



A SUGGESTED ENGLISH LANGUAGE POLICY IN TURKEY

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TELİF HAKKI VE TEZ FOTOKOPİ İZİN FORMU

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

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To my dearly beloved family

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ÖZ

Bu iki aşamalı Delphi çalışmasının amacı, eğitim fakültelerindeki İngiliz Dili Eğitimi akademisyenlerinin görüşlerini toplayarak Türkiye'deki İngilizce dil uygulamalarını analiz etmektir. Birinci aşamada (açık uçlu Delphi), 38 akademisyen çalışmaya katılmış ve açık uçlu soruları çevrimiçi veya yüz yüze görüşmeler yoluyla yanıtlamıştır. 38 katılımcı ile yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Veri analizinin ilk aşamasından elde edilen veriler, çalışmanın nitel aşamasıdır ve kelimesi kelimesine yazıya dökülmüştür. Kodlamanın manuel olarak oluşturulması öncelikle araştırmacı tarafından gerçekleştirilmiş ve daha sonra verilerin kodlarını, temalarını ve kategorilerini ayrıntılı bir şekilde ortaya çıkarmak için veriler NVivo programı ile analiz edilmiştir. Birinci tur veri analizi tamamlandıktan sonra, tüm bu bulgular ışığında bir anket oluşturulmuştur. İkinci aşamada, çalışmanın nicel verilerini oluşturan birinci tur katılımcılarına bu Likert tipi anket uygulanmıştır. Nicel bulgular, çalışmanın ilk tur nitel bulgularını doğrulamıştır. Kolmogorov-Smirnov normallik testi sonuçlarına göre çalışmada dağılım normal bulunmuştur. Üç ve daha fazla kategoriden oluşan demografik değişkenler için tek yönlü ANOVA testleri uygulanmıştır. Diğer yandan iki kategoriden oluşan demografik değişkenler için t-testi (bağımsız örneklem testleri) kullanılmıştır. Genel görüş birliği, Türkiye’de resmi ve iyi yapılandırılmış bir İngiliz dili eğitimi politikasının bulunmadığı ve sonuçlarda belirtilen sorunların bu temel sorundan kaynaklandığı yönündedir. Makro düzeyde politika karar süreci ile mikro düzeyde uygulama perspektifi arasında simbiyotik bir ilişki vardır. Bunlara ilaveten, toplanan verilerin en göze çarpan sonucu, Türkiye’de öğrencilerin ihtiyaçları ve ulusal ihtiyaçlar ile ilişkili olarak tutarlı bir İngilizce dil eğitimi politikası geliştirme ihtiyacının olmasıdır.



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ABSTRACT

The aim of this two-phase Delphi study is to analyse English language practices in Turkey by gathering opinions of ELT academicians in education faculties. In Phase One (open-ended Delphi), 38 academics participated in the study and answered open ended questions through online or face-to-face interviews. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 38 participants. The data elicited from the first round of the data analysis were the qualitative phase of the study and were transcribed verbatim. The manual formation of coding was conducted primarily by the researcher and then analysed with NVivo program to uncover codes, themes, and categories of the data in a detailed way. After the completion of first round data analysis, a questionnaire was formed in the light of all these findings. In Phase Two, the Likert-type questionnaire was administered to the participants of the First Round who formed the quantitative data of the study. The quantitative findings confirmed the first-round qualitative findings of the study. The distribution was found to be normal in the study according to the results Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test. One-way ANOVA tests were implemented for the demographic variables consisting of 3 and more categories. On the other hand, T-test (Independent Samples Test) was used for the demographic variables consisting of two categories. General consensus of opinion has it that there is a lack of official and well-structured ELT policy in Turkey and problems mentioned in the results stem from this basic problem. There is a symbiotic relationship between macro-level policy decision process and micro-level implementation perspective. Additionally, the most salient result of data gathered is that there is a need to develop a coherent English language education policy in Turkey in relationship with students' needs and national needs.



Keywords : Delphi Technique, Language Policy, ELT, English in Turkey.
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TELİF HAKKI VE TEZ FOTOKOPİ İZİN FORMU	i
ETİK İLKELERE UYGUNLUK BEYANI.....	ii
JÜRİ ONAY SAYFASI.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
ÖZ	vii
ABSTRACT	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	xi
LIST OF TABLES	xvi
LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xviii
CHAPTER I.....	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Statement of the Problem	1
1.2. Importance of the research	4
1.3. Purpose of the research	8
1.4. Research methodology and procedure	9
1.5. Research questions	10
1.6. Limitations of the research.....	10
1.7. Definitions	11

CHAPTER II	13
LITERATURE REVIEW	13
2.1. The Importance of Language	13
2.1.1. Language Education Policy	13
2.2. Teaching English as an International Language	18
2.3. Language policy and language planning (LPLP)	19
2.3.1. Top-down and bottom-up LPLP	21
2.4. The Layers of Planning and Policy	21
2.4.1. The Role of Agency in LPLP	21
2.5. Frameworks and Models in Foreign Language Policy	22
2.5.1. Spolsky's Framework of Language Policy	24
2.5.2. Kaplan & Baldauf's Framework	26
2.6. An Ecological Perspective to Language Policy	27
2.7. Foreign Language Policy in the World	29
2.7.1. Foreign language education policy in European countries	30
2.7.1.1. English Language Policy in the Netherlands	31
2.7.1.2. English Language Policy in Norway	33
2.7.1.3. English Language Policy in Denmark	35
2.7.2. Foreign Language Education Policy in India	36
2.7.3. English Education Policy in China	38
2.7.4. English Education Policy in Israel	41
2.8. The history of foreign language education in Turkey	42
2.8.1. Curricular Reforms and Turkey's ELT Program	44
2.9. Current Status of the English Language in Turkey	47
2.9.1. The CEFR and the ELP	48
2.10. Present-day language-in-education policies in Turkey	52

2.10.1. Studies Related to English Language Policy.....	54
2.11. English Language Teacher Education Programs in Turkey.....	55
2.11.1. The Role of EFL Teachers' Education in the Language Policy	58
CHAPTER III.....	61
METHODOLOGY.....	61
3.1. Introduction	61
3.2. Research Design	61
3.2.1. Qualitative Research Design	61
3.2.2. Quantitative Research Design	62
3.3. Universe and Sample.....	62
3.3.1. Demographic Features of Participants.....	64
3.4. Rounds of the Delphi and Data Analysis Procedure.....	65
3.4.1. Process of the First Round.....	66
3.4.2. Process of the Second Round.....	67
3.5. Data Collection Tools.....	68
3.5.1. Delphi Method	68
3.5.1.1. <i>The Origin of Delphi</i>	68
3.5.1.2. <i>Delphi Characteristics</i>	69
3.5.1.3. <i>Methodology in a Delphi Study</i>	72
3.5.1.4. <i>Data Collection in a Delphi Study</i>	73
3.5.2. Interviews.....	75
3.5.3. Likert-Scale Questionnaire.....	76
3.6. Epistemological Perspective	76
3.7. Challenges and Limitations.....	77
3.8. Reliability and Validity.....	77

CHAPTER IV	79
RESULTS.....	79
4.1. Introduction	79
4.2. Profile of Participants	81
4.3. Findings of the First Round: Semi – Structured Interviews	82
4.3.1. Findings Related to Views on English Language Policy	89
4.3.2. Findings Related to Views on English Language Teaching	91
4.3.3. Findings Related to Views on English Language Learning Process.....	93
4.3.4. Findings Related to Views on Assessment.....	95
4.3.5. Findings of the Second Round: Likert –Type Questionnaire	99
CHAPTER V.....	103
DISCUSSION.....	103
5.1. Discussion on English Language Policy Actions and Decisions in Turkey	103
5.2. Discussion on English Language Education Policy Principles and Specific Objectives in Turkey.....	106
5.3. Discussion on Top-down (legislation) and Bottom-up (grass-roots practices) Forces Driving LPLP process in Turkish ELT Context.....	107
CHAPTER VI.....	111
CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS.....	111
6.1. Summary of the Findings	111
6.2. Conclusion.....	112
6.3. Recommendations for Further Research.....	113
6.4. A Working Document of English Language Policy in Turkey	113
6.4.1. Introduction	113
6.4.2. An Analysis of the Current Situation in English Language Education	115
6.4.3. Results About English Language Teaching and Learning in Turkey	118

6.4.4. Recommendations and Issues for Consideration	119
REFERENCES	123
APPENDICES	145
APPENDIX A: Invitation Letter for the First Round of Delphi Study	146
APPENDIX B: First Delphi Round Open-Ended Survey Form.....	148
APPENDIX C: Interview Questions.....	149
APPENDIX D: Likert-Scale Questionnaire.....	151



LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. <i>Turkey's World Ranking In English Proficiency Index (2011-2021, EF English Proficiency Index)</i>	5
Table 2. <i>Language Planning Goals: An Integrative Framework</i>	24
Table 3. <i>Starting Year of Teaching English and English Course Hours in the Countries</i> ..	36
Table 4. <i>Participants of the Study and TÜİK Regions</i>	63
Table 5. <i>Demographic Features of Participants</i>	65
Table 6. <i>Matrix Coding Query</i>	83
Table 7. <i>The Frequency of the Categories Signified by the Participants</i>	85
Table 8. <i>The Mean Scores of Participants According Their Years of Experience</i>	100
Table 9. <i>The Mean Scores of Participants in Different Age Groups</i>	100
Table 10. <i>The Mean Scores of T-tests</i>	101
Table 11. <i>The Results of ANOVA Test</i>	101
Table 12. <i>Tests of Normality</i>	102

LIST OF FIGURES

<i>Figure 1.</i> List of mechanisms between ideology and practice.....	28
<i>Figure 2.</i> EF proficiency index, 2019	30
<i>Figure 3.</i> Biodata- age of participants	81
<i>Figure 4.</i> Biodata: Teaching experience of participants	82
<i>Figure 5.</i> Categories of the first round qualitative data	84
<i>Figure 6.</i> The percentage and frequency of categories.....	86
<i>Figure 7.</i> Frequency of words in the interviews	87
<i>Figure 8.</i> The frequency of main themes.....	88
<i>Figure 9.</i> Word cloud for the most frequently used terms.....	88
<i>Figure 10.</i> Chart output of the most commonly cited categories	98

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning Approach
CoE	Council of Europe
EF EPI	English First, English Proficiency Index
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EIL	English as an International Language
ELP	European Language Portfolio
ELT	English Language Teaching
EPOSTL	European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESOL	English to Speakers of Other Languages
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
TEYL	Teaching English to Young Learners
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
YÖK	Yüksek Öğretim Kurulu (Council of Higher Education)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Scholars such as Bottery (2000) and Chang (2006) draw attention to the role of globalization in the power and spread of English in today's world. In line with this fact, globalization also strengthens English at the expense of other community and indigenous languages. In line with this approach, English may also be seen acting as something of a Tyrannosaurus rex (Swales, 1997)— “a powerful carnivore gobbling up the other denizens of the academic linguistic grazing grounds” (p.374) and in the same breath as a “gatekeeper to positions of prestige in society” (Pennycook 1995, p. 39). As a result of cultural, social, and commercial reasons, English is extensively taught as a foreign language in many different countries. That English, as an international science language and the language of mass communication, is the global language at the present day is clearly beyond doubt.

In recent decades, internationalization and globalisation have been critical factors in the language planning related to *migration* triggering the increase in the learning of languages, especially global languages like English. Globalization, in concert with the erosion of national borders by developments in communication technology, gave way to the necessity to revamp language teaching programs in many countries. In the light of these recent events in an era of globalization, as well as ‘the geopolitical reality of the globalization of English’ (Block 2008), it is becoming extremely difficult to ignore the existence and importance of language education policies in different parts of the world. It is patently obvious that the infrastructure of this situation relevant to a collective psyche manifest in the formation of language policies. Language-in-education planning is now an important factor in the process of providing language resources appropriate for this mass movement of people (Conrick, Donovan, 2010).

As a well-known fact, the spread of English has accelerated throughout the world since World War II, which paved the way for the integration of English courses into the curriculum of educational institutions (Doğançay - Aktuna, 1998). The following reasons are some of the most significant ones with respect to the spread of English in the world (Oral, 2010; p. 61):

- The enduring effects of British colonialism,
- The influence of USA as a strong power due to its political, technological, economic, and military effects since the end of the World War II,
- The influence of globalization which has speeded up since the collapse of the Soviet Union and culminated with the great victory of America

With the outcomes and effects of aforementioned factors in the global spread of English, the non-native users of English outnumber the native users. Additionally, the issue of language policy, as a sub-discipline of sociolinguistics, has received considerable critical attention in the last three decades. The advent of critical sociolinguistics triggered widespread disillusionment with directions in the field (Bloomaert, 1996; Williams, 1992). Bayyurt (2013) also attaches importance to three different dimensions yielding the significance of sociolinguistics in foreign language education, namely: attitudes towards learning a foreign language, inclusion of culture in foreign language lessons, and the contribution of language planning to foreign language education. By the same token, language teaching programs should be arranged in a way to promote positive attitudes toward the foreign language to be learned (Bayyurt, 2013). At this point, the conceptual/theoretical framework of Hamers and Blanc (2003) which focuses on the importance of language valorization, described by the authors as “the attribution of certain positive values to language as a functional tool, that is, as an instrument which will facilitate the fulfilment of communicative and cognitive functioning signifies a language valorization process” can become an impetus to see what needs to be changed in foreign language policy studies. Hamers and Blanc also draw attention to the fact that social interaction is an inextricable dimension of the valorization process of a language.

Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) set out to demystify language policy and planning field and drew attention to three broad levels, the macro, the meso and the micro. (p. 52) in this continuum, referring to governmental bodies, local governments and non-government organizations or individual members respectively. Additionally, the implementation of

Language Policy and Planning (LPP) goals necessitates an emphasis on form – that is, on basic language and policy decisions and their implementation, or through an emphasis on cultivation – that is, on the functional extension of language development and use (Baldauf, 2006, pp. 149–152). In this vein, macro and micro levels of language policy studies are not mutually exclusive in the process of formulation and implementation.

Put simply, this study, within a Turkish educational system context, seeks to examine current language policy in practice and postulates that self-reported practices in Turkish foreign language education context are not congruent with educational reforms and theories. All the studies reviewed so far suffer from the fact that there exists a gap between language education policy as stated and the implementation of the policy in question. Curriculum, cultural factors, teacher related factors and contextual factors have a great impact on the gap between language teaching policies and actual classroom implementations of these policies in the Turkish EFL context (Kirkgöz, 2008). If the distinction between official language policy and de facto language policy is a meaningful one, horizontal influences and vertical influence, namely explicit language policy, need to be canvassed thoroughly in terms of their role in foreign language policy formulation and implementation (McMenamin and van der Walt, 2018). Therefore, (re)contextualizing language policies is of critical importance to overcome problems related with a top-down implementation of decontextualized measures. Interpretation (a), or retrospectively- and prospectively guided decoding and translation (b), or assuming an inter-place between policy and practice need to be included in this process (Ball et al., 2012).

The absence of a definite foreign language education policy in Turkey is the underlying cause of many related problems. Apart from the absence of an overarching foreign language education policy, some contextual factors also reverberate in the implementation of foreign language education programs. To illustrate, syntactic differences between English and Turkish is the stark reality of foreign language learning process. Since Turkish is a member of the Ural / Altaic language family and has an agglutinative language structure, there are various linguistic differences between English and Turkish. As a result of these factors, higher level program decisions are obscured to some extent in terms of their implementation in language classes. Additionally, since the boss of the education system is exams in Turkish education system, incompatibility between the English exams and the subjects taught throughout the course leads to negative washback effect because students are not measured with four language skills in accordance with the course content during and after formal

education. Washback effect is defined as effects of language testing on teaching and learning (Aldersen & Wall, 1993). In Özmen's study (2011), the emphasis is on elucidating the connection between high-stakes tests and washback effect and the study focuses on an effective understanding of the term in question. Currently, the pendulum seems to be swinging back towards process-oriented assessment and in the same breath scholarly attention is being paid to the need to measure four language skills in foreign language exams. However, it is not a correct point of view to think that the effects and consequences of the drastic changes made in foreign language education will be taken soon. As an example of how foreign language learning process develops, 'olive tree' metaphor in foreign language teaching suggests that we have to be patient in order to get the desired effect and result in education.

Taking this line of research as a point of departure, it will be useful to make a clarifying distinction between classroom realities and policy aims. On the other hand, there is a need for acknowledgement of classroom realities, cultural context, and resources in the process of implementing policy aims. It is clear that schools' language practices are of utmost importance inasmuch as instability in the educational policy induces some alterations in the formulation and implementation of effective language policies.

1.2. Importance of the research

Even though foreign language teaching has existed ever since the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, this practice has encountered problems preventing the realization of its full potential in this process. Another arduous undertaking for Turkey is the point that there is a certainly popular perception in the Turkish public that we cannot learn English, a situation verified by the results of self-assessed skill levels survey (Eurostat, 2009). According to self-perceived knowledge of foreign languages report (Eurostat, Adult Education Survey (AES), almost 75% of adults in Turkey declare that they do not speak any foreign languages. In the same survey, almost 23% of adults state that they can speak English as a foreign language.

According to the data of the 2021 English First English Proficiency Index (EF EPI), Turkey ranks at the seventieth position. According to EF EPI (EF EPI-a, 2014; 38), having an index of high proficiency in English, lies in the defining of "English proficiency as a core

competency for all graduates”. In line with this statement, radical steps must be taken to reverse this negative picture in Turkish EFL context.

Table 1

Turkey's World Ranking In English Proficiency Index (2011-2021, EF English Proficiency Index)

Year	Ranking
2011	43/44
2012	32/54
2013	41/60
2014	47/63
2015	50/70
2016	51/72
2017	62/80
2018	73/88
2019	79/100
2020	69 /100
2021	70 / 112

The existing accounts fail to resolve the contradiction between macro level decisions and micro level implementation in terms of language education policy and accordingly the discrepancies vastly outweigh consistencies in foreign language education policy while transferring this policy into practice. A number of difficulties arise while passing from top-level authorities to the bottom-level implementation. Policy makers are expected to aid language teachers with respect to having an in-depth knowledge of the policy to avoid the undesirable side effects of the implementation. With this fact in mind, this study aims to canvass views and perceptions from English Language Teaching academics about the absence of a clearly defined language policy in the country in that their dispositions play a pivotal role in addressing the issue of language education policies. In order to better

understand how this policy works, it is of great importance to bear in mind the role of English Language Teaching academics in conceptualizing the English language policy in Turkey.

Nunan (2003) regards the negligence as a universal phenomenon, i.e., “despite the apparent widespread perception that English is a global language, relatively little systematic information has been gathered on its impact on educational policies and practices in educational systems around the world” (p. 589). Ball (1997) also notes that many studies about classroom practices do not focus on the impact language policy has on teachers, materials and social practices carried out in classroom settings inasmuch as there exists a basic tension at the heart of education policy research. Ball also claims that some studies focus on efficiency while some others are in pursuit of commitment to social justice. Accordingly, this ‘de-contextualisation’ of studies induces an alteration in the way policymakers view and promote policy as a stand-alone construct while they focus on single cases whose outcomes tend to be a ‘reiteration of the ‘policy-practice’ gap’ (Ball, 1997 p. 265). The policy’s implementation is very much top-down because it emanates from the centralized Ministry of Education together with some other domestic and global sources. In a similar vein, policy aims include ‘deliberate choices made by governments or other authorities with regard to the relationship between language and social life’ (Djité, 1994, p. 63). Ricento (2006) also points out that ‘success or failure is not always easy to measure, given the diverse expectations or different constituencies inasmuch as policy matter is embodied in the very idea of social spaces and pertinent factors in manifold relationships (p. 18). As language policy formation process aims to evaluate contextual factors from a variety of perspectives, it is also expected to ‘...ultimately reflect(ing) power relations among groups and socio-political and economic interests’ (ibid., p. 6).

Spolsky (2004) contends that macro and micro levels comprise the language policy process at various stages. Additionally, some significant factors need to be considered in this process. Bearing these forces in mind, supranational organizations at the macro level and schools at the micro level are two significant stakeholders in sociolinguistic contexts. For instance, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) functions as the micro level implementation of the Council of Europe regarded as a supranational organization. In the same manner, the Council of Europe acts as an influential agent in shaping language policy patterns in Turkey, officially a candidate for entry to the European Union. Foreign language education reforms in Turkey are also shaped by ambitious education policies about foreign languages proposed by these supranational agencies. To

illustrate, the momentum created by the Barcelona European Council (2002), as well as the European Survey on Language Competences published ten years later, paved the way for significant reforms about starting the first foreign language early (Eurydice, 2017).

The suitability and relevance of imported teaching and learning approaches on local contexts, per contra, appear to cause disagreements and disputes between different stakeholders while they are trying to transform the education policy to better face the challenges of the globalized world. The effect of the CEFR on foreign language education policy in Turkey will be discussed in the following chapter. The study will also expand on other factors related with this matter.

Baldauf (2005), substantiating Spolsky's claims with his work, draws attention to the fact that policy makers need to incorporate ideas, laws, regulations, rules and practices in language policy and planning processes. In other words, political process at the top effectuates an establishment of language policy to be put into practice at the micro level process at the bottom. As Kırkgöz (2009, p. 665) registers her opinion by stating that 'Macro policy decisions are determined through the analysis of official policy documents and survey findings to indicate the policy in practice.'

In a similar vein, Els, Bongaerts, Extra, Os and Dieten (1984) urge caution in terms of the categories involved in this process and add that language policy factors, psychological factors, linguistic factors, and educational factors should be considered while establishing the basis of the language policy in question. Similarly, Spolsky (2004) proposed a new model, and he stated that language policy is an ecological approach, including social, political, economic, educational, and cultural factors and identifies four major forces, that is, the sociolinguistic composition, the identity associated with a language, the global spread of English, and the recognition of language choice (p. 218). Accordingly, language beliefs of the actors in the language education programs need to be taken into consideration in that process. All these actors interact and embody language policy and planning stages to a great extent.

Seeing that language education policy has close contacts with political, social, and economic elements, it is hardly surprising that central authorities such as government agencies, regional educational boards together with other stakeholders play a part in the determination of certain language policies that teachers are to comply with in language courses. Ricento (2006) reaffirms this fact when stating 'Decisions about which languages will be planned

for what purposes ultimately reflect power relations among different groups and socio-political and economic interests' (pp. 6-7).

1.3. Purpose of the research

As there has been little critical or grounded research conducted on the current English policy in Turkey, this dissertation aims to contribute to studies of language policy and planning in general to understand English Language Teaching academics' dispositions in this continuum. Nash (2008) defines the term 'disposition' as covering 'a wide range of acquired personal states, including those states of mind recognized as beliefs, which are conceived as habits embodied in a durable manner' (p. 53).

Bearing Spolsky's tripartite language policy model (2004) in mind, this dissertation study in question aspires to come up with some solutions regarding language management, language practices and language beliefs in Turkey. In other words, these three crucial agents should be considered while addressing the issue of language education policy in general because some advisory recommendations are stigmatized by other policy makers on occasion.

The absence of a clear foreign language education policy, guidelines and strategies across the country is the overriding consideration and underlying reason for the overall poor achievement of English proficiency in Turkish context. The dearth of language policy and planning together with blind adoption of international frameworks should be handled expeditiously for the acquisition of mass literacy in English. However, our success stories in the near past gives us a brief historical snapshot of what the crucial elements of language teaching are. *Maarif Colleges*, the first of which opened in 1955, set a very successful example in foreign language education thanks to teachers and students selected by exams. *Maarif Colleges* were replaced by Anatolian high schools in 1975. When high school education was increased to 4 years in 2005, the preparatory class of many Anatolian high schools, which provided a successful teaching of English, was abolished. With the termination of effective practices in Anatolian high schools, the desired and expected success in foreign language education was not achieved in this period.

The Education First English Proficiency Index, having the objective of measuring a country's English proficiency level, gathers the measurements of adult English proficiency from a total of one hundred countries (EF Proficiency Index, 2019). EF scores are employed as a means to measure cross- country comparisons and these scores were first published on

the website of EF EPI in 2011. According to the data of the 2019 index, Turkey, a country in which the proportion of pupils in upper secondary general education learning English is 99,4% (Eurostat, 2012), ranks at the seventy ninth position among one hundred countries included in EF Proficiency Index test. In the English Proficiency Index, it has a total of 33 European countries and Turkey ranks 32 out of 33 countries. As for EF EPI of 2020, Turkey ranks 69 out of these 100 countries. In 2020, there are 34 European countries in total and Turkey ranks 33 out of 34 countries. EF Proficiency Index results, the world's most comprehensive ranking in English Proficiency, are a signal that the years of schooling and the defining of English proficiency as a core competency within the school program are the most effective factors in increasing English proficiency level. Additionally, PISA 2018 results show that Turkey is still below OECD average despite significant improvement in all education fields. PISA, held by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), ranked 15-year-old students from Turkey as 42nd in mathematics, 40th in reading skills and 39th in science among 79 countries and economies. This result draws attention to the fact that students have difficulty in understanding what they read even in their mother tongue. As EF Proficiency Index and PISA scores are evaluated as a benchmark of success in this field, such alarming results have raised red flags in the country causing apprehension and concern among educators. Accordingly, these results indicate that we need to address problems in education and foreign language education in a holistic approach while focusing on other elements such as world economy ranking and global innovation index.

1.4. Research methodology and procedure

The Delphi, as a systematic and qualitative method of forecasting and gathering expert opinion on a certain subject, is employed in this current study to reach consensus and the participants are given an opportunity in the upcoming rounds to express their updated opinions after analysing the results of the previous round. Besides, the Delphi technique is a well-established approach consisting of multiple rounds of questionnaires sent to a panel of experts in a certain field. This technique is utilized in this study to elicit data from panel members in a forecasting process. In the first phase of the study, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with 38 participants working at different universities in Turkey. Participants were chosen from twelve basic regions of Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), and they took part in the study on a voluntary basis. The first part of the study formed the

qualitative data and a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire was prepared after an in-depth analysis and verbatim transcriptions of the qualitative data. Likert-scale questionnaire was grounded in the analysis of the qualitative data with NVivo program. All the participants took part in the second part of the study, too. The data elicited through the questionnaire were the quantitative part and data of the study in question. The quantitative findings of the study were analysed with the help of SPSS 25 program (Statistical figures through Statistical Package for the Social Science) and yielded results of great importance to the process of English language policy actions and decisions in Turkey. Since a consensus of forecasts is achieved among the participants of the study, this iterative Delphi process became complete after the researchers conducted two main rounds in this continuum.

1.5. Research questions

There are basically three research questions directed in this study. These are questions as follows:

1. In the absence of a definite foreign language education policy, what are the perceptions of ELT academics about the English Language policy actions and decisions in Turkey?
2. What principles and specific objectives should be incorporated as regards English language education policy in the country from the standpoint of ELT academics?
3. What are the perceptions of ELT academics with regard to the top-down (legislation) and bottom-up (grass-roots practices) forces driving LPLP process in Turkish ELT context?

1.6. Limitations of the research

The findings to be elicited from the semi-structured interviews reflect English Language Teaching academics' own attitudes towards foreign language education policy in Turkey. Therefore, the results obtained from this research cannot be generalized to the other educational contexts. It is by definition challenging and difficult to reach all the English Language Teaching academics mentioned above due to time and financial constraints. Thus, stratified random sampling strategies will be employed to represent the whole population.

1.7. Definitions

Agency: The notion of agency is a term that enquires into “who has the power to influence change in micro language policy and planning situations” (Baldauf, 2005, p. 147).

The Delphi Technique: ‘It is a widely used and accepted method for gathering data from respondents within their domain of expertise’ (Hsu and Sandford, 2007). The aim is to achieve a converge of opinion on a certain subject and it consists of multiple iterations to collect data from a panel of knowledgeable subjects.

Language Policy: A language policy is a body of ideas, laws, regulations, rules and practices intended to achieve the planned language change in the societies, group or system. (Kaplan and Baldauf, 1997, p. 11)

Language Practices: This term refers to actual language use in a certain society. Grassroots societal norms form the main focus and these norms are ‘regular and predictable’ (Spolsky 2007, p. 3).

Language Management: ‘It refers to the formulation and proclamation of an explicit plan or policy, usually but not necessarily written in a formal document, about language use ‘ (Spolsky, 2004, p.11).

Linguistic Ecology: ‘The study of the interactions between any given language and its environment’ (Haugen, 1971).

Language Valorization: “The attribution of certain positive values to language as a functional tool, that is, as an instrument which will facilitate the fulfilment of communicative and cognitive functioning” (Hamers and Blanc, 2003, p.9)



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The Importance of Language

As the fundamental and most obvious form of human communication, language functions as the tool people employ to articulate their perceptions of experience. Oral, written and non-verbal manifestations of language are used to negotiate meaning between human groups. As a source of personal identity, the centrality of languages as an inevitable tool for intellectual development and socialization is emphasized in scholarly studies (Lo Bianco, 1987). A skilled and proficient command of language smooths the way for personal growth and social opportunities. Furthermore, the studies conducted in this field give prominence to the inextricable tie between language and national allegiances since the distinctiveness of language is a source of identity in a society.

2.1.1. Language Education Policy

As it is not possible to touch on one clearly identifiable language policy, policy makers need to consider multiple layers of factors including language practices, language management and language beliefs. Therefore, a complex and dynamic language education would serve for the pressing need for policy makers to continuously upgrade the quality of education to include multifarious elements in line with the acceleration in the pace of technological change. These points would be investigated from the perspective and position of English Language Teaching academics in Turkey, in the meantime exploring the tensions between national language policies and the ideologies underpinning them allied with globalism and some similar issues. In place of an overarching framework and research questions, the research focuses the inquiry on the local and contexts.

