

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF TWO EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND
APPLICATION OF CURRICULUM PRINCIPLES

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Thesis Abstract

Akif ÇAL, “An Exploratory Study of Two EFL Teachers’ Perceptions and Application of Curriculum Principles”

To date curriculum implementation has been of interest to many researchers. Research in the area has mainly focused on the gap between stated curriculum principles and actual classroom practices, and the underlying factors that have affected the implementation of a curriculum. This study investigates the same phenomena by focusing on selected curriculum principles and their classroom practice. It focuses on two seventh grade ELT teachers’ implementation of (1) use of English in the classroom, (2) use of pair and group work, and the role of language teaching materials on their classroom practices. A teacher from a state school and a teacher from a private school were selected as participants. A case study design was used to investigate the participant teachers’ classroom practices of the curriculum principles and their perceptions of the materials they used. Data were collected through (1) semi-structured interviews, (2) classroom observations and video recordings, (3) teacher logs, and (4) documents that provided information on the curriculum. The findings of the study suggest that a gap exists between the curriculum principles and classroom practices of the participant teachers. Among the factors influential on the gap were (1) contextual factors (e.g. student profile, availability of resources), (2) teachers’ perceptions of the curriculum, and (3) the role of the institution. As for the materials, the data suggest that teachers perceived the materials as the curriculum itself. It was found that materials were also used for classroom management purposes.

Tez Özeti

Akif Çal, “İki İngilizce Öğretmeninin Müfredat Prensiplerini Algılama ve Uygulamaları
Üzerine Bir Araştırma”

Müfredat uygulaması şu ana kadar birçok araştırmacı tarafından incelenen bir konu olmuştur. Araştırmalar temel olarak müfredat prensipleri ve sınıf içi uygulamaların birbirleriyle örtüşüp örtüşmediği ve müfredat uygulanmasını etkileyen bağlamsal etkenler üzerinde durmuştur. Bu çalışma ise, seçilen belirli müfredat prensiplerinin sınıf içi uygulamalarına odaklanmıştır. Çalışmada iki yedinci sınıf İngilizce öğretmenin İngilizce müfredat prensiplerinden (1) İngilizce kullanımı, (2) grup çalışması ile dil öğretimi materyallerinin sınıf içi uygulamalara olan etkisi incelenmektedir. Çalışmada bir devlet okulu ve bir özel okul öğretmeni olmak üzere iki öğretmen yer almıştır. Bu öğretmenlerin müfredat prensiplerini sınıf içinde uygulamaları ve dil öğretimi materyallerini sınıflarında nasıl kullandıklarının incelenmesi için ‘vaka incelemesi’ tekniği kullanılmıştır. Bu çalışma için veri (1) mülakat, (2) ders gözlemi ve derslerin video kaydı, (3) ders değerlendirme formları ve (4) müfredatla ilgili dökümanlar yardımıyla toplanmıştır. Çalışmanın bulguları katılımcı öğretmenlerin sınıf içi uygulamaları ve müfredat prensipleri arasında bir boşluk bulunduğunu işaret etmektedir. Bu boşluğun oluşmasında etkenler (1) bağlamsal etkenler (öğrenci profili, kaynak yetersizliği gibi), (2) öğretmenlerin müfredatı algılamaları ve (3) kurumun rolü olarak belirlenmiştir. Bulgular ayrıca, öğretmenlerin, materyalleri müfredatın kendisi olarak algıladığını göstermiştir. Materyallerin sınıf yönetimi konusunda yardımcı bir araç olarak kullanıldığı da tespit edilmiştir.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Teachers are critical actors in building a bridge between policy makers' stated goals in curriculum documents (either governmental or institutional) and students in the classrooms. In foreign language education, the role of the teacher becomes even more evident as teachers need to take into consideration not only (1) curricular priorities, but also (2) political, social, cultural and historical contexts that language education will be placed in (Holliday, 1994). The second set of factors that can affect the classroom practices of teachers are more context-bound. They may prevent teachers from precisely and fully implementing fundamental principles of a language curriculum. For example, teachers may find it very difficult to practice group work activities while teaching English in an EFL (English as a foreign language) setting. These teachers may be hesitant to ask students to do group or pair work activities if the intended results (e.g. interaction in the target language) cannot be observable and they can go back to their regular, 'safest' way of teaching. Among the reasons of this preference of teachers are (a) cultural factors (perceptions of teacher's and students' roles), (b) teacher-related factors such as teachers' educational background and their beliefs about the right methodology, (c) the influence of materials, (d) large class size and (e) insufficient resources (Kırkgöz, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009).

Keeping these points in mind, this study will explore the implementation of the Ministry of National Education's (MNE) English language curriculum in two different

settings. The main purpose of the study is to explore the contextual influences on the implementation of the MNE's English curriculum principles.

Background and Current Status of English in Turkey

English is globally the most widely taught foreign language. The first connections between Turks and the English speaking world were established in the eleventh century during the Crusades. Goods coming from the English world have been sold since the sixteenth century in the Turkish market. Beginning with these political and economic affairs, English has been officially taught in Turkey since 1806, first in the State Navy Schools (Demircan, 1988). Until the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and after the foundation of the Turkish Republic, English continued to be taught at schools but it was only after World War II that English became a popular and prestigious language (König, 1990). Economic developments that took place after World War II were affective on the shift towards English as English was and still is seen as a tool for economic enhancement (Nunan, 2003). The economic program of the Democratic Party in the early 1950s was targeted at the Western World and the aim was to attract foreign investment and to lay the foundations of the 'free market economy' in Turkey (Aydın, 2005). The impact of global economy on the Turkish economy became apparent after the 1980s (Aydın, 2005), and is still going on after the newly established economic and political relationships with the United States and the Western World. These economic developments led to the emergence of new schools and universities. In the academic year 1955–1956, the first English-medium university, Middle East Technical University was opened (Demircan, 1988), and in the late 1970s, the first Anadolu (Anatolian)

school was opened, differing from standard high schools, these schools offered instruction in English (Doğançay-Aktuna & Kızıltepe, 2005) (however, it should be noted that almost none of these institutions, starting from 2005, is now offering subject area courses through English due to the shortage of qualified teachers). Among the organizational goals of Anatolian Schools is “to equip students with the desired proficiency of the foreign language to give them the opportunity to follow scientific and technological advancements in the world.”¹ In Turkey, as part of the 1997 educational reform, English became a compulsory subject in primary schools and primary education was extended from five years to eight years. In 2006, the 1997 curriculum was renovated and the new curriculum has been in use since then.

Researchers have identified many different reasons to explain why English is taught widely at different levels at schools in Turkey (e.g. Kırkgöz, 2005; Doğançay-Aktuna, 1998; Büyükkantarçioğlu, 2004). It should be noted that one single factor may not describe the current status of English as a second/foreign language in any context, including Turkey. As Bamgbose (2003) points out, the dominance of English may be “due to a number of factors such as population, prestige, status, functionality or nationalism in a context. English shares all these factors in different countries and may have more than one of the factors in the same country” (p. 419). The strategic and geopolitical status of Turkey, its efforts to open up to the Western world and its increasing relations with free market economies have been identified as factors affecting the popularity of English in Turkey (Kırkgöz, 2005; Doğançay-Aktuna, 1998). English

¹ Retrieved from <http://www.mevzuat.adalet.gov.tr/html/20426.html> on January 25, 2010.

has become widespread for pragmatic reasons as well. For example, Doğançay-Aktuna and Kızıltepe (2005) state that parents believe that graduating from an English-medium school will provide several opportunities for a student in the future such as getting into a prestigious university, studying abroad, and finding a good job. Likewise, Büyükkantarcıoğlu (2004) also sees the employment opportunities as a key factor in the popularity of English in Turkey. MEB English Language Curriculum states the importance of English as follows (2006, p. 16):

In our modern world, multilingualism and plurilingualism are highly encouraged because countries need people who are equipped with at least one foreign language to better their international relations socially, politically and economically. The teaching and learning of English is highly encouraged as it has become the lingua franca, in other words, the means of communication among people with different native languages. Furthermore, English is the official working language of the United Nations and NATO of which Turkey is a member.

English is not the primary means of communication in Turkey. It is hardly ever used in daily life for communication purposes. Turkey is considered to be a typical expanding circle country in Kachru's (1992) terms. Kachru identified three concentric circles of the language: (1) the inner circle (countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia where English is the native language), (2) the outer circle (countries like India, Pakistan, Kenya, Bangladesh where English may or may not be an official language but has some historical connections such as colonization with the country), (3) the expanding circle (countries like Turkey, Russia, Japan, Germany where English has no historical or governmental role but plays the role of language for international communication). As Turkey does not have any historical or governmental relation to English, English has been taught widely as an academic subject in primary and

secondary schools and many students experience their first encounter with English in formal school settings. People living in Turkey do not have enough opportunities to learn English in non-academic settings. English is the only compulsory foreign language taught at different grade levels in Turkey (Kırkgöz, 2007a).

Statement of the Problem

Research by Ricento and Hornberger (1996) argues that teachers are at the heart of language policy and the ones responsible for implementing the curriculum, thus language policy in general. They state that in countries with centralized education systems, education policies may be re-interpreted as they go through different layers (e.g. from the ministry to councils, from councils to provinces, from provinces to districts, from districts to schools, from schools to program directors and from program directors to teachers). This creates a crucial problem; as re-interpretation may occur at every layer, the goals of policy makers and goals of policy implementers (teachers) may not overlap. In other words, when it is assumed that an average teacher is fulfilling the requirements of a specific curriculum prepared by the curriculum committee at the national level, different scenarios may be at work in the local level. This results in a gap between what is intended to happen and what is actually happening in the classroom (Orafi & Borg, 2009).

Statement of the Problem in Its Specific Context

With the Ministry of Education Development Project, a new curriculum based on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles was introduced in Turkey in 1997

(Kırkgöz, 2008). The 1997 curriculum described the common learning objectives (e.g. to be motivated to learn the foreign language) and specific learning objectives (e.g. to form sentences using the adjectives studied) for each grade level, topics to be covered, and functions and structures. The 2006 curriculum, which was developed later, was an attempt to renovate the 1997 curriculum (MEB, 2006, p. 23). The 2006 curriculum includes more detailed guidelines as to how teaching and learning should take place in the foreign language classroom (e.g. teachers must use English constantly in the classroom to promote its use among students).

However, it was also understood that English teachers failed to implement the principles of the 2006 curriculum in the desired manner because of lack of understanding on the part of the teachers (MEB, 2008, p. 454). In the MEB 2008 report on the evaluation of primary education in Turkey, teachers have been criticized of following the ‘old type of teaching, which focused on structural aspects of the language’. This fact in the MNE 2008 report the evaluation of primary education in Turkey served as the motivating factor in the present study to explore the factors creating the gap between curriculum principles and classroom practices by focusing on contextual realities and their impact on classroom practices. In this report, teachers’ lack of understanding of the curriculum principles was stated as the factor that causes a gap between curriculum principles and classroom practices. This study intends to explore the classroom contexts in depth and aims to investigate if other factors than teachers’ understanding of the curriculum are in play in the successful implementation of the curriculum principles. The focus of this study will be on the ‘local’ as single cases afford

glimpses into complex interplays between policies, pedagogic practices and institutional constraints (Ramanathan & Morgan, 2007). The local cases in this study will provide insights in contextual influences on curriculum implementation.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This section will review the related literature on curriculum and curriculum implementation studies. Specific emphasis will be placed on factors that affect the implementation of curriculum principles in the classrooms. The Ministry of National Education's English curriculum for grade seven will also be explained in detail under this section.

Curriculum

Curriculum describes "what the students should learn in a course of study" (Ross 2000, p. 8). Curriculum documents inform us about the components of a specific academic topic to be learnt in a set period of time for a specific grade level. It refers to the planned learning guided by schools (Smith 2000). In a broader sense, Johnson (1989) defined curriculum as "a response to 'needs' of policy makers, learners and the entire society" (p. 2). In the Ministry of National Education's English Language Curriculum for Primary Education, curriculum is defined as "a statement which gives information about the learning objectives, content, methods, and evaluation" (MEB 2006, p. 22).

Rodgers (1989) proposed that educators considered the syllabus to be the curriculum. Nunan (1999) proposed definitions to distinguish curriculum from syllabus as the following:

Curriculum is concerned with the planning, implementation, evaluation, management, and administration of education programs. Syllabus, on the other hand, focuses more narrowly on the selection and grading of content.

(p. 8)

Syllabus prescribes the content to be covered while the educational program (curriculum) includes content of what students need to learn, guidance as to how they learn it, and how teachers should help them learn, specifying types of materials, styles and methods of assessment (Rogers, 1976 as cited in Rodgers, 1989).

Kelly (2009) listed types of curriculum as (1) the educational curriculum, (2) the total curriculum, (3) the 'hidden' curriculum, (4) the planned curriculum and the received curriculum, and (5) the formal curriculum and the informal curriculum (p. 7). For the purposes of this study, I will focus on 'the planned curriculum and the received curriculum'. Kelly described the planned curriculum as the difference between the curriculum that is laid down through curriculum documents and the received curriculum as the one that the students experience in the classroom.

The Parts of Language Curriculum

Language curriculum includes the processes of determining the needs of a group of learners, developing aims or objectives for a program to address those needs, developing an appropriate syllabus, course structure, teaching methods and materials, and evaluation of language teaching activities' (Richards, 2001, p. 2). Brown (1995) listed parts of language curriculum as (1) needs analysis, (2) objectives, (3) testing, (4) materials, (5) teaching and (6) evaluation.

Needs Analysis

Needs analysis is the series of procedures to collect information about learners' needs and may be used for a number of different purposes, some of which are:

- to find out what language skills a learner needs in order to perform a particular role
- to identify a gap between what students are able to do and what they need to be able to do
- to identify students who are most in need of training in particular language skills
- to help determine if an existing course adequately addresses the needs of potential students

(Richards, 2001, p. 52)

While the focus is on learners in needs analysis, additional bodies that can be involved in needs analysis are (1) the audience who will act upon the analysis (e.g. teachers, program administrators), (2) the needs analysts who are responsible for guiding the needs analysis procedure and (3) the resource group who provide information about the learners (e.g. parents, financial sponsors) (Brown, 1995, p. 37).

Objectives

Objectives are general statements about what must be accomplished in order to attain and satisfy students' needs (Brown, 1995). The general concern throughout education for accountability and cost effectiveness has prompted the specification of objectives in behavioral and verifiable forms (Johnson, 1989). In this respect, "statement of objectives can be the starting point for many curriculum development projects" (Kelly, 2009, p. 67).

Testing

Testing is the development of language tests based on a program's goals and objectives. Depending on the goals and objectives of a program, a language teacher may need to get involved in extensive test development for different purposes (Brown, 1995) as test construction is a matter of problem solving, with every teaching situation setting a different testing problem (Hughes, 2005).

Materials

Graves (2000) offers two ways to solve the 'problem' of materials in language curriculum development: (1) developing materials or (2) adapting materials. "Materials development is the planning process by which a teacher creates units and lessons within those units to carry out the goals and objectives of the course" (p. 149). A teacher can adopt, develop or adapt materials as long as the selected strategy fills the needs of students (Brown, 1995). However, each student's interpretation of a set of materials is still unpredictable and personal reactions to it may change, which makes the learning outcomes vulnerable to manipulation (Littlejohn & Windeatt, 1989).

Teaching

Language teaching is the transformation of thoughts into actions in the foreign language classroom (Larsen-Freeman, 2003). Although the literature is full of teaching models, it can be viewed as "a limited set of activities involved in implementing a language curriculum at the classroom level" (Brown, 1995, p. 179). "In language teaching programs, teaching models are often based on particular methods or approaches that are

compatible with the overall assumptions and ideology of the curriculum and of the language program” (Graves, 2000, p. 214).

