Yüksek Öğretimde Bir İngilizce Hazırlık Okulu Programının Bağlam Analizi: Bir Durum Çalışması

*Fikri GEÇKİNLİ

ÖZ

İngilizce eğitimi ve bu eğitimin verildiği ortam, doğası gereği dinamik bir yapıya sahiptir. Dolayısıyla, bir İngilizce öğretim programının bu dinamizme uyum sağlayabilmesi gerekir. Bu da bir İngilizce programının içinde yer aldığı ortamın düzenli olarak analiz edilmesi gerekliliğini ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Bu nedenle, bu araştırma, böyle bir bağlamı temsil eden bir yükseköğretim İngilizce hazırlık okulunun müfredatının bağlamsal analizini yapmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda Stufflebeam'in (1971) CIPP (bağlam, girdi, süreç ve ürün) modeline dayalı program değerlendirme yaklaşımı uygulanmıştır. Uygun örnekleme yöntemi kullanılarak yapılan bu araştırmanın evrenini, araştırmanın yapıldığı dönemde İngilizce hazırlık programına kayıtlı 672 öğrenci oluşturmuştur. Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenen öğrencilerin yükseköğretim İngilizce hazırlık okulu bağlamına ilişkin görüşleri, araştırmacı tarafından ilgili literatüre dayalı olarak geliştirilen bir anket ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler kullanılarak incelenmiştir. Araştırmanın bulguları, öğrencilerin İngilizce hazırlık okulu programı bağlamından genel olarak memnun olmalarına rağmen iyileştirilmesini istedikleri bazı konuların olduğunu gösterdi. Dolayısıyla araştırmanın sonuçları, yükseköğretimde İngilizce hazırlık müfredatının iyileştirilmesine yönelik bazı çıkarımlar tespit etti.

*Öğr. Gör., İstanbul Sabahattin Zaim Üniversitesi, fgeckinli@gmail.com, ORCID ID: 0000-0002-3572-5939

Context Analysis of an English Preparatory School Program in Higher Education: A Case Study

*Fikri GEÇKİNLİ

ABSTRACT

English education and the environment in which this education is given have a dynamic structure by nature. Therefore, an English teaching program must be able to adapt to this dynamism. This reveals the need to regularly analyze the environment in which an English program operates. Therefore, this research aimed to conduct a contextual analysis of the curriculum of a higher education English preparatory school that represents such a context. For this purpose, a program evaluation approach based on Stufflebeam's (1971) CIPP (context, input, process and product) model was applied. The population of this research, which was conducted using the appropriate sampling method, consisted of 672 students enrolled in the English preparatory program at the time the research was conducted. The views of students learning English as a foreign language regarding the higher education English preparatory school context were examined using a survey and semi-structured interviews developed by the researcher based on relevant literature. The findings of the research showed that although the students were generally satisfied with the context of the English preparatory school program, there were some issues they would like to see improved. Therefore, the results of the study identified some implications for improving the English preparatory curriculum in higher education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Değerlerin toplum Preparatory school is a paradigm used in universities (Macaro, 2018) in which English language instruction is offered for one year to students whose majors are taught in English (Aizawa et al., 2020; Richards & Pun, 2021). As a result, the preparation year is required for students whose majors are taught in English in Turkish universities unless they provide confirmation of language competency by submitting a passing score from exams stipulated by the program. These courses are essential for giving students the language skills they need to succeed in school and in their careers. However, these applications come with certain difficulties. The challenges found in Turkish English preparation programs include outdated curriculum (Kırkgöz, 2017), a lack of resources (Akdoğan, 2010; Akkuş, 2009; Sevinç, 2006), and inadequate teaching techniques (Özbay & Kayaoğlu 2015). Furthermore, a seamless transfer and integration of language skills into academic fields is hampered by the preparation program and undergraduate programs' lack of congruence (Uysal, 2012; Uztosun, 2018).

To ensure the efficacy and improvement of tertiary level English preparatory school programs, program evaluation is essential (Scriven, 1991). Insights from evaluation help educators and administrators identify program strengths and limitations so that they may plan wisely for program improvements. Scriven states that in order to ascertain a program's influence on student learning outcomes, data must be systematically collected and analyzed. Additionally, evaluation aids in spotting potential improvement areas, determining the applicability of programs, and making evidence-based adjustments (Patton, 2018). The English preparatory school may make sure that its curriculum and teaching strategies match the needs of the students and support efficient language development by reviewing the program.