Spolsky (2004) claims that ‘the real language policy of a community resides in its language policies’. In line with this statement, teachers seem to gravitate towards the language policies most suited to them or a ‘practiced language policy that is in line with the declared’ (Shohamy, 2006). Shohamy (2006) also uses the term ‘de facto language policy’ to refer to the application of the language policy at issue. She also claims that different stakeholders’ engagement despite the declared language educational policies should be examined in this process rather than solely focusing on top-down and bottom-up forces. Additionally, it provides us with a better understanding of how de facto language policies are applied in language classes and due weight should be allocated to examine de facto language policy to fully comprehend de jure language policy in a certain country. As there exist feeble attempts to amend teaching methodologies in some countries, language teachers adopt a distinctive and idiosyncratic style in their classes, eventuating in significant new alterations to the form. In the process, furthermore, the problem requires more than deploying all available resources to deal with the issue of language education policy. For this reason, English policy studies need to reckon with the students’ future needs and the global use of English. In a similar vein, there exists a need for acknowledgement of classroom realities, cultural context and resources given the current circumstances regarding policy implementation. Bourdieu (2005) claims that it is not enough to merely observe what is happening in a field to fully interpret the classroom mood correctly. However, examining *the social space* in which interactions, transactions and events occurred (Bourdieu 2005, as cited in Thomson, 2008) is integral to the whole process. The core principle is that these social elements are integral and not separate from participants’ own teaching methods, making the experience holistic in a way. Contextual demands of these social spaces, in conjunction with experiences built up over years of experience, need careful, case-by-case analysis to evaluate and make them more beneficial for these circumstances. Canagarajah (1999) also notes that an overall majority of language teachers must use materials prepared by Western communities, which have no concern with local context, and consequently this situation brings about many problems pertaining to the implementation of the policy adopted in foreign language education curriculum. As for the pedagogical implications for English as an international language (EIL), Kachru (1986) claims that “the universality of pedagogical model is suspect: it has to be sacrificed for local, socio-political, educational, and communicative needs” (p. 122-123). All in all, these statements put an emphasis on the significance of contextual and national elements in foreign language education curricula.

Multifarious aspects and factors play a key role in the determination and implementation of language policies as Mühlhäusler pointed out in his work (2000). With his ecology of language policy paradigm, Mühlhäusler asserts that the interaction between language education policy and the political, sociological, and economical context of speakers and educators is of great importance in that different elements, agents and contexts are interrelated and interact in classroom settings. In line with the theoretical assumptions underlying the study, participatory frameworks of SLA including neo-Vygotskian socio-cultural theories of SLA and language socialization have close connections with these elements by the same token. In neo-Vygotskian approach, learning is thought to happen through a “gradual process of internalization whereby a fully externalized social practice becomes a substantially internalized cognitive practice” (Atkinson, 2002, p.537). This theory also “takes into account the complex interaction between the individual acting with mediational means and the sociocultural context” (Swain & Deters, 2007, p. 821). A coordinated approach to be taken questions of language education is expected to espouse the interaction between these components together with some particular goals and values.

Accordingly, exploring and analysing the way that teachers interpret the relationships between such constructs as the role of English and language policy is of utmost importance to pave the way for the developments in these policies. Although language education policy is also open to some form of criticality, it holds a prominent role in the country’s education policy. Truthfully, teachers should benefit from professional development regarding the policy making process in order to actively take part in this process. Extensive teacher training, both initial and in-service, is of great importance for teachers to assume prominent roles on this stage.

As Spolsky (2007) treats language policy as a social phenomenon, he refers to the ‘domains’ as defining units of society. Joshua Fishman introduced the notion of domain to sociolinguistics in his classic study of the New Jersey barrio. (Fishman, 1972). Spolsky (2007) claims that each of these domains (family, school, neighbourhood, workplace, government, etc.) has its own policy under the influence of some certain external and internal factors or forces. Participants, location, and topic are the three characteristic components of these policies. To view the issue from a central standpoint, language choices and policies are expected to be in line with the regularities of the domain in question. In addition to these points, Bourdieu’s theory of practice and the concepts of *habitus*, field and dispositions are underlying issues highlighting the effects of socially constructed language policy on

‘institutionalized’ classroom settings. Bourdieu defined *the habitus* as ‘structured and structuring structure’ (1994, p. 170), which means that this construct is influenced by the past, it ‘helps to shape one’s present and future practices’ (Maton, 2008, p. 51) and is in a certain sequence rather than random (ibid.). Bourdieu’s *habitus* operates as a theory of reproduction in that the effects of imposed or self-imposed control work in tandem to reproduce the status quo (Morrison, 2005).

At this juncture, it is of great importance to note the term ‘le sens pratique’ or ‘practical mastery’ (Maton, 2008, p. 54) in an attempt to understand how teachers make sense of their experiences in a classroom setting. Breen, et al. (2001), drawing heavily on Bourdieu’s concept of *habitus*, conducted a study to understand more about this mastery when they investigated the principles and practices of a group of 18 experienced English-language teachers in an Australian ESOL context. The data were elicited from classroom observations and stimulated recall interviews to discover more about the ‘... interpretations of (the teachers) own actions’ (p. 477, 2001) and indicate that teachers’ individual dispositions determine the way they apply the language policy in their own classroom practices.

The real question at issue is the significance of internal domestic affairs and policies at various levels of education because international and intranational functions (Kachru, 1995) seem to have an intertwined relationship and influence the use and status of English in Turkey by reason of that very fact. To accentuate his point, Spolsky (2004) referred to the spread of English by internal needs and interest together with other externally driven forces. Bearing the significance of learning English in gaining access to better education facilities and well-paid job opportunities in the sequel, the enthusiasm for learning English is also due to the need to acquire it as a utilitarian tool for having a prestigious place and position in the international arena.

In a similar vein, the close relationship between the external (globalization) and the internal language policy and practice at all levels of education paves the way for the modifications and improvements in language policies. However, an accurately nuanced examination of Turkey’s language policy necessitates contextualized perspectives. The genesis of this issue lies in challenging the orthodox views on education while focusing on an overall, coherent, and integrated language policy. With a stronger emphasis on language education to meet the potential gains of 21st century and globalization, national language policy should reflect the pivotal role of language learning in today’s world. To put it in brief, the pivotal zone in

which Turkey located necessarily implies a need for a systemic change within the structure of the language education system.

At this juncture, noting the difference between ‘expanding circle countries’ and ‘outer circle countries’ by referring to Kachru’s work (1992) on these terms is of great importance. Apart from ‘expanding circle’ and ‘outer circle countries, Kachru (1992) draws attention to inner circle countries, which includes the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, representing the traditional, cultural, and linguistic bases of English. Kachru (1992) propounds these three concentric circles in connection with the current sociolinguistic side of English. Turkey, whose official language and medium of instruction is Turkish, belongs to expanding circle countries inasmuch as English does not function as the official or co-official language as in outer circle countries. In distinct contrast to outer circle countries, English is accepted as one of the foreign languages in school curriculum, albeit the most significant one in the country. As for German and French, they have been taught as elective subjects in the curricula of many schools. Bamgbose (2003) draws attention to the role of English in expanding circle countries by stating that:

...in Expanding Circle Countries, English lacks any strong population base, it is not likely to have any official status, nor is the push for any nationalistic considerations. Yet, it has enormous prestige mainly on account of its instrumental value. Although the role of English varies from use in certain domains (such as tourism) in institutionalized entrenchment in the educational system, what all these countries have in common is the learning and using of English as a foreign language. What has accelerated the use of English in Expanding Circle Countries is the impact of globalization. (p. 421)

Debates ensue about the role of English in Turkey, as one of these expanding circle countries, inasmuch as the absence of a foreign language education policy is *prima facie* evidence illustrating real-life repercussions of this situation. Many EFL learners in Turkey pursue the perceived global benefits of English language proficiency although there exists a simmering worry regarding the lack of practice opportunities with the attendant limitations and problems. Notwithstanding, Turkey has embraced Europeanization and is a dynamic locus given its infrastructure, facilities and proficient teachers needed to cater to language education demand. In spite of efforts to provide an enabling English language environment, top-down nature of program design and textbook selection cause instructional problems hindering the effectiveness of ELT in Turkey.

2.2. Teaching English as an International Language

As for contemporary discussions on English language, the existence of a global language and its implications is in fact “one of the liveliest current debates” in applied linguistics (Seidlhofer, 2003, p. 7). In this view, English is not the sole property of its native speakers and English is taught and learnt in diverse local contexts, meaning teaching and learning become infused with local customs, beliefs, and practices (Canagarajah, 1999; 2005a; 2005b; Holliday, 1994; McKay, 2003). As the implications and issues regarding English as a global language have multifaceted and complex sides, the historical, political, economic, and cultural characteristics of the country in question determine English language policy directives and actions about English for international stature.

As a world language, English functions as a cultural, linguistic, economic, and intellectual capital. In line with this fact, policy makers in different ‘expanding circle’ countries (Kachru 1986), strive to promote mass literacy in English. Accordingly, the worldwide demand for reasonably proficient English language users has resulted in a critical need for high-quality education for English language learners all over the world (Barnawi & Phan, 2015). At this point, an epistemic and cognitive shift guarantee results in the English education policy and practices of the country.

Foreign language acquisition planning has a pragmatic side in line with the necessity of foreign language skills to achieve great international success in many fields (Hilmarsson-Dunn and Kristinsson, 2010). Interests in English began to change in the 1940s (Rasmussen 2002) when English became Europe’s primary lingua franca (Cogo and Jenkins, 2010). In line with this statement, English language proficiency is of utmost importance for a country’s economic prosperity and academic achievements in general. TOEFL scores are directly proportional to a nation’s total H-index scores and accordingly scholars having a higher TOEFL score generate a greater number of publications having scientific value in the field in question. (British Council-TEPAV, 2013). With an average TOEFL score of 77 in 2011, Turkey had an H-index score of 193, and is ranked 34th (British Council-TEPAV, 2013).

English language proficiency is also critical in ICT industry whose mother tongue is English inasmuch as ICT knowledge paves the way for connectivity and regional integration in today’s world. With more globally connected business opportunities, English language skills are indispensable for vacancies and job prospects for highly skilled staff and workers. Unfortunately, Turkish people have low ranks regarding English proficiency. For example, the 2013 English Proficiency Index (EPI) developed by English First puts Turkey 41st out

of 60 countries. In 2012, the average total Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of both native Turkish speakers and residents of Turkey was 75 over 120 (British Council-TEPAV, 2013).

2.3. Language policy and language planning (LPLP)

In the related literature, the distinction between ‘language policy’ and language planning is couched in these general definitions. Drawing on critical perspectives on language policy and planning, ‘language policy’ is defined as a set of positions, principles that reflect the wider society’s values and attitudes towards the idea of foreign language learning, and ‘language planning’ as the sets of measures adopted within that policy (Schiffman, 1996). For Grabe and Kaplan (1991), language planning can be defined as a quintessential example of applied linguistics while theoretical understandings about language and a necessity for application to real life situations are embedded within this process. Systematic, future-oriented change in language code (corpus planning), use (status planning), learning and speaking (language-in-education planning) and/or language promotion (prestige planning) conducted by some authoritative agents encapsulate the essence of elements included in language planning process (Baldauf, 2005; Kaplan and Baldauf, 2003; Rubin and Jernudd, 1971).

Notwithstanding that language policy and language planning terms are quite often used interchangeably in this discipline, language planning refers to the judgements and the implementation of previously adopted plans while language policy is related with the laws, regulations, rules and official pronouncements. Baldauf (2006) claims that while language policy is the “plan”, language planning is the “plan implementation” (p.149). In a general sense, language planning can also be defined as the consciously and explicitly taken decisions about language issues such as the standardisation of languages and the development or reform of orthographies (Lo Bianco, 1987). It is also important to note at the outset that the first use of the term ‘language planning’ is predicated on Haugen’s study of language standardization in Norway:

By language planning I understand the activity of preparing a normative orthography, grammar, and dictionary for the guidance of writers and speakers in a nonhomogeneous speech community. In this practical application of linguistic knowledge, we are proceeding beyond descriptive linguistics into an area where judgment must be exercised in the form of choices among available linguistic forms. (Haugen, 1959, p. 8)

Over the last half century, there exists a striking analogy between Haugen's study and scholarly literature as regards the gap between theoretical and applied knowledge. However, language policy and planning are a comprehensive scope encompassing the increasing breadth of codifications associated with the field when compared with Haugen's original use of the term. Widespread consultative processes working in tandem with explicitly developed language policy principles are also preferred to make necessary modifications and improvements subsequently (Lo Bianco, 1987). Ad hoc and uncoordinated decisions and measures throw the language teaching process into disarray, as the case may be.

A series of outstanding publications, projects and conferences contributed to the development of the field. Among these projects were *Language Problems of Developing Nations* (Fishman, Ferguson, & Das Gupta, 1968) and *Can Language be Planned* (Rubin & Jernudd, 1971) emanating from the Ford Foundation Founded International Research Project in the 1960s by Fishman, Das Gupta, Rubin and Jernudd. The Ford Foundation – a US philanthropic organisation- realized early language planning work in East Africa and this undertaking served as a surrogate for US interests. Early work was also carried out for South and Southeast Asia (Fishman, 1974). These publications are solidly built upon and function as a continuing thread in the development of LPP field. Additionally, Haugen constructed a fourfold model (1966) - selection, codification, implementation, and evaluation although he did not regard it as new theory of language planning (Haugen, 1983). In a similar vein, Ricento (2000) draws attention to three phases in the development of LPP with its macrosociopolitical processes, epistemological paradigms, and strategic ends.

The subject of many intellectual treatises such as Hornberger and Ricento's (1996) *TESOL Quarterly* special issue on LPP is the coalescence of these two fields in the 1990s. Fettes (1997, p. 14) draws attention to the link between language planning and language policy in this way:

[L]anguage planning ... must be linked to the critical evaluation of language policy: the former providing standards of rationality and effectiveness, the latter testing these ideas against actual practice in order to promote the development of better language planning models. Such a field would be better described as 'language policy and planning,' LPP.

Notwithstanding the inextricable relationship between language planning and language policy studies, there exist some ambiguities and dissociations on the exact nature of the connection between these two fields. What Cooper (1989) and Tollefson (1991) pointed out

of particular noteworthiness was the significance of social change in language planning with a focus on policy as the intended outcome of the previous one.

2.3.1. Top-down and bottom-up LPLP

As governmental bodies are the effective agencies in the development of language policy, this process is generally regarded as being top-down with their role at the macro, meso and micro levels at this continuum (Baldauf & Kaplan, 2003). With the benefit of hindsight, Baldauf (2005) highlighted the theoretical issues and problems inherent in the macro–micro distinction. Individual (micro-level), community (meso-level) societal (macro-level) LPP are subtle and fluid, often overlapping and politically complex (Hult & Pietikäinen, 2014).

Overall, there exist an increasing propensity to accept local practices and other educational agencies as dominant paradigms in the area of language policy studies (Liddicoat & Baldauf, 2008). By the same token, community level engagements with bottom-up perspectives rather than bureaucracy-oriented research of language policy make great contributions to the process and eliminate simmering worry and tensions about the formation of language policy to a great extent (Johnson 2013). In a nutshell, there is ample evidence yielding an in-depth understanding of the factors and sources of major instructional problems experienced in ELT classes and these problems are related with the top-down nature of language policy design to some extent.

2.4. The Layers of Planning and Policy

2.4.1. The Role of Agency in LPLP

In LPLP studies, agency is often regarded as the impact that different stakeholders have on the implementation of top-down macro-LPP (Wiley & Garcia, 2016). In these contexts, the local ecology has a great impact on the way the actors exercise agency while the ecology of forces constrains the possibilities for acting in a particular foreign language teaching context. Coburn (2016) and Johnson and Johnson (2015) defined *agency* as the capacity of individuals to behave independently and to make their own free choices. In these studies, consideration is generally given to macro- level actors as the formers of foreign language teaching policies while focusing on the resistance of local actors to macro-policy decisions and the implementation of language teaching models (Tollefson, 2013). Hence, agency

needs to be analysed from an ecological perspective in which structure and agency have equal ontological status and dialectic relationship (Giddens, 1984).

Baldauf (2005) also claimed that a critical view of LPP studies required a rethinking of the notion of agency – a term that enquires into “who has the power to influence change in micro LPP situations” (p. 147). Sociocultural apparatuses and actors in the education system play a crucial role to reinforce and naturalize language policy standards throughout the country. In a similar way, Ahearn claims that agency refers to ‘socio-culturally mediated capacity to act’ (2001, p.112) and it is viewed as contextualized in structure and discursively constructed nature of ideologies in a certain society.

2.5. Frameworks and Models in Foreign Language Policy

The 1990s brought a resurgence of interest in language policy and planning studies while substantially affected by the imperious spread of English with the forces driving the process of globalization. By the same token, critical and postmodern theoretical developments infused some amount of modernity and new perspectives into the policy and planning studies. Cooper (1989) and Tollefson (1991) enunciated the proposition that language policy and planning needs to be located within the field of social theory in an effort to develop social change theory. *Critical approaches* to language planning are examined within this field and can be described as being a critical reaction to the hegemonic approaches found in classical language planning (Tollefson 2006, Phillipson, 1982; 2012). With the help of these efforts to integrate language planning with other social sciences, it was possible to build more direct links between research and the practice of language planning in education.

Nekvapil defines *language management* as dealing with “management of utterances (communicative acts)” and that this “takes place in concrete interactions (conversations) of individuals or in institutions of varying complexity....” (2011, p. 880- 881). On the other hand, Cooper (1989, 46–47) draws attention to the key matters at the centre of the study of language management in the following way: ‘what *actors* attempted to influence what *behaviours*, of which *people*, for what ends, by what *means*, and with what *results*?’ (original emphasis). He formed a three-strand model to organise language management, namely *corpus planning*, *status planning* and *acquisition planning*. Liddicoat (2013) claims that, language planning intervenes in four interrelated core areas and adds one more element with

the main aim of influencing societal language practices and that is *prestige or image planning*.

Hornberger (1994) also offers the framework which contains three types of planning: status, acquisition and corpus while summarizing the complex process of language policy in the meantime. She also notes two main approaches that deal with form (policy planning) and function (cultivation planning), referring to macro- issues and micro- issues respectively. To further explicate the matter, 'status is concerned with the way languages are used; corpus deals with how a language is constituted; while acquisition planning generally refers to issues surrounding those who use the language' (Fitzpatrick, 2011, p. 54). This framework is useful, especially as 'there is no overarching theory in large part because of the complexity of issues which involve language in society 'within the field (Ricento, 2006, p. 10), allowing researchers to 'unpeel the onion' of language policy studies (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996, p. 401). Multi-layered approaches to language policy are accepted as all-encompassing theories because they provide the critical interpretive and agency perspectives in a well-established manner.

Table 2

Language Planning Goals: An Integrative Framework

Approaches Types	Policy planning (on form) Goals	Cultivation planning (on function) Goals
Status planning (About uses of language)	Standardization status Officialization Nationalization Proscription	Revival Maintenance Interlingual communication International / intranational Spread
Acquisition planning (About users of language)	Group Education/School Literature Religion Mass media Work	Reacquisition Maintenance Foreign language / second language Shift
Corpus planning (About language)	Standardization Corpus Auxiliary code Graphization	Modernization Lexical Stylistic Renovation Purification Reform Stylistic simplification Terminology unification

Source: Adapted from Hornberger, N. H. (1994). Literacy and language planning. *Language and Education* 8 78.

2.5.1. Spolsky's Framework of Language Policy

The perspectives from across social sciences needs to be incorporated into language policy research since language education policy is pivotal to the success and effectiveness of foreign language education and is shaped by the unique interplay of religious, educational, and economic ambitions and realities (Spolsky and Shohamy, 2000). This problem is at the heart of several conundrums concerning foreign language provision in a country. In his noteworthy work, Spolsky (2004) calls for contextualized perspectives about the genesis of language policy studies. Spolsky's study proved very valuable in guiding language policy actions and decisions in its sequel.

Spolsky offers a theoretical framework about the determinants of language policy and what language policy actually comprises. This tripartite conceptualisation consists of three distinct components (Spolsky, 2007) and these are given below:

Language management: It refers to ‘explicit and observable efforts by someone or some group that has or claims to have authority over the participants in the domain to modify their practices and beliefs’ (Spolsky 2007, p. 4). In other words, authorities and government instruments with their legislation and policy instruments can be categorized under this heading.

Language beliefs or ideology: These are regarded as the manifestation of social, political, and cultural principles into language beliefs (Woolard and Schieffelin 1994, p. 56).

Language practices: It is related with actual language use in a certain society. The main focus is on grassroots societal norms that are ‘regular and predictable’ (Spolsky 2007, p. 3).

In the 21st century, a new world order, postmodernism and linguistic human rights conducted to the emergence of issues such as language ecology (Kaplan; Baldauf, 1997), language rights (May, 2001; 2005), and the place of English and languages other than English in a globalizing world (Pennycook, 1998). In a similar vein, Bernard Spolsky claims that four co-occurring conditions pave the way for the formation of national language policy, and these are national ideology, English in the globalisation process, a nation’s attendant sociolinguistic situation, and the internationally growing interest in the linguistic rights of minorities (Language Policy, 2004). These forces sometimes overlap in certain areas and have an interconnected nature depending on local variables and policy realization; however, they have a prominent attribute and are regarded as core motivations in the formation of a purposeful and consistent language policy. As language policy is a question of overriding importance, Spolsky’s framework is crucial in referring to the critical interpretive and agency perspectives within a multi-layered approach to language policy decisions. With this framework, Spolsky (2004) focuses on the role of not only government authorities but also community groups, schools, and families as a solution to the current exigencies of language policy formation process. It is also essential that local intellectual conditions provide a basis for the formation of a strategic plan and the implementation of language policy decisions.

In view of this study, the sociolinguistic situation is defined as ‘the number and kinds of languages, the number and kinds of speakers of each, the communicative value of each language both inside and outside the community being studied’ in his work (Spolsky 2004, p. 219). As for the role of English in global language ecology, Spolsky (2004) calls it as a ‘tidal wave of English that is moving into almost every sociolinguistic repertoire’ (p. 220). The last condition referred to is the growing interest in linguistic rights of minorities and

Spolsky (2004) states that there is an increasing global interest in ‘linguistic pluralism and an acceptance of the need to recognize the rights of individuals and groups to continue to use their own languages’ (p. 220). Additionally, it is patently obvious that the complex interplay of social, cultural, religious, and political forces plays a supplementary and complementary role in the creation of an independent nation’s language policy. In Turkey’s case, all these co-occurring conditions drive the formation of a national language policy except for some issues regarding linguistic minority rights.

With the publication of Spolsky’s *Language Policy* (2004), there has been a terminological shift in sociolinguistics to prefer ‘language management’ rather than ‘language planning’ as the term ‘language planning’ has some associations regarding nation- building efforts of decolonization process (Nekvapil, 2006). However, Spolsky’s framework of language policy has been criticized for not offering a critical grass-roots perspective inasmuch as language policy studies are expected to ‘offer a balance between policy power and interpretive agency’ and be ‘committed to issues of social justice’ (Johnson and Ricento 2013, p. 15)

2.5.2. Kaplan & Baldauf’s Framework

Language policy and planning studies have some common denominators and basic approaches embedded in them in spite of functioning as diversified research areas (Nekvapil (2015). In line with this viewpoint, Richard B. Baldauf (2012) differentiated between four basic LPP approaches: (1) the classical approach, (2) the language management approach (Language Management Theory, LMT), (3) the domain approach and (4) the critical approach. Within current intellectual constellations, these approaches also elucidated LPP discourse and process and contributed to the field to a great extent. The classical approach refers to language planning from the 1960s and 1970s and it was based on Haugen’s study (1983) and synthesis of previous works on this issue. Secondly, the language management approach is grounded in Neustupný and Jernudd’s study (1987), who incorporated not only the macro level (organized management) but also the micro-level (simple management) components into LPP studies. As for the domain approach, it was also supported by Spolsky and referred to as notion of a universally understood language domain remains key (2004, 2009). The last approach, the critical approach, is directly related with social inequalities in LPP continuum together with hegemony, colonization, social struggle, ideology, and resistance.

Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) states that language planning subsumes language policy and interpret these closely related terms in a different way. In addition to all these factors and circumstances, language ideologies with its specific historical and socio-political frameworks invariably circumscribe language policy and planning actions ((Blommaert, 1999; Pennycook, 1998). Language policy and planning (LPP) frameworks, in hindsight, present new vistas for mapping the discipline. LPP goals are nevertheless dependent on each other while some of which yield unintended outcomes referred and characterized as unplanned language policy and planning in scholarly works (Baldauf, 1994). The complicated relationship between language policy and language planning needs to be analysed to allow a holistic understanding of macro, meso and micro level policy decisions. Formal language policies need to be reformulated at these aforementioned levels since national priorities and supranational policy decisions have a great influence on this vibrant disciplinary stream. Referring to these facts, Baldauf (2006) justified on specific principles about overt and covert language policy actions:

Language policy may be realised in very formal (overt) language planning documents and pronouncements (e.g. constitutions, legislation, policy statements, educational directives) which can be either symbolic or substantive in form, in informal statements of intent (i.e. in the discourse of language, politics and society), or may be left unstated (covert). (p.149)

Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) claimed that the success of language education has always been hampered by the dearth of appropriate proactive planning and support for language policy actions developed with a joined-up curricular and collaborative connections. This situation poses a serious problem for the effectiveness of language education and stakeholders' approach glosses over important factors which should be incorporated for the contextualised analyses of actors and agency in this critical process (K., & Baldauf, R. B., Kamwangamalu, 2011). By the same token, the absence of a foreign language policy reflects the way the educational community draws on critical perspectives on language policy and planning. With the perceived importance and accelerated spread of English language throughout the world, these scholarly studies can be employed to construct English as a linguistic capital. Additionally, a plethora of solutions are recommended in this study for the challenges that ensue from the absence of an official language policy and language management programs.

2.6. An Ecological Perspective to Language Policy

Socio-political and socio-economic value and social interaction together with covert or overt reasons for language policy decisions manifest the language beliefs of a certain society.

These socially and culturally embedded metalinguistic conceptualizations of language and its forms of usage are defined as language ideologies (Blommaert, 2005, p.241). In an ecological perspective to language studies, to study ideology is, in some part and in some way, to study language in the social world ‘(Thompson, 1984: 3). For Spolsky on the other hand, ‘they are the beliefs of members of a speech community about what their language practice should be ‘(1999, p.165). Shohamy also claims that certain mechanisms are employed in order to transform language ideologies into *de facto* language policies. Even more, she entertains the role of covert *de facto* policies by stating that ‘it may be the case that ‘even the most declared multilingual policies do not always reflect the *de facto* and real (language policies), as these provide only lip service, declarations, and intentions’ (Shohamy 2006, p. 52).

Pennycook (2013) draws attention to the role of communities’ ideologies because they are real-life repercussions of policy and arrange the use of language in society beyond official policy. As for the situation in communities having a super diverse milieu, the notion of ‘*linguaging*’ *gained* currency because people living in a linguistically diverse community ‘employ whatever linguistic features are at their disposal with the intention of achieving their communicative aims’ (Jørgensen 2008, p. 169). As Schiffman also claimed, the real language policy of any given community comprises overt *de jure* and covert *de facto* policies, both of which are deeply rooted in a community’s unique linguistic culture (Schiffman 2006, p. 112).

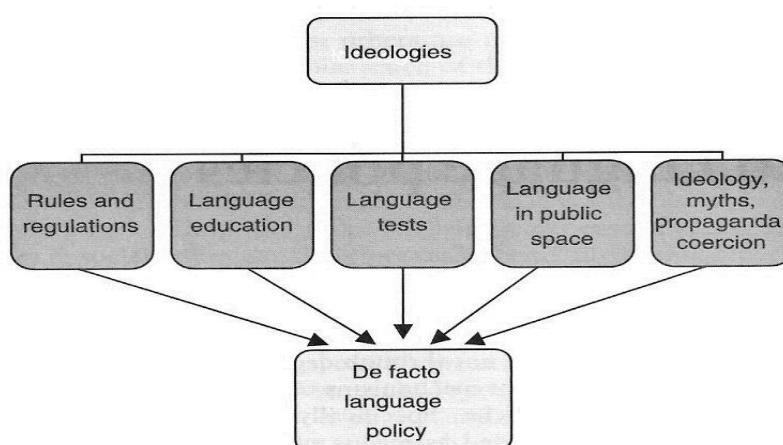


Figure 1. List of mechanisms between ideology and practice “Shohamy, E. (2006). *Language policy: Hidden agendas and new approaches*. Routledge: London, p. 8”

2.7. Foreign Language Policy in the World

According to the results of EF Proficiency Index (2019), there exists an overall improvement in the world in terms of English proficiency notwithstanding the fact that this progress is polarized and sporadic in different parts of the world. The Netherlands has overtaken Sweden and took the pole position once again in 2019. As a matter of fact, we witness a jostling of position for the top spot among Scandinavian countries. As for European countries, Spain and Italy lag behind other European countries in the list while there has been an improvement in France for the last two years. With an EPI average score of 44.60, the region with the lowest English proficiency was the Middle East. Authors of the EPI drew attention to a correlation between high English proficiency and various indicators of economic competitiveness, including higher income and increased labour productivity. Additionally, technology adoption, such as secure servers per capita, information and communication technology (ICT) exports, and broadband subscriptions have a great impact on these countries' English proficiency level.

In addition to the results of EF Proficiency Index 2021, we also included an outer circle country and two expanding circle countries according to Kachru's three concentric circles (1985) in the analysis of English language education policy in the world. China and India, as the world's most populous countries, were also included in this section. Lastly, together with related elements, English language education context in Turkey was examined in the same section. The duration of compulsory education, general education system, number of English language class hours, the starting age for English language education and the status of English in these countries are among the important titles reviewed in the same part.

Very High Proficiency		
01	Netherlands	70.27
02	Sweden	68.74
03	Norway	67.93
04	Denmark	67.87
05	Singapore	66.82
06	South Africa	65.38
07	Finland	65.34
08	Austria	64.11
09	Luxembourg	64.03
10	Germany	63.77
11	Poland	63.76
12	Portugal	63.14
13	Belgium	63.09
14	Croatia	63.07

Figure 2. EF proficiency index, 2019

2.7.1. Foreign language education policy in European countries

To start with educational structure in European countries, it is organized as 6+3+3 in Denmark, 4+4+4 in Hungary and 4+2+3+3 in Portugal. In addition to this information about education systems, the compulsory education lasts for 10 years in Denmark and Hungary while it is 12 years in some countries like Portugal and Turkey (Danish Ministry for Children, Education and Gender [DMCEG]; 2016a, Eurydice, 2014; OECD, 2015). Some countries are differently structured in terms of the role of central government in educational policies and national curriculums. Hungary, Portugal, and Turkey have a centralist structure while schools can implement their own curriculums in Denmark. This situation poses an obstacle in addressing local needs, priorities, problems, and solutions in countries having a centralist structure and a partial localization may help improve the effectiveness of ELT in Turkey and similar countries. (Kurt, 2006).