Evaluation

“Language program evaluation is about the relationships between different program components, the procedures and epistemologies developed by the people involved in programs, and the processes and outcomes which are used to show the value of a program” (Kiely & Rea-Dickins, 2005, p. 5). It aims to “promote the improvement of the curriculum and to assess its effectiveness by making use of systematic collection and analysis of relevant information” (Brown, 1995, p. 24). Of the two types of evaluation, summative evaluation is concerned with appraisal of the work while formative evaluation is concerned to provide feedback (Kelly, 2009). Brown (1995) put evaluation at the centre of his model of designing language curriculum where evaluation interacts with all the parts of language curriculum.

Curriculum Implementation

Curriculum implementation is about putting the theoretical load, the written content of a curriculum statement into action in the classroom. The differences between curriculum principles and classroom practices have been of interest to many researchers (e.g. Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Kırkgöz, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009; Prapaisit de Segovia & Hardison, 2009; Ramanathan & Morgan, 2007; Silver & Skuja-Steele, 2005; Waters & Vilches, 2008). English language education policy and the classroom practices do not always draw parallel lines (Silver & Skuja-Steele, 2005). This is due to the fact that language planning and policy is a multilayered process. As the policies pass through

every layer, reinterpretations occur resulting from the conflict between the policies and the social and personal nature of the classroom which involves the setting, teacher and the students (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996).

The focus of curriculum implementation studies is generally the classroom practice in relation to the actual curriculum. Research has suggested that the intended curriculum and classroom realities may not always overlap for several reasons such as contextual factors, teachers' beliefs and attitudes as to what the best method of teaching is (Carless, 1999a; Orafi & Borg, 2009). Therefore, the taught curriculum (namely the curriculum that is in the classroom) results from teacher curriculum approaches which have been classified as (a) teachers as curriculum transmitters, (b) teachers as curriculum developers and (c) teachers as curriculum makers (Shawer, 2010). According to Shawer, teachers who are curriculum transmitters do not get involved in any type of curriculum development process but are only implementers of an externally produced curriculum. Teachers who are curriculum developers are those who adapt an existing curriculum to their teaching context. They can make changes when necessary. Finally, teachers who are curriculum makers make a curriculum solely for their own teaching context. These approaches can be shaped depending on the school structure and the approach it holds for curriculum implementation. While the curriculum developers and managers may assert that teachers should stick to the centralized curriculum, thus creating a transmitter profile for them, self-managing schools have the opportunity to develop or make their own curriculum (Brady, 1995).

In their study of the implementation of the English language curriculum in five different countries, Silver and Skuja-Steele (2005) explored how English language instruction in classrooms related to stated governmental policies. Silver and Skuja-Steele collected data by using teacher reports, interviews, and policy reports in five different countries: Switzerland, the USA, Singapore, Japan and China. They contend that although teachers showed awareness of policy initiatives related to language education and long-term needs of students, they focused on the immediate classroom priorities and teacher goals instead of closely following the curriculum. This study is important in demonstrating that teachers may disregard the curricular priorities for the sake of practical concerns related to classroom teaching, which created a gap between the curriculum and their classroom practices.

In a similar study, Orafi and Borg (2009) looked at teachers' implementation of a new communicative ELT curriculum in the Libyan context. The researchers used classroom observations and interviews with teachers to understand teachers' classroom practices in line with the principles of the new curriculum. They found that the intentions of the curriculum and the classroom practices of the teachers differed considerably. Based on their findings, the researchers concluded that when the curriculum writers do not take the contextual realities of the teaching setting into consideration, intake of the curriculum innovation becomes limited.

The studies described in this section showed that classroom practices and curriculum principles may not always be coherent with each other. Among the many

factors identified for the inconsistency, teacher-related factors and context-related factors stand out.

Curriculum Development: Macro and Micro Concerns

Curriculum development is a series of “activities that contribute to the growth of consensus among the staff, faculty, administration and students by involving people and paper operations together” (Brown, 1995, p. 19). This is done in schools, regions or at the national level, which brings about different concerns related to macro and micro settings (Trowler, 2003).

Policy-makers and curriculum developers organize teachers and their activities in a given time and setting. Holiday (1994) argued that policy makers, as the organizing body, should be aware of the local contexts that the policy they produce will be implemented in. When the organizing body is unaware of the actual context the teaching takes place in, the framework they have prepared to serve as a guideline is prone to fail. To prevent this, McKay (2003) pointed to the need that an appropriate pedagogy of ‘EFL’ needs to be informed by local expectations regarding the role of the teacher and the learner’ as well as national requirements. Clemente, Ramirez and Dominguez (2000) shared a similar view with McKay and suggested that teachers should be consulted before developing a curriculum. The researcher argues that teachers are more familiar with their teaching contexts than the curriculum writers, thus more able in determining their contextual needs.

In her study of a recent curriculum change in Uganda, Altinyelken (2010) explored the implementation of the ‘thematic’ curriculum for primary schools. She carried out interviews with teachers and principals and made classroom observations to collect data. She concluded that policy-makers were concerned about what to include in the curriculum at the curriculum development phase but they did not consider the contextual realities in Ugandan schools (e.g. lack of training opportunities for teachers, lack of physical resources) This resulted in a gap between the goals of the curriculum and teachers’ classroom practices. She suggested that the new national curriculum was not appropriate to the Ugandan context.

Altinyelken (2010) showed that when local realities are not taken into consideration, curriculum implementation does not take place in the desired manner. In the same way, Hu (2005) argued that local expectations and realities were sometimes disregarded when the curriculum was written at the national level. In his study with 252 participants from urban and rural areas of China, Hu looked into the effects of contextual realities on curriculum implementation by focusing on both developed and under-developed regions in China. He collected data through a questionnaire and interviews. The findings revealed that the classroom instruction was more closely linked to the features of communicative language teaching (CLT) in socioeconomically developed regions where ample resources (e.g. language teaching materials, training opportunities for teachers) were available. On the contrary, in the less developed areas which lacked necessary resources to implement the curriculum fully, classroom instruction was dominated by traditional type of teaching. He stated that the new ELT curriculum disregarded the contextual diversity between developed and less developed areas in

China which resulted in a gap between the features of the curriculum and classroom practices in less developed areas.

The studies show that when curriculum writers' intentions and local needs and realities do not match, teachers may encounter problems in implementing the curriculum.

Top-Down vs. Bottom-Up Approaches in Curriculum Development

A top-down approach to curriculum is the development of the curriculum by the central government and its dissemination to the periphery and might result in over-prescription: too tight control of the content and outcomes. Conversely, a bottom-up approach is the local attempts in the development of more context-dependent curriculum and might result in under-prescription: inability to meet the national requirements (Altrichter, 2005; Cowley & Williamson, 1998; Vanderberge, 1984). Woods (1991) called the top-down approach the "input model". In the input model, the planning body set the overall objectives for learning, a syllabus is designed to carry out those objectives and materials are developed to represent the syllabus, not always taking contextual factors into consideration. Because of their exclusionary nature of the local settings, top-down approaches to curriculum development were listed among the factors that created the gap between the curriculum and classroom practices.

Among the disadvantages of centralized, prescriptive curricula is that broader goals that are identified at the national level may exclude specific needs of more local groups of learners (Bennett, 2005). Centralized, top-down curricula list competencies and capabilities that they want learners to be equipped with descriptively and

prescriptively (Niesche & Jorgensen, 2010) with a ‘one size fits all’ approach (Owston, 2007; Rogan & Grayson, 2003). The consequence of ‘one size fits all’ approach is over prescription. To avoid this, Bezzina, et al. (2009) suggested tailoring of learning experiences to local and individual needs.

Some research suggests combining top-down and bottom-up approaches as a solution to the drawbacks of over-prescription and under-prescription (Holliday, 1994; Tudor, 2001; Nunan, 2003). Carless (1999b) proposed that adapting the curriculum to the micro-level (classroom) and macro-level (society) realities will result in a more bottom-up version of the originally top-down curriculum. Carless did not opt for a total digression from the original curriculum but a reinterpretation of the curriculum to suit the local context. This way, the curriculum would appeal more to the specific needs of learners. In order to make the curriculum more appealing to the local context and to obtain educational programs that meet the national requirements as well as local realities, Huang (2004) proposed three levels of participation of different parties in the curriculum development process: (1) state level, (2) local level, and (3) school level.

The localized curriculum in the Australian context was investigated by Cowley and Williamson (1998). Cowley and Williamson compared the practices of Australian schools with the practices of schools in England and Wales. The difference between the Australian schools and schools in both England and Wales was that the Australian teachers or authorities working with the national curriculum had the opportunity to re-interpret the curriculum to suit the local context by following the broad guidelines set by the national authorities. Observations, interviews and curriculum documents were used to collect data. The findings suggested that local interpretations of a national curriculum,

one which included top-down and bottom-up approaches to curriculum development together, worked satisfactorily in real school settings.

To show the drawbacks of top-down approaches in curriculum development, Waters and Vilches (2008) reported on a curriculum innovation project in Philippines. After dissatisfaction with student achievement at the basic education level in Philippines, a new curriculum was developed at the national level. The government noted that the previous curriculum was “overcrowded” and it had a “one-size-fits-all approach”. The Philippine government launched the new curriculum in 2002. After its release in 2002, the curriculum was evaluated annually by the government through case studies and the results were found to be dissatisfactory as the instructional practices did not match the learner profile of the schools. Under these circumstances, Waters and Vilches, through interviews and focus group discussions, explored the following issues: (1) main characteristics of the implementation strategy, and (2) perceptions about its effectiveness. Interviewees were selected from the national capital area and the central part of the Philippines to achieve a representative sample as these two areas are socially and economically different. Waters and Vilches’ findings indicated that the training opportunities provided for teachers were conducted in a top-down manner. No pilot studies before the nation-wide implementation of the innovation were carried out. Participants on the training seminars were responsible for training the rest of the staff at their institutions about the new approaches adapted in the new curriculum. Because the training seminars were structured as a ‘cascade’ model – top-down fashion – it resulted in an inadequate level of understanding of curriculum principles and practices by

teachers. Lack of financial resources, workload assigned to teachers and department heads, technological equipment problems, shortage of appropriate instructional materials, and very high numbers of students in each class were other factors identified by the data, which were not foreseen by the curriculum committee before the new curriculum was launched.

In order to argue whether top-down and bottom-up approaches to curriculum development could exist together, Brady (1995) listed some school-based curriculum development projects in the past. According to Brady, the reason governments did not favor bottom-up approaches to curriculum development was that governments wanted to optimize curriculum resources and make them available to every school within the same nation. The other factor that prevented governments from promoting bottom-up approaches to curriculum development was the governments' desire to minimize differences in curriculum between schools. Brady concluded that national requirements should prescribe what the students have to achieve, but the content to achieve the prescribed student profile should remain flexible. This way, schools have the opportunity to employ the curriculum that works in their local context.

In the discussion about the top-down and bottom-up approaches to curriculum development, the conflict between the centre and periphery becomes obvious. Research has shown that in nations with highly centralized educational systems (e.g. Turkey); this conflict is at its peak.

Curriculum and Teacher Attitudes

Researchers have suggested that successful implementation of a curriculum innovation means getting teachers to shift from what is ‘working’ in the classroom to the ‘new, untried’, something which is very likely to face resistance on the part of the teachers (Hunkins & Ornstein, 1988; Hunkins & Ornstein, 1989; Leithwood, 1981; Mojkowski, 2000; Watkins, 1983). Teacher attitudes to curriculum innovation have been identified as affecting the success of curriculum implementation. Carless (1999a) showed that when teachers develop a thorough understanding of and commitment to an innovation along with institutional support, curriculum implementation process becomes successful. However; if the innovation is incompatible with teachers’ existing attitudes, resistance to change is likely to occur. To overcome a possible problem like this, Waters and Vilches (2001) argued that implementing an ELT innovation involves analyzing a range of needs so that a sound strategy for maximizing the potential for adoption and ownership of the innovation by the teachers can be developed.

Karavas-Doukas (1996) also showed that teacher attitudes towards a proposed innovation can be one of the causes of discrepancy between prescribed theory and classroom practice in her study with Greek EFL teachers. Teachers’ existing beliefs about teaching may conflict with the philosophy of a new approach. She used an attitude scale to see fourteen EFL teachers’ attitudes towards the communicative approach. Then, she observed each teacher’s classroom instruction and concluded that although teachers hold favorable attitudes towards the communicative approach, their classroom practices deviated considerably from the principles of the communicative approach. She

concluded that sole reliance on attitude scales for similar types of research could be deceiving, in-depth analyses would yield better interpretations. Kennedy & Kennedy (1996) took a similar stance to that of Karavas-Doukas (1996) and suggested that teacher attitudes should not be taken as the only indicator of change implementation, therefore they advised going into the classroom to evaluate the implementation of change.

Writers' Intentions and Teachers' Perceptions

The implementation of a curriculum also depends on teachers' perceptions of the curriculum in the same way as the writers' or vice versa which affect the interpretation of the curriculum by the teacher in terms of content and methods (Woods, 1991). Shkedi (2009) defined the curriculum as a narrative and showed that the curriculum in this narrative form could take three different shapes based on teachers' perceptions: curriculum frame narrative, curriculum task narrative and curriculum meta-narrative. The curriculum frame narrative, according to Shkedi, described how learning and teaching should take place. The frame narrative is the prescribed curriculum. This view is in line with the definitions of the curriculum in this study. The curriculum task narrative is related to the actual classroom practices of teachers who implement the curriculum. This is the perceived curriculum in Kelly's terms (2009). Lastly, the curriculum meta-narrative is about teachers' ideologies and theories regarding the curriculum they implement, which influenced their classroom practices. Shkedi portrayed in his study that the way teachers perceived the curriculum resulted in a gap between the writer's curriculum and the teacher's curriculum as teachers' perceptions were not always in line with writers' intentions.

Curriculum Implementation Studies in Turkey

Kırkgöz (2007) and Kırkgöz (2008) portray the teachers' classroom practices in the EFL classroom in the Turkish context by focusing on the 1997 curriculum innovation. These two studies resemble the present study in terms of their design, methodology and purposes.

Kırkgöz (2008) was conducted in Turkey at the primary level. With the 1997 language curriculum, which emphasized the tenets of the Communicative Language Teaching (MEB, 1997), a shift in pedagogy from teacher-centered to student-centered was targeted. According to Kırkgöz, this led to a gap between the official rhetoric and classroom practices as the principles to be practiced were unfamiliar to the teachers. Kırkgöz defined the factors influential in following a sound curriculum innovation as (1) teachers' understandings of innovation, (2) teachers' background training, (3) lack of guidance, (4) influence of textbooks, (5) large class size, and (6) insufficient resources. Kırkgöz selected two factors as the key points to the discussion in her paper, namely: (1) teachers' understandings of the innovation and (2) teacher training.

The study involved case studies of thirty two Turkish teachers of English. Kırkgöz tried to elicit explanations to the following points: (1) the teacher's familiarity with the COC (communication oriented curriculum) principles, and the extent to which they were actually implementing those principles in TEYLs (teaching English to young learners), (2) the teachers' understanding of COC and TEYLs, (3) the role of the teachers' prior training experience in their implementation of COC and TEYLs. She used classroom observations to see the classroom practices of the innovation. She also

used interviews to understand the teachers' perceptions of the requirements of TEYLs and COC.

After analysis of the data, Kırkgöz listed three types of teachers in relation to curriculum implementation: (1) transmission-oriented teachers (least oriented towards COC), (2) eclectic-oriented teachers, (3) interpretation-oriented teachers. She highlighted the importance of understanding theoretical principles which build up the innovation in successful implementation of the innovation by teachers along with the role of teacher training in successful curriculum implementation. The fact that lack of opportunities for teachers to learn new concepts, new ways of presenting content and new ways of interacting with students led to a failure in effective practice of the curriculum was emphasized.