Understanding the contextual elements that affect the efficacy of a tertiary level English preparatory school program requires applying the context analysis component of Stufflebeam's (1971) program evaluation model (CIPP). Examining the program's environment's distinctive features, such as its students, teachers, resources, and sociocultural elements, is known as context analysis (Stufflebeam, 2001). Understanding the context can help you better understand the unique requirements, difficulties, and possibilities present in the program's environment. This information is necessary to ensure the program's relevance and efficacy as well as to customize it to match the varied learning demands of the pupils. Understanding

external elements that could affect program execution and outcomes is another benefit of context analysis (Shinkfield & Stufflebeam, 2003). By taking the context into account, educators may choose effective teaching methodologies, curriculum designs, and resource allocation.

Context analysis is important for comprehending English preparatory school programs in Turkish higher education, according to several research. These studies (Kırkgöz, 2017; Soruç, 2012; Tekin, 2015; Alıcı, 2004) emphasize the significance of elements including students' levels of language ability, educational backgrounds, motives, cultural norms, attitudes toward English, and perceived relevance of the program. For planning and executing English preparation programs that are in line with students' requirements and the local educational dynamics, it is essential to comprehend the local context and how it affects program efficacy.

It is essential to examine the setting of an English preparatory school program at the tertiary level from the students' point of view since it sheds light on their requirements, expectations, and difficulties (Svinicki & McKeachie, 2014). A student-centered approach makes it easier to customize educational experiences to suit each individual student's needs. Teachers may create a welcoming and interesting learning environment that fosters student achievement by taking into account the prior knowledge, language skills, cultural backgrounds, and motivations of their students (Schunk, 2012). By analyzing the situation, one may also find potential obstacles or constraints that students may experience, allowing for more focused assistance and interventions (Tomlinson, 2014).

In the context of the English preparatory school where the study was conducted, four levels of language proficiency (A1, A2, B1, and B2) out of six levels of language competency of the CEFR provide the basis for the school curriculum. Students take a placement exam at the beginning of each school year before being assigned to classes. Because each level has a two-month time limit, students can graduate from prep school in eight months unless they fail any of the specified levels. If they fail, students must attend summer school to make up for any of the four levels that were missed. Every class has a mentor teacher assigned to it, and students are given the opportunity to seek advice from them at any time they are experiencing difficulties in their studies. Level coordinators are also in responsible of adhering to the program's schedule and curriculum compliance. Every classroom has a computer that is linked to a sound system and projector. There is internet access available both wired and wirelessly throughout the school facility. There is a limit of 20 students each class. Six skill courses (Reading & Writing and Listenin & Speaking) and eighteen

main courses make up the twenty-six classes that students are required to attend each week. Seventy out of a hundred is the pass mark. The school website plays a crucial role in the curriculum since it hosts all of the test results, weekly attendance reports, and announcements.

Considering the ongoing need for monitoring and evaluation, this study aims to perform a context analysis of an English Preparatory School Program in higher education in İstanbul, utilizing Stufflebeam's (1971) CIPP model. Consequently, the research aims to respond to the following research questions:

1.   What are the students' perspectives on the overall quality of instruction in the English preparatory school program?

2.   What do the students think about the following elements of the English preparatory program:

        a.   Teachers and administrators

        b.   Skills in learning English

        c.   Exams

        d.   Books

        e.   Website

2. METHODOLOGY

Daniel L. Stufflebeam's (1971) CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) model, which serves as the foundation for this research, is an assessment framework meant to lead complete evaluations of programs and projects. The model is made up of four interconnected parts. The first of them, Context, which is the major emphasis of this particular study, entails knowing the program's surroundings, goals, and stakeholders. Input focuses on resources, plans, and methods that are available. The process comprises the actual implementation and execution of the program, as well as an examination of the techniques and activities used. Finally, the Product assesses the program's performance and effectiveness by evaluating the results and implications. By carefully analyzing each component, the CIPP model provides a comprehensive approach to program assessment, assisting in informed decision making and continual development.

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a mixed method research design, which is essential for obtaining comprehensive insights by combining quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). By utilizing approaches such as questionnaires and statistical analysis for quantitative data, and interviews or observations for qualitative data, researchers gain a deeper understanding of complex phenomena. This integration of methods strengthens the study's validity, reliability, and credibility, laying a solid groundwork for drawing conclusions and making informed decisions (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, a mixed research design enables triangulation, which involves validating findings through multiple sources and increasing the overall rigor of the study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). By incorporating diverse data sources and research methods, researchers can comprehensively address research questions and establish a robust foundation for evidence-based practices.

