Young learners are less capable of using metalanguage skills that teachers can employ to teach grammar or discourse (Cameron, 2001). The language is likely to be acquired by young children holistically and implicitly (Cameron, 2001; Moon, 2005; Rich, 2014). Indirect learning can be actualized in the language classrooms by way of the games (Halliwell, 1992, p. 5). They should experience the use of target language integrally not in a way that the disconnected pieces of language are presented overtly (Bourke, 2006). Procedural memory is used by young children, which refers that grammar is learned by repetition and practice in meaningful contexts rather than teaching the rules explicitly (Enever, 2011). Thus, it can be drawn that a comprehensive and constant exposure to target language presented in meaningful and interesting contexts is essential in the instruction of young language learners (Cameron, 2001).

Teenagers whose ages range from 12 to 15 are called as adolescents, who are undergoing a change in terms of physics, cognition, emotion and morality. As stated in Piaget's theory of cognitive development, adolescents are in the formal operational stage, referring to the start of abstract and logical thinking, development of social awareness and improvement of language skills (Lesiak, 2015). Adolescents are in a term in which they want to be independent of their families and try to develop a self-concept. Acceptance by their peer groups is a strong desire within this period. Thus, their attitudes and thoughts are highly affected by their friends. In this regard, adolescents should be provided with collaborative activities allowing them for thinking creatively; working together and improve their skills of group communication (Lesiak, 2015; McKay, 2006). In contrast to the enthusiasm of younger learners, adolescents may have less interest towards the target language and feel uncomfortable with the activities requiring public performance such as role-plays or simulations due to their anxieties about being ridiculous in front of their peers. However, the bias towards the target language can be overcome by a comfortable classroom climate and an enjoyable learning process in which they can feel a sense of achievement. The use of activities such as drama or role-playing enables adolescent learners to figure out the

ways of coping with several situations that may occur in their lives (Cook, 2008; Moon, 2005).

The vulnerability of adolescents to disapproval and criticism are relatively higher than the young learners'. Therefore, promotion of their self-esteem and the recognition of the achievements should be taken into consideration in the design of the activities. Moreover, the temper and the emotions of adolescents are unstable owing to the fact that adolescence is a complete challenging stage in which the learners search for their identity while at the same time trying to understand rapidly changing physical development. Therefore, they are notorious for being the most challenging learner groups (Ur, as cited in Lesiak, 2015). Nevertheless, Lewis and Ur (as cited in Arda & Doyran, 2017) assert that the most fruitful years for a teenager in terms of language learning is the adolescence period due to being able to abstract reasoning and complex thinking. In order to realize their potentials, activities and tasks should be organized around appealing and relevant topics to the adolescents' lives and interests such as sport, entertainment, media and technology. Exploiting the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) materials in the language learning classes at this period allows for children to be motivated, develop positive attitudes towards the language and join in communicative activities via a variety of authentic and meaningful contexts, internet-based audio, video materials and texts (Gordon, 2007, p. 180).

Language Program by the MONE

The Historical Development of EFL Programs in Turkey

Although the recognition of English language in the Turkish education system traces back to the Tanzimat Period, the time that the Westernization movements started in the education system, there wasn't the dominance of English over other foreign languages, especially French and Arabic. Before the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, as the "medrese" was the heart of the education system and the effect of Islamic culture was highly seen in language education policies, Arabic and Persian had the priority over English (Kırkgöz, 2007, p. 217). Besides, French was another dominant language taught in schools as a natural result of being a leading country in 18th century's Europe and due to its

35

role as a medium in commercial, political and military relations. Nevertheless, with the foundation of Turkish Republic in 1923, the spread of ELT started to accelerate in an attempt to provide closer connections with Europe and the USA on the way of modernization and westernization of the country. In 1950s, with the descent of German language after World War II and owing to the expanding influence of American economy and military power, English took precedence over French and German and it started to become a language of international politics, trade, banking, tourism, media, science and technology (Doğançay & Aktuna, 1998). Despite the fact that the importance of learning a foreign language was emphasized in the education reforms made in the years following the establishment of the Turkish Republic, the teaching programs were not developed systemically until the 1980s. The two crucial steps in foreign language education were taken in 1983; one of which is the enactment of "Foreign Language Policy Act", including adjustments related to foreign language teaching in order to enhance foreign language teaching in secondary and higher education and the other the foundation of "Anatolian High Schools", in which the preparatory classes, where the English language was the medium of instruction, were introduced right after the primary school and an English curriculum was developed and started to be implemented (Küçükoğlu, 2013).

ELTPs in Turkey went through four major shifts applied in 1997, 2006, 2013 and 2017, the last of which is the recent change and the main data of the present study. With the 1997 education reform, MoNE, in cooperation with the Turkish Higher Education Council, made radical changes in the foreign language policy of the country with the aim of fostering teaching of English in Turkish educational institutions. The duration of compulsory education was extended from 5 years to 8 years. That was a critical point since English was started to be taught as a compulsory subject in grades 4 and 5, namely the introduction of EFL shifted from secondary to primary schools (Kırkgöz, 2007). The underlying reason for this innovation was to enable the students to experience the English language for a longer period of time than before so that the internalization and acquisition of the language would be easier (Sarıçoban, 2012). The 1997 reform is regarded as a milestone in Turkish EFL history as the communicative language teaching (CLT) was first introduced into ELT. The curriculum aims at promoting learner-based learning, students' active participation in the learning process and the alteration of the teacher role from a source of knowledge to a facilitator. Another positive change brought about by the 1997 reform was the introduction of teaching English to young learners (TEYL) course in ELT departments at the

undergraduate level to improve the prospective teachers' skills to fulfill the needs of young language learners and the adolescents (Kırkgöz, 2008). In spite of being an important reform, evaluation studies done for the 1997 ELTP showed that there was a big gap between the curriculum theory and the teachers' practice in real classroom atmospheres in that teachers implemented the program in a traditional way, not communicatively as stated in the curriculum (Kırkgöz, 2007). In addition, there were other deficiencies of the program such as the crowded classrooms, lack of necessary materials, the insufficient time allotted for the units and objectives to reach, the lack of guidance about testing (Büyükduman, 2005; Erdoğan, 2005). As a result of the weaknesses of 1997 ELTP and the effort to catch up with EU foreign language standards, the MoNE made drastic changes in the English curriculum in 2006. Unlike the 1997 ELTP adopting a behaviorist approach, the new curriculum was based on the constructivist theory, the idea that knowledge is constructed through problem-solving activities and the interaction with the environment, not directly delivered from the teacher to the student as in traditional classrooms (Erarslan, 2016). Like the 1997 program, the new curriculum also adopted a communicative perspective to ELT, accentuating once more the student-centered classes and the role of the teacher as a facilitator in the learning process. With an aim to foster learner autonomy and participation in the process, the recent curriculum included various craft activities, projects, songs, plays and games. In the 2006 ELTP, comprehensive theoretical information was provided on several aspects of ELT such as "curriculum design issues, selection of appropriate teaching materials for different grades, the distinction between language acquisition and language learning and how young learners and adolescents learn foreign languages" (Kırkgöz, 2007, p. 224). As for testing and assessment, the traditional paper-pencil tests were considered to be inappropriate with the principles of communicative language teaching. Instead, the performance-based assessment was implemented through the use of portfolios to assess the language progress of the learners. In addition, English class hours were increased to 3 hours in 4th and 5th grades and the books were revised (Kırkgöz, 2007). It is obvious that the new curriculum was more comprehensive than the 1997 ELTP; however, studies done to evaluate the new program revealed that the lack of materials; insufficient physical condition, time allotted for the classes and in-service training; traditional teaching styles of teachers were still problems encountered in the process (Küçük, 2008; Seçkin 2011; Topkaya & Küçük, 2010). Therefore, a new curriculum reform was carried out in 2013 due to the deficiencies of the 2006 ELTP. 2013

was the year when the 4+4+4 system was launched, lowering the age to start primary education and changing the duration of compulsory education from 8 years to 12 years. Through this implementation, the starting level to learn English was also shifted from 4th grade to 2nd grade in order to catch up with the world education applications. In the new framework, communicative purposes for learning the language was still the core of the curriculum. In order to emphasize the communicative competence, the use of authentic materials, drama, role-play and hands-on activities were recommended in the curriculum. Another distinctive feature of the 2013 ELTP is that the design of the program was based on the principles and the descriptors of the CEFR, which stresses the importance of real-life practice in order to promote fluency, proficiency and language retention. Besides, in addition to the assessment types of 2006 ELTP, self and peer assessment were added to the new curriculum via the CEFR. Nevertheless, the research showed that the 2013 ELTP had similar problems with the other programs such as the need for revision of the objectives, the inadequate materials and physical condition, the mismatch between the teachers' applications and the theory of the program and insufficient teacher-trainings (Alkan & Arslan, 2014; Çankaya, 2015).

Related Studies

In the literature, there have been a good number of curriculum analysis studies in an attempt to improve the quality of educational programs. However, it is seen that most of the related studies focus on only one or two grades and are generally based on a particular component of the curricula or the students and teachers' views. As for the difference of the present study, all the grades in basic education (2nd-8th) are covered within wide-ranging criteria to see the big picture and have a better understanding of the Basic English program.

Erdogan's (2005) study was conducted in an aim to evaluate the 1997 English curriculum applied at the 4th and 5th grades of public primary schools with the aid of the teachers' and the students' perceptions. In order to take the teachers' opinions about the content and the content sequence, compatibility of the content with the objectives and the application of the curriculum, a questionnaire developed for the study was administered to 130 teachers who taught English to the 4th and 5th-grade students in different public primary schools in Mersin. Besides, individual interviews were made with 40 students from different public primary schools to get the students' perceptions of the program. According to the results,

Erdoğan (2005) uncovered that although the teachers thought that the content and the objectives were compatible, they didn't totally approve the content and its sequence in the curriculum. Moreover, the teachers stated that the curriculum needed some revisions and changes in order to be completely applicable. It was found out that two-hour time per week was insufficient to attain the objectives and accomplish the program. As a result of the findings of students' interviews, it was discovered that students were satisfied to learn English at the 4th and 5th grades.

In order to examine how the teachers implement and the students experience the 6th, 7th and 8th English language curriculum in primary state schools, Yanık (2007) carried out a study based on the teachers and students' views about the goals and the content of the curriculum, instructional strategies, evaluation and assessment methods, learner attitudes and the problems experienced during the application of the curriculum. The data was gathered through a questionnaire applied to 368 teachers and 1235 students from the 21 cities and 42 towns in Turkey. The findings indicated that there were differences in the curriculum application process due to the physical conditions of schools and classrooms, characteristics and opinions of teachers and students. It was revealed that most of the curriculum goals were achieved and the program had some weaknesses in terms of the selection and sequence of the content. In addition, it was figured out that the students were pleased with the teacher-based and learner-based instructional strategies applied in accordance with the language skill to be taught and learned during the implementation of the program. It was also found out that the majority of the problems experienced in the application process stemmed from the coursebook, the classroom environment and the inadequacy of materials and sources, which was affected on goals achievement, classroom practices and assessment processes.

Another study on the general features, goals, outcomes and content of the new 4th and 5th-grade syllabi in 2006 ELTP was done by Topkaya and Küçük (2010) under the light of teachers' opinions. In order to collect the data, a questionnaire was conducted with 72 teachers from 26 primary state schools in Istanbul. The results of the data showed that although the teachers thought that the program was obvious and easy to understand, they stated that there were some difficulties experienced in the implementation process due to the factors such as crowded classes, overloaded content, insufficient allocated time and lack of sources such as photocopiable materials, CDs, tape recorders, etc.

Similar to the Topkaya and Küçük's study, Dönmez (2010) investigated the teachers and students' views on the implementation of the new 8th grade English language and the problems encountered by the teachers and students in the application process. 9 primary state schools in Ankara participated in the study in which in-depth interviews with the 10 English language teachers and focus group interviews with the 73 8th grade students were conducted. The results revealed that the suggested alternative assessment techniques and learner-based teaching methods weren't employed by the teachers. In addition, lack of necessary materials, equipment, gradual implementation of the new curriculum, guidance for the teachers and crowded classes, inadequate class hours were the problems encountered during the application process.

Another study investigating the teachers' perceptions of the 4th-grade syllabus in the 2006 ELTP was carried out by Seçkin (2011). The major points of research focus were the objectives, content, activities, materials and equipment and assessment. Besides, the study aimed to reveal the teachers' level of information about the curriculum, the difficulties faced by the teachers in the implementation process, the merits and demerits of the curriculum and teachers' suggestions for the improvement of the curriculum. 15 primary English teachers teaching to 4th-grade students in public schools were interviewed individually to collect the data. As a result of the findings, it was found out that the teachers didn't have sufficient information and guidance about the new program. Like in the aforementioned studies, the other problems related to the curriculum resulted from the crowded classrooms, lack of sources and supplementary materials. It was revealed that the strongest aspect of the curriculum was that it enabled the students to actively participate in the learning process. The weakest features of the curriculum were the overloaded content and the insufficient allocated time. In order to have a more effective curriculum, teachers suggested that the teaching and learning materials should be more qualified, the weekly class hour should be increased and the class sizes should be rearranged.

Alkan and Arslan (2014) analyzed the 2nd grades syllabus in 2013 ELTP based on the teachers' views. The data was gathered through a questionnaire administered to 163 teachers. As a result of the study, although most of the teachers had positive views about the curriculum, it was uncovered that there was a need for the revision of the goals and aims and development of schools' physical condition. In addition, the teachers stated that

the guidance for the testing part of the new curriculum and the allocated time were insufficient.

A comprehensive analysis study was conducted by Yücel, Dimici, Yıldız, and Bümen (2017) in an attempt to figure out the progress of English language curricula developed in the last 15 years. Exploiting a document analysis, the study investigated the two primary school (2006 & 2013) and four secondary schools (2002, 2011, 2014, & 2016) English language curricula within the criteria consisting of some principles of curriculum design such as scope, sequence, continuity, articulation, balance, user-friendliness and flexibility. The findings revealed that the latest developments in the English language teaching were closely followed in the new curricula design. The primary school curricula were consistent with the curriculum design principles apart from flexibility due to the inadequate allocated time. In addition, despite the fact that the communicative approach was suggested in secondary school curricula, it could not be practiced by the teachers as they didn't have sufficient guidance about the approach. The sequence and continuity were taken into consideration in the design of the curricula while scope, balance, user-friendliness and flexibility were ignored. It was found out that particularly, the 2011 secondary school program lacked the principles balance, user-friendliness and flexibility as it didn't take the interests and needs of the students into consideration and due to too long and complicated content and insufficient time for the implementation.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The present study examined the content of the available English language curriculum of the primary education in the context of pedagogic objectives, suggested contexts, tasks and activities, vocabulary, syllabus units, themes, functions, outcomes and testing. In this chapter, the research methodology employed in the study is outlined. The first section explains the rationale of the research design. Following this, the context and the participants are introduced in the second and third section. Then, the fourth section presents the data collection procedures and the instruments utilized in the study. Lastly, data analysis is described.

Research Design

As the aim of the study was to analyze the content of the available primary English curriculum descriptively and identify its strengths and weaknesses and to reveal the opinions of one specialist and two English teachers working for the Ministry on the components of the related curriculum needed to be excluded, revised, changed, adapted or maintained, the curriculum, developed for basic education by the MoNE in 2017, was taken as the major data. The major points of research focus were the content of the curriculum and syllabi as well as the views of one specialist and 2 EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers who implemented the 2017 ELTP. In this respect, the nature of study corresponds to descriptive research since the purpose of descriptive studies is to describe a present or past situation and reveal the accurate portrait of what occurs without

manipulating the conditions and trying to create relations or differences (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2015). This descriptive study was based on a concurrent mixed method design which allows the researcher to analyze the topic studied extensively by combining the qualitative and quantitative data. In this type of study design, the researcher gathers both types of data simultaneously throughout the study and then interprets the findings by integrating the data collected via two methods (Creswell, 2014). A concurrent design study aims to "broaden the research perspective and thus to test how the different findings complement or corroborate each other" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 172). This type of design is called as "triangulation design" by Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2006, p. 286) since the information gathered by the qualitative and quantitative processes are correlated with each other to find out whether they have similar results. Employing multiple techniques of gathering data, a comprehensive portrait of the problem investigated is ensured and the credibility of the study is strengthened. Fraenkel, Wallen and Hyun (2012, p. 558) argue that mixed-method research enables the researcher "to clarify and explain relationships found to exist between variables", "to explore relationships between variables in-depth" and "to confirm or cross-validate relationships discovered between variables".

Content analysis, which enables the researcher "to obtain descriptive information of one kind or another; to analyze observational and interview data; to test hypotheses; to check other research findings; and/or to obtain information useful in dealing with educational problems" (Fraenkel et al., 2012, p. 497), is a method which can be employed in both qualitative and quantitative studies. In quantitative studies, it refers to "examining written texts that involve the counting of instances of words, phrases or grammatical structures that fall into specific categories" while the qualitative content analysis does not utilize the predetermined categories but obtain them from the data examined (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 245). In this regard, exploiting a content analysis within a mixed-method approach, the study focused on the pedagogic objectives, vocabulary, syllabus units, functions, outcomes, themes, suggested contexts, tasks and activities and testing and quantified these variables to reach a wider portrait. Simultaneously, the qualitative data were collected through interviews designed by the researcher to yield data concerning teachers' perspectives and analyzed through a content analysis process once again. Lastly, both types of data were integrated to interpret the findings related to the current situation of the 2017 ELTP in the discussion part.

The following table displays the overall research design of the study in terms of the data collection and analysis methods utilized to find answers for each research question.

Table 2

Overall Research Design of the Study

Research Questions	Research Method	Data Collection Tools	Data Analysis	Participants
1. What are the theories and assumptions underpinning the linguistic and pedagogic dimensions of the English program for state schools?	Qualitative Quantitative	Checklist for Document Analysis Variables Quantification	Content Analysis	-
2. How are the English syllabi structured across the grades?	Qualitative Quantitative	Checklist for Document Analysis Variables Quantification	Content Analysis	-
3. What are the perceptions of English teachers about the English program?	Qualitative	Semi-structured Interview	Content Analysis	Teachers
4. What are the perceptions of the MoNE authorities on the English Program?	Qualitative	Semi-structured Interview	Content Analysis	A specialist

Context

In the 2017 ELTP, the importance of learning English is highlighted by the statement "there is no question that the key to economic, political and social progress in today's society depends on the ability of Turkish citizens to communicate effectively on an international level, and competence in English is a key factor in this process" (MoNE, 2017, p. 3). Pointing out the impact of globalization on the countries in terms of the need for learning English, Kırkgöz (2009, p. 667) argue that "in no country is this trend more prominent than in Turkey where English, currently, is the only foreign language that has become a compulsory subject at all levels of education, featuring predominantly in language policy".

Considering the basic education as the base on which the English language learning is constructed, the recent English program of basic education was analyzed in the present study. In this connection, the scope of the study is primary state schools in Turkey and the current situation of this level is tried to be reported in the present study. The compulsory basic education in Turkey is 12 years. According to the recent "National Education Statistics" report of the MoNE (2017), in the 2017-2018 academic year, the number of the public primary schools is 23.349. The number of students is 4.870.859 while the number of teachers is 268.210. In the report, it is stated that

> "The compulsory primary school age covers the age group of 5 (children who have completed 66 months, who were born between the first and third months of 2012) to 13. The coverage of this age group starts with children who are 66 months old by the end of September of the year of registration and ends at the end of the educational year when the child completes 13 and begins the age of 14" (MoNE, 2017, p. 14).

The table below displays the weekly compulsory and elective English language course (depending on the decision of the authorities in each school) hours by the grades in public primary schools of Turkey.

Table 3

The Weekly Hours of the English Language Course

Grades	Compulsory	Elective
2nd	2	-
3rd	2	-
4th	2	-
5th	3	2
6th	3	2
7th	4	2
8th	4	2

Participants

One of the aims of the present study is to reveal the teachers' perceptions of the recent English program of basic education. As stated in the earlier chapters, the 2017 ELTP has been in practice in primary education for two years. In this respect, the universe of the study is the primary state schools.