In terms of the starting age for language learning, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of countries lowering the age for the state's provision of language education in conjunction with an increase in the duration of compulsory foreign language instruction in Europe. To illustrate, students start taking English courses at age six in Finland, Croatia, France, Bangladesh, Italy, Norway, Malta, Spain Sweden; at age eight in Bulgaria, China, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Korea, Romania and Taiwan; at around age nine in Slovenia, Denmark, Hungary, Argentina and Lithuania (Enever & Moon, 2009; Eurydice, 2008).

Compulsory foreign language education starts at the age of ten in the Netherlands while it starts at five years of age in Poland (Eurydice, 2017). Finland is the only country increasing the starting age from seven to nine for compulsory first foreign language instruction (Eurydice, 2017). As it is clear from the Eurydice reports, we cannot speak of a linear relationship between EPI rankings and duration of compulsory foreign language instruction. Even though France and Turkey allocate the most annual instruction time to first foreign language instruction, France ranked 32nd and Turkey ranked 62nd out of 80 countries in EF EP Index in 2017 (Education First, 2017; Eurydice, 2017). Notwithstanding that The Netherlands has one of the shortest durations of compulsory foreign language instruction in years, the country ranked the 1st in EPI in 2017 (Education First, 2017). Other contributory factors such as teacher/student ratio, classroom set-up, teacher profile, language teaching methodologies, and these countries' ranks in the Human Development Index also play a crucial role in yielding these results, not exclusively annual instruction hours in first foreign language instruction.

2.7.1.1. English Language Policy in the Netherlands

The Netherlands, with its entire population now standing at about 17 million people, is in an important geographical location and larger European countries encompass the country having significant international orientations in economics, trade, education, and other fields. As for the national languages of the country, Dutch is the first widely spoken national and official language while Frisian is spoken by a small group of people living in the Northern province of Friesland (approximately 400,000 people).

The most ubiquitous evidence for the status and role of English in the Netherlands is that TV programmes and English spoken films are released without English subtitles or being dubbed. As a matter of fact, a great many people in the society do not regard English as a foreign language (Edwards, 2016) inasmuch as out-of-class exposure and out-of-class English media usage play a crucial role in their English learning process. European Commission Report also confirm this situation by stating that 90% of the Dutch have communicative competence in English to have a fluent conversation with a foreigner or a native speaker.

Compulsory education in the Netherlands starts at the age of five while some schools accept students one year earlier. Primary school education lasts for eight consecutive years and

followed by vocational-, general-, and pre-university level secondary schools. Students attend one of these three types of secondary schools depending on their national examination results and scholastic aptitudes.

The government determined on a change of policy in English language education in 1986 and English at primary schools was made compulsory for the last two years of primary education (students aged between 10-12 years). 80 hours of early English in the last two years of primary education is provided in spite of some hindering factors for the implementation of these policy decisions. The schools generally drip-feed one 45-minute lesson per week in primary education. With the establishment of the CEFR (Common European Framework, 2001), the CEFR attainment levels were integrated into the language education system and exam syllabus from 2009 to 2011. Students generally exceed the target attainment levels in speaking skills while they fall behind the target level in writing skill (Fasoglio & Tuin, 2018).

The students have an improved self-perception about their English competence in the face of this limited exposure to English during the class hours. Out-of-class practices and exposure to English, properly speaking, more than compensate for the lack of in-class exposure to the target language. In general, the Dutch have a high degree of proficiency in English and rank the first in international grading systems and indexes (EF Index, 2021).

As of 2014, the government made a final decision about how to proceed in ELT in secondary schools and English language education has become compulsory for all these students. Additionally, bilingual secondary education is provided in more than 130 schools in these three scholastic tracks since students have the necessary background knowledge in English (Nuffic, 2019). The reformulation of core objectives and attainment levels take place with the inclusion of a wide range of stakeholders and accordingly a bottom-up approach. Secondary school teachers are also provided with a training in content and language integrated learning approach (CLIL) together with bilingual pedagogy (Coyle, Hood & Marsh 2010) in an effort to prepare them for these intense courses and immersion programmes. As for the assessment practices employed in language classes, the negative washback effect of national central exams (determining 50 % of the final grade) has been under discussion for a while since changing the focus of examinations is deemed as a necessity in the present language education system in the Netherlands. The inclusion of reading comprehension questions with a multiple-choice format rather than target language

society, culture, literature, and related oral skills in the target language is often criticized in the extant literature (van Dée et al., 2017).

In a general sense, the education system in the country places more emphasis on developing students' communication skills and the effectiveness of ELT is improved with the help of this approach together with out-of-class exposure to English. Apart from these crucial factors, the socio-economic status of people in the country is a major determinant of their high degree of proficiency in English. Children from more affluent households attend bilingual schools in primary education. Therefore, the advantages and priorities detailed here are not all-encompassing and it is not a fair situation covering the whole society.

2.7.1.2. English Language Policy in Norway

In Norway, a certain relativization of the position and status of English as a language of international communication breeds success and a higher level of English language proficiency in the country (EF Index, 2021). In addition to the role and status of English in the society, an agreement between government and stakeholders is first required in order for a rapprochement to happen in ELT policy decisions, actions and micro-level implementation systems. This reality calls for the integration of a bottom-up approach in the reformulation of language teaching objectives and attainment levels and is a prerequisite to meet the standards in the evolving educational reforms and requirements of the 21st century.

As English occupies a predominant position in Norway's education system, the society seems to have a heightened awareness of English language policy issues and the results of this approach can easily be observed in international indexes (EF Index, 2021). With this true grit and determination, the people have enough proficiency level of English to have a fluent conversation or watch an undubbed film in English. Besides, the high status of English language determines the present national conjuncture inasmuch as English has a great influence on public domains and digital arena. In spite of not having an official status in the country, the Norwegian people learn English as a second language rather than a foreign language. Rindal (2014) claims that the status of English language in Norway is remarkably similar to an official second language in terms of the way people acquire the language and the extent to which they are exposed to it in their daily lives, especially via the internet and mass media. Additionally, partly overlapping representations of the mental lexicon also facilitate the process of language learning in that linguistically closely related languages and

cognate comprehension enable the students to have more improved language performance levels than students having linguistic and cultural barriers in language instruction.

Although scholars and many noteworthy indexes draw attention to the fact that Norwegian students have a higher level of English proficiency when compared with other European countries (Bonnet, 2004; Education First, 2021), Norwegian students are more successful in Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) rather than academic English (Hellekjær, 2010). This result stems from the fact that communicative approach and practical language use are highlighted in related documents and national policy decisions (Ministry of Education and Research, 2004; Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001) shapes the English language teaching program in the country by the same token. However, the use of target language in secondary school classes is more common when compared with the one in primary schools (Brevik & Rindal, 2020). Obviously, English is not assigned as the sole medium of instruction despite scholarly suggestions about the maximal use of target language in these classes (Krulatz, A; Neokleous, G & Henningsen, F.V., 2016).

Children start primary school at age six and English instruction starts directly from the first year of primary school. Compulsory education lasts for 10 years, there are two stages; the first of which is primary school (1-7) and is followed by lower secondary school (8-10). They have 588 hours of English instruction throughout the primary school and an hour lasts for 60 minutes in the education system. Different modes of assessment are utilized formally or informally during this process in order to cater for individual differences together with formative and summative assessment practices. Students' oral language skills are accentuated in these assessment procedures rather than solely focusing on structural and syntactic units of language.

Some national initiatives aim at improving the quality of English language instruction in the country (Assessment for Learning (AfL) and Classroom Interaction for Enhanced Student Learning (CIESL) and these are funded by the Norwegian Research Council. Apart from all these factors contributing to the development of higher-level English proficiency in the country, low unemployment rates, high labour market participation – particularly for women- and welfare model are principally interpreted as indicative of this success in English language education. More importantly, the top performing countries in the EF Proficiency Index 2021 provide great opportunities for out-of-school-contact and exposure to extramural English rather than just an early start for English instruction in schools ((Peters, 2022).

2.7.1.3. English Language Policy in Denmark

Denmark, as a member of European Union since 1973, attached great importance to lifelong learning, education for all, self-governance in its education system (Eurydice, 2016). The place accorded to English language education at all educational stages paved the way for the high level of English proficiency in Denmark (EF Index ,2021) and English language is generally regarded as a second language rather than a foreign language by most prominent scholars of the field (Færch, Haastrup & Phillipson, 1984). Additionally, the development of language teaching programs has been coordinated over time through a systematic use of CEFR and meet the necessary requirements. The Danish linguist Paul Christophersen refers to the special position of English with a specific aim to form a bilingual society with English having the role of dominant language in popular entertainment, higher education, and business world in Denmark (Christophersen, 1991). As English has a weighty influence in many fields of society, English occupies a predominant position in the Danish education system, too. However, the strategy aiming to reach “balanced domain-specific bilingualism is a witness to preserve the domains (school, higher education, and research) that Danish is losing in the last two decades (Harder, 2008) and they adopt a holistic concept encompassing the mother tongue and foreign language concurrently. Apart from these studies, there are synchronous efforts to keep the development of English at a steady pace in the area of foreign language education with a large-scale coordination between educational stages (Dansk Sprognævn, 2012). This approach provides opportunities for language learners to engage in heuristic learning activities and practices.

With the pre-eminence of English in the socio-political, cultural, and intellectual realms of society, a wide range of stakeholders make an effort to apply a coherent English language education policy and try to develop effective strategies in this field. In line with this stance, English language education starts at first grade. The duration of primary school is 6 years and students attend these courses until the end of 12th grade level. As for the educational structure in Denmark, it is formed as 6+3+3, and the compulsory education lasts for 10 years (Danish Ministry for Children, Education and Gender [DMCEG], 2016). It is expected that most students reach B2 level competences in English by the end of upper secondary schooling (gymnasium) (CEFR, 2001; European Commission, 2017). During this process, written and oral communication skills are emphasized in the language teaching programs while four basic language skills are not treated as separate entities in the Danish education system (SIL, 2016). The use of target language for communicative purposes is accentuated

in English classes and this approach is congruent with their ELT policy aims and decisions. As a well-known fact, fluent English is a sine qua non of success in business, international relations and many different fields of society and accordingly the Danish education system provides opportunities for coherence regarding progression in learning content. All in all, language and education policies at the national and local levels facilitate strong English language education in Denmark with the contribution of learning milieu fostering students' broad exposure to English outside the school.

Table 3

Starting Year of Teaching English and English Course Hours in the Countries

	Netherlands	Denmark	Norway	Turkey
Starting year of teaching English	Compulsory in the final two years (student age 10–12) of primary school since 1986	English instruction starts in Grade 1 in primary school	Formal instruction in English from the first year of primary education (six-year-old)	Teaching English starts at 2nd grade level (MONE, 2013).
Weekly English course hours or duration	400 hours during compulsory education	1 course hour in 1st and 2nd grades; 2 course hours in 3rd and 4th grades; 3 course hours in 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grades	588 teaching hours of English (teaching hours are here given in 60 minutes).	2 course hours in 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades; 4 course hours in 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades (MONE, 2013). 6 course hours in 9th grade; 4 course hours in 10th, 11th, and 12th grades (MONE, 2014).

2.7.2. Foreign Language Education Policy in India

The three-language formula proposed by the National Commission on Education 1964-1966, was included in the national language policies of 1968 and 1986. Despite some criticism regarding the implementation of constitutional provisions, Indian schooling system accommodates at least three languages in educational institutions. Among them, the two most frequently offered languages are Hindi and English, both of which are taught in all 32

states (Meganathan, 2011). With the transformative power of language, English is the second language in 21 states while Hindi is offered as a second language in eleven states. English was granted an 'associate official language' status in the forthcoming years after the declaration of independence in 1947. Along with the visible benefits of English language proficiency, there has been a shift in the perception of the language in question notwithstanding the negative perceptions stemming from the colonial period in the country.

Additionally, in total, 75 languages are taught in all echelons of Indian education system (Meganathan, 2011). The interpretation of relevant data reveals that English is the most frequently offered second language (offered by 27 of 34 states at the upper primary level, 23 of 33 states at the primary level and 21 of 34 states at the secondary level (Meganathan, 2011). Furthermore, educational institutions offering English-medium instruction increased over the last decade, especially at the primary and secondary level.

Initially, English was perceived as a library language or language of higher education although it is now associated with development and power paving the way for a better life. As Graddol explicates in a similar manner, the language which was a 'key part of the mechanism of exclusion because of its very unequal distribution in society' is now seen 'as a means of inclusion' (Graddol 2010, p.120). English language is, moreover, regarded as a killer of native or indigenous languages by some groups in Indian society and accordingly the inclusion of English in education programs or the adoption of English medium instruction in some statutory bodies is fiercely criticized. Additionally, the disparity in the quality of English language education is another significant and problematic issue in Indian society.

As for a brief historical overview of language policy in India, it was perceived as a matter of status planning rather than acquisition or corpus planning inasmuch as the studies in this field concentrated on the official side of language in the formative years of independence. In 1940s, The Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE) raised a number of important issues regarding languages in school education. The Board approved the 'three-language formula' in its 23rd meeting held in 1956 with an effort to remove inequalities among the languages of India. The Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE) made important decisions in relation to the study of English as a compulsory subject in educational institutions after the contributions made by education ministers conference held in 1957:

1. English should be taught as a compulsory language both at the secondary and the university stages, students acquire adequate knowledge of English so as to be able to receive education through this language at the university level.

2. English should not be introduced earlier than class V. The precise point at which English should be started at the middle stage was left to each individual state to decide. (MOE 1957, quoted in Agarwal 1993:98)

Despite public disquiet about the dominance of English as a colonial language, taking the above reforms into consideration are sure to smoothen the process with the help of the fact that English language knowledge redounds to these individuals' advantage in today's world.

2.7.3. English Education Policy in China

As for the provision of English language education from the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) until the present day, it is of great importance to have a look at an overview of the current English language curriculum at the various levels of China's education system. The acquisition of English language proficiency must be given serious consideration in every country's language policy as stated in some prominent academic papers in language policy field (Ferguson, 2012; Tsui & Tollefson, 2007; Spolsky, 2004). As Bolton und Graddol (2012) stated in their work, "From the 1950s to the 1990s, Chinese education experienced a roller-coaster ride of changing policy directives in foreign language education" (p. 4). In a similar sense, Lam (2005) identifies six phases of English language education policy since the establishment of the People's Republic: (i) "the interlude with Russian"; (ii) "the back-to-English movement"; (iii) "repudiation of foreign learning"; (iv) "English for renewing ties with the West"; (v) "English for modernization"; and (vi) "English for international stature" (p. 73). The contribution of official views and popular views in this continuum is fairly evenly effective inasmuch as the support of students, teachers, parents and other community members shapes the implementation of English language education policy in a certain country (Lo Bianco & Aliani, 2013; Menken & García, 2010).

As a result of China's close relationship with the Soviet Union, Russian was the main foreign language in China's education system in the early 1950s to late 1950s. As Lam (2002) claims, "because China's initial vision was alignment with the communist nations, the foreign language that received much attention in the 1950s was Russian" (p. 246). However,

‘English was condemned as the language of the enemy, namely the USA’ (Gil, 2016, p. 5) during this period. It was rare to find English being taught anywhere (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996). However, from late 1950s to mid-1960s, there was a return to English, and it was adopted as the main foreign language in the country due to the breakdown in relations with the Soviet Union. Since there was a shortage of English teachers, The Ministry of Education recruited teachers from overseas, especially from Britain, in the early 1960s (Yao, 1993). After these efforts to improve English language education, there as a period of rejection and abandonment of foreign language education from mid-1960s to early 1970s. The Cultural Revolution period also gave harm to the process of English language education in the country.

In an effort to re- establish relations with Western countries, especially the USA, the country witnessed revival of English in the early 1970s (Gil, 2016). In the new direction of modernization and reforms, there was a resumption and improvement of ELT methodology up until early 1990s. A new syllabus and textbooks were developed for secondary schools (Adamson & Morris, 1997) and ELT conferences were held to address foreign language instruction and problems in all levels of education system. With the resumption of recruiting Western teachers in the late 1970s, teachers began to experiment with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), also known as the Situational or Functional Approach in China (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Gil, 2016). Course materials also underwent extensive adaptations and the textbook series *Communicative English for Chinese learners*, developed by a group of Chinese scholars led by Li Xiaojun and introduced in 1984 (Rao, 2013) became available to language learners in the country. In the present day, task-based language teaching (TBLT) is the recommended teaching approach in China’s language policy documents.

In virtue of China’s efforts to play a greater role on the world stage, English language instruction has had a special role and meaning with the aim of learning English for international stature from the early 1990s to the present day. *the Guidelines for Vigorously Promoting the Teaching of English in Primary Schools*, issued in January 2001, featured that English language education would begin in Grade 3 of primary school in cities and suburban areas in autumn 2001 and in rural areas in autumn 2002 (Li, 2007; Hu, 2007). In the most developed and populous cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, English language education begins even earlier, in Grade 1 of primary school (Cheng, 2011). *The English Curriculum Standards*, a standards-based program, were revised in response to feedback from teachers, academics, and administrators in 2011, the result being *the English*

Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education, which was implemented as of September 2012 (Gu, 2012; D. Zhang, 2012). *The English Curriculum Standards* has nine competence-based levels, each of which conceptualizes English language proficiency in terms of five areas: language skills (the four macro skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing); language knowledge (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, functions and topics); affect (international perspectives, patriotism, confidence, and motivation); learning strategies (communicative, resourcing, meta-cognitive and cognitive strategies); and cultural understanding (cultural knowledge, understanding of English-speaking cultures and awareness of cross-cultural differences) (Cheng, 2011; Gu, 2012). The aim, as X. Cheng (2001), explains, is to develop “students’ comprehensive competence in using the English language” (p. 138) rather than merely “mastering knowledge and skills” (p. 137).

As for China’s general education system, most Chinese children attend kindergarten from the ages of three to six. Children attend primary school for six years, between the ages of six and eleven. Junior secondary school then lasts for three years, and senior secondary school another three years. Primary and junior secondary school are compulsory, and since 2007, these nine years of compulsory education have been free for all students (Gil, 2016). After graduating from senior secondary school, students can attend university education if they wish. According to *the Basic Requirement for Primary School English* issued by the Ministry of Education in 2001, students in Grades 3 and 4 should receive two class hours of English per week while students in Grades 5 and 6 should receive four class hours of English per week (Feng, 2009; Wang, 2002). Junior secondary school students receive four class hours of English per week in all three years and students in Senior secondary school receive four class hours of English per week in all three years (Feng, 2009; Gil, 2016).

As regards to levels of proficiency in English and degree of English usage, Wei und Su (2012) state that almost 33 % of China’s population, or some 415.95 million people, had studied at least one foreign language, with the vast majority, 93.8 %, having studied English. The percentage of these people who actually use English in their daily lives is quite low, with only 7.3 % claiming to often use English and 23.3 % claiming to sometimes use English. In a similar vein, the Education First (EF) English Proficiency Index placed China in the low proficiency group, ranking 33rd out of the 60 countries surveyed (Education First, 2013). All in all, in spite of not achieving the desired results, China made every effort to improve English language education especially in the last three decades.

2.7.4. English Education Policy in Israel

In the early years of Israeli's existence, English was perceived as a remnant of the British mandatory rule between 1917 and 1948 and accordingly it was viewed negatively. However, as a result of growing American influence and the special economic, political, and cultural ties with the USA, the motivation to learn English has begun to increase since the 1960s. After a period of Jewish immigration from English-speaking countries, Israel has an unusually high percentage of English native speakers working as English teachers (Inbar-Lourie, 2005). On the other hand, English and Hebrew are regarded as if they are in competition, and English is also perceived as an obstacle to achieving national goals of promoting Hebrew (Shohamy 2007, 2014; Spolsky and Shohamy 1999). Therefore, Hebrew language activists tried to prevent initiatives of teaching content in English in schools at some periods in this continuum. In spite of these obstacles, English is viewed and valued as a crucial tool for social mobility and success in the community. English language education was accordingly revived to aid Israel's modernization process.

As for English education policy in the country, English is the first foreign language taught in Hebrew-medium schools, mandatory from fourth grade (age 9) to graduation but generally the integration of English into the education program begins much earlier, in second grade (age 7) and in some cases already in the kindergarten or first grade. In Arabic-medium schools, English is usually taught only after the introduction of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) in first grade (age 6) and Hebrew as a second language in third grade (age 8). The same English curriculum, textbooks, policies, and assessment for Jews and Arabs are employed by the Ministry of Education. In a general sense, material factors create inequalities in education. The population outside the centre of the country and certain other groups are underprivileged in terms of income and parent education. The results of the Meitzav exams, nation-wide examinations in second, fifth, and eighth grades, indicate that the cities with the highest levels of English proficiency are all affluent with an overwhelmingly secular Ashkenazi Jewish population in the centre of the country (Or & Shohamy, 2017). In line with this fact, Shohamy (2017) claims that English curriculum should address the immense variety of needs, interests, and contexts in which English is taught and used and also cater for the multilingual and multicultural environment in the country. She also draws attention to the fact that students' full linguistic repertoires and their ability to use these languages should be taken into account inasmuch as language policies

implemented through the education system have the greatest impact on a country's population and future.

2.8. The history of foreign language education in Turkey

Policy makers are predisposed towards integrating various changes into the foreign language education curriculum and favours the responsiveness to the needs of society in terms of economic and political developments in the country. Therefore, presenting an overview of the development of English together with the historical overview of policies implemented is of utmost importance in facing the challenges in Turkish language education system. In other words, tracing and understanding the way that previous language policies have operated within Turkish education system serve a valuable purpose by helping the researcher to evaluate the process on the whole.

To this end, this part aims to situate the study in a historical and political context to delve into a more complex understanding of the language policy in Turkey. The introduction of English language into the Turkish education system dates back to The Tanzimat Period, the second half of the eighteenth century. The Tanzimat Period is also accepted as the beginning of the westernization movements in the education system (Kirkgöz, 2005). Robert College was the first institution teaching through the medium of English and founded as an Anglo-American private secondary school in 1863 by an American missionary. The establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923 accelerated modernization and westernization movements in the country. With the spread of ELT in educational institutions, English took primacy over other foreign languages and especially French, which was previously the language of diplomacy and education in the country.

The documents such as the Official Bulletin issued by the Turkish Ministry of National Education and the reports prepared by National Education Councils from 1939 onwards regarding policies adopted in the foreign language education of Turkey provide information with respect to these historical and developmental factors in this continuum. Çakır (2017) remarks the historical development of foreign language education by adding that it became one of the fields of science where academic careers can be made with the establishment of the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) in 1981. In 1924, foreign language education was made compulsory in schools to provide cultural and intellectual wealth and then a need for foreign language education arose out of social and cultural developments in the country

(Sebüktekin, 1981). In 1942, E. V. Gatenby came to Turkey and took an active role as a "Linguistic Adviser" with the support of the British Council. He also held important positions at Gazi Education Institute and Ankara University. In 1948, E.V. Gatenby wrote *Essential English for Turkish Students* with Charles Eckersley and his book series titled *A Direct Method English Course* was published between 1949-1953. This series were pre-eminently suited for use in secondary schools and high schools until 1970s (Çakır, 2017). Georgetown Project, with its ten specific goals, was also conducted between 1953-1965 in order to prepare a modern English language teaching program and train English language teachers. Six Maarif Colleges were opened in 1955-56 and these schools were successful in English language education with the inclusion of preparatory classes and English-Medium instruction in Maths and Science courses. In 1975, the name of Maarif Colleges was changed to Anatolian High School and secondary school sections of Anatolian High Schools were closed after the transition to continuous eight-year compulsory education in 1997. With the extension of high schools to four years in 2005-2006 School Year, preparatory classes were abolished from Anatolian High Schools and Super High Schools. As a result of all these developments in foreign language education, some problems and hardships were encountered in the process. As of 2017, intensive foreign language education commenced in pilot schools in the fifth grade of primary schools in order to eliminate deficiencies in English language education. On the other hand, the introduction of the 1983/1984 language policy acts in Turkish education plays a fundamental role in the expansion of the English language provision in Turkey. Additionally, the effect of 1997 macro policy on English Language Teaching at all levels of education were observed first and foremost during the last two decades. As for the English language curriculum for primary education including Grades 4-8, it was prepared by a commission and ratified by the Board of Education and Discipline on February 2, 2006. With the help of sample lesson plans, the commission rendered valuable assistance for foreign language teachers by emphasizing the significance of simulation and dramatization activities for the teenagers.

The following suggestions, in substance, were put forward by the commission:

- The activities that take place in students' books should be suitable for development levels of the students.
- Learner-centred approaches should be adopted.
- The goals and objectives should be based on a functional-notional and skills-based model.

- A wide range of activities including singing, playing, drawing, and dancing should be used to teach English to the youngsters.
- Teachers should enable their students to communicate in English. (Ersöz et al. 2006)

After a while, some contributory and key factors have necessitated a review of English language policy at all levels of Turkish education in that there exist some challenges in practice in relation to the current problems at the instructional levels. Şahin (2003) notes that nearly all of the results in his study show there are a number of problems with the foreign language education policy in Turkey, most important of which are related with teachers, students, textbooks, school principals, and students' parents. In a similar study, Uztosun (2018) presents an understanding of the factors that hinder the effectiveness of ELT in Turkey and major instructional problems teachers experience in this process. Students' negative affective states, large classes, poor textbooks, examination-driven teaching, overloaded and structure-based program, and limited class hours were reported to be the main factors yielding current situation in Turkey (Uztosun, 2018). Furthermore, discrepancy between policy and practice together with a variation of policy implementation across school types are the underlying reasons for some problems. An almost complete congruence between the macro policy and its micro level implementation has special significance in the process of globalization. In line with this fact, ELT curriculum reforms has entailed an ongoing review of adjustments in line with the norms of the European Union (EU) while giving it prominence over other foreign languages available.

2.8.1. Curricular Reforms and Turkey's ELT Program

With a world-wide spread of English and globalization, language teaching policies and programs have gone through some revisions all around the world (Hu, 2007). In addition to these aspects, the evolving educational challenges of 21st century paved the way for curricular reforms in many areas of education. As for the inclusion of foreign languages, English in particular, in the programs, the educational systems in many countries redesigned their ELT programs to meet the unique problems encountered in teaching a foreign language to young learners (Copland & Garton, 2014). In this vein, Wood & Attfield (2005) draw attention to the fact that a foreign language education program designed for young learners should "reflect a set of beliefs and values about what is considered to be educationally and

developmentally worthwhile in terms of children's immediate needs, their future needs and the wider society (p.138).

In 1997, with a revision in the curriculum, EFL was introduced as a compulsory school subject at fourth grade in elementary schools rather than from the sixth year of education in Turkey (Kırkgöz, 2008). Additionally, the Ministry of National Education (MONE) increased the duration of compulsory education from five to eight years. With this revision in the ELT program, the aim was also to adopt a communicative and learner-centred approach in order for language learners to improve their communicative competence (Kırkgöz, 2007). With the uncritical acceptance of game-like activities and communicatively supported tasks together with interactive activities in the program, scholars and academics designed a whole raft of measures to improve the foreign language education program in the country. However, 'the proposed change seemed revolutionary rather than evolutionary for the majority of Turkish teachers, whose previous training was tailored to teach adults not TEYLs' (Kırkgöz, 2007; p. 1862).

This revision process had an immediate and direct effect on language teachers and teacher training process. "Teaching English to Young Learners" course was introduced into the curriculum to enable pre-service teachers to develop ways and knowledge of TEYLs (Kırkgöz, 2008). Accordingly, an in-service English Language Teacher Training and Development Unit (INSET) was founded to provide in-service training for practicing English teachers (Gürsoy, E., & Eken, E., 2018). However, successful implementation of these policy objectives requires teachers' understanding of the theoretical considerations of these changes in question. As stated in most prominent works in this field, "Teachers are not simply implementers of educational innovations that are handed down to them by policy makers, but they interpret, modify and implement these innovations according to their beliefs and the context where these teachers work" (Chang, 2011; Keys 2007; Orafi & Borg, 2009). The studies conducted in this scope indicate that it is not implemented effectively, and teachers' practices differed from one region or school to another one (Kırkgöz, 2008, 2009). In line with these facts, Kırkgöz also (2009) stated that "Turkey needs to resolve existing incongruence between the idealized macro policy objectives and their realizations in practice at micro level teaching situations" (p. 681). Demiröz and Yeşilyurt (2015) also concluded that there is a close link between effective foreign language teaching and the incorporation of communicative language activities into English language classes.

In 2005, the 1997 curriculum had gone through a revision. First of all, the duration of secondary schools has been extended to four years from three years. MONE also adopted a constructivist learning approach to induce students' active involvement in the language learning process (Topkaya & Küçük, 2010). In an effort to join European Union, English was offered ten hours in the first year of secondary school while four hours of English was offered in the consecutive years (Kırkgöz, 2007). Performance-based assessment instead of pen and paper tests has been proposed with a shift from traditional assessment.

In 2012, 4+4+4 education reform was realized, and compulsory education has been increased from 8 years to 12 years. There were also changes in the former two-tier education system (Gürsoy et al., 2013). Additionally, the starting age for foreign language learning is lowered to 6.6 years of age. With the introduction of new curricular reforms, second and third graders receive two hours and fourth, fifth, sixth graders receive three hours compulsory FL courses weekly in primary education (Arslan, 2012). What is particularly striking is its focus on language learners' development of interactional and communicative skills in English. Constructivist approaches, communicative language teaching, learner-centeredness, and process-oriented assessment were the key tenets of new ELT program. Therefore, the new ELT program prioritized listening and speaking skills over grammar and reading skills.

In 2016, MONE addressed the issue of limited class hours in English classes. Together with these innovations in the Turkish education system, the MoNE conducted a pre-pilot study in order to obviate problems during the implementation of the new system. Starting with the 2017-2018 academic year, the MoNE (2017) has increased the number of units in English courses for fifth-grade students and fifth-grade courses have been earmarked for this 'foreign language preparation year'. In 2017-2018 academic year, fifth grade students took 15 hour-long classes per week in some pilot schools across Turkey with this new approach to improve the quality of foreign language education for young learners. As for the problems in the implementation of program for the Fifth Grade, the answer to this conundrum is buried in the success of the program which "is inevitably dependent upon the analogous approach in teachers' instructional choices, measurement repertoire and in learners' practice." (MoNE, 2017, p. 3). Erdem and Yücel-Toy (2017) have drawn attention to some problems related with the size of classes, the lack of a prepared curriculum, and the lack of a course book. Dilekli (2018) also found that EFL teachers complained about this overloaded and heavy curriculum and encountered problems regarding the practical side and implementation part

of this new system. The program has become optional for secondary schools commencing from the 2018-2019 school year, and if school administrations want to offer The Intensive English Language Teaching Program for fifth graders, they can introduce the program (MoNE, 2017).