2.2. Participants

Students attending an English preparatory school at a foundation university in İstanbul formed the population for this research. The researcher used convenience sampling technique to select the participants for the study. Rahi (2017) defines convenience sampling as the practice of collecting data from a study population that is easily accessible to the researcher. Students who participated in the research were asked to provide information on the variables module (A1, A2, B1, B2), department, and gender (Table 1). The data in the study were obtained from 672 students studying at a university English preparatory school in İstanbul in the spring semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. Table 1 presents data on the participants.

Table 1. Demographic Information about the Students

	N	%
Male	310	46
Female	362	54
Total	672	100
Social Sciences	186	28
Natural & Applied Sciences	486	72
Total	672	100
Module A2	99	15
Module B1	192	29
Module B2	381	57
Total	672	100

According to the data presented in Table 1, there were 310 male students, accounting for 46% of the total, and 362 female students, representing 54%. The students' departments were categorized into two academic fields: Social Sciences with 186 students, comprising 28% of the total, and Natural and Applied Sciences with 486 students, accounting for 72%. Regarding the modules, the distribution of students at the time of the research was as follows: 99 students at Level A2, 192 students at Level B1, and 381 students at Level B2.

2.3. Data Collection

The data for this study were collected using a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher, drawing inspiration from Tunç's (2010) study and relevant literature. It was divided into two parts, the first of which included three questions to learn more about the students' department, gender, and present English proficiency level (A1, A2, B1, and B2). Twenty questions made up the second half of the questionnaire, which was intended to find out how the students felt about different elements of their preparatory school education, such as the standard of instruction, the faculty, their expertise in carrying out their duties, the tests, the books, and the school website. A pilot research with 30 students was carried out before the major data collection to ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. This preliminary investigation aided in detecting and addressing any possible issues in measuring the objectives of the study. Using the coefficient alpha to test the internal consistency of the questionnaire items, a value of 0.70 was obtained, suggesting an acceptable internal consistency. The semi-structured interview questions were created using expert feedback and the results of a pilot research involving five students. The themes addressed in these interview questions were identical to those in the questionnaire, albeit the sequence and precise phrasing of the questions were not rigorously adhered to. In-depth and newly-emerging data were collected through interviews in order to get insights that were not possible to obtain from the questionnaire. Five students from each English proficiency level (module) were chosen at random to participate in the interviews. To avoid any confusion, each interview lasted around 15 minutes and was done in the pupils' mother tongue, Turkish.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data gathered from the questionnaire was examined using the SPSS statistical software suite. In the results section, the results were given using a 5-Point Likert Scale in percentiles. In the discussion section, terms such as "all," "almost all," "half," "less

than half," and "none" were employed to facilitate the interpretation of the questionnaire results. Regarding the qualitative data, the researcher employed an analytical approach to identify prominent patterns in the data, as recommended by Jorgensen (1989). These patterns were derived from the students' comments and categorized based on the interview questions. The researcher further organized the data by assigning relevant titles to facilitate subsequent evaluation and ensure comprehensibility.

2.5. Research Ethics

Necessary ethical rules such as impartiality and objective approach were followed before, throughout and during the conclusion of the research. The purpose of the research was clearly explained to the participants before data collection. Care was taken in transcribing the information obtained during the interviews. They were informed that the names of institutions and individuals would not be mentioned in any way and that data regarding the participants would not be used for other than scientific purposes. Additionally, an application was made for an ethics committee certificate and the necessary document was obtained from the university administration.

3. FINDINGS

In this research, the context of a higher education English preparatory school program was analyzed. This analysis was made according to Stufflebeam's (1971) CIPP program evaluation model. To this end, the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of the research were merged and summarized into six major areas. First of all, within the scope of the first research question, the results of the overall views of the students on the (1) educational quality in the preparatory school were included. Then, within the scope of the second research question, the results of the preparatory school students' opinions on the following elements were presented: (2) students' perception of the preparatory school staff, (3) English language skills, (4) preparatory school examinations, (5) instructional materials utilized in the preparatory school, and (6) the preparatory school's website.

3.1. Educational Quality in the English Preparatory School

"Firstly, the initial question in the research was, "What are the students' perspectives on the overall quality of instruction in the English preparatory school program?" An attempt was made to address this question, and the relevant findings were recorded in Table 2.