In qualitative studies, the researcher must form a sampling composed of the subjects who have enough knowledge; can remember enough and are able to give accurate answers in order to yield the data related to the research questions (Brink, 1993). In this regard,

purposeful sampling was utilized in the selection of the participants of the study as it is "a procedure where the researcher identifies key informants: persons who have some specific knowledge about the topic being investigated" (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2006, p. 140). Whether the sampling will conform to the data required is taken into consideration in the determination of sampling type for a study (Creswell, 2007). To this connection, as the present study tries to offer an insight into the teachers' views on the new primary English curriculum for state schools, the sampling criterion was to determine the teachers who have read the 2017 ELTP and is currently implementing it in the primary state schools. Therefore, the sample of the study consists of one specialist and two English teachers working for the Ministry and who took part both the design and the implementation of the recent revision of the English curriculum at various grades in three different primary state schools in Ankara. Their lengths of teaching experience are 5, 10 and 23 years. The data were gathered in the second term of the 2018-2019 academic year.

Data Collection Procedures and Instruments

The data for the study was gathered employing both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools. In other words, the researcher utilizes the triangulation method which refers to integrating multiple data collection methods in order to validate the findings and thus decrease the effect of possible biases that may occur in a study (Bowen, 2009).

The aim of the study is to analyze the content of the available primary English language curriculum in the context of pedagogic objectives, suggested contexts, tasks and activities, vocabulary, syllabus units, themes, functions, outcomes and testing. Therefore, the major data was collected by exploiting document analysis, one of the techniques of content analysis, which is effective in investigating aims, tendencies and patterns in documents (Stemler, 2001). That is to say, the recent primary English teaching program was analyzed within two checklists developed by the researcher. Simultaneously, the teachers' views were gathered through in-depth interviews developed by the researcher under the light of the relevant literature and expert consensus. The interview process was carried out with semi-structured interviews.

Document Analysis

In this study, the document refers to the 2017 ELTP that was accessed by the MoNE (2017) through its portal. "Document analysis yields data—excerpts, quotations, or entire passages—that are then organized into major themes, categories, and case examples specifically through content analysis" (Labuschagne, as cited in Bowen, 2009, p. 28). In the present study, the 2017 ELTP was analyzed and interpreted, at the same time, the findings related to the variables such as suggested contexts, tasks and activities, vocabulary, syllabus units, themes, functions and outcomes were quantified and presented in tables for each grade.

Document analysis is "a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents and requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge" (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). At the first step in the analysis process, the criterion was set and two checklists were developed by the researcher in the light of the related past and present literature and the national curriculum itself. That was the way of constructing the content validity of the tool while the construct validity was ensured by the expert consensus. The first checklist was created to provide a detailed descriptive analysis of the context, the present language teaching program of primary education, with respect to its pedagogic philosophy, objectives, key competences, values education, testing approach and structure. The second checklist was designed to analyze each syllabus (2nd -8th) descriptively with regard to the conformity to the specifications of the 2017 ELTP.

The Interview

Interview is one of the most preferred data collection tools in both types of study (Merriam, 2009). In MacKey and Gass's opinion (2005, p. 173), utilizing an interview enables researchers "to investigate phenomena that are not directly observable and to elicit additional data if initial answers are vague, incomplete, off-topic or not specific enough". One of the interview types is a semi-structured interview which is composed of pre-constructed guiding questions and which provide an opportunity to ask probing questions and thus to deeply investigate the topic (Dörnyei, 2007). In this respect, with an aim to get a deeper understanding of the teachers' views on the components of the 2017 ELTP needed to be excluded, revised, changed, adapted or maintained, a semi-structured interview, "in

which the researcher uses a written list of questions as a guide, while still having the freedom to digress and probe for more information" (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 173), was exploited in the study.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2005, p. 105) argue that the validity of the qualitative data can be constructed via "honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the disinterestedness or objectivity of the researcher". The reliability of the interviews is best ensured through decreasing the potential bias, building a good rapport, developing unambiguous questions applied without changing their sequence and leading the interviewee to a certain answer. In this regard, since the interview was used as a qualitative data collection tool in the present study, the content validity of the instrument was tried to be constructed by drawing upon the literature and taking the expert opinion. Being structured in agreement with the research questions, the interview items were developed by the researcher based on the checklists designed in the light of the relevant literature and the recent national ELTP. In the same vein, the interview items were written considering the reliability criterion stated by Cohen et al. (2005, p. 105), and the expert consult was taken. The interview items were originally written in English; however, the interviews were administered in Turkish. The expert opinion was taken to ensure the accurateness of the translation. Before conducting the interview, the supervisor of the researcher was consulted on the appropriateness of the items to ensure the content validity of the tool. Accordingly, the items were revised and more sub-questions were included to take more in-depth data. Then, the interview was held with two English teachers in order to test and ascertain the clarity of the items. The final version of the interview was composed of 6 main questions consisting of related sub-questions and 1 demographic question asking the year of teachers' experience. All of the interviews were audio-recorded. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes. At the beginning of each interview, the researcher summarized the aim of the study and made a small talk to break the ice. The interview is not only a tool for gathering the data but also a mutual interaction. Therefore, the interviewer should make an effort to administer the interview delicately (Cohen et al., 2005). In this regard, throughout the interview sessions, a comfortable atmosphere was promoted to make the interviewees feel relaxed and give sincere answers.

Data Analysis

The purpose of the data analysis is to grasp the meaning of the data by "consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 202). In order to draw meaning out of the data collected by the interviews, content analysis, "the process involves the simultaneous coding of raw data and the construction of categories that capture relevant characteristics of the documents content" (Merriam, 2009, p. 205) was utilized in the present study. The analysis process of the qualitative data was conducted in three phases: reducing the data in which the researcher firstly reads the data and then sums it up via codes, themes and categories; the data demonstration in which the data is presented with visual aids; data inference and verification in which the researcher interprets the data and infers its meaning (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

At the outset of the data analysis process in this study, the audio-recorded data were transcribed into verbatim. Each transcription was read and examined in order to understand the whole before breaking the data down into more workable pieces (Lodico et al., 2006). Data coding, the process of "highlighting extracts of the transcribed data and labeling these in a way that they can be easily identified, retrieved or grouped" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 250), was the second step of the analysis. The third step included the categorization of the codes in which the researcher reexamined all the codes and united them under more comprehensive themes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Unlike codes, themes describe broader notions that will be drawn on for the interpretation of the data. Through the themes, the data was reviewed to get an in-depth sense of the data (Lodico et al., 2006). Lastly, the findings were presented and interpreted based on emerging themes.

Trustworthiness of the Study

Based on a concurrent mixed method design, the present study utilized both the qualitative and quantitative methods simultaneously to collect the data. The quantification of the variables such as suggested contexts, tasks and activities, vocabulary, syllabus units, themes, functions and outcomes was the quantitative part of the study. One source of the qualitative data was two separate checklists developed for the analysis of the pedagogic objectives, vocabulary, syllabus units, functions, outcomes, themes, suggested contexts, tasks and activities and testing. To provide the content validity of the tool, the checklists

were developed by the researcher in the light of the relevant past and present literature and the national curriculum itself and the expert consensus was taken. The other tool for the qualitative data collection was the semi-structured interview for the teachers' perspectives on the 2017 ELTP.

The literature has several terms used for the validation of a qualitative research study (Creswell, 2007). To illustrate, the term credibility, "whether the participants' perceptions of the setting or events match up with the researcher's portrayal of them in the research report" (Lodico et al., 2006, p. 273), is utilized in the qualitative studies rather than the term internal validity used in the quantitative studies. Maxwell (as cited in Cohen et al., 2005, p. 106) proposes the term "understanding" instead of the "validity" on account of the fact that the goal of the researcher is to reveal the other people's perceptions included in the topic being studied and "to present a holistic interpretation of what is happening" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 244). The reliability is described as "the consistency of inferences over time, location, and circumstances" (Fraenkel et al., 2012, p. 453) for a quantitative study while the term dependability, "whether the results are consistent with the data collected" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 251), should be preferred in a qualitative method study as "reliability is problematic in the social sciences simply because human behavior is never static, nor is what many experience necessarily more reliable than what one person experiences" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 250).

Some procedures were followed in order to enhance the credibility and dependability of the present study. The first method was the triangulation, the strategy employed to validate the findings through multiple data collection methods and thus decrease the effect of possible biases that may occur in a study (Bowen, 2009), was utilized in the present study to construct the credibility of the study. Secondly, "member checking", the process of sending the findings derived from the analysis of the interviews to the participants (Lodico et al., 2006, p. 274) to check the accuracy of the inferences of the researcher. The third method to increase the validity and reliability of the study was "thick description" in which the researcher described the context, participants and explained the findings with sufficient proof introduced through "the quotes from participant interviews, field notes, and documents" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 257). As for the dependability (reliability) of the study, "external audit", in which the researcher consulted the supervisor in each phase of

the study to ask questions and to review the researchers' arguments, was another technique utilized in the study (Fraenkel et al., 2012, p. 453).

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Program Analysis

In this part, a detailed descriptive analysis of the context, the present language teaching program of primary education, with respect to its pedagogic philosophy, objectives, key competences, values education, testing approach, structure and the content of syllabus units are presented. When the recent curriculum is analyzed, it is noticed that prior to the syllabi, the 2017 ELTP introduces the aim of teaching English, the objectives, the underlying theory and then provides functions, useful language units, outcomes and suggested contexts, tasks and assignments in terms of four basic skills for each grade level. Inclusion of the key competences and values education is the distinctive feature of the present program, which indicates the aim to keep up with the world educational programs.

Curriculum Analysis

The 2017 ELTP was analyzed within the criteria in the table below. The checklist was created by the researcher to provide a detailed descriptive analysis of the context, the present language teaching program of primary education, with respect to its pedagogic philosophy, objectives, key competences, values education, testing approach and structure.

Table 4

The Checklist for the Curriculum Analysis

Pedagogic Dimensions

- Language policy
- Theory of language
- Theory of learning and teaching
- Theory of testing
  - Alignment with the principles and descriptors of the CEFR
  - Diversity for addressing different learning strategies
  - Diversity for addressing different learning styles
  - Diversity for covering four language skills
  - Performance-based assessment methods
  - Alternative process-based assessment methods
  - Self-assessment
  - Peer-assessment
  - Formative assessment types
  - Summative assessment types
  - Compliance with the students' levels and cognitive traits
  - Compliance with the content
  - Flexibility in selection for teachers
  - Guidance and support for teachers
- Type of syllabi
- Format of syllabi
- Structure of the curriculum
- Format of the curriculum
- Inclusion of key competences and values
- Interrelation among the themes
- Appropriateness of syllabi content for each learning stage
- Harmony of all stages with each other
- The weekly hours of the English course at each grade
- Suggested contexts, tasks and assignments
  - Alignment with the principles and descriptors of the CEFR
  - Inclusion of key competences and values
  - Compliance with the themes
  - Compliance with the functions
  - Compliance with the outcomes
  - Appropriateness for students' levels
  - Appropriateness for students' interests
  - Appropriateness for students' needs
  - Appropriateness for using an eclectic mix of instructional techniques in classroom
  - Motivating
  - Diversity for addressing different learning styles
  - Diversity for addressing different learning strategies
  - Authenticity
  - Flexibility in selection for teachers
  - Utilization of ICT and CALL materials
  - Feasibility

The reason for designing the 2017 ELTP was updating the previous English program for primary and lower secondary grades in regard to the opinions collected from the teachers, parents and academicians in order to maintain a contemporary and effective curriculum. The new revision was not made for a drastic change in English teaching at the related levels in that enhancing the language skills and the proficiency is the primary focus of the recent program rather than specific course content (MoNE, 2017). To this end, the main intention of the present curriculum is stated as the revision of the previous program in terms of "inclusion of values education and basic skills as themes, expansion of certain components such as testing and suggestions and updating the linguistic realizations of language skills, functions, forms, contexts, tasks and activities" (MoNE, 2017, p. 3).

As for the scope of the program, it can be stated that a wide age period between six and thirteen, both young learners and adolescents use the program (McKay, 2006, p. 1). Since these two groups of learners distinctly differ from each other regarding cognitive and social characteristics (Cameron, 2001, p. 1), it is observed that throughout each grade, the differences are taken into consideration in all parts of the syllabi, such as contexts and tasks, cognitive load, language skills, assessment and evaluation (MoNE, 2017).

Agreeing with the Cameron's (2001, p. 20) idea "children foreign language learning depends on what they experience", the 2017 ELTP proposes 56 different contexts and 21 kinds of activities which equip the learners for real-life interactions.

Below are provided some samples of "suggested contexts and tasks/activities" (MoNE, 2017, p. 15) listed by the 2017 ELTP:

Table 5

Samples for Suggested Contexts and Tasks/Activities

Contexts	Tasks/Activities
Biographical Texts	Arts and Crafts
Blogs	Chants and Songs
Brochures	Competitions
Captions	Drama Role (Play, Simulation, Pantomime)
Cards	Drawing and Coloring
Cartoons	Find Someone Who …
Catalogues	Games
Chants and Songs	Guessing
Charts	Information Transfer
Conversations	Information/Opinion Gap
Diaries/Journal Entries	Labeling
Dictionaries	Making Puppets
E-mails	Matching
Fables	Question and Answers
Fairy Tales	Reordering
Formal Letters	Storytelling
Humorous encounters	Synonyms and Antonyms
Illustrations	True/False/No information

When the suggested contexts and tasks are examined, it can be stated that they boost the learners' motivation to learn the target language as they generate a game-based learning atmosphere in which the students can play games, do hand-on activities, sing songs and dance while studying toward meaningful language use (McKay, 2006, p. 324). To illustrate; in the recent program, an enjoyable and purposeful learning atmosphere is provided for the young learners through the tasks, especially at the earliest levels, such as "arts and crafts, chants and songs, drawing and coloring, games, making puppets, labeling, questions and answers, matching, role play and simulation tasks" and the contexts like "cartoons, illustrations, lists, menus, posters, postcards, realia, notes and messages, signs, stories and videos" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 25-100). In addition, in line with the affective and cognitive developments of the students at each grade, it is observed that the recent curriculum takes the learning stages into account and starting from the 5th grade and onwards, adds different contexts such as "questionnaires, websites, picture strip stories, magazines, plays, blogs, news, reports and e-mails" and tasks such as "competitions, information transfer, true/false/no information, information/opinion gap, guessing and find

someone who" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 58-100). Handling the functions with a communicative approach through the visual, audial and audiovisual authentic materials is among the goals of the 2017 ELTP. Authentic materials enable the learners study on the natural contexts rather than the ones created by a coursebook author so that they will have a chance to study on the language item together with the other related structural and discourse items and be familiar with the actual language use (Graves, 2000, p. 155; Nunan, 2013, p. 63). Among the suggested contexts in the table above, "cartoons, posters, stories, maps, illustrations, songs, postcards, lists and videos, diaries, journal entries, blogs, reports and websites" can be stated as authentic contexts in which the functions are presented (MoNE, 2017, pp. 24-100). As a result, creative language use is supported by means of different tasks providing students with a chance to practice the language in authentic communicative contexts and learn how to reply suitably in new situations out of the classroom (Nunan, 2013, p. 70). Technology is an important means of finding authentic input for language classrooms. Various internet-based audio, video materials and texts provide variety and meaningful contexts for language teaching and enable the teachers to motivate, develop positive attitudes towards the language and to join the students in communicative activities (Gordon, 2007, p. 180). When the contexts are analyzed in the syllabi, it is noticed that the use of technology is very limited. The only technological items suggested as contexts are "blogs, e-mails, podcasts, weather reports, videos and websites" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 25-100). That aspect of the 2017 ELTP can hinder the learners from keeping pace with the new world lying ahead them since ICT and CALL play a vital role in shifting the traditional teacher-based classrooms to the learner-centered learning environments in the sense that they change the educational aims from acquisition of knowledge to production of intellectual capabilities; provide various opportunities for interaction by which the learners can exchange information and emails, engage in blog discussions, work in groups on different projects, search for information and reach resources matching with their level of interests (Bhatti, 2013; Drigas & Charami, 2014).

According to McKay (2006, p. 41), an ideal language learning atmosphere is composed of the conditions in which "a focus on meaning, interesting and engaging input and interacting, selected opportunities to focus on form and a safe and supportive learning environment" are provided. In accordance with the McKay's argument, it can be stated that the suggested contexts and tasks in the syllabi build and maintain a positive attitude toward the target language with a joyful and motivating classroom atmosphere in order to make

young learners feel pleased and backed up so that they eagerly participate and interact in classroom activities during the learning process. It is also apparent that the 2017 ELTP is quite flexible in the sense that a great variety of contexts, tasks and activities are offered through which the teacher can implement an eclectic mix of instructional methods and strategies in the classroom. Only one methodology cannot suit the whole classroom consisting of different students in terms of learning styles and strategies. Therefore, exploiting a wide range of teaching methods and techniques, particularly, a communicative approach by which the form and the fluency are both emphasized, cater for all the learners' needs (Oxford, 2003). In addition, such kind of diversity enables the teachers to address different learning styles through the games, art-crafts and songs for "bodily-kinesthetic learners"; pair and group work such as questions and answers, role-plays, information gaps, questionnaires, find someone who activities for "interpersonal learners"; story-telling, labeling, lists, notes and messages for "linguistic learners"; re-ordering, matching, charts for "logical-mathematical learners", individual tasks for "intrapersonal learners"; drawing and coloring activities for "spatial learners" and songs, rhymes and chants for "musical learners" (Gardner, 1999, pp. 41-43; MoNE, 2017). By means of the relevant, meaningful, engaging and feasible tasks and contexts and the suggestions of various assignments indicating the emphasis of each syllabus on promoting language use, various learning strategies are intended to be addressed by the 2017 ELTP, as well (MoNE, 2017). That aspect of the recent curriculum has crucial importance as being able to use suitable language learning strategies enables the learners to be actively engaged in the learning process and to be more self-confident, which are the necessities for gaining communicative competence (Oxford, 1990, p. 40). To illustrate; the suggested contexts such as picture dictionaries, posters, illustrations and advertisements relating the lexical items to visuals allow for the learners to use one of the memory strategies "using imagery, helping students store and retrieve new information via visual imagery" (Oxford, 1990, p. 41). Moreover, "representing sounds in memory", another memory strategy proposed by Oxford (1990, p. 63) are practiced with the rhymes, chants and songs and "using physical response or sensation" can be learned through the activities pantomime and drama (Oxford, 1990, p. 66). Lastly, the tasks such as information transfer, matching and re-ordering are supposed to result in the employment of cognitive strategies including skills like "recombining and transferring" (Oxford, 1990, p. 45).

The assignments suggested in the syllabi also serve for the exploitation of different learning strategies. To give an example; for the 6th grade; one of the assignments given in the syllabus is "students work in groups and create an election campaign poster for classroom presidency" (MoNE, 2017, p. 78). Besides, the assignment "students work to act out a call center drama task; in groups, students are given role cards describing tasks for each; one by one they call the call center to share their problems" (MoNE, 2017, p. 94) is suggested in the 8th grade. It is thought that these assignments may trigger the "social/ affective strategies" of the learners, referring to the "cooperation, or working with peers to solve a problem, pool information, check notes or get feedback on a learning activity" (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 45). In the same vein, all the units in each grade suggest the same assignment in that the learners are supposed to create a visual dictionary and expand it throughout the year, which encourages the use of memory strategies by the learners. In addition, this assignment ends with a reflect-on activity at the end of the term, which is thought to help developing learner autonomy in the classroom. The other assignments offered at the grades 4th and 7th respectively, "students prepare a poster of classroom rules with a list of simple instructions and visuals" (MoNE, 2017, p. 47) and "students write a simple letter about their dreams and expectations from the future" (MoNE, 2017, p. 86), may lead the students to be autonomous in terms of being a part of the classroom processes and being aware of their goals in life. An efficient assignment explicitly expresses what the learners are supposed to "demonstrate, transfer or apply to show what they understand and can do as a result of the study" (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 44). It is quite obvious that the assignments suggested in the syllabi include performance and project tasks allowing for learning the language by doing, which fosters productivity and authentic practice of the new learning out of the classroom. To illustrate; "in groups, students prepare animal masks and color them" (MoNE, 2017, p. 34); "students prepare a map of their city/town/village and describe it in groups" (MoNE, 2017, p. 42) and "students prepare a picture story about their feelings and needs when they are ill; they work in groups and exchange information about the picture story" (MoNE, 2017, p. 62). In addition, it is revealed that the assignments include some key competences and values in line with the themes. To illustrate; the assignments suggested for the 3rd grade "students bring in family photos or draw the pictures of their family members, then they prepare a poster to introduce their family members" (MoNE, 2017, p. 37) and for the 8th grade "students write a short paragraph explaining the responsibilities of their family members" may refer to the values

"Family and Friendship", "Cooperation" and "Responsibility". The 7th grade offers an assignment in that "students choose two wild animals and prepare a poster describing them; then, students make suggestions to protect wild animals" (MoNE, 2017, p. 83), which may associate with the value "Awareness of Environment". In addition, one of the key competences "Social and Civic Responsibility" and the value "Awareness of Environment" are observed in the assignment given for the 7th grade, which is "students prepare a poster showing the ways of protecting our environment" (MoNE, 2017, p. 88). As is quite clear from the samples, the length, the level and the scope of the assignments are reasonable at each grade in a way to cover the related content.

