



Turkish Primary School EFL Teachers' Use of Supplementary Materials: A Case Study on Problems and Solutions*

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Abstract: The teachers who teach English as a foreign language in Turkish state primary schools often create or use supplementary materials to promote concrete learning. However, the use of supplementary materials leads to several problems in some cases. The main purpose of this study is to define these problems and to develop strategies for overcoming them. This study employed a case study research design. Two primary school EFL teachers participated in the study. A purposive sampling technique was applied to determine the participant teachers. The data of the study were gathered through classroom observations, interviews, and self-evaluation reports. Analysis of the data was conducted through the methods of coding and theming. The findings of the study have revealed that while using supplementary materials teachers encountered some problems such as students' being distracted, students' not understanding the instructions for using the supplementary materials, technological issues, insufficient class time, slowness of young learners, damage to the supplementary materials, and lack of materials for students. The study also provides some strategies employed by teachers to overcome these problems (e.g., modelling, making explanations, monitoring students, etc.).

Keywords: Turkish EFL teachers, Supplementary material use, Supplementary material problems, Supplementary material solutions.

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Introduction

Materials are any kind of equipment applied by students or teachers to make language learning more accessible and improve foreign language learning. Any types of instruments used to enrich the learners' language experiences are called as materials (Sarıçoban & Tavit, 2012). According to Kessler (1992), anything that supplements the present materials and supplies chances for learners are called as supplementary materials. In other words, supplementary materials are any extra materials that can be used besides coursebooks (Spratt et al., 2012). Flashcards, pictures, photographs, songs, videos, and worksheets may be considered as some remarkable examples of supplementary materials which are preferred by students and teachers for being enjoyable (Tomlinson, 2013, pp. 147).

The most important components of foreign language learning are teachers, students and materials (Ekşi, 2015). Thus, using supplementary materials in English classes may be something of a necessity since teachers may need additional materials to help learners explore, comprehend, and encounter a foreign language (Tomlinson, 2013, p.108-109). However, these materials should not be designed at random; rather, they should be designed in accordance with certain principles. While designing these materials teachers should consider the needs and interests of the students. Foremost, the materials should be authentic by providing learners with an opportunity to have interaction in the target language. As the use of materials boosts students' motivation and performance in English language classes (Dodd et al., 2015), teachers often take advantage of various kinds of materials in the classroom other than course books to strengthen their students' learning. Moreover, teachers are responsible for encouraging their students' interests and curiosity, directing them to experience rich input, and providing feedback (Tomlinson, 2020). The correct selection and use of supplementary materials boost students' involvement and performance in the classroom (Peña & Sarmiento, 2012).

In the EFL context, numerous studies have dealt with the need and use of supplementary materials in high school (e.g., Cherrez, Montalvan, Brito & Ochoa, 2018; Işık, 2018; Nguyen, 2022), middle school (e.g., Dodd et al., 2015; Karki, 2018; Nurliana, 2019; Surtikanti, 2014), and primary school levels (e.g., Cherrez, Montalvan, Brito & Ochoa, 2018; Le & Polikoff, 2021; Olpińska-Szkielko, 2015; Quigley, 2021). Numerous studies which analysed the application of supplementary materials in high school context highlighted that the use of supplementary materials should be in accordance with a thorough needs analysis (Salehi & Zamanian, 2012), teachers should ask for feedback from both their students and colleagues on used materials to acknowledge their appropriateness to the context and learner needs (Nyugen, 2022), and after being specified and piloted, these materials can be employed in EFL classrooms (Işık, 2018). Previous research conducted in the secondary school level showed that the use of complementary materials has an important role in enhancing student motivation (Dodd et al., 2015), improving their basic skills such as reading and writing (Kaki, 2018), and meeting individual learning needs and styles (Nurliana, 2013). Studies conducted in the primary school level mostly focused on supplementary material development and use by language teachers and they aligned with the idea that teachers' opinions, beliefs, and practices affect which concrete materials are used in the classrooms (Le & Polikoff, 2021; Olpińska-Szkielko, 2015; Quigley, 2021).

The literature displays that the correct selection and use of supplementary materials boost students' involvement and performance in language classrooms (Peña & Sarmiento, 2012; Tomlinson, 2013). However, during the phases of designing and implementing these additional materials, teachers may face several challenges. These difficulties may be related to teachers themselves such as lack of ability and knowledge in creating materials, inadequate planning, inappropriate implementation, and being incapable of organizing technological learning materials (Wahyuningsih et al., 2021). Some other concerns may also arise in the classroom, including problems related to the classroom environment, course books, students' unwillingness

or anxiety, lack of equipment, ineffective use of time, culture, lack of pair or group work, unsuitableness of activities, and other factors (Adil, 2022).

