



| Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi |

Curriculum Implementation Approaches of Secondary School English Teachers: A Case Study

Ortaokul İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Program Uygulama Yaklaşımları¹: Bir Durum Çalışması

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Keywords

1. Curriculum implementation
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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to identify the curriculum implementation approaches of secondary school English teachers.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The study group of this qualitative case study consists of 14 English teachers and students studying in the classes of these teachers. In determination of the study group, maximum variation and criterion sampling was used. The data of the study was obtained by observations, interviews, document review and it was analyzed by qualitative content analysis technique with an interpretive qualitative approach.

Findings: Study results indicated that English teachers have basically three different approaches while implementing the curriculum: curriculum fidelity, curriculum adaptation and curriculum design. In each three approaches teachers make student-based and exam-based implementations. However, under the curriculum adaptation approach, the student-based and exam-based adaptations made by teachers during their implementations are philosophically so different from each other that they worth mentioning under a different sub-title as student-based adaptation and exam-based adaptation. Teachers who adopt curriculum fidelity approach tend to apply the curriculum materials without making any change while teachers with curriculum adaptation approach make some adaptations in these materials. In the student-based adaptation approach, teachers make these adaptations by taking student characteristics into account, while in the exam-based approach, the focus of the teachers is to prepare students for national exams or the exam of the course. Teachers with curriculum design approach teach in private schools and do not make use of curriculum materials during their instruction. These teachers have more flexibility in their classroom practices compared to the teachers with curriculum fidelity and adaptation approaches.

Highlights: Based on the results of this study, it can be suggested to investigate the effect of teachers' curriculum implementation approaches on their professional development and on their students' motivation and academic success.

Öz

Çalışmanın amacı: Bu çalışmanın amacı ortaokul İngilizce öğretmenlerinin program uygulama yaklaşımlarını ortaya çıkarmaktır.

Materyal ve Yöntem: Nitel araştırma desenlerinden durum çalışması kullanılarak tasarlanan bu araştırmanın verileri ortaokul yedinci sınıflarda öğretim yapan 14 İngilizce öğretmeninden ve bu öğretmenlerin sınıflarında öğrenim gören ortaokul yedinci sınıf öğrencilerinden elde edilmiştir. Çalışma grubunun belirlenmesinde maksimum çeşitlilik ve ölçüt örnekleme tekniklerinden faydalanılmıştır. Katılımcı gözlem, görüşme ve doküman incelemesi yoluyla elde edilen veriler nitel içerik analizi tekniği kullanılarak çözümlenmiştir.

Bulgular: Araştırma sonuçları, öğretmenlerin ortaokul yedinci sınıf İngilizce dersi öğretim programını sınıflarında uygularken programa bağlılık, programın uyarlanması ve programın tasarlanması olmak üzere temelde üç farklı yaklaşım sergilediklerini göstermiştir. Öğretmenler her bir yaklaşım altında öğrenci-odaklı ve sınav-odaklı uygulamalara yer vermektedirler. Bununla birlikte, özellikle programın uyarlanması yaklaşımı altında öğrenci-odaklı ve sınav-odaklı uyarlamalar yapan öğretmenlerin gerçekleştirdikleri uygulamaların, benimsedikleri felsefe açısından birbirinden oldukça farklılaştığı görülmektedir. Bu nedenle programın uyarlanması yaklaşımı öğrenci odaklı uyarlama ve sınav odaklı uyarlama şeklinde daha detaylı ele alınmıştır. İlgili programı sınıflarında uygularken programa bağlılık yaklaşımı sergileyen öğretmenler MEB tarafından öğretim programı kapsamında temin edilen program materyallerini sınıflarında bire bir uygulama eğilimindedirler. Programın uyarlanması yaklaşımı sergileyen öğretmenler ise sınıflarında MEB program materyallerine yer vermekle birlikte bu materyallerde uyarlamalar yapmaktadırlar. Öğrenci odaklı uyarlama yaklaşımında, öğretmenler bu uyarlamaları öğrenci özelliklerini dikkate alarak yaparken, sınav odaklı uyarlama yaklaşımında ise öğretmenlerin odak noktası, öğrencileri ulusal sınavlara ya da dersin sınavına hazırlamaktır. Programın tasarlanması yaklaşımına eğilim gösteren öğretmenler özel okullarda çalışmakta ve MEB program materyallerine derslerinde hiç yer vermemektedirler. Dahası, bu öğretmenler sınıfta yaptıkları uygulamalarda diğer yaklaşımlara eğilim gösteren öğretmenlere kıyasla daha esnek davranmaktadırlar.

Önemli Vurgular: Bu araştırmadan elde edilen bulgulardan yola çıkılarak, ileriki araştırmalarda, öğretmenlerin program uygulama yaklaşımlarının mesleki gelişimleri ve öğrencilerin derse yönelik motivasyon ve akademik başarıları üzerindeki etkileri incelenebilir.

¹ This study was produced from the researcher's doctoral dissertation.

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INTRODUCTION

Curricula in Turkey are developed with a centralist approach by the Board of Education under the Ministry of National Education (MNE). In this direction, the official curricula prepared and approved by MNE, are implemented throughout the country. However, local differences in student interests, needs and characteristics make it difficult to implement the official curriculum as planned in every school and in every classroom (Bümen, Çakar & Yıldız, 2014). For this reason, teachers, who are the implementers of the curriculum, can transform the official curriculum into an operational curriculum while applying it in their classrooms. Although the official curriculum has been centrally developed in advance, the communication of teachers and students with the curriculum constitutes the operational curriculum, in other words the curriculum-in-use (Shawer, Gilmore & Banks-Joseph, 2009).

Although there are many factors that frame curriculum implementation, teachers have the utmost importance (Remillard, 2005). No matter how the official curriculum is prepared, it is the teacher who has the last word on it during classroom practices. Factors as teachers' self-efficacy and beliefs affect their curriculum implementation (Bümen et al., 2014; Çobanoğlu, 2011; Kabaoğlu, 2015). The fact that teachers' beliefs about teaching differ from each other shows that the curriculum cannot be applied by every teacher in a similar way. From this point of view, this research draws attention to identify the various approaches that teachers have while they are implementing the curriculum.

Theoretical Framework

Curriculum implementation in this study has been studied in the context of curriculum development and curriculum fidelity. According to Varış (1996), curriculum development, in its shortest definition, is the development of a designed curriculum in practice with an investigative approach. Curriculum development is the process of designing, implementing, evaluating and rearranging the curricula used in educational institutions in line with the data obtained as a result of the evaluation (Erden, 1998). Based on the definitions, it can be stated that curriculum development includes basically three stages as curriculum design, curriculum implementation, curriculum evaluation and the implementation process is an essential and inevitable phase of curriculum development. Official curriculum developed by experts on paper are put into practice by teachers who are the implementers of the curriculum. Thus, the implementation of the curriculum refers to the interaction process between the developers and the implementers (Kabaoğlu, 2015). When the literature on the subject is examined, the early studies, which put emphasis on the teachers' role to interpret the developers' intentions, were generally conducted by Ben-Peretz (1975; 1980). The studies on curriculum implementation show that teachers generally apply official curriculum in two ways: curriculum fidelity and curriculum adaptation. In this context, one of the issues as part of the application of curriculum materials is "fidelity" or "adaptation" (Ben-Peretz, 1990). While "fidelity" and "adaptation" approaches are commonly mentioned in the literature, a third approach named "enactment" was first added to these two approaches by Snyder, Bolin, and Zumwalt (1992).

Curriculum fidelity is the faithful implementation of the curriculum designed by experts (Bümen et al., 2014). As Jackson (1986) points out, most teachers do not bother to decide how the material they teach should be presented to students. Instead, they rely on commercially prepared teaching materials, such as textbooks, who make this decision for themselves (cited in Ben-Peretz, 1990). The fidelity approach restricts the curriculum to a textbook series, a guide and a set of teacher plans (Snyder et al., 1992, p. 427). Teachers with curriculum fidelity approach tend to transfer the units in the textbook in the order they are, without making any changes. The fact that teachers with curriculum fidelity approach limit themselves to the messages clearly stated in the teacher's guidebook also limits the creativity and autonomy of the teachers (Pinar et al., 2004). Researchers emphasize that the constraints of fidelity approach should be overcome by teachers through curriculum adaptation (Shawer, 2010a).

Curriculum adaptation, which is named as mutual-adaptation by Snyder et al. (1992), is the process in which the arrangements in the curriculum are made by the curriculum development experts and the teachers who apply it in their classrooms. In this approach, the useful and unworkable points are decided during the implementation of the official curriculum in the classroom, and it is shaped according to the context (Öztürk, 2012). Since the experts still define the curriculum knowledge, adaptation approach does not differ considerably from fidelity approach. However, it becomes more flexible as teachers have more active role in making adjustments in the curriculum to make it suitable for her/his classroom context (Shawer, 2010a). Those with adaptation approach state that the curriculum should be adapted to the school context in cooperation with the curriculum development experts and the teachers. While curriculum development experts cannot realize the unique characteristics of the teaching environment, teachers know and evaluate student characteristics better and provide important data to experts on this subject (Ben-Peretz, 1990). On the other hand, as a result of their research on the curriculum, experts also provide teachers with a planned and systematic material that they can apply (Bümen et al., 2014). Curriculum adaptation approach allows teachers to shape the curriculum according to the context in which they teach. However it is the curriculum enactment approach which assign the curriculum to the teacher (Snyder et al., 1992).