As in the previous program, the principles and the descriptors of the CEFR stand at the core of the 2017 ELTP. In line with the CEFR, the new program heavily accentuates the real-life language use by providing students a genuine communicative environment in order to boost their fluency, proficiency and language retention. Analyzing the syllabi, it is seen that the functions like "greeting and meeting people, introducing oneself, telling someone what to do, expressing likes and dislikes, telling the times and dates, describing characters and people, accepting and refusing, talking about past events and making predictions about the future" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 25-100) serves for the language policy of the new curriculum.

The underlying pedagogic theory remain the same as the previous revision in that the 2017 ELTP does not specify a particular teaching method but employs "an action-oriented approach" as highly accentuated in the CEFR and employs "an eclectic mix of instructional techniques" (MoNE, 2017, p. 3) in order to fulfill the needs of the learners at different stages (Oxford, 2003, p. 16). Hence; the emphasis is on the use of English through all kinds of classroom interactions, encouraging learners to become language users and to gain communicative competence (CoE, 2001; MoNE, 2017).

The basic goal of the 2017 ELTP is stated as imposing on learners the point of language learning as communication and demonstrating English as used in real life focusing on functions such as "introducing oneself" (MoNE, 2017, p. 26), "exchanging personal information" (MoNE, 2017, p. 58), "telling the times and dates" (MoNE, 2017, p. 69), "apologizing and giving reasons" (MoNE, 2017, p. 91) and "describing the actions happening currently" (MoNE, 2017, p. 99). Thus, it is evident that the communicative approach dominates the character of the new curriculum. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson

(2011, p. 129) indicate that the communicative approach regards the target language as a means of classroom communication, not only a course subject. Therefore; the activities done in the learning process should be definitely communicative, having three common characteristics "information gap", "choice", "feedback" for creating a real communication.

The testing approach of the program serves for the employment of different learning strategies, as well. Generating a positive washback effect in order to restrain the use of particular learning strategies more than others owing to the exams is one of the most significant aspects of the new program (MoNE, 2017). Gardner (1993) accentuates the use of various testing techniques in order to enable students to display their potentials and states that an effective assessment should be context-based referring to the natural learning atmospheres in which the students are expected to solve problems or carry out projects since such an environment will reveal the students' maximum performances. Accordingly, analyzing the table below, it can be concluded that the new curriculum aims to stimulate different learning styles through "the role-plays, simulations, creative drama tasks, listen and draw activities" for "bodily-kinesthetic learners"; "information gaps, questions and answers, collaborative drama performances, group discussions and social media projects" for "interpersonal learners"; "journal performances, summarizing a text, preparing lists, describing visuals and writing an e-mail" for "linguistic learners"; "different matching activities, putting into order/reordering and transferring a text to a chart" for "logical-mathematical learners"; "singular drama performances, portfolios, note-taking and writing short notes" for "intrapersonal learners"; "solving puzzles, drawing and painting and preparing mind-maps" for "visual/spatial learners" and "discriminating between phonemes, recognizing phonemic variations and identifying interlocutor's intention" for "musical learners" (Gardner, 1999, pp. 41-43; MoNE, 2017, pp. 7-8). Analyzing the techniques mentioned in the table below, it is revealed that there is a good distribution of the learning strategies across the skills, as depicted in the 2017 ELTP. To illustrate; "memory strategies" are handled through the tasks "listening and perform/draw/put into order, matching sentences with the picture, preparing a mind-map" and the activities such as "finding specific information, identifying the gist, transferring the text to a table, taking notes, preparing a list, outlining a reading a text, summarizing a text, reordering" activate the "cognitive strategies"; "portfolios and self-assessment checklists" foster "the metacognitive strategies" and "the social strategies" are stimulated by "social media

projects and class newspaper" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 7-8; Oxford, 1990, pp. 18-21). Below are listed some samples of testing techniques proposed in the recent curriculum:

Table 6

Samples for Testing Techniques in the 2017 ELTP

Language Skills	Testing Techniques	Suggestions for Test Preparation
Reading	Finding specific information; Identifying the gist and supporting details; Intensive reading; Read and draw/paint; Transferring the text to a chart; Questions and answers	Include both bottom-up and top-down reading techniques.
Writing	Filling in a form; Describing a picture/visual/video; Writing short notes; Preparing a list; Writing a topic sentence/thesis statement; Writing a paragraph/ an essay/e-mail/	Make sure you have prepared a reliable assessment rubric to assess students. Provide a Genre (what to write), Audience (whom to write) and Purpose (why to write) for each writing assessment task.
Speaking	Collaborative or single drama performances; Discussing a picture/video; Information gap; Short presentations; Talking about a visual	Make sure you have prepared a reliable assessment rubric to assess students. Anxiety and inhibition may cause problems: Provide a relaxing atmosphere in testing.
Listening	Listen and draw/paint/match; listen and put the correct order; Match the sentences with paragraphs/ pictures; Recognizing phonemic variations, True/false/no information	Include both bottom-up and top-down listening techniques.
Integrated Skills	Summarizing a text (listening/reading or writing); Taking notes (listening and writing); Reporting an event (listening/reading and speaking)	Offer authentic or real-like tasks to promote communicative testing. Avoid offering tasks beyond students' current intellectual and cognitive maturity.
Alternative Assessment	Portfolio; Project; Creative Drama Tasks; Class Newspaper/ Social Media Projects	Encourage the inclusion of all language skills in portfolio content with equal weight and value. Note that the portfolio assessment procedure would be incomplete and thus useless without feedback and reflection.

(*Note:* Ministry of National Education. (2017). English language curriculum for primary education (grades 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8). Retrieved from http://mufredat.meb.gov.tr/ProgramDetay.aspx?PID=327.)

Another major innovation at the testing and evaluation component of the 2017 ELTP is the inclusion of the suggestions related to the assessment types. Unlike the previous program, the present curriculum provides comprehensive guidance for the assessment of four language skills and also the integration of different skills by suggesting certain testing techniques and some critical points for their preparation. Moreover, each assessment type is explained with examples and additionally, various alternative assessment choices are presented with an aim to enhance the students' learning experiences (MoNE, 2017).

McKay (2006, p. 15) proposes that an assessment procedure cannot be effective unless it fits in with the underlying theory of learning followed by the curriculum. In this regard, with an approach that testing procedure must be in conformity with the language policy of the program and in order to prevent the occurrence of "negative and harmful washback effect" (Özmen, 2012), the CEFR is the focus for the assessment and evaluation processes of the 2017 ELTP, highly focusing on "alternative, process-based testing procedures such as portfolios, projects" and the use of "self-assessment checklists" (CoE, 2001, p. 191; MoNE, 2017, p. 6). Cameron (2001, p. 235) accentuates the use of self-assessment checklists on the grounds that they enable students to be aware of the learning process more and prepare themselves accordingly and motivate them to be actively involved in their own learning journey. In the same vein, portfolios are supported by McKay (2006, p. 159) in a sense that they are the tools to record of students' growth over time enabling them to reflect on the past achievements and realize what contributes to the progress and the gradual change in their progress. Moreover, portfolios and self-assessment tools are powerful in terms of developing metacognitive strategies helping students to realize their strengths and weaknesses and monitor their learning path (Gordon, 2007, p. 209; Oxford, 1990, pp. 20-21). In addition to emphasis on the alternative assessment methods, the most suitable approach to assess the language learning for a CEFR-based curriculum fostering meaningful language use should be the application of language use tasks such as "games and drama, information gap, opinion gap, painting, drawing and talking about a picture, writing letters for real purposes", which is called "performance-based assessment" (McKay, 2006, p. 103). In this regard, it is quite obvious from the suggested assessment types in the table above that there is a meaningful connection between the nature of the program and the testing procedures held in the 2017 ELTP. Likewise, in line with the underlying theory of the language adopted in the curriculum, it is apparent that the assessment procedures are based on progressivism, promoting students to depict and judge

on the process they go through and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies they employ along the way so that they "learn how to learn" (Clark, 1987, p. 53). However, "peer evaluation", which is mentioned by Clark (1987, p. 53) as a progressivist type of assessment, is not observed in the 2017 ELTP.

Exploiting "written and oral exams, quizzes, homework assignments and projects" (MoNE, 2017, p. 6), the program proposes formal evaluation techniques in order to objectively keep a record of students' growth due to the "accountability purposes" (McKay, 2006, p. 169). The employment of both kinds of assessment is beneficial on the grounds that the needs and progress of the students are assessed to take the necessary precautions by formative assessment and the program can be evaluated and redesigned in the direction of summative information (Graves, 2000, p. 232). In line with Graves, McKay (2006, p. 112) indicates that different kinds of testing procedures should be employed to "gain the most accurate and composite picture of the students' abilities". Besides, one of the crucial concerns for planning young learners' assessment is their cognitive capabilities connected with their language development (Wolf & Butler, 2017, p. 7). Students' cognitive, social, emotional and physical development should be taken into account during the testing procedures in order to choose or create the most suitable assessment materials and to provide better feedback (McKay, 2006, p. 11). In this regard, in the present curriculum, the use of formative and summative assessment types is offered in accordance with the levels of learners. Summative testing procedures are not employed at the early stages, especially at the 2nd and 3rd grades (McKay, 2006); however, the communicative competences and the proficiency of the learners at the 4th grade and onwards are tested by a number of formative and summative testing techniques listed in the aforementioned table. Therefore, it can be stated that there is a close alignment between the intended outcomes of each grade level and the assessment types suggested for the grades. Nevertheless, the 2017 ELTP points out that teachers' discretion related to the selection of any other appropriate testing techniques is supported as long as they comply with the communicative testing philosophy (MoNE, 2017).

A noteworthy feature of the new curriculum is the inclusion of the key competences and values education with a view to keeping up with the world educational programs. The key competences are defined as "the key knowledge, skills and attitudes that are expected to equip students with the personal realization of personal and professional development and

growth, with the sole goal of societal inclusion and contribution" (MoNE, 2017, p. 5). These skills outlined by the European Commission are divided into 3 parts: "traditional skills as communication in mother tongue and foreign languages; digital skills as literacy and basic skills in math and science; horizontal skills as learning to learn, social and civic responsibility, initiative and entrepreneurship, cultural awareness and creativity"(MoNE, 2017, p. 5). The examples below prove that the key competences are integrated into themes of the recent program. In unit 10 of 5th grade, the theme is "Festivals" and the learners are provided some useful language like "Children's Day, Chinese New Year, Eid, Ramadan, Independence Day" (MoNE, 2017, p. 67), which is a sign of an attempt to include the "Cultural Awareness skill". Also, the unit 9 of the 6th grade "Saving the Planet" lists some useful language such as "we should save energy; we can use less water and electricity, we should recycle the batteries, etc." (MoNE, 2017, p. 77), referring to the "Social and Civic Responsibility skill". As for Values Education, "personal and societal beliefs and attitudes such as Awareness of Environment and Historical Heritage, Helpfulness, Family and Friendship, Sense of Justice, Self-Confidence, etc." (MoNE, 2017, p. 6) are included into the themes and also into the functions and language skills learned through the units in the syllabus of each grade. Such themes as "Environment" (MoNE, 2017, p. 88), "Friends" (MoNE, 2017, p. 26), "My family" (MoNE, 2017, p. 37) and "Chores" (MoNE, 2017, p. 98) highlighting the "Cooperation and Helpfulness" between family members can be illustrated as items of values education observed in the syllabi.

The 2017 ELTP takes into account the three descriptors of the CEFR consisting of learner autonomy, self-assessment (mentioned in the testing part) and an appreciation for cultural diversity. In line with the last descriptor of the CEFR to develop intercultural competence, the curriculum handles the cultural issues throughout syllabi (CoE, 2001; MoNE, 2007). Nevertheless, analyzing the program, it is evident that the recent curriculum underlines the importance of emphasizing the national values while at the same time introducing the target culture. To illustrate; the "Greeting" unit of the 3rd grade use some Turkish names in the function "introducing oneself" (MoNE, 2017, p. 36); in the "Nationality" theme of the 4th grade, several cities in Turkey for the function of "talking about locations" (MoNE, 2017, p. 48) are presented as useful language; the unit "Festivals" of the 5th grade (MoNE, 2017, p. 67) mentions some festivals in Turkey as well as the ones of other countries. In conclusion, it is realized that the information about the target culture is not enough for the students to have adequate knowledge of English traditions or holidays.

Congruent with the theoretical approach of the CEFR, fostering learner autonomy and problem-solving skills using learning activities and giving assignments in accordance with the development levels of students is among the objectives of the recent program. Some samples of the assignments enabling learners to monitor their own progress throughout the learning process are "students prepare a visual dictionary to show the words they know in English" (MoNE, 2017, p. 36), "students keep expanding their visual dictionary by including new vocabulary items" (MoNE, 2017, p. 69) and "students complete and reflect on their visual dictionaries" (MoNE, 2017, p. 100).

The syllabus of each grade is composed of three separate columns. In the first column, the functions standing for "communicative roles of a given form in a context of situation" (MoNE, 2017, p. 11) and useful language are introduced. The second column consists of language skills linked with the functions and useful language units. Therefore, the 2017 ELTP emphasizes the use of suggested language functions in order to achieve the objectives defined in learning outcomes. The last column is comprised of "suggested contexts, tasks and assignments" (MoNE, 2017, p. 15) providing learners meaningful situations to practice the functions, useful language and language skills in the previous sections. In addition to the samples of useful language given in each syllabus, the recent curriculum offers a comprehensive list of useful language units associated with a specific function (MoNE, 2017, pp. 16-23). The curriculum accentuates the use of these suggestions in that such diversity enables teachers to address various learning styles and strategies. Nevertheless, the employment of any other expressions consistent with the functions is supported by the new curriculum.

In the instructional design of the curriculum, three learning stages were formed with regard to the "language uses, functions and learning materials" (MoNE, 2017, p. 9). McKay (2006, p. 177) claims that "effective programs give children early opportunities for practice of routine language and basic language patterns, but also for imaginative play, action rhymes and songs, response to narrative texts and participation in narrative and simple description". In this regard, developing listening and speaking skills from the earliest stages (at the 2nd, the 3rd and the 4th-grade levels) plays a key role in the language learning process. When the program is analyzed, it is figured out that the learning outcomes are based on only listening and speaking skills at these stages. Accordingly, learners are encouraged to participate in game-based or hands-on activities derived from authentic

sources and requiring real communication between peers and the teacher (MoNE, 2017). For example; within the syllabus of the 2nd grade, unit 8 proposes the use of "drawing and coloring", "making puppets", "role-play" activities (MoNE, 2017, p. 32) and unit 1 in the 3rd grade suggests activities such as "arts and crafts", "chants and songs" and "role-play" (MoNE, 2017, p. 36). The new program also highlights the importance of using cognates, which are one of the means of building vocabulary by taking the advantage of students' first language at these stages (August, Carlo, & Snow, 2005). Unit 1 of the 2nd grade advises the use of some cognates like "ambulance, balloon, doctor, electrics, television, football, hotel, internet and lemon" in order to create a smooth transition for students from familiar to unfamiliar (MoNE, 2017, p. 25). Reading and writing are the skills added to the syllabi in higher grades pursuant to the progress of the learners. Introduction of "short texts and controlled writing activities" (MoNE, 2017, p. 9) in parallel with the development of learners' language skills start with the 5th grade, which is stage 2, and onwards. At the third stage, comprising the 7th and the 8th grades, "reading simple texts and writing short and sample stories" (MoNE, 2017, p. 9) are introduced to the learners having the required proficiency for the literacy issues. Analyzing the new program, it is noticed that the 2nd and the 3rd learning stages have such learning outcomes as "students will be able to read picture stories, conversations and cartoons about personal information" (MoNE, 2017, p. 58), "students will be able to understand simple texts about daily routines and preferences" (MoNE, 2017, p. 84), "students will be able to write simple descriptions of scientific achievements in a short paragraph" (MoNE, 2017, p. 99). In the new curriculum, the structural elements of English are taught implicitly while the learners develop communicative skills. In a communicative approach, grammar is generally taught through language functions including several forms, which is a necessity for real language use (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). By examining the syllabi, it is obvious that the recent program suggests a variety of functions including different forms in parallel with the levels of students. To illustrate; in unit 1 of the 4th grade, the function "greeting and saluting" provides language forms like "Can/may I…?" (MoNE, 2017, p. 47) or the function "giving explanations and reasons" suggests the use of forms such as "I think /guess/ believe/ suppose", "In my opinion/ to me" (MoNE, 2017, p. 97). Creative language use is promoted with a communicative approach to grammar in which the linguistic items are linked with specific communicative purposes so that the students realize the relation

between form and the functions and use the correct item to convey their messages (Nunan, 2013, p. 71).

As for the instructional materials, the 2017 ELTP provides 10 sample units comprising of interrelated themes for each grade. Therefore; it can be stated that the recent curriculum is theme-based, also known as content-based (McKay 2006, p. 256). It is widely acclaimed that theme-based teaching enables learners to be motivated for learning since they have the chance to practice the target language in meaningful and relevant contexts when the language and the content are integrated through carefully selected materials. Besides, through the content-based instruction, language acts as a tool to learn the relevant content as the learners are provided a number of interesting contexts for learning the language, which shifts the learners' focus from form to the meaning and enables learners to generate meaning by relating the new input to what is known before (Alptekin, Erçetin, & Bayyurt, 2007). Investigating the syllabi, it is figured out that familiar themes to young learners such as family, toys and games, pets, cartoon characters are accentuated in the program in order to relate the language learning to the daily life of the students. It is also revealed that throughout the curriculum, the themes are interrelated so that the new concepts are built on previously acquired knowledge and they are sequenced from students' immediate environment to far in consistent with their age and development levels. Below are listed some samples as evidence for the interrelation of the themes provided throughout the program and their developmental appropriateness for each grade level:

Table 7

The Interrelation of the Themes throughout the Syllabi

Grades	Themes about nature	Grades	Themes about the places in the city
3rd	Nature	3rd	In My City
6th	Saving the Planet	5th	My Town
7th	Environment	6th	Downtown
8th	Natural Forces	7th	Public Buildings

The new curriculum states that one of the innovations made in the new revision is the inclusion of teacher resource containing "lesson plans, printed handouts, flashcards, and audio-visual materials together with textbooks" (MoNE, 2017, p. 10), particularly at stage 1 in order to prevent some teachers' habit to carry out the tasks in the conventional

textbooks in a way to minimize their communicative functions, which contradicts with the nature of the program.

It is also found out that the syllabi are designed in a cyclical format in which the content is constructed in a way to repeat the functions and specific language units a few times in different units throughout all the grades, and so the skills and the outcomes, as well. Ornstein and Hunkins (2018, p. 183) call this kind of design as "vertical organization" and accentuate the representation of each subject matter at a more complex or difficult level. Some cyclical content samples from the recent curriculum in accordance with the levels of learners are presented in the table below:

Table 8

Samples for the Cyclical Content in Similar Themes

Grades	Themes	Functions	Useful Language	Outcomes
2nd	Friends	Asking someone's name	What's your name? My name is….	Students will be able to ask questions to learn someone's name.
4th	My friends	Describing people	What does s/he look like? He has dark hair.	Students will be able to ask and answer questions about other people's physical characteristics.
8th	Friendship	Accepting and refusing Apologizing/Giving explanations and reasons	Would you like to come over tomorrow? Sure, that sounds fun.	Students will be able to structure a talk to make simple inquiries, give explanations and reasons.