In Turkish context, a few studies have examined the challenges that EFL teachers face while using supplementary materials (e.g., Çulha, 2018; Işık, 2018). For instance, Çulha (2018) examined the English language teaching curriculum-based material use of primary and secondary schools (from grade 2 to 8) published by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MONE) (2018). In this descriptive qualitative study, the researcher applied document analysis and found that the programme and course books provide different useful contexts to learners, such as advertisements, fairy tales, menus, poems, songs, stories, websites, various tasks, and activities. However, most of the content is intertwined with the technology and teachers' digital literacy level and proficiency are crucial for efficient integration and use of these materials in language classes. Similarly, Işık (2018) investigated the efficiency of curriculum materials applied in Turkish EFL high schools. One hundred-forty-four English teachers and 811 EFL students at private high schools, state high schools, and state Anatolian high schools took part in the study. A questionnaire with thirty-seven items and an interview protocol were used as to collect data with the aim of eliciting the participants' opinions about the EFL materials. The results presented that the participants of state high schools were glad about the EFL curriculum materials used. On the other hand, teachers and students at private high schools and state Anatolian high schools had serious problems with the materials. They listed the problems they experienced with the materials as being boring, impractical, not original, and not responding to the student's interests and needs.

As the literature shows, it is important for teachers to actively develop and use EFL supplementary teaching materials, since it is beneficial to promote interaction, motivate students, and increase students' achievement (Jimenez, 2020). Previous research suggests that more research is needed concerning the application and development of English language teaching (ELT) supplementary education tools and researchers should share the results of such studies with English teachers (Tomlinson, 2013). Especially choosing and employing suitable learning materials is crucial for elementary school teachers as their students are in a sensitive and critical learning period and students in this period need concrete objects and materials to support their learning (Olpińska-Szkielko, 2015). EFL teachers' skills of effective materials use can be enhanced by examining current supplementary material design and use in real contexts (Milal et al., 2020). Thus, it is assumed that results and implications of might increase awareness of EFL teachers about using supplementary materials and contribute to their professional development. Also, both in Turkish context and other contexts, there is a need for further research regarding use of supplementary material use and challenges faced by EFL teachers. In this regard, the main objective of this study is to define main challenges that Turkish primary level EFL teachers and students face while using EFL supplementary materials in the classroom and to suggest practical solutions to these problems. The following questions guided the study:

- 1) What difficulties do EFL teachers face while using supplementary materials in English lessons in Turkish primary schools?
- 2) What are the main solutions preferred by EFL primary school teachers to overcome the challenges they faced?

Methodology

Study Design

A case study design was employed in this research. Case study is a term that includes several research methods in which an instance is focused on. Researchers in case studies explore issues within a bounded system (case) or start with an issue or problem and bound the case

through the research process. In concordance with this, case study methodology is eclectic although the data collection tools mainly are document collection, note-taking, interview, and observation. In line with purpose of the study, the cases in this study were two English language teachers from two state primary schools. The researcher of current study observed the teachers' lessons and how they used numerous types of supplementary materials in lessons through a six-week period. The schedule of this case study is briefly outlined in Figure 1.