Poland, Turkey, Brazil, France, Germany and Japan have adopted early language learning in their language education curriculum (Çelik & Karaca, 2014). Research studies in this field indicate that a language learner starting this process at an earlier age have a higher proficiency level when compared with the ones who begin at a later age ((Penfield, Taylor, & Snow cited in Gawi, 2012). Therefore, longer exposure to the outcomes of the language learning process is more preferable inasmuch as it is likely that the process will result in very high levels of proficiency (Genesee, 2014). In line with these facts and findings, Early Language Learning in Europe (ELLiE) project was carried out by a group of researchers and accepted as a result of this growing global interest and set out to “provide a detailed insight of the policy and implementation processes for early foreign language learning (FLL) programmes in Europe ...” (Enever, 2011, p.9).

There exists a common belief that children as L2 learners are ‘superior’ to adults in terms of language pedagogy (Scovel, 2000). The ‘critical period hypothesis’ (CPH), in its original formulation (Lenneberg, 1967), refers to an optimal period for language acquisition which ends at puberty. If the initial exposure is substantial and sustained to a great extent, then ‘age factor’ becomes one of the most important elements in this process (Lightbown, 2000). However, some other crucial points are also addressed in the current literature on the subject (i) multiple critical periods (each based on a specific language component, such as age six for L2 phonology), (ii) the non-existence of one or more critical periods for L2 versus L1 acquisition, (iii) a ‘sensitive’ yet not ‘critical’ period, and (iv) a gradual and continual decline from childhood to adulthood (Bialystok 1997; Richards and Schmidt 2002).

2.9. Current Status of the English Language in Turkey

Turkey, with its total area of 97% in Asia and 3% in Europe, is a country acting as a physical and cultural bridge between Asia and Europe and has considerable geopolitical importance with regard to international relations. Turkey, as a member of NATO since 1952, has close collaborations and relationships with European countries and these factors make a certain level of English proficiency crucial for the integration of country into the globalizing world,

too. Although Turkish people are cognizant of the fact that English has a prominent role with the close association between the development of globalization and the dominance of English language in the Turkish education system, they do not adopt a high level of orientation towards learning the language. Additionally, the problems experienced at the instructional level stems from the way English is propagated in the country (Kırkgöz, 2009). The impetus of a national strategy could ensure the congruence between the macro policy and its micro level implementation and span all levels of education in line with the predisposition of people towards the English language notwithstanding that it does not have an official status in Turkey.

2.9.1. The CEFR and the ELP

The Council of Europe, as an intergovernmental organization with its 47 member countries, was established on 5 May 1949 by 10 countries. Linguistic diversity and language learning, most notably in the field of education, are supported to a great extent. European Cultural Convention, signed on 19 December 1954 and ratified on 10 October 1957 by Turkey (Council of Europe, 2011), intends to promote mutual understanding among peoples of Europe and reciprocal appreciation of their cultural diversity. The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML), situated in Graz, Austria, is a prominent institution of the Council of Europe. It maintains a close liaison with Council of Europe and its language education policies with the aim of bolstering the strength of member states in the policy determination and implementation processes.

Encapsulating the true spirit and underlying principles of Council of Europe, it put forward its resolution on 25 January 1969:

- if full understanding is to be achieved among the countries of Europe, the language barriers between them must be removed;
- linguistic diversity is part of the European cultural heritage and it should, through the study of modern languages, provide a source of intellectual enrichment rather than be an obstacle to unity;
- that only if the study of modern European languages becomes general will full mutual understanding and co-operation be possible in Europe;

- a better knowledge of modern European languages will lead to the strengthening of links and the increase in international exchanges on which economic and social progress in Europe increasingly depends.
- a knowledge of a modern language should no longer be regarded as a luxury reserved for an élite, but an instrument of information and culture which should be available to all (Council of Europe 1969:2).

The Language Policy Division, functioning since 1957, executes intergovernmental co-operation programmes which aims to promote effective and appropriate language education policies. Additionally, The Language Policy Division introduced a number of instruments for the purpose of presenting standards in language education and adding precision to this procedure. These are Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and European Language Portfolio (ELP). The CEFR, describing a number of proficiency levels in foreign language learning, is a reference framework. It specifies three levels of foreign language proficiency. These are A1 and A2 (basic language user), B1 and B2 (independent language user), and C1 and C2 (proficient language user) (Heyworth, 2006). The Council of Europe introduced the CEFR in order to provide ‘a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe’ (Council of Europe 2001a).

The CEFR aims at describing “in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively” (Council of Europe 2001: 1). These words imply that the CEFR has a learner-centred action-oriented approach while focusing on individual learner’s communicative competence and performance (Little, 2009). In line with this statement, the development of learner autonomy, students’ assuming proactive responsibility for the learning process, must be given higher priority in language teaching process. Additionally, the CEFR emphasized the need to transform language learning into real-life experiences to support fluency, proficiency, and language retention (CoE, 2001). With all these functions, the CEFR is a hinge in language teaching methods and approaches as the development of learner autonomy, reflective skills and self-assessment opportunities pave the way for a more learner-centred approach in language teaching.

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) and the CEFR were first propounded at a Council of Europe symposium in 1991. The European Language Portfolio was developed and carried into effect by the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe from 1998 until 2000.

In line with the aforementioned hallmarks of Council of Europe in this respect, European Language Portfolio aims to contribute to mutual understanding within Europe by promoting plurilingualism (the ability to communicate in two or more languages) and intercultural learning while helping language learners monitor and evaluate their own learning process and become self-managing individuals with their own individual learning strategies. The ELP consists of three main parts such as Language Biography, Language Passport, and the Dossier. Self-awareness, intercultural experiences and ‘can do’ statements are the tools employed in the Language Biography section to help language learners reflect upon and assess their own learning process and opportunities. The Modern Languages division of CoE set certain criteria for language learners in the Language Passport part designed to include language learners’ spoken languages and proficiency levels. Given the particular relevance for tailor-made courses, The ELP, in general, recognizes the importance of meeting individual needs. All in all, The European Language Portfolio was the entry point to the philosophy of the CEFR. In a similar vein, LinguaFolio was applied in the United States as a local version.

As the ELP is “a tool to promote learner autonomy” (Council of Europe 2006: 9), the students have the opportunity to act as fully engaged agents of their own learning with individual and collective responsibility for planning, monitoring and evaluation (Holec 1979, Little 1991). Balçıkanlı (2008) placed much emphasis on learner autonomy by noting the parallelism between the principles of Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) that favour a proactive approach towards language learning and autonomous learners.

As the CEFR is implemented in a vast array of countries in Europe, Baldauf (2012) refers to the CEFR as the latest approach in language management research. Additionally, the CEFR aims to bring curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment into closer relation with each other as this is not the case in a traditional approach (Little, 2009). As a freely available and amply documented source, CEFR spread widely and assisted policy makers to create national educational frameworks. However, some potential problems arise in establishing the CEFR and in these cases the void is filled with some other resources and institutions. There also exists a growing body of research and literature about internalization and globalization inasmuch as language policy evaluation is a burning issue in the context of language education curricula. Scholars also unanimously consider that educators and policy makers

question the application process in terms the integration of local elements into the language education curricula.

English language education in Turkey, having a basically CEFR focused structure and European policy oriented national implementations, needs to be grounded in certain educational principles including self-assessment, cultural diversity, and learner autonomy with a lifelong learning perspective (Mirici, 2015). In a self-directed learning approach, language learners have the opportunity to develop their metacognitive learning strategies with the help of European policy based self-assessment practices. Education and Training 2020 strategy (ET2020) leads the development of education policies in Turkey and the European Commission has a correlative duty with policy makers in order to ensure student and staff mobility and improve the quality of language learning. In line with these aims, Turkish Ministry of Education adopts CEFR principles in its language teaching curricula and introduced the European Language Portfolio (ELP) in order to encourage self-assessment in ELT programs. Turkish Ministry of Education, Board of Education revised the English language curricula in 2002, 2011 and 2013 to include the CEFR principles and guidelines in it.

As for the components of European Language Portfolio, they are of great importance in language education and these are language passport, language biography and a dossier: (1) language passport summarizes the owner's linguistic identity by briefly recording second languages (L2s) learnt, formal language qualifications achieved, significant experiences of L2 use, and the owner's assessment of his or her current proficiency in the L2s he or she knows; (2) language biography is used to set language learning targets, monitor progress, plot the development of language learning skills, and record and reflect on especially important language learning and intercultural experiences; (3) dossier contains a selection of work that in the owner's judgement best represents his or her L2 capacities and achievement (Little, 2005; p.325). Most importantly, these three components have both pedagogical and reporting functions. The pedagogical function is in line with Council of Europe's aim to foster learner autonomy and lifelong learning (Little and Perclová, 2001).

The ELP was piloted in 30 schools in Turkey from 2002 to 2004 with 60 teachers and 1,357 students (Demirel, 2005:6). Research studies indicate that the ELP has significant functions for promoting reflection and self-assessment, which are of great importance in terms of learner autonomy and reflection (Sisamakias 2006, Kohonen 2000). In terms of the ELP's formative role rather than summative role in language learning, Sisamakias (2006) also draws

attention to the result that students develop more objective and autonomous self-assessment behaviours with reflective skills. Little (2009) also claimed that the ELP assists learners in keeping record of their own learning process. In a similar way, Yılmaz & Akcan (2012) conducted a study regarding the implementation of the ELP with young learners in Turkish context. The findings of their study indicate that five common practices are significant in the ELP implementation process: raising awareness, goal tracking, making choices, reflection, and self-assessment.

2.10. Present-day language-in-education policies in Turkey

Turkey, at the intersection of Europe and Asia, has a central and strategic location as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and an associate member of the EU. The geopolitical status of Turkey necessarily entails a continuous stream of effort and endeavour by a dedicated group of officials to incorporate English language courses moving with the times in equal measure. The learning of English for international communication as well as the world's lingua franca of science, business and technology matters to a great extent insofar as it shapes policy determination and implementation process. However, Brutt-Griffler (2002) points out that unlike an elite lingua franca, English is learnt by different strata of the society. Therefore, socioeconomic elite and lower socioeconomic groups are endeavouring to use all of the resources at their disposal, albeit obstacles for the educational and employment opportunities of the lower socioeconomic groups.

Kouraogo (1993) specified that monolingual contexts in ELT are “input-poor environments” (p. 167) and therefore these contexts have restricted opportunities and facilities for learners' exposure to target language. Although there exists an exigent need for language learners to improve their communicative abilities, ELT in input-poor environments together with overloaded and structure-based programs presents an abysmal picture. With the disconnection between language teaching program and practice, English language teaching policy needs to be determined with its place in the holistic and broader plan of language education.

In Turkey, students attend either public or private educational institutions in Turkey. Nevertheless, public educational institutions outnumber private educational institutions which are subject to the same regulations as public institutions in terms of Ministry of Education policies imposed on educational institutions. The Ministry of National Education

provides administrative regulations and supervision for primary, secondary, and high schools except for the education at the university level. As for the policy determination and implementation processes, macro level policy determines the framework of the national curriculum while micro level one refers to the implementation and practice parts of the policy adopted in the country. As Wang (2006) expressed, foreign language teaching practices of teachers are directly linked to micro level implementation part of this continuum. With constant criticism about lack of success to promote foreign language proficiency among Turkish students in foreign language education (Egel, 2009; Işık, 2008; Kırkgöz, 2007), it is crystal clear that there exists a discrepancy between foreign language education policy and its implementation in conjunction with lack of motivation and required resources for foreign language education. Wang (2010) pointed out that there are external and internal factors that have a great impact on the implementation of foreign language education policy in a certain context. Internal factors refer to professional development and understanding of the curriculum designed by policymakers while textbooks and other resources used in the implementation process are categorized as external factors in this respect.

Researchers and policymakers honed in on the deficiencies of the previous language policies which raise concern over its effectiveness and drew attention to task-based, learner-centred and communicative language teaching. On the other hand, academically viable goals and objectives are to be included in the language teaching curriculum inasmuch as the intended positive results will not be obtained and language policy would not come to fruition as expected if they are too ideal to be applied in certain classroom contexts. On the other hand, as all of the Turkish learners do not feel the same need for developing proficiency in the English language, we should raise students' awareness of the role of English in their personal, academic and professional lives while pinpointing ways of integrating global issues related to English language instruction into these classes (Çelik and Kasapoğlu, 2014). However, different methods and approaches may work for different levels of language learners and appropriate ones should be adopted especially for the integration of technology into language classes. In line with this conclusion, Ayar and Ekşi (2019) made a comparison between elementary and upper-intermediate groups and revealed the significance of students' perceptions about internet-based activities and the way they are involved in the meta-cognitive aspect of them.

Some recent studies draw attention to the need to establish the environment of language learning as a whole and necessary steps to ensure quality with regard to setting objectives in

tune with the latest developments in technology and language education. These studies present suggestions to overcome some of the inequalities in ELT practices. too. In an effort to develop an integrated practical approach to ELT practices in Turkey; Baz, Balçıkanlı, and Cephe (2018) focused on a technology integration model along with its practice-based strategies that are helpful for pre-service English language teachers in Turkish context and concluded that we need to raise EFL pre-service teachers' awareness about the implementation of ICT integration methods and these innovative technology integration models, however lack of technological facilities and problems cause impediments in the application of these methods in Turkish EFL context. In this vein, Ekşi and Yeşilyurt (2018) focused on the drawbacks and contribution of technology integration models and provided suggestions to improve the facilities of schools and effectiveness of projects conducted in the charge of MoNE.

Together with the integration of innovative methods into EFL classes, language assessment policies also shape ELT practices in Turkey to a great extent although pre-service and in-service language teachers hold situation- specific views. Therefore, program developers need to incorporate assessment practices into the curriculum that will have a positive washback effect on the English teaching and learning process, too (Hatipoğlu, 2016). Furthermore, reliance on paper-based assessment causes impediments in the assessment of productive skills, and this problem entails taking action for the improvement of further program and policy changes in ELT in Turkey (Erarslan, 2018).

2.10.1. Studies Related to English Language Policy

The elements of English language teaching programs have an interrelated and interactive nature rather than having linear correlations. The scholars working on ELT criticize the educational reforms and curriculum innovations since they remain limited to program papers to a great extent. In view of the relative dearth of data about English language teaching programs and lack of a coherent English language policy in Turkey, this study aims at contributing to these aspects and draw attention to the pedagogical and curricular discontinuity as a generic educational issue. We need to design a whole raft of measures to improve the effectiveness of ELT in Turkey. With these challenges and factors in mind, the studies presented in this section will provide a historical snapshot of research output regarding English language teaching programs in Turkey.

The stakeholders involved in this process may experience the planned program in a different way depending on contextual factors, learner profiles and teacher expectations and accordingly there exist some possible differences between the planned and experienced curriculum (Ellis, 2004). Chaudhary (2015) focuses on the crucial elements affecting the implementation of language teaching programs such as “the learners, resource materials and facilities, the teacher, the school environment, culture and ideology, instructional supervision and assessment” (p.984).

In Turkey, three major curriculum reforms were put into action after the challenges and weaknesses of ELT programs were recognized and these reforms took place in 1997, 2006 and 2013. A wide range of reform elements and substantial alterations such as classroom procedures, teacher factor, class size, class hour, the starting age for learning English and L1 factor featured in these reforms in order to equip language learners with the necessary language skills. Behaviourism is the main approach adopted in the 1997 educational reform and classroom techniques such as memorization, drills or question and answer sessions as well as repetition based on behaviourism were employed in order to improve students' communicative language skills (Topkaya & Küçük, 2010). After recognizing the obstacles and barriers in the implementation of the 1997 reform, a new English language teaching program was launched in 2006 and it was based upon the constructivist theory and supported learners in keeping abreast of the developments of the global world (Küçük, 2008). Process-oriented syllabus, student-centred learning, autonomy and different classroom procedures and activities were the main elements of this program. With the introduction of the 2013 curriculum also known as 4+4+4 education system, there was an emphasis on developing students' communication skills and the new program lowered the starting age to learning English to six years and it was expected to have a strong accumulative effect on the subsequent language learning process (Bayyurt, 2012).

2.11. English Language Teacher Education Programs in Turkey

In order to better understand some related problems in the field of language teaching, it is critical to note the historical accumulation of knowledge in foreign language teacher training in Turkey. To start with the viewpoint of historical development in the Republic Period in Turkey, the recognition of importance of English generated momentum for reforms and teacher training curricula has undergone extensive and radical reforms throughout this period. Sadrettin Celal Antel's report entitled "Maarif için on yıllık inkişaf programı" (A ten-

year development program for education) in 1926 was a significant milestone in promoting foreign language teacher education (Karagöz, 2018c, pp.1119-1128). The national and secular educational policy was reinforced incidental to the Law on Unification of Education (Tevhid-i Tedrisat) no 430, which came into force on 3 March 1924 and accordingly all the educational institutions were affiliated to the Board of Education (Maarif Vekaleti), that is, to the Ministry of Education (Güçlü and Şahan, 2018).

In the early years of the Republic, different resources were employed in order to train English language teachers, and these were sending teachers abroad after taking the examinations held by the Delegate of the Board of Education (Talim ve Terbiye Heyeti), the Galatasaray High School (Galatasaray Lisesi), foreign schools and philology departments of universities (Yücel, 2007). In his work "Secondary Education in Turkey" (Türkiye’de Ortaöğretim), Hasan Ali Yücel, the Minister of Education between the years 1938 and 1946, claimed that there were 71 English language teachers in 1935 in Turkey. In the 1939 - 1939 school year, with the cooperation of İstanbul University and the Ministry of Education, a school of foreign languages was opened in order to train English language teachers for high schools and the period of education was two years in these schools. A department was also opened in İstanbul Higher Teacher Education School (İstanbul Yüksek Öğretmen Okulu) in 1940 in order to train foreign language teachers. The students graduating from the philology departments of both İstanbul University and the Faculty of Languages History and Geography (Dil Tarih ve Coğrafya Fakültesi) were granted a certificate of teaching in order to meet the increasing need of foreign language teachers (Demircan, 1988; Tebliğler Dergisi, 1939, p.111).

Early in the Republic Period, in 1928, the Turkish Education Society (Türk Maarif Cemiyeti) was established at Atatürk's suggestion and later officially renamed as the Turkish Education Association (Türk Eğitim Derneği) commenced education and training completely in English as of 1951 - 1952 academic year. After a while, as a result of relationships with especially America and developments in the world, Maarif (Education) Colleges were begun to be opened as of 1956. These schools were renamed Anatolian High Schools (Anadolu Liseleri) in 1975 and both Maarif Colleges and Anatolian High Schools were the cornerstone of many foreign language policy developments and took remarkable steps to promote efficient foreign language learning and teaching in Turkey.

Thereafter departments of foreign languages were opened at Gazi Institute of Education (Gazi Eğitim Enstitüsü) and İstanbul Çapa Institute of Education (İstanbul Çapa Eğitim

Enstitüsü) in 1938. As of 1962, foreign language teaching departments which trained English language teachers were opened at the Institutes of Education in İzmir, Diyarbakır, Eskişehir, Konya, Bursa and Erzurum in addition to those in Ankara and İstanbul (Demircan, 1988). The study period at the Institutes of Education was increased to three years in 1967 and in the sequel, they were converted into institutions offering four-year training with an important legal amendment made in 1978-1979 academic year and renamed as Higher Teacher Education School. The Higher Teacher Education Schools were incorporated into newly established Faculties of education with a governmental decree on 20 July 1982. With the Educational Reform came into existence as of the 1997-1998 school year, there was a need to restructure the teacher education curricula of the faculties of education. As part of the teaching and learning process, evaluation is turning into a centre of increasing demand in developing the quality of education (Richards, 2001). Accordingly, in 1998 and 2006, two program-reforms in teacher education were introduced in Turkey, like EU countries, with the help of comparative and summative evaluation in the pedagogic, field, seminar, and practice lessons. According to CEFR criteria and framework (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages), it is claimed that the language teacher should have proficiency and knowledge in “four language skills, linguistics, grammar, literature, foreign language teaching, and proficiency in language and practice”. From this viewpoint, language teacher education reforms were presented in order to curtail and overcome the challenges in this field.

Of interest for many researchers is the quality of English Language Teacher Education inasmuch as it is a substantive issue in foreign language teaching. Richards and Farrell (2005) also emphasize that teacher education and development takes time. With the benefit of hindsight in the field, it is crystal clear that language teacher education and the quality of language instruction are not mutually exclusive inasmuch as the repercussions of any alteration in these programs continue to reverberate in English classes. For instance, 1997 macro policy had a great impact on English Language Teaching at all levels of education. Since the number of English teachers was very low, METU and Boğaziçi University graduates from any department of the university, whose language of instruction is completely English, could take up a job as English teachers. Students attending English-medium universities were appointed as English language teachers after completing a 31-credit English language teaching certificate program (Seferoğlu, 2004). Students who have been studying in universities such as German Language Teaching and French Language

Teaching for a long time could be appointed as an English Teacher in case of need when they graduate with a certificate they obtained by taking an elective 40-credit course from their English Language Teaching program during their undergraduate studies. Despite successful curricular innovations during the same period, these disputatious decisions regarding language teacher recruitment in state schools hindered the effectiveness of ELT in the forthcoming years, at least in some educational institutions.

Drawing attention to this problem in his scholarly work, Cephe (2014) states that we need to find answers to the following questions:

- What percentage of the teachers employed by the Ministry of National Education are graduates of English Language Teaching and what is the ratio of these teachers to English teachers who are not English Language Teaching graduates?
- What are the graduation areas of those who are employed as English teachers, and what is their level of language and field competencies? (p. 62-63).

It is very difficult to answer these questions with clear figures. On the other hand, some problems in English Language Teacher Education programs risks obscuring fundamental issues underlying foreign language provision in the country. There was a noticeable decrease in the readiness levels of ELT students, especially with the increasing number of universities and programs across the country (Yaman, 2018).

2.11.1. The Role of EFL Teachers' Education in the Language Policy

Language planning is generally defined as the organized activity to study language issues in an attempt to solve language problems (Spolsky, 2004; Baldauf, 2006). As a well-known fact, political, economic and social forces in the country affect the way language education policy planning is embodied in any official document (Tollefson & Tsui, 2004). Some certain correlative elements such as the social-political situation, the educational system, the status quo at the local level have a great impact on the extent to which low level agencies play a part in this continuum. One way and another, exploring the close liaison between the national English language policy and its implementation at the local level presents the opportunity to shed light on some prominent issues related with this field. Therefore, language policy-related decisions need to include both higher and lower-level agencies with their reinterpretation of the original policies in a given context (Bamgbose, 1989). Brindley and Hood (1990) claim that, "a better understanding of how curriculum implementation

happens ‘on the ground’ ...would help to put language curriculum development on a more rational footing and allow curriculum developers to plan more effectively for the changes that follow innovation” (p.233).

Additionally, the extent to which national policy is developed with the involvement of grassroots of the process reveals the gap between the curriculum policy and practical teaching situations. In many ways, involving language teachers in policy decisions renders the national curriculum more implementable and applicable. As Ricento & Hornberger (1996) point out, educational reforms are likely to be successful only if the teachers are ready to be at the heart of language policy studies. The first hurdle to overcome is the attendant problems caused by lack of intense activity from professional and community groups. Language policy and planning involve coordinated effort at all levels and therefore all these agents are expected to work towards broadly shared common goals.

When teachers are envisioned as passive adopters of the policy in question to faithfully implement it, they would not have a chance to give feedback in the pilot stage. With the imposition of these beliefs, teachers, in a way, become more indifferent to issues regarding national English education policy when the English curriculum is ivory-towered rather than focusing on the nature of the real world. What is included or verbalized in policy documents is to be in close connection with actual teaching practices, with teaching methods in line with recent international trends in foreign language education.

At national level, the diminution in the importance of particular teaching methodologies should be explored through the eyes of in-service teachers. Language teachers are generally accepted implementers of language policy rather than agents helping to shape and develop the policy itself. In the same vein, Shohamy (2006) drew attention to the most effective ways to increase teachers’ involvement in language policies while in another study the language teacher is regarded as a curriculum maker and an integral part of the curriculum in which “learners, subject matter, and milieu are in dynamic interaction” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992, p. 392). Woods (1991) focuses on the role of the teacher in transforming the conceptual structure into language teaching contexts. If this is not the case in actual teaching practices, theoretical part is regarded as an unattainable ideal or a set of postulates not applicable in the harsh world of reality (Stern, 1983, p.23)

On the other hand, research studies conducted to evaluate the relationship between teachers’ beliefs and language policy helps us to understand the way language teachers apply the policy requirements in their own classes (Darling-Hammond, 1990). Canagarajah (2006)

draws attention to the fact that English language teachers treat language policies as a way of conveying their ideological stance particularly in pedagogical situations in those ‘periphery areas’ (Kachru’s ‘outer circle’ countries).



CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents information regarding the methodological approach of the study together with each distinctive phase of the research study. Data collection process, participants and techniques employed in the data analysis procedure are provided in this section in connection with the other details of study in question.

3.2. Research Design

3.2.1. Qualitative Research Design

This chapter will offer a brief description and justification for adopting this framework of research at issue. First, the researcher will employ a mixed method research design in the study. Silverman (2000, p. 8) offers the suggestion that qualitative measures can offer ‘a deeper understanding of social phenomena’, while Richards (2009) construes this form of research as one that allows for a richer understanding of phenomena. A qualitative methodology containing exploratory and ethnographic elements will also be employed to demonstrate ‘what is’ as opposed to how things ‘ought to be’ (Canagarajah, 2006, p.155). However, it is expected to present a grounded view of how this language policy is represented in terms of most current academic thinkers’ perceptions. The idea of theory emanating from practice and practice evolving from theory, or dialectically interacting with each other (Freire, 1970 as cited in Canagarajah, 1999, p. 35), is important in terms of applying the determined policies in a dynamic classroom atmosphere.

The researcher aims to explore how academics make sense of the curriculum changes in this context by explaining how they have socially constructed their own realities. With this context in mind, the aim of this study is to explore the English language policy of Turkey and to establish how this language policy is implemented through dispositions of ELT academics from different parts of the country. In this process, theory generally emerges from the data in the interpretive paradigm that contains personal involvement from the researcher. However, the aim of the researcher is to understand the conditions, stakeholders involved in this phenomenon rather than to challenge them or predispose them to evaluate the policy in a certain direction.

3.2.2. Quantitative Research Design

As for the quantitative part of study, a Likert-scale questionnaire was formed after the analysis of qualitative data with NVivo program. The items of the questionnaire were formed on the basis of qualitative data findings elicited from 38 academics working at different universities in Turkey. The questionnaire consists of five parts: General Questions, Language Policy, Learning, Teaching, and Assessment. The questionnaire is also provided in the Appendix part of the thesis.

3.3. Universe and Sample

In the Delphi technique, choosing the experts of the research field is a critical issue. Clayton (1997) draws attention to the fact that expert in Delphi can be defined as “somebody who possess the knowledge and experience necessary to participate in Delphi research “(p.337). The participants of this study are selected from 12 different regions of the country, Turkey, specified by TÜİK (Turkish Statistical Institute) in the regional statistics data. After meeting the prospective participants of the study, the researcher sent them first Delphi round open-ended survey form and an informed consent form with an invitation letter indicating the interviewees participated in the study voluntarily. These forms also ensures that their personal privacy and anonymity will be preserved by the researcher and the collected data will only be used for the study in question.

Working within an interpretive paradigm, rich data will be sought from a stratified sample of ELT academics from these parts of the country. Stratified random sampling enables the researcher to ensure that all parts of the population are represented in the sample in order to

increase the efficiency (that is to decrease the error in the estimation). In this sampling technique, the researcher divides the entire population into different subgroups or strata, then randomly selects the participants proportionally from the different strata. The table below indicates the participants of study categorized according to Turkish Statistical Institute regions:

Table 4

Participants of the Study and TÜİK Regions

NUTS-1	NUTS-2	NUTS-3
Istanbul Region	Istanbul Subregion	Istanbul Province : 3 Participants
West Marmara Region (TR2)	Tekirdağ Subregion (TR21)	Edirne Province (2 Participants)
	Balıkesir Subregion (TR22)	Çanakkale Province (2 Participants)
Aegean Region (TR3)	Izmir Subregion (TR31)	Denizli Province (5 Participants)
		Muğla Province (2 Participants)
East Marmara Region (TR4)	Bursa Subregion (TR41)	Bursa Province (3 Participants)
	Kocaeli Subregion (TR42)	Kocaeli Province (2 Participants)
		Bolu Province (1 Participant)
West Anatolia Region (TR5)	Ankara Subregion (TR51)	Ankara Province (5 Participants)
	Konya Subregion (TR52)	Konya Province (2 Participants)
	Adana Subregion (TR62)	Adana Province (1 Participant)
	Kayseri Subregion (TR72)	Sivas Province (2 Participants)
West Black Sea Region (TR8)	Zonguldak Subregion (TR81)	
	Samsun Subregion (TR83)	Tokat Province (1 participant)
		Amasya Province (1 Participant)
Northeast Region (TRA)	Anatolia Erzurum Subregion (TRA1)	Erzurum Province : 2 Participants
Central East Anatolia Region (TRB)	Malatya Subregion (TRB1)	Malatya Province (2 Participants)
		Elazığ Province (1 Participant)
	Şanlıurfa Subregion (TRC2)	Siirt Province (1 Participant)

The number of experts in each round is another critical issue in Delphi studies. One of the ways to ensure against a homogenous population is to include at least 5-10 experts in the panel (Clayton, 1997, p. 378). In general, it is regarded that the ideal size is 10- 20 experts (Sahin, 2001, p. 2001). As for the number of participants in this study, the researcher invited

38 experts after the completion of literature review part. Informed consent was elicited from all the study participants prior to data collection process and participation was completely voluntary. Most of the participant candidates either did not volunteer to answer the open-ended questions or did not reply to our e-mails due to their overloaded work schedule.