In addition, below are illustrated the cyclical organization of functions, useful language and outcomes even in different themes throughout the grades:

Table 9

Samples for the Cyclical Content in Different Themes

Grades	Themes	Functions	Useful Language	Outcomes
2nd	At the Playground	Making simple suggestions	Let's dance/jump/play chess/run/walk.	Students will be able to make suggestions in a simple way.
3rd	Feelings	Making simple suggestions	Let's dance/play/run/walk.	Students will be able to make simple suggestions.
5th	Health	Making simple suggestions	You should stay in bed/have a rest/visit a doctor.	Students will be able to understand simple suggestions concerning illnesses.
6th	Saving the Planet	Giving and responding to simple suggestions	What should we do to save our world? We should use less water/recycle batteries/unplug the TV.	Students will be able to give each other suggestions about the protection of the environment.
7th	Celebrations	Accepting and refusing simple suggestions	Would you like some cake? Yes, please. Just a little.	Students will be able to make suggestions.

In conclusion, it can be inferred that the 2017 ELTP is grounded on "Progressivism", one of the "educational value systems" proposed by Clark (1987, p. 64), supporting the process-driven curriculum designs in which the subject matter isn't predetermined and the whole learning process is composed of meaningful activities providing natural learning experiences for the learners with different learning styles to interact and to build skills on learning how to learn

Syllabi Analysis

In this part, within the criteria in the table below, each syllabus (2nd -8th) was analyzed descriptively with regard to the conformity to the specifications of the 2017 ELTP.

Table 10

The Checklist for the Syllabi Analysis

Themes	Vocabulary
• Alignment with the principles and descriptors of the CEFR • Alignment with the objective of the syllabus • Inclusion of Key Competences and Values • Appropriateness for students' levels • Appropriateness for students' interests • Appropriateness for students' needs • Motivating • Diversity for demonstrating the use of target language in different contexts	• Compliance with the themes • Compliance with the functions • Compliance with the outcomes • Appropriateness for students' levels • Appropriateness for students' interests • Appropriateness for students' needs • Organization • Adequacy of vocabulary load • Diversity for enhancing learning the target language • Pronunciation practice
Functions	**Outcomes**
• Alignment with the principles and descriptors of the CEFR • Alignment with the objective of the syllabus • Compliance with the themes • Compliance with the outcomes • Appropriateness for students' level • Appropriateness for students' interests • Appropriateness for students' needs • Appropriateness for using various teaching methods • Organization • Diversity for enabling students to acquire the skills	• Alignment with the principles and descriptors of the CEFR • Alignment with the objective of the syllabus • Compliance with the themes • Compliance with the functions • Appropriateness for students' level • Appropriateness for students' needs • Organization • Integration of skills appropriate to the learning stages • Clear and explicit statements • Achievability

The 2nd Grade Syllabus

In the 2nd grade, the main goal of the syllabus is stated as developing a positive attitude in the young learners towards learning a foreign language. Congruent with the objective of the syllabus, the themes of the 2nd grade are composed of basic vocabulary that is very familiar and interesting to the students. The themes, respectively, are "Words, Friends, In the classroom, Numbers, Colors, At the Playground, Body Parts, Pets, Fruits and Animals" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 25-34). Snow, Wet and Genesee (1989) supports the use of thematic units for young learner classes by claiming that the progress of young learners in terms of cognition and language is dependent on each other as the child figures out the world via

language, which is a natural occurrence of first language acquisition. In this regard, the cognitive and the language development should be brought together through the content-based teaching and learning processes in the second language acquisition, as well. In addition, since increasing motivation to the target language is among the objectives of the 2nd grade syllabus (MoNE, 2017), the theme-based teaching boosts learners intrinsic motivation to learn by providing interesting and purposeful topics that they can encounter in their real-life, which also helps to focus on the meaning rather than form (Alptekin et al., 2007). As can be understood from the topics, the themes attempt to build a bridge between language learning and the students' daily lives.

Based on the CEFR, the targeted level of language proficiency of the 2nd grade, specified as A1 (Breakthrough), is clearly defined (CoE, 2001; MoNE, 2017, p. 24). According to the CEFR (CoE, 2001, p. 24), learners at A1 can

> "understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type; can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has and can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help".

Therefore, it can be asserted that the themes are consistent with the levels and needs of the students. It is also clear from the themes that the syllabus offers diversity in order to demonstrate the use of target language in different contexts, which is compatible with the theory of the recent curriculum promoting language use in an authentic communicative environment.

As for the inclusion of the key competences into the themes of the 2nd-grade syllabus, it is discovered that none of the skills were embedded in the syllabus. However, the 2nd theme "Friends" may refer to one of the values "Family and Friendship" (MoNE, 2017, p. 6). It can be concluded that the inclusion of the key competences and values remain limited within the 2nd-grade syllabus. Nevertheless, the curriculum mentions the difficulty of key competences and values integration into an English program based on the CEFR due to the fact that teaching language skills and the development of communicative competence are the ultimate goals of the language programs (MoNE, 2017, p. 5).

The 2nd-grade syllabus consists of 34 functions varying by themes and enabling students to acquire the related skills and outcomes specified in each theme and the teachers to employ different teaching methods. In this regard, it would not be wrong to state that the outcomes and the functions are coherent. For example; one of the listening outcomes is articulated as

"students will be able to follow short, simple and oral instructions about the names and locations of pet animals" for the function "talking about locations of things" in the 8th theme "Pets" (MoNE, 2017, p. 32) and the 9th theme "Fruits" introduces the function "expressing likes and dislikes" with a speaking outcome "students will be able to talk about the fruits they like" (MoNE, 2017, p. 33). In addition, it is revealed that the functions are in compliance with the themes of the syllabus. To illustrate; the 4th theme "Numbers" covers the functions such as "expressing quantity, "making simple inquiries (asking sb's age)" and "naming numbers" (MoNE, 2017, p. 28) and the 6th theme "At the Playground" (MoNE, 2017, p. 30) includes the function "making simple suggestions (Let's jump/ run/ hide and seek/ slide/…)".

When the functions of the 2nd-grade syllabus are examined, it is observed that they comply with the A1 language proficiency level of the CEFR, interests and needs of the students. Moreover, it is obvious that language practice is associated with the daily lives of the students, which is a sign of agreement with the syllabus objectives. Some examples of functions from the syllabus are: "Greeting and meeting people" (MoNE, 2017, p. 26); "making simple suggestions" (MoNE, 2017, p. 30); "talking about possessions" (MoNE, 2017, p. 31); "talking about locations of things" (MoNE, 2017, p. 32) and "expressing abilities" (MoNE, 2017, p. 34). These are also evidence for the consistency of functions with the principles of the CEFR on the grounds that they provide a natural communicative setting in which English is introduced as a medium of interaction, rather than a course to be accomplished in the school (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Richards, 2006).

A cyclical organization is observed in the design of the syllabus functions, by which the same topic, functions or structures can be studied more than once in order to ensure a better repetition and retrieval. The key factor here is that each time, the subject matter should be represented at a more complex or difficult level (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018, p. 183). The importance of recycling in language learning is accentuated by Celce-Murcia (1991, p. 291) in that "the different aspects of form, meaning and pragmatics of a structure may be acquired at different stages of interlanguage development". Therefore, one aspect of a form should be introduced periodically to provide effective reinforcement and elaboration. Below are presented some cyclical function samples from the 2nd-grade syllabus:

Table 11

Samples of the Functions and Themes in the Cyclical Format at the 2nd Grade

Functions	Themes
Giving and responding to simple instructions; Telling someone what to do	3, 9
Expressing likes and dislikes	5, 9
Naming numbers	4, 5

With reference to the learning outcomes specified under each skill, it is found out that in accordance with the statements related to the dominant skills at each grade level in the 2017 ELTP, the 2nd-grade syllabus, which is stage 1, focuses on the listening and speaking skills. The outcomes of 16 listening skills and 23 speaking skills are provided in the syllabus, which is evident that the focus is on communicative aspects of the language. In the interaction part of the "qualitative aspects of spoken language use" of the CEFR, it is indicated that an A1 level student can "ask and answer questions about personal details. Can interact in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetition, rephrasing and repair" (CoE, 2001, p. 29). Accordingly, the outcomes are in compliance with the needs and levels of the students and stated clearly by using some expressions like 'simple, short, in a simple way'. Some examples of outcomes from the syllabus are "students will able to introduce themselves in a simple way" (MoNE, 2017, p. 26); "students will be able to understand short and simple suggestions" (MoNE, 2017, p. 30); "students will be able to follow short, simple and oral instructions" (MoNE, 2017, p. 33) and "students will be able to talk about the animals they like/dislike" (MoNE, 2017, p. 34). In this regard, it would be appropriate to state that the outcomes are achievable for the learners of this learning stage.

The other sign of compliance with the communicative approach is that the outcomes of each skill equip the students to use the language in daily-life communication. To illustrate; "students will be able to ask questions to learn someone's name" (MoNE, 2017, p. 26); "students will be able to express and respond to thanks" (MoNE, 2017, p. 27); "students will be able to talk about the fruits they like" (MoNE, 2017, p. 33) and "students will be able to understand common expressions about abilities" (MoNE, 2017, p. 34).

One of the critical points to build successful learning is to choose and grade the objectives carefully (Cameron, 2001, p. 29). In this regard, compatible with the repetition of functions

74

in the syllabus, it is seen that the outcomes are cyclically repeated and reintroduced at a more complex level and they are congruent with the themes, as well. In order to provide a better understanding, the elements of the content should be redeveloped in more depth and breadth and presented in a spiral manner (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018, p. 186). Some examples are illustrated in the table below:

Table 12

Samples of the Outcomes in the Cyclical Format at the 2nd Grade

Function	Themes	Useful Language	Learning Outcomes
Giving and responding to simple instructions	3- In the Classroom	Open the window/Sit down/Paint the ball.	Students will be able to tell others how to do things in the classroom.
	9- Fruits	Touch the melon/Show the apples/Give the banana.	Students will be able to tell others to do things with fruits by pointing out them.
Naming numbers	4- Numbers	Numbers from 1-10	Students will be able to express numbers from 1 to 10 and quantifies of things.
	5- Colors	How many red crayons are there?-Three.	Students will be able to name the colors of things and express numbers and quantities of things.

Developing an effective vocabulary is essential to learn a foreign language at the earliest levels and young learners are able to learn the foreign vocabulary by engaging in the communication activities in the classroom (Cameron, 2001, p. 72). In this respect, 168 words comprised of 121 nouns, 27 verbs, 2 adjectives and 2 adverbs to be taught are given under the functions in the syllabus. The rest of the words consist of 16 basic utterances such as "good morning, you are welcome, thank you" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 26-27). Considering the specification of learning stage 1 (MoNE, 2017), it is thought that the vocabulary load, all composed of concrete nouns easy to acquire, is developmentally appropriate for the students at this age and provides enough variety to enhance the target language use. It is also found out that the vocabulary is well distributed across the themes. Introduction of the vocabulary starts with 44 cognates like "ambulance, cake, doctor, picnic" in the 1st theme and continues with some basic verbs in forms of imperative or suggestions such as "open, close, sit down, stand up, color the picture, let's dance, let's

walk" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 27-30), with an aim of making a smooth transition from familiar to the unfamiliar (August et al., 2005). In the "self-assessment grid" framed by the CEFR (CoE, 2001, p. 26), it is stated that students at A1 level "can recognize familiar words and very basic phrases concerning oneself, family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly" for the listening skill and in the "qualitative aspects of spoken language use" (CoE, 2001, p. 29), it is indicated that an A1 level student "has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations". With regard to this, analyzing the words and phrases in the 2nd-grade syllabus, it is seen that the vocabulary accords with the levels, interests and needs of the students and with the themes, functions and outcomes, as well. However, any pronunciation practice related to the given vocabulary is not observed in the syllabus.

Below are presented the conformity of vocabulary with those components of the syllabus:

Table 13

The Conformity of the Vocabulary with the Content at the 2nd Grade

Themes	Functions	Outcomes	Vocabulary
6- At the Playground	Making simple suggestions	Students will be able to make suggestions in a simple way.	Let's dance/jump/play hide and seek/run/slide/sing.
8- Pets	Talking about locations of things	Students will be able to say where the animals are by pointing out them.	Bird/cat/dog/rabbit/fish /turtle In/on/under

The 3rd Grade Syllabus

The 3rd grade program is indicated to be based on the attainments of the 2nd grade and the primary objective of the syllabus is specified as enabling students to use the target language in and out of the classroom by extending the 2nd-grade content. The themes used to achieve the attainments of the 3rd grade are "Greeting, My Family, People I Love, Feelings, Toys and Games, My House, In My City, Transportation, Weather and Nature" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 36-45). A theme-based syllabus provides the students a range of meaningful contexts in which the natural use of the target language, both written and

spoken, is presented so that they can learn the new vocabulary items easily (Cameron, 2001, p. 72). Through the themes, it is aimed to associate the basic vocabulary to be taught related to objects, places, people and animals that are important in students' daily lives with the English phonics (MoNE, 2017). Cameron (2001, p. 80) proposes that "when foreign language words are learned, they are likely to be mapped on to first language words and to thereby enter schemas that have already been built up". It is apparent from the themes that the syllabus aims to link the students' daily life with the themes. The themes of a young learner syllabus should be selected from appealing and familiar topics that they encounter in their immediate environment so that the newly introduced items are understood and the desired level of language proficiency is reached smoothly (Holderness as cited in Bayyurt & Alptekin, 2000). Similar to the 2nd-grade syllabus, the targeted level of language proficiency is designated as A1 (Breakthrough) and explained plainly at the beginning of the 3rd-grade program (CoE, 2001; MoNE, 2017, p. 35). It can be indicated that the themes align with the levels and needs of the students and the contexts are varied in order to show the natural language use in different communicative settings sequenced from the near environment to far.

Investigating the 3rd-grade syllabus, it is revealed that none of the skills in terms of the key competences integrated into the themes. Nevertheless, the 2nd and the 10th themes "My family" and "Nature" can be respectively associated with the values "Family and Friendship" and "Awareness of Environment" (MoNE, 2017, p. 6). Therefore, it is noticed that there is still an inadequacy of involvement of the competences and values in the 3rd-grade program, as well.

31 functions are provided in the 3rd-grade syllabus varying by themes. It is obvious that the functions are composed of several communicative roles through which the teachers can implement different teaching methods and help students to gain the related skills and outcomes determined in each theme with a rich variety of situations. In this respect, it would be appropriate to state that the outcomes and the functions are consistent. To illustrate; one of the speaking outcomes is specified as "students will be able to talk about physical qualities of individuals" for the function "describing characters/people" in the 3rd theme "People I Love" (MoNE, 2017, p. 38) and the 8th theme "Transportation" proposes the function "asking and giving information about transportation" with a listening outcome "students will be able to recognize the types of vehicles" (MoNE, 2017, p. 43). Moreover,

it is figured out that the functions are in accordance with the themes of the syllabus. For example; the 1st theme "Greeting" includes the functions such as "greeting and saluting", "introducing oneself" (MoNE, 2017, p. 36) and the 10th theme "Nature" (MoNE, 2017, p. 45) offers the function "talking about nature and animals".

Studying on the functions of the 3rd-grade program, it is found out that they conform to the A1 language proficiency level of the CEFR, interests and needs of the students. Furthermore, it is apparent that the emphasis of the CEFR on actual language use linked to the students' daily lives is exactly accentuated in the functions. Some examples of functions from the syllabus are "greeting and saluting" (MoNE, 2017, p. 36); "expressing feelings" (MoNE, 2017, p. 39); "describing sizes and shapes" (MoNE, 2017, p. 41); "describing weather" (MoNE, 2017, p. 44) and "talking about nature and animals" (MoNE, 2017, p. 45). As is understood from the functions, a range of authentic situations in which the students use English to interact and convey the message is offered by the 3rd-grade syllabus, which is another proof of the alignment of functions with the principles of the CEFR (Linse, 2005, p. 56).

The functions of the 3rd-grade syllabus are ordered in a cyclical manner in that elaborating each time; the target language items are covered a few times in different themes. Such a design enables the teachers to control the recycling of materials easily and gives students who do not understand the subject matter a second chance to keep up at the next phase (Nation & Macalister, 2010, p. 83). Some cyclical function samples from the 3rd-grade syllabus are presented in the table below:

Table 14

Samples of the Functions and the Themes in the Cyclical Format at the 3rd Grade

Functions	Themes
Talking about locations of things	6, 7, 8
Introducing oneself; Introducing family members	1, 2
Naming numbers; Expressing quantity	1, 5

As for the learning outcomes, it can be stated that congruent with the primary skills defined for stage 1 in the curriculum, the 3rd-grade program stresses on the listening and speaking skills. It is quite obvious that communication in the target language is encouraged with the

outcomes of 24 speaking skills and 22 listening skills defined in the 3rd-grade syllabus. Similar to the 2nd-grade syllabus, in agreement with the needs and levels of the students, the outcomes are attainable and explained clearly by using some expressions like 'basic, simple, short and in a simple way'. Some examples of outcomes from the syllabus are "students will able to recognize the basic expressions of greeting and saluting" (MoNE, 2017, p. 36); "students will be able to greet each other in a simple way" (MoNE, 2017, p. 36); "students will be able to make simple suggestions" (MoNE, 2017, p. 39) and "students will be able to follow short, simple and oral instructions about the types of buildings and parts of a city" (MoNE, 2017, p. 42).

Examining the 3rd-grade syllabus, it is also noticed that each outcome attempts to develop communicative competence by which the students can interact in the target language in and out of the classroom. To illustrate; "students will be able to talk about abilities" (MoNE, 2017, p. 38), "students will be able to talk about where buildings and other places are on a city map" (MoNE, 2017, p. 42); "students will be able to talk about the weather conditions" (MoNE, 2017, p. 44); "students will be able to talk about the animals they like or dislike and the nature" (MoNE, 2017, p. 45).

The objectives of a course should comply with the goals of the curriculum and they should be clearly stated so as to provide teachers to determine the most appropriate content and activities for better teaching and learning and to perform an effective evaluation (Richards, 2001). In line with the emphasis of the 2017 ELTP on real-life language use, the outcomes of the 3rd-grade syllabus promote using the target language within actual communication contexts.

A cyclical approach is observed in the design of outcomes compatible with the themes, allowing for reintroducing the items in a more detailed manner and providing a better realization of the skills (Graves, 2000, p. 164).

Below are illustrated some related samples:

Table 15

Samples of the Outcomes in the Cyclical Format at the 3rd Grade

Function	Themes	Useful Language	Learning Outcomes
Talking about locations of things	6- My House	Where is…? It is in the bedroom/on the bed/under table…	Students will be able to ask about and tell the location of things in a house.
	8- Transportation	Where is the boat? It is on the sea/here/there.	Students will be able to talk about where vehicles are.
Naming numbers; Expressing quantity	1- Greeting	Numbers from 1-20	Students will be able to say the numbers from 1 to 20.
	5- Toys and Games	How many kites are there? / There are three balls.	Students will be able to talk about the quantity of things.

In relation to the learnability of a word, MacKey (as cited in Tabari, 2013, p. 871) states that "the similarity of the L2 words to its L1 equivalent make them easy to learn" and "concrete words are easier to learn than abstract ones". The 3rd grade syllabus proposes 160 words consisting of 80 concrete nouns, 24 verbs, 4 adverbs and 37 adjectives such as "big/small, old/young, happy/unhappy, angry, tired and surprised" added to the syllabus for the first time. The other words to be taught are 15 basic phrases such as "good evening, have a nice weekend, take care, see you soon, sorry about that, right here, over there" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 36-42). Analyzing the vocabulary, it is figured out that the 3rd-grade syllabus includes the cognates as in the 2nd-grade program. Totally 15 cognates such as "train, helicopter, bank, market, cousin, dance, energetic, shampoo and garage" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 37-43) are provided. It is observed in the syllabus that the vocabulary teaching is ordered in a way that the verbs are taught subsequent to the nouns and concrete adjectives. With the introduction of adjectives in addition to the nouns and verbs, the syllabus increases the variety in the target language items and so facilitates the language use in parallel with the grade levels. Therefore, it can be inferred that the vocabulary load accords with the level of the students at stage 1, which is A1 according to the CEFR (CoE, 2001). In this respect, it can be stated that the vocabulary complies with the levels, interests and needs of the students and with the themes, functions and outcomes, as well. Like in the 2nd-grade program, the 3rd-grade syllabus does not suggest any pronunciation practice related to the given vocabulary.