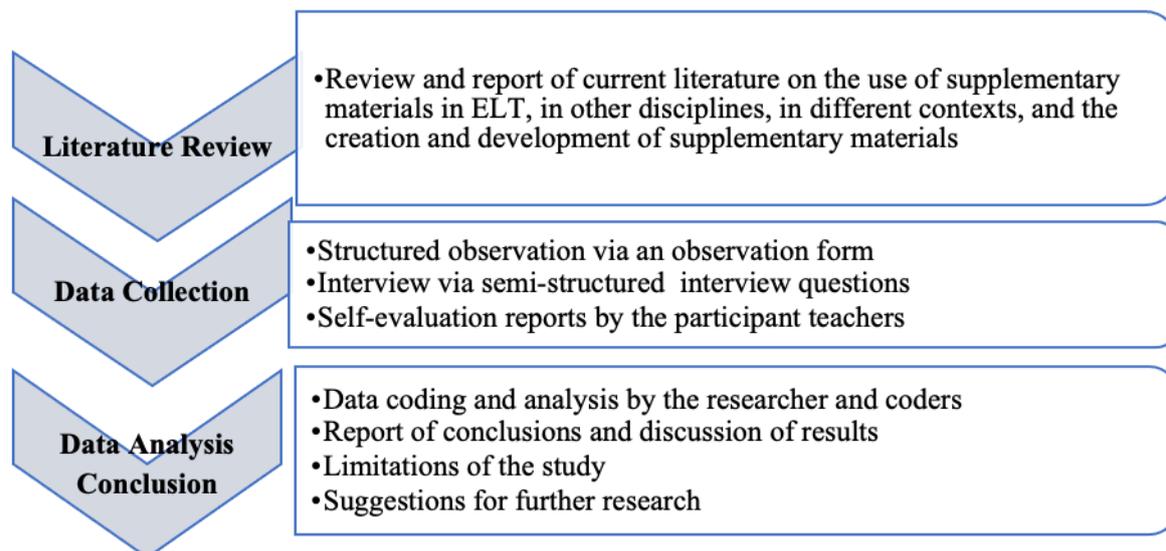


Figure 1 Schedule of the Study

Participants

Teacher Participants

The participants and cases of this study were 2 female English teachers working at two different primary schools. These teachers were determined in terms of purposive sampling method and their voluntariness to participate in the study. Teacher A is thirty-two years old and an English language teacher for more than eight years. Teacher A also graduated from English Language Teaching Programme of a Turkish state university. The teacher received training on materials design and development in ELT during BA programme, as well. Teacher B is thirty-nine years old. The teacher graduated from the ELT program of a Turkish state university, and has sixteen years of experience in teaching English in various schools of the Ministry of National Education in Turkey. Unfortunately, Teacher B claimed to have no training on materials design and development during her BA program. Both of the teacher participants took a course for teaching English to young learners during their bachelor's programs in ELT.

Student Participants

The student participants were in the 2nd and 3rd grades. The second-grade students were at the first year of learning English, and the third-grade students were at the second year of learning English. The total number of 2nd grade students was 17 (female=7 and male=10), and the total number of the 3rd grade students was 33 (female=20 and male=13). It is also noteworthy that Teacher A's students lived in the same neighbourhood with the school, while most of Teacher B's students came to the school by bus from the surrounding villages.

Procedures

In the first step of the study, the schools and teacher participants were identified. The study was applied in two nearest primary schools in the same district. Necessary permissions were obtained from the Institute of Social Sciences of Ordu University, the provincial directorate of national education, and the English teacher participants. Secondly, the teacher participants were informed about the research and data collection (classroom observation, interviews, and self-evaluation reports). The dates that were convenient for the researcher and the teacher participants were determined for classroom observation. When all the data collection tools were ready, one of the researchers started to attend the English lessons and observe the application of ELT supplementary materials in the classroom for six weeks.

Supplementary Materials Used in the Study

All the supplementary materials applied by the participating teachers during the lessons are shown in Table 1. Each week includes two English lessons.

Table 1

The Supplementary Materials Used by the Teachers and Students in the Classroom

Weeks	Teacher A		Teacher B	
	Theme	Supplementary materials	Theme	Supplementary materials
Week 1	Ability and Inability Feelings	Interactive presentation, IWB, video, posters, pictures	Numbers	IWB, a paper birthday cake, party hats, number cards, an online game
Week 2	Feelings	Interactive presentation, IWB, pictures, cards, word box	Classroom objects	Song, IWB, Real objects, Hand-out
Week 3	Feelings and Actions	Interactive presentation, IWB, flashcards, card, posters	Numbers	Interactive presentation, IWB
Week 4	Toys and Games	Interactive presentation, IWB, word box, toys (ball, car, cartoon characters, doll, race car, teddy bear) cards	Colours	Interactive presentation, IWB, colourful cards, box, balloons, handmade windmill, songs
Week 5	Toys and Games	Cards, colourful cards, a poster of colours, toys and toy boxes	Colours	Interactive presentation, IWB, worksheet
Week 6	Toys and Games	Colourful cards, Interactive presentation, IWB, a poster of numbers, 3 paper cups	Colours	Interactive presentation, IWB

Data Collection Tools

The researchers in this case study collected the data through direct observation, interviews, and self-evaluation reports. Direct observations provide a good insight in education (Best & Kahn, 2006). As the teachers spent a great deal of time observing the students and the learning atmosphere (Tomlinson, 2013), interviews and self-evaluation reports were chosen for this study. The classroom observation form and the self-evaluation reports were created as Word documents each week. The interview questions were shared with the teacher participants via an online application, and the self-evaluation reports were given to the teachers each week.