Kırkgöz (2007) shows the implementation of a curriculum innovation in Turkey related to English as a foreign language planning practices. She depicts an image showing Turkey's global importance coming from Turkey's strategic and geopolitical role in the world. Kırkgöz reviews the 1997 curriculum in terms of introduction of English teaching in primary education, ELT planning at macro and micro levels in primary education, introduction of learning materials and the assessment policy of the MNE, and ways to manage curriculum innovation.

Kırkgöz (2007) tried to explore the teachers' classroom practices and use of methodology in teaching young learners; appropriateness of MNE's ELT curriculum in terms of age and cognitive development to young learners; and finally teachers' perceptions and their suggestions for improvement. She collected data from fifty

teachers of English. She collected data through questionnaires (given to the whole group of participants), interviews (a total of seven interviewees), and one-hour classroom observations of eighteen volunteer teachers. She found that the MNE's objectives of communication did not match the classroom practices. The newly proposed CLT tenets did not seem to make a significant change in teachers' classroom practices. Teachers continued to practice their existing ways of teaching, which, most of the time, were not congruent to CLT.

Kırkgöz (2007) summarizes the difficulties in implementing a curriculum innovation project in Turkish state primary schools as (1) lack of training opportunities for teachers, (2) teachers' lack of understanding the proposed change, (3) limited number of lessons devoted to teaching, (4) overloaded nature of the curriculum, (5) large class sizes in primary schools, and (6) the activities in the main source books that were alien to students' local context.

Methodologies in Curriculum Implementation Studies

The discussion about curriculum implementation studies aimed at exploring the nature and methodology in these studies and their results. Majority of the studies used a qualitative approach but relied on different types of data collection methods. The following table summarizes the methods used to collect data in the above-mentioned studies.

Table 1. Data Collection Methods of the Studies Outlined

Study	Observations	Interviews	Questionnaires	Documents	Teacher Logs
Silver & Skuja-Steele (2005)		•		•	•
Orafi & Borg (2009)	•	•			
Carless (1999a)	•	•		•	
Altinyelken (2010)	•	•			
Hu (2005)		•	•		
Waters & Vilches (2008)		•			
Shawer, 2010	•	•			
Clemente, et al. (2000)			•		
Shkedi (2009)	•	•		•	
Karavas-Doukas (1996)	•		•		
Kırkgöz (2008)	•	•		•	
Kırkgöz (2007)	•	•	•	•	
Cowley & Williamson (1998)	•	•		•	

Table one suggests that the prevailing data collection methods for curriculum implementation studies reviewed are classroom observations and interviews. Silver and Skuja-Steele study (2005) stands out because ‘teacher logs’ were used as a data source. Through teacher logs, Silver and Skuja-Steele aimed at eliciting personal evaluations of the lessons of the participant teachers. Interviews and questionnaires are useful ways to collect data about the classroom practices of teachers but they leave out teachers’

reflections. Silver and Skuja-Steele achieve combining classroom data coming from observations and interviews with personal reflections of the teachers through teacher logs.

Purpose of the Study and Theoretical Framework

The studies outlined so far pointed out a very important phenomenon in curriculum implementation, which is the conflict between the realities of local contexts and the principles of national education programs. The literature surveyed has suggested that when planned at the national level without flexibility, curricula may fail to understand and appeal to the whole picture.

The main purpose of the study is to explore how two teachers, one from a state school and one from a private school, implement the selected curriculum principles in their specific contexts of teaching. I tried to take a stance against the issue by considering Silver and Skuja-Steele's (2005) study.

Silver and Skuja-Steele approached the English language curriculum by considering two priorities of a language policy: structural priorities and classroom priorities. Structural priorities involved four components that are identified by policymakers: (1) allocation of time to English, (2) syllabus, (3) assessment, and (4) materials. Classroom priorities involved two components and are related to the specific contexts of teaching rather than to the broad goals of the educational system: (1) lesson focus and (2) teaching approach.

There are differing approaches to curriculum implementation in the selected schools for this study. While the state school is following the Ministry of National Education's English language curriculum for primary education, the private school is following the same curriculum with local re-interpretations. This means that although the curriculum framework for these two institutions is the same, classroom practices of the same curriculum will tend to vary. This fact about the schools' approach to curriculum implementation gives me the motivation to take Silver and Skuja-Steele (2005) as my theoretical framework. These researchers focused on the influence of contextual factors on classroom practices in five different countries. In my case, I will focus on contextual factors that can affect curriculum implementation process in two structurally different schools of the same country.

I will describe the national English language curriculum for primary education in Turkey by using the structural priorities (allocation of time to English, syllabus, assessment and materials) defined by Silver and Skuja-Steele (2005); I will take into consideration the classroom priorities during the analysis of classroom data.

The ELT Curriculum for Grade Seven

Released in 2006, the MNE's English curriculum contains information as to why English is taught in schools in Turkey (see 'English in Turkey' above), introduction to different methods and approaches to teach English with greater emphasis on communicative methodology, approaches to course design and its components (curriculum, syllabus, and evaluation) and information on course materials. The MNE's English language curriculum for primary education has been prepared in the form of a

guide book for teachers. Instead of directing the teachers by laying out rigid principles, the curriculum lists principles belonging to various ELT methods and approaches. Although the curriculum developers have stated what they want the teachers to achieve, they have not specified how teachers are going to go for it (Smith, 2000). Instead of solid curricular aims and guidelines, teachers are left with alternative approaches and methods which may result in lack of understanding of the curriculum on their part.

Allocation of Time to English

Allocation of time to English in a country is linked to the status of English in that country (Silver & Skuja-Steele, 2005). English has a foreign language status in Turkey, and it gained more importance after the curriculum reform that occurred in 1997 (Kırkgöz, 2005). As Silver and Skuja-Steele discuss, the time devoted to English instruction is less if English has a foreign language status compared to countries where English has a second-language or official language status. The MNE English language curriculum (2006) states that students will have two hours of compulsory and two hours of elective English course in grade seven. It is clear from the MNE's curriculum that the maximum class hours a student can be exposed to is four in state primary schools. In contrast, as Kırkgöz 2007 points out, private schools can increase the number of teaching hours allocated to English.

Syllabus

Nunan (1989) suggests that although there is controversy among specialists on the nature of language and language learning, curriculum developers need to take into

account the data coming from classroom teachers and researchers. Syllabus design is a very complex activity and requires a deep understanding of the learning environment as “the group dynamics around regions and institutions can be very different which in turn affects the teachers differently” (Breen, 2002, p. 281). Yet, the MNE’s approach to syllabus design illustrates a centralized, top-down manner because the complete syllabi for each grade level appear in the English language curriculum for primary education, which all the teachers teaching primary grades in Turkey are bound to follow. If officials make changes to the syllabus, they are supposed to implement the changes nationwide, in all 33769 primary schools including the private primary schools (MEB, 2009). The syllabi for the primary grades are a combination of notional/functional, task and skills-based syllabi types and they are textbook-based, written by academics from a state university in Ankara and committee members coming from the Curriculum and Assessment Board. Such a top-down approach to syllabus design might involve certain risks. First, there is the risk that knowledge of policy makers clashes with local knowledge. It is stated by Rajagopalan (2005, p. 99) that scholars producing specialist knowledge, as the case in the production of a national education curriculum in Turkey, “come from the heartland of academia and are generally persons with plenty of bookish knowledge, but often with little practical or hands-on experience”. Second, there is the risk that stated tenets and principles of the curriculum are not put into practice fully in classroom settings. Current English language education curricula come from Ankara and it is assumed that they will be practiced in the same way following the same principles. However, curriculum implementation studies reviewed in the present study suggest that there are multiple factors that hinder successful curriculum implementation, especially in

settings with centralized curricula. Finally, the fact that the national language curriculum has been developed to be implemented in 33,769 primary schools means that each and every school will have to possess more or less the same facilities available while putting the curriculum into action (cassette/CD players, computers and necessary software for Dyned applications, VHS/DVD players).

The curriculum has a communicative syllabus. “It does not list linguistic elements that the learners need to learn but it gives functions that the learners are expected to master to enhance their communicative skills” (Nunan, 1999, p. 11) (syllabus for the seventh grade with the learning objectives can be found in MEB, 2003, p. 165).

Assessment

It is proposed by the MNE English language curriculum that evaluation procedures should be in line with teaching methods and techniques and the curriculum suggests employing *The Principles and Guidelines* by the Council of Europe. The curriculum developers suggest utilizing the Language Passport (to provide the student with an overview of his or her proficiency in English at a given time), the Language Biography (to help the student be involved in planning, reflecting upon and assessing the learning process and progress), and the Dossier (to give the opportunity to the student to select materials to document and illustrate achievements or experiences recorded in the Language Biography or Passport). Regarding concerns of proficiency and educational

experience, the MNE recommends use of the Dossier for the first (grades four and five) and second (grades six, seven, and eight) stages of primary education.

Tests have been described by the curriculum as tools whose aim is to measure how much progress the learner has made in terms of the objectives of the course and where s/he stands compared to other learners locally or nationally. The curriculum lists types of alternative assessment to be used along with tests to assign a course grade to students (For a sample test for grade seven see Appendix A).

Apart from the common exams and in-class performance grades, students in the second stage of the primary education in Turkey have to take an exam at the end of each school year to move to an upper grade. According to the MNE's regulations for passing onto a secondary education institution, a student has to take a placement test to be placed into a secondary education institution. One other aim of these standardized tests is to measure learning within the academic year. Test items are written based on the national curriculum.

Materials / Textbooks

Although it was stated to belong to classroom priorities, remarks coming from the teachers made Silver and Skuja-Steele (2005) add textbooks into the priorities related to the curriculum. The other reason the present study is examining textbooks / materials in this section is the fact that textbooks for the English language curriculum in Turkey have been prepared under the guidance of the MNE and shows uniformity all around Turkey which suggests national control of curriculum at every school (Schmidt & Prawat,

2006). However, the fact that private schools have to apply the same basic curriculum with the opportunity to choose materials according to their needs creates a difference between my cases.

A teacher of English does not have any other choice but to stick to the textbooks supplied by the Ministry. Nevertheless, he/she is given the opportunity to enrich his/her course content by making use of additional materials such as visual materials (posters, flashcards, board games, maps, photos, cartoons, puppets, pamphlets, newspapers, magazines, overhead projector, the opaque projector, slides, filmstrips, computer software/hardware, DVD and video cassettes, etc.), and audio materials (cassettes, records, CD players, multimedia lab, etc.) along with printed materials (the course book, teacher's book and workbook supplied by the ministry). The fundamental problem with the MNE's list of suggested materials is the question of availability of these materials in schools. Is the MNE leaving the teachers free to select these materials as they feel the need to, or just trying to present them the types of materials that can be used while teaching a foreign language? These are the questions that need to be answered.

The Curriculum Principles

The MNE's curriculum underwent a change in 1997 and the language education program in Turkey was re-adjusted to fit to the communicative approach to language teaching (Kırkgöz 2005, Kırkgöz 2007) Another innovation for the English curriculum was introduced in 2006 with renewed textbooks, content and learning objectives which were expanded and integrated into the syllabus compared to the old curriculum. While

the old curriculum listed functions, structures and vocabulary to be mastered for each grade level (MEB, 1997); “the new English language curriculum for primary education aims to develop learners’ communicative abilities” (MEB, 2006, p. 23). “A learner’s communicative ability is his ability to use the linguistic system spontaneously and flexibly to express his intended message” (Littlewood, 1981, p. 6). The year 1997 was important in another aspect too; it was the year when English was introduced to the primary grades in state schools. The fact that teaching English started from an early age (grade four) after 1997 meant there was a need to change the content and nature of language activities. In the MNE English language curriculum, teachers are supplied with different tasks and activities they can use with teenagers in English classrooms, for example, group work, project work, using different warmers before each class, games, etc. The MNE English curriculum offers an explanation as to how adolescents learn, and defines them as young, impressionable, and less motivated individuals with frequent discipline problems. Under these circumstances, the committee set some principles to be followed while teaching this group of learners. The following principles belong to grades six, seven, and eight and curriculum principles for these grade levels as stated in the documents are:

- Group work should be used.
- Project work should be encouraged to give each student the opportunity to discover their talents.
- Simulations and dramatizations should be employed.

- Activities to increase learner autonomy should be employed.
- Student-talk-time (STT) should be maximized, teacher-talk-time (TTT) should be minimized.
- Students must be encouraged to use only English in class.
- The teacher must use only English in class.
- Fluency should be stressed rather than accuracy.
- Students should be given projects to do outside the classroom.
- Students should be encouraged to design lessons or materials to be used in class.
- Students should be instructed on how to use the available resource centers.
- Students should be asked to keep a diary of their learning experiences.
- Teacher/student roles should be explained from the outset.
- Students should be encouraged to work collaboratively.
- Prediction and participation should be used in class.

In this study the following curriculum principles were investigated:

- The teacher must use only English in class and he/she must encourage students to use only English in class

- Group/Pair work should be used

These principles were chosen because of two reasons. First, use of English, both by the teacher and the student, is heavily emphasized in the MNE English curriculum, which constitutes my rationale for the selection of these principles: “Our ultimate aim is to have classes in which teachers and students always speak English.” (MEB, 2006, p. 6). It is clear from the MNE English curriculum that students and teachers are expected to speak in the target language at an optimum level. However, the MNE curriculum warns the teachers that if the students insist on speaking in the first language, the teacher should still respond to them in English; thus, providing a good role model to the students. Second, most of the activities that the MNE recommends to be used in class require pair/group work. Use of pair/group work is helpful in these aspects (Richards, 2006, p. 18):

1. Students have a chance to learn by hearing their friends’ language use.
2. Pair/group work activities give opportunities to students to generate language more than teacher-fronted activities.
3. Student motivation is likely to increase with these kinds of activities.
4. Students will have a chance to develop fluency.

Pair/group work activities give way to communication and interaction between students, meaning that the changing roles of both the teachers and students become clearer.

However, some teachers stated that these activities were causing problems and not

serving to communicative goals, as students are freer and can switch to the mother tongue (Orafi & Borg, 2009).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research methods used in this study. The chapter has five sections: (1) research methodology, (2) selection of participants (including background information about the participant teachers and the schools they worked), (3) data collection instruments, (4) verification procedures, and (5) data analysis.

Research Methodology

The following is the main research question in this study:

How does the context inform the implementation of specific curriculum principles by two teachers working at different schools?

The main research question is broken into three sub-questions.

- a) What is the role of language teaching materials in the EFL classroom?
- b) What is the role of the target language in the EFL classroom?
- c) What is the role of pair/group work activities in the EFL classroom?

Selection of Participants

Selection of the case is important in case studies because the case(s) should be typical or representative of other cases. Case study research is not sampling research (Stake, 1995). Rather than a random selection approach, informative cases were selected for this study to present contextual influences on curriculum implementation. The private school in this study is a well-known and established school in Istanbul and is especially famous

for its English program. The state school was chosen on a convenience sampling basis as only one of the teachers I contacted agreed to participate in the study. The teachers stated time limitations as a reason for not participating. They also expressed concern about being observed or video-recorded.

Background of the Participants

Two teachers from a state school and a private school agreed to participate in this study. They were both non-native English teachers with Turkish background.

The Private School Teacher

The private school teacher had a total of fourteen years of experience teaching English as a foreign language. He had an ELT degree which he obtained from Marmara University, Turkey. In the rest of the thesis, I will refer to the private school teacher as Ahmet, a pseudonym assigned to him to keep his identity confidential.

Ahmet has worked for private schools throughout his career; however, he was in his second year at his current institution at the time of the study. He started to work at this school in 2008 on yearly contract. His contract is renewed every year by the school board based on his performance.

At the time of data collection, Ahmet was teaching English in grade seven, eight and the high school preparatory program. He had twenty two teaching hours per week. He worked with level coordinators at each grade level, who were also English teachers and responsible for maintaining coordination between teachers at the same grade level.