Table 2. The Quality of Education in Preparatory School

	Very bad	Bad	Average	Good	Very good
1. How would you rate the quality of education in the prep school?	2,2 %	2,1 %	24,9 %	53,7%	17,0%

Based on the responses, approximately 70.7% of the students expressed contentment with the quality of education at the prep school, indicating that the majority of students believe they are receiving a satisfactory level of education. Conversely, when combining the percentages of students who rated the quality as "very bad" and "bad," a total of 4.3% expressed dissatisfaction with the education they are receiving.

Similarly, the initial interview question aimed to ascertain students' perspectives on the quality of education in the English preparatory school based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) model. The majority of students expressed contentment with their preparatory school education. To illustrate this one student said, "*By dividing education into smaller pieces, this system provides ease of learning.*" Another student stated, *"With this system, students with similar levels of English proficiency can get together in one class, which is increasing the overall quality of education."* However, some students expressed their concerns about the application of CEFR system. One student explained, "*This system is resulting in an exam-oriented education. Passing the exams becomes a priority.*" Another student commented, *"The content of the courses cannot be planned well. Hence, higher levels get harder."*

3.2. Students' Perceptions of the Preparatory School Staff

The second subdimension of the second research question analyzed the students' perspectives regarding the staff members in the English preparatory school. The findings have been recorded and presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Students' Perceptions of the Preparatory School Staff

	Terrible	Poor	Average	Good	Very good
2. How satisfied are you with your mentor's assistance when you encounter a problem?	3,3 %	6,5 %	17,5 %	42,7 %	30,0 %
3. How effectively do level coordinators keep students informed about the current situation?	2,2 %	11,6 %	25,6 %	40,7 %	19,9 %

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
4. How well-informed are you when you report an issue to the administration?	1,6 %	8,2 %	27,8 %	46,3 %	16,2 %
	Strongly disagree	**Disagree**	**Undecided**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**
5. I can easily contact the level coordinators.	3,1 %	7,2 %	24,0 %	43,3 %	22,5 %
6. I can easily reach the prep school principal and the vice principal.	4,8 %	9,7 %	39,3 %	33,5 %	12,6 %
	None	**Very rare**	**Sometimes**	**Often**	**Always**
7. How frequently do you ask teachers questions outside of class?	9,4 %	24,2 %	47,5 %	13,5 %	5,4 %

According to the responses obtained, a majority of students (72.7%) expressed satisfaction with the assistance provided by their assigned mentors, who are appointed by the administration for their classes. A smaller percentage (17.5%) considered the mentorship to be average, while a minority (9.8%) regarded it as unsatisfactory. Table 2 presents the corresponding percentages pertaining to this aspect. In terms of the overall situation in the preparatory school, a significant portion of students (60.6%) perceived the information received from the level coordinators as satisfactory. Another segment (25.6%) considered it to be average, whereas a small percentage (13.8%) expressed dissatisfaction. Although the dissatisfaction rate regarding the communication between level coordinators and students is low, it still warrants further investigation to identify potential breakdowns in information flow. Regarding the students' awareness of available support from the administration, a considerable majority (62.5%) believed they were adequately informed, while a significant portion (27.8%) remained undecided. However, a minority (9.8%) felt that they were not adequately informed. When asked about the ease of accessing level coordinators, a majority (65.8%) of students responded positively, while a substantial portion (24%) were unsure. However, a small percentage (10.3%) found it difficult to reach the level coordinators. When it came to contacting the principal or vice principal of the preparatory school, a significant percentage (46.1%) considered it easy, and another portion (39.3%) rated the level of contact as average. Conversely, a minority (14.5%) found it challenging to establish contact with the principal. The final item inquired the frequency with which students

ask questions to their teachers outside the classroom. In response, the group of students who indicated "sometimes" (47.5%) outnumbered both the highest percentage group (18.9%) and the subgroup (33.6%).

The interview question that examined the students' opinion of the prep school staff revealed that most of the students expressed that they were satisfied with the teachers. To demonstrate this, one student responded, *"Teachers are good at bilateral relations with the students and this has a positive impact on our success."* Another student commented, *"They make the necessary effort required to teach us."* However, a small number of students had opposite opinions. One student said, *"Novice teachers reduce our level of success."* Another student stated, "*Some of the teachers have classroom management problems and they are not fair with their assessments."* As for the level coordinators and the administrators, more than half of the students think that they do their job well. To represent it, one student suggested, *"They solve our problems and do the information transfer well."* Another student responded, *"We can reach them easily at any time of the day."* Nevertheless, some of them rejected and said, *"It is not easy to reach them and they discriminate. They do not really pay attention to our problems."* Another student complained, *"They are not tolerant enough of us."*