Classroom Observations

Quigley (2021) suggests that classroom observation is an effective way to see how teachers and students include materials in the classroom. Furthermore, direct observation has been emphasized as providing more realistic results (Büyüköztürk, 2020) and may be helpful in handling the situation (Best & Khan, 2006). Therefore, the observation technique was applied in this study. The observations were made by one of the researchers using a simply structured classroom observation form (adapted from an available form in the literature with the help of an expert researcher in assessment and evaluation). The form included eight items and these items questioned the types of supplementary materials used in the classroom; use of instruction; teachers' checking the understanding of the students; concreteness of the materials; time; feedback; difficulties and handling with the difficulties. Each item on the classroom observation form served to examine one consideration during the use of supplementary materials in the classroom. The classroom observation lasted six weeks, and each week included 2 English lessons. To sum, it included 12 lessons.

Interviews

The interviews with the teacher participants were conducted using open-ended questions adapted by the researchers from Nureldeen (2020) in line with the purpose and the research questions of this study. The interview included seven questions and each question had an aim to analyse one point for the application of the EFL supplementary materials during the lessons. The questions included in the interviews were as follows:

- 1- What types of supplementary materials did you use in your lesson? Why did you choose them?
- 2- How did your students engage with the materials you created for them?
- 3- Did you give recognition to your learners' voices, beliefs, knowledge, and experiences in the classroom? How did you apply this recognition when designing your supplementary materials?
- 4- Do you think the supplementary materials you used typically addressed the specific needs of your learners? How did they address them?
- 5- Do you think the materials had cultural content that was relevant to your students? How was it relevant?
- 6- Do you think any items in your supplementary materials were vital for your students? Why were they vital?
- 7- Did you have any difficulties using your supplementary materials in your lesson? What were these difficulties?

The teacher participants answered the questions and talked about their experiences after each lesson in their mother tongue, recorded their answers, and sent the voice recordings via a mobile application to the researcher. This allowed the teachers to answer the questions at any place they preferred. Moreover, the voice recordings could be replayed by the researcher multiple times during the data analysis phase. Using a mobile application to send the recordings was also easier and faster. Unfortunately, the researcher could not observe the teachers' non-linguistic features such as body language and gestures during the interviews.

Self-evaluation Reports

The researchers created a self-evaluation report template with the help of two experts in the field. That evaluation report had some guiding questions in concordance with the main purposes of the study. Through six weeks, the researcher handed one copy of this template to

the participant teachers after each observed lesson, the researchers wrote the reports in their L1 and delivered them to the researcher the following week.

Data Analysis

The data collected through the classroom observation, interviews, and self-evaluation reports were read, examined, coded, and analysed by the researchers according to a coding scheme by Creswell (2017). For description of the codes JAMOVİ program was used. Firstly, the notes on the observation forms taken by the researcher, self-evaluation reports and recorded interviews were transcribed and coded. It was made through categorization of the recurring themes in the participants' answers. After coding, suitable themes were identified and given in frequencies transferring on Jamovi. Following that, two other coders revised the themes and categories and gave feedback. The researchers edited the themes and categories until there is a consensus among all the coders. Finally, the themes with frequencies or numbers were presented in tables or charts in cohesion with the items of each collection tool. The codes generated were similar and consistent for all the three types of data collection, such as the type of supplementary materials, the reason why the supplementary materials selected, the problems faced, and what the overcoming strategies are.

Research Ethics

The requirements of research ethics were fulfilled by the researchers throughout the study. The necessary official permissions were taken from the Ethics Committee of Institute of Social Sciences in Ordu University, and Provincial Directorate of National Education. The headmasters of schools and teacher participants were interviewed before the study. After getting permissions, the participant teachers were provided with necessary information and responsibilities of the study. The teacher participants were voluntary to take part in this study, so they signed a form of consent approval stating they were aware of their rights and the potential risks of the research and may leave whenever they would like to. For confidentiality, the study did not include the participants' names or any private information.

Findings

Findings Related to the Classroom Observations

Concreteness and Content of the Supplementary Materials

The types of used supplementary materials and how often they were used are used in the lessons in Figure 2.