Teachers who enact curriculum act as curriculum development experts who make significant changes in the curriculum based on student experiences. According to this approach, the curriculum is shaped as a process created and experienced by teacher and students (Snyder, 1992). Teachers as curriculum developers become the composers of their own music, while in the fidelity approach, they are seen as "tools" to realize the intentions of curriculum development experts (Ben-Peretz, 1990, p.10). Teacher's tendency to follow fidelity, adaptation or enactment approach depends on how they use curriculum materials (Shawer, 2010a, p.175). In curriculum enactment approach, teachers often plan their instruction without referring to printed curriculum materials.

Literature Review

When the studies on teachers' curriculum implementation approaches are examined, it is seen that there is a theoretical framework for curriculum implementation approaches of teachers in the international literature (Ben-Peretz, 1990; Snyder et al., 1992). With the help of this theoretical framework, some studies were done regarding the curriculum approaches of teachers. According to study results conducted as PhD dissertation on English teachers by Shawer (2003, cited in Shawer, Gilmore & Banks-Joseph, 2008), teachers approach the curriculum in three different ways as curriculum transmitters, curriculum developers and curriculum makers. Accordingly, teachers who transmit the curriculum show fidelity to curriculum materials while those who develop the curriculum make adaptations such as skipping, removing, providing additional resources and activities in the curriculum materials in line with student interests and needs. On the other hand, teachers who make the curriculum, determine the applications to be carried out in the classroom based on student experiences and their own attitudes, beliefs and experiences. Other studies by the author and his colleagues were also conducted on examination of the motives that drive teachers to curriculum approaches and their implications on students and teacher professional development. According to the results of these studies, each approach adopted in the implementation of the curriculum has different implications for teacher, student, curriculum and school development (Craig, 2006; Shawer, Gilmore & Banks-Joseph, 2008; Schultz & Oyler, 2006). On the one hand, curriculum approaches transform the official curriculum into operational curriculum and on the other hand, since each approach leads to different roles and opportunities, it affects teachers' professional development differently (Craig, 2006; Randolph, Duffy & Mattingly, 2007, cited in Shawer, Gilmore & Banks-Joseph, 2008). Moreover, curriculum approaches of teachers directly affects students' learning and motivation (Shawer, 2010b; Shawer, Gilmore & Banks-Joseph, 2008; Eisner 1990; Erickson & Shultz, 1992; Shawer, Gilmore & Banks-Joseph, 2008). Studies have shown that teachers' adaptations in the curriculum in line with student interests, needs and characteristics positively affect student motivation and learning (Craig, 2001; Shawer, 2001, cited in Shawer, Gilmore & Banks-Joseph, 2008).

When the literature on the implementation of the curriculum in Turkey is examined, it is recognized that theoretically there is almost no such classification of teacher's approaches of curriculum implementation. Only in a study conducted as PhD dissertation by Tokgöz (2013), three different teacher profiles as curriculum followers, curriculum extenders and curriculum adapters were determined based on the similarities and differences of teachers in the implementation of the curriculum in their classrooms. According to this classification, curriculum followers adhere to the curriculum materials while curriculum adapters make up for the deficiencies in the curriculum materials by the help of other resources or their own experiences. Curriculum extenders focus on student success and therefore, while implementing the curriculum in their classrooms, they prioritize knowledge transfer in order to increase the success of students in national exams and improve their exam performance. In some other studies (Öztürk-Akar, 2005; Ünsal & Çetin, 2019), differences observed in curriculum implementation at the school level were examined, however no classification was made based on the differences in the practices of the teachers. Recently Bümen and Yazıcılar (2020) conducted a case study in which they compared the teachers' curriculum adaptations in state and private high schools. This study focused on curriculum adaptation of teachers by revealing the adaptation patterns and the reasons for the adaptation. It is also noteworthy that, by being a little away from the focus of this research, researchers investigating curriculum implementation in literature before have raised some concerns regarding the curriculum fidelity levels of the teachers (Bümen, 2019; Karakuyu & Oğuz, 2021; Sakalioğlu & Özudoğru, 2022), teachers' opinions and perceptions on curriculum implementation (Altay, 2020, Aykaç & Ulubey, 2012; Çelik, 2021; Dilekçi, 2019; Öztürk-Akar & Yıldırım, 2011; Tekbıyık & Akdeniz, 2008; Yaşar, 2012), the problems they experienced while implementing it (Adıgüzel, 2009; Karacaoğlu & Acar, 2010; Öztürk-Akar, 2014) and teachers' level of curriculum literacy (Çetinkaya & Tabak, 2019; Demir & Toraman, 2021; Kahramanoğlu, 2019; Kasapoğlu, 2020). Although there are some limited studies that investigate teachers' role in curriculum implementation, it is clear that previous research did not specified the curriculum implementation approaches of the teachers. This study mainly aims to fill such a theoretical gap in the literature. It is thought that such a classification of teachers' curriculum approaches help better understand the implementation process of the curriculum. Studying on the implementation of the official curriculum by teachers in their classroom is also important in terms of providing an understanding of how to improve the quality of implementation (Bümen et al., 2014). Moreover, such a theoretical framework on teachers' curriculum implementation approaches paves the way for new studies on the subject.

Given the numerous concerns raised in previous research, the aim of this study was to explore how teachers in general, English as a foreign language teacher in specific, approach curriculum while implementing it in their classroom. Specifically studying on English teachers' curriculum implementation approaches is also considered significant to better understand the teaching process and clarifying the practices in language teaching, especially in our country, where there have been difficulties in teaching English listening and speaking skills (Özer & Akay, 2022) although English curricula are designed with a communicative approach (MNE, 2018). While determining the curriculum implementation approaches of the teachers, their implementations were analyzed in line with the basic elements of the curriculum proposing the following research questions;

1. How can the curriculum implementation approaches be named as a result of the teachers' views and practices regarding the relevant curriculum?
2. What does the official English curriculum mean to the secondary school English teachers with different curriculum implementation approaches?
3. How do the secondary school English teachers with different curriculum implementation approaches plan their lessons?

4. How do the secondary school English teachers with different curriculum implementation approaches set the objectives of their lessons?
5. How do the secondary school English teachers with different curriculum implementation approaches decide the content of their lessons?
6. How do the secondary school English teachers with different curriculum implementation approaches carry out teaching-learning activities during their lessons?
7. How do the secondary school English teachers with different curriculum implementation approaches carry out the assessment and evaluation process?

METHOD/MATERIALS

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to conduct an in-depth investigation of secondary school English teachers' curriculum implementation approaches. Qualitative case study approach was applied to answer the research questions leading the study. Case study is specifically used when the how and why questions are asked on a contemporary set of events over which the researcher has little or no control (Yin, 2014). Case study is the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, and understanding its activity in significant circumstances (Stake, 1995). According to Yin (2014), case study method allows researchers to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events and by using case study, phenomena or events can be explained, described or explored in the context in which they occur. The most important characteristic of the case study is the limitation of the situation examined in the study (Merriam, 2013). The unit under study is a system with boundaries around it. Thus, the situation (case) can be a single person, a program, a group, an institution, or a community.

Qualitative case study design was most appropriate for this study, as qualitative research involves understanding social behavior in a specific context (Creswell, 2014), rather than a quantitative design which uses numerical data to measure relationships and provides an examination of the numerical data available (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The main research question of this study focused on learning from secondary school English teachers about their experiences on the implementation of the curriculum in their own classrooms and in their own words. This research question is best answered by conducting a qualitative research. Qualitative research emerges from the interpretivist paradigm. The interpretive paradigm, which is often combined with social constructivism, is concerned with understanding the world as it is from subjective experiences of individuals (Creswell, 2007). Moreover, case study as a qualitative research design, provides an in-depth perspective of a single issue (Creswell, 2014). In this case of the study, the single issue of teachers' curriculum implementation approaches were studied. Within the scope of this study, the approaches of teachers while implementing the seventh grade English curriculum in their classrooms were considered as a case and the implementation of the curriculum was examined in the classroom environment through observation, interview and archival documents. This multiple sources of data to explore the phenomenon also indicates that a case study is best suited for the research. As Heale and Twycross (2018) have asserted, case study is a holistic inquiry that entails detailed and in-depth data collection from multiple sources of data.