On some occasions, language teachers are left to find their way and devise their idiosyncratic teaching strategies and rationales. Most of the time, language teachers subvert the education policy in order to meet the pragmatic and pedagogic needs of the classroom. This study aims to incorporate the dispositions and viewpoints of ELT academics regarding language policy matters.

3.3.1. Demographic Features of Participants

This part provides brief information about some demographic features of participants (gender, affiliation, and university) and the participants are experts in the field of ELT working at different universities in Turkey. The table indicating information about the demographic features of participants from various universities is provided below.

Table 5

Demographic Features of Participants

Participant	Gender	Title	Affiliation
A01	Male	Assistant Professor	Fırat University
A02	Female	Assistant Professor	Atatürk University
A03	Female	Associate Professor	Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal
A04	Female	Professor	Kocaeli
A05	Male	Associate Professor	İnönü
A06	Male	Associate Professor	Necmettin Erbakan
A07	Male	Associate Professor	Social Sciences University of Ankara
A08	Male	Associate Professor	Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart
A09	Female	Associate Professor	Muğla Sıtkı Koçman
A10	Male	Associate Professor	Gazi
A11	Female	Associate Professor	Gazi
A12	Male	Assistant Professor	Sivas Cumhuriyet
A13	Female	Assistant Professor	Amasya
A14	Female	Assistant Professor	Uludağ
A15	Female	Assistant Professor	İnönü
A16	Female	Assistant Professor	Necmettin Erbakan
A17	Male	Associate Professor	Siirt
A18	Male	Assistant Professor	Pamukkale
A19	Female	Assistant Professor	İstanbul Medeniyet
A20	Female	Assistant Professor	Pamukkale
A21	Male	Assistant Professor	Hacettepe
A22	Female	Assistant Professor	Sivas Cumhuriyet University
A23	Female	Assistant Professor	Trakya
A24	Male	Assistant Professor	Kocaeli
A25	Female	Associate Professor	Atatürk
A26	Female	Assistant Professor	Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart
A27	Female	Assistant Professor	Yıldız Technical
A28	Female	Assistant Professor	Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa
A29	Female	Assistant Professor	Pamukkale
A30	Female	Assistant Professor	Uludağ
A31	Male	Professor	Çukurova
A32	Female	Professor	Uludağ
A33	Male	Professor	Gazi
A34	Female	Professor	Trakya
A35	Male	Professor	Pamukkale
A36	Male	Professor	İstanbul Medeniyet
A37	Male	Professor	Muğla Sıtkı Koçman
A38	Male	Professor	Pamukkale

3.4. Rounds of the Delphi and Data Analysis Procedure

After focusing on the literature review part for a few months following the dissertation proposal part, the researcher focused on the data collection process after reviewing the

interview questions at issue. The study aimed at eliciting expert opinion regarding the English Language Policy at K-12 education level in Turkey. As the Delphi Technique is employed in order to get expert opinion, the participants of the study are ELT academics in Turkey. The Delphi Technique is a structured data collection method and has been employed to make predictions about future events. It has been employed to reach a reliable consensus among experts regarding a certain phenomenon (Gupta & Clark, 1996; Rowe & Wright, 1999).

Before the first round of data collection process, a pilot study was conducted with ELT academics from Sivas Cumhuriyet University. No problems were noted regarding the first-round open-ended interview questions. However, academics participating in pilot study made contributions for the revisions of some questions in the first round of Delphi study. Regarding the language of interviews in the Delphi study, it was in English inasmuch as the participants are ELT experts from different universities in Turkey and they preferred to use English terms and answer interview questions in English.

3.4.1. Process of the First Round

Holloway (2005) states that data analysis helps the researcher identify the similarities and differences in the data. On the other hand, it is conducted to understand the uniqueness of each participant's personal experience, particularly in a qualitative study. In line with this aim, opinions of the expert panel were gathered in the first round to arrive at a consensus on English language policy actions and decisions in Turkey. The academics answered the open-ended interview questions through online interviews or written questionnaire forms in the first round. The first round of Delphi is also called inventorial phase with its open-ended questionnaire. After the completion of the first round, the data were transcribed verbatim and then analysed with NVivo program. The program enabled the researcher to uncover richer insights and get organized and clearly articulated form of these transcriptions. The researcher presented the itemization of the first round after this data analysis procedure.

The data analysis was conducted on the transcription of the semi-structured interviews in order to create an item pool for the beliefs and dispositions of ELT academics regarding language education policy in Turkey. The analyses of the transcriptions of these interviews were conducted through content analysis to clarify and elaborate on the results from the verbatim transcripts. These transcribed forms of the first round were scrutinized in order to

form codes and themes, spot reiterated items and lastly categorize them under an appropriate labelled column. NVivo program was used in order to form codes and themes of the transcribed data.

The data gathered in the first round was qualitative inasmuch as open-ended questions were directed to the experts in the field. The verbatim transcriptions of online or face-to-face interviews provided the qualitative data for the first round. After completing this part, duplicated answers and items were eliminated as a significant part of Delphi process. In the meantime, we conducted content analysis with the help of NVivo qualitative data analysis software.

The aim of first round in this Delphi study was to encourage participants to solicit their views on English language policy practices and actions in Turkey. They were expected to make contributions to the study with their anonymous cooperation on it (Clayton, 1997). The inventorial phase of the Delphi was incorporated into the study in order to allow for a strengthened form and ownership of ideas (Clayton, 1997, p. 379). The value and contribution of individual expert ideas were emphasized with the integration of inventorial phase into the study.

3.4.2. Process of the Second Round

After the completion of qualitative data analysis part, Statistical figures through Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) program was employed for the quantitative analysis of Likert scale items.

All in all, interviews and Likert-type questionnaire composed the data of the Delphi study and accordingly qualitative and quantitative data analysis were incorporated into the data analysis process in order to ensure triangulation. A comprehensive literature review and expert views on these data collection instruments helped the researcher to ensure content validity. The participants, data collection instruments, settings, procedure, and data analysis will be explicitly displayed in the following section, too.

The itemized form of the first-round data is designed and organized as the second-round questionnaire. The second round of the questionnaire has a Likert – type scale containing the statistical analysis of the first round. The questionnaire consists of 4 sections using a five – point Likert scale design. A code from 1 to 5 was employed in order to indicate respondents' level of agreement with the statements included in the second round of the study. The codes

are strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree respectively. The structured questionnaire format was sent back to participants and they were asked to rate each item depending on its own context and section title. This structured feedback format helps the participants to reconsider their ideas or explain whether they prefer to keep their position in the first round.

The iteration of Delphi rounds was modified since the aim of the Delphi Technique is to acquire a combination of various ideas rather than a single forecast. The gradual process of convergence and consistency has important implications for research and consequently the repetition of rounds was stopped at this point. A cadre of scholars underlined the fact that stopping the Delphi process after the completion of two rounds is plausible in that expert thoughts and expected changes in their dispositions generally occur in the first and second rounds (Gupta & Clark, 1996; Clayton, 1997; Woudenberg, 1991). In a similar vein, we preferred to stop the Delphi after the second round in order to avoid a false accuracy.

3.5. Data Collection Tools

Meaning will come from ELT academics' responses during the in-depth interviews, which are the main instrument for data collection and researcher's thematic analysis of data in question. Creswell (2003) also claims that interviews are helpful and instrumental when the researcher does not have the chance of observing the participants directly. He also adds that interviews permit the researcher control over the line of questioning (p.186). In line with these claims, interviews were conducted with the participants in order to gain a deeper insight and elaborate widely on the constructs being investigated. After the completion of the interviews, the verbatim transcriptions of the data were formed, and an in-depth analysis of the data was conducted with N-Vivo program. In the light of the data obtained from this process, a Likert-Scale questionnaire was formed.

3.5.1. Delphi Method

3.5.1.1. The Origin of Delphi

The term 'Delphi' derives from the 'Delphi Oracle' in ancient Greece whom people believed could communicate with the gods and predict what would happen in the future. In its original

sense, Delphi was used to extrapolate some figures from forecasts with respect to technological developments. In 1959, Helmer and fellow RAND researcher published a paper on “The Epistemology of the Inexact Sciences,” and this paper provided a philosophical base for forecasting (Fowles, 1978). After a while, Dalkey and Helmer (1963) carried out an experimental research study for the RAND (an acronym for Research and Development) Corporation. In this research called *Project Delphi*, they applied expert opinion to make comments and predictions on some military issues and munitions. Forecasts about some different aspects of the future were often derived through the collation of information containing expert judgement. The first employments of the method were purposed to get a convergence of opinions without face-to-face confrontation with those who supported them (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963). After a while, the Delphi technique was utilized to forecast important issues regarding education and curriculum development in subsequent research studies.

3.5.1.2. Delphi Characteristics

The increased use of consensus methods such as brainstorming, nominal group technique and the ‘Delphi’ Technique has arisen from the need to settle some anomalous and incompatible situations and meet specific requirements for critical issues. The Delphi technique can be defined as a structured deliberation through surveys and in-person meetings. Linstone and Turoff (1975), in their work having a notable influence on the Delphi studies, defined it as “a method for structuring a group communication process so that the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem” (p. 3). Dalkey (1967) also provided one of the most important definitions of the technique: ‘Delphi is the name of a set of procedures for eliciting and refining the opinions of a group of people. In practice, the procedures would be used with a group of experts or especially knowledgeable individuals’ (Dalkey, 1967, p.1).

Additionally, Delphi is a promising tool to address perennial problems and often-criticized gap between research and practice in educational research. In a general sense, tackling major challenges in educational settings is high on researchers’ and stakeholders’ list of priorities. The Delphi, in line with this fact, enables researchers to cultivate and document expert knowledge through the utilization of multiple and iterative rounds of data collection (Adler & Ziglio, 1996; Franklin & Hart, 2007). However, educational researchers do not leverage Delphi approaches adequately to address and resolve perennial problems in spite of scholars’

articulation of its value in terms of shaping policy and practice (Kezar, 2014). As the employment of any research tool may exacerbate or improve the gap between language policy and practice, selecting appropriate one is of critical importance in order not to fuel criticism regarding the distance between researchers and policymakers. Turoff (1970) also summarized four research objectives that necessitates the use of the Delphi:

- To explore or expose underlying assumptions or information leading to differing judgements;
- To seek out information which may generate a consensus on the part of the respondent group;
- To correlate informed judgements on a topic spanning a wide range of disciplines; and
- To educate the respondent group as to the manifold aspects of the topic.

In the development of educational policy, complex decision-making tasks need to be based on expert judgment rather than informal opinion. The substantive literature in the field draws attention to the role of Delphi technique to harness expert opinion for policy and decision-making tasks in education rather than leaving them to the remit of one person. Additionally, some key points of contention notwithstanding, Delphi is accepted as a rigorous, systematic, and arduous strategy in data collection process of research conducted for questions of substance in policy studies. Together with being an iterative multistage process, the Delphi acts as a group facilitation technique in an effort to transform opinion into group consensus. In brief, the Delphi, notwithstanding being an underutilized tool in educational research, helps the researchers exploit collective knowledge of professionals in order to unearth the truth regarding specific problems in policy development. When compared with the Delphi, precise analytical techniques provide a limited understanding of the topic in question (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). Therefore, it also helps the development and refocusing of a robust research agenda to spot the emerging problems and priorities in this specific field.

Although the anonymous gathering of narrative group opinion together with its quantitatively analysed results makes the methodological categorization of the technique much more challenging, especially the modified Delphi is accepted as a qualitative tool by some scholars (Sekayi, D., & Kennedy, A, 2017). As a well-known fact, qualitative research provides sound data and deeper meanings regarding complex phenomena and processes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In the context of community-based research, qualitative research tools promote the inclusion of community members' voice in order to address the challenges and exigencies in society. Certain criteria including purposive sampling, emergent design,

anonymous and structured communication between participants and thematic analysis are embodied in all qualitative Delphi studies (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). In a similar vein, Delphi method, as one of the qualitative methods encouraging community participation, entails structured participation to elicit insights and perspectives from experts on a certain field (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963). Decision-making about policy and practice is one of the most important functions of Delphi method with the inclusion of community members and stakeholders. Additionally, structured anonymous communication between people with a specific expertise on a field is of critical importance in data collection process. Some pre-determined criteria such as years of working experience in the field of inquiry are also required prior to the proper identification of a research sample. Random or nonbiased sample of experts are to be included in a typical Delphi study.

With a sober assessment and approach to Delphi method, the practical utility of the qualitative Delphi as a data collection tool in an array of different contexts is to be noted with relative ease. Delphi is also extensively used as a catalyst for conflict resolution and determining the efficiency of a public policy when the researcher wants to get feedback from experts with a unique lens in this topic (Alder & Ziglio, 1996). Given the proven important functions of Delphi in the context of public policy, it is employed as an instrumental and advantageous tool in community-based studies. Linstone and Turoff (1975) points out three types of Delphi: *Conventional*, *Real Time* and *Policy*. In *Conventional* Delphi, researchers dispatch a designed questionnaire to a large respondent group and after they return the answers, a new questionnaire is developed in an attempt to give feedback to the previous one. In *Conventional* Delphi studies, the participants are typically a homogenous group consisting of clearly defined group of experts (Kezar, A., & Maxey, D., 2014). Gnatzy, Warth, von der Gracht, and Darkow (2011) introduced *Real Time* Delphi, defined also as a consensus conference, to show 'how real time the real-time method increases the efficiency of the process, accommodates expert availability, and reduces drop-out rates' (p. 1681). *Real Time* Delphi differs from the *Conventional* one in that the data collection takes place during a meeting or a conference rather than a longer process. Lastly, in *Policy Delphi*, the aim is not to generate a consensus based on the research findings.

For those embarking on critical policy formation research studies that pertain to language education, the distinctive features of Delphi procedure whet their interest and appetite in data collection process. Delphi technique is appropriate to elicit potent and valid answers from participants of the study in question. Rasp (1973) maintains that critical decisions involving

programme improvement, personnel and resource allocation require the contribution and careful consideration of more than a single decision-maker in order not to cause irreparable and costly damages. If this is not the case, the study may yield inconsequential and invalid findings and results while failing to meet the demands and assumptions steering the data collection process (Clayton, 1992). In a similar vein, Moore (1987 pp. 15-17), provides four reasons explaining the logic behind consulting a group of people rather than an individual in applied social research studies:

1. It is logical that if you properly combine the judgment of a large number of people, you have a better chance of getting closer to the truth.
2. It is desirable to use groups in order to understand social phenomena by obtaining the views of the actors.
3. It is often beneficial to use groups if you are concerned about the consequences of your research. If your goal is to solve a problem of a particular group, it is reasonable to believe that the group is more likely to accept your advice (or research findings) if they have participated in the research process.
4. Complex, ill-defined problems often can be addressed only by pooled intelligence.

3.5.1.3. Methodology in a Delphi Study

As the Delphi studies are conducted with a group of people who have knowledge of the issue being explored that McKenna (1994, p.1221) defines as ‘a panel of informed individuals’, selecting participants who are versed and skilled academically in the research topic is the very essence of data collection process (Sekayi, D. & Kennedy, A., 2017). The sample size is another critical issue in that unduly vast number of participants could make the data collection process too unwieldy to manage. However, some scholars criticize the assertion that the study group represents expert opinion (Strauss & Zeigler, 1975) although none of this is to deny the importance of collecting the data based on expert knowledge. The importance of selecting experts having impartial professional stance is pointedly ambiguous inasmuch as the data gathered is expected to reflect the current perceptions and practice in society. Notwithstanding that the Delphi is exposed to subject bias in a general sense, this feature is regarded as a positive upside of the technique in that it steers the participants towards group consensus.

Non-probability sampling techniques, purposive or criterion sampling, are employed in the selection process of panellists although representativeness of the sample is eminently disputable because the participants are not selected randomly. However, they are expected to share their knowledge on the issue being investigated with a professional expert stance. These sampling techniques are analogous to selective sampling procedures and as Patton stated 'the logic of criterion sampling is to review and study all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance'(1990, p. 176).

Once the participants are determined based on some pre-determined criteria, their involvement and commitment throughout the whole process are of great importance because they are questioned about the same topic with slightly modified form the same questions being investigated. Therefore, having face-to-face interviews in the first round is to be an effective solution to overcome the problem of decreasing number of response rates in the subsequent rounds (McKenna, 1994). However, the response rate ultimately depends on the panellists' discretion and research relationship between them.

3.5.1.4. Data Collection in a Delphi Study

In a Delphi study, the researcher can gather data without bringing participants together physically. Additionally, with the help of its non-adversarial manner, successive questionnaires and opinions are repeatedly fed back in a summarized form and provided with feedback while enabling the respondents the opportunity to change their opinions. The first round of the survey is generally more qualitative in order to distil participants' ideas and determine the areas of focus that will be analysed thoroughly in subsequent rounds (Rowe, 1994). In a way, the researcher, with the help of these successive rounds of questionnaires, makes a content analysis of the data and the groups' collective opinion elicited in this continuum. This process goes on until reaching a general consensus of opinion or observing the law of diminishing returns in the data collection with decreasing number of returns in each round.

With the benefit of hindsight, the researcher wanting to secure greater involvement in the study employs one of these techniques: single expert, several experts and round table consensus. However, especially with the round table consensus, there exist the risk of polarizing opinions inasmuch as group discussions generally cause 'risky-shift' and tend to be more extreme when compared with individual decisions. Furthermore, potential

distortions of extant orientations are the result of round-table consensus rather than an objective truth and answer regarding the research questions. Each technique, and by extension round-table consensus has significant limitations for policy and decision-making studies. In line with these statements, Dalkey & Helmer (1963) predicate that Delphi technique is 'more conducive to independent thought' (p.459) and add:

Direct confrontation, on the other hand, all too often induces the hasty formulation of preconceived notions, an inclination to close one's mind to novel ideas, a tendency to defend a stand once taken or, alternatively and sometimes alternately, a predisposition to be swayed by persuasively stated opinion of others (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963, p. 458).

Therefore, the Delphi is an effective tool in obviating the problems and weaknesses present at techniques relying on a single- expert or round-table discussion. This aspect brings a formidable new dimension to the issue, further magnified by its global scale in these studies. With the help of new technology platforms and media, furthermore, the researcher utilizing the Delphi technique has the advantage of expediting data collection and distribution of summaries between rounds (Franklin & Hart, 2007).

Apart from the Delphi Technique, there exist two other group decision-making processes employed for creative and judgemental problem solving: Nominal Group Technique and Interacting Group Method. While Nominal Group Technique is substantially individual in the development of ideas, Interacting Group Method allows for the discussion and feedback sessions to aggregate individual judgements. As for the Delphi technique, it has some common features compared with Nominal Group Technique; however, idea generation is anonymous and isolated. The other group decision-making exercises yield manifold logical concerns and problems such as the difficulty of bringing together a large group of experts. Uhl (1983) also claims that dominant individuals in a group discussion generally monopolise the process and this exigency jeopardise individual objectivity and integrity of participants' responses. Furthermore, the subject matter under consideration is not addressed adequately in spite of verbose discussion patterns and explanation of ideas in the group.

Some participants' failure to object to some unacceptable positions or ideas, a situation defined as acquiescence, is often observed in group discussions focusing on irrelevant matters with the effect of dominant individuals. However, the Delphi technique elicits the participants' answers through several rounds of questionnaires to ensure the most reliable consensus of the group without having to have a confrontation with group members. Linstone and Turoff summarize these previously mentioned ideas in their definition: 'Delphi may be characterized as a method for structuring a group communication process so that the

process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem' (1975, p. 3).

With a qualitative pragmatics approach, Delphi method aims to collect data with consensus perspectives on the topic in question. The philosophy of Locke, Kant and Hegel have a tremendous effect on this method together with Dewey's pragmatism because opinions and perceptions of people help understand what reality is and have direct bearing on policy formation and decision- making in this process. (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963). As stated earlier, Delphi method is grounded in pragmatism and it is clear and unequivocal in the following aspects: 1) The Delphi method both utilizes open-ended and structured questionnaires interspersed via traditional or electronic options; 2) Rather than a generalizable sample, Delphi gathers data from a purposive sample of participants with specific expertise on the research topic; 3) Delphi serves the purpose of providing contextual truths and subjective human experiences with its flexible nature not necessitating highly specialized technology or knowledge (Skulmoski, Hartman, & Kran, 2007).

3.5.2. Interviews

Interviews have been highly esteemed in recent years in research projects on language teaching. Besides providing information regarding the unobservable properties of individual experiences and realities, interviews have the strength of yielding rich data sources about people's knowledge, opinions, and feelings (Maxwell, 2005; Patton, 2002). Semi-structured interview questions will be directed to English Language teaching academics to discover more about their dispositions about the English language policy in Turkey. A semi-structured interview, having a more flexible nature, is a more common version of interviews (Holloway& Wheeler, 2010) and "allows depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewees' responses" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p.88)

One-on-one interviewing method, (Creswell, 2005, p.215), which is conducted with only one participant during a particular session, will be employed in the data collection process. In line with this aim, an emic perspective will be used which aims to understand the issue by penetrating the frames of meaning from the perspective of the people participating in the study (Snape & Spencer, 2003).

3.5.3. Likert-Scale Questionnaire

After the completion of the first round with online or face-to-face interviews, the researcher conducted a five-point Likert scale study with the same experts in the field. Qualitative data analysis program N-Vivo helped the researchers to analyse the verbatim transcriptions of data elicited from 38 academics working at various universities in Turkey. Likert-Scale questionnaire items were formed in the light of first round data and the questionnaire is a five-point scale.

The Likert-type questionnaire was administered to a group of voluntary participants in order to clarify some expressions and control its components. The questionnaire was updated with these contributions and feedback from participants.

3.6. Epistemological Perspective

Crotty (2003) points out that the research process is made up of four different elements: epistemology; theoretical perspective; methodology and methods, all of which inform one another. An underpinning theory helps drive such a study while enabling the researcher to fully understand constructs such as language, school, power, and policy (Silverman, 2000). As epistemological perspective, or what Hamlyn (1995, p. 242) terms, the nature of knowledge, its possibility, scope, and general basis are of great importance to understand how the world is viewed. Troudi (2010) states that the epistemology or what he terms the ‘theoretical framework’ is the intellectual structure that both leads the way in the process of conducting a study and informs how data should be analysed.

Due to the complex nature of evaluating the effects of a language policy (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997; Ricento, 2006), a multifaceted theoretical framework that uses a combination of social constructivism and critical theory will guide the theoretical perspective of this study. The first one is to focus on teachers’ classroom practices together with their own dispositions while it is to the latter that we will turn for the area of language policy, and to which the researcher will devote the historical background and policy changes in Turkey. However, Ricento (2006) claims that evaluating education policy is difficult due to many variables involved in the process and because ‘success or failure is not always easy to measure, given the diverse expectations or different constituencies’ (p. 18). Socially constructed knowledge, by its very nature, cannot be regarded as a neutral construct due to the variety of meanings and interests that is included in its construction. Language policies are not evaluated under

stationary conditions and that the idea that their evaluation can be conducted objectively has been challenged in recent times (see Ricento & Hornberger, 1996). Additionally, the effects that these policies exert on certain elements are often difficult to predict due to such criteria as the involvement of local agency (Canagarajah, 2006).

3.7. Challenges and Limitations

The studies conducted with the Delphi is replete with typical examples reporting its use; however, the ‘modified Delphi’ (McKenna 1994) forms have been critiqued and generally criticized for some methodological issues, precision, and research rigour as of the mid-1970s (Sackman, 1975). Researcher bias, time and commitment of participants, future forecasting and panel membership are the main challenges facing researchers employing this technique (Davidson, 2013). The researcher needs to be more attentive in order not to slant the data gathered or affect the outcomes inadvertently while giving them a synopsis of the inputs from previous rounds. Besides, drop-outs are another problematic issue in the Delphi studies inasmuch as the data collection is compromised to some extent by the fact that some panel members withdraw before completing the last round. However, purposeful planning would be helpful to overcome and mitigate these challenges and limitations (Landeta, 2006). Although it is not an all-purpose panacea for many different problems about policy design and practice in education, it has the capability to bridge the pervasive gap between research and practice while surfacing and disseminating expert knowledge with regard to potential improvements for them (Maxey & Kezar, 2014).

3.8. Reliability and Validity

While the terms “reliability” and “validity” are generally discussed in quantitative paradigms and studies, in qualitative paradigms the terms credibility, neutrality or confirmability, consistency or dependability and applicability or transferability are to be the essential criteria for quality (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Seale (1999) also draws attention to the fact that the “trustworthiness of a research report lies at the heart of issues conventionally discussed as validity and reliability” (p. 266). At this point, social constructivism is another important term to be discussed in qualitative research paradigms. Crotty (1998) defined constructivism from the social perspectives as "the view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of

interaction between human beings and their world and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (p. 42). On the other hand, triangulation is of great importance for improving the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings. Mathison (1988) underlines the importance of triangulation methods used in qualitative research by saying: 'Triangulation has risen an important methodological issue in naturalistic and qualitative approaches to evaluation [in order to] control bias and establishing valid propositions because traditional scientific techniques are incompatible with this alternate epistemology (p. 13).'

Undoubtedly, there exist pros and cons to the researcher being an insider in this research. The question of the researcher's impartiality in this work is inevitably raised, and with the help of more than one source of enquiry i.e. interviews and legislative documents, this issue is to be overcome in the data collection process. In a similar vein, Gerard and Taylor (2004) illustrate the value of triangulation in social science by stating that:

If triangulation means anything in social science terms it is about complementarity, and nothing at all to do with mutual validation... When we view an object from two perspectives, or study a social phenomenon using two methods, then we expect to find something new as a result – whether that is point C, the binocular vision of a cylinder, a gestalt ', or simply a more well-rounded theory of the wider phenomenon being investigated.

All in all, reliability and validity should be discussed in connection with the terms mentioned above. In order to ensure reliability and validity within qualitative research paradigm, intercoders will be used for the data analysis part. As for the triangulation of qualitative data, thick description, peer scrutiny, reflective commentary, member checks and negative case analysis will be considered.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

This present study aimed at eliciting academics' viewpoints about English language teaching program and practices in Turkey and provides an interesting twist in English language policy literature showing that many problems and obstacles in this field stem from the absence of an officially recognized English language policy in Turkey. The study concludes that there is a discrepancy between the official English language program and the implemented English language program in schools and provides recommendations for impediments to the implementation of these programs.

As qualitative part of the study was conducted before the quantitative phase of the study, there is an exploratory sequential design in the study. Interview questions in the open-ended questionnaire form were designed and administered to respondents (see Appendices 1,2,3 for copies of the questionnaire). The interview questions consist of five sections, and these are *General Questions, Policymaking, Teaching, Learning and Assessment*. 15 questions in total were directed to participants. As the data collection process were conducted during the coronavirus pandemic, the interviews were generally conducted through online meetings and some of them preferred to answer interview questions in the written form. For the qualitative part of the Delphi study, interview questions were used to gain a comprehensive understanding of the English language policy circumstances and actions in Turkey together with the complexities of this English language teaching programs. This two-round Delphi study also emphasizes the importance of forward planning based on expert knowledge in English language policy actions. This approach enables the researchers to base a worthwhile assessment of English language policy in Turkey and the data collected as part of this study can also be positioned in relation to existing studies (Karaca, 2018; Suna,2017).

In this two round Delphi Study, 38 academics participated in the study. A pilot study was conducted with academics from ELT department of Sivas Cumhuriyet University before the first round of the main data collection process and it offered the opportunity to trial the questions and make any necessary adjustments before executing the plan and steps of the qualitative data collection.

As for language preferences of participants, they had their choice of languages, either English or Turkish, to help them feel at ease. Nevertheless, most of them preferred to answer in English as they are already familiar with the academic terms of topics of this field. In the first round, 38 academics from different universities in Turkey answered open-ended interview questions through online or face-to-face interviews. However, some participants preferred to answer interview questions in written form due to time limitations and their overloaded program. Semi structured interviews enabled the participants to provide extra details to explain their answers in greater depth if necessary. The first round of the study in question provided the opportunity for valuable qualitative data to be collected and allowed participants to express their ideas at their ease and any ambivalence towards the structure and methodology of English language teaching programs and policy decisions.

In the second round of Delphi study, a Likert-type questionnaire was designed in the light of the first-round data analysis conducted both with NVivo 12 qualitative data analysis program and manual coding. Themes that emerged from the interviews conducted in the first round of the study were highlighted and developed further during data analysis and then the items of the second round were prepared accordingly.

We preferred to stop Delphi rounds after the second one inasmuch as most of the expected alterations and improvements are made in these two rounds (Woudenberg, 1991; Clayton, 1997). On the other hand, the possibility that participants fall outside the central tendency may put pressure on them in this process. All in all, we preferred to stop iteration after achieving a great level of consistency and convergence in the data collection process. The participants of qualitative and quantitative part of the study were selected on purposive accounts and two-phased data collection catalysed the development of an additional layer of analysis and a comprehensive understanding of English language teaching policy actions and decisions in Turkey without imposing preconceived theoretical perspectives. The results of this two - round study will be categorized under two separate titles to form a user-friendly analysis.

4.2. Profile of Participants

A total of 38 academics took part in the study and after they were interviewed and identified by their pseudonyms as A01, A02 etc., the qualitative and quantitative data analyses were conducted in the sequel. As illustrated by our computer graphic below, most of the participants are well-experienced in ELT and the graphic indicates the age range of academics taking part in this Delphi study. In the analysis of data with NVivo and SPSS. 25 programs, the age profile of participants was categorized in three groups rather than five as there is only a small number of people in the first and last age range as indicated in the graphic below. As regards the gender of participants taking part in the current study, 60% of them were female and 40 % of them were male. The graphics below indicate the demographic representation of the interviewed participants.

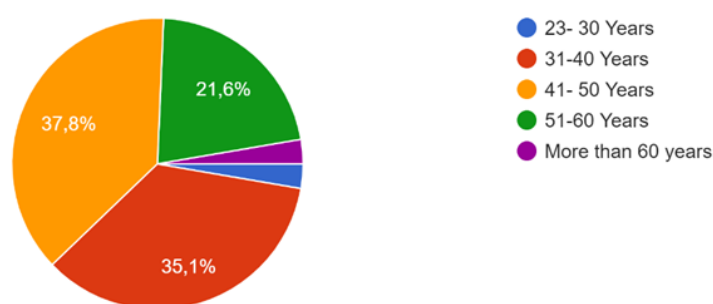


Figure 3. Biodata- age of participants

As for the first round and second round participants' profile, most of them have a teaching experience between 11-20 years as an academic at ELT department. The Likert scale questionnaire, completed via Google-forms program, yielded these results regarding participants' gender and year of teaching experience in this specific field. The graphic is also an affirmation of participants' skills as experienced academics and experts in ELT. Delphi technique necessitates data collection through the identification of a consensus view across subject experts and it is a well-established approach enabling respondents to nuance and review their opinion based on the anonymised opinions of other participants in the presented paper of the first-round data. Accordingly, the profile of participants is rather appropriate, and they are qualified for academic inquiry in this field inasmuch as their felicitous descriptions and illuminating insights provided data strong on content.