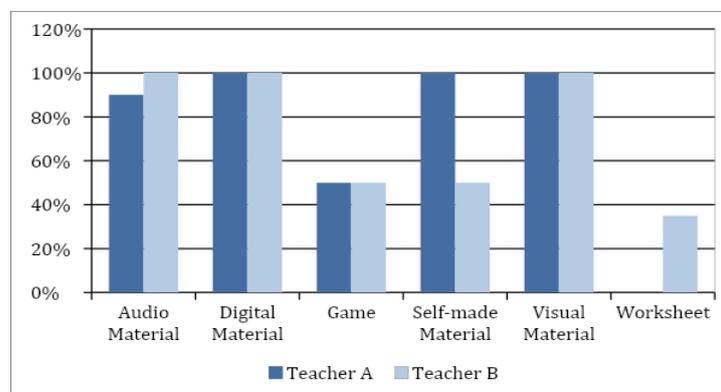


Figure 2 Frequencies of the use of supplementary materials in the classroom

Figure 2 demonstrates that the teachers used various supplementary materials in teaching. The supplementary materials introduced to the students by Teacher A were generally colourful and vivid. There were many colours, thanks to this the students were able to pronounce the colours they had learnt. Also, the flashcards and visual aids applied were of high quality. The pictures had their texts on their backs, so the teacher generally demonstrated the pictures with their written forms to the class. Furthermore, the cardboards created by the teacher were large enough and the text was readable. The materials were attractive for the young learners. The real objects (e.g., balls, cars, dolls, and toys) were big enough to be seen clearly in the classroom. The three cups activity included the students' acting out. The interactive presentation of the coursebook was touch-operated and colourful. It also included the music and videos. However, only the teacher used interactive presentation.

Teacher B used colourful materials (balloons, boxes, and toys) all the time. The interactive presentation of the coursebook included many colourful elements. These elements were mostly appropriate for visual learners. In one of the lessons, the student participants took the paper birthday cake, walked around the classroom, and stated how old they were. The students listened to the song, danced together, and did some activities on the interactive presentation using the Web 2.0 tool. They cut, coloured, and stuck the pictures. These types of tasks were mainly suitable for bodily-kinaesthetic learners. Moreover, the teacher taped some of the supplementary materials on the white board so that they could be clearly seen by all of the students. The teacher always wandered around the classroom to demonstrate the supplementary materials to everyone in the classroom. Finally, the students completed some activities including visuals and songs from the interactive presentation on the IWB.

The students' Use of Supplementary Materials

The students' interaction with each other during the use of supplementary materials is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

The Ways of Students' Interaction

Type of Work	Teacher A's students	Teacher B's students
Individual work	100%	83.3%
Pair work	.0	16.6%
Group work	.0	.0

Table 2 indicates that Teacher A's students used the supplementary materials individually all the time. As a notable instance, the students created, painted, and labelled their toy boxes, and brought their toys and toy boxes to the classroom. Then, the students introduced their toys. Fortunately, most students introduced their toy boxes and toys in the lesson. The teacher also presented the visuals, flashcards, and toys to all the students. The students made some inquiries and named the colours and toys individually. When the teacher raised a few questions, several volunteer students raised their fingers to answer, and the teacher recognised a volunteer student to answer. Teacher B's students also used the supplementary materials independently and individually. All the students put some birthday hats on their heads, and the teacher asked to each of them how old they were. Later, all the students listened to a song about colours, danced together, and told the class their favourite colours. They also worked in pairs.

Challenges and Overcoming Strategies

Challenges faced by teachers and students during the implementation of supplementary materials and the ways they used to cope with these difficulties are given in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Challenges and Overcoming Strategies by the Teachers during the Use of Supplementary Materials

Challenges	Overcoming Strategies
Misperception of instructions	Use of cue words, Translation, Related visuals
Intervention of L1	Demanding English version of the target language
Noise in the classroom	Walking around the classroom and asking students to be quiet
Challenging tasks	Being model for completing the task and making explanations
Problems related to the supplementary materials	Explaining the problems to the students
Students' incorrect answers	Elicitation of the correct answers

Both the teachers and students faced some difficulties during the lessons (e.g., misperception of instruction, intervention of L1, noise in the classroom, challenging tasks, errors with supplementary materials, and students' wrong answers) and numerous overcoming strategies to handle with the challenges (e.g., giving instruction one by one, demonstrating, eliciting, changing or modifying the materials).

Misperception of instruction

When the students did not clearly understand what to do, Teacher A usually gave explanation in Turkish or elicited the instruction from other students in the classroom. Occasionally, the teacher said the instruction again louder, or gave the instructions step by step pointing the required materials. To exemplify, the teacher cut, coloured, and stuck the visuals of school materials on her own first, asked the students to watch it, do their own work while preparing a mini book. Also, the teacher reminded some vocabularies that the students did not remember during the activities. Also, the teacher advised the students not to choose the same friends in pair or group works.

Intervention of L1

When any student gave an answer in their mother tongue, the teacher wanted the student to say it in English. In this way, the teacher tried to make students establish communication in the target language.

Noise in the classroom

When students talked about loudly or made noise during the activities, the teacher often walked around the students and asked them to be quiet.

Challenging tasks

The students were observed to have difficulty in doing True-False activity, because it was the first time they had encountered this kind of activity. Therefore, the teacher attempted to predigest the activity through showing, making explanations and giving motivational feedback.