Study Group

Determining the study group of the research was carried out in two stages: determining the schools and determining the teachers. Maximum variation and criterion sampling techniques were used in determining the schools where the study would be conducted. In order to reveal the similarities and differences in teachers' curriculum approaches, schools that differ in terms of their 2016 TEOG (Transition from Basic Education to Secondary Education) national exam scores (high-middle-low) were preferred from the two different districts of Eskisehir. In addition, each teacher in the study group was observed in different classrooms to be able to understand whether his/her curriculum implementation differ according to characteristics of the student group taught. Thus, inclusion of the schools with a large number of students was determined as a criterion. At the stage of determining the teachers to be included in the study group, criterion sampling was used. Considering the effect of experience on teachers' curriculum implementations, teachers who have at least five years of experience were included in the study group. Moreover, in order to compare the practices of the teacher in different classes, it was required that the teacher should attend more than one class in the seventh grade. The aim of the maximum variation sampling used in determining the study group of the research is not to provide diversity for generalization, but to reveal the different dimensions of the problem by finding similarities and differences between different situations. In criterion sampling, the sample is created in line with the criteria predetermined by the researcher (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011).

In this study, in line with the criteria taken into account in the selection of the study group, a total of 8 secondary schools and 14 English teachers formed the study group. The age range of the teachers in the study group is between 27 and 50 and their experience ranges from 5 years to 27 years. Information about the schools and teachers that make up the study group is given in table 1.

Table 1. The participants' demographic profiling

	District	School Success Level	Teacher	Age	Experience (year)
State Schools	A	High	Öykü	35	14
			Emine	37	13
		Medium	Banu	45	21
		Low	Ali	39	13
	B	High	İpek	48	27
			Onur	50	27
		Medium	Esra	30	8
			Mehtap	30	7
			Nazan	38	17
			Ayşe	31	12
Private schools	A	High	İlknur	35	12
			Elif	31	10
	B	High	Aslı	27	5
			Tülay	36	15

Instruments

The data of the research were obtained through observation, interview and document analysis. Information on data collection tools is given below.

Semi-structured Interviews

The interviews were conducted with both teachers and students to collect the data of this study. Thus, interview questions were prepared separately for both teachers and students. The interview questions were open-ended and semi-structured. This semi-structured form of the questions allowed the researchers to reveal deeper explanations by follow-up questions. The semi-structured interview questions were written by the researchers considering the elements of the curriculum and the relevant literature to reveal the experiments of teachers and students regarding the implementation of the curriculum. The interview questions were also aligned with the research questions. In this direction, the questions were written to reveal the teachers' perceptions of the curriculum, their course planning processes, and their actions regarding the determination of course objectives, content, activities and evaluation processes. More specifically, the first two questions in the teachers' interview form were set to reveal teachers' understanding of the curriculum. The next three questions were designed to understand how teachers plan their lesson. The next question, which is the sixth question, was created to understand how teachers use the curriculum while determining the objectives of the lesson. The following three questions were written to reveal teachers' content determination process by asking them how the curriculum effect their selection of the content of their lesson and whether they include content that is not specified in the curriculum. If yes, in what situations they do that. Within the scope of the tenth question, which was created to reveal what kind of path teachers follow in their teaching process, they were asked whether the curriculum help them on how to proceed in the teaching-learning process and which materials and activities they frequently use in their lessons. Finally the last question in teachers' interview form was created to reveal the effect of the curriculum in determining the evaluation processes. Moreover, the questions in the interview form for the students were created in order to better understand the curriculum implementation approaches of the teachers. Accordingly, the first question was set to learn whether their teacher make reference to official curriculum during teaching. The second question was designed to reveal the resources teacher use and how she/he uses them. The next two questions were created to discover the teaching-learning and evaluation activities she/he refers to. Follow up questions were also posed to learn what students think about whether she/he considers their interests and wishes in the selection of resources to be used and in determining the activities they applied in the lesson.

The interview questions were reviewed by an expert panel. The panel included two experts working in the department of curriculum and instruction and an expert working in the department of measurement and evaluation in education. Some minor modifications concerning inappropriate dictions used in some interview questions (Q5, Q9 for teachers and Q1 for students) were made and follow up question(s) were added to some of the questions (Q10, Q11) for teachers' interview form in line with the experts' feedback. In addition, the interview questions were field-tested by two English teachers who did not participate in the study. Finally, the interview protocol included eleven open ended questions for teachers and four open ended questions for students to encourage them to share their own thoughts and experiences regarding the implementation of the curriculum. The questions were followed up with probes on the answers the teachers and students gave. Interview protocol is a list of questions and instructions that guide interviewers while making interviews (Vogt et al., 2012). It allows the researcher to ask the same questions of every participant in every interview (Creswell, 2014). The interviews were conducted by one of the researchers by following the interview protocol. Interviews with teachers were conducted face-to-face by the researcher in the schools where they worked, and they lasted an average of 25 minutes. The interviews with the students were carried out as focus group meeting with the whole class when the teacher was not in the classroom in order not to affect the students' responses. Interviews with the students lasted an average of 15 minutes.

Observations

According to Yin (2014) the use of multiple sources was necessary for a case study to have an accurate portrayal of the case. Some studies in literature have shown that direct observation was the most rigorous measurement when multiple sources of information such as participants and observer were used (Emshooff et al., 1897; Ruiz-Primo, 2005; Smith et al., 2007). The findings of these researches have indicated that participants' self-report scores differed significantly from observation scores. The credibility and dependability of the data of this study were increased by directly observing the applications in the classroom in order to determine the teachers' approach to curriculum implementation. The researcher participated in the lessons of the teachers in the study group, and observed the teachers' implementation of the curriculum in their classrooms. Despite the possibility of teachers not behaving naturally in the early stages of the observations, intensive classroom observation of 10-20 lessons delivered by the teachers was made. In order to see how the teachers applied the curriculum materials in the classroom, each teacher was observed throughout a unit (lecturing and implementation of the activities). Before the observations, teachers were informed about the purpose of the research and they were encouraged to act naturally by stating that there would be no evaluation of teacher performance. The researcher-created observation protocol was used to collect the data. Observation protocol covered the topics prepared within the scope of the research questions to be considered during the observation and ensured the researcher to adhere to research aim during observation period. During the observations, extensive field notes and reflections were written by the researcher. After each observation, informal post-lesson discussions were also done with the observed teacher to avoid misinterpretations and to capture the realistic picture of the overall curriculum implementation.

Archival Documents

In addition to interviews and observations, documents such as exam papers, worksheets, student notebooks were collected from some teachers in the study group concurrent to observations. Since these documents were used together with other data collection methods, no complex and detailed analysis was needed. The researcher can use the data obtained from the documents to support, disprove or provide alternative explanations from observations and interviews (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). In this direction, within the scope of this study, the consistency of teacher's practices in the classroom with the data obtained from the observations and interviews was examined by analyzing the documents shared by the teachers. Besides, before starting the observations, the seventh grade English curriculum and the curriculum materials such as teachers' books, student books and workbooks prepared by the Ministry of National Education were also examined and during the observations, teachers' level of utilization of these resources were taken into consideration in determining the teachers' approaches to curriculum implementation.

Data Collection and Analysis

Before starting the research, permission was obtained from the Ministry of National Education to collect data from the schools affiliated to it. Approval from research ethics committee was also granted. Before collecting the data of the study, participants were informed about the purpose of the study and they were informed that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Pseudonym was used in the presentation of the findings to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. During the collection of the data, firstly, the teachers were observed for at least ten lesson hours. The interviews were conducted once after the observations, in case the interview to be held affected the teacher's curriculum implementation. Observations started in October during 2017-2018 academic year. The documents were analyzed before and during data collection procedure.

Data analysis is an ongoing and interactive process in qualitative research (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Throughout the study an interpretive qualitative approach was used to interpret the data. Qualitative content analysis technique was used to analyze the data of this study. The qualitative content analysis procedure is category-based and research question oriented (Mayring, 2019). Accordingly, text evaluation is restricted to selected category system and research questions which are derived from the main aims of the research are answered at the end of the analysis. The procedure of category development in qualitative content analysis can be inductive or deductive (Mayring, 2000). Patton (2002) suggests both inductive and deductive approach in creating themes or categories, examining data that do not fit into categories or deviating situations. Corbin and Strauss (2014) draws attention to the necessity of using inductive analyzes if there is not enough study and solid theoretical structure to base the research subject. In this study the categories were derived from research questions and theoretical background. In all these stages, both the concepts existing in the literature were used and these concepts in the literature were enriched by adding new codes and categories obtained from the data set. Thus both inductive and deductive category development procedure of qualitative content analysis was applied.