3.3. Students' English Language Learning Skills

The third subdimension of the second research question analyzed the students' perspectives regarding English language skills. The findings have been recorded and presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Students' English Language Skills

	Reading	Listening	Writing	Speaking	Grammar
8. Which skill do you find most challenging?	6,4 %	31,3 %	20,5 %	30,0 %	11,7 %
9. Which skill receives the least emphasis in the prep school?	15,8 %	23,1 %	12,9 %	42,5 %	5,8 %

When the students were queried about the most challenging skill in the preparatory school, Listening (31.3%) and Speaking (30.0%) were identified as the most difficult skills, respectively. They were closely followed by Writing (20.5%) and Reading (6.4%). Grammar (11.7%) was considered the least difficult skill. Table 4 displays the corresponding percentages for this aspect. Furthermore, the students were asked to identify the skill that received the least emphasis in the preparatory school. In response, Speaking (42.5%) emerged as the skill perceived to be given the least emphasis. This was followed by Listening (23.1%), Reading (15.8%), Writing (12.9%), and

Grammar (5.8%).

To the interview question investigating how successful the students find themselves in skills in learning English they expressed that listening and speaking skills are considered to be almost equally difficult skills by the majority of the students. One student predicted, "*They are not good at listening skill since the topics are boring and include too much technical vocabulary.*" Another student stated, *"We can develop our speaking skills only if speaking Turkish during the classes is strictly forbidden."* Few students expressed their concerns regarding reading and writing skills. One student said, *"Reading and writing are the kind of skills that I can develop on my own."* Another student commented, *"I consider myself successful in reading and writing although sometimes I cannot do well in tests."*

3.4. English Preparatory School Examinations

The fourth subdimension of the second research question analyzed the students' perspectives regarding preparatory school examinations. The findings have been recorded and presented in Table 5.

Table 5. English Preparatory School Examinations

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
10. The tests accurately reflect the content covered in the courses.	1,2 %	3,9 %	12,3 %	55,9 %	26,7 %
11. Mid-term exams contribute to my learning process.	1,9 %	5,4 %	21,3 %	49,1 %	22,2 %
	Very easy	Easy	Average	Difficult	Very difficult
12. How would you rate the difficulty level of the exams administered?	0,5 %	3,8 %	48,8 %	39,1 %	7,7 %

When students were asked about the extent to which the tests in the prep school reflect the course content, 82.6% of the students, combining the "strongly agree" and "agree" categories, believe that the exams accurately reflect the course material. Conversely, a small percentage of students (5.1%) hold contrary views. Additionally, the students were asked if mid-term exams enhance their understanding of the course content. In response to this question, 71.3% of the students in the "agree" and "strongly agree" categories affirmed that mid-term exams indeed help them learn better. However, 7.3% expressed disagreement, indicating that they do not perceive mid-term exams as beneficial for their learning. These results are presented in Table

4 below. Furthermore, the students were questioned about the difficulty level of the prep school exams, with 46.8% perceiving them as difficult and 4.3% considering them as easy.

Regarding the interview results on the exams conducted in the preparatory school, it was found that approximately two-thirds of the students believe that the exams accurately reflect the course content and contribute to their learning. To illustrate, one student responded, *"Exams make us study harder; accordingly, we learn better."* As for the difficulty level of the exams, almost half of the students think exams are difficult. One student commented, "*There are too many exams and their level of difficulty is not consistent."* Another student responded, *"Reading passages are too difficult and sound quality of listening during the exams is not good enough."*

3.5. Instructional Materials Utilized in the English Preparatory School

The fifth subdimension of the second research question examined the students' viewpoints on the instructional materials used in the preparatory school. The findings obtained have been documented and are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6. Books Used in the English Preparatory School

	Terrible	Poor	Undecided	Good	Very good
13. Fundamentals of English Grammar	2,4 %	6,3 %	26,6 %	45,6 %	19,1 %
14. Speak Out	7,0 %	12,1 %	16,0 %	41,7 %	23,1 %
15. Focus on Writing	7,9 %	14,8 %	21,6 %	40,4 %	15,3 %

Firstly, the students' opinions regarding the book "Fundamentals of English Grammar" were investigated. In response to this question, 64.7% of the students expressed satisfaction with the book, while 8.7% expressed dissatisfaction. Secondly, the students were asked about their preference for the book "Speak Out". Among the respondents, 64.8% indicated satisfaction with the book, whereas 19.1% expressed dissatisfaction. Lastly, the students were asked for their thoughts on the book "Focus on Writing". In their responses, 55.7% of the students, belonging to the top two categories, stated that they liked the book. Conversely, when combining the two negative categories, 22.7% of the students expressed that they did not find the book to be good.