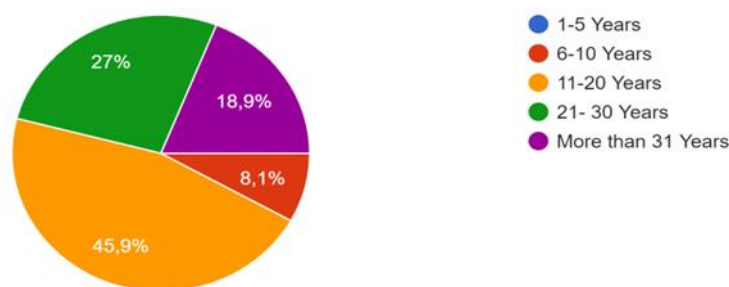


Figure 4. Biodata: Teaching experience of participants

4.3. Findings of the First Round: Semi – Structured Interviews

In the first round of the Delphi study, the researchers directed open-ended questions to 38 academics of ELT departments at different universities in Turkey. The results of the first-round data are analysed and introduced with reference to research questions of the study together with the section titles of the open-ended interview questions. Quotes in this study were also derived from the verbatim transcriptions or written notes compiled during interviews. In addition, filed notes were coded and categorized while patterns and themes are identified in this process. The verbatim transcriptions of the first-round data were analysed through content analysis. The qualitative content analysis is employed for the data analysis part of the study since it functions “as a passport to listening to the words of the text and understanding better the perspective(s) of the producer of these words” (Berg, 2001, p.242). Both NVivo 11 and manual coding were used for the analysis of data.

Matrix coding query results, as a very basic form of cross tabulation within NVivo, allowed the researchers to analyse different and functional attributes of the data and functioned as shortcuts to have access to qualitative in-depth information about the results of the study. Additionally, these results indicate how many times coding references overlap with the criteria laid down by the researchers in advance. These queries were also potentially profitable to take a quick glance across the qualitative data. By running this query, we had the opportunity to numerically explore the coding to English language policy for each of the interview participants. The data employed in the Matrix coding part were totally based on the interviews conducted with the participants of the first round Delphi study. As a result of this process, 21 coding references were obtained by the researchers and some of these are compatibility regarding pedagogical practice and student assessment, connection between

the language proficiency and other factors, correlation between progression in the learning context and formal assessment of English, the alignment between primary and secondary language curricula, match - mismatch between objectives and pedagogical practice, existence of a policy, and views on English language class hours. As for the most frequently addressed coding references of the first round, the participants referred to the gap between theory and practice to the utmost and then assessment, number of English class hours, the CEFR and general information and views on the English language policy followed in succession. Themes with fewer coding references highlighted opinions and topics which are underrepresented in the transcriptions of the qualitative data elicited in the first round. The table below as a small part of the Matrix coding query indicated codes with fewer or more references according to the data obtained through semi-structured interviews:

Table 6

Matrix Coding Query

	A : A01	B : A02	C : A03
1 : The alignment between primary and secondary language curricula	1	0	1
2 : Student needs	0	0	0
3 : Policy makers	3	1	2
4 : Views on the class hours	1	0	0
5 : Positive views on the class hours	1	1	0
6 : Negative views on the class hours	0	0	1
7 : Number of class hours	2	1	1
8 : Mother Tongue	1	1	1
9 : Match - Mismatch between objectives and pedagogical practice	1	1	1
10 : General information and views on the policy	5	0	0
11 : Gap between the theory and the practice	4	5	5
12 : Existence of a policy	1	1	1
13 : Connection between the language proficiency and other factors	1	1	1

The undermentioned figure visualizes the most common coding references articulated by the interview participants coherently. These findings revealed that the academics generally held positive perspectives towards the connection between language proficiency and other social factors while they held negative views towards the gap between theory and practice. The problems with the dichotomies posed between theory and practice illustrate the fact that classroom implementations do not comply with the theoretical approaches proposed by policy makers and program designers. They also concluded that some revisions were necessary regarding the number of class hours and incompatibility between pedagogical

practice and student assessment. As for correlation between progression in the learning context and formal assessment of English, some skills are heavily covered while listening and speaking skills found relatively less room in the program and assessment part in the sequel. The academics participating in this study also asserted that teachers are faced with a dilemma in determining language skills in their classes inasmuch as overreliance on grammar and reading skills supposedly ease the process from the perspective of language learners.

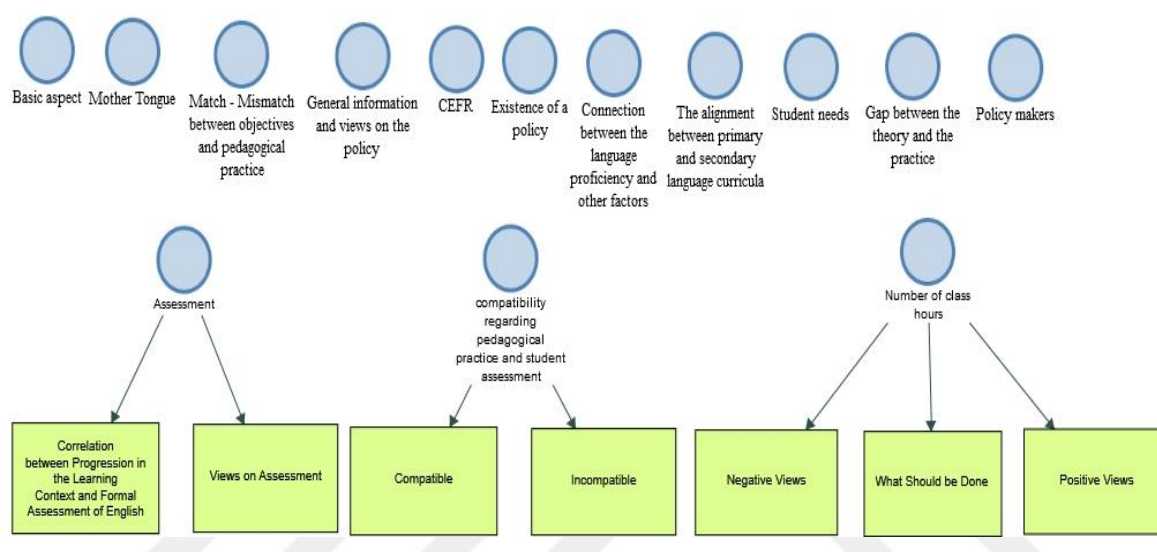


Figure 5. Categories of the first round qualitative data

While the figure above illustrates the main categories of the first-round data, the table below indicates the frequency of the categories signified by the participants. Most of the participants claimed that language policy actions and practices are complex phenomena mediated by a mix of several factors, among these is the compatibility regarding pedagogical practice and student assessment process. They believe that teachers generally resort to teaching practices ministering to students' needs for examination and a great number of participants (22 out of 38) think that we need to resolve most of the problems thrown up by these apparent incompatibilities between pedagogical practice and student assessment.

Table 7

The Frequency of the Categories Signified by the Participants

Titles	Sources	Frequency
ASSESSMENT	38	84
Correlation between progression in the learning context and formal assessment	32	33
Views on assessment	36	50
BASIC ASPECT	35	35
CEFR	36	49
COMPATIBILITY REGARDING PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE AND STUDENT ASSESSMENT	34	38
Compatible	16	16
Incompatible	22	22
CONNECTION BETWEEN THE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AND OTHER FACTORS	38	40
EXISTENCE OF A POLICY	38	39
GAP BETWEEN THE THEORY AND THE PRACTICE	38	71
GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT AND VIEWS ON THE POLICY	33	67
MATCH – MISMATCH BETWEEN OBJECTIVES AND PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE	38	38
MOTHER TONGUE	38	38
NUMBER OF CLASS HOURS	38	54
Negative views on the class hours	15	19
Positive views on the class hours	6	6
What should be done regarding the class hours	28	29
POLICY MAKERS	38	45
STUDENT NEEDS	32	32
THE ALIGNMENT BETWEEN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LANGUAGE CURRICULA	30	30

*Titles written in capital letters indicate themes while others indicate sub-themes.

Once we have coded the literature and verbatim transcriptions of the data , we elicited the queries and visualizations to get an overview of the emerging themes to make comments on the results of the study. The figure implies some deficiencies in compatibility regarding pedagogical practice and student assessment.

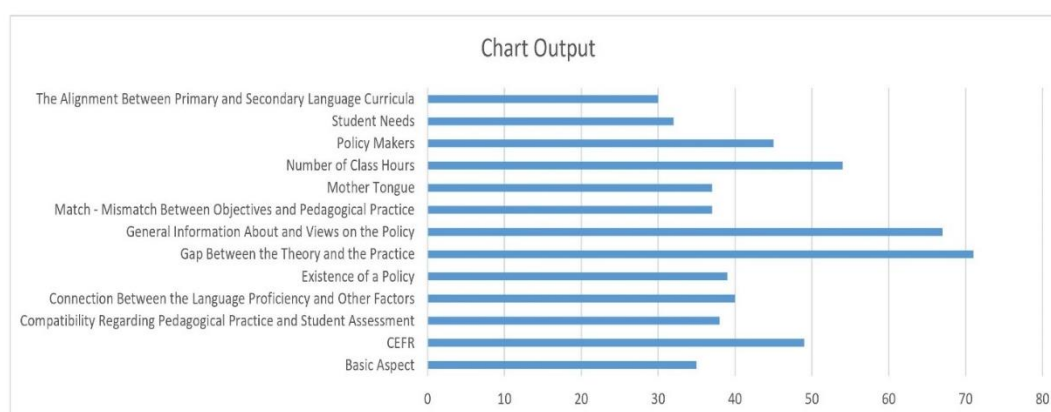


Figure 6. The percentage and frequency of categories

Here is a direct quote from the participant from A38 regarding the correlation between progression in the learning context and formal assessment of English and some criticism were directed towards the program's content and the tools used (or not used) to assess four basic skills:

This is the problematic field in Turkey. Teachers do not obey the objectives of the curriculum; they do not teach skill-based and do not assess skill-based. They simply teach grammar and test grammar, which does not result in communicative competence for the learner.

As stated above by A38, the implementation of English programs with reasonable fidelity and a high degree of clarity is of great importance to enable learners acquire communicative and sociolinguistic competence in this field. Undoubtedly, English language teachers are sometimes likely to modify the program to fit their student profiles and needs. Once a diagnosis of problem is established, short-term and long-term plans can be tailored to meet students' demands and unique requirements of these circumstances. Correct conceptualization of a new reform requirement is critical in order to make certain curriculum accommodations that are in keeping with theoretical underpinnings of the change. Teachers are also expected to establish rapport and diagnose learner's developmental priorities in classroom setting to implement the program with fidelity and right conceptualization (Wette, 2009). As Mellati and Khademi (2014) pointed out in their study, "Every learning context has unique learners; [the] teacher is the only one that is able to determine learners' styles and differentiate them from each other. Not policy makers, course designers, nor curriculum developers have the ability to determine learners' style" (p. 270).

The discussions regarding the efficacy of language teaching programs are generally focalized around the mismatched high stakes assessment as an inhibiting factor at classroom level and in this vein, Fullan (2007) also adds difficult classroom conditions and insufficient resources to this list. Participant A02 directs attention to this obstacle, and it needs to be overcome by program developers and other stakeholders for the efficacy of the program:

Although learning process aims to enhance communicative competence of learners, formal assessment focuses on the assessment of linguistic competence. Formal tests generally do not involve any parts to assess speaking or listening skills of learners. Furthermore, writing performance of learners are assessed through restricted-response items in which they do not use many components of writing.

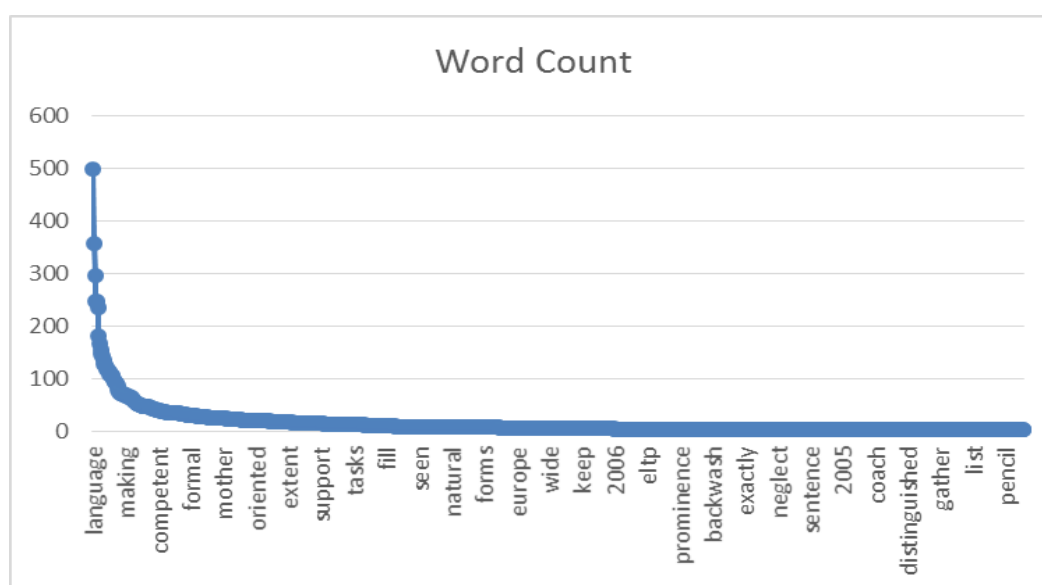


Figure 7. Frequency of words in the interviews

In addition to the figures given above about the qualitative data analysis part, following queries were also obtained with NVivo program to explore the material in depth and prevent loss of data in this process. The figure below indicates the frequency of main themes pointed out by academics participating in the study and they generally drew attention to the gap between the theory and practice, connection between language proficiency and other factors (socioeconomic and institutional) and also number of English language class hours. Great importance is attached to assessment of four language skills to decrease the gap between what was focused on and what was accomplished in ELT contexts. The recurring theme emphasized during the semi-structured interviews was the overreliance on grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension. Most academics interviewed voiced the lack of interface between knowledge and effective implementation of the program. In accordance

with these results, investigating mismatches between students' needs and targeted goals has become of great significance.

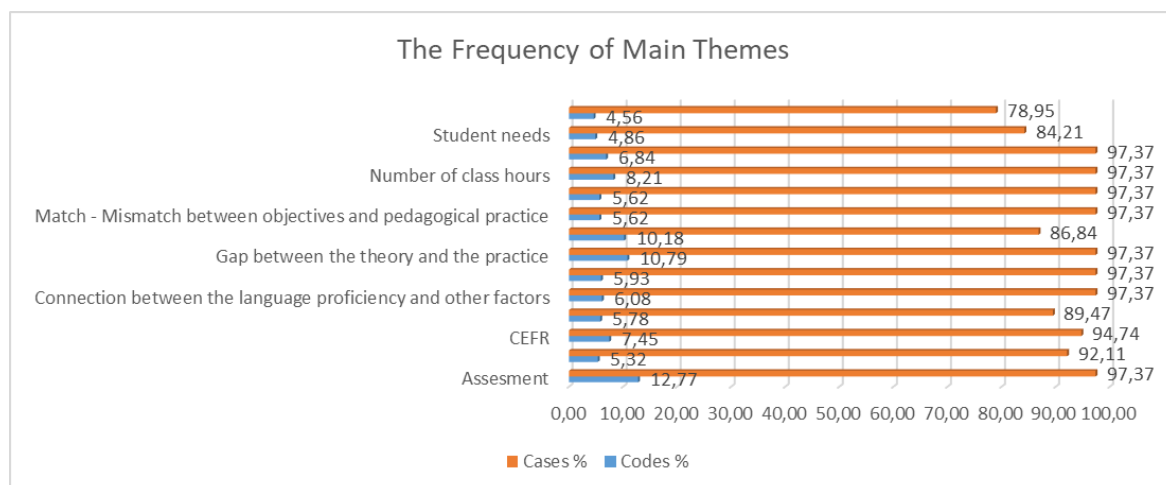


Figure 8. The frequency of main themes

The figure below illustrates the most commonly used terms by the participants of the study. The word cloud was formed after the analysis of qualitative data with NVivo program. It gives brief information regarding the most salient problems and topics in English language teaching.



Figure 9. Word cloud for the most frequently used terms

4.3.1. Findings Related to Views on English Language Policy

The authentic voices of English language teaching academics from a variety of experience made great contribution to this study and their studies generally focus on ELT practices in Turkish context. Participants were selected to take part on the basis of this criterion, and they proposed recommendations for an effective language learning milieu fostering the development of English language proficiency of students. The extract given below summarizes the foci points of this research study aiming to understand the differences between the espoused beliefs and self-reported practices in ELT settings. Here is a representative statement:

First of all, a sound theoretical understanding of the field of language education with a cover of facts regarding a range of cases, situations and regions should be addressed. Language education policy includes suggestions how to address social, cultural, and economic issues that have great influence on foreign language proficiency. It may be based on the language education policies of different countries, which are successful in language education and share similar contexts with use. Besides, language policy should cover points regarding both national levels and the institutional levels of schools, workplaces, families, health services, media and other entities as well as detailed accounts of promoting and managing language (education) policy (who, what, why, and how) in local, institutional, national and global contexts. (A25)

To be more specific, most of academics taking part in the present study point out that instructional problems and poor institutional planning are the main challenges for ELT although much progress has been made locally and nationally thanks to educational reforms to accelerate the modernization of English language teaching programs in Turkey. Nonetheless, there are several factors militating against the fulfilment of these reforms and objectives and they will be analysed in the upcoming sections.

Here is one of the extracts from the participant A03:

From the implementation perspective, the decision-makers may not have the necessary language policy awareness in terms of making the decision and observing, monitoring the application process. From the macro-level policy implementation, the decisions are made; however, the applications are not monitored and assessed from the micro-level implementation perspective.

They also added that such problems and challenges need to be uncovered to find long-term solutions for the improvement of ELT programs in Turkey. With these potential hindrances, teaching English in a foreign language context is inevitably problematic (Tilfarlioglu & Ozturk, 2007) and we need improvements to furnish the most propitious conditions for guaranteeing successful results in this field. One of the academics highlighted the possible impediments to the implementation of revised ELT programs in Turkey:

Objectives were written to teach a language in an integrated way. Somehow teachers omit some parts which require students to be more productive. There might have some

reasons for this; thus, it should be investigated. They tend to focus on vocabulary, reading and grammar most of the time (particularly in high school contexts). There are lots of critical thinking questions in high school books; however, there are no pathways for teachers to support students' speaking. Thus, everything depends on teachers' competences, willingness, motivation, energy, and mostly their conscience. (A30)

A large number of the participants acknowledged that one reason educational reforms are not as successful as desired is lack of clarity about what is intended and additionally lack of an officially recognized coherent English language teaching policy. The overwhelming consensus is that lack of an official English language policy is probably the primary source of current problems in ELT. They were also in agreement about the connection between the lack of a national ELT policy to implement the principles adopted with educational reforms and unsuccessful results obtained in proficiency indexes and high-stakes examinations. Although the adequacy of the program was examined and some revisions were made to explore the strengths and weaknesses of the program, ELT planning, policy and practices are the main challenges that could be overhauled and enhanced in this process. Here is a representative quote from participant A04:

I don't think that there is a functional English language policy that is peculiar to Turkey. Certain decisions are made based on the requirements of a specific period. As far as I know, there are 2 major foreign language policy acts (1983 and 1984) which are significant for foreign language planning in our country.

In a similar way, participant A07 focused on the lack of an official foreign language policy document in Turkey by adding that:

In my opinion, we should have a language policy document which reflects our national needs and aims. We must set our standards. We should reformulate our educational objectives, teaching methodology and assessment procedures according to this document.

Apart from the factors and quotes given above regarding the English language policy actions and decisions in Turkey, some of the participants focused on another important element with reference to the foreign language education context in Turkey. In this sense, Kouraogo (1993) calls monolingual contexts as "input-poor environments" (p. 167) and it is therefore no wonder that ELT is more challenging in these countries. Of course, in the nature of these things, some of the language teaching objectives cannot be guaranteed. The development of communicative competence, in particular, is not up to the mark in Turkey due to students' limited exposure to the target language. Great importance is attached to communicative side of the language and therefore improving communicative competence of language learning is the primary purpose and reason behind the process of language education (Richards &

Rodgers, 2001). In line with these scholarly works, participant A04 held a positive attitude towards the exposure to target language items in FL settings:

I believe the insufficiency of exposure makes the process challenging for both teachers and learners. Language teachers do not use English in the classroom and productive skills are generally neglected. These realities of the classrooms make the policy actions and decisions useless.

In this part of the interviews, the participants were also directed a question with reference to the basic aspects of our prospective English language policy. They generally highlighted the significance of authentic language input and elucidated positive viewpoints regarding the incorporation of communication-based activities and tasks into language classes. A representative statement is as following:

The policy should be aware of that language learning is a dynamic and generative process; therefore, the policies need to be ready for constant and instant changes when necessary. But each change should be scrutinized by experts in the field. One more thing would be that communicative purposes of English appear to be undermined by teaching curriculums and practitioners. (A17)

Some of the participants criticized the current ELT model for not providing fairly equal conditions for language learners and warned that high-stakes examination is an important factor hindering satisfaction gained from the language learning process:

We should give importance to differentiated learning/teaching. We should provide equal rights and opportunities for the students. For example, both private and state students should have the same amount of English instruction and class hours. Students should access all types of digital equipment and devices. Accordingly, standardized exams will not harm advantageous students living under weak conditions. (A27)

As this study aims to explore tacit and unobservable aspects of language policy actions, related questions were directed to participants. The analysis of interview protocols revealed a great level of consistency and most of them agreed the essentiality of tackling the most common obstacles in Turkish EFL teaching context:

I think Turkey has always been willing to develop and put forward new decisions for the development of English teaching. However, some challenges make it hard to put the practice into action. For example, even if there is an ongoing effort on revising and renewing the course materials, there are some other challenges such as, crowded classrooms, lack of teachers, lack of up-to-date materials, etc.) (A27)

4.3.2. Findings Related to Views on English Language Teaching

When directed a question regarding the match between curriculum objectives and pedagogical practice, the participants gave similar responses and the extracts given below show that academics hold similar beliefs about the foci points and obstacles of ELT practices in primary and secondary schools.

Although the teachers are educated in accordance with the requirements of communicative language teaching, they tend to use the traditional methods and techniques as they are easy for them to implement in actual classroom. (A37)

No, there is not a match because of differing contextual factors involving students' needs, physical conditions, teachers' professional development, relevant technical and technological equipment that will assist learning process, students and their families' perception of foreign language education. (A25)

In line with the results of the current study, Kızıldağ (2009) examined the adequacy of the English language teaching programs in Turkey by conducting semi-structured interviews with language teachers. She concludes that poor institutional planning together with instructional and socio-cultural / economic problems incapacitate English language teaching process in Turkey.

Uztosun (2011) also expressed some concerns regarding the implementation of ELT programs in his study and concluded that current practice solely focuses grammatical units of English. In reference to the mismatch between targeted goals and classroom implementations, he drew attention to some different factors including course books, the status of English, overloaded syllabus, and the content of university examination. The implementability problem of theoretical views followed in Turkey was also analysed in a quantitative study conducted by Grossman et al. (2007). There is a need to develop a practice perspective taking into account the characteristics of state schools, teachers and students along with the other requirements.

In line with the results of the studies cited above, the participants of this study pointed out other weaknesses of the program and emphasized the need for a few revisions in it. A wide range of militating concerns such as students' reticence to participate in communicative courses and mismatches between students' needs and targeted goals were also emphasized during the interviews. Here is a direct quote from A02:

Similarly, the mismatch between curriculum objectives and pedagogical practice seems to be resulted from the gap between the theory and practice. There are a number of reasons that lead to this mismatch such as learner-related factors (their ages, levels, educational background, socio-economic levels, needs, etc.), teacher-related factors (their proficiency in English, field-knowledge, pedagogical knowledge etc.)

In this part of the interview, a question was directed to participants about the connection between pedagogical practice and student assessment. It is an indisputable fact that teachers' role is paramount in deciding what to teach and what to assess from the prescribed program. Most of the participants also voiced the gap between the prescribed and enacted program and claimed that teachers sometimes attend to classroom practices and language teaching policies that are consistent with their own beliefs and agendas and here is a representative sample quote from A32: 'As far as I know the curriculum objectives and course textbook are

in harmony. However, the language teaching techniques and pedagogical practice adopted by the teachers displays differences.’

The participants also added that we need to reorient the classroom dynamic from teacher-directed instruction to a learner- centred approach. Here is a representative sample from participant A02:

The assessment process of students is just based on formal tests irrespective of their ages, levels, or learning purposes. Teachers generally avoid other types of assessment such as in-class assessment, alternative assessment etc., instead, they prefer formal tests since they provide concrete, more objective, and reliable results for their assessment.

4.3.3. Findings Related to Views on English Language Learning Process

Academics taking part in this study put an emphasis on the need to understand language teaching and learning holistically to ensure quality in the outcomes of this process. The interviews conducted with academics from ELT department also revealed that English language learning process needs to be less fragmented to contribute to students’ holistic repertoire of linguistic knowledge. They concluded that this approach is the sine qua non of language teaching and learning and paid due regard to the analysis of important factors and elements to foster learners’ self-efficacy beliefs and enhance their self-confidence.

A34 replied to the question in this way:

The learning behaviour of a student is affected by so many factors such as the environment where s/he lives, the cultural norms that shape her/his personality, the gap between in his/her own social and economic status; and etc. Such factors affect the motivation level of the student as well as the level of self-efficacy and self-esteem, self-confidence, and etc.

In this part of the interview, a question was directed to participants regarding the connection between English language proficiency and demographic, economic and social developments.

Participant A32 lamented the absence of equal and fair conditions for language learners in Turkish EFL context and noted that:

I think that all of these developments have an impact on language learning. I believe that those with wealth and power can be more privileged, students living in rural areas and facing poverty need to be provided with more opportunities and perhaps encouragement in terms of language learning.

Participants also agreed that there was a strong correlation between students' proficiency level of English and socio-cultural status. Here is a direct quote from participant A07:

They are generally interconnected. When the socio-economic status of the learners is higher, they can reach a high-quality foreign language learning environment easily. The family support their learning financially and mentally.

Participant A19 replied to the question in a similar way and here is direct quote: ‘They are also highly connected. Demographic, economic, and social developments determine the quantity and quality of the investment in EFL learning/teaching.’

Haworth et al. (2006) conducted action research in this topic and the results of the study revealed the direct relationship between language learning and socio-cultural factors. Accordingly, socio-cultural factors are evaluated as an inevitable part of achieving language competence.

Here is a direct quote from A16:

‘Basing on the concrete data on the English language proficiency of demographically, economically, and socially developed societies, there is a significant connection. The more developed the society, the higher the language proficiency, not only English proficiency.’

The status and role of English in some countries foster the super-valorization of English. In other words, the success and English proficiency level of people in a country is related with the instrumental value assigned to English. In this vein, there are some other indexes and criteria indicating that these people highly value English as a cognitive tool empowering them in their own construction of knowledge and identity.

Balçıkanlı (2021) points out the positive correlation between the results of PISA scores and EF Proficiency Index in his noteworthy book indicating the most common challenges and problems in the English language teaching and learning process and offers ways to curtail or overcome these obstacles. Countries with high success in reading comprehension according to PISA 2018 results also have very high English proficiency in 2019 results of EF Index (Balçıkanlı,2021). Additionally, marked differences and similarities between the low ranking and high-ranking countries’ (in EF Proficiency Index) education systems emphatically explains the level of achievement in English, too.

Only a small number of participants partially agreed that socio-economic factors and other indicators have a great influence on the English language learning process. They focused on the effect of individual factors and differences instead, and here is a representative quote from A03: ‘Rather than relating it to community level demographics or constructs, I would consider the individual differences as the driving potency for language learning motivation.’

4.3.4. Findings Related to Views on Assessment

An alignment of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment (Anderson, 2002; Bernstein, 2004) have been postulated to be critical for an effective ELT and classroom innovation. In line with these scholarly works, the participants of the first round Delphi study analysed the importance of assessment practices in ELT in Turkey and drew attention to some problematic parts. The success of ELT hinges partially on an alignment between learning objectives and assessment of language skills. Additionally, it is pivotal for ensuring the coherence and consistency between the intended outcomes and assessment tasks. Participant A10 claimed that appropriate assessment tasks could help improve the effectiveness of ELT and below is a direct quote: ‘Assessment should be handled in such a way that it will be a natural part of the activities geared towards developing four language proficiency skills.’

38 participants of the first round claimed that misalignments remain between learning outcomes and preferred language assessment tasks although communicative language teaching principles have been incorporated into the language teaching programs in primary and secondary schools in Turkey. They also concluded that some revisions are necessary in assessment of four skills in order to design more closed aligned programs. This perception is echoed by A12 and here is a direct quote:

For summative assessment, nation-wide standardized English proficiency exams that assess four skills can be introduced. This can have a positive wash-back effect on instruction. Besides, more effective and clear-cut rubrics can be developed for the assessment of speaking and writing as a guide for teachers.

They do not think that there is correlation between progression in the learning context and formal assessment of English. In addition to these points, participants also claimed that teachers sometimes selectively attend to ELT programs that are consistent with their agendas. The repertoire of existing knowledge and experience of language teachers determines the extent to which language policy actions are interpreted and applied in language classrooms (Spillane et al, 2002) . Besides, an important consideration informing assessment in ELT is the theoretical underpinnings through which we can analyse formative and summative assessment tools, too. Here is a representative quote from participant A14 focusing on major current challenges in assessment tools: ‘Although we aim at developing communicative competence, our instruction and assessment techniques still focus on grammatical competence- the usage. Perhaps, we need to reconsider our English Language Tests at LGS and YDS. Innovation is not possible otherwise’.