During the analysis of interview and observation data, a general framework was formed on research' sub-problems and interview questions and this framework was developed based on the data set. General framework was created as "perceptions on curriculum", "planning the lesson", "setting objectives", "determining the content", "teaching-learning process" and "assessment and evaluation process". This conceptual frame played a leading role during content analysis. Before starting the analysis of interview data, the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim to make the data ready for analysis. Miles and Huberman's (1994) data analysis scheme was applied to analyze the raw data. Accordingly, the first stage is coding. Transcripts of each participants were read repeatedly and meanings of the expressions were coded. Open coding was performed on the transcribed interviews. Pattern coding was used as the second step. Through pattern coding data reduction was achieved by assembling similar codes together and re-coding. After completing the coding process, themes and subthemes were crystalized

based on the similarities and differences in the codes. Teachers' curriculum approaches were named within the scope of these themes. After the codes and themes were finalized, another expert who has studies on qualitative research and is competent in this field was asked to code some parts of the interview and observation data. Agreement between raters = Number of agreements/Total number of accepted and rejected codes formula proposed by Miles and Huberman was used to achieve the inter-rater agreement. After completion of coding process by the coders, the codes and themes were discussed based on the research aim and disagreements were resolved by follow-up discussions. When the reliability formula of Miles and Huberman was calculated, the confidence level was found as 95%. Miles and Huberman (1994) recommended that the reliability of the coding should be at least 80% concordance level for a good qualitative reliability. The concordance level value found in this research is an indicator of the reliability of the analysis results. As it has explained before under archival document title, no complex and detailed analysis were performed for the documents examined within this study. The data obtained from documents were used to support, disprove or provide alternative explanations to observation and interview data.

FINDINGS

The study is aimed to determine and define the curriculum implementation approaches of the secondary school English teachers by examining the implementations they make in their classes. In this part of the study, the findings are presented in line with the research questions.

1. How can the curriculum implementation approaches be named as a result of the teachers' views and practices regarding the relevant curriculum?

The data got from the observations, interviews and document analysis have shown that teachers in the study group have basically three different approaches while implementing the curriculum in their classrooms: curriculum fidelity, curriculum adaptation and curriculum design. Under each approach, teachers perform student-based and exam-based practices. However, student-based and exam-based practices carried out by teachers, especially under the approach of curriculum adaptation, differ considerably from each other in terms of the philosophy they are based on. This situation necessitated the detailed explanation of the curriculum adaptation approach as exam-based and student-based adaptations.

Within the scope of this study, curriculum fidelity was considered as commitment to the seventh grade English curriculum published by the Ministry of National Education and the textbooks prepared and distributed to schools in line with this curriculum. The main characteristic of teachers who tend to curriculum fidelity approach is that they adhere to the curriculum materials in the activities they do in the classroom. Onur and Esra Teacher, who tend to the curriculum fidelity approach, work in a public school. While Onur Teacher has 27 years of experience and works at a school with a high level of success, Esra Teacher has 8 years of experience and works at a school with medium level success.

Teachers, who have curriculum adaptation approach, use curriculum materials in their classroom, but they make some adaptations in these materials such as skipping, omitting, adding, changing exercises etc. The reasons for these adaptations made by teachers in the curriculum materials determine what kind of adaptation approach they have. Data get from the interviews and observations showed that one group of teachers consider student characteristics while making adaptations in the curriculum materials. On the other hand, some adapt the curriculum materials to prepare students for national exams. The main characteristic of the teachers, who adapt the curriculum according to student characteristics, is that they take into account the interests, wishes, needs and levels of the students while implementing the activities in the curriculum materials. In the study group, there are five teachers who adapt the curriculum materials according to student characteristics. These teachers work in public schools with different success levels. On the other hand, the main characteristic of the teachers who make exam-based adaptations is that they focus on increasing the academic success of students by preparing them for both national exams and the exams of the course. In the study group, there are five teachers who make exam-based adaptations the curriculum materials. Two of them work in private schools while three of them work in state schools.

The main feature of the teachers who tend to the curriculum design approach is that they follow another source other than the curriculum materials in-class activities. Two teachers in the study group who tend to the curriculum design approach work in a private school, and these teachers are not obliged to use the curriculum materials in their classes due to the school's curriculum implementation policy. Although the teachers under this approach did not design the curriculum themselves, the flexibility given to them by the private school they work for allows them to freely design their teaching processes. The past experiences of İlknur Teacher with 12 years of experience and Aslı Teacher with 5 years of experience in the study group are for private schools. The information of the teachers with different curriculum approaches is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Teachers in the Study Group According to their Curriculum Approaches

Curriculum Approaches	Teacher	School	School Success Level	School Curriculum Policy	Age	Experience
Fidelity	Onur	A	High	Compulsory	50	27
	Esra	C	Medium	Compulsory	30	8
Student based	Öykü	D	High	Compulsory	35	14
	Mehtap	C	Medium	Compulsory	30	7
	Banu	B	Medium	Compulsory	45	21
	Ali	F	Low	Compulsory	39	13
	Ayşe	E	Low	Compulsory	31	12
	Emine	D	High	Compulsory	37	13
Exam based	İpek	A	High	Compulsory	48	27
	Nazan	C	Medium	Compulsory	38	17
	Tülay	G	High	Non-compulsory	36	15
	Elif	H	High	Non-compulsory	31	10
	Aslı	G	High	Non-compulsory	27	5
Design	İlknur	H	High	Non-compulsory	35	12

2. What does the official English curriculum mean to the secondary school English teachers with different curriculum implementation approaches?

Esra and Onur teachers, with curriculum fidelity approach, see the curriculum as a guideline and an instruction to follow. Esra Teacher has positive opinions about the curriculum and curriculum materials and follows the curriculum materials as she adopts the student-based philosophy of the curriculum. On the other hand, Onur Teacher states that the activities in curriculum materials are inadequate and not suitable for the student level, however, he still follows them as the questions in national exams are based on these sources. Teachers with student-based adaptation approach define the curriculum as a framework that draws the boundaries and state that it is up to the teacher to enrich this framework. In addition, these teachers note that they should be given more voice during curriculum development. On the other hand, teachers with exam-based curriculum adaptation approach define the curriculum as a tool that ensures unity in exams and think that it should be applied in order to act jointly. They see it as a necessity to apply the curriculum materials in the classroom, especially since they are taken into consideration in national exams. In addition to the curriculum materials, they also include resources that contain exercises and questions that prepare students for the exam. They state that there is a conflict between the constructivist and student-based philosophy of the curriculum and the national exams imposed by the education system. Teachers with curriculum design approach state that the implementation of the curriculum depends on the teacher in line with the characteristics of the students.

It was observed that the majority of the teachers in the study group perceived the textbooks published by the MNE as the official curriculum and they benefited from the textbooks instead of examining the official curriculum in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the course. For example, the answer given by Onur Teacher to a question asked by the researcher about what the official curriculum organized by the MNE means to them made it clear that the textbooks express the curriculum for him.

"We are literally processing the book. Curriculum. Because this is our duty. This is sent to us, if it is sent, we process it, but as I said, the issue of efficiency is debatable." (Onur teacher)

3. How do the secondary school English teachers with different curriculum implementation approaches plan their lessons?

Teachers with curriculum fidelity approach draw attention to the necessity of implementing the curriculum materials and do not make any planning other than those specified in the curriculum materials while planning their lesson. Teachers with curriculum-adaptation approach also make use of the curriculum and curriculum materials while planning their lessons. However they don't restrict them with curriculum materials. They take advantage of their own experiences or other materials while planning. Beside, teachers with curriculum design approach don't refer to curriculum materials while planning their course.

During the interviews, İlknur Teacher, who has a curriculum design approach, clearly states that she mostly uses her own experiences in planning the teaching and takes into account the opinions of the students.

"While planning the teaching, I put myself in the children's shoes and ask what kind of thing I would like to do. I remember my own childhood from my high school and middle school years... Planning is mostly improvised. Because sometimes very interesting things can come from children." (İlknur Teacher)

Moreover, the following section from the observations made in İlknur teacher's classroom shows that the teacher gives her students right to speak in the planning of the teaching.

Observation:

The teacher states that they will do a speaking activity in the next lesson:

Hande: You plan and it gets boring.

İlknur Teacher: This time you will plan.

Students: Hooray!

4. How do the secondary school English teachers with different curriculum implementation approaches set the objectives of their lessons?

Esra and Onur Teachers state that they refer to the curriculum and curriculum materials while determining the objectives of the lesson and that they do not include any objectives other than the ones specified in the curriculum.

"In determining the objectives of the lesson, I keep up with the curriculum as a guide, I consider the learning outcomes in the annual plan or in the curriculum." (Esra Teacher)

Since these teachers make the activities in the curriculum materials page by page, it is usually predictable which subject will be covered and which activities will be done in the course.

Teachers, who tend to student-based adaptation approach, adhere to the curriculum and curriculum materials while determining the learning outcomes, but also provide extra information such as including words and patterns related to daily life in line with student interests, needs and questions, and covering a topic other than those specified in the curriculum materials. The teachers were asked whether they give place to nonscheduled objectives during their teaching and the answers to this question made it clear that they can sometimes go beyond the formal curriculum by including different phrases and sentences in their lesson.