Ahmet also worked with a department head whose duties involved mentoring English teachers in their work;

The State School Teacher

The state school teacher had a total of four years of experience teaching English as a foreign language. She had an ELT degree which she obtained from Konya Selçuk University, Turkey. In the rest of the thesis, I will refer to the state school teacher as Zeynep, a pseudonym assigned to her to keep her identity confidential.

Before starting to work at a state school, Zeynep worked at a university as an English teacher. She took the national test which is a requirement to obtain a teaching position in state schools and passed. In 2008, she started to work in her current school.

Table two summarizes information about the participants of this study.

Table 2. Participant Teachers

Participants	Zeynep	Ahmet
Age	26	37
Degree	BA	BA
Teaching Experience	4 years	15 years
Type of School	State Primary	Private Primary
Grades Taught at the time of Study	4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8	7 – 8 – High School

Nature of Case Studies

A case study approach to collect data in qualitative research was adopted as the main purpose of the study is to understand particularity and complexity of the institutions

involved (Stake, 1995). The perspectives of the participants and the classroom practices have been highlighted with thick descriptions of the teaching contexts.

Gerring (2007) defined a case study as “the intensive study of a single case where the purpose of that study is to shed light on a larger class of cases” (p. 20). A case can be “a single person, a single community, a single organization or a single event” (Gillham, 2000, p. 1). Types of case are (1) the critical case, (2) the unique case, and (3) the typical case. In each type of case studies, the goal of the researcher is to generate theory out of the findings (Bryman, 2008, p. 57-59).

In line with the aims of case studies, several methods to collect data were used in this study. The main aim was to understand the particularity and complexity of the cases through various data sources, instead of relying on a single one.

Data Collection Instruments

Qualitative data was collected for this exploratory study. The aim is to explore the implementation of the national curriculum in two different types of schools in Istanbul. The main purpose of the study is to present contextual influences on classroom practices.

According to the Ministry of National Education regulations, all research involving school settings carried out by researchers from universities has to be evaluated by a special committee. After preparing the documents and explaining my purposes for this study, I applied to the Ministry for the permission to collect data in schools. After I was granted the permissions, I started to collect data.

Data sources for this study were identified according to Holliday's (2002) classification of qualitative data to guarantee that each selected source could count as data in order to establish trustworthiness, thus reliability and validity for the present study.

There are four sources of data in this study: (1) teacher logs, (2) video recordings/observations of lessons, (3) interviews with participant teachers, (4) various documents related to the curricula in both schools. The first three data sources provided information on pedagogical practices of the teachers and the last one provided information on governmental policies. First, I present a general view of the data in table three, and then explain each data source in detail.

Table 3. Data Collection Procedures

Participants	Zeynep	Ahmet
Number of Interviews	6	7
Length of Interviews	73 Minutes	85 Minutes
Classes Recorded/Observed	16 class hours of 40 minutes	15 class hours of 40 minutes
Teacher Logs	14 logs	11 logs

There are differences between the two cases in terms of numbers and duration of data types. The difference between numbers of interviews is because I needed to call Ahmet for a phone interview to ask for some further clarifications about an instance that appeared in the data at a later stage of data analysis. Number of class hours observed/video-recorded varied slightly because there were clashes in Ahmet's weekly schedule with the exams. Ahmet had to proctor exams of other subject area courses in

English lessons as the examinations for all students at a specific grade level take place at the same teaching slot. Finally, the difference between numbers of teacher logs stemmed from the fact that Ahmet did not fill out a teacher log for each lesson consistently because he was very busy.

Teacher Logs

Teacher logs served as a tool to show “description of event” (Holliday, 2002, p. 70). Each teacher participating in the study was responsible for keeping a report of his/her class. The two participant teachers filled out the logs for each lesson observed/recorded. I adopted the logs from Silver and Skuja-Steele (2005) without making any changes in the logs. The logs were designed in a way that would enable the teacher to both state the focus and learning objectives of a certain teaching period and express personal thoughts for the same period (Silver & Skuja-Steele, 2005). They gave the teacher the chance to make self-evaluations after each teaching period. Teacher logs were included as a data source in order to show the links between each observed class and the teacher’s rationale behind his/her actions. Teacher logs also provided the interaction pattern in the classroom suggesting whether the interaction took place in a ‘teacher to student’, ‘student to teacher’ or ‘student to student’ fashion.

Video Recordings and Classroom Observations

Video recordings and classroom observations were used to show “behavior in setting” (Holliday, 2002, p. 71). All the class hours taught by the state school teacher during the time of instruction were recorded. The purpose of the recordings was to obtain the live image of the teacher in the actual classroom teaching environment in order to explore

the stated points in the teacher logs at work. This data also helped the researcher complement and triangulate the data from teacher logs.

All the students in the state primary school were made aware of the purpose of video recordings and necessary documents were sent to parents for approval. After every student submitted signed permission of the parents, video recordings started. A digital video recorder was used to record the classes in the state school. The participant teacher in the state school set up the equipment before each class and she handed the recordings to me every weekend. Direct observation of classes was not possible to logistical reasons.

Classroom observations were carried out in the private school as the school board did not allow the researcher to video record the classes for concerns of confidentiality. The observed classes in the private school were audio-recorded as well. I entered the classroom with the English teacher and took up the role of the observer. Neither the teacher nor the students felt disturbed during the observations. The teacher was a colleague of mine and all the students were my students from the previous year, thus, they knew me as an English teacher very well. The purpose of the observations was explained to the students before the classroom observations started. During the observations, I tried to take an outsider's stance to the whole image of the classroom by maintaining a certain space between myself and the rest of the group including the teacher.

Interviews with Participant Teachers

An interview before the classroom observations was conducted with both teachers to find out about their familiarity with the curriculum principles they were supposed to follow (focusing on the selected ones for this study) and to provide demographic background information about them. I prepared the questions about the Ministry's English language education curriculum and its principles by considering my goals for this study. The first interview lasted about forty minutes with each teacher. Questions focused on teachers' educational background, the Ministry of National Education's English language curriculum, how the curriculum was developed, organization of the institutions, teaching practices, personal views on group work activities and use of the first and second language in the EFL classroom. Interviews with the teachers took place with the teachers in their apartments on a one-to-one basis. Each interview was audio-recorded and then transcribed for analysis. Sample interview questions can be found in Appendix B.

Weekly-interviews gave the opportunity for further clarifications in the log entries and observed classes when necessary. Weekly-interview questions were developed depending on the entries in teacher logs and video recordings and observation notes of the classrooms. Duration of the interviews varied from two minutes to fifteen minutes. For some instances observed in the classroom, repetitive questions were asked in different interviews. As the teaching practices became clearer after the observations and interviews, time spent on interviews decreased. Interviews provided "accounts" for the researcher's requests of clarifications (Holliday, 2002, p. 71). After video recordings and observation notes were checked for each week, a post-interview took place.

Classroom practices and their relation to the curriculum were the main focus in the interviews. Phenomena such as use of Turkish and English in the foreign language classroom and use of pair/group work were explored in the interviews. However, questions related to what happened in the classroom were also asked. All the interviews were conducted in Turkish to create a friendlier atmosphere and give more chances to teachers to express their opinions fully while answering interview questions.

During the analysis of the data, I needed to ask a few more questions to Ahmet, the private school teacher. Because he was not in Istanbul then, I had to carry out a phone interview, which I recorded and transcribed.

Documents

Documents pertaining to the teaching contexts were collected to get an overview of the teaching programs (Holliday, 2002, p. 71). “The English Language Curriculum for Primary Education” published online by the Ministry of National Education documents the core language curriculum for all schools in Turkey. Other documents such as yearly plans were also examined. Documents related to the grade seven curriculum were my sources that gave me information about the curriculum principles and the way they should be followed by teachers teaching under the Ministry of National Education in Turkey.

The private primary school in this study enriched the core curriculum published by the Ministry by using the principles of the Middle Years Program (MYP) by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). “From Principles into Practice” guide

by the IBO (2008) was also examined to have a deeper understanding of the nature of MYP.

Verification Procedures

To build credibility, I used three different verification procedures used for qualitative research.

Prolonged Engagement

“Prolonged engagement provides a foundation for credibility by enabling the researcher to learn about the culture of an organization or other social setting over an extended time period that reduces the conflict which may arise from the newness of researchers and respondents to each other’s presence” (Erlandson, 1993, p. 133). I have been teaching grade six, seven and eight curriculum for two years at the private school in Istanbul which is the focus of this study. My knowledge of the curriculum and the school setting equipped me with necessary information to shed light on different phenomena as they occurred. I did not find it difficult to understand when the teacher working at the private school explained his rationale behind his practices. Also, the fact that the teacher in the private primary school was a colleague of mine facilitated my research by providing credibility as both a researcher and a teacher. Finally, my knowledge of the state school system coming from my sixteen-year experience as a student in state schools gave me the chance to look at things from an alternative point of view.

Triangulation

Triangulation, in its most general form, is “the use of multiple methods of data in a single investigation in order to arrive at the same research findings. Triangulation reduces observer or interviewer bias and enhances validity and reliability” (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 146). I consistently used three different sources to obtain the data for this study; semi-structured interviews, video recordings/observations of classes, and teacher logs. Various documents related to grade seven curriculum also provided extra information on the educational programs. Semi-structured interviews started with the first interview before seeing the classroom practice and gave me the opportunity to have background information about the teachers, their schools, their familiarity with the curriculum, and their approaches to teaching. Video recordings/observations of classes were a way to see the teaching practice in action to establish links between participant teachers’ classroom practices and curriculum principles. By observing both teachers in their actual settings, I was able to see various factors that affected teachers while teaching. As the video recordings/observation notes were analyzed, points that needed further clarification emerged and these points became the focus of my weekly interviews. An interview was conducted with both teachers at the end of each week during the data collection process. The last data collection instrument was the teacher logs. Teacher logs aimed to help teachers keep a log of their daily teaching in a detailed way as well as to encourage them to reflect on personal practices. Both teachers were asked to fill out the log after each teaching period. The teacher log consisted of four

different parts: activity types and time allocated for each activity, interaction patterns, learning objectives, and evaluation of the teaching period.

Peer Debriefing

Peer debriefing is “a process in which an outsider – another researcher, academic or professional – reviews the data and the analysis with the researcher who presents the problems and working hypotheses for discussion” (Holloway, 1997, p. 116). In this respect, I asked an ELT master’s degree student in the Middle East Technical University to be my debriefer and check the data of this study. I presented her the data and research questions and told her about my study. Her duty was to choose the concepts from the data and group them under pre-defined categories. After she completed the task, we compared and contrasted our results for overlaps.

Data Analysis

Data collection continued for four weeks in the state school and six weeks in the private school. I started to collect data at the beginning of March in the state primary school and completed the first week of April, 2010. In the private primary school, data collection started in the last week of February and ended in the third week of April. I interviewed the teachers every weekend on their classroom practices from the previous week. Before I started analyzing the data, I grouped all the video recordings and observation notes week by week. After the evidence from each week of classes was thoroughly analyzed, I wrote the interview questions and interviewed the participant teachers. I transcribed all the interviews and read through the interviews twice before I started to analyze the data.

Following the Corbin and Strauss (1990) framework for Open Coding, I looked for concepts first in my data which helped me create the big picture. Then, I focused on categories to classify my concepts in order to come to a position where I could assign meaning to events observed. I made reductions in the data to remain focused and keep my path by carefully evaluating what served my purposes and what did not.

CHAPTER 4

CASE ZEYNEP

This section will describe the case of Zeynep, the state school teacher. In the first part of this section, I will present general information about the primary school setting to highlight issues such as availability of materials, teaching context, curriculum and student backgrounds. Selected principles of curriculum will be examined one by one.

The Teaching Context

Sixteen hours of Zeynep's classes were video-recorded and six interviews were conducted with Zeynep. Zeynep also completed fourteen teacher logs for her classes.

Zeynep had been teaching for more than three years at the time of data collection, however, she had one year of teaching experience with the curriculum that is the focus of this study when the data collection started. Zeynep's school was located in a district which was socioeconomically underdeveloped in Istanbul. Zeynep stated that her students came from very poor families. Data was collected in a grade seven class. The reason for the selection of grade seven classes was my desire to achieve uniformity in terms of backgrounds of participant teachers, both being non-native English teachers. Students in the state school received four hours of English instruction per week in grade seven. English classes begin in grade four, meaning that students in Zeynep's class had received English instruction for three years before this study. Average number of students per classroom was twenty four in the state school, and the total number of

students in grade seven was around eighty. There were twenty three students in Zeynep's class.

The seating plan was arranged in a way to make all students face towards Zeynep. Zeynep was always in front of the class. Students did not face towards each other.

Zeynep was the only qualified English teacher in her school; she was responsible for teaching a total of seven different classes and also served as the head of the English department.

There was a newly established library with about one thousand copies of books, and a computer lab which students visited for technology classes in Zeynep's school. There was neither a gymnasium nor a science laboratory in the school. As Zeynep explained, parent profile was stable; almost all parents were from the lower-class, some of whom were unemployed. Because of some problems with the building, the school was moved to another location and it shared the same building with another state school at the time of the study.

Zeynep expressed that her teaching context consisted of a classroom and the textbook only. Although the national program for English language education recommended the use of different materials while teaching English (e.g. visual materials, audio materials and printed materials), Zeynep usually emphasized unavailability of resources such as technological equipment in the classrooms and additional teaching materials to help teachers add variety into their teaching (using

resources with authentic language, using multimedia, etc.). She stated that lack of resources made her place the textbook as the only tool to rely on while teaching and emphasized the importance of the textbook as in the following:

I do not have the conditions to use any materials other than the textbook. The physical resources of the school are not enough: there aren't any opportunities to show videos or do listening exercises because we don't have a video or CD player. If we had a CD player, I would bring in my own CDs, I have a couple of CDs for young learners but I cannot use them here.

(Zeynep, Interview 1, February 2010)

Zeynep expressed that she wished the course was communication oriented, but explained that lack of resources and student profile were an obstacle to that.

Zeynep put emphasis on the guiding role of the textbook in her teaching. She was not aware of the existence of the national English language curriculum for primary education written by the Ministry of National Education. "The only resources", she said, "are the textbook and the teacher's book" in guiding her throughout the semester. The lack of a prescribed curriculum (or that she was unaware of it) resulted in not knowing about the learning objectives or the skills that were desired for the students to acquire by the Ministry. She expressed unavailability of the curriculum by saying:

We don't have it [the curriculum]. All the other courses have it but we don't. I teach visual arts besides English, I don't have the book but I borrow it from another teacher. Even visual arts have a prescribed curriculum but English doesn't. I was curious about the Turkish classes; so I borrowed their book and checked it. They have it, mathematics department has it, but English doesn't.

(Zeynep, Interview 1, February 2010)

Zeynep expressed that sometimes teachers who specialized in content areas other than English had to teach English at state schools because of lack of English teachers. She stated that she had to work with such teachers.

Zeynep was officially responsible for coordination among the teachers who taught English at her school. She argued that she did not get enough help with the English program from the school administration. The fact that the school principal had changed three times since Zeynep had started teaching was an important factor in this.

The internal assessment of the implementation of the curriculum is carried out by principals and the external assessment is carried out by ministry inspectors at state schools. Zeynep expressed that a principal has not visited her class or there had not been an inspector to come and observe her classes at the time of the study. As for the new regulations regarding the inspection, Zeynep told that it is up to the teacher to be observed by the inspector or not. In such a case the inspectors would make decisions based on lesson plans or other documents.

Classroom Practice

This section describes Zeynep's classroom practices based on data from video recordings of her classes, interviews and teacher logs.

The Role of Materials

The only language teaching material that Zeynep used was the textbook. I observed that Zeynep followed the textbook closely in her class. She did not seem to be making use of

materials other than the textbook and she explained why she relied on the textbook heavily by saying:

We have to do the textbook. It is the only source that is available to us. I also wonder what we will do if we do not have it. That's why we are obliged to follow the content in the textbook.