Below are exemplified the consistency of vocabulary with those components of the syllabus:

Table 16

The Conformity of the Vocabulary with the Content at the 3rd Grade

Themes	Functions	Outcomes	Vocabulary
4- Feelings	Expressing feelings	Students will be able to talk about personal emotions/feelings.	Angry/energetic/tired/happy/ sad/surprised
9- Weather	Describing the weather	Students will be able to talk about the weather conditions.	Cold/cloudy/freezing/hot/ rainy/wet

The 4th Grade Syllabus

Within the syllabus of the 4th grade, it is principally intended to increase self-confidence, motivation and positive attitudes towards learning English of the students with the tasks and activities appropriate for their interests, physical, social and cognitive developments. To this end, the themes of the 4th grade syllabus are comprised of familiar and engaging topics such as "Classroom Rules, Nationality, Cartoon Characters, Free Time, My Day, Fun with Science, Jobs, My Clothes, My Friends and Food and Drinks" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 47-56). Theme-based teaching allows students to link the words, functions and forms with a specific topic, which helps memory and comprehension (Scott & Ytreberg, 1990, p. 84). In this regard, the 4th-grade syllabus also aims at teaching the related vocabulary with their correct pronunciation by means of the themes. As is clear from the variety of the real-life contexts presented through the themes, the 4th-grade program adopts a constructivist approach by which the students can transfer the things learned in the classroom to out of class experiences. Task-based instruction enriched with role-plays and simulations and the cooperation are the key principles of the classrooms dominated by such an approach. Students interact with their peers and the teacher; learn how to deal with the language problems by cooperating and working in small groups and to choose the correct language in different contexts provided in the classroom (Nunan, 2013, p. 75).

Like the 3rd grade syllabus, A1 (Breakthrough) is the targeted level of language proficiency and it is clearly defined at the beginning of the syllabus. Based on the A1 description of the

CEFR, it can be indicated that the selected themes correlate with the levels and needs of the students (CoE, 2001; MoNE, 2017, p. 46).

As regards integrating the values and the skills of key competences into the themes, the 2nd unit "Nationality" can be associated with the skill "Cultural Awareness" and the value "Patriotism" as the unit provides some useful language items in terms of the regions and cities of Turkey and functions teaching different countries and nationalities. Likewise, the 9th theme "My Friends" can refer to the value "Family and Friendship" (MoNE, 2017, p. 6). Once again, it is discovered that the inclusion of key competences and the values are inadequate within the themes, which is thought to arise from the difficulty of integrating such skills into an English curriculum based on developing language skills and communicative competences, already stated in the related part of the 2017 ELTP (MoNE, 2017, p. 5).

Varying by themes, the 4th-grade syllabus suggests 33 functions creating a classroom environment in which several teaching methods can be employed and actual language interaction is encouraged. Studying the functions, it is apparent that they assist to make the aims and outcomes of syllabus attainable. For example; the listening outcome "students will be able to understand short and clear utterances about permission" serves for the function "asking for permission" in the 1st theme "Classroom Rules" (MoNE, 207, p. 47) and the 8th theme "My Clothes" presents the function "describing the weather (expressing basic needs)" with a speaking outcome "students will be able to ask and answer simple questions about weather conditions and clothing items in simple conversations" (MoNE, 2017, p. 54). As is quite clear from the examples, the functions are in alignment with the themes of the syllabus, as well. To illustrate more; the 2nd theme "Nationality" introduces the functions such as "identifying countries and nationalities" (MoNE, 2017, p. 48), the 5th theme "My Day" gives the function "talking about daily routines" (MoNE, 2017, p. 51) and the 7th theme "Jobs" includes the function "describing what people do and expressing what people like" (MoNE, 2017, p. 53). Therefore, it can be concluded that the functions are compatible with the real-life language use principle and A1 language proficiency level of the CEFR, as well as the interests and needs of the students.

The organization of the functions in the 4th-grade syllabus is cyclical with an aim of reintroducing the subject matter learned in more detail by another skill or technique and in

a different context (Graves, 2000, p. 138). Below are illustrated some cyclical function samples from the 4th-grade syllabus:

Table 17

Samples of the Functions and Themes in the Cyclical Format at the 4th Grade

Functions	Themes
Making simple requests	1, 8
Telling someone what to do; Giving and responding to simple instructions	1, 6
Talking about possessions	3, 9

The 4th-grade syllabus defines 24 outcomes for speaking skill and 21 outcomes for listening skill, which complies with the focal skills of stage 1 depicted by the 2017 ELTP. Examining each outcome, it would not be wrong to say that they are feasible and consistent with the needs of students in stage 1. Congruent with the A1 level (CoE, 2001), the 4th-grade syllabus defines the outcomes with some expressions like 'simple, short, clear, basic and brief'. It is also quite evident that actual language use is promoted by the intended outcomes. Some examples of outcomes from the syllabus are "students will able to deliver a simple, brief speech about abilities with an initial preparation" (MoNE, 2017, p. 49); "students will be able to understand short oral texts about weather conditions and clothing" (MoNE, 2017, p. 54); "students will be able to talk about possessions" (MoNE, 2017, p. 55) and "students will be able to talk about their basic needs and feelings" (MoNE, 2017, p. 56).

Similar to the repetition of the themes, the outcomes are recycled more in-depth in different units in the 4th-grade syllabus. Some related examples are demonstrated in the table below:

Table 18

Samples of the Outcomes in the Cyclical Format at the 4th Grade

Function	Themes	Useful Language	Learning Outcomes
Making simple requests	1- Classroom Rules	Give me the book, please. Say that again, please.	Students will be able to make requests by using simple utterances.
	8- My Clothes	Can I borrow your umbrella?	Students will be able to make simple requests about borrowing.
Talking about possessions	2- Cartoon Characters	This is her/his/my guitar. These are his/her/your books.	Students will be able to talk about their own and others' possessions.
	9- My Friends	I have brown hair. He has curly hair. Her/his legs are very long.	Students will be able to ask and answer questions about other people's physical characteristics.

Counting the number of the words to be taught, it is discovered that in parallel with the grade levels, the present curriculum increases the vocabulary load under the condition that it complies with the targeted proficiency level, which is still A1 at the 4th grade (CoE, 2001). The learners at primary level are likely to easily learn the basic level words during the introduction of the new concepts (Cameron, 2001, p. 81). Accordingly, it is revealed that the nouns to be taught are still concrete and include 17 cognates such as "salad, puzzle, coffee, piano, actor, pilot, doctor" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 47-56). 212 words including 115 nouns, 63 verbs and 20 adjectives are aimed to teach by the 4th-grade syllabus. Besides, 11 basic expressions such as "sure, of course, here you are, pardon me, maybe later" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 47-56) are included in the useful language part. It is also discovered that 3 adverbs, which are "slowly, now and later" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 50-56) are introduced in the syllabus. Consequently, it can be inferred that the 4th-grade program has a wide range of vocabulary congruent with the levels, interests and needs of the students and with the themes, functions and outcomes, as well. However, any pronunciation suggestions related to the given vocabulary aren't observed in the 4th-grade syllabus.

In the table below, the harmony between the vocabulary and the other components of the program is illustrated:

Table 19

The Conformity of the Vocabulary with the Content at the 4th Grade

Themes	Functions	Outcomes	Vocabulary
2- Nationality	Identifying countries and nationalities	Students will be able to talk about nations and nationalities.	America/American; British/Britain; Turkey/Turkish; North/south/east/west
7- Fun with Science	Giving and responding to simple instructions	Students will be able to give short and basic instructions.	Plant/shake/freeze/melt/mix Experiment/science Bottle/glass

The 5th Grade Syllabus

In line with the theory adopted in the general curriculum and the principles of the CEFR, the 5th-grade syllabus focuses on fostering communicative competence and language use in actual interactions. In order to encourage students to maintain a positive attitude towards the target language, it is taught through the tasks and activities such as "games, drawing and painting tasks, role-plays, art-crafts, chants and songs, storytelling" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 58-67). The primary goal of the syllabus is to increase students' interest in learning the target language and enable them to use the language in real life. The students should be exposed to different kinds of input in various contexts as it facilitates the understanding and learning the language even if it is over the students' levels, which is defined by Krashen as "comprehensible input" (Krashen, as cited in Linse, 2005, p. 13). To this end, the themes of the syllabus are composed of several interesting topics for this age group such as "Hello, My Town, Games and Hobbies, My Daily Routine, Movies, Party Time, Fitness, The Animal Shelter and Festivals" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 58-67). Only the 5th unit "Health", may be criticized for not attracting the interests of this age group as it offers some vocabulary such as "backache, faint, illness, sore throat and so on" (MoNE, 2017, p. 62).

To teach the correct pronunciation of the related vocabulary through these themes is also within the aims of the syllabus. Handling the functions with a communicative approach through the visual, audial and audiovisual materials is among the goals of the program. The context in which the functions are presented is planned to be composed of "cartoons, posters, realia, stories, maps, illustrations, songs, postcards, lists and videos" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 58-67) to attract the students' attention. The syllabus of the 5th grade, stated as

the stage 2 by the MoNE (2017), explicitly defines the desired level of language proficiency as A1 (Breakthrough) based on the CEFR (CoE, 2001). Nevertheless, reading and writing activities, which are implemented at the word level in the previous syllabi, are upgraded to the sentence level in a limited way (MoNE, 2017). Thus, it can be asserted that the themes and tasks of the syllabus accord with the levels and needs of the students.

Mentioned as a challenging attempt for an English curriculum by the MoNE (2017), the inclusion of the key competences and the values is restricted at the 5th-grade syllabus, as well. When the program is analyzed, it is seen that "Cultural Awareness", one of the key competences, was included in the syllabus through the 10th theme "Festivals" introducing the national and religious holidays in Turkey and the Chinese Year as well (MoNE, 2017, p. 67), through the 1st theme "Hello" teaching the countries and nationalities (MoNE, 2017, p. 58) and through the activities demonstrating some touristic places in Turkey in the 2nd theme "My Town" (MoNE, 2017, p. 59). In addition, through the assignments given such as "keeping their own dictionaries and reflecting on them" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 58-67), it is obvious that the syllabus aims to foster "learning to learn", to give them a chance to take their own learning responsibilities and to be aware of their own progress (CoE, 2001), which is another key competence mentioned in the 2017 ELTP. To this respect, it is one of the evidence that the syllabus serves for learner autonomy as well. However, when the themes of the 5th grade are examined, no values are observed.

Analyzing the functions, it can be stated that they lead students to the daily-life language use in keeping with the A1 language proficiency level of the CEFR, as well as the interests and needs of the students. That is to say, in accordance with the stages divided into 3 by MoNE (2017), it is found out that load of the functions is intensified in this grade. 47 functions useful for real-life communication and the employment of different teaching methods are proposed in the 5th-grade syllabus. All the functions cater for students' needs to reach the intended outcomes. To illustrate; the listening outcome "students will be able to understand simple, oral texts about hobbies, likes/dislikes and abilities" is supplied for the function "expressing ability and inability, likes and dislikes" in the 3rd theme "Games and Hobbies" (MoNE, 2017, p. 60) and the 7th theme "Party Time" consists of the function "expressing obligation" with a speaking outcome "students will be able to use utterances to express obligation" (MoNE, 2017, p. 64). These examples are also evidence for the consistency of the functions with the themes of the 5th-grade program. To exemplify more; the 2nd theme "My Daily Routine" presents the function "describing what people do

regularly" (MoNE, 2017, p. 61), the 6th theme "Movies" offers the function "making simple inquiries about the movies" (MoNE, 2017, p. 63) and the 10th theme "Festivals" includes the function "describing general events and repeated actions" (MoNE, 2017, p. 67). The cyclical procedure is followed in the introduction of the functions in the 5th-grade syllabus as in the former syllabi. The table below demonstrates some cyclical function samples from the 5th-grade syllabus:

Table 20

Samples of the Functions and Themes in the Cyclical Format at the 5th Grade

Functions	Units
Expressing likes and dislikes	1, 3
Telling the time	4, 6
Greeting and meeting people	1, 7
Making simple suggestions	5, 8
Naming number	4, 10
Asking for permission	7, 9

The outcomes of 11 reading skills such as "students will be able to read their timetable for their lessons" (MoNE, 2017, p. 58); "students will be able to understand information about important places" (MoNE, 2017, p. 59) and "students will be able to follow a simple story with visual aids" (MoNE, 2017, p. 60) are firstly introduced in sentence-level at the 5th grade, which complies with the intended language skills in the instructional design of the 2017 ELTP. For the reading skill, the "self-assessment grid" determined by CoE (2001, p. 26) indicates that A1 level students "can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues". Therefore, it is quite obvious that the outcomes related to the reading skills are in line with the CEFR.

The other outcomes consist of 14 listening skills and 27 speaking skills, revealing the fact that the center of attention is still communicative aspects of the language. Using some expressions like 'simple, short, basic, limited', the outcomes are articulated in clear statements and in alignment with the needs and desired level of language proficiency, A1 based on the CEFR (CoE, 2001). Some examples of outcomes from the syllabus are: "students will be able to follow a simple story with visual aids" (MoNE, 2017, p. 60); "students will be able to use basic greeting and leave-taking expressions" (MoNE, 2017, p.

64), "students will be able to understand suggestions made for a limited number of activities" (MoNE, 2017, p. 65) and "students will be able to describe the events in a festival in a simple way" (MoNE, 2017, p. 67).

In parallel with recycling the functions and the themes of the syllabus, it is discovered that the outcomes are cyclically reintroduced in more detail each time. Below are illustrated some examples with regard to this harmony:

Table 21

Samples of the Outcomes in the Cyclical Format at the 5th Grade

Function	Units	Useful Language	Learning Outcomes
Telling the time	4-My Daily Routine	What time is it? -It's half past nine.	Students will be able to tell the time.
	6- Movies	What time is the movie?	Students will be able to state the time of an event.
Making simple suggestions	5- Health	You should stay in bed. Visit a doctor/ have a rest.	Students will be able to understand simple suggestions concerning illnesses.
	8- Fitness	Let's go hiking! –That sounds great. How about jogging? –Sorry, I must study.	Students will be able to accept or refuse suggestions in a simple way.

In accordance with the developmental levels of the students, the vocabulary load is observed to be intensified with approximately 264 words including 140 concrete nouns, 35 adjectives and 70 verbs in the 5th-grade syllabus. The rest of the words consist of 10 adverbs such as "regularly, now, right now and at the moment" (MoNE, 2017, p. 66) and 10 simple utterances like "my pleasure, nice to have you here, that sounds great, that's a good idea" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 58-65). Although the utilization of cognates is suggested particularly at the earliest stages by the MoNE (2017), 14 cognates such as "cinema, music, vitamin, cake, party, activity and camp" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 58-67) are proposed in the 5th-grade program, as well. It is obvious that different vocabulary items enriching the authentic language use are provided in consistent with the needs and interests of the students. However; the vocabulary in the 3rd theme related to the games played in the past such as "marbles, dodge ball, blind man's buff and hopscotch" (MoNE, 2017, p. 60) may

not attract today's students' attention as they aren't familiar with such kind of traditional games. The 5th-grade syllabus does not mention about any pronunciation practice related to the given vocabulary.

Below is demonstrated the compatibility among the components of the 5th-grade syllabus:

Table 22

The Conformity of the Vocabulary with the Content at the 5th Grade

Themes	Functions	Outcomes	Vocabulary
2- My Town	Asking for and giving directions Talking about locations of things and people	Students will be able to talk about the locations of things and people in simple conversations.	Around/next to/opposite the barber shop the bank the library the mosque
10- Festivals	Describing general events and repeated actions	Students will be able to describe the events in a festival in a simple way.	Children's Day Chinese New Year Eid Ramadan Independence Day

The 6th Grade Syllabus

The stated objective for grade 6 is to enable students to express themselves and their opinions by using simple and useful functions required for daily language. It is asserted that students' creativity and imagination are aimed to develop by the chosen topics for the program. Through the themes selected from the situations that are often encountered in real life such as "Life, Yummy Breakfast, Downtown, Weather and Emotions, At the Fair, Occupations, Holidays and Bookworms" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 69-75), the 6th grade syllabus encourages learners to interact with each other about present and past by using the related functions. Another indicated target of the program is to raise the students as responsible individuals for the environment and society via the themes such as "Saving the Planet and Democracy" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 77-78). Thus, it is obvious that the syllabus offers diversity in order to provide authentic language use in different situations. In the context of teaching English to young learners, classroom instruction should be related to the actual life child-centered situations in which the students can use the language (Linse, 2005, p. 56).

As is quite clear from the interesting and familiar themes, the 6th-grade program attempts to arouse students' interest in learning the target language and to create an enjoyable classroom atmosphere in which the students develop positive attitudes towards the target language. Thus, English is taught as a means of communication, not as the ultimate goal of the course (MoNE, 2017). Based on the CEFR, the targeted level of language proficiency of the 6th grade, specified as A1 (Breakthrough) is clearly defined (CoE, 2001; MoNE, 2017, p. 24). Therefore, it can be asserted that the themes are appropriate for this stage in terms of students' social, cognitive, affective development and needs.

It is noticed that the inclusion of key competences and values into the themes is confined to a few skills within the 6th-grade syllabus, as well. To illustrate, the 9th and the 10th themes "Saving the Planet" and "Democracy" including the stages of an election procedure (MoNE, 2017, pp. 77-78) refers to the skill "Social and Civic Responsibility". Likewise, the values "Awareness of Environment" and "Responsibility" can be associated with the 9th theme "Saving the Planet" as the unit suggests some useful language such as "save energy, use less water, turn off the lights and recycle the batteries" (MoNE, 2017, p. 77).

The 6th-grade syllabus consists of 32 functions varying by themes. Each function allows for students to gain the related skills and outcomes specified in each theme and the teachers can employ different teaching methods. In this regard, it would be appropriate to state that the outcomes and the functions are coherent. For example; one of the listening outcomes is articulated as "students will be able to recognize phrases, words and expressions related to repeated actions" for the function "describing what people do regularly" in the 1st theme "Life" (MoNE, 2017, p. 69) and the 5th theme "At the Fair" introduces the function "expressing likes and dislikes" with a speaking outcome "students will be able to use various simple expressions to state the feelings and personal opinions about places and things" (MoNE, 2017, p. 73). In addition, it is revealed that the functions are in compliance with the themes of the syllabus. To illustrate more; the 4th theme "Weather and Emotions" covers the functions such as "describing the weather, expressing emotions" (MoNE, 2017, p. 72) and the 6th theme "Occupations" includes the function "talking about occupations" (MoNE, 2017, p. 74).

When the functions of the 6th-grade program are analyzed, it is found out that they accord with the A1 language proficiency level of the CEFR, interests and needs of the students. Furthermore, it is quite evident that there is a link between the daily lives of the students

and the classroom language practices, which is an indication of conformity with the syllabus objectives. Some examples of functions from the syllabus are "accepting and refusing" (MoNE, 2017, p. 70); "describing places" (MoNE, 2017, p. 71); "talking about past events" (MoNE, 2017, p. 75) and "giving and responding to simple suggestions" (MoNE, 2017, p. 77). As is obvious from the functions generating authentic language use, English is demonstrated as a medium of communication in the 6th-grade syllabus so that the principles of the CEFR are followed (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Richards, 2006).

As in the previous syllabi, the functions are cyclically designed in the 6th grade program on the grounds that introducing a subject matter more than once is essential for a better language acquisition since students generally do not learn the related material at the first time. In this regard, the acquisition process can be supported by recycling the material in more detail each time (Graves, 2000, p. 164). Below are presented some cyclical function samples from the 6th-grade syllabus:

Table 23

Samples of the Functions and Themes in the Cyclical Format at the 6th Grade

Functions	Themes
Telling the time and dates; Telling the time, days and dates	1, 6
Expressing likes and dislikes	2, 5
Talking about past events	7, 8, 10

In regard to the learning outcomes defined for each skill, it is found out that in accordance with the emphasized language skills at stage 2, the 6th grade program firstly introduces 6 writing outcomes in a limited way, "not more than 25 words at a time" (MoNE, 2017, p. 10), such as "students will be able to produce a piece of writing about occupations and the dates" (MoNE, 2017, p. 74) ; "students will be able to write short and simple pieces in various forms about holidays" (MoNE, 2017, p. 75) and "students will be able to write simple pieces about concepts related to democracy" (MoNE, 2017, p. 78). The competences expected from A1 level students in terms of writing skill are stated as "I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel

registration form" in the self-assessment chart of the CEFR (CoE, 2001, p. 26). Thus, it is apparent that the outcomes of writing skills comply with the CEFR's framework of the targeted language proficiency levels.