Reflection on English language teaching practices took substantial attention in learning contexts in the last decades. Özkan, Demir and Balçıklı (2014) aptly put the importance of implementing a reflective-teaching-based-approach to help students attain the language learning goals and target level of English language proficiency. In line with scholarly studies, the participants also elucidated on the importance of reflective teaching practices and washback effect in ELT process, defined as the influence of testing and assessment procedure on learning behaviours and teaching practices. A33 clearly called for the need for assessment tools that are congruent with the curricular objectives and drew attention to the differences between state schools and private institutions in this regard:

The mis/match is generally shaped by the high-stakes examinations; that is, what and how you ask the questions in LGS, YDT and beyond, which we call washback effect. W.Effect can be positive or negative, depending on whether your curricular objectives are addressed in these examinations or not. Therefore, for state schools there is a huge difference between what is written in the curriculum and what is done in the classes largely because of the high stakes examinations. As for private k12, the ecology is completely different since most of them are successful in teaching foreign languages.

A number of scholarly investigations (Wilson, 1991; Madaus, 1991) uncovered that tests have adverse effects on the quality of ELT program and classroom learning. This study also yielded similar results in terms of the effect of formative assessment practices on language learning process. Here is a representative quote from participant A33:

Assessment is the boss of curriculum. Whatever you write in a curriculum and no matter how effectively you write them down, it is the assessment system that determines what students study, how they study is and similarly what and how teachers teach the content. This is valid for both proficiency and achievement testing procedures.

Agreeing with the quote given above, participant A35 claimed that ‘Formal assessment based on traditional methods is the biggest hindrance that prevents foreign language learning in this county, and progression is in parallel with how you assess your students.’

Academics taking part in the study pronounced the need for suitable assessment tasks strengthening effective curriculum alignment through English course designs and their statements are in line with scholarly works pointing out the significance of a national language education policy focusing on developing language skills for global proficiency (Finney, 2002). Participants also concluded that there is a paucity of understanding of its role in realising learning objectives in the current ELT context in Turkey and this situation hinders the development and improvement of certain problematic parts including examination-driven teaching in English classes. With the purpose on this duty in mind, there is a need to orientate teachers and students to suitable assessment tasks.

The second question of this part is directly related with formative and summative assessment practices in English language classes. These two assessment types are regarded as complementary and the way they are used determine the basic differences between them (Dixson and Worrell, 2016). Summative assessments are defined as “cumulative assessments ... that intend to capture what a student has learned, or the quality of the learning, and judge performance against some standards” (National Research Council, p. 25). As for the definition of formative assessment, it is described as “activities undertaken by teachers—and by their students in assessing themselves—that provide information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning activities” (Black & William, 2010, p. 82). Here is a direct quote from A02:

Basically, all four skills should be involved in both teaching and assessment process. In other words, students should also learn how to use in addition to learning what it is. Furthermore, they should be provided with the opportunities to use the language. Similarly, teaching process should be reflected in assessment. Their performance should be assessed in process and at the end of the process in addition to the assessment of their competence.

Generally, learners are assessed through summative assessment which consists of questions designed to measure comprehension and linguistic knowledge of learners. However, particularly learners' performance in productive skills –speaking and writing- can be assessed through formative assessment. Thus, they get feedback about their process.

Participants of the study clearly called for the reduction of teaching for examination practices and content overload during the interviews. It is a well-known fact that there is an overemphasis on examination due to competition among students in Turkish foreign language education context. Participants also pointed out the need to tackle these obstacles and emphasized that formative assessment tools such as reflections, observations, and self-evaluations can be used more often in order to maximize student learning and adjust the program accordingly. A33 clearly called for an authentic and appropriate evaluation of language programs:

For both formative and summative assessment procedures, it might be a good idea to approach language as it is; that is to say, an integrated approach to language assessment specifically in general English instruction may lead to success. For academic English programs, skills may come forth or back depending on the foci of the program and the needs of the learners.

On the other hand, summative assessment tools are effective to specify students' proficiency levels of English and serve for the purpose of selecting people eligible for special programs (e.g., gifted and talented education), and determining whether a student is qualified enough to advance to the next grade level, to provide career guidance, or to assess qualifications for awards (Harlen & Gardner, 2010). In line with the theoretical part of the topic in question, A37 agreed noting that:

Language proficiency consists of four language skills as well as grammar and vocabulary. For that reason, there should be a balance between formative and summative assessments. Both

receptive and productive skills should be taken into consideration in assessment. We can use formative assessment for feedback purposes next to summative ones. In sum any aspects of language profession skills can be developed through the use of both formative and summative assessments.

As formative assessment offers a whole host of tools that provide feedback to teachers or students that would help improve the actual efficacy and efficiency of language courses (Dixson and Worrell, 2016), two primary forms of formative assessment, spontaneous and planned (Cook, 2009), can be employed in English classes to yield data about student progress with the help of impromptu or deliberate feedback :

Here is a representative quote from participant A26:

First of all, there should be a close correspondence between what is covered in English lessons and exams. This does not only create valid and reliable assessment practices but also leads to positive washback. Secondly, along with formal assessment procedures, alternative assessment methods such as portfolios and diaries should also be included in the evaluation process. Additionally, self-assessment should be given a priority to foster learner autonomy.

Over and above the representative quotes given above, chart output figure below also summarizes the most commonly cited categories during the semi-structured interviews and assessment is one of the most significant aspects of language teaching process among them. Some clear and tangible results can be seen in the chart below.

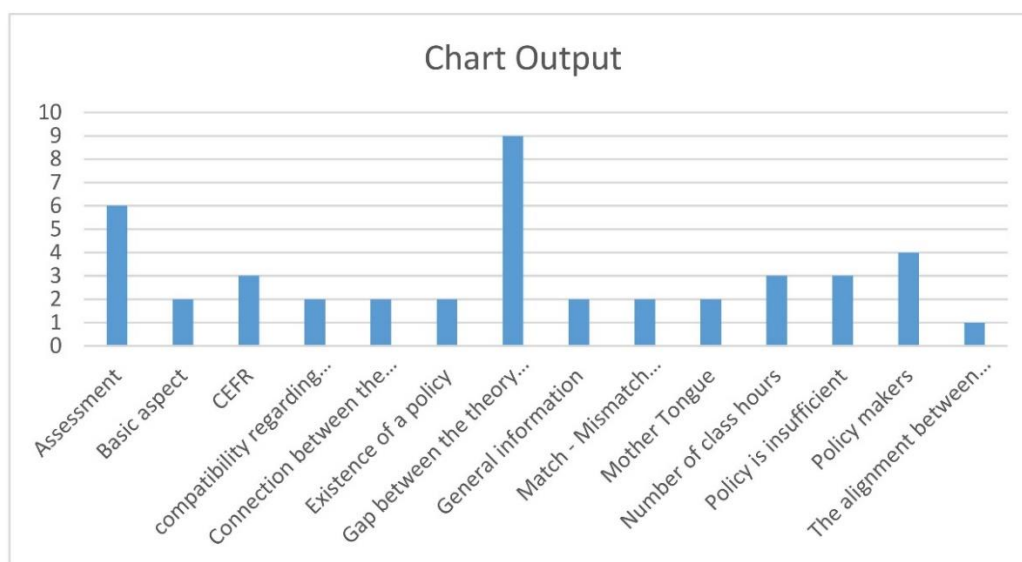


Figure 10. Chart output of the most commonly cited categories

4.3.5. Findings of the Second Round: Likert –Type Questionnaire

A Likert-Scale Questionnaire of 94 items (General Questions 12, Policymaking 25, Teaching 17, Learning 18 and Assessment 22 items) was used in order to collect data from 38 academics working at different universities in Turkey. With a specific focus on descriptive statistics, the data was processed through SPSS 25. In the quantitative part of the study, t-test (Independent Samples Test) was used for the demographic variables consisting of two categories, while one-way ANOVA tests were applied for the demographic variables consisting of 3 and more categories. Descriptive statistics of the data indicated that the sample of this study shows a normal distribution ($p > .05$). The statistical technique employed in the data analysis can be in the form of either 'parametric' or 'non-parametric' tests according to the distribution of the data. Mann-Whitney U test was conducted as a non-parametric test in the study. As there is not a significant difference between group of participants, the consensus of opinion is that there is a lack of coherent English education policy in Turkey. Besides, this situation shows that no significant difference was noted to be among the groups categorized according to gender, age and year of teaching experience. All the participants gave consistent replies to the questionnaire items. According to these findings, academics working in different regions of Turkey drew attention to the existence of some critical deficiencies in the current ELT program together with the lack of a coherent language teaching policy in Turkey.

In order to compare the participants' beliefs towards English language policy in Turkey, 12 one-way between-subjects ANOVA tests were conducted for age group and years of experience variables. Since there is just one participant categorized in these groups, that participant is assigned to the nearest range group and analysed accordingly inasmuch as a single participant could not be included in the comparison part.

The results of six one-way between-subjects ANOVA tests indicated no significant differences between years of experience in assessment sub-dimension [$F(3,35) = .328, p = .805$], learning sub-dimension [$F(3,35) = .549, p = .652$], teaching sub-dimension [$F(3,35) = 1.327, p = .281$], policy making sub-dimension [$F(3,35) = 1.470, p = .239$], general questions sub-dimension [$F(3,35) = 1.593, p = .209$], and overall beliefs [$F(3,35) = .132, p = .941$]. The mean scores of the participants is given in the table below.

Table 8

The Mean Scores of Participants According Their Years of Experience

Years of Experience	n	Assessment Mean (SD)	Learning Mean (SD)	Teaching Mean (SD)	Policy Making Mean (SD)	General Questions Mean (SD)	Total Mean (SD)
6-10	4	85.75 (8.14)	65.25 (4.27)	62.25 (3.30)	86.25 (8.50)	33.75 (4.92)	333.25 (26.48)
11-20	16	87.00 (7.96)	64.18 (4.94)	57.88 (4.21)	87.47 (4.91)	34.12 (4.12)	330.65 (15.30)
21-30	11	87.73 (7.31)	66.82 (5.56)	59.09 (2.88)	86.27 (4.10)	34.18 (4.29)	334.09 (18.00)
31 and Above	7	89.86 (6.23)	65.29 (6.26)	59.00 (5.07)	82.71 (4.50)	37.71 (2.14)	334.57 (15.21)

The results of six one-way between-subjects ANOVA tests indicated no significant differences between age groups in assessment sub-dimension [$F(2,36) = .215, p = .808$], learning sub-dimension [$F(2,36) = .166, p = .848$], teaching sub-dimension [$F(2,36) = .004, p = .996$], policy making sub-dimension [$F(2,36) = 2.222, p = .123$], general questions sub-dimension [$F(2,36) = .389, p = .681$], and overall beliefs [$F(2,36) = .134, p = .875$]. The mean scores of the participants is given in the table below:

Table 9

The Mean Scores of Participants in Different Age Groups

Age Group	n	Assessment Mean (SD)	Learning Mean (SD)	Teaching Mean (SD)	Policy Making Mean (SD)	General Questions Mean (SD)	Total Mean (SD)
23-40	14	86.60 (8.01)	65.47 (4.60)	58.87 (3.83)	87.33 (6.06)	34.60 (4.47)	332.87 (17.93)
41-50	15	88.27 (7.25)	65.53 (5.78)	58.93 (4.11)	86.80 (4.16)	34.27 (3.69)	333.80 (16.85)
51 and Above	9	88.11 (6.88)	64.33 (5.75)	58.78 (4.66)	83.11 (4.17)	35.78 (4.30)	330.11 (15.96)

For gender variable, five independent-samples T tests and one Mann-Whitney U test were run. The reason for using one Mann-Whitney U test was that the data elicited from the participants for the age variable under the learning sub-dimension of the questionnaire violated the normality assumption. The results of five independent-samples T tests highlighted no significant differences between genders in assessment sub-dimension [$t(37) = -.79, p = .43$], teaching sub-dimension [$t(37) = .09, p = .93$], policy making sub-dimension [$t(37) = -1.05, p = .30$], general questions sub-dimension [$t(37) = .11, p = .92$], and overall beliefs [$t(37) = -.85, p = .40$]. The mean scores are given in below.

Table 10

The Mean Scores of T-tests

Gender	n	Assessment Mean (SD)	Learning Mean (SD)	Teaching Mean (SD)	Policy Making Mean (SD)	General Questions Mean (SD)	Total Mean (SD)
Male	16	86.53 (8.04)	64.53 (5.27)	58.94 (4.02)	85.18 (5.08)	34.82 (4.42)	330.00 (16.59)
Female	22	88.41 (6.79)	65.77 (5.25)	58.82 (4.13)	86.91 (5.18)	34.68 (3.90)	334.59 (16.89)

Table 11

The Results of ANOVA Test

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
A_Total	Between Groups	24,014	2	12,007	,215	,808
	Within Groups	2011,422	36	55,873		
	Total	2035,436	38			
L_Total	Between Groups	9,456	2	4,728	,166	,848
	Within Groups	1027,467	36	28,541		
	Total	1036,923	38			
T_Total	Between Groups	,137	2	,068	,004	,996
	Within Groups	616,222	36	17,117		
	Total	616,359	38			
PM_Total	Between Groups	110,455	2	55,227	2,222	,123
	Within Groups	894,622	36	24,851		
	Total	1005,077	38			
GQ_Total	Between Groups	13,347	2	6,674	,389	,681
	Within Groups	618,089	36	17,169		
	Total	631,436	38			
Total	Between Groups	78,414	2	39,207	,134	,875
	Within Groups	10515,022	36	292,084		
	Total	10593,436	38			

In addition to these tests, Kolmogorov – Smirnov, one of the nonparametric tests and requiring univariate continuous data, is also employed in order to check the assumption of normality in ANOVA. The test enabled the researchers to compare the data obtained via Likert-scale questionnaire with a known distribution and let us find out if they have the same distribution. The results, as shown in the table below, disclose that the null hypothesis is true and accordingly there is no significant difference between specified groups of participants. The Shapiro-Wilk Test also indicates that the population of this current study is normally distributed since our values are under a certain threshold as shown in the table given below:

Table 12

Tests of Normality

Age	Statistic	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a		Statistic	Shapiro-Wilk	
		Smirnov ^a	df		df	Sig.
23-40	,175	15	,200*	,895	15	,080
41-50	,097	15	,200*	,982	15	,981
51 Above	,107	9	,200*	,986	9	,988
23-40	,140	15	,200*	,889	15	,065
41-50	,200	15	,110	,935	15	,328
51 Above	,213	9	,200*	,904	9	,278
23-40	,144	15	,200*	,956	15	,619
41-50	,198	15	,118	,948	15	,489
51 Above	,169	9	,200*	,938	9	,560
23-40	,142	15	,200*	,958	15	,652
41-50	,176	15	,200*	,934	15	,312
51 Above	,230	9	,185	,835	9	,051
23-40	,160	15	,200*	,977	15	,949
41-50	,145	15	,200*	,958	15	,658
51 Above	,206	9	,200*	,905	9	,281
23-40	,107	15	,200*	,973	15	,899
41-50	,168	15	,200*	,956	15	,622
51 Above	,220	9	,200*	,872	9	,128

In addition to the descriptive analysis parts explained above, some items of the questionnaire were reverse coded since the questionnaire includes some positively and negatively keyed items. Reverse coding is a significant validation technique in order to find out whether the participants give consistent answers to the questions. Besides, the reason for the inclusion of positively and negatively keyed items in the Likert-scale questionnaire is to counteract positivity and negativity biases among participants. After the reverse coding process, we included all items in the reliability tests after recoding them and this exploratory factor analysis also confirmed that all these items belong in the measure conducted in the sequel. The aim of reverse coding was also to ensure one-dimensionality with values in the entire scale and to cross-check answer validity. Items 7 and 8 in the *General Questions*; 4, 13, 16 and 17 in *Policymaking*; 9, 11, 13, 16 and 17 in *Teaching*, 4 and 9 in *Learning* and lastly 2 and 9 in *Assessment* parts of the questionnaire were reverse coded. Negatively keyed items were coded as 1-5, 5-1, 2-4, 4-2 and afterwards their overall scores were calculated. The results indicate the consistency among participant responses and unidimensionality with these values in the scale.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

In this part, the discussion of the findings will be presented with reference to the research questions of the present study. This part is different from the findings section in the way that the answers to research questions will be analysed in the order they are directed to participants. The different data collection tools employed during this continuum enabled the researchers to triangulate the data with the aim of enhancing the reliability of results. The results obtained by triangulation eliminated the prospective weaknesses of each data collection methods by complementing them with strong and distinguishing features of these instruments as indicated in scholarly works (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012). The qualitative and quantitative data collection tools yielded similar results and the academics taking part in the study achieved scientific consensus on three important topics analysed below.

5.1. Discussion on English Language Policy Actions and Decisions in Turkey

The academics participating the current study clarified the points which are necessary for a clear awareness of English language policy issues. They also claimed that English language learning process is expected to involve progression and constructing new knowledge on the basis of previous skills and schemata. In other words, starting from scratch and disregarding the work conducted throughout the years and different educational stages give rise to many deficiencies and problems in the current ELT programs. However, we need to rethink teaching objectives and strive to produce language teaching materials appropriate to the new policy emphases.

In the analysis of qualitative findings obtained in the first round of the Delphi study, academics from different regions of Turkey addressed different external and internal factors

causing ELT in Turkish context to fail to serve predetermined purposes. They generally focused on the idea that English language teaching solely relies on structural units of target language in English classes and this situation contradicts with the theoretical knowledge underpinning the practical considerations in these classes. The data collected further corroborated the discrepancy between the prescribed program decisions and teachers' actual practices in English classes. Echoing this conclusion, one of the participants summarized the underlying problems with these words:

The problem is that the theory and reforms come from the top-down. This means that there are contradicting applications. For example, we say CLIL in the program and in the 2023 vision, but we don't have CLIL textbooks available to the teachers. We say communicative ability as the aim, but we measure comprehension and memorization in the national exams. We say increasing teacher quality, but at the same time we do not facilitate the teachers' efforts to develop themselves. As far as I know, the teachers are not given extra points for undertaking research any more. (A09)

In response to the question about the effectiveness of English language program in primary and secondary education in addressing to students' needs, one participant voiced the following opinions:

Partially they address... Especially the sub-skills such as vocabulary. But the other aspects that are not addressed are about the sharp transition to the production. The learners are very passive and far from more practice in the classes. The main focus is on grammar what makes the process very difficult for learners and keep them away from production and blurs the teachers in teaching and assessment as well.(A13)

When the first round and second round data findings were compared and contrasted, it was observed that there is a functional extensive overlap between the qualitative and quantitative findings of the same sections. The participants concluded that the lack of a coherent English language policy is the perennial problem in the Turkish EFL context. A fortiori, it is essential to adopt appropriate assessment tools for the evaluation of four basic skills rather than solely focusing on the grammatical and lexical units of the target language. the British Council and TEPAV's (2013) report also indicated that teachers are urged to rely on structural units of language and students do not show considerable progress towards English proficiency targets in the ongoing development of educational programmes despite taking more than 1,000 hours of English classroom instruction. In the same report, recommendations were also proposed for effective curricular reforms in ELT and statistics disclosed that 6% of general high school students regarded themselves as advanced level learners while 37% of them believed that they were beginner level learners of English. This situation is contrary to the avowed policy statements in the program inasmuch as English is deemphasized towards the end of high school years in Turkey to help students allocate more time for university placement exam. The results of this current study are in line with these findings, and it is

indicated below with a representative quote from a response to the question regarding the alignment between primary and secondary school curricula:

I believe they overlap to a great extent. Teachers deal with the same structures and topics over and over again. However, knowledge should be constructed on the previous knowledge. We should not waste time teaching the same vocabulary items and language structures over and over.
(A01)

Thus, it would not be wrong to maintain that lack of alignment between primary and secondary education curricula hinders the satisfaction gained from ELT process. Here is a representative statement from the qualitative data of the study:

‘I get the feeling that the secondary curriculum does not follow the primary curriculum. It is like a repetition of it. This feeling is based on the coverage in the secondary school books.’
(A09)

In 2012, MoNE introduced the 4+4+4 educational system, and the duration of compulsory education was increased from 8 to 12 years. Constructivist approaches and process-oriented assessment were the theoretical considerations underpinning to promote modernization and innovations in ELT practices. In spite of curricular innovations aiming to convert exam-based and structural program into a communicative and task-based one, there is ample empirical evidence indicating different reasons underpinning the disconnection between self-reported practice and theoretical knowledge. As a result, it fails to change the classroom practices although many steps are taken to reassure the quality of language teaching and improve the instructional conditions for the effectiveness of ELT. The constraints which act against the implementation of appropriate theoretical approaches in ELT can be overcome by some adaptations in the testing and assessment practices, too. In this vein, the content and focus of English language examinations need to be shifted to testing learners in terms of their communicative competence rather than solely relying on grammatical aspects of language. Gürsoy, Korkmaz and Damar (2013) carried out a study to explore ELT practices in primary schools in Turkey and concluded that most teachers did not even focus on speaking and listening skills. To be more specific, innovations and curricular reforms sometimes yield unexpected outcomes although policy makers strive to furnish the most propitious conditions for guaranteeing the success of English language education.

Participants also claimed that we need English textbooks and instructional materials that are in tune with the necessities of communication-driven teaching since they play important roles in teaching English (Harwood, 2010). The British Council and TEPAV (2013) also pointed out that English classes are generally designed to complete textbook exercises, most

of which are structural and lexical in nature. This result is reminiscent of traditional EFL practices conducted a few decades earlier. Thus, it would not be wrong to maintain that we are striving through some turbulences in our English education system, and we need to translate curriculum reforms into actual practices rather than limiting them to policy papers and prescriptions.

5.2. Discussion on English Language Education Policy Principles and Specific Objectives in Turkey

One of the recurring themes in the analysis of verbatim transcriptions of interviews is the examination-driven teaching practices in English classes. The participants of the study underlined the importance of student engagement in communicative activities and exam-based education system is the main source of students' reticence in speaking and listening activities. To be more specific, this situation is directly related with students' 'negative affective states, widespread apathy, and indifference towards communication-driven teaching in a monolingual context. As there is an overemphasis on examination due to competition in the high-stakes exams and education system, language teachers also resort to teaching for examination and design the courses accordingly. In line with this situation, the conflict between the perspectives of program designers and accuracy-based exam policy is a key factor driving possible problems in this field and has a great influence on teaching procedures followed in primary and secondary schools in Turkey. This dichotomy is one of the preoccupations of this study since it indicated the inconsistency between theoretical approaches adopted by program designers and classroom practices.

Academics mostly indicated negative perceptions about class size (the number of the students), schools' physical structures, and language skills which are addressed in ELT programs. They were also asked whether the class hours for English are adequate or not in primary and secondary schools. Other recurring themes in the analysis of these qualitative data were increasing class hours and offering preparatory classes to equip students with an in-depth English language instruction and provide opportunities for the internalization of language items. Participants were in agreement with each other in this regard and here is an extract from the interviews: 'For each level, the number of hours should be increased. The aim and content of these extra hours should be on the interactive aspects in language learning and teaching.' (A11). These findings seem to be parallel to the extant literature and previous studies conducted in this topic. Uztosun's (2016) study also focuses on the effect of limited

class hours as the major factor obstructing effective ELT at primary schools in Turkey. As a matter of fact, allocating some extra time for supplementary activities to reinforce what is taught is a problematic issue for English language teachers in Turkey.

The essentiality of presenting communicative language learning milieu for primary and secondary school students is reported to be a significant factor contributing to skill development process inasmuch as language learners in Turkey have limited exposure to extramural English and opportunities for incidental learning. In this vein, the status of English in Turkey proved a determinative key factor in the status quo of English Language Teaching (ELT) in Turkish education system and ultimately affect the proficiency level of Turkish people to a great extent. Karakaş (2019) obtained similar results in his study and concluded that lack of reference to the current status of English as a lingua franca in general causes some impediments to prepare students for real-world English use. Additionally, exam-based policy and practices neglect students' productive skills and obstacles the possibility of providing an authentic language learning milieu for them. Therefore, overreliance on grammar and syntactic properties of language is a factor hindering satisfaction gained from ELT classes and accordingly we need to integrate four language skills into the ELT programs meaningfully. All in all, these predictable and unexpected concerns for exam-oriented nature of our education system were articulated by academics taking part in this study and they provided crucial pedagogical recommendations for the success of English language education.

5.3. Discussion on Top-down (legislation) and Bottom-up (grass-roots practices) Forces Driving LPLP process in Turkish ELT Context

The top-down nature of program development was also questioned by participants of the study, and they distinguished different reasons underpinning the disconnection between classroom practice and theoretical part of the program. This situation poses a critical problem, and we need to generate some pedagogical recommendations in order to ensure effective utilization of the program to cover many of the related components in LPLP process. The results of this two-round Delphi study indicated that the assessment and evaluation part pose a dilemma in this regard since learners' mastery of skills is expected to be judged against methods and techniques offered in the curricula rather than in line with the ones used during high stakes national examinations (Mickan, 2013).

From the manifest content of ELT programs in Turkey, it is clear that these programs are designed in accordance with the pedagogical and descriptive guidelines of the CEFR and it can be seen in the flowing extract: ...learners are expected to graduate from high school with a minimum CEFR B2+ and/or beyond level of English language proficiency... (MoNE, 2018, p. 7)

From the inquiry of qualitative and quantitative data analysis, it emerged that participants do not think that these descriptions resonate with the realities of English classes in our country, albeit the existence and adequacy of theoretical aspects in the related prescriptions. Findings of this study is supported by previous studies conducted in this regard. Denkci Akkaş and Coker (2016) draw attention to the importance of practice-oriented English classes and they also found out that structural units of language are overtly favoured over the communicative side of language at the high school level in Turkey in spite of attached importance to the communicative approach in the text of national curriculum. The lack of congruence among the intended and observed transactions in primary, secondary and high schools pose a critical problem in ELT in Turkey (Aksoy, 2020). One of the participants avowed that there are some problems in the implementation, too:

CEFR was introduced a long time ago, and the proficiency levels are being widely used, but the familiarity with its concepts still lacks. Although the importance of intercultural competence is highlighted within the framework theoretically, I don't think the current national curriculum implementations follow the proposed components of CEFR in the application. (A03)

The participants of the study highlighted the significance of micro-level implementation perspective and concluded that theoretical parts of the educational reforms can face a number of unforeseen obstacles at implementation part. One of the participants remarked that different stakeholders can make contributions in the macro-level and grassroots practice of policy decisions:

In terms of official stances, the main focus assembles the instructed language practices based on English. However, from the implementation perspective, the decision-makers may not have the necessary language policy awareness in terms of making the decision and observing, monitoring the application process. From the macro-level policy implementation, the decisions are made; however, the applications are not monitored and assessed from the micro-level implementation perspective. Additionally, the stakeholders are not collaboratively involved in the process. (A03)

The educational reforms spearheaded by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) aims at giving more space to language education in the three-tier model adopted for the 12-year compulsory education process, widely known as the 4+4+4 education system in Turkey (Gürsoy, Korkmaz, & Damar, 2013). When the qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed, it was observed that most of the participants focus on the inconsistency and discrepancy between overtly avowed goals and ground realities of foreign language

education. It is generally not possible to translate language policy prescriptions into classroom implementations in a way harmonious with the requirements of policy documents. Kırkgöz, Çelik and Arıkan (2016) offered persuasive evidence that understanding and cooperation from all parties involved are prerequisites for the success of English language teaching programs. The continuity and success of the curriculum development mechanism depend incontestably upon the development of new assumptions about structural elements and a continuous evaluation of the process according to feedback received in the sequel (Aksoy, 2020). In addition, undefined layers of language policy practices were stressed during the interviews, and they have an influential role in the implementation perspective. Here is a representative sample:

The unofficial mechanism in the present context regulates the use and the practice of English in Turkey. However, as I previously mentioned, the undefined layers of policy applications create an ambiguity in terms of policy creation and interpretation, in turn, in policy instantiation in the most general sense. (A03)

The stark truth about English language education in Turkey is that we need to prepare a coherent official policy document and form a unique ecosystem in which all stakeholders can take part in. This conclusion sounds fair when the recent studies conducted in this topic are taken into consideration and the emphasis academics placed on this issue seem parallel with the extant literature. Aksoy (2020) also contends that there is a need to prepare a national foreign language policy document and effectuate the necessary alterations for a unique foreign language-teaching system by taking the needs and realities of Turkey into account. Bettering language instruction is also contingent upon the status of the English language since it is viewed as an academic requirement in Turkey, rather than a communication tool.



CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

6.1. Summary of the Findings

The first research question clearly intends to elicit results about English Language policy actions and decisions in Turkey and the first and second rounds of the Delphi study indicated that there is a need for a reduction of content overload and teaching for examination practices. The academics taking part in the study clearly called for prompt action about the formation of an official English language policy in Turkey to ensure effective ELT and utilization of resources in Turkish ELT context. Additionally, we need to plan the lessons to suit different learner profiles and characteristics to enable educational reforms move from intention to practice in English classes. The participants of the study agreed noting that a solid understanding of the program components and re-orienting the classroom dynamics could help improve the effectiveness of ELT in our country.

The purpose of the second research question was to reveal ELT academics' perceptions of the necessary principles and specific objectives as regards English language education policy in Turkey. They voiced some negative aspects of language teaching objectives and implementation process. The common agreement was on the shortcomings that occurred during the implementation of English language programs and assessment methods employed in this continuum. With these potential hindrances, teaching a language in a foreign context inevitably causes a wide range of militating concerns such as the proficiency level of students at the end of compulsory education and the discrepancy between classroom practices and theoretical approaches prescribed in program documents. The study also indicated that we need some revisions regarding skill focus in the implementation of language education reforms and assessment of these skills since listening and speaking find relatively less room in the ELT programs.

The last research question was related with top-down and bottom-up practices in ELT context in Turkey. The participants of the study aptly put the challenges of implementing a top-down program in spite of efforts to incorporate modern pedagogical thinking in the latest national ELT curricula. As traditional representations characterize teachers' and pupil's attitudes in ELT settings, there is an urgent need to monitor and assess the micro-level implementation perspectives after determining the macro-level program components. The evolving educational requirements of the 21st century should be incorporated to the ELT programs in a way that is responsive to existing contextual variables and constraints of the system. Besides, the ELT programs of our country need to be aligned with economic, political and educational requirements and realities of the situation (Enever, 2011).