(Zeynep, Interview 5; April, 2010)

Almost all the exercises that students completed in the class were grammar exercises. No focus on speaking, listening, or writing skills were observed. In some lessons, reading texts were analyzed. A typical reading activity would start with the teacher reading the text out loud for pronunciation. Then, students would read the text in pairs or individually. Before each exercise, instructions were translated into Turkish, either by the teacher or by the students. After students read the whole text individually, the teacher would raise the new grammar item and explain it on the board. These explanations were usually made by using formulaic expressions and referring to the equivalent of the structure in Turkish.

Textbooks are prepared by the Turkish Ministry of National Education and offered to students free of charge. When asked how the design and content of the textbook affected the way she taught, Zeynep emphasized the ineffectiveness of the textbooks which were written at the national level. She argued that each and every teacher working at a state school had to use the same textbook in Turkey for grade seven and she found this to be unreasonable. She expressed that her students' abilities in the target language were not enough to cope with the demands of the current textbook:

I don't think it's logical to use the same textbook all around Turkey. If the textbooks are written to meet specific local needs, better results would be obtained.

(Zeynep, Interview 2, March 2010)

She told that she sometimes made changes in the textbook as no technological equipment was available. For example, when she did not have the necessary equipment to make students listen to texts or watch videos, she could read the transcriptions in the teacher's book for her students.

Zeynep added that the textbook was of vital importance during the official inspections. According to her, the inspectors would base their questions on the textbook and the successful coverage of the curriculum was considered to be the indication of how well the teacher was doing with the textbook. The inspectors would examine the records of daily teaching in the class book and sometimes observe classes.

Zeynep stated that she tried to integrate different activities (e.g. songs, games) into her teaching to offer some variety to her students, but because her students tended to react negatively in such situations, she gave up and started to follow the content of the textbook strictly again. The only thing she did different from the content of the textbook was about grammar instruction. Zeynep thought that grammar explanations were beyond the proficiency levels of her students, and she explained the grammar items on the chalkboard in Turkish. She preferred to explain grammar items in Turkish because she thought her students would understand the message given in the text better and thus be able to answer the comprehension questions.

Zeynep translated all the instructions into Turkish. Reading texts, comprehension questions and the answers to the comprehension questions were also translated into

Turkish. Part of a typical lesson with a reading text is exemplified below:

T: Sayfa 41’de 4. egzersizde bir resim var, görüyorsunuz. Resme göre aktiviteleri biz yazacağız yan tarafa. ‘Last Sunday’ diye başlamış. ‘Last Sunday’ neydi?

S1: Pazar

T: ‘It was very hot’. Neymiş?

S2: Çok sıcak.

T: Sıcaktı diyeceğim.

Several Students: Were, were!

T: Hayır, hayır. Hep ‘was’ ile doldurmuyoruz, anlamlı olması lazım. Deniz kenarına ... Deniz kenarına dersem ne demem lazım: Hadi Türkçesini söyleyin, ‘deniz kenarına’ ...

S3: Deniz kenarında yüzdüm.

T: Orada zaten yüzüyor. Deniz kenarında değil, deniz kenarına, deniz kenarına ne yapılır?

S3: Gidilir!

T: Evet, gittik diyeceğiz.

S1: Go!

T: Evet ‘go’, ikinci halini yazacağız.

Several Students: Went, went!

T: Went, went. Sınavda sordum ya. ‘Some of my friends ... beach volleyball.’ Kumsal voleybolu.

Sx: ‘play’, oynuyorlar.²

² T: There is a picture on page 41 in exercise 4. As you see, according to the picture, we will write the activities they are doing on the beach. It starts with ‘Last Sunday’. What was ‘Last Sunday?’

S1: Sunday

T: It was very hot. What is it?

S2: Very hot

T: I say ‘It was very hot’. We ‘something’ to the sea side)

Several Students: Were, were!

T: No, no. We are not doing it always with ‘was’. It has to be meaningful. ‘To the seaside...’ If I say ‘to the seaside’, what do I need to say? Come on, say it in Turkish. ‘To the seaside...’

S3: I swam at the seaside

T: She is already swimming there. Not ‘at the seaside’ but ‘to the seaside’. What do you do ‘to the seaside’?

S3: Go!

T: Yes, we will say ‘we went’

S1: Go!

T: Yes, go! We will write the second form

Several Students: Went, went!

T: Went, went. I asked on the test. ‘Some of my friends ... beach volleyball.’ Beach volleyball.

Sx: ‘Play’. They are playing.

T: 'Play', ikinci hali nasıldı?
 Sx: 'played'
 T: 'Played', geçmiş zamandan bahsediyoruz, hepsi geçen Pazar. (Writes 'played on the board').
 T: 'And some other' ... Diğerleri ne yapmışlar? Bazıları volleyball oynuyor, diğerleri ne yapıyor?
 S2: Yüzüyor, 'swim', 'swimming'!
 T: 'Swim', ikinci hali neydi?
 S2: 'Swam'
 T: 'Swam', bu da düzensiz aynı 'go' gibi. 'Go' nasıl 'went' oluyorsa 'swim' de 'swam' oluyor. 'My father ... a newspaper' 'Newspaper?'
 S5: Yeni, yeni!
 T: Gazete, gazete 'newspaper'.
 S5: okuyor, okumak.
 Several Students: Benim babam gazete okuyor.
 T: Okumak, Erhan?
 S6: Soyleyim mi hocam? Re-ad.
 T: 'Read'. İkinci hali ne? Aynı yazılıyor, sadece okunuşu değişiyor (Writes on the board), /rid/ /red/ oluyor.³

(Zeynep's Class, March 16, 2010)

Zeynep believed that her students felt more comfortable during the classes when they were able to understand the message given in the text through translation. This would

³ T: Play'. What was the second form?

Sx: 'played'

T: Played', we are talking about past time. All of them happen on last Sunday.

T: And some other...' What did the others do? Some of them are playing volleyball, what are the others doing?

S2: They are swimming! 'Swim', 'swimming'!

T: Swim', what was the second form?

S2: 'Swam'

T: Swam', this is also irregular like 'go'. Just as 'go' becomes 'went', 'swim' becomes 'swam'. 'My father ... a newspaper.' Newspaper?

S5: New, new!

T: Newspaper, newspaper 'newspaper'

S5: He is reading. Read

Several Students: My father is reading a newspaper

T: Read, Erhan?

S6: Shall I say it teacher? Re-ad

T: 'Read'. What is the second form? The spelling does not change, only the pronunciation changes. /rid/ becomes /red/.

also enable them to answer the comprehension questions. The following is her explanation why she used translation in her classes:

It is said in the book that the reading texts should be memorized and the dialogues be acted out. It is also suggested that the comprehension questions be answered. In order to give them a chance to answer the comprehension questions and develop their translation skills, I ask them to translate the sentences from English to Turkish because when they are able to do it, they get the fun of learning English. They feel more comfortable when they can understand a sentence written in English. It will also help them develop their grammar.

(Zeynep; Interview 3, March 2010)

Zeynep's classroom practices also involved teaching general world knowledge to her students. I observed that she spent an important amount of class-time reading and talking about the Pyramids, she said that she thought that her students did not know much about the world and this would give them a chance to learn more about it. She expressed this by saying:

General world knowledge, only for general world knowledge. They are unaware of the rest of the world. They don't even know what an amusement park is. They don't know anything, even the underground, tram, nothing.

(Zeynep, Interview 2; March, 2010)

Zeynep also asked her students to do research on the topics of the reading texts such as Pyramids, inventors, and the Seven Wonders of the World. However, Zeynep asked her students to do these assignments in Turkish. I asked her why she asked her students to do the assignments in Turkish, she said:

They cannot do it. I tried it before. I asked them to do the previous performance assignment in English; it was totally a mess, even more. I couldn't understand what the thing was about, let alone the child. They just came to the board, repeated sentences, I did not get anything. And then I checked their paper, I did not get anything again. And one more thing is when I ask them to do something in English, what they do is do internet research, and whatever comes up comes into the class. The student just brings in the assignment without understanding a word of it.

(Zeynep; Interview 3, March 2010)

In the teacher logs, Zeynep mentioned reading passages through which students could practice reading skills and work on grammar. In a typical class, Zeynep places the reading text at the beginning of the lesson, and then this is followed by the translation of the text and students' work on the comprehension questions. She generally added translation exercises as another activity type in teaching reading in the teacher logs. The type of activity and the learning objectives were almost identical in the teacher logs Zeynep kept. She reworded the activity types to count for the learning objectives. For example; 'reading a text about Atlantis, the lost city' as an activity type was stated as 'raising general world knowledge about Atlantis' under learning objectives column in the teacher logs.

Zeynep expressed in the interviews that she placed the textbook at the core of her classes because of (1) lack of resources, (2) the student profile, (3) the desire to achieve classroom management, and (4) the inspection carried out by the Ministry inspectors. Although she was allowed to use additional resources, she explained that she could not do so due to time limitations.

Use of English

A total of sixteen teaching hours were video-recorded between March and April 2010. Video recordings included no instances where Zeynep spoke English to communicate with her students in class. Her students did not use the target language, either. She mentioned that her students were in their third year learning English. However, the instruction they received was not efficient and enough. So, she had to start from the beginning to teach English because her students' level of English was extremely low when they started grade seven. This resulted in her extensive use of Turkish in the EFL classroom. When I reminded her of the principle, 'the emphasis on the use of English by the teacher all the time' in the curriculum, her response was the following:

It would be really utopian to carry out everything in English because they have serious problems in following the instructions even in Turkish if you noticed. Sometimes I have to repeat the same sentence three times, sometimes four, I have to say everything over and over [in Turkish]. I told you that the class was doing well because of being video-recorded. Yes, they are doing well but in my other classes you have to repeat the same thing sometimes six or seven times due to the noise and turmoil. Think about using English in that situation. How many times would you have to repeat a sentence to a group of students who do not understand the Turkish equivalent of the same sentence after repeating it seven times? It would stop the teacher from doing her class.

(Zeynep, Interview 3; March 2010)

Video recordings revealed that it was only when the students read passages in the textbook that they uttered things in English in Zeynep's class. And as new grammar structures appeared in reading passages, Zeynep gave further explanations on the board using examples first in Turkish, then in English. Zeynep first translated the equivalent of the target grammar structure into Turkish, she asked questions to her students using the

Turkish equivalent of the target structure, and then stated the target structure in English.

The following is a typical exchange from her classes:

T: Altta bir listemiz var, gördük, aynı X. Bu sefer de cümle haline getirirken şöyle bir yapı kullanacağız: “Altı yaşındayken şunu yapabiliyordum”. İşte “Üç yaşındayken şunu yapabiliyordum” ya da “ben iki yaşındayken şunu yapabiliyordum” gibi. Hani “yapabiliyordum” anlamını katan şey neydi?

Several Students: What? Was? Cold!

T: Could (writes on the board). Geçmişte yapabildiklerimizden bahsederken “could” kullanıyorduk, şimdiki yapabildiklerimizden bahsederken...

Several Students: Can! Can!

T: Biz geçmişten bahsettiğimize göre neyi kullanacağız?

Several Students: Could!

T: Mesela önce kendimden örnek vereyim: “Beş yaşındayken bisiklet sürebiliyordum”.

S1: I could

T: “I could ride a bicycle when I was five years old” (writes on the board). Şu “when I was five years old” yaş belirtiyor, işte “beş yaşındayken, üç yaşındayken” gibi. “Ben üç yaşındayken” yine “when” “bisiklet sürebiliyordum”. Bu sefer şunu yapacağız. Burada dört tane mi beş tane mi kaç tane vermiş?

Several Students: Beş tane

T: Beş tane vermiş. Cümleleri boş bırakmış, siz onu bulun diye bırakmış, bu beş kişiden isimleri değiştiriyoruz, mesela İdil Biret diyecceğiz (writes on the board), “İdil Biret...”

S2: Could

T: Could. Ne yapabiliyormuş? “Play a bass concerto”. When?⁴

⁴ T: There is a list below the text, have you seen it? It is the same X. This time we will use such a structure while making sentences: “She could do it when she was six.” For example; “He could do it when he was three.” or “I could do that when I was two.” What did we use to say “he could”?

Several Students: What? Was? Cold!

T: When we are talking about the things we could do in the past, we use “could”, when we are talking about the things we “can” do now...

Several Students: Can! Can!

T: Because we are talking about the past, what are we supposed to use?

Several Students: Could!

T: To start with, I want to give an example about myself: “I could ride a bicycle when I was five years old.”

S1: I could

T: This “when I was five years old” shows your age like “when I was five” or “when I was three”. Again “when I was three, I could ride a bicycle.” This time we will do this: there are four or five, how many?

Several Students: five

T: Five, there are blanks in the sentences so that you can fill them in. We need to change the names for these five people, for example; we will say “İdil Biret...”

S2: Could

T: Could, what could she do? Play a bass concerto. When?

Several Students: Altı yaşındayken, when.

T: when

SX: he

T: he, güzel, he mi she mi İdil? When she was six years old. Diğerlerini de siz yapıyorsunuz hadi bakalım.⁵

(Zeynep's Class, March 30, 2010)

As it is evident in the data, Zeynep seems to become highly mechanical during these periods. Explicit grammar instruction dominated the total time she spent in the classroom. She clarified her practice of explicit grammar instruction by stating that there was not enough explanation of new grammar structures in the book. She added that although the workbook contained further grammar exercises, she did not have time to do those exercises in the classroom.

The only instances when her students tried to use English to respond to Zeynep were during the attendance check. Some students responded by saying “here” or “absent”. Apart from their one-word responses, Zeynep's students did not use English to state their opinion on something or to answer a question. No student was observed to build a complete sentence which was not partially taken from the book or from the instructions of the teacher. Furthermore, the teacher never used a sentence in English without giving the Turkish translation first. She told that she conducted an entire lesson in English on her first day at school. But, according to Zeynep, her students behaved improperly such as giving her rude responses and ignoring her presence whenever she spoke English, so she gave up speaking English. She expressed in the interviews that

⁵ Several Students: When she was six.

T: when

SX: he

T: He?” Nice, is İdil he or she? When she was six years old. You are doing the rest yourselves.

she was really concerned about classroom management and this concern discouraged her from using English in class:

I tried it [to speak English] here but it only caused turmoil. The students were all like ‘We don’t understand! What language are you speaking? Are you swearing at us?’ Despite all my efforts to speak English in a lesson with the hope of getting them used to it, it did not work. They started to ignore my presence.

(Zeynep, Interview 1, February 2010)

According to Zeynep, another factor that prevented her from speaking English was her students’ low proficiency in English. She stated that she completely gave up the use of the target language, usually emphasizing that her students did not know anything about English.

Zeynep’s students’ use of English in the classroom did not go beyond imitating the already existing sentences in the book. They only changed some parts of the example sentences and formed a new sentence accordingly. Zeynep said:

Only during a grammar exercise can they form a sentence. If I say three or more sentences in response to a question, they can form the following fifth sentence in the same way. But it is not like I ask a question and they answer me, there is already a very similar one, the only thing they need to change is the subject or the object or the adjective, that’s how they form sentences. If I say “How old is Ahmet?” instead of “How old is Ayse?” they can answer it but if I ask them “How are you?” from scratch, they just look at me in the face blankly.

(Zeynep, Interview 3; March, 2010)

Use of Group Work

Two types of pair/group work activities were observed in Zeynep’s class. A typical pair/group activity for Zeynep was to ask two or three students to read aloud the lines in

a dialogue together. Zeynep told that she increases student motivation by doing so because her students would think that they could at least read in English. The second type of group work that Zeynep used was asking her students to translate sentences from English into Turkish in groups.

Zeynep depicted the interaction patterns as from the teacher to the students, from students to students and from students to teachers in the teacher logs. Classroom recordings showed that the only time her students interacted with each other was during the group work activities. However, the interactions among students were not carried out in the target language.