"I don't stick to objectives in the curriculum. For example, during my lecture, I include sentences, phrases that I like. The other day, in one of my classes, I mentioned about three proverbs to catch student's attention." (Öykü Teacher)

In addition, observations made in Öykü Teacher's classroom and interviews with her students prove that the teacher gives additional topics or explanations according to the student's needs.

Teachers with an exam-based adaptation approach, on the other hand, adhere to the objectives in curriculum and the curriculum materials, since they are taken into account in national exams. İpek Teacher emphasized the responsibility she has in preparing her students for national exams and expressed the necessity to consider the objectives in the curriculum materials.

"By considering the national exams, I have to teach the children whatever is provided in the curriculum. Because all students throughout the country learn the same subject. These children all take the same exam. Thus, we shouldn't ignore the curriculum." (İpek Teacher)

The observations also made it clear that the teachers who have the exam-based adaptation approach ignored the objectives of the curriculum regarding the language skills for listening and speaking, and focused more on the ones related to the teaching of vocabulary and grammar rules, which may be questioned in central exams.

Since İlknur and Aslı Teachers, who have curriculum design approach, used a source other than the curriculum materials, the objectives they teach to the students differ from the ones in the curriculum materials. For example, while "past tense" is taught in the second unit in the curriculum materials, "present perfect tense" is taught in the second unit in the lesson of Aslı Teacher. Moreover, the "present perfect tense" is not included in the curriculum materials prepared by the MNE for the seventh-grade students.

5. How do the secondary school English teachers with different curriculum implementation approaches decide the content of their lessons?

Esra and Onur Teachers, with curriculum fidelity approach, refer to the curriculum materials in determining the content and transfer the content as specified in the curriculum materials. The following scene from the observations clearly shows that, while determining the content, Onur Teacher remains within the boundaries of the curriculum and avoids including any content beside the ones in the curriculum.

Observation:

(On a question in the exam):

Ege: Teacher, I searched the internet for the word "family" and found out that "are" is also used in some cases.

Onur Teacher: Listen children, I worked in many schools, high school, middle school etc. We have a curriculum. The things outlined in that curriculum are taught. In secondary school English curriculum, it is used as "my family is" and it is required to be taught in that way... We only teach to the extent permitted by the curriculum.

Esra and Onur Teachers generally do not go beyond the content given in the curriculum and in the textbooks. While Esra Teacher adhere to the content in the curriculum as she thinks the content in the curriculum materials is appropriate and sufficient for the student level, Onur Teacher does not include any content beyond the curriculum materials as he thinks that it is his responsibility to transfer the content in the curriculum materials and to prepare students for national exams.

Teachers with student-based adaptation approach enriches the curriculum materials with worksheets, photocopies, slides, videos, etc. They also provide additional content such as vocabularies and grammar patterns. For instance, Banu teacher made an

extra explanation of the phrase "when I was a child" which was included in a sentence on the worksheet that was provided by the teacher. She mentioned about the use of the word "when" as a conjunction although in the relevant curriculum there was no objective for this. Similarly, Ali Teacher provides additional content in his lesson by presenting words that are not found in the curriculum materials.

Observation:

Ali Teacher: What is "documentary"?

Aylin: Belgesel (*Turkish of the word "documentary"*)

Ali Teacher: See, this word didn't appear in the "Television" unit. However, we mentioned about it before although it doesn't take place in the books, right?

Students: Yes.

Banu Teacher states that she usually includes additional content to meet the student's needs and interests. Öykü Teacher, on the other hand, frequently provides additional content in order to make learning more fun and meaningful by establishing a connection between daily life and the content.

"...if the student has an extra question, I try to answer it by giving additional information without confusing the student." (Banu Teacher)

"...I give additional information to catch the attention of the students. For example, the last week we talked about black Friday which is not included in the curriculum materials." (Öykü Teacher)

Ali Teacher states that the content in the curriculum repeats itself and it becomes monotonous. Thus, he enriches the content by using themes other than the ones in the curriculum materials and tries to make it more interesting for the students.

"I can take the tool (theme) out of the way and go directly to the goal (expressing preference) as the goal is specific in the curriculum. For example, the theme in the curriculum is "extreme sports" and the number of sentences that can be made with 6-7 extreme sports is very limited. We always find ourselves while repeating the same sentences with the words in this theme. However, we can make it more fun and meaningful by changing the tool. I ask my students to express their preferences not only on extreme sports but also on food, music, movie etc." (Ali Teacher)

On the other hand, teachers who make exam-based adaptations often add to the content in curriculum materials by providing extra sample sentences and making detailed explanations in order to reinforce the subject. For instance, while Elif Teacher handling the "expressing preferences" objective of the third unit in the curriculum, she explains the subject of "gerunds" and "infinitives" in detail by equating them as if solving a math problem on the board, although they are not mentioned in the curriculum in detail. Moreover, she refers to the curriculum and to the content that the students are responsible in the exam by saying "About infinitives, I just need to keep in mind these two words "want" and "would like for the seventh grade." Teachers with exam-based curriculum adaptation focus on reinforcing grammar topics rather than communicative elements of the language, thereby increasing the rate of correct answers for students in the exam.

When considered the curriculum design approach, it is seen that the content used by İlknur and Aslı Teachers in their lessons is completely different from the curriculum materials. For example, while the themes used in the first four units in the curriculum materials are appearance, biography, sports and wild animals, in Aslı Teacher's lesson, fashion, emotions, adventure, material world, etc. themes are included and the grammar topics covered in each theme are completely different from the curriculum materials. Moreover, Aslı Teacher clearly stated that the content she used was completely different from the content in the curriculum published by the MNE.

"Our subjects are not the same as MNE. We are further ahead. For example, we teach the present perfect tense, the perfect continuous tense, noun clauses. These subjects don't take place in 7th grade curriculum of MNE." (Aslı Teacher)

Both İlknur and Aslı Teachers adapt the content of the resources they use such as providing additional information or giving extra lectures in line with the interests and needs of the students. İlknur Teacher clearly states that she made additions to the content of the book she used in the classroom by giving extra lectures.

"I provide additional content. For example, while explaining the present perfect tense, I give more information than the book. In the book only sentence structure is provided. There is no information on "for, since, just, already, yet". I teach them all at once. For example, there were exercises in the book only on present perfect sentences. I gave extra worksheets to teach just, for, since, yet, already etc." (İlknur Teacher)

Alp, one of the students in Aslı teacher's class, states that Aslı Teacher give extra lectures in the classroom in line with the needs of the students.

Alp: "She makes additional explanations, for example, the difference between "have got" and "have" was not normally found in our book, but we had problem to understand, that's why Aslı Teacher explained it."

6. How do the secondary school English teachers with different curriculum implementation approaches carry out teaching-learning activities during their lessons?

Esra and Onur Teacher, who tend to curriculum fidelity approach, mostly adhere to the curriculum materials in-class activities and they do not bring any activity to the classroom except the activities in the curriculum materials. Therefore, in the classroom, they usually apply guessing, filling the gap, matching, marking, sequencing, storytelling, true-false etc. activities that take place in the textbooks.

Esra Teacher apply the activities in the curriculum without making any change as she thinks that the curriculum is well developed and is a good guide for teachers. On the other hand, Onur Teacher adheres to the activities in the curriculum materials as it is obliged to do so by MNE although he thinks that the activities in the textbooks are not suitable for the student level and that they are not well structured. The following scene from the observations clearly shows that Onur Teacher does not make any change in the implementation of the activities in the curriculum materials according to the interests and needs of the students.

Observation:

Students: Teacher, let's play a song.

Onur Teacher: No, we were doing it when we had time.

Students: Teacher, we learned the subject yesterday, and we have made the exercises today. Please let's listen to the song. Open the song in the book.

Onur Teacher: The book is very good, though. (The teacher insists that they resume on the activities in the book by opening the textbook on the smart board.).

During interviews, Esra Teacher also clearly stated that she transfers the units in the textbook in the order presented to them and she adheres to the activities in the curriculum materials.

"I teach the units in the order given in the textbook. I've never made any change until today... So I think I am 80% loyal to the curriculum. Mostly loyal, I can make little personal changes." (Esra Teacher)

The focus of teachers who make student-based adaptations in the curriculum materials is to shape the teaching in line with student characteristics. These teachers consider students' interests, needs and levels. They give importance to make the lesson more fun and to decrease the negative attitude towards English. Ayşe Teacher, one of the teachers who make student-based adaptations, remarked that she doesn't like the activities in the textbooks and changes the textbook activities or provides additional activities from other materials.

"... I decide on activities myself. I cannot say that I liked the activities in the textbook very much. So, I am changing and expanding them" (Ayşe Teacher).

Similarly, Banu and Öykü Teachers stated that instead of blindly adhering to the activities in the curriculum materials, they made adaptations in these activities in line with student characteristics. These teachers frequently apply student-centered methods and techniques such as game playing, role playing, peer teaching, brainstorming, and pair work. Thus, they diversify the teaching and try to appeal to every child.