Errors related to supplementary materials

The interactive presentation sometimes included errors, because of this the teacher explained that "There are some problems with the presentation. That is not a problem. It is OK."

Students' incorrect answers

The teacher tried to elicit the correct answers first from the student, and then from the other students in the classroom. In addition to this, the presentation on IWBs alerted the students with a sound automatically as soon as there were incorrect answers, and congratulated them right after they gave the correct answers.

Findings Related to the Interviews

The teacher participants noted that there was not much difficulty in using the supplementary materials. Teacher A stated:

As the supplementary materials used were enjoyable and interesting, there were few challenges. The students participated in the activities and had a good time, for the materials I applied were mostly suitable for their ages, interests, and levels.

Likewise, Teacher B said “There was no difficultness in use of our supplementary materials, rather using these materials made our lessons more straightforward.”

Lastly, the teachers did cite some difficulties they faced while using supplementary materials and they indicated that they applied some strategies to overcome these challenges. These difficulties are seen in Table 4.

Table 4

Some Difficulties in the Use of Supplementary Materials

Problems	Teacher A	Teacher B
Internet problems	25%	12.5%
Problems related to the IWB	12.5%	25%
Insufficient time	.0	12.5%
Damage to supplementary materials	.0	12.5%

According to Table 4, the problems are mainly related to use of IWB, technology, and the internet. One such challenge was problems with technology. In this regard, Teacher A put forward:

There might be some technical problems. As an example, I could not have used the IWB or interactive presentation if the electricity went off. Therefore, the course books, visuals, worksheets, and the assignments did by the students could be included in the lessons. I would talk with the students then. Several speaking activities or role-plays would also be included in the lesson, as well. We may sometimes face this problem but fortunately there were no power cuts during the six weeks.

Teacher B also reported:

There occasionally may be technological problems with the IWB, such as working slowly, not working properly, or some internet connection problems. I let the students play games, organize a competition among the students, or give handouts as a solution. We may also go on with the course book.

Another problem mentioned by the teachers was the inadequacy of teaching hours. The student participants have two teaching hours of English per week, and this is seen as a problem by the participant EFL teachers. Teacher A elaborated:

The time was not enough to include all of the students to the activities, as they had only 2 English language lessons a week. Therefore, I usually preferred the use of colourful,

enjoyable, and interesting supplementary materials. My students took parts in the lessons and did the activities more readily when some interesting supplementary materials were used.

Teacher B also said that some students worked at a slow pace while doing some activities, and as a result, the activities were left incomplete in the classroom. As she revealed:

The lack of time was a problem, because the students were unable to carry out the work, such as colouring and cutting. For this reason, I asked the students to complete the work at home and to send a photo of the completed work to me through their mobile phones.

Damage to the supplementary materials used in the classroom was also one of the challenges. In this regard, Teacher B expressed:

There were tiny problems, such as the blowout of the balloons, but these problems did not matter very much. These types of problems may be handled easily, in my view. An example of this is that the supplementary materials may be replaced with other similar materials in the classroom.

To summarize the findings of this question, there were some challenges for the teacher participants during the use of supplementary materials in the classroom. These challenges were put in order; internet problems and problems related to IWB (technological problems), damage given to the supplementary materials; and insufficient time.

Findings Related to the Self-Evaluation Reports

The self-evaluation Report of Teacher A

Teacher A said that the IWB and interactive presentations were the most advantageous supplementary materials in the classroom and stated:

The interactive presentations of the course book are the most effective supplementary materials in the classroom, for they contribute to the students' auditory and visual skills.

In addition, the teacher claimed that the use of colours in the classes was effective and reported:

I got the students' attention showing them some colourful cards. I asked them to tell the colours of the cards. As these colourful cards have a positive effect on the lessons, I am pleased with these materials and will go on using the colourful cards in the classroom. The posters of the colours and numbers were also effective materials. I hung these posters on the white board so that all the students were able to see the colours and numbers clearly.

The activities and games involving the supplementary materials were also viewed as entertaining to the students, and the teacher added:

In the three-paper cup game, I wrote "colours", "numbers", and "toys" on the cups and put some related words on the desk. The students picked a piece of paper and categorized the words. It is an interesting activity, specifically for young learners. Different versions of this activity may be applied for some other words related to different subjects.

The teacher also talked about the assignments that the students did by using supplementary materials and expressed that:

I asked the students to do some assignments and worksheets related to the theme of the lesson, such as preparing a feelings poster, a superhero poster, and a toy box. These types of homework are necessary for the students' development, because they create a product and practice the grammar points and words they have learnt in this way.

The teacher also put emphasis on the use of real objects and reported:

I brought a lot of toys into the classroom for the unit "Toys and Games." The students got very excited when I showed them the toys.