I asked Zeynep to list the advantages and disadvantages of pair/group work activities. Table four below lists Zeynep's opinions about the advantages and disadvantages of using group work in the EFL classroom:

Table 4. Advantages and Disadvantages of Group Work

Group Work	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Facilitates classroom management	Students use Turkish during group work
Keeps students busy and on-task	Causes noise in the classroom
Promotes dictionary use	Takes more time than teacher-fronted activities
Motivates students as it gives them a feeling of carrying out a task on their own in the target language	
Provides opportunities for students to work with the textbook more closely	

Summary

The influence of the local context on Zeynep's classroom practices was evident in the data. She showed her willingness to teach English to her students in various interviews. She also talked about factors that prevented her from doing so such as (1) lack of resources, (2) students' background and their current proficiency in English, and (3) the requirement of following the textbook strictly which she taught was not appropriate for her students. These factors affected her way of approaching the curriculum principles. She did not use the target language in her classroom as she thought that her students would not understand her and follow the lesson when she spoke English. Although she sometimes employed group work, she did not organize it in a way to promote interaction among students. She used group work because it helped classroom management.

CHAPTER 5

CASE AHMET

This section is about the private school teacher Ahmet. I will present general information about the school setting to highlight issues such as availability of materials, teaching context, student backgrounds, and curriculum. Selected principles of curriculum will be examined one by one.

The Teaching Context

Ahmet, the second participant teacher of the study worked in Istanbul. I observed his classes for fifteen teaching hours. The observations continued for six weeks. Seven interviews were conducted with Ahmet and he completed eleven teacher logs for his classes. There were clashes between the class hours and exams in the weekly schedule, so the observation period had to be extended to reach a certain amount of teaching hours observed.

Ahmet's class consisted of twenty five students. He complained about the class size several times during the interviews. He argued that a class size of twenty five students was problematic in terms of achieving the goals of the curriculum. Ahmet's school had an extensive English program. Data was collected in a grade seven class. In grade seven, students received seven hours of English instruction per week. Before coming to grade seven, students received extensive English in primary school as well (ten hours per week each year in the primary school at every grade and seven hours per week in grade six).

Ahmet's school was first established in 1985 in Kadıköy as a high school and moved to its current campus in 1988. There were primary, high school and science high school buildings, a sports and arts complex, a library with about 57.000 copies of books in a variety of languages, a medium-size conference hall, science laboratories, two observatories, a semi-Olympic sized swimming pool, more than an acre of open sports field, computer laboratories, teachers' study halls, teacher and student cafeterias, playground for kindergarten students on the main campus.

There were thirty three English teachers working in the primary school (from grade one to grade eight). Twenty three of them were non-native speaker teachers and ten were native speakers from countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada. In grade seven, which is the main focus of this study, four out of five teachers were non-native speakers. Average student number for a class was twenty three, and there were 156 students in grade seven at the time of data collection, and there were twenty three students in Ahmet's class.

The seating plan was arranged in a way to make all students face towards Ahmet. Ahmet usually stood in front of the class. Students did not face each other except for group work activities.

Ahmet's school offered more than the national curriculum through the three International Baccalaureate programs it implemented: the Primary Years Program (PYP), the Middle Years Program (MYP), and the Diploma Program (DP). Ahmet expressed that he did not take part in the curriculum development process at his current

school. He defined his job as a teacher who implemented the existing curriculum without making any changes. He stated that he did not receive any training on the curriculum he was implementing, which he did not see as a problem. However he did receive training on the Middle Years Program he was implementing along with the curriculum. In his first year, he attended seminars, MYP workshops and MYP meetings where he was informed about the nature of MYP. Because he was new to the school system and the MYP program, he found the training beneficial.

In Ahmet's school, there was a coordinator for each grade level. The grade level coordinator's job was to lead the weekly coordination meetings and make sure that everything and every teacher was working in line with the curriculum. The coordinator also established connections with the head of the English department who was responsible for the entire English department at Ahmet's school. When he had a problem or confusion about the curriculum, he could consult her. The level coordinator worked closely with the department head on issues related to exams, materials and student achievement. Ahmet and his colleagues had weekly meetings to evaluate the previous week, to plan things to be done during the following week, upcoming exams, and precautions to be taken to increase student achievement. The head of the English department also joined the meetings and contributed when necessary. According to Ahmet, weekly level meetings helped the curriculum implementation process, because they helped teachers to check their progress against the yearly plan. These meetings also gave them chances to exchange ideas about classroom practices.

During the weekly level meetings, Ahmet brought up any issues that he needed help with such as his classroom practices, and they would work towards a solution. The

head of the English department visited Ahmet's classes from time to time and gave him feedback about his classroom practice, as well. Ahmet found the feedback constructive and he made changes in his classroom practice accordingly. The school principal never visited Ahmet's classes, though. Department heads were working autonomously and more closely with the teachers. The purpose of the classroom visits was to see whether the curriculum and the classroom practices were in harmony. Ahmet expressed that the harmony was achieved to a great extent because of the weekly coordination meetings.

Ahmet found not having to follow a single textbook advantageous and he stated that he could use multiple materials while teaching and did not stick to a single style of teaching. He believed that textbooks forced the teacher to teach in a certain way. He defined his method of teaching to be eclectic and argued that he used different techniques and methods ranging from the communicative approach to direct method.

While preparing for his classes, Ahmet made use of multiple resources and was encouraged to do so by his coordinator and the department head. He mentioned that he used the internet and the library to obtain supporting materials. Ahmet did not use a single textbook; instead he used two readers, an anthology book of literature and a supplementary book for grammar instruction. He also had the necessary technological equipment in his class to add variety into his teaching by using additional materials.

Ahmet stated that he was happy with his students' proficiency in English and he thought his students could understand him without any problems when he spoke in English at a normal pace. Almost all his students started learning English in pre-school, before grade one in the same school and most of them were able to express themselves

in English. He also thought that his students were motivated towards learning English and their motivation was shared and supported by their parents as well. Ahmet viewed parent motivation and involvement as the key factor which affected student success.

Classroom Practice

This section describes Ahmet's classroom practice based on data from classroom observations, interviews and teacher logs.

The Role of Materials

As stated previously, Ahmet did not use a single textbook in his class. Ahmet's school selected materials considering the learner profile and school's objectives in terms of English.

Ahmet used a grammar practice book for grammar instruction in his classes. This gave Ahmet's lessons a flavor of explicit and isolated grammar instruction. Ahmet would normally start a grammar lesson by giving the page number. Then, he would explain the grammar rules by writing them on the board and ask his students to copy from the board into their notebooks. When he finished the new grammar topic, his students would focus on the exercises provided by the book. Although he stated his desire to conduct interactive grammar lessons by using some games and different types of activities, he stated that he had never tried it yet. The following is an extract from Ahmet's usual classroom practice of teaching grammar:

T: Would you mind opening your grammar homework. It was unit forty two, right?
S1: Yeah!
T: Open unit forty two. Let's do it in five minutes.
S2: Mr. X, benimki yok.⁶
S3: Hocam listening hangi gün?⁷
T: It is gonna be on Thursday, probably lunch time, not sure yet. OK! Passive structure ... Did you find the weekend homework easy or difficult?
Several Students: Easy!
Sx: Very easy!
S4: Extreme!
T: OK guys, here we go! ... Forty two, forty two point one. Many accidents are caused by dangerous driving. Aslı, let's start with you.
S5: Cheese are made from milk.
T: Cheese cannot be counted.
S6: Is!
S5: Ben çok güzel tabi ilkokul hataları yapıyorum.⁸
T: Three, Emir!
S7: The roof of the building was damaged in a storm a few days ago.
T: Damaged.
S7: Damaged.
T: Başak, number four.
S8: You were invited to wending...
T: Wedding, wedding.
S8: Wedding, why didn't you go?

(Ahmet's class, March 15, 2010)

Ahmet used two other sets of books. The first set was an anthology book of English literature called 'Visions' which had extracts of various written genres. I observed one class while Ahmet conducted a lesson using 'Visions'. He supported the content of the book using a power point presentation. In the lesson which was on the Incan Civilization, he explained Incan's way of life and their sacred city to his students with the presentation. During the presentation, students asked questions and expressed their

⁶ S2: Mr. X, I don't have mine.

⁷ S3: Teacher, when is the listening?

⁸ S5: Very well, I am making primary school mistakes.

views about the topic. Through the presentation, Ahmet gave some geographical background information about the setting in which the story took place. Ahmet used the book as a means of authentic language input and modeling for correct pronunciation as well. Before they read the text together, the students listened to the recording of the text and followed it in the book. I observed that a regular lesson with the anthology book was followed by comprehension questions.

In the second set, Ahmet had two authentic novels for young learners both written originally in English. I observed two of Ahmet's classes in which he focused on one of the novels. First, the students had a discussion on the story, then Ahmet gave his students worksheets containing comprehension questions. After the first half of the book was covered, Ahmet assigned a 'literature circle' activity to his students to cover the second half. The details of this activity will be discussed under 'Use of pair/group work' section.

Apart from the books, Ahmet also used an extensive amount of worksheets prepared for grammar exercises, weekend homework, and supplementary exercises for the readers. The worksheets were sometimes the only focus of the lesson and Ahmet conducted full classes by using them, especially with the ones on grammar. He used the worksheets to encourage students to do library research and present their findings orally to their peers, as well. I observed that some worksheets served to have students practice their writing skills.

Although Ahmet argued in the first interview that the curriculum contained learning objectives and that he followed the curriculum while determining the learning

objectives, the objectives in the teacher logs were taken from the contents of the materials he used. The learning objectives were written according to the types of activities he employed. I compared his learning objectives with the objectives of the curriculum and observed that they did not match.

Use of English

Ahmet used English most of the time in class and his students usually used English to communicate with or respond to him. However, there were also some instances when both parties used Turkish.

When he got angry at a student or wanted to make a joke, Ahmet used Turkish. I asked him whether this would lead to more use of Turkish among students as well. He said:

I believe it is beneficial to soften the atmosphere once in a while [by using Turkish] and return back to English later. That way, my students stay more comfortable and more focused.

(Ahmet, Interview 2; March, 2010)

Among the reasons he used Turkish in his lessons were different factors. First, he expressed that he spoke Turkish to motivate his students. He argued in the interviews that not all his students had a good attention span. Because of that, he switched to Turkish mostly to make a joke, which he believed helped those students to be involved in the lesson. Second, his instruction in Turkish usually targeted the teaching of a specific grammar item. After he introduced a new grammar structure in a lesson, he re-explained the rules in Turkish if a student stated that he/she was confused. I asked him to

elaborate on his decision to use Turkish in such cases. Ahmet first emphasized that he did not use Turkish consistently but especially for the grammar instruction, and he highlighted the benefit of using the first language as the following:

It [speaking Turkish] makes many points clearer and quicker to understand in grammar instruction. With the time you have saved, you get to do more exercises in class and give them more opportunities to try the new item. This way you can be surer about the things you teach.

(Ahmet, Interview 1; February 2010)

When I think that I can save time and be more effective by doing that [speaking Turkish], I use Turkish without hesitating because I believe that the first language has a big importance in grammar instruction.

(Ahmet, Interview 3; March 2010)

Other important points that came out as to Ahmet's reasons in switching to Turkish during grammar instruction were:

- 1) he thought that he might waste valuable class time trying to explain the new grammar item in English to low-proficiency students and that is why he switched to Turkish,
- 2) he thought that some students' level of English was low so he used Turkish to get his message across,
- 3) he did not want to leave a lesson incomplete; to speed up the process, he used Turkish to give some quick hints.

Ahmet stated in the interviews that he considered the student profile when he used English or Turkish. His beliefs about a student's language proficiency were a

determining factor for him to choose between languages. He sometimes chose to repeat the instructions in Turkish for some of his students. He explained the reason as follows:

Those students have difficulty even in understanding very simple instructions. When they do not understand, they look around not knowing what to do. In such a situation, I go near their desk, repeat the instructions in Turkish for them because they should not be left behind their friends to keep harmony of the total group. That's why I sometimes explain things to them in Turkish because they really do not understand.

(Ahmet, Interview 3; March 2010)

Some of Ahmet's students used English in class while speaking to him and some of them constantly used Turkish. In some instances, I witnessed students speaking Turkish to Ahmet and Ahmet replying back in English as the curriculum suggested the teachers did. The following is a typical example to such dialogues:

T: You are going to pick up a paper from your notebook and write on that.

S1: Hocam paragraf paragraf mı yapmamız gerekiyor?⁹

T: Well, we have studied this speech.

(Ahmet's class, March 10, 2010)

Sometimes Ahmet did not warn his students for speaking Turkish. He explained this by stating:

I have to say that I am usually more insistent against the kids who I think can do it [speak English], but still it depends on the lesson, where we are in a lesson, the time remaining and whether I will be able to finish what I am doing or not. If I have little time and a subject to finish in the planned time, I would not want to spend any extra time on trying to get the student speak English, it would prevent me from finishing my lesson and affect the other twenty four students.

(Ahmet, Interview 3; March 2010)

⁹ S1: Teacher, do we need to write paragraph by paragraph?

In some cases Ahmet reminded his students to speak English by using different strategies. Among his strategies were (1) ignore what the student said, (2) warn the student verbally or by using body language to speak English, and (3) remind the student that he/she would get an oral grade by showing his/her language abilities in class. Ahmet was usually successful in his attempts to make his students speak English at first, but his warnings did not have a long-term effect. I observed that although one of his students was fluent in English, she created problems for Ahmet because she usually wanted to speak Turkish in class despite Ahmet's warnings. This is a small extract from a dialogue between the student and Ahmet during a group work:

S: Mr. X, yarın da yapabilir miyiz?

T: (does not answer, ignores)

S: Ah tamam (Oh, OK!). Mr. X, can we continue with this tomorrow, too?

(Ahmet's class, April 26, 2010)

Most of Ahmet's students showed their ability in using English to express their opinion or ask a question. However, a very constant use of Turkish was observed when students wanted to ask the meanings of unknown words. While some students used English to ask the meaning of an unknown word (Mr. X, what does mean in English?), some other students preferred to use Turkish. I observed that Ahmet's reaction varied towards the questions asked in Turkish. He sometimes responded to the question and gave the meaning for the word, but sometimes he warned the students not to use Turkish in such a situation. His warnings were sometimes in English, and sometimes in Turkish.

Some of Ahmet's students' asked him for permission to speak in Turkish before saying something. I observed that one of his students wanted to express her ideas first in

English, but when she realized that she would not be able to do it, she asked Ahmet for permission to speak in Turkish. In another lesson, I observed Ahmet talking to some students; he was warning them about the consequences of not doing homework and reminding them that they were going to stay after school for detention. The students first started to use Turkish and English together, but when the teacher remained persistent, they switched to English completely

T: I'll give you the papers, you are staying for detention after school.

S1: Ne zaman?¹⁰

S2: After school?

T: After school, for two hours you will write something.

S2: Today or tomorrow?

T: I'll tell you when, either today or Friday. OK, first let's finish the power point presentation that we haven't finished.

S1: Hocam öğle teneffüsünde kalsak olmaz mı?¹¹

S2: Evet hocam öğle teneffüsü.¹²

T: No!

S3: Hiç kalmadık ya .¹³

S1: 50 geçe çıkarız hemen 15 dakikada da yemek yeriz.¹⁴

T: No! You are speaking Turkish. XXX ... OK, this Inca culture, I think we have gone through this power point presentation, "who found our mummy?" ...

S1: Mr. X, do we need to close the curtains?

T: If you can't see, yes.

(Ahmet's class, March 17, 2010)

The interaction patterns Ahmet put in the teacher logs differed. He put a 'teacher to student' type of interaction pattern for controlled exercises in the teacher logs.

Classroom observations showed that this type of interaction dominated his classroom.

¹⁰ S1: When?

¹¹ S1: Isn't it possible that we stay during lunch break?

¹² S2: Yes sir, lunch break

¹³ S3: Because we have never stayed before.