The fifth question in the interview aimed to collect information about the effectiveness of the books (Fundamentals of English Grammar, Speak Out, and Focus on Writing) used in the English program at the prep school. The findings revealed that a majority of the students agreed that these books enhance their learning

experience. To demonstrate, one student explained, *"Textbooks are especially effective in teaching vocabulary."* Another student stated, *"I believe the efficiency of the textbooks only if they are productively used by the teachers."* However, almost one-third of the students think the textbooks do not facilitate their learning. In this regard, one student said, *"The textbooks used in the prep school program are way above our level."* Another student stated, "*The content of these textbooks do not fit in our culture; therefore, teachers should not be dependent on the textbooks. They are just a waste of time."*

3.6. English Preparatory School Website

The final subdimension of the second research question focused on the students' perspectives on the preparatory school website. The findings have been recorded and are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. English Preparatory school website

	Too late	Late	Normal	Fast	Very fast
16. Recording attendance and participation grades on the website is …	26,2 %	32,2 %	30,7 %	9,2 %	1,7 %
	Not helpful at all	Not helpful	Undecided	Helpful	Very helpful
17. The prep school website is …	4,7 %	24,8 %	1,1 %	58,6 %	10,7 %
	None	Very rare	Sometimes	Often	Always
18. How often do you utilize the prep school website?	3,3 %	12,2 %	41,1 %	33,6 %	9,8 %
	Updates	Activities	Exam results	Announcements	Materials
19. What do you primarily use the prep school website for?	1,6 %	11,2 %	14,4 %	46,7 %	26,2 %
	Other	Student work	Students' opinions	Announcements	Materials
20. Which of the following should be prioritized on the prep school website?	0,0 %	16,8 %	17,0 %	26,0 %	40,2 %

When students were asked about their opinions on the timing of entering attendance and participation grades into the prep school website, 10.9% of the students, combining the top two categories, considered the timing to be suitable. In contrast, 58.4% of the students expressed dissatisfaction with the speed of entering attendance and grades into the website. Regarding the usefulness of the prep school website, 69.3% of the students believed that it was helpful, while 29.5% expressed the opinion that it was not helpful. In terms of frequency of website usage, 9.8% of the students reported using it "always," 33.6% answered "often," and 41.1% responded with "sometimes." These results indicate a relatively high rate of website engagement. When asked about the purposes for which they use the prep school website, the majority of students (46.7%) selected "announcements," followed by "materials" with 26.2%. Conversely, a small number of students (1.6%) chose "updates" as their preferred option. Regarding the features that should be included in the prep school website, 40.2% of the students prioritized "materials" as the most important, followed by "announcements" with 26.0%. "Students' work" received the least preference, with only 16.8% of the students selecting it.

The sixth question in the interview aimed to gather the students' opinions regarding the prep school website. Overall, the majority of students find the prep school website to be useful. Additionally, students primarily utilize the prep school website for two main purposes: accessing announcements and accessing educational materials. In this respect, one student suggested, *"I use the website mostly for announcements. Materials come in the second place."* Another student said, *"I find really useful sample materials to prepare for the exams; therefore, I often use it to study."* Nevertheless, almost two-third of the students complained, *"Examination results are announced late on the website."* However, nearly one-third of the students perceive the website as being of little value and do not frequently utilize it. Accordingly, one student commented, *"The design of the website is not attractive at all; I just use it to keep track of the academic calendar."* Another student said, *"I just follow what is going on in my module. Other than that I do not feel an urge to use the website. I do not think it is good enough."*

4. CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of the English preparatory school program from students' point of view using the context component of the CIPP evaluation model developed by Stufflebeam (1971). In this regard, findings were discussed below.

Consistent with research by Unal et al. (2017), Tekin (2015), and Coşkun (2013), two-thirds of the pupils expressed overall satisfaction with the CEFR-based education provided by the prep school. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) was designed by the Council of Europe as a foundation for the development of language curricula, exams, textbooks, and other resources throughout Europe (Council of Europe, 1998; 2001). The CEFR levels A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2 are used to classify foreign language competency. Listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production, and writing are the five language skill areas that are verbally described for each level in the form of can-do statements by North (2000). However, some students expressed some problems in relation to the implementation of this system. Disruptions, such as students not being placed at the appropriate level from the start or progressing to the next level without being ready, weaken the CEFR system's operation. They also put forward that in case of quality impairment in any of the CEFR levels (A1, A2, B1, and B2) it creates a knock-on effect on the next level. As a result, teachers and program designers are expected to demonstrate due diligence for each level in terms of ensuring that students achieve the language competence standards of each level before progressing to the next level. Another issue raised by the students during the interviews is that when the books are not suitable for the specified level, this creates a gap between the levels. This raises the need for a proper selection of the textbooks in accordance with the CEFR system to improve the quality of the content of the levels.