Another change observed in the 6th-grade syllabus is to divide the outcomes of the speaking skills into 2 parts as "Spoken Interaction" or "Spoken Production". The program defines 27 outcomes of speaking skills, 12 for spoken interaction and 15 for spoken production. In terms of the spoken interaction competences, an A1 level student can "interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help him/her formulate what s/he is trying to say. Can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics" and "can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where s/he lives and people s/he knows" in the context of spoken production (CoE, 2001, p. 26). Accordingly, the 6th grade program proposes outcomes related to the spoken production such as "students will be able to make comparisons between two things" (MoNE, 2017, p. 71), "students will be able to describe past activities and personal experiences" (MoNE, 2017, p. 75) and "students will be able to talk about the concept of democracy" (MoNE, 2017, p. 78). Besides, some examples of the outcomes for spoken interaction are "students will be able to talk about and express the feelings and personal opinions about places and things" (MoNE, 2017, p. 73), "students will be able to talk about the locations of people and things" (MoNE, 2017, p. 76) and "students will be able to give each other suggestions about the protection of the environment" (MoNE, 2017, p. 77).

The other outcomes are composed of 14 listening skills and 13 reading skills. Therefore, it can be concluded that the outcomes of the 6th-grade program are centered on the communicative aspects of the target language and stated clearly. As is clear from some expressions in the definitions of the outcomes like 'simple, short, in a simple way' and the framework of the CEFR, they are thought to be achievable and in compliance with the needs and intended proficiency levels of the students. To illustrate; "students will be able to understand short, simple sentences and expressions about past events with definite time" (MoNE, 2017, p. 76); "students will be able to understand suggestions related to the protection of the environment in simple oral texts" (MoNE, 2017, p. 77) and "students will be able to give short descriptions of past and present events" (MoNE, 2017, p. 78).

Congruent with the repetition of the functions in the syllabus, it is noticed that the outcomes are cyclically repeated and reintroduced in different contexts and at a more complex level in alignment with the themes, as well. Some examples are illustrated in the table below:

Table 24

Samples of the Outcomes in the Cyclical Format at the 6th Grade

Function	Themes	Useful Language	Learning Outcomes
Telling the time and dates; Telling the time, days and dates	1- Life	What time is it? – It's five p.m. / It's twenty past three. What is the date today? 11 August 2016.	Students will be able to tell the time and dates.
	6- Occupations	I was born on the 10th of February, 2005. She was in Istanbul in May. She was born in Malatya in 1990.	Students will be able to state the dates.
Talking about past events	7- Holidays	What did you do on your holiday? I played with my friends/climbed trees/walked in the forest.	Students will be able to describe past activities and personal experiences.
	10- Democracy	We had an election in our school. Our classroom president gave us a speech.	Students will be able to give short descriptions of past and present events.

Analyzing the 6th-grade syllabus, it is revealed that the vocabulary load increases in direct proportion to the students' progress in language skills. That is to say, 261 words comprised of 146 nouns, 70 verbs, 9 adverbs and 32 adjectives to be taught are presented under the functions in the syllabus. The other words consist of 4 basic phrases such as "sure, it's all gone, no thanks, yes please" (MoNE, 2017, p. 70). It can be inferred that the vocabulary load complies with the needs and levels of the students, which is designated as A1 based

on the CEFR (CoE, 2001; MoNE, 2017) and provides enough variety to use the language in different contexts. The suggested words are in line with the themes, functions and outcomes, as well. Most of the chosen vocabulary is thought to be interesting for the students at this age. However, the 10th theme "Democracy" may be criticized as it offers some words such as "ballot box, election, fair law, poll and human right" (MoNE, 2017, p. 78) that might be found unfamiliar and boring by the students at stage 2. Like the previous syllabi, any pronunciation practice isn't observed in the 6th-grade program.

Below are presented the conformity of vocabulary with the other components of the syllabus:

Table 25

The Conformity of the Vocabulary with the Content at the 6th Grade

Themes	Functions	Outcomes	Vocabulary
3- Downtown	Describing places (Making comparisons) Describing what people are doing now	Students will be able to make comparisons between two things. Students will be able to describe people doing different actions.	Downtown/Hometown/ Kiosk/Skyscraper Busy/Crowded/High Feed/Sell/Read
6- Occupations	Talking about occupations	Students will be able to talk about occupations.	Architect/Cook/Dentist/ Engineer/Manager Work/Build/Sew/Make

The 7th Grade Syllabus

Based on the CEFR, the targeted level of language proficiency of the 7th grade is specified as A2 (Waystage) (CoE, 2001; MoNE, 2017, p. 24). According to the CEFR (CoE, 2001, p. 24), learners at A2

> "can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment); can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters; can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need".

In this regard, the attainments of A2 level set the framework of the 7th-grade syllabus (MoNE, 2017). Congruent with the intended level, needs and interests of the students, the themes are sequenced according to the principle 'from near to far and known to unknown'

and composed of familiar topics such as "Appearance and Personality, Sports, Biographies, Wild Animals, Television, Celebrations, Dreams, Public Buildings, Environment and Planets" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 80-89). According to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, by progressing gradually in terms of knowledge and mental skills, the reasoning of a child evolves into the logical thinking defined as the last stage 'formal operation', including the ages ranging from 12 to 15, which refers to the early adolescence. In this stage, the children are able to figure out the abstract relationships with the help of concrete examples. In addition, they start to take more responsibility of their lives and hold their own views in terms of education and the ways to construct it (Cameron, 2001, p. 3; Ur, 1996). However, they have difficulty in engaging in risk-taking tasks like communicating in the target language. In order to reach the communicative and cultural objectives, learners need to be developed socially and effectively so that they learn how to move away from their own perspectives and to interact their interlocutors confidently (Clark, 1987, p. 73). Based on the Piaget's argument on the fact that the child actively constructs the knowledge and considering the qualities of an adolescent, the most important material for this stage is the social context in which the students are provided a range of situations in that they have to create solutions to different problems systematically. In this respect, students at this stage should be exposed to motivating contexts on which they intrinsically commit themselves and actively carry out a diversity of tasks requiring abstract thinking (Zhao & Morgan, 2005). When the themes are analyzed, it is quite obvious that the 7th-grade syllabus has a large spectrum of themes including authentic content which arouses students' interest and gives them a chance to talk, read and write about the target language (McKay, 2006, p. 256).

As for the inclusion of the key competences into the themes of the 7th grade program, it is discovered that one of the skills "Social and Civic Responsibility" was embedded in the syllabus through the 4th theme "Wild Animals" including functions about the countries the wild animals live in and protecting them (MoNE, 2017, p. 83) and the 9th theme "Environment" introducing some useful language and functions about protecting environment (MoNE, 2017, p. 88). Both themes and the 10th theme "Planets" also serve for the value "Awareness of Environment" (MoNE, 2017, p. 89). It can be inferred that the inclusion of those competences and values remain limited within the 7th-grade syllabus, as well.

The 7th-grade syllabus consists of 35 functions varying by themes. It can be stated that the functions and the outcomes operate in harmony with each other. That is to say, the functions help students achieve the intended outcomes and teachers to exploit different kinds of teaching methods. They also comply with the themes. For example; one of the listening outcomes is articulated as "students will be able to understand clear, standard speech on appearances and personalities" for the function "describing characters and people" in the 1st theme "Appearance and Personality" (MoNE, 2017, p. 80); the 3rd theme "Biographies" covers the functions such as "talking about past events" and "telling the time, days and dates" with a writing outcome "students will be able to write a short and simple report about past events" (MoNE, 2017, p. 82) and the 5th theme "Television" introduces the function "expressing preferences" with a speaking outcome "students will be able to ask questions about preferences of other people" (MoNE, 2017, p. 84).

When the functions of the 7th-grade syllabus are examined, it is noticed that they foster daily life language use by creating a natural communicative atmosphere, which is a sign of agreement with the syllabus objectives and the principles of the CEFR (CoE, 2001; MoNE, 2017). They also accord with the A2 language proficiency level of the CEFR, interests and needs of the students. Some other examples of functions from the syllabus are "talking about routines and daily activities" (MoNE, 2017, p. 81); "stating personal opinions" (MoNE, 2017, p. 84); "expressing needs and quantity" (MoNE, 2017, p. 85) and "giving explanations and reasons" (MoNE, 2017, p. 87).

The functions of the 7th-grade syllabus are designed in a cyclical order in which the former subjects are regarded as the basis for the next learning and accordingly, the earlier phases are returned and refined throughout the program (Brumfit, 1984, p. 48). The table below demonstrates some cyclical function samples from the 7th-grade syllabus:

Table 26

Samples of the Functions and Themes in the Cyclical Format at the 7th Grade

Functions	Themes
Talking about past events	3, 4, 5, 10
Describing what people do regularly	2, 5
Giving explanations/reasons	1, 2, 4, 8, 9

The primary skills intended to be developed at this stage, which is A2, are stated as listening and speaking and secondarily reading and writing. When the learning outcomes are analyzed, it can be indicated that the 7th-grade program follows this procedure. With the aim of promoting authentic language use in different contexts, 26 outcomes of speaking skills are provided in the syllabus, 13 for spoken interaction and 13 for spoken production. In the self-assessment chart of the CEFR, it is indicated related to the spoken interaction that an A2 level student "can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities; can handle very short social exchanges, even though s/he can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going himself/herself" and "can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms his/her family and other people, living conditions, his/her educational background and his/her present or most recent job " in terms of spoken production (CoE, 2001, p. 26). In this regard, it can be inferred that the outcomes of the 7th-grade program are feasible and comply with the needs and intended proficiency levels of the students. In accordance with the CEFR's specification for A2 level, some outcomes of speaking production skills defined in the 7th grade syllabus are "students will be able to report on appearances and personalities of other people" (MoNE, 2017, p. 80), "students will be able to describe past events and experiences" (MoNE, 2017, p. 82) and "students will be able to express needs and quantity" (MoNE, 2017, p. 85). For spoken interaction, the outcomes such as "students will be able to talk about obligations" (MoNE, 2017, p. 88) and "students will be able to make simple comparisons", "students will be able to talk about past events" (MoNE, 2017, p. 89) are provided.

The other outcomes of the syllabus consist of 13 listening skills, 13 reading skills and 11 writing skills. In line with the levels and cognitive development of the students, it is noticed that expressions such as 'simple, basic, short and in a simple way' are still used in the statements but not much as in the previous syllabi, which are A1 level. It is also discovered that the outcomes of writing skills are increased at the 7th-grade program and students are expected to write short descriptions, messages and reports in addition to the pieces about the related functions, which conforms to the goals of the 2017 ELTP with respect to the extent of skills intensity at each grade. Some examples of writing outcomes from the 7th grade syllabus are "students will be able to write a short and simple report about past events" (MoNE, 2017, p. 82); "students will be able to write pieces about daily routines and preferences" (MoNE, 2017, p. 84); "students will be able to write short

description of a process" (MoNE, 2017, p. 88) and "students will be able to write short and basic descriptions of facts and general truths" (MoNE, 2017, p. 89).

The outcomes of the 7th grade are cyclically designed in a way to reintroduce the related functions more comprehensive each time using a different skill and in a different situation (Graves, 2000, p. 164). The table below shows the cyclical design of the outcomes and their consistency with the themes:

Table 27

Samples of the Outcomes in the Cyclical Format at the 7th Grade

Function	Themes	Useful Language	Learning Outcomes
Giving explanations/ reasons	4- Wild Animals	People always harmed wild animals because they were afraid of them.	Students will be able to report on past and present events.
	8- Public Buildings	You should play in the new park to make friends. They went to the bookshop to buy a sports magazine.	Students will be able to report on explanations with reasons.
Talking about past events	3- Biographies	Why did she move to Manchester? -She moved to Manchester to study physics.	Students will be able to describe past events and experiences.
	5- Television	Did you watch the wildlife documentary last night? -I watched it last night and it was fantastic.	Students will be able to talk about past events and personal experiences.

In the 7th grade syllabus, 286 words including 137 nouns, 84 verbs, 50 adjectives, 11 adverbs and 4 simple utterances such as "yes, please; just a little; no, thanks" (MoNE, 2017, p. 85) are provided for the useful language to be taught in each theme. In accordance with the specification of learning stage 3 (MoNE, 2017), it is observed that the 7th-grade program increases the vocabulary load in order to provide enough variety to enhance the target language use. In the "self-assessment grid" framed by CoE (2001, p. 26), it is stated that students at A2 level "can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment); can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements" for the listening skill and in terms of the range, it is

indicated that an A2 level student "uses basic sentence patterns with memorized phrases, groups of a few words and formulae in order to communicate limited information in simple everyday situations" (CoE, 2001, p. 29). In this regard, analyzing the words and phrases in the 7th-grade syllabus, it can be stated that the vocabulary accords with the levels, interests and needs of the students and with the themes, functions and outcomes, as well. However, the 7th-grade program does not suggest any pronunciation practice related to the given vocabulary.

Below are presented the harmony among the components of the syllabus:

Table 28

The Conformity of the Vocabulary with the Content at the 7th Grade

Themes	Functions	Outcomes	Vocabulary
6- Celebrations	Making arrangements and sequencing the actions	Students will be able to talk about arrangements and sequences of actions.	Arrange/Decorate/Invite Beverage/Guest/Host/ Invitation card
10- Planets	Talking about past events	Students will be able to talk about past events.	Atmosphere/Galaxy/ Gravity/Satellite Observe/Discover/ Explore/Rescue

The 8th Grade Syllabus

As in the 7th-grade syllabus, the attainments of A2 (Waystage) level determined by the CEFR (2001, p. 24) constitute the learning objectives of the 8th-grade program. The targeted level of language proficiency is clearly explained at the beginning of the program. In the 8th grade program, it is asserted that the development characteristics of children who are at the first stage of transition from childhood to adolescence are primarily taken into consideration in the content selection (MoNE, 2017). Accordingly, in alignment with the physical, social and cognitive growth and intended level of language proficiency of the students, the themes are in a sequence starting students' immediate environment to far and composed of familiar and appealing topics for this age group such as "Friendship, Teen Life, In the Kitchen, On the Phone, The Internet, Adventures, Tourism, Chores, Science and Naturel Forces" (MoNE, 2017, pp. 91-100). Only the 3rd unit 'In the Kitchen', may not catch the interests of this age group as it proposes some functions including recipes and some vocabulary such as "peel, pour, bake, fry, slice and chop" (MoNE, 2017, p. 93).

99

With regard to the inclusion of the key competences and the values into the themes, the 1st unit "Friendship" can be associated with the value "Family and Friendship" as the units provide some functions like "apologizing" and "accepting an offer" (MoNE, 2017, p. 91). Likewise, the 8th theme "Chores" including functions to share responsibilities at home can refer to the values "Cooperation" and "Helpfulness" (MoNE, 2017, p. 98). In addition, one of the key competences "Social and Civic Responsibility" and the value "Awareness of Environment" are observed to be embedded in the 10th theme "Natural Forces" proposing some useful language about the nature and protecting it such as "tsunami, droughts, water shortage, using less water, wasting water and melt" (MoNE, 2017, p. 100). Lastly, the 7th theme "Tourism" includes one of the key competences "Cultural Awareness" and the value "Awareness of Historical Heritage" as it mentions some historical places in Turkey and the other countries in the parts of useful language. In comparison with the previous syllabi, it can be concluded that the inclusion of the key competences and the values are relatively at a reasonable amount within the themes of the 8th-grade syllabus.

Varying by themes, the 8th-grade syllabus suggests 37 functions fostering a convenient classroom environment to employ several teaching methods and to encourage actual language interaction. Analyzing the functions, it is quite evident that they help to make the aims and outcomes of the syllabus achievable. For example; the speaking outcome "students will be able to make a simple phone call asking and responding to questions" serves for the function "following phone conversations" in the 4th theme "On The Phone" (MoNE, 2017, p. 94); the 7th theme "Tourism" presents the function "describing places" with a writing outcome "students will be able to design a brochure, advertisement or a postcard about their favorite tourist attraction" (MoNE, 2017, p. 97) and one of the functions "making predictions about the future" in the 10th theme "Natural Forces" includes a reading outcome "students will be able to identify specific information in simple texts about natural forces and disasters" (MoNE, 2017, p. 100). As is quite obvious from the examples, the functions are in alignment with the themes of the syllabus, as well. Thus, it can be inferred that the functions meet the students' needs for real-life language use and they comply with A2 language proficiency level of the CEFR and interests of the students.

The organization of the functions in the 8th-grade program is cyclical with an aim of reintroducing the subject matter learned in more detail by another skill or technique and in

a different context (Graves, 2000, p. 138). Below are illustrated some cyclical function samples from the 8th-grade syllabus:

Table 29

Samples of the Functions and Themes in the Cyclical Format at the 8th Grade

Functions	Themes
Accepting and refusing	1, 5
Expressing likes and dislikes	2, 8
Expressing preferences	2, 3, 6, 7
Making comparisons	6, 7

The 8th-grade syllabus specifies the primary skills to be advanced as listening and speaking and secondary skills as reading and writing (MoNE, 2017). To this end, the outcomes of 15 listening skills and 31 speaking skills, 16 for spoken interaction and 15 for spoken production, are presented in the 8th-grade program. Analyzing each outcome, it would be appropriate to state that they are feasible and consistent with the intended level of language proficiency and the needs of the students at stage 3 depicted by MoNE (2017). It is also quite obvious that actual language use is promoted by the intended outcomes. Some outcomes of speaking interaction skills from the syllabus are "students will able to express what they prefer, like and dislike" (MoNE, 2017, p. 92); "students will be able to interact during simple, routine tasks requiring a direct exchange of information" (MoNE, 2017, p. 98) and "students will be able to talk about predictions concerning future of the earth" (MoNE, 2017, p. 100). The syllabus also proposes some outcomes for spoken production such as "students will be able to make excuses and to accept and refuse offers by using a series of phrases and simple sentences" (MoNE, 2017, p. 95) and "students will be able to describe actions happening currently" (MoNE, 2017, p. 99).

In the 2017 ELTP which integrates the four skills from the second term of the 6th grade and onwards, particularly in terms of writing skills, different kinds of scriptwriting activities based on different purposes and beyond the sentence level come to the prominence in the 8th-grade syllabus (MoNE, 2017). In this regard, 10 writing outcomes are presented in the 8th-grade program. To illustrate; "students will be able to write a short and simple letter apologizing and giving reasons for not attending a party in response to an invitation"

(MoNE, 2017, p. 91); "students will be able to write a basic paragraph to describe their internet habits" (MoNE, 2017, p. 95) and "students will be able to design a brochure, advertisement and postcard about their favorite tourist attraction" (MoNE, 2017, p. 97). The other outcomes of the syllabus are composed of 14 reading skills. In accordance with A2 level, the use of the expressions such as 'simple, basic and short' is limited but still observed in some outcomes. Similar to the repetition of the themes, the outcomes are recycled more in-depth in different units in the 8th-grade syllabus. Some related examples are demonstrated in the table below:

Table 30

Samples of the Outcomes in the Cyclical Format at the 8th Grade

Function	Themes	Useful Language	Learning Outcomes
Expressing preferences	2- Teen Life	I prefer reading the news online.	Students will be able to express what they prefer, like and dislike.
	7- Tourism	I'd rather visit historic sites because they are usually more interesting.	Students will be able to express their preferences and give reasons.
Expressing likes and dislikes	2- Teen Life	I love/like/enjoy going to concerts.	Students will be able to express what they prefer, like and dislike.
	8- Chores	I don't like it when my mom asks too many questions.	Students will be able to express their obligations, likes and dislikes in simple terms.