¹⁴ S1: we leave 50 past twelve and eat in 15 minutes.

For group work, his pattern changed to ‘student to student’ in which students would use the target language to carry out exchanges between each other; however, this type of an interaction pattern could only be observed in the ‘literature circle’ activity and it was not in the target language but in Turkish.

Use of Group Work

Ahmet stated that he employed pair/group work during grammar exercises and while reading the novels in class. I could only observe one example of group work in Ahmet’s class during my observations of 15 teaching hours. As I mentioned earlier, it was the “literature circle” activity. Ahmet put his students into groups of four and gave each member of the group a different task to work on. Students did not work together. Each student in the groups worked on his/her individual task without interacting with the other members of the group. I asked Ahmet whether the students used English among themselves for this specific group activity. He said:

They worked individually, but as far as I am concerned, English was used in the groups where girls dominated, especially in student X’s group. However, English was not used in groups with average and below average students but it was a very quiet atmosphere, everybody was doing their job.

(Ahmet, Weekly Interview 5; April, 2010)

Use of English by the students for this group work activity was observed at the presentation stage of the final product. Other than this example, Ahmet’s lessons were characterized by teacher-fronted whole class work.

My observations showed that Ahmet’s students carried out conversations only in Turkish when they were involved in group work. In one of the interviews, he expressed

that this was expected as they knew that they could all speak Turkish. He complained about the fact that he had too many students in his class. He expressed that he could not spend enough time to check each group's work and warn them when they spoke Turkish, this was the reason most of his students used Turkish during group work, according to Ahmet.

I asked Ahmet to express his views on advantages and disadvantages of using group work in the language classroom. Table five summarizes his opinions.

Table 5. Advantages and Disadvantages of Group Work

Group Work	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Enables students to become autonomous learners	Students usually use Turkish
Enhances organization and collaboration skills among students	Time consuming
Develops students' presentation skills when they are supposed to present the final product	If not monitored properly, sometimes creates confusion among students about how to complete a given task
Allows the students to practice newly learnt language structures	

Summary

Ahmet's classroom practices were, to some extent, under control by his school through weekly level meetings. In those meetings, teachers came together to discuss issues related to what should be done in every class. Ahmet used the language teaching materials as sources of language input but he provided language input for his students by using the target language, too. He also used Turkish in some other occasions; he used it as an ice-breaker to make jokes, to give quick grammar explanations, and to give

instructions for those students who, he believed, did not understand him in English. His instruction was teacher-fronted mostly, with little emphasis on working in groups to create interactions.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The main purpose of the study is to explore the contextual influences on the implementation of the Ministry of National Education's English language curriculum. In this section, I will analyze and discuss my findings related to the two cases by focusing on the research questions.

Research Question 1: how does the context inform the implementation of specific curriculum principles by two teachers working at different schools?

The data coming from the two participants of this study showed that teachers shaped their classroom practices in line with the realities of their teaching context, and this was not always similar to what curriculum writers had in mind.

It was evident in the data that although both participant teachers of this study were implementing the same core English curriculum, there were differences that changed the nature of the curriculum. The state school teacher was implementing the Ministry of National Education's English curriculum in a top-down manner whereas the private school teacher had a more bottom-up version of the originally top-down curriculum. The state school teacher perceived the curriculum principles to be distant from the realities of the specific context. This is a problem associated with top-down approaches to curriculum implementation in previous research (Altrichter, 2005; Bezzina, et al. 2009; Cowley & Williamson, 1998; Niesche & Jorgensen, 2010; Vanderberge, 1984). However, contrary to what research (Brady, 1995; Cowley &

Williamson, 1998) has suggested, the data revealed that the more bottom-up version of the top-down curriculum was not implemented fully in the private school as well. Data showed that none of the teachers could realize the selected curriculum principles in their classrooms. The teachers usually re-interpreted or changed the way the principles should be implemented in the EFL classroom.

This finding of the study is consistent with the findings of the Silver and Skuja-Steele (2005) study, which suggested that teachers shaped their practices according to the needs and realities of their teaching context because suggested curriculum principles were usually reinterpreted by the teachers. Teachers focused not on curriculum principles but on the needs of students and on their methodological beliefs. This finding is also in line with Orafi and Borg (2009) who argued that teachers focused more on contextual realities of their work and sometimes used practices that the curriculum did not suggest. Among the contextual factors that affected the participant teachers' implementation of the selected curriculum principles in the present study were (1) lack of resources, (2) students' background in the target language, and (3) teachers' obligation to cover the specified content within a given time. Kırkgöz (2007, 2008) also proposed that these factors were influential on the classroom practices of the teachers working in the Turkish context and that this led to the gap between curriculum principles and classroom practices.

The data also showed that teacher-related factors had an impact on classroom practices of the participant teachers. Teacher-related factors included teachers'

perceptions of the curriculum principles, teachers' methodological choices and teachers' concerns about the realities of their teaching context.

Research Question (1a): what is the role of language teaching materials in the EFL classroom?

Table six summarizes the findings related to the role of language teaching materials in the EFL classroom. The first two findings are valid for both cases.

Table 6. The Role of Language Teaching Materials in the EFL Classroom

Ahmet	Zeynep
Materials served as the curriculum	
Learning objectives were derived from the content of the materials, not the curriculum	
Materials were standardized at the institutional level	Materials were standardized at the national level

Kelly (2009, p. 57) discusses that “the content of the materials serves as the curriculum in many teaching contexts”. In this respect, both participants of this study, through their in-class practice, teacher logs and responses to my interview questions showed that they viewed the language teaching materials as the primary source of their course content.

The way materials were used in the two participant teachers' classrooms indicated that the content of language teaching materials was the curriculum itself. This finding is also parallel to Richards's (1993) argument that the materials used in a program usually go beyond the curriculum and are the determining factor for course objectives, types of syllabus, the content which the students will study and assumptions about teaching and learning.

The participants in this study viewed the language teaching materials as constituting the curriculum because (1) they did not receive any training on the curriculum principles at the institutional level, (2) they shaped their way of teaching with the guidance and instructions provided by the materials, and (3) they formed the learning objectives based on the contents of the materials.

Silver and Skuja-Steele (2005) discuss that teachers refrain from targeting long-term policy goals and focus more on short-term goals, which they can relate to their own teaching context. These short-term goals are not explicitly stated in the curriculum but they are the products of teachers. This may explain why the two participant teachers in this study did not follow the learning objectives associated with the long-term goals set by the Ministry of National Education's English curriculum. The data indicated that the participant teachers focused on the realities of their teaching contexts (e.g. lack of resources), their needs and beliefs as teachers (e.g. concern about covering the content, practicality of using the first language in the classroom), and their students' needs and abilities (e.g. some students' inability to use the target language) in the EFL classroom.

As teachers are the ones who have specific knowledge of the local context they are teaching in and the specific needs of their students, they should have an active role in the material selection process (Richards, 2001). When conventional materials are selected for a wide audience, there is the risk that they cannot address specific learner needs (Richards, 1993). This is especially evident in contexts such as Turkey where there is standardization of language teaching materials at the national level, which is relevant to Zeynep's case. In Ahmet's case, a similar type of standardization took place

at the institutional level. Ahmet did not have the option to select specific materials to meet the needs of his students but had to rely on the materials that are used in all the other classrooms in the same grade level. This meant that the teachers were not being included in this process in an active manner so that they could consider contextual factors, individual needs and specific learning outcomes. All students received common and fundamental knowledge through exposure to certain authorized and prescribed content (Al-Issa, 2007). Using standardized materials to cover certain content meant that learner needs were standardized as well.

Research Question (1b): what is the role of the target language in the EFL classroom?

Table seven summarizes the findings related to the role of the target language in the EFL classroom.

Table 7. The Role of the Target Language in the EFL Classroom

Ahmet	Zeynep
Dominant use of English in class. Sometimes used Turkish for instruction.	Rarely used English in class. Instruction was carried out in Turkish almost always.
Promoted use of English among students but ignored the principle related to use of English in some situations.	Did not promote use of English among students.
Used Turkish to make jokes and sometimes to facilitate understanding among students.	Used Turkish to facilitate understanding among students.
Thought that use of Turkish among students was inevitable regarding the context.	Thought that use of Turkish among students was inevitable regarding the context.

The rationale behind the curriculum principle on the use of English in the EFL classroom did not match the practices of the participant teachers. The curriculum

suggests that the teacher should conduct an entire lesson in English and make the use of English consistent. Teachers also should involve students into meaningful language activities where they will need to speak English. The curriculum also foresees the fact that students may tend to speak in the mother tongue except during language practice activities. The role of the teacher, however, is to encourage students to use only English in class by creating an environment where students feel they should communicate in the target language and feel comfortable doing so (MEB, 2006). The data in this study revealed that Zeynep's teaching involved extremely frequent use of Turkish. Although use of Turkish was much less in Ahmet's classes and English dominated more, the fact that Ahmet used Turkish from time to time still created a gap between the curriculum principle related to the use of English in the EFL classroom and his classroom practices.

The main problem with Zeynep's approach to the target language was that Zeynep did not prepare an atmosphere in which students felt the need to speak in English. According to Zeynep, using Turkish in the EFL classroom was a way of helping her students to be more involved in the lessons because speaking in Turkish enabled them to understand the content and respond to it. It also served as a tool for classroom management in Zeynep's case. However, Carless (2008), who investigated the use of mother tongue in the foreign language classroom, suggested that while the use of the mother tongue seemed to be a learner-centered strategy, it could fail to promote target language practice and communication among students. None of Zeynep's students was observed using English and Zeynep explicitly stated that they never used English in class. In this respect, Zeynep's classroom practices deviated from the curriculum

principle on the use of the target language and she failed to promote the use of English by her students in her teaching context.

Despite the frequent use of English in Ahmet's class, Ahmet still failed to fully implement the use of English principle because he preferred to use Turkish in some situations. The fact that Ahmet used Turkish especially during grammar instruction was an example of Silver and Skuja-Steele's (2005) finding that teachers are more concerned with practical solutions as to how to manage a class of students, teach that day's lesson and help students learn the material. Ahmet seemed to be inconsistent in using English in his classroom, which gave his students the impression that they could use Turkish. Contrary to Ahmet's practice, Thurnbull (2001) suggested that the language teacher was the source of the target language input along with the materials for the students in foreign language settings where students did not have enough opportunities to be exposed to the language outside the classroom. Thus, a language teacher should maximize the amount of the target language use in the classroom.

Both teachers accepted that their students used their first language in the foreign language classroom and they also added that there is very little they could do to prevent students from speaking Turkish. This matches Orafi and Borg's (2009) finding which suggests that teachers act according to their contextual realities and sometimes display practices that the curriculum does not suggest. Brady (1995) explained the teachers' perceived decision-making space that governed classroom practices, which is relevant for the two cases in this study. He stated that teachers had expectations regarding their students' abilities which shaped their classroom practices.

The fact that classroom practices of both teachers were mainly characterized by structural grammar exercises meant that both teachers failed to create an atmosphere in which students felt the need to engage in authentic communication by using English. To improve learners' motivation to use the target language for real communication purposes, Littlewood (1981) argued that "communicative activities should be designed considering the language as a means of communication, not as a structural system" while teaching English (p. 17). This will lead to message-oriented interaction in the foreign language classroom which provides comprehensible input for learners and gives them a chance to practice the target language (Crawford, 2004). However, it was seen that both teachers viewed the teaching of English as the mastery of specific content which made their course more structural. National and institutional policies played a role in their choice as well. As both teachers stated earlier, their job involved covering predetermined content in the classroom and this was an indication of successful teaching. But, as Hutchinson and Torres (1994) pointed out, heavily structured lessons will inevitably tend to routinization. The structural nature of classes in both cases resulted in students' choice of using English only during grammar exercises consistently in a controlled manner. This finding contradicts with the principle of the Ministry of National Education's English curriculum which suggests that students in grade seven must be able to carry out exchanges in English themselves.

Research Question (1c): what is the role of pair/group work activities in the EFL classroom?

Table eight summarizes the findings related to the role of pair/group work activities in the EFL classroom. The first three findings are relevant to both cases.

Table 8. The Role of Pair/Group Work in the EFL Classroom

Ahmet	Zeynep
Perception of group work differed from what the curriculum suggested.	
Group work activities did not provide authentic interaction in the target language.	
Teacher-fronted whole class work dominated.	
Product-oriented group work.	Group work as a way of classroom management by keeping students busy.

The curriculum suggests use of pair/group work with students at this age level as it would allow them (1) to interact with different classmates in a less stressful, collaborative way, and (2) to create more opportunities for language practice (MEB, 2006, p. 120). The curriculum assumes that students will employ the target language during pair/group work. The data in this study showed that this was not the case. The aim of group work activities is “to create an atmosphere in which learners have opportunities for language production by working with each other” (Chaudron, 1988, p. 98). However, the data revealed that Ahmet did not design group work activities in a way to promote target language production. Students were not really involved in group work in Ahmet’s setting and eventually were not involved in any interaction in the target language. Ahmet’s group work activity was oriented towards the product, not the process. His perception of a group work activity was not consistent with the aim of

group work activities suggested in the curriculum. His students were more concerned about completing the task and were busy with their individual work, which did not result in meaningful interaction among the students in the target language.

In Zeynep's case, use of group work did not serve the interactional purposes of the curriculum, too. Zeynep's students did not interact with each other using the target language in group work as well. The data indicated that Zeynep's perception of group work was different from what the curriculum suggested. The difference between the Ministry of National Education's English curriculum group work principle and Zeynep's classroom practices may possibly derive from Zeynep's lack of understanding the idea of using group work in the EFL classroom. This finding draws a parallel line to Woods' (1991) finding which suggested that implementation of a curriculum depends on teachers' perceptions of the curriculum in the same way as the writers' or vice versa. When teachers had a different perception of the methods, teaching style and suggested activities in the curriculum, a gap between the classroom practices and curriculum principles occur.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This chapter of this study involves five sections: (1) summary of the study, (2) conclusion, (3) implications for ELT, (4) limitations, and (5) suggestions for further research

Summary of the Study

The main objective of this study was to explore the influence of contextual factors on the instructional practices of two teachers as to how they implemented certain principles of the Ministry of National Education's English curriculum for primary education. The data was collected through teacher logs, recordings/observations of classroom practices of the participant teachers, numerous interviews with the teachers, and curriculum documents. The data collection process lasted eight weeks. The findings were consistent with the literature and showed the role of the materials, the teachers' perceptions of the use of the target language and group work, and contextual influences on curriculum implementation in the EFL classroom.

Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that the implementation of Ministry of National Education's English curriculum for primary education by two teachers was influenced by the contextual and teacher related factors. Teachers' perceptions of curricular principles, their methodological beliefs such as the use of the first language and group work in the foreign language classroom and contextual factors like the availability of

resources, and students' background in the target language affected the way the curriculum was implemented by the participant teachers.

This study is different from previous studies which were done in the Turkish context. Kırkgöz (2007, 2008) explored the implementation of the 1997 curriculum innovation by teachers and identified contextual factors that affected their classroom practices. This study contributed to the literature by exploring the contextual influences on classroom practices by focusing on specific curriculum principles and their realization in the EFL classroom in the Turkish context. Furthermore, while Kırkgöz (2007, 2008) focused on state owned primary schools only, this study focused on a state owned primary school and a private primary school to achieve a representative sample in terms of contextual differences. Selecting schools from different backgrounds is a way to see the influence of contextual differences on classroom practices (e.g. Hu, 2005). State schools represent the side which implements the curriculum with a top-down approach with usually inadequate resources whereas private schools represent the side which implements the same curriculum in a more localized manner. With this difference at play, this study found the remarkable gap between the selected curriculum principles related to the use of English and group work and the classroom practices in the state school.