With regard to students' opinions of the prep school staff, the majority of the students delivered a favorable opinion. Essentially, the communication approach is based on an effective interaction between teachers and students. Therefore, this interaction influences teachers' teaching motivation (Mottet et al., 2004) and students' learning motivation (Ellis, 2004; Zabitgil Gülseren et al., 2016). However, when it comes to the administrators, more than one-third of the students expressed the level of availability as average. Administrators tend to become less accessible since they hand over some of their responsibilities to the level coordinators. This could be the reason that the students are resorting to level coordinators whenever they feel the need. Then again, the students indicated that they received more help from their teachers and mentor teachers rather than level coordinators when they encounter a problem. Evidence suggests that when students love their teachers and have a sense of school belonging, this has a positive impact on the teaching and learning climate (Aksoy, 2017). It is understood that, with troubleshooting and consulting, the administration expects students to follow a hierarchy, which is ordered as teachers,

level coordinators and administrators. Finally, students generally seem satisfied with the current level of communication although they may be a little confused with the method.

As for the skills in learning English, the data revealed that speaking and listening were the least emphasized ones. These results provided parallel evidence with the study carried out by Tunç (2010) and Al-Darwish (2006) who found that speaking and listening were two skills the students felt themselves most inadequate. Students stated that proper attention is not given to speaking skill until the final stages of their education process. Many second-language or foreign-language learners consider the development of their spoken English abilities to be crucial, leading them to assess their language learning progress and the efficacy of their English course based on their perceived improvement in spoken proficiency (Richards, 2008). Accordingly, Richards suggests that despite the limited proficiency level of the learners, speaking skill should be initiated to be improved at the first stages of their learning process. The students interviewed expressed an additional reason for their inability to improve their speaking skills, attributing it to the lack of classes with native English teachers, suggesting that Turkish teachers may not prioritize speaking skills in their instruction. Consequently, students perceive foreign teachers as essential for developing their speaking abilities, aligning with the long-standing belief that native speakers are superior instructors, particularly in speaking and listening skills. Nevertheless, the literature also acknowledges the strengths of non-native teachers, such as their ability to empathize with students and shared cultural backgrounds (Lucie & Enric, 2008). Listening was identified as a slightly more challenging skill than speaking, and students attributed this difficulty to the poor audio quality during tests. Wong (2005) suggests that prioritizing the communicative significance of listening materials is justifiable due to the absence of alternative listening methods and the accompanying technology. Consequently, the literature emphasizes the importance of focusing on the communicative aspect of listening rather than solely on sound quality for effective listening. Students did not raise any concerns regarding their reading and writing skills; however, Mede (2012) identified significant findings in her study that suggest a need for evaluation and redesign of the reading and writing syllabi.

Regarding the examinations, students believe that the exam content accurately reflects the class material and aids their learning process, suggesting that the administered tests meet the criteria of validity in assessment. Additionally, nearly two-third of the students reported that exams contribute to their learning

improvement. These findings align with Tunç's (2009) research, which also demonstrated the positive impact of exams on students' learning. In the interviews, students further explained that exams facilitate knowledge retention by breaking down topics into smaller segments, allowing them to review and reinforce their understanding. Nevertheless, a group of students expressed their belief that the exams administered in the preparatory school were challenging, noting that as they progressed to higher levels, they encountered increasingly difficult tests. During the interviews, they voiced their dissatisfaction with the quality of education at certain levels. Consequently, inadequate education in previous levels is likely to have an impact on their performance in subsequent modules. Addressing this issue could involve considering the individual skills and knowledge of each student and tailoring instruction based on their current foundation, which has been suggested as a potential solution to this problem (Harris, 1996).