"I am not affected by the curriculum as I usually try to choose the method that is more appropriate for student characteristics " (Banu Teacher)

"I don't always keep to the curriculum as each child is different. I verify the activities by using colored cardboards, opening music, making presentations etc. (Öykü Teacher)

Ayşe and Banu Teachers consider the student level while implementing the activities in the curriculum materials, and when the activities are not suitable for the student level, they skip or simplify them.

"There were some high-level reading texts in the curriculum materials. For instance, there were a detailed biography of someone. As I know the level of my students, I don't expect them to read and answer the questions related to this biography. Thus, I skipped it." (Ayşe Teacher)

"Students find some units difficult. I can speed it up a little more in the unit that I consider simple and spend a little more time for the one where the students have difficulty. I simplify some activities. Student level is very important while making activities." (Banu Teacher)

When the activities in the curriculum materials are insufficient to reinforce the subject, teachers with student-based adaptation approach compensate for this deficiency by providing additional exercises, extra worksheets, sample sentences and other sources. When the activities in the curriculum materials do not attract the attention of the students, they transform the activity or supply additional activities. For example, when the activities in the curriculum materials do not attract the attention of the students, Ali Teacher either turn these activities into more fun such as playing games or drawing pictures, or support them with fun activities such as songs, videos, animations, slides, flashcards, etc.

"For example, I played an English song to attract students' attention. I use activities that will make them learn the language with enthusiasm. Apart from the activities in the textbook, I try to include an English movie, animation." (Ali Teacher)

Similarly, Mehtap Teacher tries to attract the attention of the students to the lesson by providing a video on the subject. In an activity in the third unit with the theme of sports, there are explanations about different sports such as "street luge", "zorbing" and students are asked to match these explanations with the relevant picture. In this exercise, Teacher Mehtap made the students watch an entertaining video showing how these sports are done, even though it is not in the book, thus making the activity more fun and interesting so that students can better understand these sports, which are far from their own culture, and learn words more effectively.

On the other hand, teachers who make exam-based adaptations shape their teaching to increase students' exam performance. In this context, they generally ignore the activities (listening and speaking) aimed at improving communication skills in the curriculum materials and focus on teaching vocabulary and grammar. Vocabulary teaching is generally carried out for exam and memorization. For example, the following section from the observations made in Teacher İpek's classroom shows that the teacher

matched the vocabulary teaching with the success of the exam and emphasized that the students must memorize words in order to get high grades in the exam.

Observation:

İpek Teacher: Your first exam is over, there's still a second, third. You cannot do the exam unless you memorize vocabulary.

Ayla: I don't want to deal with memorizing words at all.

İpek Teacher: If you don't want to memorize, then I don't want to grade as well.

Similarly, the following statement of Pınar, one of the students in Nazan Teacher's class, clearly shows that Nazan Teacher focuses on teaching vocabulary to increase the exam grade and does not take student interests into account in her activities for teaching vocabulary.

Pınar: "In our teacher's class last year, we were writing the words of the unit on paper, and we were writing the meaning on the other side. We were matching and getting points by playing games. It was so much more fun and it made us learn better. She is not teaching us this year. This year, Teacher Nazan writes the words and asks us to write them in the notebook 5 times."

Teachers who make exam-based adaptations supply additional activities such as worksheets and tests in order to reinforce the grammar rules and prepare students for the exam. Teacher Elif, who works in a private school has clearly stated in the interviews that she includes multiple-choice tests as an additional activity to increase students' performance in exams.

"I start with grammar first, then move on to words. Then I go to the reading passages that include grammar and words, and finally I give a test. Because we get the feedback of the lesson, I teach through school practice exams. Therefore, children should be accustomed to the test technique so that they can do well in the exam. We need to solve a lot of tests on that subject." (Elif Teacher)

Teachers with exam-based adaptation approach often use direct instruction and question-answer methods in their lessons, and they perform a traditional teaching. In addition, they often skip entertaining activities such as games, songs, videos in the curriculum materials and emphasize the words and grammar rules in the activities. For example, Teacher İpek generally focuses on teaching vocabulary and grammar that will contribute to prepare students for the exam, and puts activities other than these into the background. She usually skips these activities in the curriculum materials, which she sees as a waste of time.

"I usually skip the fun ones. The games, the songs. Because we don't have time. If we finish the subjects, we usually leave them at the end of the year. I want to give it right away, but it doesn't happen because we have exams." (İpek Teacher)

Other teachers, who make exam-based adaptations in the study group, often skip the interactive exercises recommended to be done with a friend in the curriculum materials or turn them into individual activities. These teachers ignore the communicative teaching by transforming activities such as speaking and listening into writing and reading activities. The excerpt from the interview with one of these teachers shows that these teachers often skip fun, student-based and communicative activities that will not contribute to the exam.

"I'm skipping. For example, how shall I say, we often have to skip listening. Sometimes we read, sometimes we can't. There are activities that are very repetitive, for example, we had an activity in this unit, the reading of sports in different languages. What will this do for the student? So, I passed. There are some activities that I consider unnecessary, I skip them." (Emine Teacher)

It has been observed that teachers who make exam-based adaptations rarely include interactive whiteboards in their teaching processes. These teachers make use of the blackboard where more lectures and reinforcement questions are written during teaching. In addition, it has been observed that these teachers frequently emphasize the issues that may arise in the exam while doing the activities during the lesson.

Beside, the most striking features of the teachers who tend to the curriculum design approach are that they have more activities in their lessons, due to the fact that the course hours are longer than the state schools' course hours and they use different resources from the curriculum materials. These teachers have more time for reading-listening and speaking lessons. They take into account the interests, wishes and needs of the students in their practices. The following statement of Pelin, one of the students in Aslı Teacher's class, about her teacher supports that her teachers take into account the interests and wishes of students.

Pelin: "Teacher Aslı realizes that sometimes we are bored in the lessons. Then she let us talk about what we want. We talk a little bit, then we continue the lesson again. She usually listens to our request."

Both İlknur and Aslı Teacher give importance to student opinions in the activities they will do in the lesson. The following section, taken from the observations of Aslı Teacher's class, clearly shows that the teacher decides on some activities together with the student.

Observation:

Aslı Teacher: Okay, I ask you, should we read (Frankenstein) in this lesson or another lesson?

Students: This lesson.

Aslı Teacher: Okay, let's see, this time we will listen and read.

Sevgi: Hooray!

İlknur and Aslı Teacher, while doing the activities in the textbook they use, they make adaptations such as skipping, changing, providing additional activities, etc. according to the level and interests of the students. In addition, the views of İlknur Teacher

about the additional activities she brought to the classroom reveal that these teachers put emphasis on the activities that appeal to the students.

"I usually include more colorful activities with more visuals. Since we don't use official curriculum, the activities in my class in not very exam-based." (Ilknur Teacher)

The strategies, methods and techniques that Ilknur and Aslı Teacher use in teaching are question-answer, translation, direct instruction, role playing, dialogue creation, guessing, group work, game playing, etc. It is seen that teaching is predominantly student-based.

7. How do the secondary school English teachers with different curriculum implementation approaches carry out the assessment and evaluation process?

Esra and Onur Teachers, who have curriculum fidelity approach, consider formative evaluation such as homework and class participation in addition to the written exams during evaluation processes. As suggested in the curriculum, they do not immediately correct the pronunciation mistakes of the students during the lesson and give them the opportunity to speak. Again, the following scene from the observation clearly shows that Onur Teacher takes into account the curriculum materials while preparing the written exam questions.

Observation:

Ahmet: Teacher, we are depressed due to the exam. Well, you said "lovely" under "look like", and a lot of friends did it wrong.

Ayla: Yes teacher. You accept "beautiful" under "look like" but why don't you accept "lovely"? You accepted it while we were studying in the classroom that day, so it remained that way in my mind.

Onur Teacher: What did I tell you before the exam? I said not a word will come out except the book, did it?

Ahmet: No teacher, it didn't.

In addition, Esra and Onur Teachers, who adhere to the curriculum during assessment and evaluation process, take into account the annual plan to determine the examination times. On the other hand, during observations it was recognized that although alternative assessment techniques such as self-assessment, peer assessment, and portfolio assessment were suggested in the official curriculum, both Esra and Onur Teachers did not use these techniques and rarely applied portfolio assessment in their classes.

Teachers who make student-based adaptations mostly consider the objectives of the curriculum while preparing the exam questions. In addition to the written exam, they also take into account formative evaluation such as homework, class participation and oral exam. In addition, these teachers carry out vocabulary teaching in the process with quizzes they call "word box" or "pouch test" in their classrooms. In this context, students prepare a bag or box for themselves and whether they have learned the words is tested by quizzes made by their teachers from time to time. In addition, as Ayşe Teacher stated during the interviews, teachers who tend to the student-based adaptation approach take into account the exam results of the students and try to eliminate the learning deficiencies by making remedial teaching for the unachieved objectives.