Counting the number of the words to be taught, it is found out that in parallel with the content intensity and the targeted proficiency level, which is still A2 (CoE, 2001; MoNE, 2017), the 8th-grade vocabulary load is relatively more intensive. 337 words including 119 verbs, 131 nouns, 65 adjectives and 13 adverbs are presented in the syllabus. In addition, 9 expressions such as "that sounds fun, not at all, yes sure, no thanks, in my opinion" are included in the useful language parts. It can be concluded that the 8th-grade program provides a great variety of vocabulary compatible with the levels, interests and needs of the students and with the themes, functions and outcomes, as well. Nevertheless, any

suggestions in terms of pronunciation related to the given vocabulary aren't noticed in the 8th-grade syllabus.

The table below illustrates the conformity between the vocabulary and the other components of the program:

Table 31

The Conformity of the Vocabulary with the Content at the 8th Grade

Themes	Functions	Outcomes	Vocabulary
4- On the phone	Following phone conversations	Students will be able to make a simple phone call asking and responding to questions.	Available/connect/contact/dial/keep in touch/ hang on/hold on/leave a message
7- Tourism	Describing places	Students will be able to talk about their favorite tourist attractions.	Ancient/architecture/attraction/cultural destination/incredible resort/rural/urban/all-inclusive

Findings Related to the Perceptions of English Teachers and the MoNE Authorities about the English Program

In this part, in order to answer the research questions 4 and 5, the qualitative data findings collected through the interviews carried out with 2 English teachers and one authority working for the Ministry are presented. After having analyzed the data, the perceptions of the participants were gathered under four themes as "the basic dimensions of the syllabi", "strengths of the curriculum", "weaknesses of the curriculum" and "suggestions for the curriculum" were determined.

Teachers' Perceptions on the Basic Dimensions of the Syllabi

With respect to the themes, it is revealed that all the teachers are content with the appropriateness of the themes for the level, interests and needs of the students. They stated that the themes provide a wide variety of contexts to lead the students to the daily target language use. One of the teachers indicated that the themes are interrelated throughout the

curriculum. Only one teacher stated that the students sometimes get easily bored only with the theme about science.

T1: Themes such as daily routines, internet, and phone conversations promote the daily-life target language use. They are motivating. The students are easily motivated especially on the themes "TV programs and movies" since they associate the topic with their own lives. They become happy when they say their favorite movies and actors. Moreover, they ask the correct pronunciation of the words. However, the theme "Science" is just a bit problematic. Since the terms in the reading passages or listening texts are too heavy for the levels of the students, they are distracted easily.

T2: I think that compared to the previous programs, the recent revision is more appealing to the interests of the students. All the themes are parallel and in accordance with the functions throughout the curriculum. Although the students don't want to participate in the lessons with the same interest for each theme, there are themes that appeal to each student that has different interests. For example, the boys like the unit "Sports and games" while the girls enjoy the unit "Horoscopes".

T3: We carried out field research to determine appropriate themes appealing to the different interests and to find what is missing in the previous program. For example, following the feedback, we omitted a unit named "Fortune Teller". Therefore; the themes are congruent with the interests and needs of different students. The 3 stages were taken into consideration in determining the themes so that they are sequenced from near to far.

As for the functions, it is realized that all the teachers are satisfied with the functions in the curriculum. All of the teachers indicated that the functions were in conformity with the themes; appropriate for the levels of learners and aims of the curriculum. Nevertheless, two of the teachers pointed out that although the functions are communicative-based, the teachers in the field prefer to implement them with a grammar-based approach.

T1: When we think they will be at the A2 level at the end of the 8th grade, I can say that functions are sequenced in line with the levels of the students. In addition, functions are in agreement with the outcomes and themes. For example, in the theme "Biographies" at the 7th grade, past experiences are mentioned as a function and the lives of famous people in the past are studied in some tasks. In fact, I've never seen an outcome that doesn't match the context.

T3: The functions are exactly communicative and enhance daily-life language use. However, the teachers like to study on the functions with a grammar-based method. I talked to some teachers in some forums who started to teach "Present Perfect" when they see the verb "have".

In relation to the outcomes of the syllabi units, all the teachers stated that they didn't have difficulty in reaching the intended outcomes. They were appropriate for the students' levels, interests and needs. Moreover, they highlighted that all the outcomes are clearly stated in each syllabus.

T2: The outcomes lead the students to use the target language. They are in compliance with the principles of the CEFR and the levels of the students. They are obvious enough.

T3: Students at the 8ᵗʰ grade graduate with an A2 level. All the outcomes are in accordance with the CEFR and the tasks serve for the attainment of the outcomes.

It is also discovered that all the teachers are pleased with the suggested contexts, tasks and activities. They noted that there is a wide variety of contexts that every teacher can access easily. Tasks are communicative-based and promote student participation in the lessons.

T2: The contexts and tasks comply with the students' needs and interests. When we check the tasks and contexts, we realize that they are consistent with the contexts in the CEFR.

T3: As the tasks are not grammar-based, they enable the students to participate in the lesson eagerly. While the tasks and contexts were being determined, the CEFR was always open in front of the curriculum designers so that they match its principles. In addition, in order to address all the schools in Turkey, most of the contexts are accessible apart from podcasts or websites. We took the students both in İzmir and Ağrı into consideration.

Teachers' Perceptions on the Strengths of the Curriculum

Teachers expressed many benefits of the curriculum in terms of the content of the syllabi units, testing and the policy of the program. They all think that the program is learner-centered.

T1: The greatest strength of the curriculum is that the outcomes are clearly stated. We can easily understand what we should teach. There are lots of tasks that we engage the students in the lessons to attain the outcomes.

T1: The testing part provides many assessment types based on four language skills. Moreover, these are presented with detailed examples and explanations about how to use. The diversity in the assessment examples enables us to be able to choose different types for different learner styles. For example, for reading assessment, there are almost 30 activities.

T2: It's a very comprehensive program. The functions and outcomes are clearly stated. There are many kinds of contexts and example sentences for the functions. This diversity enables us to address different learning styles. Teachers who carefully read the program can easily manage well their lessons.

T2: The program also focuses on the values education. I think it's kind of a program that develops a positive attitude towards learning English.

T3: The program can address all the schools in Turkey. We worked with the teachers in the field in the design of the units' content. For example, even while writing a word for the vocabulary part in each level, we were asking the teacher who was coming from a mountain village whether his students can learn or not.

T3: The program is not grammar-based. It totally complies with the CEFR. In terms of age groups and levels, the borders are very obvious. There aren't any objectives that the teachers cannot reach. The theory is OK; here what the matter is the teachers' creativity and competence.

Teachers' Perceptions on the Weaknesses of the Curriculum

It can be inferred that all the teachers are mostly satisfied with the content and the policy of the 2017 ELTP. However; two of the teachers reached a consensus on the point that the program doesn't provide enough flexibility for the teachers.

T1: Most of the themes, functions and outcomes comply with the levels, interests and needs of the students. However, the examples in the vocabulary part and the determination of the themes may restrict the teachers. For example, the interests of the students in Ağrı and İstanbul are different. When the Ministry determines the themes and presents a template, teachers may not arrange them according to the interests of their students. They usually say that "the book is designed pursuant to the themes so that I have to teach all the themes".

T2: The problem of the program is that it is too detailed. The samples in the program should lead the teachers to arrange their own lessons. However, most of the teachers think that they should give only the samples and that's enough. They don't think following the stage levels, they should design their own lessons' content taking their students' interest, needs and cultural values into account and create different things. I think the program may be more flexible. It should be adapted according to the physical equipment of the schools, readiness levels and language skills of the students.

Two of the teachers expressed their concerns about the inadequacy of the class hours to implement such a detailed program.

T2: Although the outcomes are feasible, we realize that the outcomes are not permanent. The class hours aren't adequate for reinforcing the outcomes. The class hours should be increased.

T3: The class hours are insufficient. For example, the class hours in the 2nd grade are only two hours so that we focused only on the things to be taught in such a limited time. I think we are not aware of the difference between the EFL and ESL. The class hours are wanted to be designed as if it's an ESL program but our students don't have a chance to practice the language outside of the classrooms. I think the inadequacy of the class hours limits the content of the program.

In terms of contexts and activities, lacking technology was another concern shared by the two teachers.

T1: Although the content and the outcomes are suitable for the technology integration, there aren't any sources specified obviously in the curriculum such as technological games and some contents on EBA. However, the teachers can integrate the technology into activities like preparing a brochure or a poster.

T2: The contexts in which we can use the technology should be increased to provide more interactive lessons. Even though the teachers don't have projectors or computers in their classes, at least they have cassette-players. The private schools use some websites like Class Dojo. That kind of things should be prevalent in public schools as well in which the employment of EBA is still problematic.

All the teachers were of the same mind about the necessity for increasing the elements related to the intercultural awareness and about the unconformity between the theory and the teachers' implementation.

T1: Although the themes promote authentic language use, they don't enable the teachers to introduce the target culture sufficiently. In fact, we have themes such as "tourism" or "countries" supporting intercultural awareness. However, the content of the books doesn't have such kind of elements like Halloween or Christmas Eve.

T1: The outcomes comply with the principles of the CEFR and the objectives of the curriculum. Nevertheless, there is a problem in the practice of the teachers. They usually regard the outcomes as structural elements. Even though all the functions comply with the CEFR principles and communicative-based, when the teachers see the word "past" in the functions, they directly start to teach verb 2.

T2: The program provides a great variety of suggested testing types based on four language skills. However, I realize that the exams for listening and speaking skills aren't usually employed. The reasons for that may result from the teachers' styles, the physical conditions of the schools, the inadequacy of the class hours or that the assessment of these two skills is more difficult. I think that there is a problem in the implementation part of the curriculum.

The 2017 ELTP is a learner-centered program and the learner autonomy is the principle that is highly accentuated but not well-supported throughout the curriculum (MoNE, 2017). In relation to the learner autonomy, two teachers thought that there are still some deficiencies about giving the students responsibility for their own progress.

T1: The program is suitable for engaging the students in the lessons and mentions about learner autonomy. For example, group discussions are included in the outcomes to lead the students to produce on their own. However, I think it's not enough for developing autonomy in the students.

T2: In the assignments, it is seen that learner autonomy is taken into consideration. However, the assignment samples may limit the creativity of the students. They should be more independent while doing an assignment.

Teachers' Suggestions for the Curriculum

The general view about the 2017 ELTP is that the program is detailed enough and creates a supportive teaching and learning atmosphere to use the target language in authentic communications. Moreover, all the teachers expressed their appreciation about the conformity among the components of each syllabus. However, all the teachers had some concerns and made recommendations about a few dimensions of the curriculum.

T1: The assessment types may be given separately for each stage as every teacher may not differentiate them. For example, writing-based assessment types may be increased at the 2nd grade.

T2: The program is detailed enough. However, I think that it should be made more flexible rather than make improvements. For example, we can determine the stages and give the functions based on the stages rather than give all the skills and themes separately for each grade.

T3: In order to create cohesion throughout the curriculum, the designers of the program should take more initiative during the determination of the content. The program should include more items introducing the target culture.

Two teachers agreed upon the idea that exam paper examples and lesson plan samples should be provided for the teachers. However, one of the teachers holds an opposite opinion about that.

T1: Exam paper examples would be useful for inexperienced teachers. The exams in public schools are centered on writing and reading skills. If exam samples that assess the listening and speaking skills are given, teachers may be more willing to prepare exams focusing on these skills.

T2: Lesson plans should definitely be included in the curriculum. Teachers usually tend to find lesson plans from unreliable sources on the Net. Instead of this, it would be better to make their own plans based on a lesson plan sample.

One of the teachers holds a different opinion about giving lesson plan and exam paper samples.

T3: Lesson plans shouldn't be added to the curriculum since every teacher can't use the same type of plans. Everybody has a different teaching type. In addition, that would be a monotonous type of education. Birds do not fly into our mouths ready roasted.

T3: Due to the same reasons that I mentioned in lesson plans, exam paper samples should be never given. There may be differences between classes so that we can't apply the same exams for every class.

All the teachers highlighted the incoordination between the theory and the practice of the curriculum as mentioned above. Nevertheless, one of the teachers stated a very different point of view from all other participants and made a recommendation about that problem.

T3: I think that the unconformity between the theory of the curriculum and the teachers' implementation result from the deficiencies in teacher training. Teachers should benefit from the faculties of education in seminars done before the beginning of each term. The education that I had 23 years ago has changed so that the active teacher training is a must.

In sum, the interviews showed that teachers are generally content with the suggested contexts, tasks and activities, vocabulary, syllabus themes, functions, outcomes and testing. However, they have a few concerns about the unconformity between the theory and the teachers' practice in the field, inadequate class hours, lack of technological contexts and intercultural items. In this regard, they have further recommendations to make the program more effective.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, an overall picture of the study beginning with the summary of the aim, process and findings and ending with the implications and suggestions for practice is drawn.

Summary of the Study

The present study aimed to analyze and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the available primary English curriculum descriptively. The major points of research focus were the content of the curriculum and syllabi and the views of one specialist and two EFL teachers, working for the Ministry. In order to achieve this aim, exploiting a content analysis within a concurrent mixed-method design, both the qualitative and quantitative methods were employed simultaneously. Document analysis was carried out in order to collect the major data of the study. In this regard, the 2017 ELTP was analyzed within two checklists prepared by the researcher in the light of the related past and present literature and the national curriculum itself and at the same time, the findings related to the variables such as suggested contexts, tasks and activities, vocabulary, syllabus units, themes, functions and outcomes were quantified. For revealing teachers' perceptions, a semi-structured interview was developed by the researcher based on the checklists designed. The analysis process of the qualitative data was conducted by a content analysis process once again. Lastly, both types of data were integrated to interpret the findings related to the current situation of the 2017 ELTP.

The findings reveal that;

• By means of the three stages determined in the instructional design of the curriculum, the characteristic and cognitive differences between young learners and adolescents are taken into consideration in all parts of the syllabi, such as the content, contexts and tasks, cognitive load, language skills, assignments and assessment.

• There is a great variety of contexts, tasks and activities which equip the learners for real-life interactions.

• The themes and functions attempt to build a bridge between language learning and the students' daily lives.

• Each outcome is explained clearly and feasible.

• Themes, suggested contexts and tasks/activities provide a game-based learning atmosphere in which the students can play games, do hand-on activities, sing songs and dance. Therefore, it is obvious that developing motivation in learners is one of the key factors in the 2017 ELTP.

• Teachers are provided a great variety of contexts, tasks and activities through which an eclectic mix of instructional methods and strategies can be utilized in the classroom.

• Providing that it is communicative-based, teachers' discretion with regard to the teaching methods and strategies and assessment types is supported in the 2017 ELTP.

• Through a wide range of suggested contexts/tasks/activities and assignments, different needs, interests and styles of learners and learning strategies are considered in the present curriculum.

• Assignments suggested in the syllabi include performance and project tasks allowing for learning the language by doing, which fosters productivity and authentic practice of the new learning out of the classroom.

• The length, the level and the scope of the assignments are reasonable at each grade in a way to cover the related content.

• The emphasis is on the use of English through all kinds of classroom interactions, encouraging learners to become language users and to gain communicative competence.

• The recent program is in accordance with the CEFR principles which are self-assessment supported with portfolios and self-assessment checklists, learner autonomy enhanced by 'learn-by doing' activities and assignments and authentic language use. However, the principle, an appreciation for cultural diversity, isn't supported enough in the program.

112

• The present curriculum provides comprehensive guidance for the assessment of four language skills and also the integration of different skills by suggesting certain testing techniques which are very clear and enhanced by a great variety of samples for each skill and some critical points for their preparation.

• There is a meaningful connection between the nature of the program and the testing procedures held in the 2017 ELTP.

• The 2017 ELTP proposes the use of formative and summative assessment types in accordance with the levels of learners. Summative testing procedures are not employed at the early stages.

• The structural elements of English are taught implicitly while the learners develop communicative skills. The syllabi suggest a variety of functions including different forms in parallel with the levels of students.

• The components of each syllabus are in harmony with each other.

• There is a cyclical organization in the design of the themes, functions and outcomes throughout the syllabi.

• The vocabulary load is developmentally appropriate for the levels of students at each grade level and provides enough variety to enhance the target language use. Apart from two themes, the vocabulary is composed of the words appealing for the students.

• There isn't any pronunciation practice related to the given vocabulary in each syllabus.

• The use of technology in terms of contexts, tasks and activities is very limited. The only technological items suggested as contexts are blogs, e-mails, podcasts, weather reports, videos and websites.

• The inclusion of the key competences and values education is a distinctive feature of the recent revision. However, that is very limited within each syllabus.

• Intercultural awareness isn't well-supported in the present curriculum. The target culture isn't introduced enough.

• English teachers have mostly positive opinions about the content of each syllabus in terms of themes, functions, outcomes, vocabulary and suggested contexts and tasks/activities.

• English teachers find technology integration in the syllabi into instruction insufficient and suggest including more technology-based contexts or tasks in the curriculum.

• English teachers think that there is still a mismatch between the theory of the curriculum and the teachers' implementation. Therefore, they recommend that the content of the in-service teacher training should be improved.

• English teachers are satisfied with the guidance in the testing part and the clarity of the outcomes.

• English teachers find class hours inadequate. They think that limits the content of the program and the attainability of the outcomes.

• English teachers find the introduction of the target culture insufficient. They want to take more initiative in the curriculum planning process.

• English teachers find the components of each syllabus compatible with each other. However, they do not find the program flexible enough. They demand more flexibility to be able to adapt the program according to the physical equipment of the schools, readiness levels and language skills of the students.

• Compared to the previous programs, English teachers find the content of the program more appealing to the interests of the students.

• English teachers find the program consistent with the principle of the CEFR in terms of self-assessment testing types and daily-language use.

• English teachers find the recent revision learner-centered. They are satisfied with the content in that they engage the students in the lessons and promote a positive attitude. However, learner autonomy is a problematic aspect of the curriculum needed to be supported more.

• English teachers think that lesson plan and exam paper samples should be included in the curriculum.

Implications and Suggestions

The findings of the present study aimed to analyze and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the 2017 ELTP for primary education suggest some implications for curriculum designers of the MoNE.

First of all, both the findings revealed by the analysis of the document and the teachers' interviews show that the program has some deficiencies with regard to the introduction of the target culture, technology utilization and pronunciation practice. In this regard, the

program may be more appealing and meaningful if the themes are revised and supplemented by extra contexts including more elements about the target culture. In addition, the integration of the technological applications, contexts and activities, ICT tools and CALL materials into the lessons may boost the learners' motivation and facilitate language learning. What is more, the syllabi can also include pronunciation activities to provide the students with an opportunity to develop a better pronunciation from the early stages. The most significant finding of the interviews was the teachers' concern about the unconformity between the theory of the program and the teachers' practice, which is the same problem experienced in the 2013 ELTP. In this regard, peer observation and reflective teaching practices which allow for the teachers to observe their colleagues' implementation and to analyze their own classes may be exploited in public schools. In addition, this finding may indicate a need for teacher training to develop teachers in terms of teaching methodology. Therefore, the quality of in-service training can be questioned. In this respect, a study on teachers' practices in each grade may provide important feedback to the field. Lastly, the current study reveals the teachers' perceptions on the 2017 ELTP. However, this part of the study was carried out with a very little sample. Therefore, in order to have a deeper understanding, a study on the teachers' perceptions with more participants may be a possible suggestion.

REFERENCES

Adıgüzel, O., & Özüdoğru, F. (2014). The analysis of the views of English teachers about 2nd grade English language teaching curriculum. *E-International Journal of Educational Research, 7*(2), 16-35.

Alkan, M. F., & Arslan, M. (2014). Evaluation of the 2nd grade English language curriculum. *Uluslararası Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim Çalışmaları Dergisi, 4*(7), 87-99.

Alptekin, C., Erçetin, G., & Bayyurt, Y. (2007). The effectiveness of a theme-based syllabus for young L2 learners. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 28*(1), 1-17.

Arda, S., & Doyran, F. (2017). Analysis of young learners' and teenagers' attitudes to English language learning. *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction, 9*(2), 179-197.

Arıkan, A. (2005). An evaluation of literature curriculum in Hacettepe University English language teaching department. *H.U. Journal of Education, 29*, 27-33.

August, D., Carlo, M., & Snow, C. (2005). The critical role of vocabulary development for English language learners. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 20*(1), 50–57.

Barrett, M. (2007). *Children's knowledge, beliefs and feelings about nations and national groups*. Hove: Psychology.