Findings of the study also showed that the implementation of the curriculum in the private school still needs improvement. Although curriculum monitoring in the private school was done by three internal assessors (level coordinator, department head and the principal) and an external assessor (Ministry inspectors), it was the teacher who

interpreted the final version of the curriculum which affected how teaching and learning took place in the classroom. Contrary to the mechanism of assessment employed at the private school, the state school had two assessment mechanisms (the principal and Ministry inspectors), the former of which did not guide or interfere with classroom practices of the teacher.

This study also revealed that the curriculum implementation process seems to be hierarchically-controlled, more or less independent of teachers' views for both participants (Al-Daami & Wallace, 2007). For the state school, the national government controlled (or aimed at controlling) teaching by imposing an externally written curriculum, which assumed a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. Although the private school developed its own curriculum, it also aimed to standardize instruction through its curriculum and working mechanism. However, in both cases teachers used their own curriculum in the way they interpreted it by taking the contextual factors and teacher-related factors into consideration.

Implications

For Pedagogy

The findings of this study showed that classroom dynamics depend on different factors such as teachers' methodological beliefs and contextual influences. So, in order to bridge the gap between theory and practice, classroom contexts should be discovered in their original settings and local solutions should be offered.

For Teachers

This study revealed the importance of role of the teachers in the curriculum implementation process. The data revealed that it is the teachers whose job is to create links between the curriculum and the classroom. Teachers' perceptions of the curriculum played a major role in this. When teachers perceived the curriculum principles in the wrong way, a gap between the curriculum principles and the classroom practice occurred. Teachers can work with the curriculum more closely to avoid this gap. Working with the curriculum along with the syllabus means that the teacher shapes his/her classroom practice in line with the curriculum principles while trying to build teaching strategies to teach specific content.

Teachers' perceptions of the materials also had an impact on classroom practices and shaped their teaching. This usually resulted in divergence from the actual curriculum principles as teachers viewed the materials and its content as the curriculum. When the teachers neglected the curriculum and its principles, they failed to add variety (use of additional resources, different types of activities that focus both on structured and authentic use of the language) into their teaching which created an inauthentic classroom atmosphere where everything followed a predictable order. Exploiting the materials to suit one's own teaching context would be more time consuming and mean more work on the part of the teacher, but as it is the teacher who knows about the contextual factors of a specific classroom, this practice would yield better results in appealing to different learner needs and creating an atmosphere where everybody feels motivated to be an active learner.

For Schools

The data revealed that the English department in the private school had a very strong independence and carried out the curriculum monitoring process by distribution of duty at different levels. However, the state school did not have as many teachers as the private school to monitor the curriculum and the principal's involvement was very limited. The advantage of private schools is that private schools can hire new personnel without intervention when they need to. However, there are bureaucratic layers that a state school must go through before employing new teachers. A shortage of qualified teachers at state schools, thus, is a problem in this respect.

Zeynep stated that no curriculum monitoring took place in her context apart from the external assessment carried out by the Ministry inspectors. In the private school, there were different teachers who were kept responsible for curriculum monitoring as well as the Ministry inspectors. They served as a bridge between the teacher and the principal. Curriculum monitoring was carried out more consistently in the private school. However, lack of teachers to monitor the curriculum meant that curriculum monitoring was the responsibility of only the school principal in the state school (Glatthorn & Jailall, 2009)

For a systematic monitoring of the curriculum across a school, the role of the principal in curriculum monitoring is crucial. In schools with no level coordinators or department heads, it is the principals' responsibility to ensure that the classroom instruction matches curriculum principles. To obtain excellence in teaching, principals should be aware of what kind of classroom practices take place in their schools (Lee &

Dimmock, 1999). This will give them the opportunity to take action when necessary.

Delegating teachers to assist in the process will also help as it would ease the burden on the principals. Assistant principals or teachers should be more autonomous in state schools and the responsibility for curriculum monitoring should be disseminated from the centre (the principal) to the periphery (teachers, coordinators).

For Curriculum Writers

State schools in Turkey should also have the right to develop their own curriculum in line with their local contexts and student needs, a right which has been granted only to the private schools. This statement does not mean that state schools should develop their own curriculum independent of the national requirements. It expresses the need for an approach that draws the national boundaries for the curriculum and gives the freedom to make adaptations for a localized curriculum within those boundaries (Cowley & Williamson, 1998; Hu, 2005; Vanderberge, 1984). However, this would require more professional competencies for teachers. Teacher education, in-service teacher training and guidance are crucial elements. To promote an in-depth understanding of the concept of teachers as curriculum developers, teacher trainees should be offered more courses on curriculum development at teacher training programs. To ensure that in-service teachers can carry out the process smoothly, opportunities of in-service teacher training and guidance should be expanded. Teachers should take more active roles in the development of the central curriculum and to be able to make them fit to their local contexts (Shohamy, 1998).

Teachers should also be actively involved in textbook writing and textbook selection for their schools. Textbooks usually form the learning objectives of a curriculum. When a textbook is used nationwide, learning objectives are also put into use at the national level. However, teachers are working closely with their students and have the best knowledge of them and their needs. So, teachers should be invited to committees to choose textbooks that are more appropriate to their teaching context.

Limitations of the Study

This study focused on a private primary school and a state primary school. I am well aware of the differences that exist between these two types of institutions. State primary schools are generally poor in resources, suffer a shortage of teachers and students usually come from a variety of backgrounds which makes the student profile at state schools unstable. They are strictly controlled by the Ministry of Education in the sense that the textbooks to be used are supplied by the Ministry for free, the teachers are appointed based on scores of a centralized exam, and they have to follow the national curriculum without making any changes to make it more appropriate to their local contexts. Private schools, on the other hand, are autonomous in nature to a certain extent; they run their own corporate mechanism. If a private school is in need of teachers, it could hire them anytime. They could choose their own textbooks. Private schools are also rich in resources as the budget is structured with student tuition. These differences make it difficult to put the two institutions in the same study. The intention, though, is not to compare and contrast the two institutions against each other but to

explore phenomena related to each of them as both schools are bound to use the same core curriculum for the same grade level.

The second weakness of the study is the difference in terms of years of experience of the participant teachers. Ahmet had a remarkable teaching experience compared to Zeynep. Although I tried to obtain uniformity, it was not an easy task to make the participant profile equal. Many other teachers I contacted to take part in this study rejected my request.

The third weakness of this study is the fact that I worked at the same private school with Ahmet. This fact might raise questions about the researcher bias. While collecting and analyzing the data, I took the necessary precautions to be able to take an outsider's perspective to events. I used multiple data sources. A colleague with a master's degree checked part of my data and I compared her groupings and analyses with mine. Any differing points were discussed for clarifications.

The last weakness of the study stems from the fact that I did not have enough time to go and observe classes in the state primary school. I observed classes in the private primary school and took field notes but because I was employed full-time at the time of data collection, I could not visit the state primary school to observe classes. To solve the problem, I used video-recordings.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study looked at the curriculum implementation practices of two teachers from a state school and a private school. Considering these two schools were in Istanbul, further

studies should be conducted in schools located at different parts of Turkey to see whether the findings of this study overlap with findings from other schools. As suggested by Karavas-Doukas (1996), teachers' classroom practices can be first investigated by using attitude scales at a wider level, and selected cases can be observed in the classroom. This practice would give the opportunity to combine qualitative and quantitative research methods together.

The curriculum principles that were the foci of this study were the use of English and group work in the EFL classroom. There are several other curriculum principles in the Ministry of National Education's English curriculum. Further research can be conducted to investigate their relation to classroom practices of EFL teachers in Turkey.

This study investigated the curriculum implementation process by focusing on classroom practices of two teachers. However, teachers organize their classroom practices to offer instruction to students. Considering the vital role of students in the curriculum implementation as agents, further studies could be designed to include students' views in curriculum implementation.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE TEST FOR THE SEVENTH GRADE

Part 1: The following sentences are all mixed. Put the following story into its correct order. The first one is given for you.



The Cauldron Died

	"Oh," responded the Hodja. "Your cauldron gave birth to a little one. You can keep them both."
	And the neighbor never again saw his cauldron.
	"What are you saying?" shouted the neighbor. A cauldron does not live, and it cannot die. Return it to me at once!"
1	Nasreddin Hodja needed a large cooking container, so he borrowed his neighbor's copper cauldron. He returned it with a small pot inside.
	Some time later the Hodja asked to borrow the cauldron again.
	"One moment!" answered the Hodja. "If a cauldron can give birth to a child, then it also can die."
	The neighbor did not argue. He took the nice little pot, because it didn't cost him anything.
	"My dear friend," replied the Hodja. "I have bad news. Your cauldron died."
	"Why not?" thought the neighbor. "Perhaps there will be another little pot inside when he returns it."
	But this time the Hodja did not return the cauldron. After many days, the neighbor went to the Hodja and asked for the borrowed cauldron.
	"What is this?" asked his neighbor. "There is a small pot inside my cauldron."

Part 2: Detective Thackery is investigating a crime. He is asking questions. What is he asking? Fill in the blanks.



Detective: last night at 10 p.m.?

Suspect: I was at home.

Detective:

Suspect: I was watching TV.

Detective: Were you alone?

Suspect: I was with some friends. I can give their names if you want.

Detective:?

Suspect: They left at midnight.

Detective:?

Suspect: After that, I went to bed.

Detective:?

Suspect: Yes, I went to sleep immediately.

Detective:?

Suspect: No, I didn't go to Mr. Harrod's house. I don't even know him.

Part 3: How much do you know about the inventors and explorers? Make sentences as in the example.

PEOPLE

King Camp Gillette
Wilbur & Orville Wright
Christopher Columbus
Roald Amundsen
Levi Strauss
Marco Polo
Alexander Graham Bell
Marie Curie
Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen

INVENTIONS AND DISCOVERIES

safety razor
jeans
telephone
X-ray imaging
engine-powered airplane
both the North and South Poles
China
Central America
radium

VERBS
invent
discover
explore

EXAMPLE: King Camp Gillette INVENTED the safety razor.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.



APPENDIX B: SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW ONE

- 1) Öğretmenlik eğitiminizi hangi üniversitede aldınız?
- 2) Eğitim dereceniz nedir? (lisans, yüksek lisans)
- 3) Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'na bağlı ilköğretim okulunda mı yoksa özel bir ilköğretim okulunda mı çalışıyorsunuz?
- 4) Şu an çalıştığınız kurumda uyguladığınız yabancı dil müfredatını kaç yıldır uygulamaktasınız?
- 5) Şu an uyguladığınız yabancı dil müfredatı nasıl geliştirildi? Açıklayınız.
- 6) Şu an uyguladığınız yabancı dil müfredatı ile ilgili aldığınız eğitim, seminer, kurs vb. nelerdir?
- 7) Şu an uyguladığınız yabancı dil müfredatının sınıf içi uygulamalarınıza yön vermesi beklenen prensipleri nelerdir?
- 8) Şu an uyguladığınız yabancı dil müfredatı ile ilgili sorunlarınızda kurumunuzda size yardım edebilecek yetkili kişi veya kişiler var mı? Görev ve pozisyonları nelerdir?
- 9) Çalıştığınız kurum, şu an uyguladığınız yabancı dil müfredatı ile ilgili size müfredat uygulamaları ve bileşenlerinde esneklik ve değişim yapma fırsatı sunuyor mu? (Öğretim yöntemi, kullanılan materyaller, ders saati sayısı, sınav sayısı ve tipi, v.b.) Lütfen açıklayınız.
- 10) Şu an sınıf içi uygulamalarınızı kim, nasıl değerlendiriyor? Açıklayınız.
- 11) Şu an uyguladığınız yabancı dil müfredatı prensipleri ve sınıf içi uygulamaları arasında nasıl bir ilişki var? Açıklayınız.
- 12) Yabancı dil öğretiminde hangi yöntem ve teknikleri kullanıyorsunuz? Açıklayınız.
- 13) Şu an uyguladığınız yabancı dil müfredatı prensiplerinden uygulanmasını en zor bulduğunuz prensibi belirtir misiniz? Neden?
- 14) İngilizce öğretmeni ve yabancı dil müfredatının uygulayıcısı olarak sınıf içinde rolünüz nedir?
- 15) Sizin için öğrencilerinizin dört dil yetisinden (konuşma, yazma, okuma, dinleme) hangisini geliştirmesi birincil önem taşıyor? Açıklayınız ve sebebini belirtiniz.
- 16) Bir dersi hazırlarken size hangi kaynaklar yol gösteriyor?
- 17) Dersinizle ilgili öğrenme hedeflerine nasıl karar veriyorsunuz?
- 18) Derste kullandığınız malzemeleri nasıl belirliyorsunuz?
- 19) Öğrenme hedefleri sınıf içi uygulamalarınıza nasıl yön veriyor?

- 20) Şu an uyguladığınız yabancı dil müfredatı yabancı dil öğretiminde hangi yöntem ve teknikleri esas almaktadır?
- 21) Şu an uyguladığınız yabancı dil müfredatı sizin teknoloji (bilgisayar, CD çalar, tepegöz, projektör, v.b.) kullanmanızı teşvik ediyor mu?
- 22) Şu an uyguladığınız yabancı dil müfredatının kullanmanızı istediği teknolojiyi sınıf içinde kullanıyor musunuz? Açıklayınız.
- 23) Yabancı dil öğretirken materyal seçimine nasıl karar veriyorsunuz?
- 24) 7. sınıf öğrencileriniz için uygun olan aktivite türleri nelerdir? Açıklayınız.
- 25) Sınıf içinde anadili kullanıyor musunuz? Sebebini açıklayınız.
- 26) Dilbilgisi öğretimi sizin sınıfınızda nasıl yer buluyor?
- 27) Öğretim yöntem ve metodlarına karar verirken öğrenci profilinizi ne düzeyde dikkate alıyorsunuz? Açıklayınız.
- 28) “Öğrenci merkezli yabancı dil öğretim modeli öğrencinin sorumluluklarının ve öğrenme potansiyelinin artmasını sağlamaktadır.” Sınıfınızda öğrenci merkezli öğretim nasıl yer buluyor?
- 29) Yabancı dil öğretiminde grup çalışmasından nasıl yararlanıyorsunuz? Açıklayınız.
- 30) Grup çalışması yönteminin artıları ve eksileri sizin sınıfınız için nelerdir?
- 31) Sizin için yabancı dili “konuşmanın” ön koşulu nedir?
- 32) Öğrencileriniz yabancı dili konuşurken hata yaparsa, bu hatalara karşı ne tür yaklaşımlar sergiliyorsunuz?
- 33) Uyguladığınız aktiviteleri öğrencilerinizin ihtiyaçları doğrultusunda değiştiriyor musunuz?
- 34) Öğrencilerinizin grup çalışmasında yabancı dili etkili bir şekilde kullanması neye bağlıdır?
- 35) Öğrencilerinizin yabancı dil dersinde anadillerini kullanmalarına izin veriyor musunuz? Neden?
- 36) Anadil kullanımının öğretmene sağladığı avantajlar nelerdir?
- 37) Sınıfınızda oturma planı nasıldır? Açıklayınız.

APPENDIX C: TEACHER LOG

1. Please use one form for each lesson throughout the month of teaching.
2. Fill in the information at the top of the form to help me sequence your lessons.
3. It would be good if you would fill in the form as soon as possible after each lesson.

Information to include in each of the columns:

Activity/tasks

What were pupils doing during this time? In brackets after each task write the estimated time that pupils spent on each activity or task.

Type of Interaction

Please describe the type of interaction used during the activity (teacher to student, student to teacher, student to student)

Learning Purpose

I am interested in your thoughts as you planned the lesson. For example: Why did you choose this activity? Was the activity intended to be instructional or to prepare for a test?

Reflections/Comments

After teaching spend some time thinking about the lesson. Did everything go as planned? Did you have any problems while conducting your lesson? Did everything go in line with your learning objectives? Please include any other points that you would like to mention.

Teacher Name:	School:	Date:
Time Lesson Began:	Time Lesson Ended:	Lesson Focus:

Activity/Tasks (time)	Type of Interaction	Learning Purpose	Reflections

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