Generally, the teacher was positive about the supplementary materials created, designed, and used in the classroom and did not report any challenges in regard to the use of supplementary materials.

The Self-evaluation Report of Teacher B

As with Teacher A, Teacher B put forward that the interactive presentations and IWB was a key element in the classes. The teacher attached importance to all of the students' active participation in the lessons and gave permission to the students to use the IWB for the activities. The teacher reasoned that:

The IWB is essential for English lessons, as it allows the students to learn English in an easier and more permanent way, supplementing the course book with audio and visuals. The IWB also encourages the students to compete with each other while doing the activities. It makes both the teachers' and the students' work smoother, saves time in the lessons, and gives an opportunity to see the answers and results of the activities, exercises, and games for all the students in the classroom. The students enjoy doing activities on the IWB much. Listening to the teacher constantly may be boring. Therefore, I would rather do some different activities periodically.

The teacher also proposed that the supplementary materials used in the class overall suit for the students:

I think English language lessons are more important than other lessons, because they so frequently require the use of supplementary materials. Diverse types of materials are also fundamental to make the learning environment richer and to allow the students to be eager to participate in the English lesson. For me, the supplementary materials used were mostly favourable for the students' ages, interests, levels, needs, and the aims of the lessons. These materials allowed the students to participate in the lesson actively and to experience permanent learning. Overall, I am pleased with the supplementary materials such as crafts, interactive presentations, real objects, songs, and worksheets used in the classroom.

The teacher sometimes needed more time in the classroom, as the young learners cut and coloured the pictures slowly and were not able to complete the tasks on time. Therefore, the teacher asked the students to complete the work at home and send a photo of it to the teacher through the online application. This technique may be used as a solution for lack of time. In final, the teacher impressed that the students had distance education during the pandemic Covid-19, therefore students have difficulties in adapting to the classroom and school.

On the other hand, the teacher said that there were not many challenges in using the supplementary materials and said:

There might be some problems related to the internet while using the interactive presentation of the course book. To use the interactive presentations requires a membership, therefore I became a member of a website to download and use these

presentations in the classroom. For I believe that these presentations are useful for the learners as well as appealing to their eyes. But I think that the songs included in these presentations are not appropriate for the students. So, I suggest that these songs need to be changed.

In conclusion, this teacher was also glad with the supplementary materials used in the classroom and recommended their use in future lessons. The teacher also remarked that curiosity and interest kept the students' perceptions active and allowed them to listen carefully and remain engaged with the lessons. The supplementary materials were also seen to have multiple functions by the teacher, so she claimed that the same materials may be used again in future, yet some changes (e.g., writing the numbers on the party hats) may be applied.

Discussion and Conclusion

This research first sought answer to the question of what difficulties primary school EFL teachers encounter when using supplementary materials in English lessons. The findings obtained from the classroom observations revealed some challenges such as misperception of instruction, intervention of L1, noise in the classroom, challenging tasks, errors with supplementary materials, and students' wrong answers. In addition, the findings obtained from the interviews suggested that teachers experienced four different difficulties: problems with the internet, problems with the smart board, damage caused by students to additional materials and lack of time. However, in self-evaluation reports, teachers did not mention any challenges regarding the design and use of supplementary materials. Previous research in the literature support some of the challenges put forward in this study (Mehdipour & Zerehkafi, 2013; Rejeki, Kristina, & Wijayanto, 2022; Sultana & Ashrafuzzaman, 2016; Tekir & Akar, 2020). For example, in a study conducted by Mehdipour and Zerehkafi (2013), the researchers examined the challenges and barriers of using mobile phones as supplementary materials in secondary school English lessons and they determined that both teachers and students had some technical problems such as connectivity and battery life. The same problem was also determined in a similar study by Rejeki, Kristina, and Wijayanto (2022). Likewise, in a study (Sultana & Ashrafuzzaman, 2016) investigating primary school teachers' efficiency in using supplementary materials in English lessons, teachers claimed to have some problems such as limited time to design and implement materials, slow learners' consuming more time to complete tasks, and challenges in using IWBs. In another study carried out by Tekir and Akar (2020), the researchers categorised the difficulties encountered by EFL teachers under five main themes; teacher related, student related, material related, school related and ministry related factors. Among the difficulties in the relevant categories, limited time, difficulty in classroom management (noise), challenging tasks and technical problems overlap with some of the challenging factors identified in this study.