6.2. Conclusion

The data elicited in the first and second round of the Delphi study indicate that there is a need to ensure a closer match between syllabus objectives and pedagogical practice. In addition to these aspects, the tenuous connection between classroom implementation and assessment causes some drawbacks in measuring students' progress towards these pre-determined goals. The participants of the study also claimed that the importance of formative assessment is considerably underestimated in the Turkish EFL context while summative assessment is preferred due to time constraints and curriculum overload.

The academics also claimed that there exists a positive correlation between mother tongue proficiency and foreign language achievement and international measurement systems such as PISA scores confirm the results of this current study, too. As a matter of fact, students' poor knowledge and mastery in L1 generally function as a complementary factor or an obstacle in the process of foreign language learning. With reference to more general aspects of language learning and education system, participants claimed that the lack of alignment between primary and secondary language curricula denotes discontinuities and inadequacies in the scale of English teaching provision in these spans of education system. Apart from these results, they concluded that pedagogical practice and student assessment are not compatible with one another to a great extent. The tension between the program and assessment practices is a salient problem in ELT in Turkey and accordingly language teachers feel compelled to teach the subject matters in line with the summative assessment methods and high-stakes tests applied in the Turkish EFL context.

Despite a surfeit of new initiatives in ELT in Turkey, ideologies present in macro-contexts inadvertently affect the implementations in the micro-contexts such as schools and language classrooms. In line with this situation, the socio-linguistic context and general education system in Turkey, a priori, call for an inclusive English language policy at all levels of education with a longitudinal coordination of language teaching. Consideration should also be given to explicitly constructing language policy on the basis of CEFR and the Council of Europe notwithstanding that it is hard to draw clear lines of demarcation between policy decisions and classroom implementations. In a nutshell, the participants of the study rightly pointed out the need for a holistic analysis of language education with a positive disposition towards the formation of an official English language policy in Turkey.

6.3. Recommendations for Further Research

In this study, the perceptions of ELT academics towards English language policy and program development were investigated and a working document to report the suggestions of ELT academics for improvements in the Turkish ELT context was prepared in the light of the data gathered through this process. A further study might be conducted with the contribution of other stakeholders such English language teachers on a larger scale, and it might yield more comprehensive results about the implementation of policy perspectives in the compulsory education institutions.

6.4. A Working Document of English Language Policy in Turkey

6.4.1. Introduction

Foreign language learning is a sine qua non for successful interaction with people from other societies and promotion of a greater intercultural understanding in the world. Turkey, as one of the forty-six Council of Europe member states, aims at providing its citizens with appropriate mediums for social inclusion and cohesion despite the ecological complexity of the language education system. To this end, our country needs improvements for an equal access to quality education and ELT. The working document prepared after the completion of data analysis parts is the final stage of this two-round Delphi study and focuses on the compulsory education in Turkey. The recommendations stated in this working document are

based on the results obtained in this two-round Delphi study and the qualitative and quantitative findings indicate a need to leverage a change in both the organization of English language programs and in the methods of language education to be provided. In this part of the study, we will demystify some possible directions for future developments that would help generate momentum for language educational reforms in the multi-dimensional nature of the compulsory education process in Turkey.

Although the academics taking part in this Delphi study held diametrically opposed views about the role of CEFR in foreign language education policy in Turkey and the role of decision-making agents in LPP process, they arrived at a consensus that consideration should be given to explicitly constructing a national foreign language policy on the basis on global requirements. In line with these aims, we need to undertake a self-evaluation of our English language education programs and focus on the need to form a coherent and official English language policy in Turkey. The absence of a recognized ELP (English Language Policy) corroborates the discrepancy between the predetermined program decisions and teachers' actual practices. Accordingly, curricular reforms and innovations do not translate into real practices in language classes.

Although the exceptional merit of learning English is accepted and recognized in Turkey, we need policy divisions to function as catalysts in this process since there is a lack of a purposeful and consistent foreign language policy in our country. In line with these facts, this paper introduces quantitative and qualitative snapshot of English language policy and program research together with related suggestions and recommendations. The aim of this study is to put an emphasis on possible future policy developments in our country for a process of reflection by the stakeholders of program decisions rather than an external evaluation. In line with this fact, the fostering of the active involvement of key stakeholders in the process is a crucial factor in the success of English language policy decisions and implementation perspectives. With this aim in mind, this current study presents a comprehensive overview of English language education in Turkey during the compulsory education process. The study conducted with Delphi Technique yielded significant results supporting the need for the development and dissemination of innovation in foreign language learning. The need for dissemination of educational reforms calls for a wide-ranging public discussion and reflection on these issues, too. It also means opting for a scientifically orientated ethos which is also consonant with the fundamental assumptions of the wider society and experts of the field.

On the other hand, English language education components need to be analysed and understood holistically since lasting negative consequences with a compartmentalized evaluation of English language education gradually encroach into the whole process of language education. The preparation and formation of a country report describing the policy issues under discussion and current position of English language in the country is an important step of principal phases in this continuum. We have some important examples of language policy country reports in European countries and these reports are prepared with the contribution of experts from the field together with the discussion papers presented by authorities from the Council of Europe.

When foreign language learning and teaching milieu of five countries (the Netherlands, Austria, Denmark, Singapore and Norway) ranking top in the EF Proficiency Index 2021 are analysed, it is clear that students internalize the language structure as an inescapable part of their cultural context while these countries also abound in examples of successful and good practice in language teaching. English is so pervasive in international media that Norwegian students drew attention to the fact that they learn as much English outside the school as much they learn inside the school as included in a report prepared by the European Network of Policy Makers for the Evaluation of Education Systems. All in all, this external analysis of the current situation with a comparison with other countries stimulates reflections on common problems and challenges of foreign language education in Turkey while functioning as a catalyst for the self-analysis of English language policy decisions.

6.4.2. An Analysis of the Current Situation in English Language Education

This part gives brief information about recent changes and new challenges facing English language education in Turkey. Our country's circumstances, history, and priorities shape English language policy actions to a great extent. The structure and content of the English education programs will be analysed under this heading. Additionally, the priorities of our country and reasonable precautions to be taken for desirable practice will be discussed in this part of the study.

English language education policy decisions and purposes have a complementary nature since they lay the basis for intercultural contact and education for democratic life. An awareness of English language with a specific focus on academic side together with its function as a communicative tool paved the way for the inclusion of these classes in primary,

secondary and high schools. However, a lack of appropriate English language skills to interact effectively and appropriately with other people is demonstrated in the reports prepared by EF Proficiency Index and this situation illustrates a dichotomy between classroom practices and theoretical approaches proposed by program designers.

As for the nexus between EFL practices and the ELT program in Turkey, the participants of the study concluded that classroom implementations do not reflect the underpinnings of the ELT program in Turkey. The challenges and the gap felt by in-service novice teachers also cause them to undergo burn-out syndrome in the first decade of their teaching career. Findings of this Delphi study clearly unveil that an improvement in the quality of pre- and in-service training and higher salaries for teachers would directly affect the implementation of policy decisions and are significant constituent elements in causing the disconnection between beliefs and practices of English language teachers. Furthermore, the symbiotic relationship between the well-being of societies and the quality of education provided in a certain country is echoed in The OECD Better Life Index that develops statistics about aspects shaping the quality of people's lives. Social inequalities are also integrated into the analysis process of Better Life Index report and socio-economic situations of particular groups are categorized according to the education degrees of these groups. As for the connection between the English proficiency level of countries and their ranks in the Better Life Index report, top-ranking countries (the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, and Austria) in the EF Proficiency Index 2021 rate their general satisfaction with life higher than the OECD average of 6.7 (on a scale from 0 to 10).

Echoing the merit of English language learning in the 21st century, the participants also concluded that we need long-lasting, research-informed, and updated actions in preparing an English language policy with a specific effort to integrate sociocultural and socioeconomic diversity in Turkey. When directed a question regarding the existence of correlation between progression in the learning context and formal assessment of English, they concluded that in-service teachers need to be provided with well-designed, research-informed, practice-oriented examples of alternative assessment in collaboration with a diverse group of academics in Turkey. They also claimed that formative and summative assessment are not mutually exclusive and accordingly the assessment of students' progress in the foreign language should be handled sensitively.

The results of PISA surveys of reading, without leaving room for complacency, indicates that mother tongue proficiency have close liaison with foreign language proficiency levels

of individuals. As Balçıkanlı (2021) aptly puts the topic in his distinguished work, the countries which have higher success rates in reading comprehension according to PISA 2018 results also have very high English proficiency in 2019 results of EF Index, too. Bearing in mind the growing importance that is attached to a holistic approach to language education in Turkey, there is an urgent need to write an addendum to the working country report that addresses the teaching of our mother tongue, Turkish, in an effective way together with some implications regarding the English language education in the country, too. A national commitment in this field can be reflected in publications, conferences, academic events, and collaborative research projects to overcome the long-lasting problems of ELT in our country.

Early language learning is one of the major issues in language teaching methodology especially with the publication of international reports on educational achievement (PISA, the OECD report) and it fosters the holistic development of children together with the development of positive attitudes towards foreign language education since they have low affective filter and less anxiety (Ford, 2014; Gürsoy & Korkmaz, 2012). Edelenbos et al. (2006), in their review paper on multinational early language learning (ELL) practices, reaffirmed the contribution of ELL to young learners' cognitive, linguistic, and socio-emotional skills and multicultural understanding. In this vein, the country reports of European countries on English language policy demonstrate the growing tendency to accept more intensive approaches to early language teaching (immersion, content-based instruction) to help language learners' development of intercultural awareness, too. The quality and accountability at system level should be the focal points in ELL rather than just evaluating the process as a playful language exploration.

With a general recognition of the need for a reform in ELL, the starting age for English language education was lowered to the second grade with the latest educational reform in 2012. Given the strong emphasis that educational programs places on giving children a good start by developing their communicative competence in the English language from a very young age, the academics participating in this study also favoured lowering the starting age for English language education as well as drawing on critical perspectives on foreign language education at pre-school level. Accordingly, consideration should be given to a paradigm shift in the underlying philosophy of kindergarten education, too. As the significance of English education is on an upward trajectory in the last decades, a great deal of investment is needed in language teaching with proactive planning and support although they can be rather cumbersome to implement in some contexts. The participants focused on

the urgent need for a policy shift from a centralistic mindset to a more context-sensitive point of view to overcome the challenges arising from this generic educational issue.

6.4.3. Results About English Language Teaching and Learning in Turkey

Language education policies should be an essential part of social policy decisions and need to be prepared with a mutual understanding of civil society and key stakeholders of process. As can be seen in the references part, there is a strong recent tradition of research into language learning and teaching in our country. The scholarly studies conducted within this field emphasize the need for a national consensus on principles to guide the development of English education policy in Turkey. The complex educational structures and components should be evaluated as a bracing challenge rather than insuperable impediments to the implementation of policy perspectives.

The participants also drew on critical perspectives regarding the lack of continuity between successive educational levels of the three-tier education system in Turkey. This topic is one of the most frequently mentioned concerns in the qualitative and quantitative findings of the study in question. Starting the subject matters in English from scratch is a common problem and in these cases language learning turns into a matter of repeated new beginnings with much effort wasted during the whole process. To sum up, the lack of alignment between primary and secondary language curricula is an impediment to bettering foreign language education in Turkey.

Although the role and position of English for international stature are widely accepted in Turkey, concerns remain over the sufficiency and coherence of language learning content since some scholars even believe in the existence of a ‘ceiling effect’, where pupils do not show any progress after a certain stage of development. Academic and conversational proficiency levels of students should be congruent with each other and self-perceived professional competence of language learners. In addition, a strong administrative apparatus is also needed to plan the valorization process of English language in the country.

The role of normative instruments such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is also discussed under this heading since the academics taking part in this study concluded that the CEFR, clarifying the situations and domains of communication in a comprehensive manner, is a crucial component of this process in spite of some inconsistencies in the application of these frameworks in local contexts. A standards-based

approach is also criticized for its important implications in the assessment of four language skills and not leaving space for the contribution of individual teachers. Using the ELP (European Language Portfolio), developed and piloted by the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, from 1998 until 2000, as an instrument of quality assurance and a balanced assessment of four basic skills will play a central role in the formation of a coherent English language policy. The various ELP models with their checklists are effective instruments to plot students' progress towards program goals and to promote the development of learner autonomy. A more competence-based approach with transparent and comparable learning outcomes for the assessment process of the language being learned will pave the way for the effective instruction of English language.

Nevertheless, we need to elaborate on our ELP in harmony with the CEFR frameworks and design the assessment procedure to utilize the measures of quality assurance accordingly. Therefore, a fundamental aspect of our working document of English language policy in Turkey is to ensure compliance with the requirements of the European Union for social inclusion and democratic citizenship. Together with the necessary political will, a sustained effort, understanding and commitment of language professionals ensure the enactment of a coherent ELP in Turkey in spite of the challenging nature of the task in question.

6.4.4. Recommendations and Issues for Consideration

We need to give the teacher and language learners feedback on their progress and on the adequacy of teaching process with a more systematic and competence-oriented approach to language teaching. Additionally, diagnostic tools can be developed to assess pupils' prior knowledge and proficiency level of English before designing the subject matters which are coherent with students' cognitive development. These considerations prompt the question whether, as far as language policy and decision makers are concerned, measures to promote the effectiveness of language education could be simply up to the scratch with some problems regarding the infrastructure capacity of the schools and coherence between the proposed teaching methods and the content of the English classes. Additionally, it is difficult to develop oral communication capacity in English since too intense objectives and overloaded curriculum make the program inapplicable. The participants also claimed that the students do not have extramural language learning opportunities since English does not have an institutional role to play in our country, notwithstanding that English programs are

well-structured in a general sense. This situation leads to the fact that we are lagging behind the countries at the top of the EF Proficiency Index.

The recommendations made in the European Commission report on how to improve the effectiveness of ELT are also applicable in the Turkish EFL context. One of the main recommendations in the report is to find out the best way to track the progression in language development of particular individuals and the development of their motivation in certain learning milieux. Participants of this study reaffirmed this recommendation by drawing attention to importance of correlation between learning context and formal assessment of English language proficiency levels. Echoing the scholarly works about the effect assessment ELT process, an academic summarized the whole situation with these words: *‘National exams and teacher administrated exams in MEB school generally fall behind the learning objectives, pedagogical practices and real language requirements in the global world (A12)’*. The prominence of formative assessment techniques in ELT is generally underscored in Turkey. The participants also reached a consensus on the need for nation-wide standardized English proficiency exams that assess four skills, and it is crucial in promoting positive washback effect on English language instruction.

However, the assessment of speaking is particularly problematic and merits consideration in assessment practices of language teachers. More effective and clear-cut rubrics can be developed to overcome the most common problems experienced in the assessment of four skills. In line with the contribution of the ELP to the assessment practices of foreign language, there is also an urgent need to put The ELP (European Language Portfolio) at the disposal of all language learners in Turkey while trying to develop the ELP implementation strategies in tune with contextual differences throughout the country. Although the participants were predominantly positive towards the integration of the CEFR and ELP into ELT programs, there was scepticism regarding its large-scale adoption in language classes and shortcomings were also mentioned in the implementation of these frameworks.

For effective formative assessment, we also need to reduce the number of students in secondary and upper-secondary education. The statistics for this part disclosed that digital formative assessment tools can be alternatively employed to overcome these obstacles. However, there is a compelling need for improvement in the existing infrastructure capacity of schools for the effective utilization of these digital tools by pupils and language teachers. The academics also stated the need to increase the number of English language class hours in terms of the efficiency and effectiveness of language teaching and noted that Turkey’s

results in national and international evaluations of English language skills are too weak. They also proposed a few enhancements concerning the pacing of the program to overcome problems regarding students' reticence to participate in communicative activities. English has the special role allocated to foreign language in Turkey and we need to respond to changes in parallel with the modern society.

An integrated competence-based approach merits consideration to address the basic problems in ELT in Turkey although it has some important implications in terms of the amount of class time devoted to language teaching. Framework conditions such as size of classes, funding, and conditions for the provision of foreign language should be spelled out clearly to implement an integrated and dynamic concept of language learning. A broader recognition of these common problems will ensue of the appropriate solutions and steps to address these issues. Additionally, the common standards and the quality criteria of a nationwide Turkish EFL curriculum framework such as the ratio of teachers to children should be set together with the related objectives and pedagogical implementation aspects. The socio-economic status of families also plays a crucial role in this process since the children from low-income families report significantly lower levels of English proficiency and have little or no motivation to learn a foreign language than children whose families are more economically advantaged. The academics also elaborated on the positive correlation between the socio-economic background of language learners and interest in foreign language study.

Apart from the aspects mentioned above, the participants stressed the necessity of forming a connection between the bottom-up dynamic and top-down control of language policy actions and decisions so that the wealth of academics conducting studies in the related field can be exploited for the benefit of the foreign language education programs. With particular reference to current issues in ELP and decisions taken by the Ministry of National Education, positive involvement and active support of different stakeholders are crucial in solving the problems stemming from the inequalities, and discontinuities in ELT programs. There is also a general recognition of the need to ensure the sustainability of innovation and implementation of policy decisions in ELT classes. One of the major issues is to enable universities to open language education and research centres like the ones in European countries to allow for improvements in ELT through joint research and teaching activities while promoting the development of language education.

Furthermore, students are expected to take responsibility for their own language learning process by becoming autonomous learners. Accordingly, the integration of ICT tools into language classes and students' exposure to extramural English are of great importance to overcome some of the deficiencies in the current program. Since there is a lack of sufficient teaching hours in ELT programs, some objectives of educational reforms seem unattainable.

This study attempted to investigate the delivery and effectiveness of English language teaching programs implemented throughout the compulsory education process in Turkey. In addition, this two-round study aimed to shed light on how to make improvements on the implementation of curricular reforms undertaken in the field of ELT, too. Although language teaching approaches employed in this process were uncovered to be sound to some extent, there exist mismatches between intense teaching content and classroom practices. More in-depth statistical and empirical information is also needed about day-to-day realities of English language education in Turkey since there is a lack of large-scale system-focused research to promote the effectiveness of the current practice in ELT in Turkey. Necessary steps, responding to the challenges and ad hoc regional needs that arise during the successive stages of LPP process, should be taken to lay on a sound foundation for the future planning of the English language teaching programs. On the other hand, socio-economic problems and our place and low ranks in the OECD Better Life Index are the opposite side of the coin. We hope that this working document providing suggestions for the improvement of ELT in Turkey will function as a splendid signpost to develop true grit and determination for future developments in this field.

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APPENDICES



APPENDIX A: Invitation Letter for the First Round of Delphi Study

Dear Participant,

I am carrying out a research study entitled ‘A Suggested English Language Policy’ under the supervision of Prof. Dr Cem Balçıkanlı of Gazi University, Institute of Educational Sciences, Department of Foreign Language Education, English Language Education program.

This study seeks to examine current language policy in practice within a Turkish educational system context. With this fact in mind, this study aims to canvass views and perceptions from English Language Teaching academics about foreign language policy in the country in that their dispositions play a pivotal role in addressing the issue of language education policies. In order to better understand how this policy works, it is of great importance to bear in mind the role of English Language Teaching academics in conceptualizing the English language policy in Turkey. The questionnaire consists of four parts, and these are ‘Policy Making, Teaching, Learning and Assessment’.

Delphi Method was developed by Rand Corporation to synthesize the most reliable consensus of a group of experts, by using a series of questionnaires with controlled feedback, (Dalkey & Helmer, 1962). Delphi method was employed because this method enables to synthesize consensus of experts. The most powerful aspect of this method is that it gives controlled feedback to the experts after the completion of each round. Another important feature is about sharing the results of the statistical analysis with the participants. Delphi panel progresses through sequential questionnaires. Since the results of these questionnaires are shared with the participants and lead them to make the final decision, the continuity of the participants in this process is of great importance for the progress of the research.

In the study, Delphi Method will be applied in three main rounds. The aim of the Delphi 1st Round is to gather the opinions of experts on English language education and policy. Therefore, data will be gathered from a group of experienced English language teacher education experts. In the next stage, the data from the participants within the framework of this survey will be compiled and it will be presented to you with your answers, and you will be asked whether you want to change your answer or to protect it exactly. With the analysis of the data to be obtained at this stage, a common and final text is aimed to be reached in the light of the data collected on English language education.

The names and personal information of the participants will be absolutely kept confidential. The collected data will be used only for academic purposes. In the research analysis, your name will be anonymous. If you agree to participate in the study, your views will only be used within the scope of this research. Your participation is entirely voluntary based. You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. If you agree to participate in the study, you are kindly requested to complete and submit the Delphi Study 1st Round Open-Ended Questionnaire Form.

I wish that your response to the request for participation will be positive, and I thank you in advance for your participation and support in the study.

Kindest regards.

Şeyma Yeşil

;
;

APPENDIX B: First Delphi Round Open-Ended Survey Form

Dear Participant,

Your opinions and contributions you will make with your recommendations are of great importance for this research entitled ‘A Suggested English Language Policy’. As there has been little critical or grounded research conducted on the current English policy in Turkey, this dissertation aims to contribute to studies of language policy and planning in general in an effort to understand English Language Teaching academics’ dispositions in this continuum.

This study is expected to consist of at least three phases. The first phase will begin with the submission of open-ended questions. The first phase of this Delphi application consists of 10 open-ended questions. In the second stage, a Likert-type survey will be created by combining the opinions of all participants in the study. The prepared questionnaire will be sent to you, and you will be asked to determine your participation levels for each item in the questionnaire. In the last stage, the questionnaire will be reorganized in line with your opinions and the statistical analysis obtained for each item in the second round will be shared with you. After examining the statistical values related to each item in the survey, you can change the answer you gave in the previous round if you deem it necessary. If no consensus is reached in the third round, the Delphi implementation will continue for another round.

Your personal information will not be shared with anyone other than the researcher and thesis advisor. Thank you very much for your support with your suggestions and devoting your precious time to our work.

Best regards

Şeyma Yeşil

APPENDIX C: Interview Questions

English Language Policy

General Questions

1. Do you think that there is an officially recognized English language policy in Turkey? Are there any official documents?
2. What could be the basic aspects of our language policy?
3. What do you think about the English Language policy actions and decisions in Turkey?

a) Policy making

1. How do you consider the role of CEFR in foreign language education policy in Turkey?
2. In what ways do decision making agents including programs developers, academics and administrators influence foreign language policy in Turkey?
3. What do you think about the gap between theory and practice in the field of ELT in Turkey?

b) Teaching

1. Do you think there is a match between curriculum objectives and pedagogical practice? To which extent do these objectives overlap with the pedagogical practice in ELT classes?
2. Do you think pedagogical practice and student assessment are compatible with one another?
3. What do you think about the number of English language class hours in terms of the efficiency and effectiveness of language teaching?

c) Learning

1. Do you think that the English language program in primary and secondary education addresses to students' needs? If not, why?
2. What do you think of the alignment between primary and secondary language curricula?
3. What do you think about the relationship between mother tongue proficiency and foreign language achievement?
4. What do you think about the connection between English language proficiency and demographic, economic and social developments?

d) Assessment

1. Do you think there is correlation between progression in the learning context and formal assessment of English?
2. Which aspects should be developed in formative and summative assessment of four language proficiency skills?



APPENDIX D: Likert-Scale Questionnaire

PART I: Biodata

Age

() 23- 30 Years () 31-40 Years () 41- 50 Years () 51-60 Years () More than 60 years

Gender

() Male () Female

Years of Experience

() 1-5 Years () 6-10 Years () 11-20 Years () 21- 30 () More than 31 Years

University Affiliation / Institution

.....

PART II: Five - Point Likert Scale Questionnaire

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
General Questions					
1. There is a functional English language policy that is peculiar to Turkey.					
2. The level of cooperation is adequate between the academy and the ministry to solve the problems in ELT.					
3. We need a language policy document which reflects our national needs and aims.					
4. English language policy actions are appropriate for the local contexts.					
5. There are enough scholarly studies that can guide language policy actions in Turkey.					
6. There is a two-way connection between English language proficiency and socio-economic opportunities a person has.					
7. There is a gap between curriculum objectives and pedagogical practice.					
8. There are inequalities among students' socioeconomic levels and opportunities they have.					
9. Learners have opportunity to develop their linguistic skills in authentic or authentic-like environments.					
10. The classrooms host much more students than they should have.					
11. The training of language teachers is consistent with quality standards and the relevant level of education.					

12. There is a need to develop a coherent foreign language policy in relationship with students' needs.					
Policy Making					
1. Language planning should be localized rather than a one-size-fit program.					
2. Needs analysis should be carried out to determine what level of English are needed for different types of students.					
3. Policy actions are not continuous.					
4. Real communication is missing in many of the classrooms.					
5. Classroom applications correspond with what is written in the curriculum.					
6. There is a huge difference between what is written in the curriculum and what is done in the classes.					
7. Speaking and pronunciation are essential skills for learning English.					
8. Language programs give enough importance to speaking and listening skills.					
9. English language curriculum addresses to students' needs.					
10. There is a high degree of overlap between objectives and pedagogical practice in ELT classes.					
11. The language policy should focus on how to motivate learners rather than what to involve in it.					
12. Opportunities for extracurricular activities should be enhanced.					
13. The CEFR cannot be adopted completely due to cultural and national differences.					
14. In order for learners to be exposed to a desirable level of comprehensible input, the weekly hours should be increased.					
15. There is a need to reshape the current program considering the social and cultural realities of Turkey.					
16. There is inconsistency between the school-based and national examination systems.					
17. The CEFR cannot naturally address some local problems.					
18. A national centre for language education will have great contributions to effective language teaching.					
19. Teachers and academics take part in curricula development studies but not involved in decision making processes.					
20. CEFR can serve as a guideline for the development of Turkish EFL policy.					
21. Synthesizing CEFR through adaptations is a better idea in order to					

make it more applicable in the Turkish EFL context.					
22. There must be a national strategy document for foreign language education which will serve as a policymaking or setting standards institution.					
23. The macro-level constituents (decision-makers) should make room for a polyphonic environment, where people listen to others as well.					
24. The stakeholders are collaboratively involved in the decision making process.					
25. Certain decisions are made based on the requirements of a specific period rather than forming a suitable English language policy for all school grades.					
Teaching					
1. Eclectic approach can be used given individual differences and different teaching and learning contexts.					
2. There is an alignment between primary and secondary school curricula in terms of the teaching philosophy.					
3. Teachers prefer to follow the activities in the book in their own way rather than communicative activities.					
4. The quality of time spent in the classrooms is more important than the quantity and number of English language class hours.					
5. English language class hours are sufficient to contribute to the efficiency of language teaching.					
6. English language teachers should focus on communicative value of students' productions.					
7. The exposure level of students could be maximized through systematic planning.					
8. The use of technological tools by which students can extend their work outside the class hours should be encouraged.					
9. There is a gap between the official documents and real practices at schools.					
10. In the course hours, more time is allocated to theory than real and hands-on practice.					
11. Human resource and infrastructure is insufficient for implementing cutting-edge theoretical aspects of language teaching.					
12. We need to simplify the theoretical burden on students by lowering the number of grammatical units.					
13. Real classroom applications are rarely accurate reflections of academic research findings.					

14. Expecting teachers to comply with the CEFR concepts by fulfilling the requirements would not be realistic within this context.					
15. The importance of intercultural competence should be highlighted within the framework theoretically.					
16. The current national curriculum implementations do not follow the proposed components of CEFR in the application.					
17. Foreign language teachers are poorly guided in terms of collaborative decision-making processes.					
Learning					
1. Primary and secondary education English language programs are compatible with the cognitive and affective development of the students.					
2. The number of hours are enough for learners to make considerable progress over years.					
3. The more proficient in the mother tongue the learner is, the higher foreign language achievement s/he will get.					
4. Mother tongue proficiency does not automatically secure foreign language achievement.					
5. Mother tongue proficiency contributes to children's metalinguistic awareness.					
6. The individual differences are the driving potency for language learning motivation.					
7. Socio-economic status has a huge effect on academic achievement and English language proficiency of individuals.					
8. The more developed the society is, the higher language proficiency individuals would have.					
9. Productive skills are generally neglected in the classroom.					
10. The insufficiency of exposure makes the language learning process challenging for both teachers and learners.					
11. The course books conform with the requirements and practical realities of latest language teaching methods.					
12. The realities of English Language classes make the policy actions useless to some extent.					
13. Important measures should be designed to ensure early language learning at primary schools.					
14. Common standards should be determined with a nationwide framework curriculum regarding objectives and pedagogical implementation.					

15. European Language Portfolios should be made available and put at the disposal of all children/pupils.					
16. Appropriate modules can be offered regarding scholarly subjects and continuous development of learners' language competences.					
17. Continuity of language teaching is assured despite differing levels of previous knowledge and skills among pupils.					
18. A general concept of language and culture awareness needs to be integrated into basic training.					
Assessment					
1. The frameworks of assessment and the tools of learning process are evaluated as a coherent set of principles.					
2. Formative and summative assessment should not be mutually exclusive.					
3. Students need formative assessment but summative assessment is also necessary in language teaching.					
4. Although communicative and task-based activities are used in ELT classes, we measure comprehension and memorization in the national exams.					
5. The number of students in classes should be reduced for effective formative assessment.					
6. Teachers can be encouraged to use digital formative assessment tools.					
7. English language teachers should be encouraged to apply alternative assessment techniques in their own classroom.					
8. There is a correlation between the learning practices and formal assessment of English.					
9. Listening, speaking and writing proficiency is disregarded in both formative and summative assessment types.					
10. Both receptive and productive skills should be taken into consideration in assessment.					
11. Skills-based testing should be a requirement for graduation from high schools.					
12. Formal assessment based on traditional methods prevents foreign language learning in our country.					
13. There should be a measurement to make use of the positive washback effect in English exams.					
14. More effective and clear-cut rubrics can be developed for the assessment of speaking and writing skills.					

15. All four language skills should be handled together in ELT process.					
16. In-service teachers need to be informed about the importance of formative and summative assessment.					
17. Assessment should be a natural part of the activities for developing four language proficiency skills.					
18. The negative washback effects of the tests result in using the Grammar Translation Method in ELT classes.					
19. Students should take a test including four skills and it would create a positive backwash effect on the process.					
20. Both summative and formative practices could be considered in combination to refer to students' achievement in foreign language learning.					
21. Alternative assessment methods are adequately integrated into formative and summative assessment process.					
22. The high stakes testing system triggers the teaching of theoretical information.					



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