"In the textbook there were some questions about "How often, frequency adverbs", they weren't sufficient. Did students understand or not understand the activity... they could not do it in the exam. I repeated that subject and provided extra worksheet. I asked students to solve more questions and make sentences on the subject." (Ayşe Teacher)

Banu Teacher emphasizes that learning is more important than grades in her lessons. The following section, taken from the observations made in Banu Teacher's class, shows that the midterm exams applied to determine the learning levels of the students are mostly aimed at improving English learning and communication skills of the students rather than preparing them for the exam.

Observation:

(Teacher holds a vocabulary test on Biographies -Unit 2- in the classroom)

Banu Teacher: It's a little difficult. I told you memorizing is not enough. You need to find the answer by understanding the meaning of the sentence.

Students: Will it affect the exam grade?

Banu Teacher: My son, the purpose of this test is to have cognition on your learning. Don't worry about the note. Think about whether you learned. Watch out for your mistakes.

Banu Teacher, who focuses on the students' ability to use and learn the language rather than the grade they will get, states that while preparing the exam questions, she focuses on the subjects that the students need to learn and that may be useful in the future.

"While preparing questions, I ask myself what the students will learn from this. In Unit 2, for example, students should know what a biography is and they should know where in the text they can find the answer for the questions of where and when someone was born. I prefer to give information that they will make use of in the future in their real life." (Banu Teacher)

On the other hand, teachers with exam-based adaptation approach take into account the objectives and content in the curriculum materials while preparing the exam questions and they do not go beyond them since the curriculum materials will be considered in the national exams. Elif Teacher clearly states that she adheres to the objectives and content in the curriculum materials to prepare students for the national exams.

“Curriculum is 100% effective during evaluation and assessment. Because there is a common test across Turkey. Thus, we don’t teach beyond the curriculum. All the students will take this exam and the questions will be based on the official curriculum.” (Elif Teacher)

Teachers with exam-based adaptation approach give importance to written exams rather than formative evaluation such as conducting a midterm exam (quiz), and they mostly emphasize the subjects and activities that might be in the exam. Students are not allowed to make mistakes, pronunciation and grammar mistakes are corrected instantly. These teachers often display an authoritarian attitude in their classrooms, unable to tolerate students' wrong answers. In order to prepare students for national exams, they usually include multiple-choice tests in the course's own exam.

When considered the implementations of the teachers with curriculum design approach, while the grade received from İlknur Teacher's course is reflected on the student's report card at the end of the semester, no grade is given in Asli Teacher's course. Thus, there is no written exam in Asli Teacher's class. However, Asli Teacher still applies unit assessment exams to test the learning outcomes of students, although it is not mandatory.

“Normally we don’t have a unit assessment requirement, but I do it because if I don't, I don't understand what the student learned and what difficulty he/she has while learning.” (Asli Teacher)

İlknur Teacher, on the other hand, does not refer to the curriculum materials prepared by the MNE while preparing the exam questions. She tests learning with both written exams and the sentences formed by the students during the lesson in a process-oriented manner.

“I don’t refer to official curriculum materials while writing exam questions. I refer to the materials that I use in my class while teaching. As I don’t teach the content in the official curriculum materials, I can’t ask questions by referring them.” (İlknur Teacher)

It is seen that teachers with curriculum design approach are generally not exam-oriented while teaching but they aim at improving communication skills of students. Thus, unlike the teachers with curriculum fidelity and curriculum adaptation, they assess listening and speaking skills of their students during teaching and in exams.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to define the curriculum implementation approaches of secondary school English teachers and to determine in-class practices of teachers with different approaches. In order to realize the purpose of the research, the data obtained from the teachers and students through interview, observation and document review were examined in line with the interpretative paradigm. The findings of this study have shown that teachers in the study group have basically three different curriculum implementation approaches named as; curriculum fidelity, curriculum adaptation and curriculum design. These teachers with different approaches have fundamentally different perceptions on the curriculum and make various implementations while planning and deciding the objectives, content, teaching activities and assessment processes of the course. In this conclusion part, the curriculum implementation approaches and the practices made by the teachers with different approaches are summarized briefly.

Teachers with curriculum fidelity approach, define the curriculum as a guide to be followed and draw attention to the necessity of using the curriculum materials. Thus they take the curriculum materials into account during instruction and almost never share anything other than those specified in these materials. They stick to the objectives and the content given in curriculum materials. These teachers generally follow the activities in these materials page by page. They generally don’t add or omit any activities. The timely and complete completion of the activities in the curriculum materials is often prior to student needs and interests. While assessing learning outcomes, they apply both formative and summative evaluations. However, even these teachers, who implement the curriculum as it is, don’t make use of alternative assessment techniques which are suggested in the official curriculum.

Teachers with curriculum adaptation approach, include curriculum materials in their teaching processes, but during the use of these materials they make adaptations as skipping, changing, simplifying, bringing additional activities, etc., either for student characteristics or for exam performance. While the factor that encourages the teachers, who make student-based adaptations is basically the level, interests, wishes and needs of the student, the focus of the teachers who make the exam-based adaptations is to increase the exam performance of the students. Teachers who make student-based adaptations define the curriculum as a framework that sets boundaries, and they state that it is up to the teacher to enrich this framework according to the student. These teachers generally use the curriculum materials as they are compulsory and compensate for the limitations in these materials with their own adaptations. In this direction, while implementing an activity in the curriculum materials, they make adaptations according to the level, interest, desire and need of the student. Sometimes they make these adaptations by skipping a reading passage that they know is not suitable for the student's level or replacing it with another text, and sometimes by bringing an additional activity to the class that will enable the student to learn while having fun. Thus, they adapt the content and activities in the curriculum materials to appeal to the characteristics of their students. Teachers who make exam-based adaptations define the curriculum as a tool that provides exam partnership and draw attention to the incompatibility between the constructivist philosophy of the curriculum and the exam-based educational system. These teachers include curriculum materials in their lessons, but they also use additional resources to prepare students for the exam. In the implementation process of the curriculum materials, since it is important to increase the student's exam performance, communicative elements are usually skipped and

activities to prepare for the exam in which the grammar rules are reinforced are added. For this reason, they make an adaptation that mostly ignores the communicative elements of the curriculum and the interests of the students.

Teachers who tend to the curriculum design approach don't use the curriculum materials in their class and they adapt the resources they use in line with the student's characteristics. These teachers working in private institutions can act much more flexible in teaching processes than teachers in other approaches. Since these teachers use different resources, they include different objectives, content and activities from the curriculum materials in their lessons. They take into account the student needs and interests and shape their teaching accordingly.

DISCUSSION

Since curricula in Turkey are prepared with a central approach, teachers are expected to adhere to these curricula and curriculum materials in their classroom practices. However, studies show that many factors such as teachers' beliefs, values, experiences, decision-making processes, and subject area are effective in the implementation of the curriculum (Azano et al., 2011; Barnes, 2005; Bay et al., 2017; Bümen et al., 2014; Cosden, 1991; Çınar, Teyfur & Teyfur, 2006; Erickson & Shultz, 1992; Kabaoğlu, 2015; Öztürk, 2012; Remillard, 2005; Sherin & Drake, 2004; Tokgöz, 2013). The implementation of the curriculum is a dynamic process that is influenced by the opinions and knowledge of teachers (Remillard, 2005). As a result of this research, it has been seen that teachers have basically three different approaches when applying the curriculum in their classrooms: curriculum fidelity, curriculum adaptation and curriculum design. This result is compatible with the previous studies on teachers' curriculum practices. Snyder et al. (1992) stated that teachers have approaches of fidelity, mutual adaptation and enact while applying the curriculum in their classrooms. Similarly, Shaver (2003, cited in Shaver, Gilmore & Banks-Joseph, 2008) stated that teachers approach the curriculum in different ways as curriculum transmitters, curriculum developers, and curriculum makers (as cited in Shaver et al., 2008,). The "curriculum fidelity" and "curriculum transmitters" in the literature and the "curriculum fidelity" approach named as a result of this research are similar to each other. In these approaches, teachers tend to apply the curriculum materials exactly. Since it is stated that teachers make adaptations in the official curriculum in all three approaches called "curriculum adaptation", "mutual adaptation" and "curriculum development", these approaches also overlap with each other. However, since the curriculum adaptation approach within the scope of this research reflects two different views as student-based and exam-based adaptation, and therefore the adaptation of the curriculum is detailed under these two approaches, it differs from the approaches of mutual adaptation and curriculum developers in the literature. As a result of this research, the last approach called "curriculum design" differs partially from the concept of "enactment" and "curriculum makers". In the approaches called enactment and curriculum makers, all the decisions from objectives to content, teaching-learning processes and assessment-evaluation processes are taken by the teacher, while the approach of curriculum design in this study is mostly instructional design. Because, although there are significant differences from official curriculum materials in terms of learning outcomes, content, educational situations and test situations in the applications made in this approach, the final decision about the source book and test situations that the teacher will use is largely taken by the private institution where the teacher works. In addition, teachers come together to discuss the selection of the source book to be used and make a decision and present the source they want to use to the school administration. Teachers with curriculum design approach have the most flexibility in teaching-learning process, and they can act much more flexible than the teachers in other groups in determining their in-class activities. Teachers with curriculum design approach were only seen in private schools in the sample of the study, and no teachers with this approach were found in state schools. Tokgöz (2013), who has a similar sample group with this research, determined three different teacher profiles in her study and these profiles were named as curriculum followers, curriculum extenders and curriculum adapters. According to this classification, curriculum followers and curriculum adapters are similar to the curriculum fidelity and curriculum adaptation approaches named as a result of this research. On the other hand, "curriculum extenders", named after teachers who focus on student success and prioritize knowledge transfer in order to increase students' success in national exams, correspond to teachers with "exam-based adaptation" approach in this study. Teachers who make exam-based adaptations often skip communicative and student-based activities such as listening and speaking in the curriculum materials, and do not show the necessary importance to these activities as they do not contribute to national exams. In other words, while these teachers are adding to the curriculum materials, they are also ignoring the activities in these materials and narrowing the communicative and student-based effect of the curriculum. Therefore, it is more appropriate for this study to name these teachers as those who have an exam-based adaptation approach rather than curriculum extenders.