Regarding the textbooks used in the preparatory school, a majority of the students expressed contentment with the books, namely "Fundamentals of English Grammar," "Speak Out," and "Focus on Writing." This conclusion is consistent with the findings of a research done at a public university's English preparatory program by Ünal et al. (2017), which found that both teachers and students were happy with the materials. During interviews, students emphasized the usefulness of the books, particularly for acquiring new vocabulary and facilitating their learning progress. Kayapinar (2009) affirms that textbooks offer convenience to both teachers and students, serving as pre-designed syllabi with well-planned content selection. Some students voiced their dissatisfaction with how their teachers were using books, while others expressed their desire for additional activities beyond their textbooks. According to Harmer (2007), students may initially have motivation, but the real challenge lies in maintaining that motivation. Hence, these results suggest that students anticipate their teachers to strike a balance by skillfully integrating textbooks into their lessons and providing additional resources that match the appropriate level of challenge for the students (Erdoğan & Gürol, 2016).

In relation to the website of the preparatory school, the primary usage by students is to keep up with announcements and access study materials for exam preparation. A majority of students find the school website helpful as it enables communication with the school and provides sample materials for exam studying. Although most students are satisfied with the website, they expressed a desire for faster display of test results. Conversely, a small number of students interviewed reported a lack of interesting content on the website and unappealing design.

Hesketh & Selwyn's (1999) research revealed that the majority of school websites primarily offer basic information about the school and news for students and parents, along with occasional examples of student work. Consequently, improvements to school websites are necessary in terms of design and content to better align with the current needs and perspectives of students.

The study suggests several improvements to enhance the quality of the program in various areas such as education, prep school staff, skills, exams, textbooks, and the prep school website. One recommendation is to carefully select textbooks aligned with the CEFR system and improve the quality of education at each level. The study also found that a few students expressed dissatisfaction with novice teachers and their classroom management skills. In response, providing in-service training for novice teachers to enhance their teaching abilities was proposed as a solution. Research indicates that novice teachers who receive guidance training can become significantly more effective after two years. Speaking and listening skills were found to be the least emphasized, with students identifying insufficient attention to these skills and the absence of classes with native speakers as the main reasons. Literature suggests that incorporating native teachers and speaking classes at beginner levels can facilitate students' development in these areas. Listening comprehension difficulty in exams was attributed to anxiety, and reducing anxiety during listening tests could help students improve their listening skills. Students also raised concerns about the number of exams and technical issues such as audio quality. Establishing a testing office to address technical problems and optimize exam frequency was proposed as a solution. In terms of textbook selection, a few students expressed concerns about the level appropriateness and cultural relevance. The study acknowledges that textbook selection often depends on personal preferences rather than pedagogical considerations. To bridge the gap, teachers could act as mediators and select textbooks that align with students' level and local culture. Regarding the prep school website, students complained about the lack of engaging content and support for their classes. Considering the increasing use of technology in education, the study suggests developing the website based on students' needs. Research indicates that young people have a unique relationship with technology, distinct from that of their parents and teachers (Green & Hannon, 2007).

In conclusion, this study assessed the English language teaching program at a university prep school using the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, and Product) model by Stufflebeam (1971). The focus of the study was primarily on the context element of

the model. The findings indicated that while students were generally satisfied with the program, certain revisions were recommended to enhance its development. These revisions included more careful selection of books, greater emphasis on speaking and listening skills, improvement of education quality at each level, and enhancements to the prep school website. This research, along with other studies, emphasized the value of routine program reviews since, in higher education, depending only on word-of-mouth recommendations may lack a professional touch. Conducting professional program evaluations can provide valuable feedback and help identify students' needs. It is acknowledged that mistakes are inevitable in understanding students' needs, and program evaluations can serve as a useful reference. However, it is important to note that findings from one context may not be universally applicable or provide all-encompassing solutions.

Despite successfully evaluating the prep school language program from the students' perspective, this study has certain limitations. One major limitation is the reliance on questionnaires and interviews as the sole sources of data, primarily due to time constraints and heavy workload. To enhance the study's reliability, incorporating additional data sources such as observations and written documents like achievement tests would be beneficial. Furthermore, the findings of this study are confined to the specific university context in which the research was conducted. To establish broader generalizability, it would be valuable to replicate the study in similar contexts.

In terms of future research suggestions, the current study only gathered data from students and did not include instructors or administrators. To conduct a more comprehensive investigation, future researchers could focus on a comparative analysis involving students, instructors, and administrators. This approach would provide a broader perspective on the topic. Additionally, another study could evaluate the quality of university prep school education from the viewpoint of department instructors. Since English language teaching in prep school is a crucial component of departmental training, understanding the instructors' opinions on the quality of prep school education is essential. Therefore, conducting research to explore department instructors' perceptions of prep school education would be valuable.

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