Secondly, this study attempted to answer the question of what are the basic solutions preferred by EFL primary school teachers to overcome the challenges they faced. The data gathered from classroom observations suggested six challenges encountered by the teachers: misperception of instruction, intervention of L1, noise in the classroom, challenging tasks, errors with supplementary materials, and students' wrong answers. In regard to the first problem teachers applied the strategies of modelling, simplifying (Tomlinson, 2013), repeating the instruction with different words, and explaining. When students talked in their native language, teachers encouraged them to use target language as much as possible. This strategy was determined to be used by teachers in a previous study conducted by Kabilan and Izzaham (2008) on teaching practices of English teachers in Malaysia. Considering these two problems, primary school EFL students' limited proficiency in the vocabulary and grammar of the target language may have caused them to have difficulty in comprehending the meaning and

expressing themselves in the target language (Chung, 2016; Songbatumis, 2017). When there was noise in the classrooms, participant teachers walked around, monitored, and warned the students to be quiet. As stated by Willis (1996), less controlled activities, especially in larger classes, give students more freedom, causing them to be distracted more easily. In addition, some disciplinary problems, such as noise, may arise when teachers allocate too much time for the completion of a task. In his study on English teachers' task-based practices, Carless (2004) found that participating teachers had problems with managing noise and monitoring students during the activities, and they could not handle with these challenges efficiently. For challenging tasks, teachers tried to help learners understand and accomplish tasks by demonstrating the tasks themselves first, making explanations in the target language and giving them motivational feedback. Errors with the supplementary materials were handled by teachers themselves (they made necessary adjustments on them). When it comes to the students' errors, teachers applied the strategies of self-correction, peer-correction and they also facilitated from IWBs to automatically react with sound to students' wrong answers.

Moreover, the data obtained from the interviews suggested that teachers experienced four different difficulties: problems with the internet, problems with the smart board, damage caused by students to additional materials and lack of time. To deal with the problems such as internet connection, power outages, and whiteboard not working properly, teachers implemented the strategy of switching to other activities that do not require electricity or internet use. The teachers in this study preferred to move on to other activities instead of solving the technical problems they encountered. Mollaei and Riasati (2013) argue that teachers' inability to use technological materials effectively in foreign language classes is due to insufficient teacher training, a lack of vision regarding the opportunities provided by technology in improving teaching and learning, and insufficient technical support in schools. A survey study conducted by Merç (2015) also revealed that the majority of Turkish teacher candidates do not have the necessary skills to use technology devices effectively in their foreign language classrooms. Another issue that teachers put forward as an obstacle to the application of supplementary materials was the damage caused by students to the materials. Teachers solved this problem by replacing damaged materials with similar ones. The last problem suggested by the teachers was insufficient lesson hours. Some activities required more time for students to do, but the time allocated to the lessons was not enough. Therefore, teachers asked their students to complete the tasks at home. However, this method used by teachers may cause students not to fully understand the given task. Additionally, students' inability to receive instant feedback from the teacher prevents them from experiencing a constructive learning process.

In their self-evaluation reports, both teachers did not indicate any specific difficulties with the design and implementation of supplementary materials. However, they pointed out some advantages of these materials such as attracting students' attention, engaging them, and contributing to their auditory and visual skills. They also claimed that involving students in design and development of materials helped them learn better by providing a more fun and motivating learning environment. Furthermore, materials designed specifically to suit students' ages, needs, interests and proficiency levels provided a more interactive teaching and learning environment. Previous studies also show that the correct selection and use of supplementary materials increase students' participation and achievement in language classes (Peña & Sarmiento, 2012; Tomlinson, 2013).

In conclusion, this research has highlighted a number of issues faced by primary school EFL teachers while designing and using supplementary materials in their foreign language classrooms. The findings showed that teachers were challenged by some teacher related, student related and material related problems. To overcome these issues, this study also identified some strategies employed by the teachers such as managing noise, encouraging students to use the target language during activities, modelling, making explanation, switching to alternative

activities and giving motivational feedback. Yet, these challenges cannot be generalized since the findings revealed localized difficulties peculiar to a specific context.

Limitations and Recommendations

This study was applied in only 2 state primary schools in Turkey. It may be applied in more schools. Furthermore, it was applied with just 2nd and 3rd-grade student. A similar study may be applied with 4th-grade students. Similarly, a study with more participant EFL teachers can be conducted to have deeper understanding in this issue. In view of data collection, teachers wrote their self-evaluation reports not immediately after the lessons as they had following lessons. It may be discussed that some details related to the lessons may have been forgotten and mentioned in the reports.

The results of this study may be compared with other courses such as Turkish language and Maths with regard to the use of supplementary materials. This study also recommends that a study on materials development and evaluation should be carried out with pre-service EFL teachers to make contribution in their teaching skills using supplementary materials.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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