The results of this research, which examines the curriculum approaches of teachers, have also shown that teachers perceive the textbooks as the official curriculum, and they mostly make use of the textbook, not the official curriculum, while planning the lesson. In similar studies, it is seen that teachers perceive the teacher's guidebook, textbook or annual plan as curriculum (Tokgöz, 2013), and therefore, in studies on this subject, the concept of curriculum refers to the resources and guides used by teachers (Remillard, 2005; Sherin & Drake, 2004). The teachers' perception of the textbooks as curriculum and therefore especially for the curriculum fidelity approach, their transferring the textbooks one-to-one causes problems such as the practices that are not in accordance with the constructivist philosophy of the curriculum.

Another remarkable finding in this study is that teachers, including ones with curriculum fidelity approach, generally use traditional assessment techniques in their classrooms. Although teachers sometimes include formative evaluation such as midterm exams, homework control and project assignments in addition to written and oral exams, they do not include the self-

evaluation techniques suggested in the curriculum in order to enable students to follow their own learning processes. Findings from the literature have shown that teachers mostly use traditional assessment techniques instead of alternative assessment techniques due to the pressure of national exams, lack of time and crowded classrooms (Apaydın & Kandemir, 2018; Büyükduman, 2005; Erdol & Yıldızlı, 2018; İzci, Göktaş & Şad, 2014; Kabapınar & Ataman, 2010; Karakuş & Öztürk, 2016; Tokgöz, 2013; Yapıcı & Demirdelen, 2007). The fact that teachers do not include alternative assessment techniques in their classrooms may be due to reasons such as the inadequacy of teachers in applying these techniques, the fact that the constructivist philosophy of the curriculum is not fully introduced to them or they are used to traditional assessment techniques (Alkan & Arslan, 2014; Çelik & Kasapoğlu, 2014; Demirtaş & Erdem, 2015; Tokgöz, 2013). There are studies in the literature showing that teachers feel inadequate in applying alternative assessment techniques (Demir, Tananis & Trahan, 2019; Gözütok, Akgün & Karacaoğlu, 2005; Güneş, 2009; Karamustafaoğlu, Çağlak & Meşeci, 2012; Nazlıçipek & Akarsu, 2003; Özenç & Çakır, 2015; Yamtim & Wongwanich, 2014). Teachers generally feel inadequate in alternative assessment techniques such as rubrics, self-assessment, peer assessment, portfolio, and projects (Birgin & Baki, 2009).

Finally, when the research findings are examined, it is seen that most of the teachers tend to the curriculum adaptation approach in their classrooms. This finding of the study is in good accordance with the findings of the previous studies (Bernard, 2017; Bümen, 2019; Tokgöz, 2013; Troyer, 2019; Yazıcılar & Bümen, 2019). Despite the pressure to adhere to the curriculum, the majority of teachers adapting the curriculum materials can be explained by the inadequacy of the textbooks and the contradiction between the national examination system and the constructivist philosophy of the curriculum. Teachers who state the inadequacy of textbooks in meeting student characteristics and preparing students for the exam make adaptations to the curriculum materials either to meet student needs and interests or to better prepare students for national exams. In the study carried out by Tokgöz (2013), the teachers who made adaptations in the curriculum stated that the curriculum was not suitable for implementation due to the contradiction between the examination system and the curriculum philosophy, and the differing classroom and school contexts. Within the scope of the teaching profession general qualifications, MNE (2017) stated that teachers should have sufficient skills to prepare the environment and materials that will enable all students to learn effectively and to conduct the learning-teaching process effectively. Teachers should prepare their plans in accordance with the curriculum, but at the same time, they should be flexible in their applications in the classroom, taking into account the individual differences and socio-cultural characteristics of the students. In addition, in the management of the learning-teaching process, teachers are expected to consider students with special needs, to associate the lesson with the daily life of the student, and to consider the characteristics of the environment. In this context, the adaptations made by the teachers in the curriculum materials are among the professional skills that all teachers should have.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study have shown that for some teachers, the curriculum is synonymous with textbooks. This situation causes teachers to transfer the textbooks in their classes without considering the student characteristics. However, this approach contradicts with the philosophy of the constructivist curriculum. In addition, it is noteworthy that even the teachers with curriculum fidelity approach cannot fully implement the constructivist philosophy of the curriculum, especially in the evaluation processes. Therefore, informing teachers about the curriculum, its structure and philosophy, and supporting them during implementation process will be beneficial for the curriculum to be implemented in accordance with its intended purpose. In-service training programs can be organized for teachers in the profession. For pre-service teachers, who are the teachers of the future, precautions should be taken in this regard in pre-service education institutions. Precautions to be taken to increase the curriculum literacy levels of both teachers and teacher candidates can help teachers to better understand and implement the curriculum. In addition, increasing the pedagogical design capacity of teachers will also support them in understanding the philosophy of the curriculum correctly and making adaptations in accordance with this philosophy. Within pedagogical design capacity, in order to achieve educational goals, teachers; detect existing resources and interpret, evaluate limitations in class setting and find strategies (Brown, 2002).

When the findings regarding the teachers' approaches to curriculum implementation are examined, it is clear that most of the teachers in the study group made adaptations while applying the curriculum. Some of those with curriculum fidelity approach also stated that they adhered to the curriculum as they considered it as an obligation, but they were not satisfied with the curriculum materials. Thus strict policy on curriculum adherence should be reviewed. Even though they are still under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education, the fact that the teachers in private schools shape curriculum applications according to students' characteristics may be due to the more flexible policy of the private schools. In a study by Shaver et al. (2008), free college policy was the motive behind curriculum-development and making. Teachers' ability to choose textbooks appropriate to their classroom context will increase their autonomy and thus improve their adaptation skills (Canbolat, 2020). When teachers are given the opportunity and flexibility, they can tailor the curriculum to student characteristics.

In this study the curriculum implementation approaches of English teachers were determined. The findings of the study is thought to path a way for the new studies on curriculum implementation. Thus, some new study topics are also suggested for the researchers. Most researchers and teacher trainers state that professional development should be directly related to teachers' experiences in the classroom. (Sherin & Drake, 2004). Although teachers include the same curriculum in their classrooms, some teachers continue to improve themselves, while others either do not develop at all or show little improvement (Shaver, 2010a).

In this direction, the effects of different curriculum implementation approach of teachers on their professional development can be examined. Moreover, the effect of teachers with different curriculum implementation approaches on students can be investigated to improve the quality of learning.

This study has potential limitations. The generalizability of the findings are limited with a group of teachers who work in a city. However the criterion and maximum variation sampling were used to be able to include teachers with different conditions which have potential to represent a wide audience. Another limitation is about the lack of previous studies on the topic. The studies conducted are mostly take place in foreign literature. The domestic literature on the topic is very limited. Thus the theoretical foundations need to be examined in terms of suitability to the domestic conditions. The studies like this one seem significant to examine the cultural relevance of the theoretical framework. In this direction, studies that will be conducted with various study groups and with the curricula of different education levels will contribute to the theoretical framework of this topic. Moreover, this study did not focus on the factors that determine the curriculum approaches of the teachers. Therefore new studies explaining why teachers approached curriculum in these ways will contribute to the literature on curriculum implementation approaches.

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Statements of publication ethics

I/We hereby declare that the study has not unethical issues and that research and publication ethics have been observed carefully.

Researchers' contribution rate

The study was conducted and reported with equal collaboration of the researchers.

Ethics Committee Approval Information

Ethics Committee Approval Document of this research was provided by Eskisehir Osmangazi University in 15.08.2017 by Ethics Committee for Education and Humanities with number 2017-7.

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