Bayyurt, Y., & Alptekin, C. (2000). EFL syllabus design for Turkish young learners in bilingual school contexts. In J. Moon & M. Nikolov (Eds.), *Research into teaching English to young learners* (pp. 312-322). Pécs, Hungary: Pécs University.

Bhatti, T. (2013). Teaching reading through computer-assisted language learning. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, *17*(2), 1-11.

Bourke, J. M. (2006). Designing a topic-based syllabus for young learners. *ELT Journal, 60*(3), 279-286.

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal, 9*(2), 27-40.

Brink, H. I. L. (1993). Validity and reliability in qualitative research. *Curationis, 16*(2), 35-38.

Brown, J. D. (1995). *The elements of language curriculum: A systematic approach to program development*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Büyükduman, F.İ. (2005). İlköğretim okulları İngilizce öğretmenlerinin birinci kademe İngilizce öğretim programına ilişkin görüşleri. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, 28* (28), 55-64.

Büyüköztürk, Ş., Çakmak, E. K., Akgün, Ö. E., Karadeniz, Ş., & Demirel, F. (2017). *Bilimsel araştirma yöntemleri*. Ankara: Pegem.

Cameron, L. (2001). *Teaching languages to young learners*. Cambridge, England: CUP.

Cankaya, P. (2015). *An evaluation of the primary 3rd grade English language teaching program: Tekirdağ case*. Master's Thesis, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Çanakkale.

Cary, L. J. (2006). From currere to curriculum spaces: Bringing together curriculum theory and educational research. *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy, 3*(2), 148–167.

Celce M. M. (1991). Grammar pedagogy in second and foreign language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly, 25*(3), 290-298.

Celce M. M., & Olshtain, E. (2000). *Discourse and context in language teaching*. Cambridge: CUP.

Celik, S. (2012). Competency levels of teachers in using interactive whiteboards. *Contemporary Educational Technology*, *3*(2), 115-129.

Celik, S., & Kasapoğlu, H. (2014). Implementing the recent curricular changes to English language instruction in Turkey: Opinions and concerns of elementary school administrators. *South African Journal of Education, 34*(2), 1-14.

Cincioğlu, A. (2012). *Institutional factors as a component of language curriculum development: Perspectives of English preparatory class lecturers at public and private universities in Istanbul*. Doctoral Dissertation, Istanbul University, Istanbul.

Clark, L. J. (1987). *Curriculum renewal in school foreign language learning*. Oxford: OUP.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2005). *Research methods in education*. New York: Routledge.

Cook, V. (2008). *Second language learning and language teaching*. UK: Hodder Education.

Council of Europe (CoE). (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge, England: CUP.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches*. London: SAGE.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE.

Darabi, M. (2014). The effect of linear versus cyclical approach on language proficiency of Iranian EFL learners. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*, *7*(3), 617-634.

Demirel, E., & Cephe, P. T. (2014). Looking into burnout levels among English language instructors. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, 11*(1), 1-14.

Doğançay, A. S. (1998). The spread of English in Turkey and its current sociolinguistic profile. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 19*(1), 24-39.

Dönmez, Ö. (2010). *Implementation of the new eighth grade English language curriculum from the perspectives of teachers and students*. Master's Thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara.

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics*. Oxford: OUP.

Drigas, A., & Charami, F. (2014). ICTs in English learning and teaching. *İ-JES, 2*(4), 4-10.

Dubin, F., & Olshtain, E. (1986). *Course design, developing programs and materials for language learning*. New York: CUP.

Eisner, E. W. (1994). Curriculum ideologies. In E. W. Eisner (Eds.), *The educational imagination on the design and evaluation of school programs* (pp. 47-86). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Enever, J. (2011). Policy. In J. Enever (Eds.), *ELLiE – Early language learning in Europe* (pp. 23-43). London: British Council. Retrieved from www.teachingenglish.org.uk/publications/early-language-learning-europe.

Erarslan, A. (2016). *An evaluation of second grade English language curriculum: Teachers' perceptions and issues in implementation*. Doctoral Dissertation, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Çanakkale.

Erdem, S., & Toy, Y. B. (2017). Determination of the needs for foreign language oriented fifth grade English curriculum. *International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic, 12*(28), 259-280.

Erdoğan, V. (2005). *An evaluation of the English curriculum implemented at the 4th and 5th grade primary state schools: The views of the teachers and the students*. Master's Thesis, Mersin University, Mersin.

Ertürk, S. (1988). Türkiye'de eğitim felsefesi sorunu. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, 3*, 11-16.

Fraenkel, J. R., Wallen, N. E., & Hyun, H. H. (2012). *How to design and evaluate research in education*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Gardner, H. (1993). *Multiple intelligences: The theory in practice*. New York: Basic Books.

Gardner, H. (1999). *Intelligence reframed: Multiple intelligences for the 21st century*. New York: Basic Books.

Garton, S., & F. Copland (Eds.). (2019). *The Routledge handbook of teaching English to young learners*. New York: Taylor & Francis Group.

Glatthorn, A. A., Boschee, F., & Whitehead, B. M. (2006). *Curriculum leadership: Development and implementation*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Gordon, T. (2007). *Teaching young children a second language*. London: Praeger.

Graves, K. (2000). *Designing language courses: A guide for teachers*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Gress, J. R., & Purpel, D. E. (1988). *Curriculum: An introduction to the field*. Berkeley: McCutchan.

Halliwell, S. (1992). *Teaching English in the primary classroom*. London: Longman.

Haznedar, B. (2010, November). *Türkiye'de yabancı dil eğitimi: Reformlar, yönelimler ve öğretmenlerimiz*. Paper presented in International Conference on New Trends in Education and Their Implications, Antalya.

Hewitt, T. W. (2006). *Understanding and shaping curriculum: What we teach and why*. Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Huang, K. (2011). Motivating lessons: A classroom-oriented investigation of the effects of content-based instruction on EFL young learners' motivated behaviors and classroom verbal interaction. *System, 39*, 186-201.

Jansen, J. D., & Reddy, V. (1994). *Curriculum Analysis: A reference manual*. Paper presented at the Curriculum Development Workshop, Cape Town, South Africa. Retrieved from http://www.pitt.edu/~ginie/ieq/pdf/curranal.pdf.

Kambur, S. (2018). *An evaluation of 5th grade intensive English language curriculum in terms of teacher opinions*. Master's Thesis, Yeditepe University, Istanbul.

Kandemir, A. (2016). *İlkokul 2. sınıf İngilizce öğretim programının katılımcı odaklı program değerlendirme yaklaşımıyla değerlendirilmesi*. Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Pamukkale Üniversitesi, Denizli.

Kaya, S. (2018). *Evaluation of the middle school English language curriculum developed in 2012 utilizing Stake's countenance evaluation model*. Doctoral Dissertation, Middle East Technical University, Ankara.

Kelly, A. V. (2004). *The curriculum theory and practice*. London: Sage.

Kırkgöz, Y. (2007). English language teaching in Turkey: Policy changes and their implementations. *Regional Language Centre Journal, 38*(2), 216-228.

Kırkgöz, Y. (2008). Curriculum innovation in Turkish primary education. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 36*(4), 309-322.

Kırkgöz, Y. (2009). Globalization and English language policy in Turkey. *Educational Policy*, *23*(5), 663–684.

Kırkgöz, Y. (2019). Fostering young learners' listening and speaking skills. In S. Garton & F. Copland (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of teaching English to young learners* (pp. 171-187). New York: Taylor & Francis Group.

Küçük, Ö. (2008). *An evaluation of English language teaching program at key stage I and opinions of teachers regarding the program.* Master's Thesis, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Çanakkale.

Küçükoğlu, B. (2013). The history of foreign language policies in Turkey. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 70*, 1090 – 1094.

Larsen-Freeman, D., & Anderson, M. (2011). *Techniques and principles in language teaching*. London, England: OUP.

Lesiak, K. (2015). Teaching English to adolescents. *World Scientific News, 1*, 246-260.

Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2003). *How languages are learned*. Oxford: OUP.

Lindstromberg, S. (Eds.). (2004). *Language activities for teenagers*. Cambridge: CUP.

Linse, C. T. (2005). *Practical English language teaching: Young learners*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Littlewood, W. (1984). *Communicative language teaching*. Cambridge: CUP.

Lodico, M. G., Spaulding, D. T., & Katherine, H. V. (2006). *Methods in educational research: From theory to practice*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Lovat, T., & Smith, D. (1995). *Curriculum: Action on reflection revisited*. Sydney: Social Science.

MacKey, A., & Gass, S. (2005). *Second language research: methodology and design*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Marsh, C., & Willis, G. (2007). *Curriculum: Alternative approaches, ongoing issues.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.

McKay, P. (2006). *Assessing young language learners*. Cambridge: CUP.

McKay, S. (1980). Towards an integrated syllabus. In K. Croft (Eds.), *Readings on English as a second language* (pp. 72-84). Cambridge, Mass: Winthrop.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation, revised and expanded from qualitative research and case study applications in education.* San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Miles, B. M., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook.* USA: Sage.

Ministry of National Education. (2017). *English language curriculum for primary education (grades 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8).* Retrieved from http://mufredat.meb.gov.tr/ProgramDetay.aspx?PID=327.

Moon, J. (2005). *Children learning English*. London: Heinemann.

Moore, A. (2015). *Understanding the school curriculum: Theory, politics and principle*. New York: Taylor & Francis Group.

Nation, I. S. P., & Macalister, J. (2010). *Language curriculum design*. New York: Taylor & Francis Group.

Null, W. (2011). *Curriculum: From theory to practice*. United Kingdom: Rowman & Littlefield, Inc.

Nunan, D. (1988). *Syllabus design*. Oxford: OUP.

Nunan, D. (2001). *Aspects of task-based syllabus design*. Retrieved from: http://www.seasite.niu.edu/tagalog/teachers_page/language_learning_articles/aspects_of_taskbased_syllabus.htm.

Nunan, D. (2003). The impact of English as a global language on educational policies and practices in the Asia-Pacific region. *Tesol Quarterly, 37*(4), 589-613.

Nunan, D. (2013). *Learner-centered English language education: The selected works of David Nunan.* UK: Routledge.

O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge, UK: CUP.

Olivia, P. F. (1997). *Developing the curriculum*. United States: Longman.

Ornstein, A. C., & Hunkins, F. P. (2018). *Curriculum: Foundations, principles and issues.* Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited.

Oxford, L. R. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Oxford, R. L. (2003). *Language learning styles and strategies: An overview*. Oxford: GALA. Retrieved from http://web.ntpu.edu.tw/~language/workshop/read2.pdf.

Özkan, N. (2004). *Developing a syllabus for the fourth and fifth grades of the state schools in Turkey*. Doctoral Dissertation, Gazi University, Ankara.

Özmen, K. S. (2012). A study of the washback effect of exams and associated teacher burnout. *The Teacher Trainer Journal, 26*(3), 13-24.

Pinar, W. F. (2004). *What is curriculum theory?* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Rahimpour, M. (2010). Current trends on syllabus design in foreign language instruction. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *2*(2), 1660–1664.

Read, C. (2003). Is younger better? *English Teaching Professional*, *28*, 5-7.

Reilly, T. (1988). *Approaches to Foreign Language Syllabus Design*. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED295460.pdf.

Rich, S. (Eds.). (2014). *International perspectives on teaching English to young learners*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Richards, C. J. (1990). *The language teaching matrix*. Cambridge: CUP.

Richards, C. J. (2013). Curriculum approaches in language teaching: Forward, central, and backward design. *RELC Journal, 44*(1), 5–33.

Richards, C. J. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge: CUP.

Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today*. New York: CUP.

Rivers, W. M. (1981). *Teaching foreign language skills*. U. S. A: The University of Chicago.

Ross, A. (2000). *Curriculum: Construction and critique*. London: Falmer.

Sahin, E. (1991). *A needs assessment of teachers and students from engineering and tourism departments for designing a communicative ELT curriculum*. Master's Thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara.

Sarıçoban, G. (2012). Foreign language education policies in Turkey. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 46,* 2643-2648.

Scott, W. A., & Ytreberg, L. H. (1990). *Teaching English to children*. London: Longman.

Seçkin, H. (2011). İlköğretim 4. sınıf İngilizce dersi öğretim programına ilişkin öğretmen görüşleri. *Uluslararası İnsan Bilimleri Dergisi, 8*(2), 550-557.

Singleton, D., & Pfenninger, S. (2018). L2 acquisition in childhood, adulthood and old age: Misreported and underresearched dimensions of the age factor. *Journal of Second Language Studies, 1*(2), 254–275.

Snow, M. A., Met M., & Genesee, F. (1989). A conceptual framework for the integration of language and content in second/foreign language instruction. *TESOL Quarterly, 23*(2), 201-217.

Stemler, S. E. (2001). An Overview of Content Analysis. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 7(17), 1-10.

Stenhouse, L. (1975). *An introduction to curriculum research and development*. London: Heinemann.

Stern, H. H. (1983). *Fundamental concepts of language*. Oxford: OUP.

Storey, W. C. (2007). Insights into language curriculum development. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, 4*(1), 86–107.

Suna, Y., & Durmuşçelebi, M. (2013). Türkiye'de yabancı dil öğrenme-öğretme problemine ilişkin yapılan çalışmaların derlemesi. *Türkiye Sosyal Politika ve Çalışma Hayatı Araştırmaları Dergisi, 3*(5), 7-24.

Taba, H. (1962). *Curriculum development*: *Theory and practice*. New York: Harcourt Brace and World, Inc.

Tabari, A. G. (2013). Challenges of language syllabus design in EFL/ESL contexts. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 4*(4), 869-873.

Tanner, D., & Tanner, L. (1995). *Curriculum development*: *Theory and practice*. New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall.

TEPAV. (2014). *Türkiye'deki devlet okullarında İngilizce dilinin öğretimine ilişkin ulusal ihtiyaç analizi.* Retrieved from http://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1399388519-1.Turkiyedeki_Devlet_Okullarinda_Ingilizce_Dilinin_Ogrenimine_Iliskin_Ulusal_Ihtiyac_Analizi.pdf.

Tinsley, T., & Comfort, T. (2012). *Lessons from Abroad: International review of primary languages.* CfBT Educational Trust. Retrieved from https://www.educationdevelopmenttrust.com/EducationDevelopmentTrust/files/cc/ccead869-2418-4cad-b04a-d4ae98097448.pdf.

Tomlinson, C. A. (1999). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. USA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Topkaya, E. Z., & Küçük, Ö. (2010). An evaluation of 4th and 5th grade English language teaching program. *Elementary Education Online, 9*(1), 52-65.

Tunç, F. (2010). *Evaluation of an English language teaching program at a public university using CIPP model.* Master's Thesis, METU, Ankara.

Ur, P. (1996). *A course in language teaching: Practice and theory.* Great Britain: CUP.

Weir, C., & Roberts, J. (1994). *Programme evaluation in ELT*. UK: Blackwell.

Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2006). *Understanding by design: A Framework for effecting curricular development and assessment*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Wiles, J., & Bondi, J. (2007). *Curriculum development: A guide to practice*. N.J: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.

Wilkins, D. A. (1976). *Notional syllabus*. Oxford: OUP.

Wolf, M. K., & Butler, Y. G. (2017). *English language proficiency assessments for young learners*. New York: Routledge.

Yanık, A. (2007). *A study of English language curriculum implementation in 6th, 7th and 8th grades of public primary schools through teachers' and students' perceptions.* Master's Thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara.

Yücel, E., Dimici, K., Yıldız, B., & Bümen, N. T. (2017). An analysis of the primary and secondary school English language curricula published over the last 15 years. *Ege Eğitim Dergisi, 18*(2), 702-737.

Zhao, A., & Morgan, C. (2005). Consideration of age in L2 attainment: Children, adolescents and adults. In P. Robertson & J. Jung (Eds.), *English language learning in the Asian context* (pp. 28-34). British Virgin Islands: Asian EFL Journal.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Interview Questions for Teachers

Interview Questions for Teachers

1. How long have you been teaching English?
2. Are there any problems that you've encountered during the implementation of the 2017 ELTP in terms of themes, vocabulary, functions, outcomes and testing? What are they?
3. What do you think about the themes in the 2017 ELTP
 In terms of;
- appropriateness for students' level, interests and needs?
- compliance with the CEFR principles
- compliance with the objective of the syllabi?
- motivation?
- variety?

4. What do you think about the outcomes expected from the English program
In terms of;
- compliance with the CEFR principles
- compliance with the objective of the syllabi
- appropriateness for students' level, interests and needs
- integration of the skills appropriate to the learning stages
- feasibility
- comprehensibility

5. What do you think about the functions in the 2017 ELTP?
 In terms of;
- compliance with the CEFR principles
- compliance with the objective of the syllabi
- appropriateness for students' level, interests and needs
- appropriateness for using various teaching methods
- variety

6. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program?
 In terms of;
- language use
- addressing different learner styles/strategies
- developing a positive attitude towards the language
- testing
- suggested contexts and tasks/activities

7. What are your suggestions related to the 2017 ELTP?
- Which components of the program can be improved?
- What about including some lesson plan and exam samples?

Appendix B. The Checklist for Curriculum Analysis

Pedagogic Dimensions

- Language policy
- Theory of language
- Theory of learning and teaching
- Theory of testing
  - Alignment with the principles and descriptors of the CEFR
  - Diversity for addressing different learning strategies
  - Diversity for addressing different learning styles
  - Diversity for covering four language skills
  - Performance-based assessment methods
  - Alternative process-based assessment methods
  - Self-assessment
  - Peer-assessment
  - Formative assessment types
  - Summative assessment types
  - Compliance with the students' levels and cognitive traits
  - Compliance with the content
  - Flexibility in selection for teachers
  - Guidance and support for teachers
- Type of syllabi
- Format of syllabi
- Structure of the curriculum
- Format of the curriculum
- Inclusion of key competences and values
- Interrelation among the themes
- Appropriateness of syllabi content for each learning stage
- Harmony of all stages with each other
- The weekly hours of the English course at each grade
- Suggested contexts, tasks and assignments
  - Alignment with the principles and descriptors of the CEFR
  - Inclusion of key competences and values
  - Compliance with the themes
  - Compliance with the functions
  - Compliance with the outcomes
  - Appropriateness for students' levels
  - Appropriateness for students' interests
  - Appropriateness for students' needs
  - Appropriateness for using an eclectic mix of instructional techniques in the classroom
  - Motivating
  - Diversity for addressing different learning styles
  - Diversity for addressing different learning strategies
  - Authenticity
  - Flexibility in selection for teachers
  - Utilization of ICT and CALL materials
  - Feasibility

Appendix C. The Checklist for Syllabi Analysis

Themes	Vocabulary
• Alignment with the principles and descriptors of the CEFR • Alignment with the objective of the syllabus • Inclusion of Key Competences and Values • Appropriateness for students' levels • Appropriateness for students' interests • Appropriateness for students' needs • Motivating • Diversity for demonstrating the use of target language in different contexts	• Compliance with the themes • Compliance with the functions • Compliance with the outcomes • Appropriateness for students' levels • Appropriateness for students' interests • Appropriateness for students' needs • Organization • Adequacy of vocabulary load • Diversity for enhancing learning the target language • Pronunciation practice
Functions	**Outcomes**
• Alignment with the principles and descriptors of the CEFR • Alignment with the objective of the syllabus • Compliance with the themes • Compliance with the outcomes • Appropriateness for students' level • Appropriateness for students' interests • Appropriateness for students' needs • Appropriateness for using various teaching methods • Organization • Diversity for enabling students to acquire the skills	• Alignment with the principles and descriptors of the CEFR • Alignment with the objective of the syllabus • Compliance with the themes • Compliance with the functions • Appropriateness for students' level • Appropriateness for students' needs • Organization • Integration of skills appropriate to the learning stages • Clear and explicit statements • Achievability

Appendix D. The Distribution of Vocabulary across the Grades

Grades	Total Number of the Words	Distribution of Lexical Items Across the Grades					
		Nouns	Cognates	Verbs	Adjectives	Adverbs	Prefabricated Utterances
2	168	121	44	27	2	2	16
3	160	80	15	24	37	4	15
4	212	115	17	63	20	3	11
5	264	140	14	70	35	9	10
6	261	146	-	70	32	9	4
7	286	137	-	84	50	11	4
8	337	131	-	119	65	13	9

GAZİLİ OLMAK AYRICALIKTIR...